Distribution Lists – Exchanging Information

When registered to a list one may just read passing messages. This is a very good means to be aware of *what is going on* on a given topics. But when participating in a discussion some rules must be followed:

- *Never send a message which is not related to the topics of the list.*
  This is especially important when the list is not moderated since such messages will reach all participants who will not care about its contents. It is also true when the list is moderated. Editors are volunteers and should not be disturbed when not necessary.
- *Be always concise and clear*
  Readers should understand, from the first look, what is the subject and purpose of the message (fill properly the Subject field in your message). They receive dozens of messages a day and the quality of a distribution list is the quality of its contents.
- *Do not participate in useless discussions*
  Sometimes, on a sensitive subject, some people start lengthy complaints and discussions which quickly become very inappropriate and off subject.
- *Answer to the right address*
  Do not misuse the `reply` feature of your e–mail interface. Depending on the listserv configuration a reply may go either to the list or to the sender. It is very inappropriate to answer to the list when the message becomes personal or too technical. Often the person who starts a discussion will summarize all the answers in a message which avoids numerous exchanges and disturbances to participants. Check the address before sending your answer!
- *Remember the lists to which you have subscribed*
  List managers receive dozen of messages of angry persons who do not remember they have subscribed to a list and do not understand why they receive messages from the list.
- *Never use automatic answering facilities*
  Do not include any procedure which automatically answers your e–mail, such as a .vacation file on Unix machines. No participant is interested in messages like as: *Sorry I am on vacation from...* which will be distributed if your mail server sends back such answer.

Common mistakes

- Sending the message to the listserv instead of the list address.
  For instance, do not use *listserv@lmcp.jussieu.fr* to take part in a discussion on the IUCr list. Send your contribution to *iucr@lmcp.jussieu.fr*
- Confusing the listserv address with the list address
  Quite often participants to a list receive messages such as *subscribe...*, *unsubscribe..*, ... sent to the list address instead of to the listserv address.
- Reply to the list instead of the sender of the message
- The listserv does not accept your message.
  Probably the address as included in the message is different from the one used when subscribing. Use the first one or unsubscribe with the first one and subscribe again.

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[1] http://www.iucr.ac.uk/iucr–top/welcome.html
[2] int.index.html
[3] int.index.html
[4] int.list.gen.html
[5] int.list.cmd.html
[6] int.list.crys.html
[7] http://www.lmcp.jussieu.fr/~epelboin /