

# The 13<sup>th</sup> Member Assembly of the FGF

January 24, 2005

by Fred Breit, Gerd Friedrich

**The 13<sup>th</sup> Member Assembly was convened by the FGF's Board of Directors in Düsseldorf. 30 persons were present, among them 13 voting members out of 19. Thus, a regular Assembly meeting could take place. Topics were the activity of the Association during the last reporting period and the election of the new Board.**

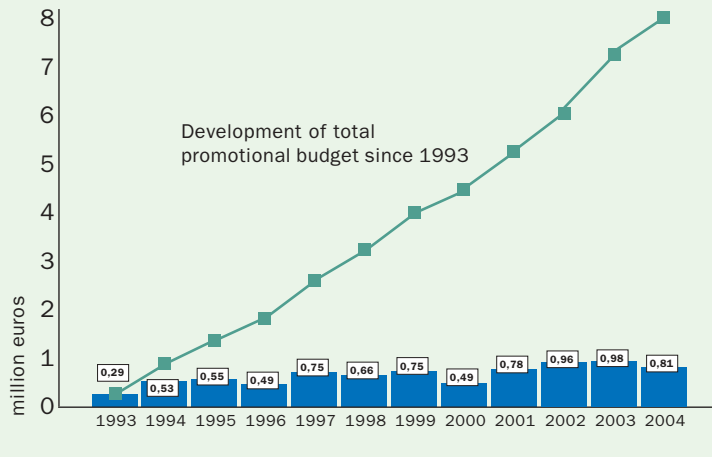
After approval of the meeting agenda and the minutes from the 12th Member Assembly work could begin. The Chair of the Board, Mr Eike Bär, presented his report on the activities of the Board by emphasizing the following aspects:

1. The main objectives of the FGF were successfully met and will continue to be pursued.
2. The motto is "Do good and talk about it!"
3. The FGF's strict commitment to science will be kept; it will continue to abstain from voicing an own opinion. Project holders are requested to present their results to the public themselves.

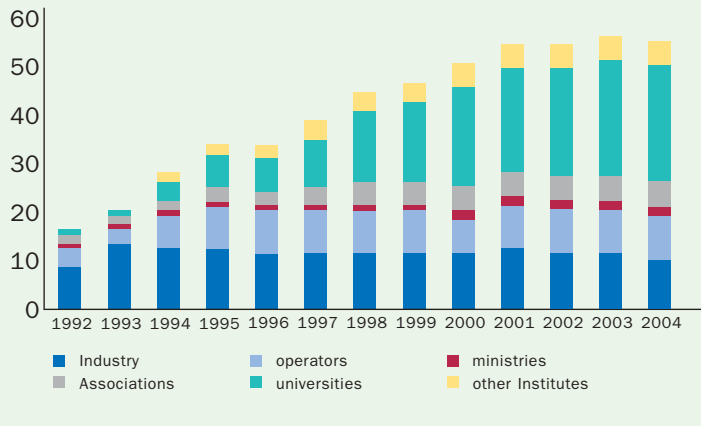
Over the past year, the Chair – according to a decision of the Board of Directors – repeatedly visited the Administrative Office and attended conferences of the AG F and AG Ö to gain a first-hand impression of the daily workings. He expressed his thanks to all involved in the work done by these groups, as well as the companies authorizing staff to support the FGF's work.

For the reporting period, a review of the FGF's working concept and tasks had been planned. Against the background of the generational change in the Board of Directors, a professionally moderated workshop

Granted third-party funds



Membership development 1992 to 2004




was performed, among other things to ensure the participation of the younger board members. Working groups covering individual topics were set up by the Board. This work is still ongoing. The Board will present a report and possibly call for a special Member Assembly, as soon as results are available.

With pleasure and due pride, Mr Bär spoke about the great recognition the FGF enjoys in other countries. One reason is its good cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Bioelectromagnetics Society (BEMS) and its European counterpart, the European BioElectromagnetics Association (EBEA), with its renowned researchers. Recently, FGF project holders have increasingly been able to present their research results at this forum – high-level scientific results that were well received by the scientific community. Another forum is the European Union with its multitudinous research activities and information policies. Here, the FGF provides valuable insight that is essential for risk assessment with regard to EMCE issues. Within the EU program COST 281, the FGF, as an active member (besides the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS), participates in research coordination and research work itself.

On the national level, the FGF, as in previous years, played an active role in the bodies dealing with standardization and risk assessment. In addition, there is its participation in the “Roundtable” of the German Mobile Radio Research Program (“BfS research”). Mr Bär put the emphasis on the possibility to bring the FGF’s expertise to the program.

After the “boom” of GSM resp. UMTS networks characterizing the European mobile radio market in its initial phase, the market for telecommunication services is now saturated. In fact, the market of network providers and manufacturers of telecommunication equipment has consolidated. For the FGF, this means that some of its paying members have given up or withdrew from the German-speaking region. As a consequence, there are less potential paying members. With the present income of approx. 1.5 million Euros, the budget is strained. Without new members and additional third-party funds, there will be no mentionable change in the financial situation.

Of course, questions asked by members such as “What will I get for my money?”, or “What are the



goals that can be achieved with these funds?" are fully legitimate. The Board of Directors will put special emphasis on these aspects in "strategy discussion". Without describing the activities of the Administrative Office and the Working Groups "Research" and "Public Relations" in detail, Mr Bär spoke about the great dedication, productivity and the successful work done by the members and the Administrative Office. He pointed out that the list of achievements was long, longer even than in the very successful year 2003. He congratulated all those involved and expressed his thanks to them.

Upon finishing his speech, he addressed some of the year's highlights: in 2004, two internationally attended and much noticed workshops were held in Helsinki and Schriesheim. There is agreement among the board members to continue focusing on this type of knowledge generation bringing together leading experts to discuss topics of interest. Feedback and acceptance among scientists are good. Obviously, this was a worthwhile use of member fees. This is very satisfactory indeed, as the financial resources of the FGF for own research are limited. In 2004, these funds amounted to 0.8 million Euros (third-party funds).

With regard to the FGF's public relation work, much progress was made in general conceptualisation and, as a consequence, in detail, without neglecting the pursuit of long-term goals. Its own regular publications "Newsletter", "Infoline" and "Edition Wissenschaft" are an important tool for disseminating objective, science-based information to the public. These periodicals are well established, as is impressively shown by the number of copies resp. requests: the number of printed copies of the FGF Newsletter is 4500; in addition, there are about 5000 internet requests per month. In Mr Bär's opinion, this service for members and public alike is "great client service" providing scientifically sound facts related to the EMCE debate. The English versions are quite successful, too: 30% of the requests concern information offered in English.

It is with satisfaction that Mr Bär observes the measures taken continually and consistently for the implementation of the goals. Mr Bär concluded his observations by thanking the FGF's Administrative Of-

fice for the good work, but also the contributing members of the numerous working groups for their extensive support. From his perspective as the Chair of the Board "it was a successful year".

## Working Group Research

The director of the Working Group Research, AG F, Dr. Volker Bökelmann talked about the reporting period from January 29, 2004 to January 27, 2005. The main focus of research in 2004 was on "data collection and data analysis" through literature review and the organization of international workshops, rather than on the monitoring of the individual research projects initiated by the FGF, as had been the case in previous years (see also Annual Reports 2003 and 2004). The workshops are intended to foster the exchange of ideas and to clarify unresolved matters in a dialog between experts from all disciplines. Activities related to knowledge mediation and the scientific discussion and evaluation of available research results were further expanded. Internal workshops of the FGF's working groups served as a tool in the process of optimisation, which is continuing. During this time period, there were 6 regular AG F sessions; 6 subgroups (UAGs) constitute "competence centers" supporting the AG F.

Two subgroups are especially active, strongly promoting the work of the AG F:

- **the subgroup (UAG) "in vivo / in vitro"**

Aside from its original activities, the group has three additional special tasks:

- constituting the ad-hoc group "Pulsed Fields" with a weekly phone conference; its objective is to produce a reference document containing information on all aspects of pulsed fields
- the "monitoring of worldwide research programs with special regard to Germany" in order to identify research topics already investigated resp. ongoing research projects, and to decide what additional action needs to be taken.
- the "Quick Response System" which is meant to provide comprehensive information on sensational or critical research findings or trends within the first 24 h and to a provisional assessment or eval-

uation within 48 h. The system has shown to be effective several times, e.g. with regard to the “Sernelius publication”, the current hot topic of “fertility”, the “Naila study”, the “blood screening action”, and the result presentation of the “REFLEX studies”. Members were provided with diligently prepared reliable information in short time, with the support of external experts.

- subgroup (UAG) „WBLDB“

The group is responsible for further expansion of the knowledge-based literature database, including only peer-reviewed literature, and its systematic transcription into classes and tables. Moreover, it prepares the collected research studies and results for evaluation. Supported by the BfS, a new user interface was developed by the end of the year, which is very effective in presenting scientific publications in a comprehensible form, even to laypersons, etc. Mr Bökelmann urgently recommends to take a look at the database and to try it out.

Long-term efforts are required to ensure a continuous expansion and maintenance of the inventory. Quality control is essential to this project. Assisted by experts, studies are analysed and evaluated according to qualitative and quantitative aspects. Middle term and long-term promotion are needed to preserve and, above all, to update this high-quality database. New funds, complementing those provided by the FGF, have to be raised.

The main part of the lecture given by Mr Bökelmann dealt with the progress achieved with individual research projects resp. workshops of the FGF:

## Projects:

### # 42 „Electro sensitivity“

Due to the weak recruiting of volunteers, this project experienced delay. The original intention was to reach a number of 20 test persons (only 13 person have been tested so far) in order to achieve sufficient statistical power, i.e. a conclusiveness of experiments comparable to that of other studies. As a consequence, the FGF has taken responsibility for volunteer recruiting, and managed to find 26 volunteers by the beginning of the year. The project is unique in that participants first have to qualify in an open prov-

ocation test before being included in the double-blinded experiment.

### # 45 “3rd mobile radio generation, long-term experiment”

There was an initial larger delay due to the required redesign of the exposure system for unconstrained rats and the development of a transmitter with appropriate strength. In the meantime, however, the first animal generation has been exposed and evaluation is underway.

### Workshop: “Stress proteins”

The first workshop of the year was held in Finland, in the capital Helsinki. Organized in cooperation with the Finnish Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority, STUK, and the European research association COST 281, a symposium dealing with the topic “**Influence of RF Fields on the Expression of Stress Proteins**” took place on April 28 and 29, attended by high-ranking experts. Possible influences of radio frequency fields on stress proteins (also called heat-shock proteins, HSP) have been investigated only recently. The workshop therefore was a good opportunity to bring together the major part of scientists doing research in this field for intense discussion (a meeting report is included in Newsletter 2/2004)

The positive outcome of a visit of the working group to the laboratory of Prof. de Pomerai in Nottingham, England, was presented during the Helsinki Workshop: After intense discussion and reproduction of the study with a new exposure system, de Pomerai revised his conclusions on athermal expression of stress proteins in nematode worms and presented new results.

### Workshop: “Cancer”

Schriesheim/Heidelberg was the location of the international Autumn Workshop of the FGF on November 15 to 17, the third time in succession generously supported by the Baden-Württemberg State Ministry of Environment and Transport. It was organized in cooperation with the European COST 281 and the „EMF-Net“ actions.

Under the headline “**Are RF-fields able to raise the risk of cancer?**”, international experts discussed the

association between radiofrequency fields and carcinogenesis based on ongoing and completed epidemiological studies and long-term animal experiments. (A short report on the workshop was published in Newsletter 4/2004; all lectures and rapporteur reports are available on the Internet.) Regrettably, Dr. Eger, one of the authors of the Naila study, which made quite a stir, cancelled his participation. The workshop would have been an excellent forum for discussing his results.

### Strategy Workshop of the Working Group Research (AG F)

To support the Board of Directors' workshop on the future strategies of the FGF, the AG F also prepared a special meeting to collect ideas and develop concepts evolving around the general topic: "How to increase the acceptance of the FGF by research?"

### Working Group Public Relations

The presentation of Dr. Olaf Schulz, director of the Working Group Public Relations (AG Ö) was illustrated by numerous fact sheets. As part of the AG Ö activities, 14 meetings took place, 7 of them face to face. During these meetings, the AG Ö prepared the workshop titled "Review of the existing communication mod-

el" to be held in the spring, based on the "Guideline for the Public Relation Work of the FGF 2003". The workshop was performed for internal review purposes.

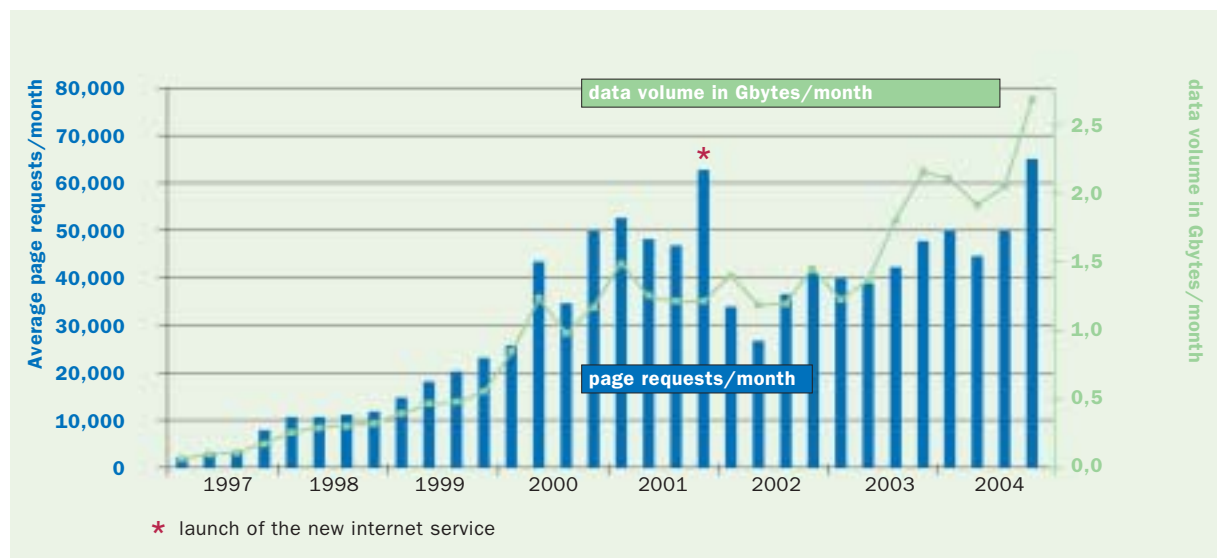
A high standard was set for the FGF's public relation work by its objective to be the "leading non-governmental agency for information and communication related to EMCE research" in the German-speaking region. Mr Schulz emphasized that the FGF has a "clear positioning as a voice of science", due to its "competence in research and science", and that it was "credible, because it is science-based".

Measures to be taken are the following:

- continuous optimisation of internal and external information and communication services,
- intensifying the contact with external target groups and striving for active communication,
- evaluation of target group expectations,
- the adaptation of existing tools with regard to target groups (target groups of the FGF's public relation work are FGF members, scientists and experts, associations and institutions, industry as well as multipliers, such as the media),
- information exchange and, possibly, coordination with other organizations.

The challenge was to pursue these objectives in practical work. On this basis, the AG Ö made great efforts

### Development FGF internet service requests



in 2004 to provide its members and the public with information on EMCE issues, by:

- the expansion and improved graphic design of the internal information service of the FGF, the “FGF intranet”
- updating and expanding the internet service ([www.fgf.de](http://www.fgf.de)), including new options such as downloads of single Newsletter articles
- the active participation of the Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk in public events (as in previous years, the FGF helped prepare events)
- responding – often in great depth – to many oral and written requests from authorities, scientists, media and from the public.

Mr Schulz described the individual channels of information in more detail:

## Internet

The internet is the main information channel of the news service offered by the FGF. After the decrease in requests seen in 2002, which was due to the general decrease in media coverage of the topic (see Annual Report 2004) and, certainly, also to the newly launched information services of other organizations and interest groups, the number of requested pages is again on the rise. The percentage of pages in English of total statistics is 35 % (in the year before: 23%). “Research Results and Publications”, the core segment of the FGF’s internet service, is – as in the year before – the most often visited part with about 60% of page requests.

The percentage of “News and Events” increased from 22% in 2003 to 27%. This is due to the continually growing number of requests for “Infoline”, the weekly information of the FGF. An exemplary evaluation done for the month of September showed a total number of requests for “Infoline” (all issues) of 4739; the German version with 3083 requests, and the English version with 1575 requests. Over the past year, functional improvements have been made to facilitate the handling of requests for information.

## Infoline

In 2004, 50 Infoline issues with a total of 617 news items and 141 pages appeared. “Infoline” presents worldwide news related to the topic of EMCE in Ger-

man and English. It is found on the FGF web pages and is additionally sent to members and external subscribers via email. Members can request background information related to the news, the so-called HOTs, on paper at the Administrative Office. There are (at the end of 2004) 330 external subscribers; 30% of the English-speaking region.

With issue 28 from July 22, 2004, Infoline has adopted the new corporate design of the Newsletter. Aside from the new layout, there was also a conceptual redesign categorizing information by rubrics: On Our Own Behalf, Research, Environment and Society, Politics and Law, Technology, and Dates.

## Press clippings

As a service offered to its members, the FGF surveys the press coverage of EMCE issues since 1995 (since October 2002 also online press). The monitoring comprises both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The qualitative evaluation is based on a detailed classificatory scheme focusing on health-relevant news. Thus, it is possible to make current developments transparent and to demonstrate also long-term consequences of argumentation. Since October 2004, sound data are available.

## Newsletter

A total of four issues with 310 pages were published (at the beginning of each quarter). The number of print copies was 4500; in addition, there are about 5000 Internet downloads per month.

In 2004, the new design was first used for all issues. The new layout and graphic design, as well as the new conceptual presentation with its regular rubrics, improve readability. The authors are mentioned in the index, and there is also a year index of all published articles that can be taken out, meant to help readers find information they are looking for. Longer articles contain a summary. Single articles can be searched and downloaded.

## Edition Wissenschaft

There were no new issues in 2004.

The issues

- no. 15, April 2002, “Effects of electromagnetic fields on the function of the blood-brain barrier”,

by Dr. med. Florian Stögbauer, • no. 18, April 2003, “Technical requirements of exposure facilities for the investigation of radiofrequency electromagnetic field effects on biological systems”, by Dr. Joachim Streckert, and

- no. 19, July 2003, “In vivo studies of possible effects of radiofrequency electromagnetic fields (HF-EMF), especially as are used by mobile radio – A literature survey of long-term animal experiments (carcinogenicity studies)”, by Dr. Thomas Tillmann and Dr. Jochen Buschmann

were translated into English and are available as downloads on the internet. To cut costs, print versions are no longer available.

## Intranet

The intranet has been expanded conceptually and functionally over the last year. New help functions such as search routines, structuring, etc. were added to facilitate “treasure hunting”. Thus, the acceptance of the intranet as the main information platform of the FGF was further improved, as is impressively confirmed by the growing number of users and the amount of data requested.

At the end of his presentation, Mr Schulz described two other objectives of the AG Ö: in 2005, it is planned to increase efforts to reach the target group of economic journalists and to reinforce the member service.

## Administrative Office

Prior to his fact sheet presentation, Dr. Gerd Friedrich, the Managing Director of the FGF, stated that the FGF, contrary to original plans anticipating a “life duration” of 3 years, now is in its 13th year. With Dr. Payer, the last of the 1<sup>st</sup> generation board members, one of the “founding fathers of the Association”, has departed. 2<sup>nd</sup> generation members are also leaving. So e.g. Dr. Wolf Haas, an active member who, for many years, played a crucial role in the Association both as the director of the AG F and, later on, as the Deputy Chair of the Board of Directors, will leave the Association.

With regard to the work done during the reporting period, Mr Friedrich emphasized that it was again a “busy” year with many highlights. Some of the events

had already been described in the by other lecturers. A detailed report on all activities and events is included in the Annual Report 2004 (see [www.fgf.de](http://www.fgf.de)) prepared by the Administrative Office. Of particular note was the strong communality and the good cooperation, even among competitors. Mr Friedrich underlined the role and participation of members without direct financial involvement, such as universities, which do very much to strengthen the FGF’s scientific competence.

With regard to membership development, he reported the arrival of the Fachhochschule (Polytechnics) Dortmund; on the other hand, the company Marconi, a regular member, leaves the FGF. And this trend seems to continue: with Lucent Technology another member has announced its departure, due to economic reasons. With many former members – above all those having participated in the AG F and AG Ö – the good cooperation is continued even after the departure of the member company. In the long run



## The FGF Board of Directors

### Board of Directors:

### personal representative:

#### *for the group of network operators:*

- Karl-Wilhelm Siebert, Vodafone D2
- Dr. Fritz Lauer, T-Mobile
- Dr. Karsten Menzel, E-Plus

- Dr. Ulrich Hermann, Swisscom
- Bernd Pritzer, Deutsche Telekom
- Dr. Holger Ruse, O<sub>2</sub>

#### *for the group of service providers:*

- Herbert Tillmann, Bayerischer Rundfunk

- Helwin Lesch, Bayerischer Rundfunk

#### *for industry:*

- Eike Bär, Motorola
- Dr. Heinz Friedrichs, Bosch
- Dr. Uwe Kullnick, Siemens

- Thomas Barmüller, FMK
- Christer Törnevik, Ericsson
- Ralf Grafe, Nokia

#### *for the group of public authorities:*

- Dittmar von Schilling, BMWA

- Peter Voß, BMWA

though, the lack of fees will have its effect on the work done by the FGF and the service offered to the members.

National and international activities of the FGF Administrative Office have been described in other reports. However, Mr Friedrich emphasized the support given to the EU research action COST 281 that has played a major role in gaining international recognition. The collaboration with the scientists of COST 281 also leads to many synergies in the daily workings of the FGF.

Next, Mr Friedrich focussed on the financial situation of the Association. He compared the numbers for the years 2004 and 2005. It is obvious that income and expenditure will be below those of the previous year. Due to the decrease in member fees, approx. 150,000 Euros less are available.

Discussion about the report of the Board of Directors During discussion of the report of the Board, Mr Bär asked how come the budget for public relation work was exceeded by 8%. Mr Friedrich answered that this was mainly due to the English translations of Newsletter and Edition Wissenschaft. In the meantime, project reports have to be submitted in English in order to cut translation costs. Difficulties arise from the fact that some authorities demand reports in German.

Peter Voss (BMW A) asked who represented the FGF in the different international and national organizations. Mr Friedrich said that he himself was the representative at the WHO and EU, and that, where necessary, he was supported by an expert. The WHO decides whom to invite as an expert. EU bodies invited him primarily as a representative of COST 281. The foci of interest related to EMCE are roughly the same for the EU and the WHO; differences are rather found in single actions. The EU Commission has no own body concerned with EMCE: different directorates-general such as science, justice, health, telecommunications, competition, health services, etc. are responsible. This makes work more difficult.

A question voiced by Prof. Enders dealt with the financing of the FGF. What is the strategy for the recruitment of new members? Are telecommunication companies the target, or could e.g. manufacturers of household appliances be included? According to Mr Friedrich, also car manufacturers, insurances and other companies concerned with EMCE issues are welcome as members. But interest in this group is rare, or they are already members of other organizations active in the field. Daimler-Chrysler was the only company to become a member of the FGF. Mr Bär remarked that government support as a lever to recruit new members would be welcome.



## Auditors' report and discharge of the Board of Directors

The result of the audit was that there were no irregularities; funds were used in accordance with the Statutes. Mr Stracke recommended approval and the discharge of the Board of Directors.

At 12:20, Mr Bär asked Mr Matthias Meier to chair the meeting. With 13 votes for the Board's discharge, the decision was unanimous (no vote against the proposal or abstention).

Mr Meier thanked the Board for the excellent work done over the past year. Mr Bär acknowledged the trust put in the Board; he was pleased with the positive result of the auditors' report with regard to the Administrative Office.

## Election of Board members

In accordance with the FGF's Statutes, the Chair of Elections was given a joint election list of the different member groups. Again, all 13 voting members (i.e. unanimously, without a vote against the proposal or abstention) voted for the proposal. The elected persons accepted the election.

At 12:25, the session was interrupted for the election of a new Chair of the Board. At 12:30, agreement was reached: Mr Bär, the old Chair, will also be the new Chair. The Deputy Chair will be Dr. Lauer, from the ranks of network operators. Both accepted the vote.

Mr Bär expressed his thanks for the trust put in him and then honoured Mr Haas for his dedicated work under the roof of the Association. Mr Haas has been the director of the AG F for four years, the „hardest job of all“: “He, Wolf Haas, has excelled through his balanced views, even when times were tough.” With his constructive attitude he had always helped to find consensus, so decisions were made by agreement. “He has gained outstanding merits on behalf of the FGF.” According to the Statutes, Mr Bär suggested to make him an honorary member. The vote in favour was unanimous.

## Program 2005 and Budget 2005

Planned activities related to research include ongoing projects and at least two workshops. There are no funds available for new research projects. That

does not mean that the FGF is not open to proposals, but it will be very cautious in its approach to new projects.

Mr Bär reported that the Board had scheduled an additional date for an internal strategy workshop conceptualising the future orientation of the FGF. Mr Bär urged discussion of the Board's program.

Mr Friedrich then presented the budget for the year 2005, already taking into account the reduced income from member fees. Nonetheless, there will be no reduction of research funds.

During discussion of the program and the budget for 2005, Prof. Volkert Hansen wished to speak. At the time being, large national research programs were ongoing, he said; but in three years' time there would perhaps be a lull in research promotion. This was good reason to maintain contact with research to be able to fall back on experienced, competent institutes. It was very important to maintain competence; it was this competence e.g. that prompted Prof. de Pomerai to “withdraw” his results. Prof. Hansen continued that it was possible to keep research going on a lower level without losing competence. The FGF had to be ready to act as soon as the BfS research program came to its end. Mr Bär summarized: “Research – yes, but only where we are able to do it.”

## Other

**Lecture of Mr Georg Neubauer** (Seibersdorf, the largest non-universitarian research institute in Austria)  
Dr. Georg Neubauer spoke on the topic: „Methods for determining exposure in the vicinity of base stations“.

### **Lecture of Mr Baldauf** (Univ. Karlsruhe)

A continuation of the follow-up on the “miniWatt Project I”: “Alternative radio systems with minimal power density in digital broadcasting, mobile radio, wireless LANs” is planned (see Mr Baldauf's report during the Annual Member Assembly 2004). Mr Baldauf presented the current status of the miniWatt II project.

*Dr. Fred Breit, Deutsche Telekom AG*

*Dr. Gerd Friedrich, Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk*