



## **Dedication to Alexander Samel**

The session on Noise-Induced Sleep Disturbances was dedicated to Alexander Samel who passed away May 19, 2007. Dr. Samel chaired the respective Team on Noise-Induced Sleep Disturbances since 2003 together with Dr. Ken I Hume.

Alexander Samel was born November 6, 1947 in Kiel, Germany. After his graduation in Physics in 1976 he worked at the Physical Institute of Bonn University. In 1980 he joined the Institute of Aerospace Medicine at the German Aerospace Center (DLR, Deutsches Luft- und Raumfahrtzentrum) in Cologne, Germany. He stayed at the DLR until his death, only interrupted by a 2 years period when he worked as a Senior Scientist at the NASA Aims Research Center, Aerospace Human Factors Research Division in Moffet Field, CA, USA. 1998 he became Head of the Department of Flight Physiology at the DLR.

His main scientific interests concerned the circadian system in particular the interrelation between stress, fatigue, sleep and performance in flight personnel and noise induced sleep disturbances including not only the physiological alterations of sleep itself, but also the after effects i.e. subjective evaluation of sleep and performance. Among others Alexander Samel had initiated the worldwide largest study on the effects of aircraft noise on sleep which consisted of an extended experimental study in the laboratory and a large field study with polysomnographic sleep recordings of residents living near an airport. Another extended study focussed on the comparison between noises emitted from aircraft, road and railway traffic. To discover the clinical relevance of these disturbances he initiated the Virtual Institute 'Transportation Noise – Effects on Sleep and Performance', where physiologists and clinicians worked together.

Dr. Samel was a member of numerous research associations, i.e. the Society of Research of Biological Rhythms, the German Sleep Society, the European Sleep Research Society, the International Commission on Biological Effects of Noise, the German Society of Aviation and Space Medicine, the Aerospace Medical Association (Airtransport Medicine Committee), and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). He was a corresponding Member of the International Academy of Astronautics and was appointed to the Joint Aviation Authorities' Project Advisory Group for Human Factors and to the European Transport Safety Council, 'Airsafety Working Party'.

He received the Howard K. Edwards Aerospace Medical Association Memorial Award of the US Aerospace Medical Association in 1998; he became member of the International Academy of Astronautics in 2001, fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association in 2002 and fellow of the Aerospace Human Factors Association (USA) in 2006.

Despite his very tight time schedule he always had the time to discuss scientific problems and to offer a solution even in areas where he himself did not work. These characteristics/traits made him a respected and reliable partner in research cooperation.

Alexander's views and statements were always well researched and honest and he never propagated information he wasn't absolutely sure of. Alexander was an excellent teacher who had the ability to detect and to promote young scientists.

We lost not only an excellent honest scientist, but also a friend. His death caused a gap that is difficult to fill. We are grateful to have known him.

Barbara Griefahn