

Introduction



Eighth Symposium on the Role of the Vestibular Organs in Space Exploration

Houston, Texas, USA

April 8–10, 2011

This issue includes the scientific abstracts from the Eighth Symposium on the Role of the Vestibular Organs, held in Houston, Texas on April 8–10, 2011. This international meeting of sensorimotor researchers, flight surgeons, and astronauts was sponsored by the NASA Human Research Program and the National Space Biomedical Research Institute's Sensorimotor Adaptation Research Team. The meeting was a satellite of the 18th Humans in Space Symposium of the International Academy of Astronautics, also held in Houston the following week. The first Symposium on the Role of the Vestibular Organs in Space Exploration was organized by Dr. Ashton Graybiel in 1965, and held at the US Naval Aerospace Medical Research Center in Pensacola. The next meeting was held at the NASA Ames Research Center, but returned to Pensacola for the next three. A committee from the next scientific generation (led by Black, Oman, Paloski, and Young) organized meetings in Portland (2002), Noordwijk/Netherlands (2006), and this meeting in Houston. The more recent meetings included poster sessions and panel discussions with flight surgeons and astronauts, but continues to focus on aerospace aspects of basic and applied vestibular/sensorimotor function. We have tried to maintain the international, collegial, and informal spirit which made the early meetings organized by Dr. Graybiel so interesting and enjoyable.

Proceedings from the Pensacola and Ames meetings were published by NASA (SPs –77, –115, –152, –187, and –314). PDFs of these early proceedings are available on request from the organizing committee. *Journal of Vestibular Research* has published abstracts (JVR 11:3–5, 2002) and selected papers (JVR 12:5–6, 2003) from the Sixth Symposium, and selected papers from the Seventh (JVR 17:5–6, 2007). Selected papers from the Eighth meeting will appear in a subsequent issue.

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Charles M. Oman, Ph.D.
Symposium Organizing Committee Chair