

Comment on:

“Review of ‘Pollution Caused by Fireworks’ by D. Gnauth White” by Monona Rossol, Issue 7, p 74.

In reference to the letter published in Issue 7, “Another Fog Study” by Monona Rossol, the data Ms. Rossol presented does not support her conclusion. The data indicates that something is happening during the performance to reduce the musicians’ lung function, but the data does not show that “clearly special effects are harming the musicians”. The summary of Dr. Moline’s report does not say what is doing this, it only notes the effect. The special effects could be doing this, or it could be something else.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform Journal readers of the existence of the ESTA Technical Standards Program (TSP). ESTA is the Entertainment Services and Technology Association, and the TSP is an ANSI accredited program consisting of the Technical Standards Committee and various Working Groups. A Fog and Smoke Working Group is currently drafting a standard for theatrical fog.

The TSP Fog and Smoke Working Group includes manufacturers, dealers, and users of fog and smoke effects. Anybody with an interest in fog and smoke is eligible to join the group; you do not have to be a member of ESTA.

For more information about ESTA’s Technical Standards Program, go to their web site at ‘<http://www.esta.org/>’, or contact the Technical Standards Manager at ESTA, 875 Fifth Ave., Suite 2302, New York, NY 10001, phone 212-244-1505, fax 212-244-1502, e-mail: standards@esta.org.

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[Ed. Due to an e-mail problem, this letter—originally written on July 13, 1998—was only recently received by the *Journal of Pyrotechnics*.]

Reply from Monona Rossol:

It is unrealistic of Mr. Kahn to assert that the “special effects could be doing this, or it could be something else.” There is no other rational explanation of the reduction of lung function seen in all the musicians plus documentation that seven people developed asthma requiring daily medication in an orchestra of 25 people in only three years of exposure. These kinds of problems have only been reported in shows that use special effects. And having spoken with many of these musicians, they assure me that the symptoms clearly start when the smoke enters the pit.

It is also important for readers to know more about ESTA than Mr. Kahn tells you. The voting members of ESTA are primarily special effects manufacturers and distributors and their paid consultants.

Unlike the other standard setting organizations to which I belong, ESTA requires voting members to attend meetings. The ESTA meetings are held all over the country and members must be able to afford to fly to meetings, stay in hotels and take two or three days off work several times a year. This policy effectively eliminates participation from members who do not have a large financial interest in continuing to make, sell, and or use special effects.

I am a voting member of many committees of the American Society of Testing and Materials, and two committees of the National Fire Protection Association. Attendance at meetings

of ASTM and NFPA is not required and members can keep up by reading the minutes and voting on proposals by mail. In fact, ASTM often pays the airfare for non-industry members in order to assure a balance of interests at committee meetings.

Whenever industry representatives refer to “standards”, we should ask who sets those standards.

Monona Rossol

