



New President for UKAPE

Dick Hegerty was elected unopposed as President at the September meeting of the Executive Committee. He took up office from outgoing President Ken Paterson at the end of the Biennial Delegate Conference, to lead UKAPE forward for the next two years. As an active member of the Executive Committee and Conference Committee for many years, and currently a member of the Engineering Profession Working Party and the Membership and Communications Committee, he is well

placed to take over the helm of UKAPE. With his previous experience as President, the future of UKAPE is clearly in safe hands.

Dick has indicated that his priorities are to secure sustained growth for UKAPE, to further raise its profile, and to implement Conference decisions in an effective and timely way.

Conference Targets Major Issues

This issue of Engineer Today reports on the September 2002 Biennial Delegate Conference in detail, including summaries of the contributions from all the invited speakers. All photographs in this issue were taken at Conference by Graham Sturdy. A separate insert lists all the resolutions carried by Conference in numerical sequence.

Training Seminar March 2003

Can you spare a couple of days to learn how you can improve your position at work, and at the same time help UKAPE grow and build the Association for the future?

As a follow up from the successful Conference Resolutions on recruitment and previous successful organising seminars, now is the time to spring into action and attend the next UKAPE recruiting seminar from 24th-26th March 2003 at Esher Place.

This is the first call for participants – places will be limited and allocated on a first come first served basis, with preference given to working members. Please put these dates in your new 2003 diaries and register your interest now by contacting John Kearney or John Morgan-Evans at Hayes Court ASAP, or send in the enclosed form.

Executive Committee Nominations

Included with this edition of Engineer Today is a Nomination Form for Centre Representatives for election to membership of the Executive Committee for half of the seats, following the usual cycle of Centre elections. These are important offices and not unduly onerous, and all members who wish to influence the direction of UKAPE should consider putting their names forward. The Executive meets quarterly on Saturdays at Esher Place, and participation is an excellent way of keeping up with the issues of the day and staying in touch with the active membership of the Association.

For more information, or an informal discussion about the working of the Executive, please call Dick Hegerty or Ken Paterson. It is important that these posts are filled by members who have fresh ideas to help regenerate UKAPE, and enthusiasm counts for just as much as experience.

Members willing to serve should make arrangements to have their completed nomination form, including two supporting signatures, returned to Hayes Court by the due date of 21st January 2003.

John Kearney's True Stories

MEMBER REINSTATED

UKAPE has succeeded in winning back a member's job after he was dismissed for having Work-Related Upper Limb Disorder (WRULD), more commonly referred to as Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI).



The member is employed by a very large company in the defence industry and had been working regularly on display screen equipment as part of his role – sometimes working long hours. He had experienced swelling in the hand a year ago which developed into daily pain. After being signed off from work he was given physiotherapy and acupuncture. He also paid for a chiropractor for the neck strain he had started to suffer from. His personnel manager persuaded him to return to work on reduced hours and he was referred to a consultant through his employer's health insurer.

The member requested the provision of an ergonomic keyboard and voice-activated software to alleviate his discomfort in performing his duties. These were refused. After a month his doctor signed him off again. The company's insurers engaged a medical rehabilitation company to assist and the possibility of redeployment was discussed.

The rehabilitation company arranged an ergonomic assessment of the member's workstation but this was cancelled by his boss who called the member to a meeting with the personnel manager. Assuming that this was for a review of his options, our colleague was surprised to be told bluntly that the company could not continue to employ him and he was dismissed. He called upon UKAPE and we represented him at an appeal hearing. We were able to show that an ergonomic workstation assessment had not been conducted when the member started his job eight years ago, or since then, as is required by Law under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (DSE Regulations). These Regulations were introduced under the HSW Act 1974 to enable the UK to comply with the requirements of European Directive 90/270/EEC. In addition, our enquiries within the company could not identify anyone in the building, full of hundreds of employees using display screens, who had ever had an ergonomic workstation assessment.

We also further pointed out that the company was almost certainly in breach of the Disability Discrimination Act in not having taken all reasonable steps to make adjustment in the workplace to enable our colleague to continue at work. The hearing was adjourned for a week after which the company offered to reinstate the member with back pay and re-deploy him in duties with minimal display screen involvement. They also said that they had ordered a Maltron ergonomic keyboard and arranged for the rehabilitation company to assess voice-activated software in conjunction with the member.

If you have any concerns arising from issues raised by our colleague's experience, please contact your local Regional Officer of the union. (useful web-sites: www.rsi-uk.org.uk; www.maltron.com).



Engineering Profession Working Party (EPWP) Meets the ETB

Emergency Resolution D, carried overwhelmingly at Biennial Delegate Conference, noted our alarm at the proposals by the Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) to permit employers to award qualifications. After our Resolution was publicised in *New Civil Engineer* (NCE), Alan Clark, the Chief Executive of the ETB, used NCE as a vehicle to challenge us publicly meet him to discuss our concerns. As the Resolution had been allocated for action by the EPWP, a high powered UKAPE delegation consisting of Dick Hegerty, Ken Paterson, Ian Hay, Syd Croft and John Kearney visited the ETB and participated in an extensive discussion.

We described our concerns that uncontrolled award of qualifications by employers would be a conflict of interest, and we were given assurances that the proposals would not go beyond existing practices, whereby some employers have training agreements for their staff which are monitored by institutions, and that there was no intent to water down existing standards for engineering qualifications.

The ETB indicated that the award of qualifications would be underpinned with rigour, that it would continue to reside with the institutions, and that existing checks and balances, including monitoring by the Engineering Council (UK), would apply to new arrangements.

Alan Clark stated that the strategy for the ETB anticipated that the proportion of ETB income received directly from individual registrants would reduce due to increasing contributions from business, industry and government, although he expected that the actual amount of income from 'registrants' would increase, as a consequence of increasing numbers of engineers, technologists and scientists registering with the ETB.

Notwithstanding the strategy, we voiced our concerns that registration fees should not be used to develop new qualifications which could not benefit existing registered engineers, and we called upon the ETB to ensure funds were provided from business, industry and all relevant government departments to support new initiatives which involved qualifications in areas outside the present registration zones.

We described our view that the profession no longer has a sufficiently democratic organisation, such that grass roots registered engineers now feel deeply disenfranchised, and that the ETB should address this aspect of the profession. We also noted UKAPE's belief, enshrined in our policy, that licensing and statutory registration are essential steps to take if long term futures for professional engineers, and the engineering profession, are to be secured. Alan Clark stated that he saw a potential for licensing to be extended in areas affecting health and safety.

In particular, we indicated that the ETB should be ensuring that professional engineers and technologists are paid properly for the responsibilities which they carry, and for the high level of training and abilities which they provide. A selection of the press coverage of these discussions can be reviewed on the UKAPE website.

UKAPE Biennial Delegate Conference 28-29 September 2002

Opening of Conference



Ian Tonks

Conference was formally opened by Ian Tonks, amicus-AEEU Regional Secretary for Region 4 (West Midlands), who welcomed UKAPE's Conference to Newcastle-under-Lyme and sketched a picture of his Region, which covers several counties and some 70,000 union members. He believed that amalgamation would be the way forward for the union, adopting best practice wherever it was found. He observed that the union has to "sell the product" to achieve growth. He also encouraged Conference to finish early on Saturday afternoon and go along to support local football team Port Vale, claiming that this would double the likely attendance!

President Reports an Active Tour of Duty

UKAPE President Ken Paterson, Chairman of Conference, presented the Executive Committee (EC) Report to Conference on behalf of the EC. He emphasised how his regional visits had clearly demonstrated the essential need for UKAPE in providing support and representation to its members, and noted that reports of a continuous stream of individual cases are received at every EC meeting. The Association had continued to be a busy place during his term of office, with extensive effort throughout all areas, in both internal and external affairs, including a revitalised advertising and publicity campaign.

He thanked all those who had given such good service to UKAPE in the period, including all staff, EC members, Conference Committee members and all active members throughout the country.



Ken Paterson



Michael Murdoch

Michael Murdoch Sets the National Scene

In his address to Conference, Michael, National Secretary of the Federation of Professional Associations (FPA), noted that the union needed to work at being relevant and effective to attract new members, and observed that unions were the only means of matching the power of employers. Unions offered protection at work and individual representation.

He reported that the FPA had maintained its growth, with a successful formula for delivering solutions which matched the wishes and aspirations of members. This included a trend towards industry integration. He added that the proposed merger with MSF had the support of the membership of both unions and the prize was there for the taking.

Michael emphasised the fundamental importance of recruiting, and that there was now the extra benefit of new legislation to improve rights of representation, while also highlighting the need for genuine partnership between employers and unions, which should not be a sham.

Workshops Create Fresh Thinking

Conference divided into two groups for workshops to inform conference on recruiting and union structure. These were ably facilitated by Gerry Hanna, Head of amicus-AEEU organisation, and John Morgan-Evans, FPA Development Officer, respectively.

In the subsequent plenary sessions, useful reports back from the workshop sessions were provided by, Bob Douglas, Peter Everitt, Dick Hegerty and Keith Robinson.

Recruiting Opportunities Identified



Gerry Hanna

Marketing of UKAPE was the predominant feature of this workshop. Important aspects for effective recruiting were considered to include: the need for career development, a good communications network, a redundancy advice resource, and many other features. Gerry noted the four primary reasons for joining a union. For the majority of UKAPE members and potential members, they are likely to be, in order of importance: legal advice and support;

representation at work; terms and conditions; and health and safety information, education and assistance. The many extra benefits and services available, including a comprehensive array of insurance services, are also identified as an additional incentive for prospective members.

Structure for the 21st Century Outlined

In his introductory presentation, John Morgan-Evans described how market research had shown that the UKAPE was well aligned with the aspirations and priorities of professionals. The four main elements desired by professionals were a sense of professional responsibility; conditions at work which afford respect, rewards and resources; a desire for entry standards and quality for their profession; and an interest in vocational and personal development provided by the professional association.



J Morgan-Evans

John noted that enhancement of the website should bring significant benefits, and that a general overhaul to modernise the branding of the Association provided value. He highlighted three critical aspects for UKAPE to succeed, viz. good representation; addressing professional concerns; and communication with members and non-members.

Pensions Problems Presented

Julian Richards, amicus-AEEU Head of Pensions, returned to update Conference on the features of final salary and money purchase schemes. He noted that although there shouldn't be a difference, there was. The involvement of the employer in supporting company final salary schemes was fundamental. In very general terms, for money purchase schemes a contribution of 12-15% of salary over a members working life would allow them to purchase a half salary pension. When closing final salary schemes employers were saving money but not passing that saving on to employees in terms of appropriate contributions to new arrangements, and some employers had been unable to pay for their pension arrangements and gone bust. Much of this has occurred because of poor market returns for pension schemes.

Whilst the minimum funding requirement has afforded some protection to members it has not been sufficient to ensure that, when final salary schemes are wound up, members purchasing an annuity have sufficient funds to purchase the level of benefits they had been expecting. Typically, in such a situation, pensioners get some 50-60% of what they expected. He reported that at present, the lower quintile for final salary scheme pensions is about £100 per week, with the upper quintile at about £400 per week.

Additional driving forces in recent times have been the removal of advance corporation tax, such that now pension schemes don't get £5bn per annum that they used to get, and the lack of any experience in the last twenty years of pension's deficits. He considered that the FRS17 arrangements were ill thought through.



Julian Richards

He emphasised that the first solution should NOT be to just close down final salary pension schemes since, in many cases, doing so could be more expensive than protecting the fund. Retaining their pension fund would give a company a competitive advantage in the current climate of skills shortages.

In an excellently-fielded question and answer session, Julian observed that pension scheme mergers were not always necessarily a bad thing; pensions should be cost neutral, i.e. surpluses and deficits should balance; and there were now open market options for annuities, with an advice service from the union.

The clear message was that if the company starts to consider closing its pension schemes, then contact the union for help and advice.

Round-up of Conference Resolutions

Planning for the Future – Structure Enhanced

The rule changes agreed at Conference, which principally add an Executive Officers Committee and a Membership and Communications Committee to the Bye-laws, will result in a reissue of the Bye-laws of the Association in the new year, available to members on request. The Executive Officers Committee formalises existing custom and practice, to aid the smooth running and management of the Association. The Membership & Communications Committee provides a robust mechanism for ensuring the survival and growth of the Association.

Additional members for this Committee are now being sought.

If you can contribute to the development of the Association, please contact Dick Hegerty or Ken Paterson. Both full participating attendees and corresponding members are equally welcome.



Conference Group (BDC 2002)

Manufacturing

The West Midlands presentation to motion 7, addressed with feeling by their delegation following severe manufacturing decline in the area, was fully supported by Conference and is to be progressed with government as well as several other resolutions.

Rail Safety

Resolution 8 and Emergency Resolution B, on rail safety and membership of network rail, were both fully supported by Conference.

Pensions

The pensions debate was as lively as ever, and most of the motions on this subject were supported and carried. However, a proposal for an increase in retirement age to seventy was heavily defeated.

Democracy & Standards in the Engineering Profession

Conference noted the demise of the Engineering Council, and fully supported resolutions calling for a more democratic governing body, for implementation of a statutory authority as proposed by Sir Monty Finniston before the establishment of the Engineering Council, and condemned the ETB proposals to permit employers to award qualifications.

Engineering Ethics

Following on from the public lecture earlier this year by Professor John Uff QC (fully reported in Engineer Today Q2 2002), Conference carried overwhelmingly a resolution calling upon the institutions to ensure they set, monitor and enforce continuing competence and standards and codes of conduct.

The pensions debate was as lively as ever, and most of the motions on this subject were supported and carried

Names and Faces

Stop Press – Death of Charles Hickling

Very sad news has been received that Charles Hickling died aged 69 on 2nd December 2002. He had been in hospital for major treatment earlier in the year, and improved sufficiently to participate fully as Conference Committee Chairman at BDC. UKAPE sends its deepest sympathies to his wife Val and family. A memorial service will be held on Friday 3rd January 2003 at 2pm at St Leonards Church, Chesham Bois, Amersham, Bucks. Please advise Brian West on 01420 562300 if you plan to attend. Donations should be made to McMillan Cancer Relief or RNLI, in lieu of flowers.



We will miss his huge contribution to UKAPE over many years, as Assistant National Secretary, National Secretary and Conference Committee Chairman. A more extensive tribute will be included in the next issue. If you have some memories of Charles to record in Engineer Today, please forward details to Dick Hegerty.

UKAPE Website Upgraded

The UKAPE website at www.ukape.org.uk has been completely rebuilt and much enhanced during the last couple of months. Further expansion is planned, which will provide significantly extended facilities for members. News items involving UKAPE are now reported onto the website as well as in this newsletter. Application forms and direct debit mandate forms are now available for downloading, together with a selection of recent case studies. Copies of all recent Engineer Today newsletters are also included for quick reference, in 'pdf' format, which can also be printed out as and when required.

New Recruiting Literature

UKAPE has entered the technological spirit of the 21st century with a strong show of upgrading and development. As well as the complete website rebuild at www.ukape.org.uk, new recruiting literature has been developed, which effectively indicates the range of benefits of UKAPE membership and its potential value to members and is now available from Hayes Court.

Individual Representation Enhanced

Recent legislation which enhances individual representation (see also Engineer Today Q2 2001) now gives that important element of UKAPE's services even greater value to members.

Student Campaign

The campaign to inform students and to encourage them to join UKAPE continues with a focus at present on universities in the South East. If you have good links with any universities in your area, particularly if they are in the South East, please contact John Morgan-Evans at Hayes Court.

Local Government – Cause for Concern

UKAPE has been receiving alarming reports that there are latent potential problems with the new executive powers given to local councils in the Local Government Act 2000. Unqualified council members in the council 'Cabinet' can now overrule the technical advice and decisions of professional staff, which can lead to a conflict of interest for councillors who may, knowingly or not, take decisions to reduce costs, which may have safety implications.

If you are aware of any incidents which could have compromised safety due to decisions being removed from professional staff and being taken by councillors, please advise UKAPE in the strictest confidence.

2003 Contribution Rates

New subscription rates have been set, with increases of about 3%, to reflect an increase from the union and the level of services and benefits offered to members. Rates for 2003 are: annual £129.00 monthly £11.85

Professional Indemnity Cover for Employees

Firstly, thanks to all survey participants who responded to our request for a declaration of interest in individual professional indemnity cover. We have found insufficient demand to progress a scheme specifically for self-employed UKAPE members at present. However, at the September Executive Committee meeting, it was considered that many employed members might be relying on their employer's Professional Indemnity cover, and thus now wish to draw employed members attention to the possibility that their employer cover may not be all that might be anticipated. Employed members are urged to check the PI cover provided for them by their employer, to ensure the adequacy of such arrangements.

Wanted: Charity Needs Electrical Generating Set

Charity in Essex needs a second hand 25KVA 3 phase diesel or petrol generator, suitable for marine use, and is prepared to pay a realistic price. Collection could be arranged from the London / Home Counties / East Anglia area. Contact Dick Hegerty in the first instance on 01621 860380.

Quarternights

Inserted with this issue is a listing of all quarternights for next year. Please check with Hayes Court if you are unsure which Centre to attend.

South East Centre – New Quarternight Venue

Since the closure of Cudham earlier this year, South Eastern Centre has transferred its meeting venue to: the 'Rose and Crown' PH, Green Street Green, Orpington, Kent.

Copy Deadlines 2003

Copy dates for articles, letters and contributions for future issues of Engineer Today for 2003 are:

Issue Date:	March	June	September	December
Copy Date:	1st February	1st May	1st August	1st November

UKAPE Contacts

If you have a home e-mail address where we can contact you, please e-mail the details to either Dick Hegerty or John Kearney. Updated information is also posted on the UKAPE website at: www.ukape.org.uk

Dick Hegerty (President) Dingwall, Beckingham Street, Tolleshunt Major, Essex CM9 8LJ tel 01621 860380 e-mail: Richard.Hegerty@care4free.net

Ken Paterson (Vice-President) 11 Magnolia Court, 39 Grange Road, Sutton, Surrey, SM2 6SY tel 020 8643 2906 fax 020 8770 3986 e-mail: KPaterson@summitbg.freemove.co.uk

Bob Simpson (amicus-AEEU Executive Councillor and VP) Sarum Cottage, Park Farm, Chiddingfold, Lewes, Sussex, BN8 6HH tel 01825 872373 mob 07710 770714 e-mail: bob.simpson@ukape.org.uk

UKAPE, Hayes Court, West Common Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7AU tel 020 8462 7755 fax 020 8315 8234

John Kearney (x 394) e-mail: j.kearney@headoffice.aeeu.org.uk

Michele Smith (x394) e-mail: m.smith@headoffice.aeeu.org.uk

John Morgan-Evans (x353) e-mail: j.morgan-evans@headoffice.aeeu.org.uk

Graham Briggs (x 399) e-mail: g.briggs@headoffice.aeeu.org.uk