

Editorial

During the course of the special meeting in London on 9 June this year, President Peter Everitt asked for somebody to come forward to act as editor for the 'Engineer Today'. I decided this is something I could do. It is now with a degree of trepidation that I approach the first issue under my editorship.

This small magazine was originally the brain child of our former friend and colleague Ken Paterson and I will do my best to remain faithful to the high standards he maintained.

"Is the ETB at all relevant to the majority of Engineers?"

In this issue there are a number of matters covered which are of interest to the Professional Engineer, possibly the most controversial being the disbanding of the Registrants' Panel of the Engineering & Technology Board. Registrant representation is something that Ken Paterson was passionate about and something that UKAPE has

consistently supported. It would appear that this has now been removed with very little reaction from the profession at large. We should remember that the bulk of the £5.5 million funding for the ETB and the Engineering Council UK comes from the fees paid by the registrants who now have no representation on the bodies concerned and thus no say in how the money is spent. Syd Croft, our erstwhile representative on the ETB Registrants Panel gives his comments on this debacle. Nevertheless, given the fact that fewer than 3% of registered Engineers bothered to vote in the election for Registrant Representatives, the obvious question is simply, "Is the ETB at all relevant to the majority of Engineers?" It would seem that the answer is a resounding NO! What are your views on this issue?

Bob Douglas represented UKAPE at the recent UNITE (AMICUS Section) conference and gives some revealing impressions.

I will be including in future editions a number of other articles on legal topics which I hope will be of interest to our membership. Again your view would be welcome. Should this be a regular feature?

Finally can I remind you that this is a magazine for all UKAPE members and your letters, suggestions and other contributions would be most welcome. Both my email and postal addresses are given on the back page and I look forward to receiving thousands of letters for inclusion in the December edition. The deadline for your comments for the December edition is 30 November.



John Kearney

It is with great sadness that we have to report the untimely death on 28 September of our former National Secretary John Kearney. John became National Secretary in 1996 and remained in post until he took early retirement following the merger with

MSF in 2004. John worked tirelessly for UKAPE and achieved numerous successes for our members in disputes with their employers. John will be sadly missed by all his friends and former colleagues and we extend our sympathy to his wife and family at this time. We hope to include a full appreciation of John and his work for UKAPE in the next edition.

John's funeral was held on 5 October at West Herts. Crematorium. The family indicate that friends and colleagues may wish to make a donation to St Francis' Hospice in John's memory. If members wish to contribute, cheques should be sent to: J Worley (Funeral Directors), Hawkrigde House, 48 Lawn Lane, Hemel Hempstead, HP3 9HL, stating that it is for the collection on John's behalf.

Employers retire on age

Based directly on the experience of their members, the Employers Forum on Age (EFA) has now produced a document called "The End of the Line for Retirement Ages."

Whilst admitting that it was a mistake to argue for a mandatory retirement age at 65, the EFA accepts that it was the "deal maker for many employers in the negotiations over Age Regulations when they were introduced in October 2006."

Instead, the EFA says it was wrong to impose a retirement age and to force people out of work irrespective of their ability. "Alongside the root and branch review of all other employment policies required prior to the introduction of age laws, employers should have addressed the fundamental question of fixed retirement ages in the light of changing social and economic forces. After all how can you say you don't discriminate on age if you maintain the right to force people to leave just because they are 65?"

Welcome news to many UKAPE members I'm sure (Ed).

To download a copy of the report, go to:
[http://www.efa.org.uk/policy/downloads/EFA Business case for removing retirement ages.pdf](http://www.efa.org.uk/policy/downloads/EFA_Business_case_for_removing_retirement_ages.pdf)

The President Writes

In this issue of Engineer Today I would like to expand on two topics which were discussed at the 9 June meeting, and were highlighted as concerns by several members who were not able to be present at that meeting.

Relations with the Parent Union

Several members have expressed concerns over being represented by an organisation where the majority of the membership has a different perspective on life from the average Professional Engineer.

Most unions today recognise the benefits of size which increases their influence with governments and globally based employers. They also recognise that to get the size they want they must embrace diversity in their membership and provide support which can be tailored to the needs of each individual group. Most EC members have heard the current Amicus General Secretary, Derek Simpson, speak on a number of occasions in a variety of situations and he has always made a specific point that he does NOT see Amicus as providing a 'one size fits all' service.

Another important point which has been recognised is that the traditional membership areas are shrinking in the developed economies and that the growth areas for employment are in the professional and managerial/organisational areas. A union which doesn't find ways to effectively recruit and represent these people is fishing in a shrinking pool and will get smaller and smaller until it dies.

The main predecessors of Amicus (EETPU and AEU) represented a range of skill types and levels and had a record of allowing a large amount of autonomy to the different groups. In the time since UKAPE transferred engagements to EETPU it has never been inhibited in what it has tried to do by its parent union. Amicus currently has four autonomous industrial sectors for Professional/Managerial members, the Federation of Professional Associations (of which UKAPE is a member), the Communication Managers Association, the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors Association and

finance staff in UNIFI; these give a total M&P membership approaching 100,000. The conclusion is that there is a very significant professional presence in Amicus and one of the objectives of the UKAPE EC is to structure the new union (Unite) so that all these members can work together on the 'Professional Dimension' where they have common interests. In the end the amount of influence we can wield comes down to numbers and if we can co-ordinate all the M&P members in Amicus we will ensure that we are not wagged by the remains of the T&G tail.

The Professional Dimension

All UKAPE activists feel frustrated with the Engineering Institutions and this is an area where much effort has been expended from the beginning of UKAPE's existence. These Institutions have proved to be powerfully rooted in the Establishment, and appear conservative in many aspects affecting individual Engineers. In particular they have not supported moves to control the right to practice or to generate a co-ordinated public image which is really representative of practicing Professional Engineers. The Institutions have also been very good at giving the impression that they represent engineers in all aspects and are very coy about admitting that their charters prevent most of them from doing what UKAPE does – representing an engineer in his relationship with his employer.

It is interesting to look back and see how little effect even the Finnieston Commission has had on the way the Institutions operate. It seems to me that all of the Finnieston recommendations have been either ignored or negated. Two of the main Finnieston recommendations were to move towards statutory registration of the right to practice (as Doctors, Pharmacists, Lawyers etc) and directly elected representation on the top governing body for the Profession. The latest changes which the Institutions have 'engineered' remove the last vestiges of directly elected democracy in the Engineering Profession's umbrella organisation (ECUK and ETB) and are covered elsewhere in this issue. UKAPE will continue to lobby in support of moves towards better control and recognition of the title 'Engineer' and the re-introduction of directly elected members on the ECUK and ETB.

ETB registrants panel dismissed

The Engineering and Technology Board agreed changes to its Articles of Association at the AGM on 11th July 2007 to increase representation on the Board by some of the larger engineering organisations.

Six new trustee positions have been created. The Institution of Mechanical Engineers, the Institution of Civil Engineers and the Institution of Engineering and Technology will each nominate a council representative to the ETB Board. The other 32 engineering institutions will elect a further two board members and there will also be a seat for the Royal Academy of Engineering.

Membership of the 17-strong ETB Board stays the same and four trustees from the Registrant's Panel and two independent trustee positions have been removed to make way for the

above changes. The Registrants' Panel (also known as College A), comprising 24 individual members who were appointed through independently run elections, has been disbanded.

Syd Croft, Northern Centre Representative on UKAPE's Executive Committee, was a member of the Registrants' Panel and the first he knew of the changes was in a letter from the ETB Chairman on 13th July 2007 notifying him that he was no longer a member of College A or the ETB. (The letter is reproduced on the UKAPE Website.)

The Executive Committee is deeply concerned not only at Syd's summary dismissal but also at the cavalier manner in which the last remaining democratic voice of the engineering profession has been eliminated without full and open consultation with registrants. We are also sympathetic to concerns expressed by some of the smaller engineering institutions that they too have been disenfranchised by the changes.

Ian Hay

"None of our Sectors are to be wiped out"

UNITE the UNION – AMICUS section conference

Once again UKAPE's veteran conference goer Vice President Bob Douglas braved the terrors of Blackpool to attend the main union conference as part of the FPA delegation pictured above. (Bob is in the back row on the far left.)

A number of predictable motions were discussed and there were speeches from Gordon Brown, Tony Woodley and Derek Simpson.

Significantly Derek Simpson is reported as saying, "None of our Sectors are to be wiped out – though there may be some tweaking."

This was greeted as good news as the FPA is a Sector within the Union.

BUT

Following the FPA National Meeting on 2 October Bob Douglas reports:

The Federation of Professional Associations (FPA) is an umbrella body for managerial and professional (M&P) staff within Amicus, to which UKAPE belongs.

For elections to the new National Executive Council of Unite the Union (Amicus Section) the various groups within the FPA have been allocated to the Sectors that the existing NEC considers to be the most appropriate.

UKAPE and EESA have been grouped with the ENERGY Sector. People in this sector are mainly/exclusively power station workers. There has been no logical explanation as to why this was done other than to reduce the number of NEC members to 40. Neither UKAPE nor any other of the constituents of the FPA had any choice as to where they were allocated.

Nominations will be sought for candidates for election to the NEC posts sometime in the future.

The FPA has not been abolished but its influence will almost certainly be reduced by having no NEC member.

There will be regional FPA meetings preparatory for an FPA Conference in Brighton next June.

As the merger of Amicus and T&G is still evolving, the future organisation of the M&P staff within the merged union is not known at the moment.

Ed: Is this another instance of Professional Engineers losing their voice?

A full report of the conference is available on the Amicus website. www.amicustheunion.org and follow the links to Decisions of the Unite NEC where you will find 70 pages of information.



Syd Croft writes:

I wonder how many other mere mortals, sorry, Registrants like myself, were horrified to learn of the disbandment of our democratically elected panel.

Anybody who takes the time to think about the implications will realise that there is something sadly wrong with ETB's reconstitution. Since we, the Registrants, contribute significantly to the ETB's funding and now have no directly elected people to represent us, the situation is very similar to the principle of 'no taxation without representation' that caused so much trouble on the other side of the Atlantic in the second half of the eighteenth century.

One question worth asking is who attended the AGM where the decision was taken to eradicate the Registrants'? Were they democratically elected? Frankly, their action

smacks of dictatorship, and shouldn't happen in this day and age. I would be interested to learn the European Court of Human Rights views on the subject

It is important that the voice of 'ordinary' Engineers should not be lost from the Board. It would however be interesting to learn the ETB's definition of an 'ordinary' Engineer, and compare it with the backgrounds of the people who are replacing those who were on the Registrants' Panel. For example, I think it is stretching credibility a little too far to class the Chief Executive of the IMech E as an 'ordinary' Engineer.

[Ed: What do you think? Is the ETB relevant to the 'ordinary Engineer'? Should we care that the last vestiges of democracy in engineering have been eroded? What, if anything, should we do about it? Your letters and emails will be most welcome.

– though there may be some tweaking."

Holiday entitlement

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform has created a handy table on their website to help work out the increased holiday entitlement to which workers are entitled from 1 October 2007.

It explains that the statutory entitlement for a member of staff will depend on when their leave year begins. To work out the entitlement, workers should read across the table from the start date of the leave year.

For example, a member of staff whose leave year begins on 1 April will have a holiday entitlement of:

4.4 weeks in the leave year April 2007-March 2008

4.8 weeks in the leave year April 2008-March 2009

5.6 weeks in the leave year April 2009-March 2010 and onwards.

To work out the number of days they are entitled to, multiply the number of weeks given by the number of days usually worked (eg 4.2 weeks x 5 days = 21 days, 4.2 weeks x 4 days = 16.8 days etc).

To use the calculator, go to:

www.berr.gov.uk/employment/holidays/page40455.html

National minimum wage

From 1 October 2007 the National Minimum Wage will change as follows:

Adult Rate	– Age 22 and over	£5.52
Youth Rate	– Age 18 – 21 years inclusive	£4.60
	– Age 16 & 17 years	£3.40

Notice of UKAPE Biennial Delegate Conference 2008

The UKAPE 2008 Biennial Delegate Conference will take place from **11.00 am Saturday 24th May to midday Sunday 25th May, 2008**, venue Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London.

Important dates leading up to Conference are as follows:

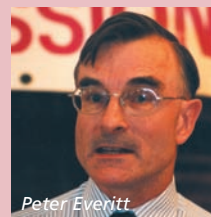
- (a) **Original motions** to be received at UKAPE Head Office by **first post 22nd February, 2008**, but preferably earlier. Also preferred date for notification of delegates to Head Office.
- (b) Compositing proposals to originators by 24th February.
- (c) Compositing proposals to be cleared with originators by 29th February.
- (d) **Preliminary Order Papers** to reach EC members and Centre Secretaries by **14th March**.
- (e) **Amendments** to original motions to be received at UKAPE Head office by **first post 4th April**. Also **deadline date** for notification of **delegates** to Head Office.
- (f) Any further compositing proposals to originators by 11th April.
- (g) Further compositing proposals to be cleared with originators by 18th April.
- (h) Final Order Paper, Agenda and all associated papers to be circulated to delegates and others attending Conference by 2nd May.

Please note that **motions** for the 2008 UKAPE Conference need to be considered at the December 2007 **Quarter Night Meeting**.

UKAPE Contacts

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

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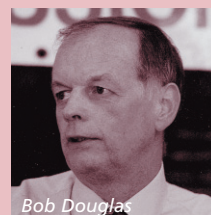
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An Engineer or not an Engineer

There are currently two petitions on the 10 Downing Street website concerning the status of UK engineers and both call for the title 'Engineer' to become protected in law as is the case with the term 'Architect' for example.

Whilst this is something for which UKAPE has campaigned for many years, realistically it is unlikely to gain ground. As is well known, in the English-speaking world the term 'engineer' has come to mean anybody who works within the engineering field, particularly in the areas of manufacture or maintenance, and in the US it also means the driver of a locomotive.

In France, as I have discovered, the term *ingénieur* is used to mean a Professional Engineer, a tradesman is known as *un technicien* and the repair man is *un dépanneur*. It would seem that to follow this terminology in the UK would probably be as pointless as making Engineer a preserved title, because what we do have in the UK are three protected qualifications: Chartered Engineer, Incorporated Engineer and Engineering Technician.

Perhaps we should now campaign to encourage all qualified Engineers and Technicians to register with the Engineering Council UK, and ensure that the titles CEng, IEng and Eng Tech are only used by those entitled to them, which should go a long way to guaranteeing that those outside the profession are aware of who is who and who does what, as they are here in France.

(As an aside, having completed a minor repair to my lawn mower I went back to the shop to thank the owner for his advice and general helpfulness, he shook my hand turned to my wife and sad "*Il est ingénieur, n'est ce pas?*" I left it at that.)

Ed: These comments were intended to be all I was going to say on this topic; however I subsequently received the following from EC Member Ian Hay.

The EC^{UK} Board agreed in December 2006 that there should be a review of the Incorporated Engineer (IEng) registration category. A working group was established to undertake this under the chairmanship of Professor David Anderson (who also chairs the ECUK's Registration Standards Committee).

The group has recently submitted its first report which contains the following principal recommendations:

- Consultation should take place with Licensed Members (professional engineering institutions) on repositioning IEng as part of a progressive registration structure;
- The title of the qualification should be changed. The working group suggests Registered Engineer as the favoured alternative, but recommends market research before a final decision is made;
- The exemplifying academic qualification should remain unchanged as a Bachelor's degree (non-honours).

UKAPE's Engineering Profession Working Party (EPWP) has been

considering these recommendations and would welcome further input from members to the Editor (see below).

IEng is perceived by many to be a less credible qualification than CEng. This seems to have been a significant factor in the continuing lack of success in promoting IEng. We have some concern that the latest recommendation to reposition IEng within a progressive registration structure may make things worse. IEng registration might come to be regarded as a stepping stone to CEng, thus reinforcing the impression that it is an inferior qualification.

Distinguishing between the roles of CEng and IEng has proved problematic at every stage of the progression from SARTOR 1 through to UK-SPEC. Many believe that the differences between the two categories of registrant have become somewhat blurred under UK-SPEC and the reduced emphasis on the practical element of IEng competence in UK-SPEC was a step in the wrong direction. We believe that IEng should be a respected qualification in its own right, recognising the importance of practical competence to complement academic ability.

The correct choice of a new name is very important. We acknowledge that the term IEng is generally unpopular and ought to be changed. However, we feel that the favoured title "Registered Engineer" would most likely increase confusion with the general public who would undoubtedly see this as a higher qualification than CEng. The fact that all professional engineers are registered with ECUK (the ETB website refers to registered Chartered Engineer, registered Incorporated Engineer etc.) could also lead to confusion. We firmly believe that any initiative which might ultimately undermine the status of CEng must be avoided.

The report acknowledges that the reason for opting for a non-honours degree as the exemplifying academic qualification for IEng was the expectation that the use of the qualification would receive encouragement in the Dearing Report. This did not happen and very few universities now appear to be offering courses suited to IEng. A recent search of the websites of several leading universities revealed only a single passing reference to an IEng course. Raising the standard to a non-honours degree appears to have had an adverse impact on applications for membership and it may be that an HNC/D is a more appropriate standard for IEng.

Ian Hay

Ed: Are you an Incorporated Engineer? What do you think?

Does the thought of being called something else appeal to you, if so, what?

(Comments are welcome from Chartered Engineers and Engineering Technicians as well!)