

## From the President's Office

The Special Delegate Conference in June was well attended and approved the proposed changes to our Bye-Laws; so the Executive Committee (EC) now has the task of turning these into a viable mechanism for an annual meeting of the UKAPE membership. The first thing we did was to appoint a sub committee to sort out the details. At first sight this looks like the typical response; but we already have a 'Conference Committee' to organise the Biennial Delegate Conference and they had organised the special meeting in June 2007 as well as the SDC, so they do know what they are doing. Also it is much easier to get things like this done in a group of 5 or 6 than when the whole 20 members of the Executive can put their 'ideas' in.

The intent of the Bye-Law change was to help in getting more members involved instead of being limited to those who attend local meetings. It became apparent from the discussions about how to organise the Annual Meeting that the structure of the Executive suffered from the same problem. All the EC members are elected by their

centre membership at a quarternight meeting. Any member who cannot easily get to his or her local quarternight cannot become a member of the EC; and many members are over 50 miles away from their 'local' meeting. This is something the EC will be examining before the first Annual Meeting which is planned for June 2010. We really do need some new faces on the Committee. Nothing much has changed since I joined the EC about 10 years ago and most of the other members have been there for at least twice as long as I have.

You may remember in the last issue I mentioned the inquiry into Engineering by the Innovation, Universities, Science & Skills Committee of the House of Commons. Their report had recommended the appointment of a Government Chief Engineering Advisor alongside the existing Scientific Advisor.



The Government rejected this on the grounds that it would "add an unnecessary layer of complexity and confusion". This is a typical response of all Governments who don't like complexity and want everything to be a simple 'yes' or 'no'. Unfortunately the world is not like that and there are no simple technical solutions to the current environmental and economic problems. The main problem perhaps is that those in Government don't want to accept that the situation is "complex and confusing" and are not prepared to face up to reality. The MP's Committee doesn't accept the Government's position on this and are continuing to push for a more positive response.

The current president of the Royal Academy of Engineering, Lord Browne (ex head of BP), is also campaigning for more engineering expertise to feed into Government initiatives and policy decisions.

UKAPE will be doing what it can to support both groups.

2009 is the fortieth anniversary of the founding of UKAPE. 12 May 1969 is the precise date it was registered, with the initial members being transferred from the Engineers Guild on 1 June.

Thirty-four of the founder members are still in membership; a tribute to UKAPE's capability for retaining members. We invited them to a presentation ceremony at the last EC meeting in August and this is reported in detail elsewhere in this issue. One of those who came to the presentation was Bryan Oliver who was the first President of UKAPE. Bryan was the first UKAPE person I met back in 1970 when I, and many of my colleagues, were searching for an appropriate trade union for professional engineers to join. Those were the days of closed shops and in some cases compulsory membership of the locally recognised union. So, but for Bryan, you would not have me as President; I will leave you to make up your own mind as to whether that is good or bad.

Peter Everitt, President

## Editorial

In this edition of Engineer Today we continue with our commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the association. UKAPE came into existence on 1 June 1969 and there are still 34 founder members within the fold, all of whom will receive a commemorative certificate. The EC met at Esher Place on 22 August and broke off from its deliberations so that President Peter Everitt could present three of these stalwarts with their certificates.

On the question of this anniversary, in the last edition we did ask for anything of interest regarding UKAPE's history: we are

sad to say we are still waiting. If anybody has any information, no matter how small or insignificant you think it is, we would be extremely grateful to hear your reminiscences.

President Peter Everitt continues the debate on the Parliamentary Inquiry and the implications of the changes resulting from the Special Delegate Conference. Both of these topics are continued by others elsewhere in this edition.

Finally, as ever I would remind you that this is your newsletter and we will publish almost anything that our readers would like to share with other members, so please keep the letters coming.

Bob Simpson, Editor

### The Parliamentary Inquiry and the Proposed Chief Engineer

In our last edition we reported on the above and included comments from one of our readers. Since then we have had further comments on the same subject. Jack Dinsdale writes as follows:

I read with some concern Tony Wheeler's diatribe in your June issue regarding the Government Chief Scientific Advisor's comments to the Select Committee.

While I agree wholeheartedly with Mr Wheeler's support for a Government Engineering Advisor (why not Chief Engineer?), I think he goes too far in asserting that there is no association whatever between engineering and science, particularly physics. I have always admired Theodore von Karman's definition last century that "Scientists investigate what exists, while engineers create what has never been."

Thus scientists discover previously unknown elements, celestial bodies, diseases, living organisms, etc, and come up with theories, while engineers design and manufacture structures, machines, materials, etc that never existed before.

My point is that, in order to design useful products, engineers have to make use of the mathematical and physical principles discovered by scientists. While there may exist scientists without any concept of engineering (perhaps Prof Beddington is one of them) I doubt if there are any competent engineers around who have no concept of the physical principles underlying their particular area of engineering. I have always described myself as an "engineer and physicist". At one time I was professor of mechatronics in Dundee University's department of Applied Physics and Electronic and Manufacturing Engineering. In this department engineers and physicists, both staff and students, learned and practised both disciplines and were well aware of the relationships between the two.

It is surely important to spell out these relationships, especially to young people, whose first formal experience of science and engineering at school will probably be via general science or physics and chemistry (most of the students on my engineering degree course at Cambridge, which I attended following a 2-year craft apprenticeship on the shop-floor, had qualified via A-level maths and physics). Many school pupils (we hope) will progress to successful careers in engineering, and I believe that schools should do more to explain to pupils how the scientific principles they learn at school are applied by engineers to the design and manufacture of new products.

I know of many scientists who have had to design and build their own experimental equipment because nothing suitable existed – in this sense they were acting as engineers. Likewise, many engineers, myself included, have had to break off a design/manufacturing project to investigate a relevant physical phenomenon before returning to the engineering – in this sense we were acting as scientists.

There are many opportunities for both scientists and engineers which are distinct and different in approach, but which are not mutually exclusive.

Jack Dinsdale

Peter Milne picks up on the status of Engineers rather than the appointment of a Government Advisor.

It was interesting to see Tony Wheeler's comments on the status of Engineering in the same edition as the article on Public Attitudes To and Perceptions Of Engineering.

It is only relatively recently that Engineers have been perceived as being sufficiently professional to be able to countersign passport applications. In fact, the "establishment" still does not understand Engineering. If we look at how Engineering achievements are reported in the media, we will often find ourselves described as Scientists. To take one example, the BBC News website (in the main) considers items to be within Technology if they relate to computing or the Internet and anything else falls within Science and Environment.

This has been a long standing issue, and the Government has been hampered in its understanding of the importance of Engineering by the dominance of Classics and Humanities graduates amongst the Civil Service. Until Engineering is properly recognised within Government we are unlikely to make progress in other areas such as statutory registration.

I suggest that UKAPE, and its individual members, takes every opportunity to comment when Engineering has not been properly recognised in some newspaper, radio or television report. In parallel, UKAPE should continue to lobby Government directly regarding the status of Engineering and Engineers within our society.

Peter Milne

Peter's view is of course something that UKAPE has been advocating for many years: perhaps the appointment of a Chief Engineering Advisor is something that is likely to assist in the change of public attitudes. What are your thoughts? Is this likely to improve our status or is it just another pie in the sky? As ever your views on this or any other topic are most welcome.

**Unions for All** – This new leaflet from the Northern TUC explains how trade unions work in the workplace and in the community and can be found at the following link: [http://www.tuc.org.uk/the\\_tuc/tuc-16893-f0.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/the_tuc/tuc-16893-f0.cfm)

#### Member Trustee News – summer 2009

A number of our members are pension fund trustees and may find the latest issue of Trustee News of interest. It includes:

- Annual Conference Report
- TUC Fund Manager Voting Survey results published
- Union Trustee honoured
- Responsible Investment Briefs
- New guidance on passing pensions risks to insurers
- Review of default retirement age brought forward
- Regulator to focus more on DC schemes
- US union challenges banks
- Board for Actuarial Standards consults on pension reform.

All this information can be found at the following link:

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/pensions/tuc-16894-f0.cfm>

Engineers have to make use of the mathematical and physical principles discovered by scientists

### UKAPE 40 YEARS ON

On 22 August three founder members of our association attended Esher Place to be presented with well earned commemorative certificates by our president Peter Everitt.



Seen here is Founder President of UKAPE Bryan Oliver receiving his commemorative certificate from our current President Peter Everitt.

Bryan has finally retired and lives in Majorca.

Founder member David Smith receives his commemorative certificate from President Peter Everitt with Bryan Oliver watching in the background.



David has worked in the building industry and is now happily retired but still remains active in UKAPE.

Pictured here is founder member Keith Armstrong, who not only became a member of UKAPE in 1969 but also has been (and still is) a member of the Executive Committee for many years.

Keith has worked in the aircraft industry for nearly all his working life and latterly has been lecturing to would-be aero-engineers for the past 18 years since "retiring."

Keith receives his commemorative certificate from President Peter Everitt.

### Ian Hay, EC Member for Metropolitan Centre

In an occasional series of articles, we invite members of the EC to tell us about themselves.

Here I reveal all about my friend and colleague Ian Hay, a robust and loyal member of the Executive Committee. (I will be expecting to hear from his solicitor in due course.)

Ian graduated with a degree in civil engineering from Edinburgh University in 1964. He has worked for consulting water engineers throughout his career, initially in Scotland with R H Cuthbertson and Partners and for the past thirty years with Rofe, Kennard and Lapworth (RKL) in Sutton. He has been involved in the promotion, design and construction of many major water supply schemes throughout the UK and overseas, notably Cyprus, the Middle East, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. He is now retired.

He is a Fellow of both ICE and the Chartered Institution of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM). He is a member of CIWEM's Cabinet and Council and Chairman of their Engineering Professional Board. He is a member of the Engineering Council (UK) International Advisory Panel.

A member of UKAPE for over thirty-five years, Ian has served on a number of committees and working parties. He led detailed negotiations with the partners of RKL which culminated in the firm granting formal recognition to UKAPE, one of only a handful of consulting firms to do so. He represents Metropolitan Centre on the Executive and is a member of the Engineering Profession Working Party (EPWP). For some years he was Chairman of the Consultancy Industry Committee. Against a background of apathy and occasional hostility, he encouraged recruitment in consulting engineering firms where most employees have no collective voice.

Ian believes passionately that we should be proud of being members of UKAPE and be prepared to actively promote an association that cares deeply about the welfare of professionals in engineering and seeks to safeguard their interests by providing individual support and collective representation at local, national and international level. He supports licensing of engineers and advocates the introduction of a universal code of ethics for all professionals in engineering in order to protect individuals and their institutions in an increasingly litigious society.

### Special Delegate Conference 2009

Following the report in the previous edition of Engineer Today on the Special Delegate Conference held in June this year, I am indebted to Peter Milne, the principal architect of the new Bye-Laws, who has sent me the following points of clarification.

- In the previous edition we said that, "Motions may be submitted to the AMM (Annual Members Meeting) but they are not binding on the EC (Executive Committee). The EC however will be obliged to report its actions or otherwise with its reasons at the subsequent AMM." Peter says that members now have more say in the running of the Association than before, because the new Bye-Laws include an ability to have a vote of no confidence in the EC. Previously there was no explicit means of forcing the EC to take any particular action.
- We previously stated, "Subject to EC approval members will be able to participate in the AMM by remote means, e.g. Internet." Peter has indicated that this is a slight error; in fact the remote participation of members is for the EC to propose and for an AMM to approve.
- The inclusion of motions being considered at EC meetings was a formalisation of an existing EC agenda item, to consider Members' Business and Centre Business items. This has been included so that it is no longer necessary to wait until the next general meeting before proposing a motion that UKAPE should be taking some action.

There will, of course, be a number of points that will need clarification as time goes by and these will only become apparent as the new arrangements are put to use. If, however, before next year, any hawk-eyed reader spots any particular howlers please feel free to contact the EC as covered in new Bye-Law 5.4.

Bob Simpson, Editor

### News in Brief

#### TUC 2009

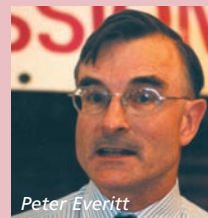
Finally, TUC 2009 is scheduled to take place in Liverpool during the third week of September. We will be represented and will report back in the next issue.

### 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](http://www.ukape.org.uk)

#### Peter Everitt, President

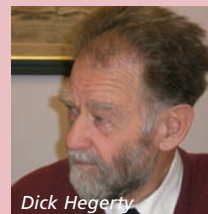
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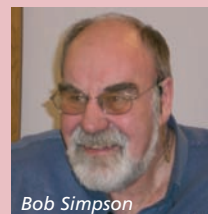
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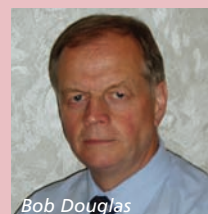
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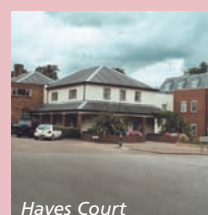
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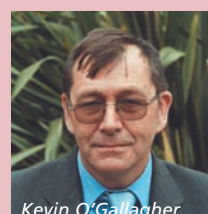
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