

Environmental Agency Consultation

UKAPE has been invited to comment on a consultation by the Environment Agency regarding fluid discharges to the ground. Two are being consulted on at the moment, one for discharges from landfill and the other for treated effluent from sewage treatment works. Both these discharges could cause pollution to groundwater that could be harmful, say, to the abstraction of drinking water. The level of this risk and the potential for harm needs to be considered. Guidance has been given in the past but with new regulations having been promulgated in recent years it was considered appropriate for a revision to be considered. UKAPE will be making comments on the consultations, as it believes it can usefully add to the discussion.

Ed: This exercise is being undertaken by Vice President Bob Douglas, but if any other member feels he or she can contribute to this please contact Michele Smith at Head Office as soon as you can. (It is always good to spread the load!)

Calling Notice

For the 2010 Annual Members Meeting

The UKAPE Annual Members Meeting (AMM) for 2010 will take place in the Tudor Room of the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London, on Saturday 12 June from 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm.

The meeting will consist of Executive Committee members and Officers, who may participate but will not have a vote. Each Centre may submit motions to amend the (new) Bye-Laws and send one representative who will have a vote. Any other full member may attend the AMM with a vote and submit motions for the Order Paper other than Bye-Law amendments.

Centre representatives and independent members intending to attend must provide notice of their intention, together with any motions for submission, to reach Head Office by 12 May 2010 at the latest. Centre representatives to include a note of which Centre they represent. The notice must be sent to UKAPE, Hayes Court, West Common Road, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7AU. Centre representatives and independent members attending may claim travelling expenses at standard 2nd class return rail fares plus £15.

Mike Gibson Conference Committee



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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The President asks

"Where to for Manufacturing?"

One of the 'benefits' of the role of President is that you get access to copies of several magazines which you have never seen before. Some of these are of limited value but the one from the Royal Academy of Engineering usually has several interesting articles.

The December issue included items on climate change with one covering some of the Geoengineering possibilities (e.g. Solar radiation management, Cloud albedo modification and Sunshades in space). This was particularly interesting as it appeared just after (but, I'm sure, not as a result of) what I wrote in the last issue.

It also contained a short article on a totally different subject by Sir Alan Rudge based on research commissioned by the ERA Foundation (www.erafoundation.org) on the "Sustainability of the UK Economy in an Era of Declining Productive Capability". Two significant conclusions were that financial and business services (prior to the credit crunch) comprised about a quarter of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and a quarter of exports; also manufacturing had shrunk to a seventh of GDP but was contributing half of exports. So manufacturing is almost four times as effective as financial services in supporting UK plc. The research also showed that the UK balance of trade was in balance in 1997; but by 2007 had reached an annual deficit of £60 billion. When I was a lad in the 1950s (back in the Dark Ages as my daughter would say) the Balance of Trade was a regular cause of concern and made national newspaper, radio and TV headlines. In those days we were concerned that the rest of the world should see that we were 'paying our way' in the world economy to avoid massive selling of UK assets and corresponding reduction in the value of the pound.

More recently the official wisdom seems to have been that as long as somebody is prepared to lend you what you need large deficits are fine. It seems that people have needed the recent financial turmoil to see that you can't produce real economic growth by financial wheezes



and by just making the same money move around faster and faster.

Government policy over recent decades has been that manufacturing is no longer an essential part of the UK economy and that services (mainly financial) will take over. Another example of politicians being on a different planet, and a bankrupt one at that?

What does all this do for professional engineers? Well it may be the start of a recognition that the modern world is built fundamentally on technology and engineering products and ideas, and that while financial services help this process they are not a substitute for it. When will we see any changes? My view can be summed up by "don't hold your breath"; these things take time. I have seen recently that the Engineering and Technology board has been repeating the claims that there will be a shortage of qualified engineers; perhaps this is associated with expecting the government to take manufacturing more seriously.

However I cannot believe that we are close to a shortage until engineers' salaries at least match those of GPs and lawyers; I am not aware of a major shortage in either of these professions. With salaries where they are today there is obviously no current shortage of engineers.

Peter Everitt President

This edition of Engineer Today marks the end of an old era and the beginning of a new one. This newsletter was originally started by former UKAPE President Ken Paterson during his term as president and has survived in its present form since then. Ken felt that the previous publication was unnecessarily expensive and with that became editor and chief correspondent as well as being president of the Association. When he set up these arrangements Ken gave the responsibility for its printing to Riccardo Marabese who since then has provided an excellent service. The UNITE head office has now obtained new printing machines, and for entirely financial reasons the UKAPE Executive has decided to change to the in-house arrangements. We therefore offer our thanks to Riccardo for his past contribution and welcome our new colleagues to the production team.

Early in February, the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem), published a report giving a gloomy assessment of the future of energy supplies in the UK. It appears that Ofgem expressed serious doubts that the current arrangements for the distribution of gas and electricity, which derive from the liberalisation put in place 20 years ago, would not be able to generate sufficient power for the country's needs by 2020. The result of this is that the major political parties will bray at one another, each blaming the other for not doing enough. The great British public will do nothing but moan and the Green lobby will object to every proposal to get us out of this mess when it is proposed, claiming that it will only hasten Armageddon. It seems that this issue is almost entirely a matter for Engineers. Electricity generation and distribution, gas production and distribution are all highly complicated engineering topics. Would this not be an ideal opportunity for the non-existent Government Engineering Adviser to flex his muscles? No doubt this will be left to the Politicians and the Government Scientific Adviser to solve. Let's all keep our fingers crossed.

We do however now have a Government Construction Industry Adviser who, as a Quantity Surveyor, we all recognise is ideally qualified to deal with this crisis.

In the last edition you may have noticed an interesting photomontage of your editor indicating that there was a need for a panel of experts to deal with the type of issues in which we as an association can make our presence felt. Vice President Bob Douglas has been dealing with such an issue, which he briefly describes. It would be helpful to have more names at our disposal to deal with this kind of enquiry and we would like to hear from you.

We would also welcome any other comments from our readership so please keep your letters coming in.

SNOW

We have heard a lot about snow over the past few months. We have seen the devastating effects a snowfall can bring to the public transport systems and thus to the economy, so perhaps it is time we engineers should bring our expertise to bear on this apparently insoluble problem.



The picture above shows your editor digging our car out following the latest offering, a mere 16 inches or thereabouts. When this was done we managed to complete our weekly shop, our neighbours having already done theirs, all the local children have been to school every day and almost everyone has been to work. The buses ran and the planes took off and landed. The reason for this is that the roads and runways are regularly cleared. We often hear that it is uneconomical to have snowploughs at the ready that will only be used once or twice a year, so perhaps we should follow the French example.



Take one heavy lorry, place two empty skips on the back for ballast, install a bulldozer blade on the front and a grit box on the back. Et voilà! An instant snowplough which for the remaining nine months of the year can revert to being a lorry. For minor roads, a local farmer's tractor is also turned into a snow plough in the same way. Complex costly engineering? I think not. No doubt there are very good reasons why this could not be replicated in the UK, at least a hundred of which relate to Health and Safety, not to mention the ridiculous and punitive Public Liability Insurance levels required by some Local Authorities and of course the damages arising from an accident resulting from the cleared roadway. When this is weighed against the estimated £6 million per day that a snowfall costs the UK economy maybe a little common sense



would not be amiss. Add to this the fact that 2 inches of snow managed to close Gatwick Airport for a day in January, the only thing the UK seems to be able to do successfully is to become a laughing stock.

Government Chief Construction Adviser

It was recently announced that Paul Morrell OBE has been appointed to the new role of Government Chief Construction Adviser (CCA).

The CCA will work with Government and the industry to act as a link between the two and ensure Britain's construction sector is equipped with the knowledge, skills and best practice to make the most of the opportunities which the 21st century will offer. As CCA, Mr Morrell will lead the Construction Innovation and Growth Team. His first task will be to head the Low Carbon Construction Review, announced by Lord Mandelson on 18 September and due to report its initial findings in the spring of 2010. This is part of the challenge to bring the industry together to identify how best to deliver the 2022 carbon reduction commitments, to meet the broader challenges of the low carbon future and to capture the many new opportunities it will bring. The CCA will chair the Board responsible for securing value for money from the government's procurement of construction, promote innovation and sustainability in the industry, and be responsible for ensuring government takes full account of the impacts of the regulatory regime on the construction industry.

The CCA is an independent role, but will report jointly to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills and HM Treasury Ministers. The remit of the role includes:-

- **Chairing a new Construction Collaborative Category Board, which will build on the existing Public Sector Construction Clients Forum (PSCCF), to drive the implementation and further development of best value Government construction procurement.**
- **Chairing an enhanced sustainable construction strategy delivery board to help ensure policy regarding the industry is effectively co-ordinated.**
- **Assessing the key barriers to growth in the UK's Low Carbon construction sector to ensure the UK industry is well placed to serve developing needs and markets.**
- **Working with the industry, through the Strategic Forum for Construction, to deliver the industry improvement agenda, including the Construction Commitments.**
- **Promoting innovation in the sector, working closely with the Technology Strategy Board and other funding bodies.**
- **Co-ordinating the Whitehall response to reports featuring construction.**

Mr Morrell is by training a Quantity Surveyor and until accepting this new appointment has worked entirely for Davis Langdon, which now describes itself as "Construction Consultant" but always used to be a firm of Quantity Surveyors.

Given the enormous amount of engineering content (of many disciplines) on a modern construction project do we accept that a QS has the right background for this job? Would it perhaps have been wiser to appoint an engineer? Your thoughts on this would be welcome.

Tal Golesworthy C Eng MEI MRSC

At the beginning of January there was a story in the press about the "Engineer" who invented a new and effective implant for a certain type of heart patient. Given the fact that the word "Engineer" is used with impunity and can mean anybody from a gas fitter to a jet engine designer, I wondered if in fact Tal was an Engineer in the sense that we understand. I am pleased to report that he is, the press for once was right and here are the details.

Tal is a Chartered Engineer with over 30 years' experience in research and development. Tal's experience includes 16 years at the Coal Research Establishment, 3 years training as a patent agent and 13 years as a director of Environmental Technology Ltd where he has developed into one of Europe's experts in hot gas cleaning utilising cyclone and filter systems. Tal is a former Council Member of the Institution of Chemical Engineers, The Filtration Society, The Institute of Energy, and a founding Council Member of the Energy Institute.

In 2000 he founded the External Aortic Root Support project as a result of his own cardiac condition.

It is good to see a high profile engineer recognised by the popular press in this way.

