

Monthly round-up of news from the Institute of Highway Engineers



FOCUS

Newly-launched council will champion the technicians' cause

The new Technician Council will aim to expand and develop technician registration schemes largely based on the Engineering Council model. It will facilitate the initial drafting of registration standards in science IT, etc; ensuring that appropriate support, professional development and information is made available alongside registration for individual technicians; and driving forward the agenda of promoting the professional status of and recognition for technicians, including marketing and policy influence roles

Business, innovation and skills minister, Pat McFadden, said: 'In securing future economic growth, it is essential that we have the right people with the right skills in the right jobs.

'Employers must be able to find skilled technicians and be confident that their knowledge



and abilities have been rigorously assessed. The new Technician Council has a vital role to play in bringing together all of those who employ and train technicians to make this happen.

'It will champion rising standards and promote

the immense value of technicians to our economy'

The council is the creation of a working group including the Engineering Council, Science Council, Royal Academy of Engineering and others brought together under Lord Sainsbury's leadership last year to explore issues surrounding the professional registration of technicians.

Introducing the council, Lord Sainsbury said: 'The establishment of the council will provide an effective mechanism for promoting the professional status and recognition for technicians.'

Tony Sharp, IHE president, reassured members: 'The council will not usurp any Engineering Council functions. Rather, it will put additional and significant weight behind the Technician grade, and is very welcome.'

IHE in action...

● John Nightingale reports that 2010's 'Big bang' – the UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair was a great occasion. Attendance was three times that of the inaugural 2009 fair, including 15,500 young visitors. Jem Stansfield, presenter of the BBC's *Bang goes the theory*, and creator of the coffee-powered car, said: 'It was just amazing. There were so many kids there, it was insane. Some of their favourite things were welding with chocolate and testing their reflexes against Formula One's Jenson Button's score. On the whole, it was just a really good day.'

● The **2010 AGM** will be at Winchester Guildhall on Friday 18 June at 4.45pm. It follows the Southern branch seminar *Highway engineers – investing in the asset*.

● Friday **annual dinner** tickets are selling well at £30 a head. Dinner guests include the mayor of Winchester and the chairman and chief executive of Hampshire CC. Double rooms are available at the four-star Winchester

Hotel for £89. Contact Sandy Lopes, on 20 7436 7487. Main sponsor this year is Amey.

● **Steve Spender**, incoming IHE president, now chairs the UK Footway Group, and has joined the UK Roads Board.

● **Graham Milne** and **Steve Spender** were members of recent visit teams from the Joint Board of Moderators to the University of West of England (UWE) and Glasgow Caledonian University respectively. The JBM is responsible for accrediting civils degrees on behalf of a partnership of ICE, CIHT, IStructE and IHE.

● On the staff side, **Sandy Lopez** marketing and events manager, has taken a lead from her colleagues and is expecting a baby in September. Membership manager, Michelle Maguire, has given birth to a baby girl, Ava, but is due back in the office in October. Our first mother, Sandy's predecessor, Cheryl Brown, visited recently with her baby girl, Jessica.

MEMBER PROFILE: Andrew Thurston BEng IEng FIHE

Colin Buchanan is the transport planning, planning, urban design and economics consultancy founded by Sir Colin Buchanan, and Andrew brings his 25 years' expertise as a traffic modeller to the organisation.

One major current project is to construct a model of traffic and pedestrian flows during the Olympic Games around the central London venues of Hyde Park, Earls Court, Lords and Horse Guards, which is the inland Beach Volleyball venue.

This is a crucial element in the Olympic Delivery Agency's traffic-management plan 'because of the density of traffic and the narrow roads around these areas'

He is also redesigning Russell Square which will become two-way, in advance of turning into the Olympic Media centre.

A second scheme, which requires regular travel, is to provide updated standards and specifications for the road signage of a Middle Eastern country. This has called on Andrew 'to study and compare practice across a wide range



Andrew Thurston – associate director, Colin Buchanan

of countries to develop that which is most appropriate for the client'

The great advances in modelling over the past decade 'make it much easier to enable people to see what the effects of different management solutions will be.

'Rather like a computer game, but a game

based on the maths of a situation and showing real things in 3D visualisations'. He believes that 'Incorporated Engineer status tells people that you have accredited competencies, and that you are qualified to give your opinions. This is important when building your career'

As honorary treasurer of IHE, he sees it vital to 'maintain the integrity of the organisation at its high level in these difficult economic times', and that he would like to see 'more and more student members joining who we can support throughout their careers and help to progress from each level to the next'. He believes that 'special interest groups, such as the Traffic Signals Group, are very valuable in forming IHE policy, which can have an effect on national decisions greater than the relatively-small size of IHE would suggest'

He sees IHE as a professional organisation providing formal support and structure through seminars and registration, and as 'an informal, unstuffy network of people willing and able to help each other at all levels.'

WES puts the boot into inappropriate footwear

A campaign to bring better-fitting work wear to women in engineering and construction has already succeeded in putting the boot into safety footwear.

In September 2009, the **Women's Engineering Society (WES)** launched an online survey to find out what problems there were with personal protective equipment (PPE).

Four months later, WES has teamed up with footwear manufacturer Dunlop to produce its LT Series 500 range of boots, specifically fashioned to fit women's feet. And these boots have an unusual added extra – they are purple – inspired by a charity campaign by Engineers Australia.

The striking purple leather boots, which meet all standards for safety footwear, can be purchased from the WES e-shop at www.wes.org.uk.



Road safety certificate is a TERN for the better

The **European Directive on Road Infrastructure Management** requires that by 2013, road safety auditors working on the Trans European Road Network (TERN) will need to undergo road safety engineering training, resulting in the award of a 'certificate of competence'. ☎: www.tmsconsultancy.co.uk/services/

training-courses/rospa-road-safety-engineerin. From June 2010, delegates attending the 10-day RoSPA-TMS Road Safety Engineering course will be able to gain such a certificate of competence which will fulfil the requirement of the European Directive for undertaking RSAs on the TERN.

Northern Ireland seeks a safer approach



DOE (NI) is consulting on a new strategy following on from *A safer way*. The department has adopted the 'safe systems' approach to addressing road safety which considers roads, vehicles and road-users together, and seeks to ensure that each of these three elements takes account of the limitations or potential weaknesses in the other two.

☎: www.roadsafetyni.gov.uk/index/road_safety_strategy_2010/public_consultation.htm.

Reclaiming our rural highways

Rural roads are faced with increasing sign clutter, street furniture, high traffic volumes and speed, all raising concerns over environmental impact and safety. So:

- how can we manage highways and transport to preserve the character of the countryside?
- what tools are available to minimise the impact?
- how can we protect the landscape?
- will *Manual for streets 2* make a difference?

IHE's July seminar will be drawing on guidance developed for AONBs in Kent and Dorset, and is for engineers and community groups.

Speakers include: Alexandra Luck, Luck Associates, *The highway and its environs – what are the options while managing risk?*

Highway design guidance and planning policy in rural

areas will be tackled by Alan Young, WSP, with an update on *Manual for streets 2*, and Richard Fitter, Entran Ltd, *Quiet lanes – are they rural shared spaces?*

Jo Cleary, Friends of the Lake District, *Quality audits for rural highway improvement and maintenance schemes – lessons from Cumbria*.

Case studies from Tim Nicholson, Peak National Park, Keith Allen, Norfolk CC on getting speed under control, and Transport Scotland on *Road furniture in the countryside – best practice*.

Find out more at IHE's conference Friday 2 July 2010, Hexham, Northumberland. *In association with Northumberland CC, Northumberland National Park Authority, Northumberland Coast Area of Outstanding Beauty and North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.*

training & development

● Preparing for your review

20 May, Taunton
In-depth advice and support in going for CEng, IEng and EngTech
1 July, Leeds

A must-attend course for potential CEng and IEng applicants using the Technical Report and Further Learning routes. Engineers without the standard-entry qualifications will find the course invaluable.

● Highway engineers – investing in the asset

Friday 8 June 2010
Winchester Guildhall

An IHE Southern Seminar Delegate fee only £70. Discuss how to deliver improved value with declining budgets!
☎: tony.suter@btinternet.com

● IHE annual dinner

Friday 18 June 2010
Winchester Hotel

Main sponsor: Amey. Tickets £30, including wine. Ben-and-breakfast available at special rates

● Improve your skills in traffic signs

October, Coventry
The course to maintain your expertise in direction and warning signing Supported by Department for Transport

diary dates

● Reclaiming our rural highways

2 July, Hexham, Northumberland

● Annual development control conference

Postponed to July or September, London

● Traffic signs conference and exhibition

1-3 September, Loughborough
The TSRGD revisions explained.

● Transport development control

Six-day foundation course
14-16 September, and 7-9 December 2010