



The Society of Environmental Engineers
The Manor House, High Street, Buntingford, Herts. SG9 9AB
Founded 1959

Tel: + 44 (0)1763 271209 Fax: + 44 (0)1763 273255
Email: office@environmental.org.uk Web Site: www.environmental.org.uk

2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I am pleased to present this, my final report after two terms of office, four years, as your Chairman. In so doing, I would like to take this opportunity to reflect, not only on the past year, but on the past few years.

Looking back

I joined this Society in 2000, at a time when we were working towards our first licence from EC-UK to award the professional credentials EngTech, IEng, and CEng. I am sure that we perceived this as a valuable additional member benefit that would possibly serve to attract new members, and indeed this has proved to be the case with a slow but steady number of new membership and registration applications.

Unfortunately, due to changes in the location and organisation of the Society, it was necessary at that time to impose a substantial rise in our subscription level to one more akin to other similar organisations. This, of course, prompted a decline in membership as those for whom it was no longer relevant left the organisation, so the benefit was temporarily negated by the decline in member numbers.

Fortunately, our Chief Executive skilfully brokered the arrangement with EC-UK whereby we could partner with other small institutions and societies to take their members through to the EC registers as Joint Members. This was new ground for both the SEE and EC-UK, so was perhaps viewed with some degree of suspicion. Very quickly, however, we established arrangements with several such bodies, and apart from one organisation that later left the scheme, we have maintained and developed those relationships. The success of this did not go unseen by EC-UK, who began to promote this arrangement, and recognised the non-predatory way in which we managed to operate such that these organisations were not threatened in their own right. However, the number of possible joint member institutions was limited, and a number wished to have the benefit of registration without the encumbrance of joint membership. So it is, that EC-UK, having now reverted to its old name of Engineering Council, has decided that these collaborative arrangements can be agreed between any institution and any licensed member for the licensed member to take the other institution's members through to the registers on an administration only basis. It was in this context that we signed the most recent agreement in November last year with the Institute of Explosives Engineers (IExpE), and we look forward to registering some of their members in just a few weeks time. It is perhaps significant that the lack of threat posed by the SEE, being the smallest of the licensed members, combined with the track record of developing these relationships with several organisations over a number of years, allowed us to win this agreement in competition with the largest of all the licensed members. There is no doubt that the SEE punches well above its weight in professional circles. Joint membership was never going to be a quick fix for membership numbers, but it has proved to be a solid track for the future.

One of the great debates in the Society over these years has been around the confusion in people's minds over what an environmental engineer is, and, even within this past decade, I can recall us discussing whether we should change the name of the Society to better reflect the occupation of our traditional member base in the environmental testing community. Fortunately, with hindsight, we never did do that, but rather we recognised that environmental engineers are not just concerned with the effects of the environment on products and equipment, but are also concerned with the effects of man's activities on the environment and the need to develop engineering solutions to some of the environmental problems that modern life has created. It was very apparent that we could either continue complaining that we were misunderstood as to what we were about, or we could expand our horizons to become *The Society* where the interaction of engineering and the environment could be addressed on a professional level. Never has our motto, "*Engineering for Mankind*" been more relevant.

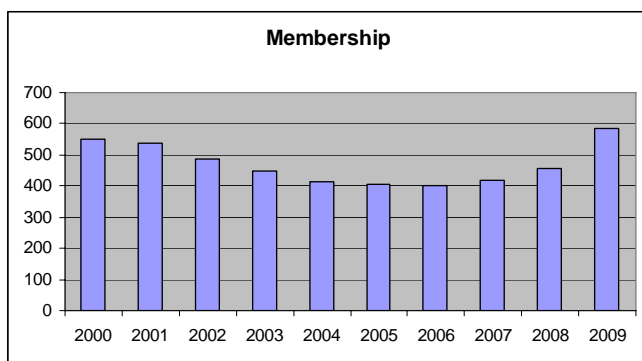


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Now, the Society has also been a regular attendee at a number of exhibitions to promote itself, and it was at one of these about three or four years ago that I spoke with representatives of the Society for the Environment and took some of their literature. Further discussion and negotiation from our Chief Executive finally yielded our acceptance as a Constituent Body of the Society for the Environment (SocEnv), with a one-year grandfathering period when our members could accede to SocEnv without a Professional Review interview running throughout 2009. Now, the strength of our 'brand' has finally been realised. We are providing the natural professional 'home' for engineers involved in all aspects of the environment. Of the 24 or so other Constituent Bodies of SocEnv, none has leveraged the CEnv qualification to boost its own membership to the extent that the SEE has during this past year. Environmental Engineer has a different meaning in the 21st Century, but we continue to serve our traditional base in the testing community as well as embracing the new engineer working to reduce environmental impact in our everyday lives.

So what of 2009?



2009 has seen the most dramatic change our membership in a single year, with an increase over the year from 456 at the end of 2008 to 584 at the end of 2009.

Membership now stands at the highest level ever, with further applications pending.

There have been 8 new CEng registrants during the year, 3 from the SEE, 3 from SaRS, and 2 from ICorr. There was one new IEng registrant during the year from the SEE. All of these organisations have further applications in progress.

The Society registered a total of 102 Chartered Environmentalists (CEnv) during the year, every one of those applications being strictly vetted by our panel of 6 Assessors.

Looking ahead

2009 was undoubtedly an exception due to the grandfathering period with SocEnv, and we continue to experience the tail of that boom with a further 100 membership applications pending as a result of that.

We already have 7 candidates booked in for Professional Review Interviews for registration with Engineering Council, with candidates from SEE, ICorr, SaRS, and IExpE, so it is very likely that our total number of registrants in 2010 will exceed that for 2009.



We have also registered 46 CEnv to date in 2010, with a further 100 applications pending.

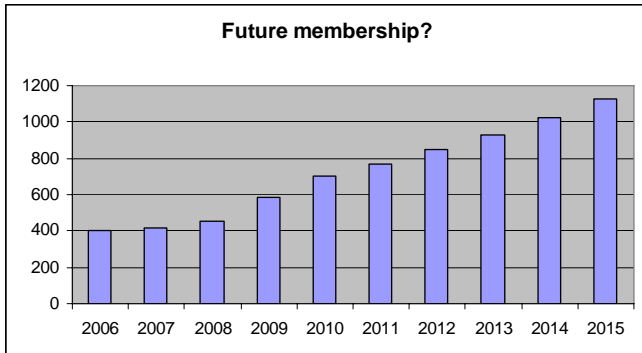
SocEnv
Society for the Environment

Licensed Member of Engineering Council
Constituent Body of the Society for the Environment
Registered Company No: 1438715. Registered Charity No: 278338.



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If we speculate that the sharp rise experienced in 2009 declines, but that the combination of Engineering Council registrants and SocEnv registrants, combined with further development of our registration partner institutions yields a year-on-year growth of 10% per annum, then we can look forward to exceeding 1000 members within the next five years.

Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, many of the CEnv applications have come from one of the most densely developed places in the world, Hong Kong. The density of construction in Hong Kong poses such a threat to the local environment, that it is no surprise that there are many people employed in managing the environmental risk there. It remains to be seen just how the SEE may develop in the Asia Pacific Region over the years to come. That aside, we have also experienced interest from Singapore, Malaysia, the Middle East and African countries, all of which present an opportunity for further international development of the SEE.

Publications

Increasingly, the networking opportunities of professional organisations are less about face-to-face meetings, but more about sharing information. The Society acts as a conduit for some of this through its publications, *Environmental Engineering* and the *Test House Directory*, which both continue to be successful publications for the Society, even in the tough times of the 'credit crunch'. The incorporation of SEE News into *Environmental Engineering* has been well received, and the quality of information and its presentation is a real improvement over the previous format. We, in collaboration with our publishers, are actively exploring the opportunities for a new periodical targeted at the environmentalist portion of our membership to ensure that they receive full benefit from their membership, and hope that this will come to fruition during 2010.

Technical Activities

The infrastructure for technical activities has also been changed during the past year to reflect the change in the way we network. It has been re-organised to be driven by topic rather than by general interest so that members can create ad hoc groups with specific aims, which they can then arrange as best suits the activity, be it face-to-face meetings, conference calls, web-based discussions, e-mail discussions, or any effective mechanism. The new Technical Forum is a more dynamic environment for technical discussions, which will reflect the more diverse interests of our current membership as well as enabling our overseas members to participate in these activities. We recognise that there is a real need for the Society as an organisation to develop and publicise to our membership a mechanism for registering a topic of interest, having it disseminated to all members, and engaging the membership in the ensuing discussion.

Neil R. Barker CEng CEnv MIET HonFSEE
Chairman