

The Royal Institution of Naval Architects

The President's address to the 2016 AGM

When I addressed you as the President for the first time last year, I described both the trepidation and sense of honour I was feeling. As I speak to you for the second time, I can report that the feeling of trepidation may be less, but the sense of honour at being the President of this fine Institution with its rich history is certainly no less. Indeed, as I have had the opportunity to learn more about the Institution, the honour of being even a small a part of that history is even greater today.

It is with great pleasure that I again welcome you to the Institution's Headquarters, and present my second report as the 31st President of the Institution and Chairman of its Board of Trustees. As is customary, my report will reflect on the Institution's achievements over the past year, and will look forward to what changes and activities members can expect over the next twelve months.

Membership was again up over the previous year, and is again standing at its highest in the Institution's history. The growth continues to come mainly from countries other than the UK, demonstrating that the Institution does indeed reflect the international maritime industry. Seen in the context of the challenges which the maritime industry and therefore members in that industry continue to face, this increase is all the more commendable. Once again, the increase in the number of Associate Members and Student Members – those at the start of their careers – was particularly pleasing, reflecting as it does the continuing priority which the Council and Board give to encouraging the younger members of the profession to be involved with the Institution.

However, I am sure you would agree that the Institution cannot be complacent over these increases in membership. The Institution cannot take it for granted that those individuals who are today involved in the design, construction or maintenance of marine vessels and structures will become members of the Institution. The Institution must constantly show the value of membership and that it does indeed demonstrate an international recognition of the achievement, or intention to achieve, the highest standards of professional competence - and that membership will benefit a member's career.

I believe that this is an area where all members can and indeed have a responsibility to contribute. If you have engineering colleagues who are directly involved in the design, construction and maintenance of marine vessels and structures, or if you have colleagues who are not engineers, but who are involved or interested in the maritime industry, and if any of them are not yet members then either encourage them to apply for membership or contact the Chief Executive who will do the rest in his usual persuasive manner.

As I referred to earlier, over the past year the Institution has continued to encourage the involvement of the younger members of the naval architecture profession in its activities. This is achieved through student membership at an increasing number of universities world-wide and through the prizes and awards which recognise the achievements of the students. Many of these awards are co-sponsored by companies, serving to demonstrate the valuable link which the Institution provides between universities and industry. These awards are presented to first year, third year and final year students, reflecting the continuous engagement which the Institution has with the universities.

Once again, and thanks to the generosity of some companies, students have been able to attend the Institution's conferences - but demand always outstrips the number available and more places are always sought. If your company would be interested in sponsoring a place, at a very modest cost, again, please contact the Chief Executive. It is another opportunity for members to put something back into their Institution and profession.

For many members, one of the greatest benefits of membership is the opportunity to meet other maritime professionals at local Branch or Section meetings. This has been apparent to me when I have had the opportunity to visit the Branches and Sections. All the Institution's Branches and Sections have had full programmes of technical meetings and other activities during the year, and I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Institution, to thank those members who give willingly and freely of their time to serve on the Division Councils, and Branch and Section Committees. Without the time which they willingly give, such activities would not take place. It is due in no small part to their efforts that the Institution enjoys its international standing.

However, thanks to the pressures of work and tempus fugit, there is always a demand for members prepared and able to contribute their time as members of committees. Again, it is an opportunity to put something back.

But of course many members also make their contribution in other ways, for example by refereeing papers for conferences and publications, acting as Professional Review Interviewers for those members seeking registration, promoting the Institution and encouraging membership wherever they are, or simply by maintaining their membership – and paying their membership fees on time! These are all opportunities for members to put something back into their Institution and their profession – nothing is more valued and appreciated than members' time and enthusiasm.

As it was in 1860, "promoting and facilitating the exchange of technical and scientific information ... thereby to improve the design of ships" has continued to be the aim of the Institution over the past twelve months – an aim which it has successfully achieved through its publications and its conferences.

All the Institution's journals have continued to enjoy their well-deserved reputations as the leading technical journals in their fields, appreciated for the quality and scope of their content in the 100 and more countries in which they are distributed. This reputation has helped to maintain the attraction of the Institution's journals to advertisers. A new initiative this year has been the introduction of *Shiprepair eNews* as a regular email newsletter providing regular, up to date news, views and information on what's happening in the repair, maintenance and conversion sector. *Shiprepair eNews* will complement the more depth reporting of the Institution's magazine *Shiprepair & Conversion Technology*. The concept will be extended to the other Institution journals.

However, maintaining the journals commercial and editorial success does not come easily and the Institution is very grateful for the work of the advertising, editorial and production staff in achieving that success.

The journals continue to be available in both printed and electronic format, with members able to choose whether to receive both or just the electronic version. The latter results in a significant saving in postage and printing costs, allowing a reduction in membership fee to be offered, as well as making a contribution to saving the rain forest. I would urge members to consider this option, but I would also reassure them that the Institution will continue to give members the choice of digital or printed editions.

The Institution has maintained its reputation for the quality of its international conferences. In the past twelve months, it has organised or co-organised a record number of conferences and courses in the Australia, China, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, New Zealand, The Netherlands, South Korea and the UK. As always, the Institution's conferences have sought to reflect technical developments in the maritime industry.

This year, two one-day workshops aimed at developing the communication skills of engineers have been successfully introduced. The Effective Communications Workshop covers the fundamental communications skills required by all engineers, whilst the Effective Presentation and Networking workshop covers the skills needed by engineers who are required to give presentations, both oral and written, and network at all levels.

The Institution's conferences continue to attract papers of the highest quality, but the pressures of work, in many cases resulting from increased activity with reduced numbers, does impact on the number of delegates attending conferences. I would urge those of you in a position to do so to promote the value to their companies of their engineers hearing and discussing the latest developments in the maritime industry, as well as the invaluable networking opportunity which conferences present

The Institution is grateful for the efforts of both the Institution's conference staff and those members who referee the papers and chair the conference sessions.

The Institution has continued to encourage high academic and professional standards by recognising the achievement of both those young - and not so young - members of the profession and industry. It was a great pleasure to present the Institution's medals and prizes a few moments ago. At the Institution's Annual Dinner this evening, I will be announcing the winners of the Institution's Maritime Safety Award, which has now been running since 1999, and the Maritime Innovation Award, now in its third year.

These two Awards are perhaps all the more valued since they reflect the recognition of the industry as well as the Institution, of these achievements. The Institution is grateful to Lloyd's Register and QinetiQ for their continuing support of the awards.

As I said, it will give me great pleasure to present this year's Awards at the Annual Dinner this evening but I would invite you – even now - as members of the global maritime industry, to be giving thought to, and forwarding your nominations for next years' Awards.

The 2015 President's Invitation Lecture was given by Mr Peter I. Keller, Executive Vice President of TOTE Inc. who presented a review of TOTE's all encompassing LNG programme. The continuing

ability of the Institution to attract such leading members of the industry to present this Lecture is, I believe, a further indication of the Institution's standing. The Institution is most grateful to ABS for their continuing support of this event.

The Institution's links and standing with industry were maintained through its Corporate Partner members, the sponsorship of awards and activities, and the many visits to companies made by the Chief Executive.

As I announced at the start of my Report, I present it as both the elected President of the Institution and as the appointed Chairman of the Board of Trustees, providing a link between those two bodies.

The Board of Trustees is now in its third year as the Institution's governing body, and during that time has completed its review of the Institution's policy with regard to such key matters as its investments and risk management. As a smaller body of 12 members of Council, it is better able to focus on governance matters, and ensuring the proper management of the Institution in accordance with the requirements of the UK Charity Commission. The Institution's status as a registered charity provides significant benefits, particularly financial.

The formation of the Board has allowed the Council to concentrate on the professional, technical and learned society affairs which are at the heart of the Institution. In that respect, the Council of today is fulfilling the role of the Council in 1860. That role of Council is principally exercised through the Institution's standing committees – the Membership, Professional Affairs and Publications Committee - and the Technical Committees, which include the IMO, Safety, Small Craft and High Speed Vessels Committees. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of all the members of all the Institution's standing committees, as well as those on our Council and Board of Trustees.

The Technical Committees provide the means by which the Institution makes its collective expertise available to such forums as the International Maritime Organisation, where the Institution continues to make a significant contribution which is recognised and valued by both the members and Secretariat of the IMO. During the year, the Council has formed a Working Group to review the structure and responsibilities of the Technical Committees, to ensure that they reflect the developments in the profession and the maritime industry since they were formed. The Working Group will complete its work this year.

I hope you will agree that this report on the Institution's activities over the past twelve months is very encouraging and describes an Institution which continues to go from strength to strength. I said at the beginning of my report that I would also look to the future, at least over the next twelve months. In short, it is expected to be more of the same with regard to its membership and activities, always seeking to respond to the changing needs and priorities of its members, the profession and the maritime industry. It will undoubtedly be a challenging year, as it will be for the maritime industry.

To those feelings of trepidation and sense of honour I referred to earlier, I must now add a note of sadness as I come to the end of my term of office as the President, although it has some three months still to go. It has been a most enjoyable two years, during which time there have been some

memorable moments, starting with the surprise with which I greeted the news from the Chief Executive when he informed me that I had been nominated for election as President, and did I want the job. Another memorable moment was being taken to lunch by the Chief Executive at his local pub, which he informed me – with some satisfaction, I thought - was older than my country. Chairing my first Board and Council meetings also provided me with memorable moments, and at this time I would like to express my sincere thanks to my fellow Board and Council members for the support they have given me. I must also thank you the members for electing me and giving me the opportunity to put something back into the Institution.

But perhaps the most memorable moments have come when I have met with members, both of the Institution and of the maritime community. In meeting them I have been left in no doubt as to the respect and standing which this Institution enjoys in all sectors of this global industry. It has left me proud and honoured to be a member of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects, as I hope you are too.

And finally, I would like to wish my successor as the 32nd President, Tom Boardley, the same pleasure I have enjoyed as the 31st President. I am sure you will give him the same support you have given me.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. The floor is now yours, to comment on or query the content of my report.

Bruce S. Rosenblatt FRINA
President