EMEARB(09)M3
1 October 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the
EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST & AFRICA REGIONAL BOARD
held on Wednesday 30 September 2009 at 10 am, Savoy Place

Present:

Eur Ing Dr L Savvides
Dr E Al-Gallaf
Dr M Fiorini
Mr F Golly
Mr K Parr
Eur Ing S Savvides
Dr A Segal
Mr F Eissa, observer
Mrs B Gurney, Board Secretary
Ms A Taylor, Local Network Communications Manager

1. Training

The Board received five training presentations from members of staff on the subjects of Communications, Professional Registration, Event Management, Inspec and Local Networks.

Note: The presentation visuals are sent with the Minutes.

2. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The chairman welcomed Mr Faisal Eissa who would be joining the Board from 1 October 2009 and was present as an observer for this meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Chris McLoughlin.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the telephone conference held on 4 September 2009 were approved and signed as a correct record (EMEARB(09)M2). The Board was asked to comment on the technicalities of the tele-conference and although it was felt that the process was accomplished smoothly, Faith, who was new to this type of meeting, was not clear about the protocol of when or how to respond with a comment. It was agreed that future tele-conferences should be kept to a maximum of two topics and to a length of no more than one hour which may require them to be held fairly frequently.

TO NOTE: Beryl Gurney

4. Report from Global Operations Board

Lazaros Savvides advised the Board of the decisions that had been taken during the tele-conference held by Global Operations Board on 1 September 2009. One item of particular interest was that the Local Network Finance Committee (LNFC) would remain in place during 2009/10 to allocate Local Network funds for the 2010/11 session and that Regional Boards would take over this responsibility in the 2010/11 session. In order to prepare Regional Boards it

had been agreed that a representative from each Regional Board would join the LNFC during the 2009/10 session to gain experience of the processes. It was agreed to defer the appointment of the EMEA RB representative until it was known whether Chris McLoughlin was interested in the role.

TO NOTE: Beryl Gurney

5. Management Performance Report

5.1 Agnes Segal introduced paper (EMEARB(09)6) and explained that the Forecast sheet showed that the EMEA region was profitable, largely because of income from Inspec. Income from member subscriptions and TPN activity was higher than expenditure on Local Networks, Magazines and Conferences. During discussion the following points were made:

a) it was important to seek ways to increase Inspec sales as they provided the main source of income, although Board members themselves would have no control of this activity they could seek opportunities and alert staff to them;

b) a growth in membership would also increase income.

5.2 Agnes continued by drawing the Board's attention to the cumulative performance against budget and advised that:

a) TPN and Prestige event attendances were a long way short of the year's target;

b) Membership net movement showed higher losses than at this time last year;

c) Membership recruitment was below target;

d) Membership losses were the same as last year;

e) 25-40 member age range was targeted to grow by 2,000 but 2,500 have already been lost;

f) Qualification rates of CEng/IEng were better than last year but short of the target although it was anticipated that it would be reached by the end of the year;

g) Qualification rates of Eng Tech were disappointing although only just short of figures for last year;

h) Qualification rates of ICT Tech were behind target but figures should improve with the help of Business Partners;

i) Records added to Inspec database and articles submitted to journals were ahead of target but income from Inspec and Journals was under threat;

j) Staff turnover had slowed and was better than last year.

5.3 In discussion, the following points were made:

a) IET needed to find a new source of revenue;

b) IET owned the Wiring Regulations but qualifications relating to competent electrical installation were granted by City & Guilds;

c) IET should increase sales of its books which were often difficult to source overseas.

6. Intra Region Communications

The Board considered ways that it could communicate and work with IET entities within the EMEA region (GOB(09)13) and made the following comments:

a) EuroExec was composed of representatives from each of the Networks in Europe but the last meeting held had extended invitations to representatives from the Middle East and Africa. The purpose of EuroExec was to exchange best practice and organise joint events. A lecture on Sports Technology had toured the European Local Networks one session but it had needed extensive intervention from the Regional Co-ordinator and was not a success in some countries. EuroExec could provide a communications route between EMEA RB and Local Networks. It was acknowledged that EuroExec had not been successful with a low activity level and that it needed to be more effective;

b) There were other important entities, such as TPNs, that existed outside of the LNs in EuroExec;

c) Suggestions for the future of EuroExec were that it could be closed down, be restricted to one meeting per year to discuss Local Network issues at a time when another gathering took place to keep costs to a minimum, be restricted to telephonic communication or be developed into a wider vehicle to deliver the message;

d) Other communication tools included Newsletters from the Board, a Website, Discussion Forum and a dedicated email address to deal with questions and ideas from the community;

e) Any communication channel must ensure that the message from the Board was delivered to the people on the ground and, importantly, messages were delivered back from the ground to the Board. An additional layer between the Board and the ground might create a barrier and dilute this process;

f) It could be useful if regional meetings could be arranged during the Volunteers Weekend in March although it was noted that a limited number of people could be invited to the conference because of space restrictions. Care needed to be taken to ensure that the governance structure was not being replicated by any regional gathering;

g) The Americas Regional Board had decided to hold a conference to bring together all of their stakeholders to help to drive forward activity in the region. This would be paid for from 2009/10 funds earmarked for the region but which had not been allocated. EMEA RB could follow their example and organise something similar;

h) In the future it was likely that five regional volunteer conferences would be held instead of one global event in London. It may prove necessary to obtain sponsorship to cover volunteer conference expenses or to ask volunteers to cover their own costs if IET was not able to cover the full cost;

i) Less developed areas in Africa did not have a reliable source of energy which prevented or restricted usage of or access to technology including email and websites. It would be essential to communicate with them via printed copy;

j) Some African countries had a strict hierarchal structure where elders were revered which could stop younger people from giving their views. The advantage of the IET forum was that it was a place where everybody was treated as an equal;

k) There were cultural variations in the Middle Eastern countries but it was anticipated that both electronic communication and physical meetings would work well;

l) Physical meetings were useful ways of ensuring that cross fertilisation took place;

m) Video conferences added an extra dimension to tele-conferences and were more like a physical meeting. Such electronic communication would ensure that momentum was maintained between physical meetings;

n) There was no intention to get all of the membership together every year but Local Network events provided an opportunity for members in the vicinity to meet together;

o) A mixture of communication tools would be most effective;

p) In summary, it was the responsibility of each Regional Board to oversee delivery of IET's Plans within its region whilst ensuring that an effective mechanism was in place to communicate and work with all the entities in its region;

No decision was reached regarding the methods and channels of communication that would be used by the Board.

7. Regional Forums

Paper EMEARB(09)13 was not considered separately as the subject of regional gatherings was discussed under Agenda item 6.

8. Regional Reports

8.1 Three regional research Reports had been prepared by Board members (EMEARB(09)7). Ebrahim Al-Gallaf introduced his report on the Middle East and highlighted the section on Higher Education because he felt this was an area where the IET could have an impact as many new Universities had been built but as yet there was very little IET interaction with the students. Much new industry has also been established over the past 15 years but, again, the IET was not widely known. The following clarification was provided:

a) Most of the university students were local and 50% of the courses were delivered in English. Some universities were affiliated to European or US universities;

b) CPD was not considered to be necessary in Egypt. Membership of the IET was helpful if an Egyptian engineer was working abroad as it was proof of status;

c) In Bahrain the main reason to join the IET was its historical connections. Members were a mixture of both local people and ex-pats;

8.2 In summary, Ebrahim indicated that marketing the IET to academia and industry should be improved, that Local Networks should start to visit industry and that large events or conferences would spread the word about IET to a great number of people.

8.3 The following suggestions were made to develop activity in the Middle East:

a) Select a few universities and find members to act as mentors and to promote IET membership;

b) Identify key industrial companies and find members to act as Registration Advisors;

c) Form MOUs with local professional bodies.

8.4 Faith Golly introduced his Africa report and informed the Board that it had been difficult to source reliable information. He highlighted the following points:

a) The IET is still known as the IEE in Nigeria;

b) The IEEE was well known in universities, largely through social events, but contact was not well maintained post university. Conversely, the IET was not well known in universities but had better contact in industry;

c) There was no ICE activity in Nigeria although there were many ICE members;

d) On-line IET lectures at universities or a speaker flown in from the UK would help to promote the IET in Nigeria;

e) Students were easier to recruit than to maintain because of a lack of volunteers to sustain interest. Many engineering students don't take up engineering as a career;

f) Engineering students in Egypt would find it useful to have information about job opportunities or help with identifying which university course was suitable;

g) Ghana could sustain a Local Network as many members were resident there;

h) some members in Nigeria experienced problems with subscription renewal which caused discontent.

8.5 It was agreed that Faith would complete his report on Africa with the information that was outstanding whereupon the Board would draw out five recommendations from each of the Africa and Middle East reports. It was further agreed not to pursue the Eastern Europe report at this time but to concentrate on opportunities in Africa and the Middle East.

ACTION: Faith Golly
TO NOTE: all

8.6 It was agreed that a report on Western Europe should be written to allow comparisons to be made between countries where the IET already had a presence and places where it might consider attempting to establish itself.

ACTION: Agnes Segal

9. Communication with Members

Alex Taylor was asked to comment on Keith Parr's paper on the importance of effective communication between Local Networks and their members (EMEARB(09)8). Alex advised the Board that approximately 85% of the issues covered in the paper were being addressed either by Marketing Department or by the Access to Data project that was being monitored by Global

Operations Board. She agreed with the assumptions in the paper but reminded the Board that the IET was legally bound by the Data Protection Act and also had to respect the communication preferences of individual members.

10. Risk Identification and Management

Paper EMEARB(09)9 was not discussed.

11. Local Network Finance Committee Report

Paper EMEARB(09)10 was not discussed.

12. Local Network Activity

Paper EMEARB(09)11 was not discussed.

13. Local Network Support Team

Paper EMEARB(09)12 was not discussed.

14. Report to Global Operations Board

Global Operations Board was meeting on 1 October. Dr Savvides would report the deliberations on the Regional Reports and the Board's concern about Inspec.

15. Any Other Business

Michele Fiorini was stepping down from the Board at the end of the 2008/09 session and the Chairman thanked him for the contribution he made to the Board during his short appointment.

16. Dates of Next Meetings

It was agreed to hold a tele-conference in November when the remaining papers from this meeting would be discussed. The next physical meeting was confirmed as 10 February 2010 and would take place in London.