



UK Naval Engineering Science and Technology (UKNEST) Forum

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Introduction

UKNEST was officially formed in October 2005. UKNEST's Terms of Reference are within Annex A. From the outset, the membership of UKNEST has been comprehensive and diverse, giving UKNEST its' unique ability to deal with the broad issues that affect the whole UK naval engineering, science and technology (EST) community. The Steering Group (SG) for UKNEST is independently chaired by Mr John Coles, with each of UKNEST's 18 members (see Annex B) having a seat on the SG.

This document reports on the progress made by UKNEST during its second full year in operation, and outlines the agenda for 2008.

Achievements

UKNEST operates principally through time-limited Working Groups (WG) established to tackle specific issues. The following outlines the key activities of the WGs during 2007;

Training, Education and Development. (TED) The working group has investigated, with the help of recent recruits, how best to promote UK Naval ES&T to UK university undergraduates as a professional career offering interest, challenge, variety and with an opportunity to make a difference. A campaign brief designed to appeal to the 'Facebook/Bebo' generation has been prepared based upon modern techniques and resources. The aim is to complement and supplement existing member organisation promotional and recruitment media by presenting an interactive/interdependent ES&T enterprise rather than just a cluster of individual localised employers.

The Working Group has established the different criteria for graduate and non-graduate (Chartered and Technician Engineer) skills and needs in the naval sector such that a second phase of recruitment and promotion campaigning can be planned in due course.

Science and Technology (S&T). At the November 2007 Steering Group meeting at Devonport, the working group held a productive seminar entitled 'Maritime Grand Challenge Seminar 2007 – Focussing Long Term Science and Technology'. The aim of this UKNEST facilitated event was to examine the question, "Where should the UK invest in the long-term Research & Technology to ensure Maritime success for the future?" The full outcome from this seminar can be obtained from the Secretariat (secretary@uknest.org).



UKNEST has been represented in the emerging European Defence Agency research programme to establish the opportunities for UK participation in this programme. This engagement will continue in 2008.

Additional Activity

UKNEST has continued to provide a consultative body for key issues affecting the NEST community. This has included key input to the formation of the Naval Design Partnership which has now commenced its pilot phase on the Future Surface Combatant project. It also continued to provide a consultation forum for the MOD studies into Key Industrial Capabilities in the naval sector. Towards the end of 2007, UKNEST commenced engagement with a MOD-initiated study on the future of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors. This activity continues into 2008.

Management and Administration

UKNEST secretariat continues to be provided by IMarEST. During 2007 UKNEST appointed an Executive Coordinator (Dr Ben Dobson) to facilitate the progress of UKNEST activities and collaborate between the members.

Steering Group. The SG met three times (HMS Sultan Gosport, BAES Surface Fleet Solutions Glasgow and Babcock Marine Devonport, Plymouth) during 2007 under the Chairmanship of Sir John Parker and then his successor John Coles. The next meeting is planned in March 2008 at QinetiQ, Winfrith. It is planned to continue with three meetings annually, rotating around member's facilities to allow an educational element to each meeting and improve understanding of member organisations facilities and capabilities.

Co-ordination Group. A small Co-ordination Group meets between each Steering Group to develop and prioritise ideas and ensure that on-going activities are receiving the necessary support.

Promotional Activity

A UKNEST web-site is continually updated (www.uknest.org) with details on the objectives of the Forum, membership and on-going activities.

In 2007 the new UKNEST leaflets were produced and distributed round to members for use in PR and recruitment. A copy of the leaflet may be found on the website.

Membership

Although UKNEST has already attracted the vast majority of the UK's key Naval EST organisations, it is hoped that the membership may be increased further in 2008. Invitations have been issued to a number of companies who may be interested in membership.



Finance

It was agreed that the annual membership fee of £5,000 would continue through 2008 but would rise to £6,000 in 2009. Full running costs including IMarEST Secretariat, Executive Coordinator, Working Groups/Steering Group/Coordination Group run at £70,000. After investment in activities including £50,000 for the TED WG promotional campaign, the Forum is forecast to have a surplus of £64,000 at 31st December 2008. Together with the fee income for 2009, this is expected to allow sufficient funds for activities for 2009.

2008 Agenda

The Steering Group approved the 2008 agenda which will include the following activities;

Training, Education and Development WG

- Career promotion campaign (in progress). Printed and on-line material promoting careers in naval E, S and T with undergraduates.
- Feasibility study on a UKNEST Internship Programme providing multi-organisation programme of work experience for under-graduates.

Science and Technology WG

- Progress participation on a trial basis with the European Defence Agency research programme.
- Progress potential for cooperation with Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.
- Keep watching brief with possible action on the development of the Defence Technology Plan.

Naval E, S and T Leaders WG

- Exploration of ideas for 'growing the top 2% of naval E,S&T leaders' e.g. early career UKNEST secondment scheme.
- Engagement with MOD on the current studies into the future of the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors.

Other activities

- Sustainment of niche skills/technologies – examination of options for mitigation, building on the work done to support RAND Key Industrial Capabilities study.
- Engage with proposals for a European Centre of Excellence in Naval Design.



ANNEX A – UKNEST Terms of Reference

Background

The formation of the United Kingdom Naval Engineering, Science and Technology (UKNEST) Forum was borne out of recognition that there was a lack of focus in the UK for matters that related to the sustainment and development of the UK's naval design and engineering intellectual base. Whilst considerable attention has been, and is being focused on the naval industrial base, the role of the corresponding intellectual base in under-pinning the industrial base is not being given the attention it should due to its relatively small size and cost. Nevertheless, recent examples have shown the huge impact that failures wholly or partly in the intellectual base can cause in major projects.

Objectives

The proposed overall aim for the UKNEST Forum is;

To provide a forum for the UK's professional naval engineering, science and technology community for addressing issues of common concern, fostering specific professional development needs, and giving a focal point for interaction with, and influencing the wider Government and industrial community.

This objective would be seen in the context of an overall vision of;

Developing and sustaining the vision and implementation of a world-class naval engineering, science and technology intellectual base in the UK.

Implicit within the proposed overall aim are the following objectives;

- Provide a forum where representative individuals can meet on an equal professional basis to discuss matters of interest or concern to the UKNEST community.
- Influence training, education and professional development organizations with strategic advice on the needs of the UKNEST community.
- Provide a representative focus for influencing Government/industry initiatives that will impact the UKNEST community.
- Communicate the value and special interests of the UKNEST community to appropriate professional and public audiences.
- Strengthen the collegiate spirit within the UKNEST community reflecting the shared interests between individuals and organizations.

UKNEST Activities

The UKNEST programme of activities is developed by the Steering Group to meet perceived priorities. The scope of UKNEST activities will include the following;

- **Workshops.** Output focused and professionally-orientated i.e. not approaching issues from a political/commercial viewpoint. Currently candidate topics include design processes, role and function of design authority, skills development, professional development structure, education and training, innovation, tools etc.



- ***Awareness Raising and Engagement.*** UKNEST has a key objective to influence Government and industry policy and actions for the benefit of the UK's intellectual base in naval engineering, science and technology. In response to specific issues, UKNEST will use its networks to raise issues of concern, and suggest options for consideration.
- ***Communication.*** Communication of the UKNEST objectives and activities will be established through the Internet and newsletters published at an appropriate frequency.
- ***Position Papers and Reports.*** There are some issues that will benefit from the development of a position paper or report. Research, surveys and studies will be conducted as appropriate under the auspices of UKNEST.

Membership

Membership of UKNEST is open to public and private organisations with substantial interests in the naval engineering, science and technology intellectual base, and significant UK professional assets. Membership provides one place on the UKNEST Steering Group. Membership of UKNEST is on a one organization, one representative basis, except where the Steering Group approves multiple membership for an organization whose structure suggests that more than one representative might be appropriate. In this circumstance multiple membership fees would be payable.

Governance

UKNEST is directed by a Steering Group with an independent Chairperson. The Steering Group meets bi-annually or at a frequency determined by the members. The role of the Steering Group is to ensure the smooth running of the Forum, agree expenditure and membership fees, and set the priorities for activities of the Forum.

Administration

The secretariat for UKNEST is provided by the IMarEST.

Funding

UKNEST is maintained on a not-for-profit basis with annual membership fees set at a level to permit execution of the Forum's activity. First year membership is £5,000 per member. Members fund the full cost of their own participation (meetings etc.). All other activities e.g. workshops, social etc. are run on a basis that covers costs, with non-members paying a premium for participation. Any operating surplus/deficit is reflected in subsequent year's membership fees.



ANNEX B – 2007 UKNEST Membership

AVEVA
Babcock Marine
BAES Surface Ships
BAES Submarines
BMT Defence Services
Converteam
Devonport Royal Dockyard
IMarEST
Lloyds Register
MOD Defence Equipment & Support
MOD Dstl
QinetiQ
Rolls Royce
Royal Navy
RINA
SEA
Thales Naval
VT Shipbuilding
Weir, Strachan & Henshaw
WS Atkins

