Barry Mawson
Chairman Editorial Panel

Editorial

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Bridge Engineering has been in production for three years and we now have a change in Panel Chairman. We cannot let this pass without recording our gratitude to Professor Ben Barr, the retiring chairman. Under his skilful leadership and drive, the journal has been launched, established and is now thriving—a considerable achievement.

The most recent edition of *Bridge Engineering*, focussed on footbridges and the preceding call for papers generated a large amount of interest from potential authors. Unfortunately, not all could be accommodated within the space of the edition and other papers were unable to complete the process of review and editorial preparation in time. All these papers will now take their place in the general list and appear in this or subsequent issues, as stated in the December 2005 editorial by Peter Curran, who must also be thanked for his tremendous work in co-ordinating that issue.

The papers now presented here cover a wide range of topics for the bridge engineer, from tools to assist the process of initial design concept through to bridge monitoring, repair, maintenance and replacement. The process of in situ heat-straightening of impact-damaged steel has now been used several times and the paper on Brockhampton Road new bridge adds to our knowledge. The use of precast slabs for composite steel/concrete bridge decks can improve the process of this important area of bridging and the paper on testing of in situ joints is welcome.

With the increased activity in the railway sector over recent years, the editorial panel have decided that in 2007 there will be an issue focussing on railway bridges. Papers on new design, individual projects, research topics, bridge management and maintenance are requested; please refer to the call for papers at the back of this issue. However, there will be three more issues this year and a further three next year without specific focus other than the art and science of the bridge engineer. The panel always welcomes papers for publication; but a word of warning—the process of review and editing can take some time. Of course, papers do not have to be full-length and shorter briefing notes, especially on interesting projects, are often accepted.

Finally a word on discussion. This journal, like all the others, forms a part of the 'Learned Society' role of the Institution of Civil Engineers. In these pages, we encourage authors to seek to advance the profession. Ideas presented may not always be universally accepted and may need to be challenged, or at least discussed further. The panel does not see its role as censor and seeks to promote development by placing such papers before members for open discussion and debate. So far the panel has been disappointed at the response to papers and the lack of 'added-value' that discussion brings. For those with knowledge and experience of a topic, but insufficient time to prepare a full paper, discussion is a very effective way of adding to the knowledge base.