EDITORIAL: February 2014

Editorial

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Welcome to the February 2014 issue of *Civil Engineering*, the general journal of the *Proceedings of the Institution of Civil Engineers*.

We start with last November's presidential address from Geoff French (2014). Through integrity, communication and engagement French challenges us to redefine the role and perception of civil engineers in our local and global communities. He alludes to 2014 as a critical year for civil engineers to engage with the political process to ensure our hot-button issues do not slip down national agendas, such as in the run-up to the UK's general election in 2015.

If the ICE executive, as French suggests, are the conductors of the civil engineering symphony, then my role here as compère is to introduce our soloists for this issue's performance. Our first act takes on a coastal theme with de Vriend *et al.* (2014) and Ananthakumar and Jayesh (2014), while our second focuses on transport infrastructure with Wearne *et al.* (2014) and Josey and Burton (2014).

De Vriend *et al.* (2014) document innovations in Dutch coastal infrastructure, in which natural processes are intrinsically incorporated into the construction and function of engineered structures. Their paper will feel at home in an emerging plethora of work in ICE journals that postulates such an approach (Beck *et al.*, 2010; DeJong *et al.*, 2013; HRH Prince of Wales, 2012; Renforth *et al.*, 2011) and is an early practical example of the exciting field of 'earth systems engineering'.

Ananthakumar and Jayesh (2014) take us to India for a thorough report on the construction of the £400 million Kattupalli shipyard and port, which will be the largest shipyard in Asia when completed. As someone who grew up only a stone's throw away from shipbuilding on the UK's River Tyne, one cannot help lament the journey eastwards of such industry. However, this significant investment in India will continue to boost the standard of living of millions of people. The burgeoning civils market in the subcontinent forms the backbone of such development, supported in no small part by ICE's 950 resident members.

The civil engineering heroics demonstrated at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games do not get any more dramatic than the sprint-finish repairs to the M4 Boston Manor viaduct, in which 111 cracks were discovered in the electro-slag welding only 3 months before the start of the games. Wearne *et al.* (2014) provide us with a compelling account of the emergency repairs, highlighting Lean collaborative planning (e.g. Chen *et al.*, 2012; Sadreddini, 2012) for the project's success. I will also take this opportunity to remind you of the 2011 May and November special issues on delivering London 2012 venues and infrastructure, which are available free of charge from the ICE virtual library.

Josey and Burton (2014) take us to another highly charged market, Australia, for the development of rail infrastructure in south-east Queensland. The population in greater Brisbane has

grown by 25% in the last decade to over 2 million inhabitants, placing enormous strain on the existing infrastructure. Previously we read in *Civil Engineering* of a £1 billion upgrade to a suburban motorway in Brisbane (Royle, 2013). Through snapshots in our sister journals, we can also attribute new innovations to this investment in infrastructure (e.g. Indraratna *et al.*, 2012), a telling reminder that the economic benefits of engineering extend well beyond the boundary or stakeholders of a particular project.

Finally, on behalf of the editorial panel, I would like to extend my thanks to those that have helped produce this issue, especially the authors of the above papers for sharing their experiences with us. I hope you found these enjoyable, and that they encourage you and your colleagues to consider sharing your own experiences through this and other *ICE Proceedings* journals.

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