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**IMECH E**

## **Institution of Mechanical Engineers Benelux Branch**

# **Annual Report for 2003**

**March 2004**

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## **2 Executive Summary**

**In its 7th year the Benelux Branch Committee consolidated its work around the Vision and Objectives set in May 1998 to be the Benelux Network of IMechE members contributing to professional and business life in Europe. Attention focused on:**

- The organisation of **Professional Events**. We achieved our target for Technical Lectures, Visits and networking events
- Maintaining the quality of **Communications with our members** whilst reducing its cost, especially in the use of Internet related media where we have an established website and mailing list.
- More **influence** in Birdcage Walk, with active participation in the International Affairs and our Past Chairman being on the Trustee Board.

In its continuing efforts to promote the activities of a learned society within the Region, the Branch Committee decided to adopt and champion the theme of 'encouraging the personal development of engineers into the industrial leaders of the future'.

### **3 Branch Strategy & Structures**

In May 1998, the Benelux branch committee reviewed its strategy and structure. It defined the following Vision and set Objectives to Branch activities which remained valid in 2003:

<b>Vision</b>	
<b>To be the Benelux Network of IMechE members contributing to professional and business life in Europe</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
<b>Activities</b>	<b>European Awareness</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· To hold and organise, solely or in collaboration with other bodies, at least 4 topic meetings per year and an AGM.</li><li>· To organise at least 4 technical visits per year</li><li>· To organise at least 2 social events per year</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· To engender awareness amongst IMechE staff and world-wide membership of issues initiatives and programmes at EU level</li><li>· To make a regular input to IMechE's strategic thinking especially on European Affairs</li><li>· To facilitate visits to EU Institutions of IMechE HQ management</li></ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<b>Links and Agreements</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· To compile and distribute to all members a quarterly branch newsletter.</li><li>· To maintain a regularly updated IMechE Benelux website</li><li>· To promote awareness and knowledge of Mechanical Engineering and IMechE within local engineering institutions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· To continue to maintain active links with the BSMEE, SRBII and VDI in Belgium and KiVI and NIRIA in Holland</li><li>· To collaborate actively with other UK engineering institutions in Continental Europe</li><li>· To explore possible links with other local professional bodies</li></ul>

These formed the basis of the Branch's 5-Year Business Plan which was sent to the HQ for approval in Sept 2003. . In addition, the Branch Committee will adopt and champion the theme of 'encouraging the personal development of engineers into the industrial leaders of the future'.

## **4 Promotion of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers**

The Committee sees its role as serving IMechE members working and living in the Benelux and as a facilitator of contacts with other national engineering bodies and the European Commission. This is possible because of the wealth of experience and contacts that the senior members of the Committee have built up over decades.

### **4.1 Contacts with European Engineering Institutions**

The Branch continues to strengthen its contacts with leaders of national and international engineering organisations, many of whom we meet regularly at committee meetings of the International Engineers Club or at its monthly lunchtime seminars. All of these organisations helped to publicise our 'Leaders of Industry' conference within their organisations. The event was attended by the President and the Secretary-General of FEANI, by the President of FABI and by Isobel Pollack, representing the IMechE leadership.

#### ***The Belgian Society of Mechanical and Environmental Engineers.***

Several informal contacts were made in 2003. THE BSMEE were one of the co-sponsors of the Leaders of Industry conference.

#### ***Societe Royale Belge des Ingenieurs et Industrialistes, Brussels, Belgium***

The SRBII has been a key contact for the Branch in Brussels. However, the governing administrative council of the SRBII at its meeting held 28 January 2004, voted unanimously for the dissolution of the SRBII in view of its financial situation which has deteriorated rapidly in the past year. We understand that a group of SRBII members is considering the possibility of taking over the Hôtel Ravenstein, the SRBII's headquarters, in an effort to maintain its links with engineers and industry.

This may have an impact on where the Branch holds its future activities in Brussels.

The SRBII was instrumental in setting up at its headquarters the "International Club of Engineers and Industrialists" (IEC) - a non-profit making organisation bringing together engineering associations in Belgium and neighbouring countries. The IMechE Benelux Branch is a founder member of the Club and our Past Chairman, Mr Bill Adam, is one of its two Vice-Presidents. The Club intends to continue its activities, but it is questionable that the Club or the Branch will be able to continue to use the facilities at the Hôtel Ravenstein, the SBRII's headquarters.

#### ***Koninklijk Instituut van Ingenieurs (KIVI), The Hague, The Netherlands (Royal Institution of Engineers in The Netherlands)***

KIVI is the national, multi-discipline engineering institution for university graduate engineers in The Netherlands. It has approximately 15 000 members.

The IMechE Benelux Branch immediate past Chairman, Ken Elvery, maintained active contact with KIVI during 2003. He attended the KIVI New Year Reception in

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January and made the arrangements for holding the Branch's Annual General Meeting at the KIVI headquarters in March 2003. Ken Elvery and Peter Tromans participated in the joint KIVI/NIRIA/IMechE event planning committee of the Mechanical and Marine Engineering Division.

KIVI/NIRIA mechanical engineering events are publicised to IMechE Benelux Branch members via the Benelux Branch Newsletter and the KIVI and NIRIA websites. Those events are, of course, held in the Dutch language.

### ***FABI, Brussels, Belgium***

Several informal contacts were made in 2003.

### ***AGI-ISF (now renamed CNISF)***

Several informal contacts were made in 2003. Mr Michel Van Hecke, an AGI-ISF member, has been elected President of the International Engineers Club. The President-elect, M. Noel Clavelloux, was a speaker at the Leaders of Industry conference.

### ***Association Luxembourgeoise des Ingenieurs***

The Vice Chairman has contacts with this organization and received invitations to attend its meetings.

### ***IEE, ICE, IChemE and Royal Society of Chemistry contacts in the Benelux countries***

Our Branch Chairman maintained personal contacts with the local Chairman or Secretaries of these institutions, with regional organisations in this area. There is a continuing interest in expanding liaison between Institutions in the Region. The RSC events are advertised via Benlist. Members of these institutions have attended the Brussels 'Beer and Banter' events.

## **4.2 Membership Recruitment Activities**

Our ability to recruit and develop members is limited to the International Schools in Benelux, plus expatriates trainee engineers posted to the Region.

### ***Careers Conventions***

For the fifth year in succession, the British School at Voorschoten, near The Hague, invited IMechE to be present at its annual Careers convention. More than Thirty professions were represented. This year Tony Waters and Hannah Rattay were able to show the latest IMechE schools publicity material to more than 20 senior pupils and their parents, who showed an interest in studying for mechanical engineering as a career. Aspects emphasised included the latest Engineering Council requirements to achieve Chartered Engineer status (SARTOR 3), the type and level of university degree required and the IMechE list of accredited university degree courses.

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However, the interest, challenge and satisfaction of an engineering career were also emphasized. A most successful exposure for our Branch, which may result in several pupils accepting the challenges which mechanical engineering, offers. Particularly pleasing is the high quality of the latest publicity materials Large posters, brochures, handouts, small gifts etc .This has helped significantly to increase the interest level and promote a positive image for Mechanical Engineering.

### ***Interviews for Corporate Membership***

2003 was again a rather slow year for interviews in the Netherlands with only three candidates presented for membership. All were successful with the predominance of candidates still via the Shell/NAM Oil Exploration and Production business who maintain a MPDS program. Thanks to Tony Waters, Alan Hankinson (M) and John Hurst (M) who assisted with the Interviews.

In Belgium, 3 candidates were interviewed (two for Member and one for Fellow). Thanks to Steve Price, Denis Hicks, Peter Tromans and Paul Drazen who conducted these interviews.

## **5 Communicating with the membership**

Communication with the Branch membership over the three countries is always challenging and expensive. Each mailshot costs the branch over £300.

The communication policy of the Branch is to use

- A Newsletter (4 times/year) and mailshots (2 times/year) as the main communication media.
- Events to increase personal contact between members and enhance our role in forming Networks in the region.
- An Internet page. The Branch implemented the decision to establish and control our own Website in 2000 ([www.imechebenelux.org](http://www.imechebenelux.org)).
- IMECHENEAR YOU
- The Agenda supplement in Professional Engineer.

In addition, an Internet mailing list has continued to inform members of activities in Benelux (Benlist). Subscription to the mailing list is voluntary and open to all people interested in Engineering.

Finally, our ability to communicate effectively with our members greatly improved using the accurate contact details established in the Branch Members Database.

### **5.1 Newsletter**

In 2003, the Branch continued its newsletter and issued four, 4-page editions. Editorial control was by Paul Revell. The Newsletter contained

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- Branch and Institution news,
- a review of recent Branch events,
- notification and registration details for forthcoming events,
- general interest articles about Benelux , and
- contact details, webpage information, subscription details for the Internet mailing lists

We have adopted a policy of distributing the Newsletter electronically by e-mail to all branch members who have provided an e-mail address (however such members can always select to still receive a paper copy by post).

The newsletter is circulated widely with HQ and to officers in other Regions.

## **5.2 Website and Mailing List**

Our website [www.imechebenelux.org](http://www.imechebenelux.org) has been maintained through the year and remains a good reference source for information such as committee details and event profiles.

The mailing list BenList for our members in Benelux was maintained once again in 2003 as a channel to inform subscribed members about our events and those of other institutions (e.g. SRBII, Brussels). The total number of subscribers is stable at 53.

The IMechE website [www.imech.org.uk](http://www.imech.org.uk) has a new section IMech Near You in which our Branch has information posted. Alan Hankinson and Paul Revell are accredited users for input of the section.

Information for 'Events' is now taken from our 'IMechE Near You' area.

## ***6 The Branch's contribution to professional and business life in Europe***

### **6.1 Summary of Events and Industrial Visits**

In 2003 we fell short, by one technical visit, of our target of organising, solely or in collaboration with other bodies, at least

- 4 topic meetings per year,
- an AGM,
- at least 4 technical visits per year, and
- at least 2 social events per year.

However, social events become more regular as, in 2003, the Branch continued an initiative for informal networking for all professionals called 'Beer and Banter' in Brussels. This is a monthly gathering advertised in local newspapers to allow

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professionals too meet each other on a regular basis. In general the Brussels events attract 5-10 people/event. Similar events were organized in Holland in 2003.

The table shows our achievements and membership response.

**Table 1: Summary of Events 2003**

Date	Topic	Attendance
26 Feb 2003	How Engineering Standards become political weapons	Cancelled
29 March 2003	AGM	19
29 March 2003	Lecture : The Jaguar Story (Joint with KVIV/Jaguar Owner Club of Holland)	40
10 May 2003	Branch Annual Dinner	40
22 June 2003	Dutch Military Aircraft Museum	
13 Sept 2003	RDW Test Track	30
	Digging for Gold – Luxembourg Weekend	13
13 Nov 2003	Shell's support for Ferrari in Formula 1	25
14 Nov 2003	Conference: "Leaders of Industry" (Joint with CIII)	53

In addition, Steven Price from Benelux assisted the IMechE's Consultants Group to organise a '**Projects, Partnerships and Procurement**' seminar at Birdcage Walk. However, this was ultimately cancelled.

The '**Leaders of Industry**' of Industry Seminar was the principal means by which the Branch promoted its theme of 'encouraging the personal development of engineers into the industrial leaders of the future'. It attracted senior business leaders from around Europe, and representatives from other professional institutions and associations, including Isobel Pollock representing IMechE, and Claire Quinton representing IEE.

In addition to high quality and entertaining presentations from senior figures from Ford, Alcan, CNISF, and the EU, the conference presented the findings of the Leaders of Industry survey into skills requirements for future leaders of European industry. The successful conference concluded with the launch of the European Institute for Industrial Leadership, a positive step taken to create a centre of excellence for the education and development of these necessary skills for engineers throughout Europe.

The branch has agreed to co-sponsor the short-course training programmes offered by the EIIIL and to promote them to the branch, including the young members, and to the wider IMechE membership, as part of its theme of '*encouraging the personal development of engineers into the industrial leaders of the future*'.

## 6.2 Young Members Group

The Young Members Group is re-organising following the departure of several key Young Members.

## **7 Increasing our influence within the UK structures of the Institution – all to advise on UK contacts in 2003**

In addition to supporting the Council in the management of the Institution, our unique objective remained to ensure that the Institution developed a credible International Policy

- to support its overseas members to a similar degree as UK resident members
- to highlight developments in Europe which are significant to both UK and Internationally resident members

The Branch Chairman represents the Branch at IMechE Council, this includes meetings of the Committee of Regional Chairmen and the annual overseas Branch Chairmen's Meeting in London.

Ken Elvery served on the IMechE Trustee Board as ordinary member with overseas residence. He took the role of Lead Member for International Affairs, helping to develop a global policy for the Institution. Additionally, Ken serves as IMechE's representative on The Engineering Council (UK) – International Advisory Panel.

Several committee members continued to provide valuable input to HQ.

1. In the IT matters Alan Hankinson continued to represent the Branch on the IT Committee to assist with implementation of the Institution's IT policy.
2. Steven Price took an active role in The IMechE's Consultants Group organising 'Projects, Partnerships and Procurement', helping to define and test the Consultants Directory database of members, representing the IMechE at a joint initiative with IBM on innovation in industry, and helping to compile a position paper to the DTI's consultation exercise on innovation published in December 2003.

## **8 Administrative Changes**

### **8.1 Constitution**

The Committee maintains its own Constitution under the Institution's Branch Rule Book. No changes were made in 2003.

### **8.2 Committee Structure**

The Committee's policy is to preserve a structure that represents the geographical spread of its membership, and contact with local organisations, including the EU.

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At present, the committee structure has the four constitutional posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Honorary Secretary.

In addition, special positions exist for liaison with Belgian and UK institutions, maintenance of membership lists, Editor of the Newsletter, contacts with Professional Engineer and Website development and Young Members'.

Each country in the Benelux has at least one Committee member to co-ordinate local events and act as a focal point in that country.

#### ***Administrative Posts***

Chairman	Andy Webb
Past Chairman	Ken Elvery
Vice Chairman	Theo Speaight
Treasurer	John Thompson
Honorary Secretary	Denis Hicks

#### ***Functional Posts***

Belgian Events	Andy Webb, Steven Price
Dutch Events	Peter Tromans, Ken Elvery
Luxembourg Events	Theo Speaight
Liaison Belgian Institutions	Bill Adam
Newsletter	Paul Revell
Website	Alan Hankinson
Membership Database	Malcolm Henderson
Young Members	Elizabeth O'Malley, Greg Bouzakis

### **8.3 Budget**

The Institution granted the Branch a budget of £6210 for its activities in 2003 (£6900 in 2002). Other income of £1875 arose from events, sponsorships of the newsletter and web-site and bank interest. In addition, the CRC Chairman's fund agreed to support the Branch's major one-day conference, 'Leaders of Industry', by up to a maximum of £500 to be taken from the Branch's reserves. £245 of this amount was drawn on to cover the conference expenses. A further sum of £443 was donated by the IEE Benelux Branch to sponsor the cocktail given after the Leaders of Industry event. Thus, in 2003 the Branch broke even with a total income of £8773 balancing a total expenditure of £8773.

The use of free-of-charge resources provided by some of our committee members and their companies saved the Branch an estimated £1600 in 2003.

The principle sponsors were:

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Sponsor(s)</b>
Partial sponsorship of Branch Newsletter	Koyo Seiko Europe

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Sponsorship of the Branch web-site	Shell E.& P.
Sponsorship of Leaders of Industry cocktail	IEE Benelux Branch
Miscellaneous use of facilities	Air Products
	Dutch Space
	Allseas
	Huntsman Polyurethanes
	Shell
	British Embassies, Brussels & Den Haag

The Branch maintained two bank accounts. The principal account in Belgium, held with Citibank, Waterloo was managed by the Treasurer. A second account at ABN-AMRO Bank in the Netherlands was maintained to minimise transfer costs for expenditures in the Netherlands. This account was managed by the Branch's Immediate Past Chairman. The future of the second account is under review given the introduction of low cost European Banking Services in mid-2003. Expenditures were authorised according to the Branch Constitution by the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Honorary Secretary.

The statement of accounts is available from the Treasurer.

#### **8.4 Insurance**

The Branch maintained its own insurance within Benelux, in addition to that of the Institution. The premium was Euro 137 renewable annually and was arranged through the brokers Bokiau of Brussels.

This insurance covers legal responsibilities resulting from our actions as part of the Branch (or related activities, e.g. participation at social or professional events, setting up displays at exhibitions, preparation and distribution of food and drinks). Material damage is covered up to Euro 125000 per incident, personal injury coverage is Euro 1.25 million per incident. The Branch pays the first Euro 125 of any damage.

Coverage is world-wide (but any activity outside the EU must be notified in advance).

Use of vehicles is covered but committee members' private insurance covers personal vehicles used on I Mech E business

If we purchase an item for the branch and it is used by a member then any damage-in-use is covered.

The normal exclusions apply e.g. use of explosives, damages under the influence of drink and drugs, illegal actions, damages due to extreme faults of judgement, war, aeroplanes falling out of the sky etc.

We continue *not* to pay for insurance cover for the following

Payment of legal costs,

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Insurance for items in our possession (e.g. loaned equipment),  
Insurance related to any product that we produce.

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**For, and on behalf of, the Benelux Branch of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.**

**Denis Hicks, CEng MIMechE**

Honorary Secretary – IMechE Benelux Branch

March 2004