

MINUTES OF THE IRTE PROFESSIONAL SECTOR COUNCIL

Wednesday, 11/06/2025 11:00HRS

Society of Operations Engineers, 22 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1PR, London & Teams

Confidential

Committee:	(Chair) Nick Elliott	NE
	Elected Member, Ian Foster	IF
	Elected Member Joe Williams	JW
	Elected Member, Michael Hutchinson	MH
	Elected Member Neil Mitchell	NM
	Elected Member, George Haywood (until 2027)	GH
	Co- opted Member, David Grogut	DG

Guests:	Ian Macdonald	IM
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SOE Office Team:	Executive Director: Emma Thompson	ET
	Technical Product Manager: Leo Hubbard	LH
	In capacity of Minute taker: Laila Saidi (Admin Assistant)	

Joining on MS Teams:	Neil Mitchel	NM
	George Haywood	GH
	Andrew Trigg (until 2027)	AT
	Leo Hubbard	LH
	Saul Figueroa	SF
	Chris Grime	CG

Apologies:	Elected Member, Lawrie Alford
	Vice Chair John Davies
	Co- Opted Member Richard Belton

1. Welcome and apologies for absence and confirmation of quorum and any conflicts to be raised

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were recorded as above.

2. Update from the chair

The Chair announced that there's been a lot happening in the past few months, including the launch of the Maintenance Provision Rating Scheme (MPRS). The Chair agreed that at the end of the meeting he and ET would explain what the MPRS is. The Chair suggested using the presentation he had put together can then be shared to the Committee and then an edited version can then be used on social media.

- Action: (The Chair) NE, Chris Knight and Jack Spence

The Chair explained that the CV Show this year, had been one of the best one in years. There were a lot of discussions about MPRS. ET had also presented on the main stage on the IRTE skills mapping guide. The guide explains that you don't have to be a university graduate to get involved in engineering as there are different avenues that can be taken whether it's management, entrepreneurship, starting from the bottom and working your way up.

3. Minutes for previous meeting and actions

The Action's from the last meeting were:

NO	Action	Description	Owner
1	1.1	Explore creation of short, sharp technical videos for social media platforms	GS
2	2.1	Develop strategy to inject positive change in irtec training promotion	Irtec steering group
3	3.1	Explore ways to embed SOE membership within irtec certification process	LH & AC
4	4.1	Schedule monthly calls with Transport Engineer	NE & CG
5	5.1	Develop a plan to digitalise Transport Engineer	JB & GS

The Chair asks the committee if there are any comments that anyone would like to raise on the agenda. AT mentioned he wasn't able to see any updates on the mentor platform, as he has had his name down as a registered mentor. ET explained that there are 60 mentors and around 40 mentees. ET suggested to AT that they can do more advertising to say that there is still support for the mentees for them to receive the help they need.

Action

Action for ET, to let Robin Bates know that more advertising can be done on the mentoring platform.

4. Expressions of AOB

The Chair asks the committee if there is anything that anyone would like to raise AOB for the end of the meeting.

- IM suggested the CPD Platform

5. Membership and growth strategy

The Chair explained that there needs to be a form of structure in order to grow the membership. A few ongoing things that are in place are:

- The PSV skills Challenge which has been complete.
- An initial Pilot for an HGV Skills Challenge in partnership with DAF Trucks would be taking place in September in Nottingham.
- CV show
- Road Transport Expo
- Transport Engineer Journal.

The Chair expressed on how there are different types of techniques to promote this such as:

- Webinars
- Podcasts
- marketing and business development.

A lot of potential with contacting organisations with corporate membership and individual membership to help them understand that IRTE can help the with their careers. The Chair suggested that younger people in the organisation that knows best about social media can help out with this.

ET gave an update that this year we were exhibiting at Road Transport Expo (RTX) in the capacity as a media partner via Transport Engineer. CG enquires about being able to join as an associate

member online immediately as he noticed that it didn't work making it difficult to join online. ET says that Mick raised this to her and Oliver Teasell and that this is being reviewed to make it easier to join as a basic member, there shouldn't be any hurdles.

Action

- To make applying for a membership online easier and more user friendly to gain more members.
- The Chair suggested that we need to periodically check that the systems for applying for membership is working how it should be.

The Chair and ET discussed short video clips that catches one's attention and how he'd like to explore that to put quick messages to get something out for members and those interested to become members. CG good idea to do short clips for social media to have a good engagement for more membership growth especially to target a younger audience.

Action

- NE says the key thing is where to look and where to ask. In terms of guidance documents wouldn't be a bad idea to push technical guides.
- GH suggested having a forum whereby we can engage with SOE members.

The Chair suggested a guidance document to answer questions correctly and accurate as possible when being asked. LH with membership growth strategy, there's a good benefit with integrating membership on boarding process with irtec application process for example, an opt in process. The Chair agreed to having a process for those who are interested, that we can track more members as long as the correct marketing material is there.

Action

Video testimonials show testimonial videos on the website from existing members and companies. Action ET to speak to Chris Knight and Jack Spence. IM commented that it is difficult to get individuals to be members. Corporate membership from companies may be a better idea for more membership growth.

6. Summary Head office report Update

ET announces that there has been a lot of engagement activities including:

- Presentations, industry dinners and strategic round tables.
- Demi had joined admin team alongside Laila. Saul has joined and is now working alongside Leo.
- Jack had been promoted to marketing manager as Greeshma had resigned.
- Brenda is a new starter and has joined as the head of finance as Deva had also resigned.

In Terms of Business development ET explained that since having Alex on board as SOE's business development manager it has helped a lot. New sponsors for skills challenge which are:

- GYS Welding
- G2G engineering
- Freeway

Freeway has been a sponsor before, but the other two are brand new sponsors and having met them last week, they were keen on the testing side, so Richard Belton at S and B Automotive Academy is working with them for next year's Skills Challenge.

Active corporate partner opportunities are in progress with British compressed air society. Tribblum recycling, SGS and DAF. Further good news is that MAN have confirmed this morning that they want to be signed up as a corporate partner and want all their workshops MPRS accredited. In terms of the

MPRS portal there have been 3,700 views 1,400 visits and 150 accounts created giving us revenue of £1,680.

- Skills Challenge testing last week with the awards coming up on the **16th of July 2025**.
- Stand at Fleet Engineer, which Nick, Alex and Leo attended last week.
- LiftEX taking place on the 11 and 12 of June
- RTX Expo 24-26 June.

ET added that the team have been doing a lot of campaigns targeting Lapsed members, in a more personalised approach than previously. 960 members still to pay however, has improved as this time around last year there were over 1,000 members to pay. The team are currently updating corporate partner material and are also currently looking at partnership with Nineteen Group.

Finance

- From January to April income of £403 these are budget of £463. Shortfall of £60,000.
- Expenditure is £524,000, currently under budget of 73,000
- Cash in bank is just over £1,001,06 3.09 in investments
- Third income is £830,000 to be released in a year

Key notes

irtec 15,058 active licences. 1843 new licences in 2025

- Workshop accreditation 435 active 41 added in 2025.
- MPRS 55 levels awarded across 55 workshops
- AI policy in place. Only 1 case of misuse
- Document control and SharePoint access being updated this year.

Membership and registration

- The criteria has been updated.
- No non-conformities with the Auditors. Corrective plans in place.
- Power BI is now brought into our CRM system. Going well in terms placing data and reports.
- Current members stand at 8,666 which is up from 8,584 which were the figures in March.
- Paying members is 8,391. Free members being 275.
- New members in May 82, in operations sector. Average age of member is 53.
- Payment method: 74% paying via credit card. 26% via direct debit.

CG shares his thoughts on the head office report and gives his congratulations, and it noted that having the head office report is helpful.

7. Transport Engineer

JB explained that he will be doing a case study for the MPRS.

Advertising Income Update

- Year-on-Year Comparison: Advertising income for the current period is still ahead of the same period last year overall, though there are notable challenges.
- DAF Bookings: Last year, DAF booked 12 full pages. This year, only 1 has been booked so far. They are expected to rebook for the August issue, but this represents a significant drop.
- Revenue Shortfall: We are currently 10 pages down, equating to a potential revenue loss of £9,900 (based on a rate of £990 per page).

Other OEMs:

- Renault and Scania have placed adverts sporadically—Scania in particular has appeared a few times thanks to LE's efforts.
- Iveco has expressed interest in working with us but currently lacks the budget to proceed.

Print vs Digital:

- There was discussion about reducing or removing the print edition. While digital-only publishing is more sustainable, there are concerns about the potential impact on advertising income if physical copies are reduced significantly.
- *Transport Engineer* currently publishes 12 print issues annually, alongside a digital version. A sudden reduction to just 4 print issues a year would be a drastic change.
- The average reader age is 54, which is relevant when considering how content and adverts are consumed—many in this demographic still prefer print.
- DAF Uncertainty: There is uncertainty about whether DAF will book two issues this year. If not, the expected revenue loss from DAF and other regular advertisers could be as high as £48,595—or more.
- Positive Development: A new partnership with RTX has been confirmed, which is a positive step for *Transport Engineer*. Events like RTX help increase circulation of physical copies, which in turn supports advertiser engagement and revenue.

Action

To make the magazines digital for the public, full magazine for those who are subscribed members. Make an 18-month plan to then revisit to see where members stand with the online magazines. For Leo to coordinate the case study. The committee are looking at removing the free version. To access the full version, this would be restricted to members and subscribers only.

8. Current Professional Sector Committee external activities

- Next Stanmore meeting 12th June 2025.

Action for the Chair- To circulate the documents from that meeting so everyone is aware of what was presented. The Chair will then circulate the minutes for the meeting which will be in six months' time.

The Chair shares some information on the Stanmore meeting and announces that it is a stand-alone meeting that the IRTE representative (NE) attends.

The Chair announced that the Stanmore meeting discussion will be about:

- Vehicle testing performance.
- Enforcement
- Operational performance.
- Vehicle testing update.
- Enforcement policy update.
- Data views on driver's skills scope shortages.

NE briefly mentioned that he is the only IRTE representative attending the Stanmore meetings and he would welcome volunteers from the council to also join him and attend the meetings. DG has offered to now attend the Stanmore meetings with NE. There was also a discussion about potentially combining the Stanmore meeting and the TWIG meetings as they have a lot of overlap in attendees and topics covered.

Action the Chair will send out the document for Stanmore and the TWIG meeting.

The guide to Maintaining Road Worthiness has been reissued with some adjustments for better guidance. The Chair explained from DVSA point of view they want to start streamlining, start of the next process of the next review.

Action for the chair- To circulate this when information is given.

The next MPRS Steering Group meeting is on the **3rd of July 2025** in Kent. The purpose of the meeting is to look for a workshop as it has been awarded MPRS rating Daimler. Discuss the Initial numbers and what we have achieved to date.

Irtec

ET mentioned that the irtec steering group and the Expert working group that work on updating all levels of irtec. LH wants to have the steering group first to see what the OEMs have decided and what they want to do with irtec moving forward.

(The Chair) NE shares that the last meeting was in December and the one previously was in July and suggests the next one should be in September/October time as it gives them a chance to have a discussion and have something to lead back to the steering group. It was agreed to have this in place for September or October this year.

Action irtec Steering Group meeting to be scheduled for quarter four – LH.

External working group updates

ET had joined a monthly meeting for an external working group called HGV skills. Which is sharing what SOE is doing as an organisation with SMMT, RHA and Logistics UK. ET has spoken about what is being done with Skills Challenge last week and what we have coming now. ET added that if there are any updates that are useful to the Committee, she will share them.

The Axles stands publication has now been published.

9. Technical Guidance Review

There are 6 technical guides that need to be reviewed and updated. The Chair had started work on this but asked the Committee for their assistance also.

Action: IRTE PSC to refresh and re-issue the technical guides.

ET had shared a link at the IRTE PSC meeting for the guides for everyone to have a look at the documents: <https://www.soe.org.uk/resources-home/technical-guides.html>

Both CG and AT had volunteered to assist with updating three of the guides, assisting the Chair.

10. Achievements since the last PSC

The Chair Identifying 12 young members- Action completed

Transport Engineer review of the journal content is happening - talks commence monthly

11. IRTE Services Ltd – Financial Summary (to 30 April 2025)

The Executive Director updated the committee on IRTE Services' financial performance and key initiatives for the period ending April 2025.

- **Principal Activities:**

IRTE Services continues to focus on delivering two core initiatives: the established IRTE Workshop Accreditation Scheme and the newly launched Maintenance Provider Recognition Scheme (MPRS), which was introduced at the Commercial Vehicle Show in late April 2025. Early performance results reflect timing differences, particularly with the MPRS, where income generation is expected to begin in May 2025.

▪ **Financial Performance:**

The company reported a turnover of £33,494, which was below the budgeted figure of £49,775, resulting in a negative variance of £16,281.

Gross profit amounted to £18,705 against a budget of £29,144, leading to a shortfall of £10,438.

Operating profit was £17,288 compared to a budgeted £27,711, reflecting a negative variance of £10,423.

However, interest received exceeded expectations at £1,865 (vs. £800 budgeted), generating a positive variance of £1,065.

Consequently, profit before tax stood at £19,153, falling short of the £28,511 target by **£9,358**. No tax or Gift Aid payments have been made to date. Income and expenditure related to the CV Show are not applicable during this reporting period.

▪ **IRTE Workshop Accreditation Scheme:**

The scheme generated a **total income of £33,705** up to the end of April 2025.

A total of **39 workshops were inspected**, broken down as follows:

- 35 Band A workshops contributing £30,525
 - 4 Band C workshops generating £3,180
 - No activity was reported under Band B or overseas inspections.
- The scheme produced a net contribution of £21,475, exceeding the budgeted figure of £19,194.

▪ **Maintenance Provision Rating Scheme (MPRS):**

Officially launched in April 2025 at the CV Show, MPRS has not yet generated income, recording £0 in April against a budgeted £14,950.

However, expenditure of £2,841 was recorded, remaining under budget.

Income is expected to commence from May 2025 onwards as provider uptake begins.

▪ **Balance Sheet (as of 30 April 2025):**

The company maintains a strong cash position with cash at bank of £333,392.

Debtors total £31,590, while creditors due within one year amount to £55,528.

Net assets stand at £309,454, with creditors and debtors remaining stable compared to the position in December 2024.

12. Any other business

ET had formally thanked LH for his work on launching MPRS on time. IM mentioned CPD good practice for every member of the community to submit their CPD every 12-months to better serve members.

Meeting Ended at 14:15

NO	Action	Responsible Person/Group	Completed
1	Inform Robin Bates that more advertising can be done on the mentoring platform	ET	
2	Make applying for membership online easier and more user-friendly	ET	
3	Periodically check that the systems for applying for membership are functioning correctly	The Chair	

4	Create short clips for social media to increase engagement and target a younger audience	CG	
5	Promote technical guides and ensure accessibility	NE	
6	Set up a forum to engage with SOE members	GH	
7	Add video testimonials from existing members and companies to the website	ET	
8	Make the magazines digital for the public; full version only for subscribed members	IRTE PSC	
9	Create an 18-month plan to evaluate member engagement with online magazines	IRTE PSC	
10	Coordinate the Kevin Rooney case study and follow-up interviews	LH	
11	Restrict access to the full magazine version to members/subscribers only	IRTE PSC	
12	Send out the document for Stanmore and TWIG meeting	The Chair	
13	Refresh and re-issue the technical guides	IRTE PSC	