

**REGIONAL REPORT – UNITED KINGDOM****UK Project Management Scene**

*By Miles Shepherd*

**British Computer Society**

There are many organisations with an interest in project management in UK. Best known is the Association for Project Management, at more than 15,000 strong, it is by far the biggest. Next comes the British Computer Society (BCS) with probably 8,000 participants in their Specific Interest Group on Project Management and it is this group that is the focus this month.

BCS has run a specialist group on project management for around 20 years so they are not new kids on the block. They publish books on project management, but with a twist. Their line is that projects concerning IT are more about business than technology although clearly that too is important. They take the point made by Paul Coby, CIO of British Airways. Coby stated at BCS Elite Spring Workshop that in 1996 BA was the most profitable airline, in 2000 it was 21st on the list and by 2005 it was back on top. His rationale is that BA lost control of the cost of projects because there was no adequate measurement in place. Coby believes there are no IT projects, just business projects; that IT departments bring technological advice to the table to help a business improve and that IT does matter. That BA has reversed the situation is evident in many of the recently completed and highly successful initiatives such as e-ticketing and self service check ins. It will be interesting to see how this transfers to Heathrow's Terminal 5 which is due to open in less than a year and relies on IT for much of its innovative baggage handling and routing.

BCS has run its own PM certification scheme for many years through the Information Systems Examination Board. This arm defines syllabi for various industry areas such as service management, security planning and project management. The PM set includes foundation level certificates in IS Project Management and IT Enabled Business change while the Practitioner level has a certificate and advanced Certificate in Programme and Project Support Office plus 7

other related qualifications. The set is complemented by a specialist Certificate in IS Project Management. Supported by an extensive network of accredited training providers and monthly examinations, the scheme is one of the more successful project management qualification systems.

## APM News

As reported in Breaking News, APM held its Annual Dinner at the Dorchester Hotel, in London's Mayfair on 29 March 2007. The sell out event, hosted by APM President Dr Martin Barnes, is one of the highlights of APM's calendar and attracted a wide range of industry, academic and professional members. TV Presenter Adam Hart-Davies, well known for his historical engineering programmes, replied for the guests.

The evening began with the inaugural presentation of the President's Medal to immediate past Chairman, Tom Taylor, for his inspirational leadership. See Breaking News for further details. Also presented were the three new Honorary Fellows who each received their certificates. Sir Harold Bernstein was unable to be present but was represented by a colleague from Manchester City Council. Sir Harold has been a staunch supporter of PM for many years and his championing led to the highly successful Commonwealth Games in Manchester among many other regeneration projects that have transformed the City.



Guest Speaker, TV  
Presenter Adam  
Hart-Davies

John Faiers led a highly successful Branch and his ideas led to the introduction of local Chapters to bridge the sometimes large geographical gaps in the Branch network. He also played a crucial part in the acquisition of the HQ premises. The third recipient was Miles Shepherd, past Chair of APM and past President and immediate past Chairman of IPMA.

Members also learned that the Ministry of Defence has reorganised its Procurement Agency into two parts. Of more immediate interest is that MoD has also mandated APM qualifications for its extensive staff in projects. This is a major step forward for both APM and MoD since it gives great recognition to the professional development work that has taken place over the past 5 years.



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