

TECHNICAL STRATEGY



A global focus

One of the prime objectives of the Energy Institute's 2017–2019 strategy is to internationalise its activities across the board, 'bringing global energy expertise together'. EI Technical Director *Martin Maeso* reviews progress within the development of good practice against the strategic objective of increased internationalisation.

As the UK grapples with the concept of Brexit and its place in the world once it leaves the European Union (EU), the Energy Institute (EI) too is thinking about its role within a global energy industry. And how to cement its relevance more globally and build on the value proposition established to date. We believe that an increasing and sustained international profile is pivotal to

the EI fulfilling its stated claim of 'bringing global expertise together'.

The EI is a network, stretching across the energy system, from oil and gas through to innovative low carbon technologies. Central to this network is the technical programme, and the development and use of industry good practice. It can be argued that the good practice work has always had a very international feel. It helps underpin global industry operations and is referenced widely by regulators and other international bodies. Furthermore, this approach is supported, funded and used by technical partner companies with a truly global outlook and outreach.

The good practice guidelines which form the main output from the technical work are used very widely. We are able to accurately track from where they are downloaded and by whom they are used. We know they are downloaded across over 100

countries. So, on the surface we have a robustly quantified and truly global output. But country downloads across the globe are a very simple yardstick against which to measure the international relevance of the EI and its good practice.

Technical expertise

Another yardstick would be to look at those who work with the EI in developing the good practice, or the committee members themselves. The EI has upwards of 100 technical committees across health, safety, environment, asset integrity, measurement, and test methods, and covers the entire value chain for oil and gas, offshore and onshore wind, thermal power generation, storage and energy management.

On publication of the strategy, each committee was asked to undertake a number of tasks in support of the drive to increase the international profile of the EI. The first task was to review committee membership, looking to where those helping shape the guidance are based. The next task was to look at the responsibility of those helping develop the guidance, and understand if they had a UK-specific, regional or truly international role and perspective within their own organisations. The challenge would then be to increase the level of participants from outside the UK and outside Europe, as we move through the three-year strategy period.

Interestingly, the review itself demonstrated that many of the committees already have a truly global perspective. This might be subject-driven to a large extent, but even where a given committee has a very UK-based membership, often there will be close collaboration with an organisation based elsewhere, and very often the outputs of that committee will be heavily used in different parts of the world.

Aviation refuelling, measurement and tests

A number of areas already stand out as being global both in the committee composition and relevance of the good practice delivered. This includes work on aviation refuelling, where the EI plays a pivotal role in underpinning refuelling operations and providing guidance on the safe and reliable provision of jet fuel to commercial aircraft. The EI sits at the heart of the global industry, working with

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metamorphosis

other organisations such as IATA and ICAO to ensure that over 100,000 daily commercial aircraft refuelling operations see fuel delivered into planes free of dirt and water, and within specification.

Equally, EI committees on measurement – where guidelines are developed to support both industry and regulators on standard measurement methods for quantity and quality control for allocation, custody transfer and fiscal purposes, as well as stock control and loss prevention – are entirely global in the committee membership. Meetings are held in the US, Asia-Pacific and Europe, and the guidance is used far and wide. Much of this work is carried out in partnership with the ISO, or the API and other international bodies.

A number of other areas are equally international, including work on test methods development, where the EI cooperates globally, often leading efforts to update and develop methods that essentially underpin the application of global fuel specifications. In this area, we work with CEN, ISO, ASTM and a host of other organisations.

This approach can also be relevant for very specific activities, such as the development of guidance on avoiding vibration induced fatigue, where work groups meet remotely and members dial in from the US, Asia-Pacific and Australia. Timing such meetings so everyone is awake is a real logistical challenge!

Wider initiatives

A key aspect of the internationalisation strategy for good practice is to work within the wider EI initiatives to build a presence in regional target areas. In particular South East Asia and the Middle East, where close liaison with and support for the regional Managing Directors is aimed at establishing regional technical groups that might then form the focus point for wider EI activities and initiatives.

The premise is to link with EI Partners operating in the region and encouraging discussion on what is relevant from the EI's existing portfolio of good practice. Establishing where there are gaps and then either working with a committee of local industry experts to amend and repurpose existing guidance, or build good practice from scratch. In doing this the intent is to engage with wider industry representatives and encourage others to join the EI as Partners. To support development

of regional good practice, and link to and access the wealth of existing guidance, most of which will already be applicable and relevant.

A good example of this in practice is with the EI Asia Forum. Established under and linked with the Hydrocarbon Management Committee, the Asian Forum reviews existing content and project work funded through the EI, and also looks at applying this locally. Developing associated guidance and good practice that is specific to the region. For example, recent work has been developed through the Forum on bunkering activities.

It is perhaps not a surprise that when talking with local industry about specific problems they might face, it becomes clear that work has already happened in other geographies, and sometimes in other sectors, that might help address a particular local issue. The recent introduction of Workplace Safety and Health (MHI) Regulations (2017) in Singapore – a core feature of which is the requirement to submit a safety case, and with that a need to apply and consider human factors issues in building the safety case – provides a good example.

Recent workshops in both Singapore and Kuala Lumpur highlighted how implementation of the safety case regime in the region has driven the desire for knowledge on human factors. Supported by a need to build competency regionally and opening the potential to draw on the wealth of work already undertaken within the established EI good practice programme on human factors.

Building communication

Often the biggest challenge in getting traction in the EI good practice programme is our ability to communicate with the relevant audience, particularly in regions where the EI value proposition is less well recognised. One way to overcome this is to work with the local Managing Directors to deliver local workshops and dissemination events. A recent conference on HSSE held in Dubai is a good example.

Regional work on the development of solar panel fields highlighted an array of potential challenges, as disparate as working in extreme climates (heat), fitness standards, dealing with venomous snakes and scorpions, manual handling issues and physiological issues of remote working. Believe it or not, all of these issues are covered by EI good practice already

developed, albeit in other regions and other sectors. A work group will now be established under local facilitation but linked to the core EI technical activity, and will seek to understand what the HSE issues are in major solar field design and operation; which issues have commonality; which are non-competitive and likely to show willingness to resolve them collectively. The solutions may include learning from each other, existing EI guidance in other sectors, or specific gap-filling research and knowledge development.

One inescapable issue when thinking about internationalising work is that of language. It goes without saying that in order to reach target audiences the work developed needs to be translated into relevant languages. High profile documents are regularly being translated into key languages, but interestingly, the issue of language is being mitigated as much as possible by disseminating guidance using animations, gamification and pictorially as much as possible. This approach is more applicable when trying to engage on single or specific issues, but in future will be used increasingly for disseminating information.

Looking forward

Efforts to engage more globally are essential for the future of the EI technical good practice work. Experts are no longer confined to well-defined areas and regions. The industry we support is global, and the knowledge base within that industry is spread far and wide. We have to engage that knowledge-base if we are to remain relevant.

One thing remains constant regardless of geography or sector. The EI ethos of independence, being an honest broker, and encouraging collaboration and building consensus across parties will always be at the heart of what we do on good practice. It is also what helps makes the EI somewhat unique and stand out from the crowd. ●

Participants at the EI Human Factors Forum in Kuala Lumpur

