



# Middle East Interest Group of Engineers Australia

August, 2011  
Volume 1, Issue 3

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## Convenor's Message

This is the third of our occasional newsletters. I am pleased to announce that the newsletter now has an editorial team consisting of Andrew Collings in Doha and Julia Smith in Abu Dhabi. We welcome any comments on the structure and format of the newsletter. We especially welcome any contributions to this newsletter.

The goal of MEIG is to hold presentations every two months in the UAE and Qatar. If there is a demand we would like to hold presentation meetings elsewhere in the region as well. We have not had any site visits for sometime, so anyone who is interested in hosting a site visit please contact myself or either one of our editors.

We now are seeking presentations for the remainder of the year and early 2012. We are all doing interesting work, so please consider making a presentation to fellow engineers.

## People and Venues Needed

For MEIG to continue to flourish, we need members who are prepared to make presentations.

Also in the UAE, we need to continue to find suitable venues to attract our members from both Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

These presentations are really the life blood of the MEIG.

## Coming Events in 2011

### UAE

In the UAE we have the following, interesting presentation on:

- Wednesday 14 September at 6:30pm  
**Estidama, presented by Irina Foster, AECOM Sustainability Team Leader.**

Venue: AECOM Al Jazira Office, Abu Dhabi

RSVP: [julia.smith@aecom.com](mailto:julia.smith@aecom.com) by 11th September

### Qatar

In Qatar, we have the following interesting presentation on:

- *Tuesday September 13*  
**The role of ASHGHAL in Qatar National Development Strategy 2011 to 2016-**  
Mr Lambros Karavis

The presentation will be held at the RasGas Building in West Bay. All presentations will commence at 18:00.

RSVP Len Johnstone- E-mail address: [lenj@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:lenj@loxinfo.co.th)

In addition, we are currently pursuing the possibility of site visits.

*A presentation is also proposed by Blue Visions for both UAE and Qatar on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of October respectively. Full details will be provided next month.*

## Did you Know?

You can access webcasts of Engineers Australia technical presentations and seminars through the Engineers Australia website. This is a useful tool for maintaining Continuing Professional Development (CPD). You can access the webcasts by navigating to the 'Resources and Library' tab on the Engineers Australia website.

## Engineering Quote

*Engineering problems are under-defined, there are many solutions, good, bad and indifferent. The art is to arrive at a good solution. This is a creative activity, involving imagination, intuition and deliberate choice.*

– Ove Arup –



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## UAE July Presentation

On Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July the MEIG held a meeting in Dubai for members and guests. Mitch Walbaum from Worley Parsons was the guest speaker and gave a presentation on his work in Iraq. The project, which began in September 2010, involved environmental monitoring for an Iraqi oil field.

The team who worked on the project was established in the UAE and comprised of mostly expats and one Iraqi (Dr. Jamal Abaychi). The oilfield covers 400 square kilometres and contains numerous environmental receptors including; surface water bodies (marshland and river systems), farmland and several villages. The intention was to monitor early development work of the field for impact to the environment, with the intention to control and reduce the observed impacts.

Mitch described the many project challenges, in particular having to work in what is still a war torn environment. He described security as major issue, as well as trying to bring environmental concern to a region where environmental preservation is still on the back-burner when compared to personal safety and well-being. Mitch gave the audience valuable insight into what it is like to work in Iraq through his engaging presentation and interesting photographs.



## People's Profiles



Len Johnstone is the founding convenor of the Middle East Interest Group of Engineers Australia.

Although he is based in Bangkok, he has spent significant time over the last few years working in the Middle East in particular in Doha and Cairo.

**Name:** Len Johnstone

**Company:** Oriental Consultants

**Location:** Bangkok

**Position:** Senior Transport Planner

**Why did you choose engineering as a career?**

*I actually chose it because I want to use mathematics in a practical manner.*

**What has been the most interesting job you have worked on so far?**

*There are two projects which have really inspired me. I worked on the planning of the first mass transit system in Bangkok. The inspiration was my involvement in the project from conception to operation. The second project was a national project in Bosnia Herzegovina. As a neutral party, our project team enabled the opposing parties to come together in a technical environment as transport provided a linkage between all parties.*

**What inspires you?**

*Young people becoming involvement in planning.*

**What makes you laugh?**

*A good comedy film.*

**What annoys you?**

*Stubborn people who will not change their point of view when presented with good alternatives.*

**If you could do anything, what would you change?**

*I would ensure that everyone thought of the community not themselves.*

**What was one of your best holidays?**

*One of my best holidays was a driving holiday in South East Thailand to Chantanaburi.*

**What is your passion outside of engineering?**

*Theatre.*