

UK Project Management Round Up



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INTRODUCTION

The Summer in Europe is usually pretty quiet, with little happening except social events – the so-called Silly Season. There have certainly been many social events in UK in the past month, Glorious Goodwood (second only to Royal Ascot in the flat racing season) and the Commonwealth Games to name but two. The latter event is a major multi-sport event, second only to the Olympic Games in size and coverage so is a pretty significant event requiring considerable project management skills to bring off successfully. The Games are winding down as I write but from all reports, the Scots have made a great success of what they call the Friendly Games – I'd say this is another example of great British project management!

However, the project world does not really stop, whatever the season and there are some topics to report; notably in the Defence and transport sectors. There has also been a development in the long running saga of the Association for Project Management's (APM) application for a Royal Charter and the wider project world has lost another great leader.

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

UK based readers (and many others too) will be aware that APM applied to the Privy Council for the grant of a Royal Charter. Such an award identifies the occupational group as a profession so far as the British Government is concerned. It has significance beyond the UK borders: many commonwealth countries understand and support the concept of Royal Charters and given that there are 71 member states in the Commonwealth, a significant worldwide grouping will see Project Management as a profession. APM set out to achieve Chartered status for the project management profession in 2007. Support was, and remains, strong with 50 organisations across the public and private sectors supporting the case for raising professional standards in project management. Project and programme management are vital contributors to the UK's economy. The National Audit Office reports that expenditure on the 43 most complex projects in government are worth over £200 billion alone.

Chartered status is seen to offer a number of benefits:

- It offers assurance to users of project management services through the association's regulating authority;
- It acknowledges project professionals as experts in their field, offering a clear differentiator between professionals and others.
- It provides a framework for improving project performance.
- It will raise the profile and value of project management.

The road to Royal Charter has been tortuous, and strongly opposed by the Project Management Institute (PMI). However, in February 2013, The Minister for the Cabinet Office decided to recommend that a Royal Charter should be granted to APM and the application was then considered by a committee of the Privy Council that unanimously reached its recommendation that a Royal Charter should be granted to APM, and that this recommendation would be placed on the list of business for the meeting of the Privy Council to be held in October 2013. This decision was challenged by PMI who submitted a request for a Judicial Review which was heard in London in early July. Having reserved judgment at the substantive hearing of the Judicial Review claim held at the High Court in London, the Judge, Mr Justice Mitting, handed down his judgment on 17 July 2014. The Judge dismissed the PMI claims on all grounds. Full details of the written judgment can be found at <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2014/2438.html> .

There is still due process to unwind but it looks like APM will receive its Royal Charter and as can be seen in the judgment:

“...will help promote project management as a distinct professional discipline in its own right and attract more people to join the profession. Its existence would promote awareness and understanding of what is required to be an effective project manager and (as has been seen with other professions) help to boost the profile and draw of the profession...”

Further details may be found at <http://www.apm.org.uk/news/statementjuly2014-update#.U937RvldWSo>

TRANSPORT PROJECTS – AIR

There are always many projects underway in the Transport Sector but this month the focus is on those in the air and on the railways.

In the air, one very long term project concerns space travel! The Farnborough Air Show saw the UK government announce its vision of a spaceport. The aim is to establish a Spaceport by 2018 and eight potential sites based on existing aerodromes have been shortlisted. Readers will recall that Sir Richard Branson has been building craft to take tourists into space and it is possible that a UK Spaceport might provide a base for these and other flights as well as a range of companies providing a site for satellite launches.



Business Secretary Vince Cable said at Farnborough:

Space is big business for the UK. It already contributes £11.3 billion to the economy each year, supporting nearly 35,000 jobs. That's why it's important for us to prepare the UK for new launcher technology and take steps towards meeting our ambition of establishing the first British spaceport by 2018.

So plenty of opportunity for projects.

In a poll carried out by the Engineer online magazine (see <http://www.theengineer.co.uk/opinion/last-weeks-poll-uk-spaceport/1018923.article>) the majority feeling (57%) was that Doncaster would be the best site, despite 5 of the 8 sites being in Scotland, mainly at ex RAF bases. The Scottish bases attracted only 7% of the poll with a similar number of voters seeing no need for a spaceport at all.

Still in the air, another airport is seeking to get in on the expansion of capacity for London. Stanstead Airport has announced plans to expand its long haul capability in order to attract Middle Eastern airlines. Stanstead is owned by Manchester Airports Group, having recently been sold by the Spanish-led consortium that owns Heathrow. Clearly all plans depend on the eagerly awaited report by Sir Howard Davies' team, due later this year.

TRANSPORT PROJECTS – RAIL

The major engineering project in Europe is the £15 billion Crossrail link. It is the subject of a very interesting 3 part TC series on BBC2. The TV series marked the midpoint of tunneling operations and showed how much precision was required as the massive tunneling borer negotiated a gap with clearances of as little as 85 cms. The TV series centred on the management of the mega project and in particular the work to breathe new life into the Connaught Tunnel – a disused rail tunnel in Docklands. The 550m long tunnel runs below the Royal Docks next to ExCeL London and close to London City Airport. The original tunnel was built in 1878 and has not been in passenger use since December 2006.



Work was required to deepen, strengthen and widen the structure and to remove 135 years of coal and soot from the steam trains that originally used the tracks. Last summer, 13 million litres of water were drained from the dock that runs above the tunnel to allow Crossrail workers to access the structure from above.

Linda Miller, Connaught Tunnel Project Manager said: “It’s great to know that, thanks to our work, this 135 year old tunnel will once again have a vital role to play in London’s transport network. Once Crossrail opens in 2018, up to 12 trains an hour will pass through the tunnel beneath the Royal Docks, hugely improving links between southeast London and the rest of the capital.”

Andrew Wolstenholme, Crossrail Chief Executive said: “Most people have no idea that more than 30 metres below their feet a warren of new station tunnels is being excavated across central London. These striking images offer a glimpse of Crossrail’s new stations that from 2018 will serve tens of thousands of passengers every day.”

Five of Crossrail’s central London stations are being created using a well-established technique known as ‘Sprayed Concrete Lining’ to create new station tunnels – Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon, Liverpool Street and Whitechapel. The technique involves spraying a quick-setting form of concrete onto freshly excavated ground to seal the new tunnels.

There have been 4 major rail projects in London since 2000. These are the East London line extensions (opened May 2010, with the final section completed in December 2012), Thameslink Programme (opening 2018), Crossrail (opening 2018) and Crossrail 2 (dependent on HS2 plans).

Still with Crossrail, Transport for London announced that MTR, the operators of the Hong Kong, will be awarded a £1.4 billion contract over 8 years with a possible extension of a further 2 years. Press speculation puts a likely profit margin of about 5% or £70 million over the 8 year contract. Competitors for the contract included Arriva, the Deutsche Bundesbahn UK division and Keolis, the French nationalized rail group SNCF.

Meanwhile, outside London, more than £3 billion has been allocated to projects to improve transport infrastructure, over and beyond the HS 2 allocations. Based around Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) bidding opened last year for the first tranche of £2 billion and was 3 times oversubscribed. Cities Minister **Greg Clark** has visited all 39 bidders and stated that many of the bids were for “fantastic projects” in 2015 – 16.

DEFENCE PROJECTS

The Farnborough International Air Show takes place every other year and is a week-long trade event with 4 days devoted to sales and project announcements while the final 2 days are open to the public. This year saw several important Defence contract awards in the Prime Minister’s announcement of £1.1bn of defence

spending. **David Cameron** outlined investments of £800m for a new surveillance package and £300m for a new ice patrol ship and radar. This will pay for drones, UK special forces and intelligence gathering to tackle global terrorism. Among the projects announced were:

- A UK Defence Solutions Centre in Farnborough to develop new defence technology.
- A £4m UK Centre for Maritime Intelligent Systems based in Portsmouth
- The development of a hi-tech unmanned submarine.



As Farnborough was drawing to a close, news came in that Taranis, the UK stealth drone had passed its attest flight tests in Australia. Costing £185 million and funded jointly by the UK MOD and UK industry, the Taranis demonstrator aircraft was formally unveiled in July 2010. To give it its full designation, Taranis is an unmanned combat aircraft system advanced

technology demonstrator programme.

Initial 'power-up' or ground testing commenced later in 2010 at BAE Systems' military aircraft factory in Warton, Lancashire followed by a comprehensive and highly detailed programme of pre-first flight milestones. These included unmanned pilot training, radar cross section measurements, ground station system integration and, in April 2013 taxi trials on the runway at Warton.

The findings from the aircraft's test flights show that the UK has developed a significant lead in understanding unmanned aircraft which could strike with precision over a long range whilst remaining undetected.

The technological advances made through Taranis will also help the UKMOD and Royal Air Force make decisions on the future mix of manned and unmanned fast jet aircraft and how they will operate together in a safe and effective manner for the UK's defences.



The first two phases of the project are now complete and decisions are due on the third phase of flight tests. MoD is responsible for this decision as well as when the UK team will start collaborating with its French counterparts Dassault and Thales. According to press reports, the major success

of the recent trials was the development of the Rolls Royce Adour 951 engine. The challenge has been to hide the gas turbine, minimize its heat signature and infra-red image.

HANS THAMHAIN



Dr Hans Thamain (left) passed away on 11 July after crashing his bike in Hyannis, Massachusetts. The details are fuzzy. Nobody seems to know if he was hit by a car, run off the road, or if he had some medical episode. He was in a coma for a couple of days before passing. Hans was an amazing man. Perhaps best known as Professor of Management and Director of Management of Technology and Project Management Programs at Bentley University, he was still racing Ironman triathlons at the age of 77. In fact he qualified for Kona for the fifth time this year.

In a long academic career, Hans built a formidable reputation as an author; he published more than 70 research papers and five text books. He also had a busy life outside academia and his twenty years of engineering and business management include GTE/Verizon, General Electric and ITT.

Dr. Thamhain studied electrical engineering in Germany before moving to Canada in 1963 to pursue his career. He received his PhD from Syracuse University and in 1976 moved to Framingham, Massachusetts. He was a tenured professor at Bentley University in Waltham. Hans has shared his knowledge in Business Management at conferences and seminars around the world. In various online tributes to Hans, his students invariably referred to his sensitivity to their problems and difficulties, a teacher appreciated not just for his knowledge but also for his ability to pass this on to others.

I first met Hans at the IPMA Congress in Moscow, in 2003 when we shared a taxi to the airport. At Sheremetyevo, I wished Hans and his wife Ingrid farewell and we went our separate ways. Although my trip back to UK was uneventful, Hans and Ingrid had more difficult trip as he had inadvertently overstayed his visa by one day! He and Ingrid eventually got home but were delayed by a day.

I continued to meet Hans at IPMA Congresses and also met him when we were both participating in an IMA Research Board sponsored event at the University of Michigan. My abiding memory of him is as a gifted teacher with an amazing ability to present complicated data in a lucid, interesting way that was easy for all audiences to appreciate. We have lost a very good man, a respected academic and an able practitioner. The world of Project Management will remember him with affection and respect.

About the Author



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Miles Shepherd is an executive editorial advisor and international correspondent for PM World in the United Kingdom. He is also managing director for MS Projects Ltd, a consulting company supporting various UK and overseas Government agencies, nuclear industry organisations and other businesses. Miles has over 30 years' experience on a variety of projects in UK, Eastern Europe and Russia. His PM experience includes defence, major IT projects, decommissioning of nuclear reactors, nuclear security, rail and business projects for the UK Government and EU. Past Chair and Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM), Miles is also past president and chair of the International Project Management Association (IPMA). He is currently Director of PMI's Global Accreditation Centre and the Chair of the ISO committee developing new international standards for Project Management and for Program/Portfolio Management. He was involved in setting up APM's team developing guidelines for project management oversight and governance. Miles is based in Salisbury, England and can be contacted at miles.shepherd@msp-ltd.co.uk.

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