Editorial

‘There’s a whole lot of OR going on’

This is my first Editorial and I also expect it to be my penultimate, for I do not think Editorials should be a regular feature of *OR Insight*. Nevertheless, on taking over this role for the Society, I felt I had to make some initial statement, especially as a number of members have asked me what I am going to do as Editor. The question is difficult to answer in the longer term, as changes will need to occur to take advantage of the relentless progress of information technology and the rise of the electronic journal. However, I have a number of more immediate aims.

The first is to try to be a worthy successor to Stephen Ward. Stephen was one of the proponents of a publication aimed at the practitioner and manager. Having put forward the case for *OR Insight*, he then found himself its Editor, a task he has fulfilled for ten years. During this time *OR Insight* has gained a devoted readership and surveys show it to be read and appreciated by most members of the Society. Visiting Stephen, to understand the editorial role, made me realise the considerable time and effort he has put in to make the publication what it now is. I know I can speak for all members of the Society in thanking Stephen for his work in making *OR Insight* such a success.

After ten years, Stephen felt he would like a change, and naturally, I feel very hesitant but excited at the prospect of taking ‘his baby’ onward. I am consoled and encouraged by the support I have received from the Associate Editors, and the staff at Seymour House, especially from Christine Faulkner. Most important though, are the links with yourselves, as readers and contributors.

This leads to my second aim, namely to encourage more of the readers of *OR Insight* to become contributors. This quarterly is a vehicle for us to share experiences gained through our work, to describe our problems and how we are working towards their solution. Through sharing we can all gain. As the title of this Editorial indicates, I believe there is a lot of good OR happening. Good OR starts with a real problem, suggests a way of viewing or modelling the situation, and then tests the validity of

the representation. Not only is this model then used to alleviate the original problem, but the model is then pushed to its limits to gain further insight into the structure of the problem. *OR Insight* is a very suitable name for this publication.

An extension of the previous aim is to facilitate discussion and additional contributions to previously published articles. ‘Letters to the Editor’ have always been welcomed but never appeared - until now. By chance, the first letter in ten years has arrived, and appears in this issue. I would like this to be the start of a regular feature, and to encourage more correspondence on the articles, bringing ‘*Additional Insight*’ through the comments and experiences of others.

OR Insight seems a natural home for subject tutorials and review articles. New areas and developments of OR spring up all the time, and this publication, along with the training courses run by the Society, are ways of keeping abreast and up-to-date. Although formal professional status was recently rejected, true applied professionalism is clearly the aim of all members, and therefore articles which enhance understanding are very welcome.

OR Insight is about examples of good OR, and the practice of OR. Some contributions arise from the academic community, and these authors may like to note that, although the type of article is different to the Society’s monthly journal, all their submissions are refereed in the standard manner.

Finally, may I repeat the last line of the Editorial policy printed inside the back cover, and stress that I will be pleased to hear from anyone with ideas and suggestions for the content of this publication. My function is merely to enable you to share your *OR Insights* with one another.

F Roy Johnston