Editorial

Editors: Steve Clarke and Brian Lehaney

This is the seventh issue of OR Insight that we have produced since taking over from Roy Johnston in the middle of Volume 13 (2000). We now have enough material behind us to enable us to reflect on the nature of OR Insight, and to consider possible future paths. As ORI editors we are also members of the Publications Committee, and some of our discussion relates to issues that have been raised in that arena.

OR Insight is unusual, in that it provides a journal outlet for the practitioner, whether full time, part time, academic consultant, or some other form. We are reliably informed that it is very readable, but that it is not trivial. The latter arises because the papers in ORI relate to real life problems, and they refer to lessons that are transferable to other areas.

One of the ways in which we have tried to encourage the flow of papers, is by inviting the Associate Editors to make use of the Editorial slot as a kind of information bulletin and call for papers for their particular areas. In our previous six issues, we have had guest editorials from Gillian Jack and Kathryn Whymark (Change Management), Elayne Coakcs and Dianne Willis (Knowledge Management), Paul Drake (Human-centred Issues in Information Systems), Frances O'Brien and Maureen Meadows (Strategy), and Simon Taylor and Stewart Robinson (Simulation Modelling). If anyone is unclear about the varied areas which we cover, these guest editorials provide an excellent overview of some, but by no means all. We hope to have contributions in the near future from other Associate Editors.

Not surprisingly, we claimed the first editorial (13(3)) for ourselves, and we also took the opportunity to revise the editorial policy and information for contributors. The basic aims of OR Insight are to:

- stimulate interest in OR
- inform managers and management scientists about the scope and potential of OR interventions
- inform practitioners about developments in related areas.

We believe that ORI is achieving these aims in many ways, but we are also keen to widen our scope and to encourage as much variety as possible. In the last six issues there have been twenty papers (excluding editorials). These have included papers on:

- the use of information systems in small firms
- a cutting stock problem concerning steel coils
- higher education performance and data envelopment analysis
- complaint management
the management of public art projects
- assessment hierarchies
- knowledge sharing
- supply chain optimisation
- PC upgrade policy
- tracking change management and benchmarking
- graduate assistantship allocations
- collaborative simulation modelling
- credit scoring and mortgages.

If ever you are asked the standard question "What is OR?", we would suggest that there may be no better way of explaining the wonderful variety of activities and approaches in our discipline than by reference to the work reported in ORI. The papers have been not just content-diverse. Apart from the UK contributors, we have had authors from Spain, Australia, and the USA.

In this issue, the diversity continues, with authors from Australia, the Netherlands, and the UK submitting papers on:

- network performance modelling in the UK water industry
- interactive policy analysis
- complexity and workflow modelling
- social interaction and performance.

Long may the richness of OR continue to be reflected in the pages of ORI.