

**PIARC NATIONAL COMMITTEES MEETING, MONTPELLIER
30 SEPTEMBER 2004**

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BRITISH NATIONAL COMMITTEE

A delegation of around 80 members from the UK attended the World Road Congress in Durban in October 2003, and a post-congress meeting was held in London in November to capture feedback from the event. There was general agreement that the congress had been a great success, and that many useful contacts (both professional and personal) had been made or renewed. A report of the UK participation in the congress has been prepared, and is available on the BNC website.

Early in 2004, the National Committee sought nominations for UK membership of the restructured PIARC Technical Committees for the new 2004 – 2007 cycle. The UK has provided members for all but one of the committees (and in most cases two), and in a number of committees the UK member is acting as the English Speaking Secretary. By coordinating the UK nominations, the BNC has ensured a balance of UK representation between consultants, contractors, academics, and between the private and public sectors. The UK is also providing the chairman of one of the committees (John Miles, TC1.3).

The UK First Delegate, Ginny Clarke, has continued in her role as a Strategic Theme Coordinator, and for the new cycle has taken over the coordination of Strategic Theme 2 (Sustainable Mobility). The BNC Secretariat has supported Ginny in this role, and is seeking to find better ways of sharing the experiences of UK members within this theme, and the technical committees in general, with the wider UK membership.

At its Annual General Meeting in June 2003, the BNC membership approved a proposal from the executive committee to develop a closer working relationship with the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT), in order to revitalise the BNC, and reverse the recent trend of declining membership. Since then, consultations between the two organisations have been ongoing, to determine how this partnership could be developed, and as a first stage in the process, the IHT is to take over the BNC Secretariat functions, currently undertaken by the Highways Agency, with effect from Autumn 2004.

The 2004 Annual General Meeting and Members Lunch took place at the Institution of Civil Engineers headquarters in London on 5th July, and was attended by the Roads Minister, David Jamieson (Patron of the BNC), and by the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Transport, David Rowlands (President). The meeting was also attended by a number of overseas delegates, and presentations given by Keso Msita (chairman of Technical Committee 2.5 – Rural Roads and Accessibility) and Colin Ellis (Department for International Development) were well received.

As the AGM also marked the end of the current chairman's four-year term of office, an election for his successor was held. Steve Lee, of Surrey County Council, was the successful candidate. During the member's lunch, the outgoing chairman, Billy McCoubrey, was presented with an engraved decanter by the Minister, who thanked him for his contribution to the work of the National Committee during his chairmanship.

Looking to the future, preparations for UK Congress on 8-9 June 2005 are now progressing, in conjunction with the IHT. It is hoped that a number of technical committees (particularly those in ST2) will arrange meetings or seminars to coincide with the UK Congress, and that there will be a significant number of overseas delegates. Further details will follow in due course.

Mark Neave
Honorary Secretary
British National Committee