comment

Our shared future

By highlighting emerging innovations, the CV Show has always pointed us towards the future of commercial vehicle technology. This year's event (see review, pp22-25) focused on alternatives to diesel, in the form of battery-electric vehicles. Internal combustion engines are being replaced with electric motors for propulsion.

The vehicles of the future are ever more starting to resemble fixed plant. And the technical worlds of fixed and mobile plant are converging around a few key technologies, for example sensors, batteries and electric motors, that are both smart and connected to networks and which combine with the increasing demand for key skills such as data analytics. An integrated discipline exists in the interface of operational technology and information technology.

While accepting the wider engineering challenges faced in the design and delivery of this integrated technology, the work of operating, maintaining and ensuring the continued safety of this equipment falls to members of the SOE's professional sectors. The ever-increasing complexity of such equipment makes this job ever more difficult but at the same time ever more satisfying.

With one voice, the Society is perfectly placed to help its members face the technical and technological challenges that the future brings. The SOE has members in diverse sectors, ranging from operations and maintenance of commercial vehicles (IRTE), to industrial plant and equipment (IPlantE) and safety reviews of operating plant (BES), as well as a new environmental sector (Env), which can act as our 'green' conscience in our interactions with the modern world.

While members of each professional sector may look at life through a slightly different lens, the Society acts as a perfect melting pot for good ideas and shared practices. I'm minded of the approach that saw the UK's Airborne Forces achieve success at Goose Green in the Falklands 40 years ago. This may very well hold a resonance for the way the Society will approach the future: *ad unum omnes* – all to one end.

Adam Fraser-Hitchen
President, Society of Operations Engineers

To reach shortened URLs in the magazine – *www.is.gd/xxxxxx* – type the whole link into the address window of your web browser.