



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
FOUNDED 1918 • INCORPORATED 1924



Case Study

Ron Hedger IEng MIFireE

Year joined the IFE: 1995

Year of gaining IFE Membership and Registration:

MIFireE – 1998; EngTech – 2008; IEng - 2018

Current Job Title: Fire Engineering and Building Consultation Team Manager, and Intermediate Operational Command Officer

Employer: Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service

Location: Eastleigh Fire and Police Headquarters

Please describe your current role:

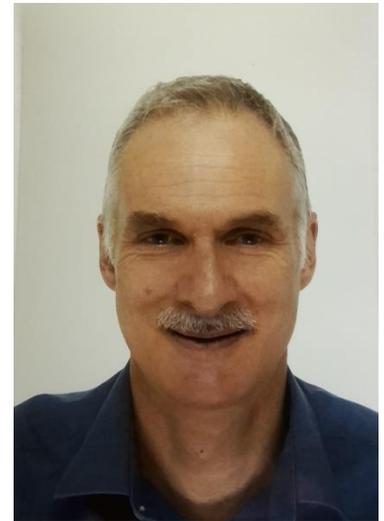
I manage a team responsible for ensuring all building regulation consultations between Building Control and the Fire and Rescue Service are assessed within the statutory timescales and best practice advice is provided to ensure Fire Safety Order compliance and firefighter safety. The team is also responsible for technical advice, post incident surveys of buildings and the provision of technical training and CPD events.

Please provide a brief outline of your career:

Back in 1989 I began work as a firefighter before taking roles as a Fire Safety Inspector, Sub Officer Community Safety, Fire Safety Office Manager and Station Manager: Technical Fire Safety Support. More recent roles have included Station Commander and Station Manager at different fire services to a variety of management roles including Commercial Training manager COMAH site enforcement officer and CBRN(E) Tactical Advisor. Since 1998 I have also carried out the role of Associate Instructor for the Fire Protection Association which includes matters such as fire safety legislation and fire safety design of buildings.

How did you gain IFE membership?

I was encouraged to join by the Fire Service in 1995 and sat the Member examinations two years later achieving MIFireE grade in 1998. During this time I joined the IFE Southern branch and attended CPD events to gain an appreciation of the wider application of fire safety outside of the Fire Service and the work carried out by the IFE to encourage and support improvement in standards of practitioners.



How has IFE membership benefitted your career?

Early in my career being a member of the IFE opened up promotion opportunities. Later, as I worked my way up the IFE membership ladder, it gave me increased confidence. Involvement in the IFE as an advocate for Engineering Council registration, as an active member of a local branch, and as an active member of Special Interest Groups has been a means of making and maintaining contacts outside of the Fire Service. My engagement with other professionals from diverse backgrounds has widened my understanding of my own field of interest. I am about to retire from the Fire and Rescue Service and feel equipped to take the next step into the private sector. My involvement with the IFE has given me the confidence to take this step.

What attracted you to gain IEng registration?

In 2004 I wanted to gain formal, professional recognition for my increasing competence in the field of Fire Engineering. My desire to do this was supported by the Fire Service who are keen for their serving officers to achieve professional recognition. I also became an EngTech peer reviewer for the IFE and an advocate within Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, encouraging and supporting my colleagues to apply for registration. I encourage my team members to

Jan 2019



THE INSTITUTION OF FIRE ENGINEERS
FOUNDED 1918 • INCORPORATED 1924



Case Study

Ron Hedger IEng MIFireE

become registered with the Engineering Council at the level appropriate to their role.

How did you find the process and assistance you received?

I was initially very disheartened to discover that my degree was not accredited by the Engineering Council. However having now completed the task of the Technical Report, I am very pleased to have been required to do so. The assistance I received from my mentor was clear, timely, concise and enormously helpful. I probably did not ask for help enough, and as a result made it difficult for myself. I would strongly advise anyone going through the process, particularly the Individual Route, to make good use of your mentor. Most of my personal development was in learning the 'academic process' necessary to carry out an effective and valid investigation and to write an appropriate technical report. This has shaped every aspect of my dealings within the Fire Engineering community and proved to be very beneficial in reshaping my thinking.

What are your future goals?

I have enrolled on the Master of Fire Safety Engineering degree at the University of Central Lancashire as a part time student. I hope to qualify in early 2020 and my intention is to register as a Chartered Engineer. I remain involved in the IFE Southern branch currently acting as Treasurer and intend to remain active within the branch, hopefully assisting in the shaping of the future of fire engineering and fire safety across the community.

What is your employer's attitude towards registration? Were they supportive while you were working towards IFE membership/registration?

I have always been fully supported in my drive for professional recognition and in my work for and support of the IFE. In my current role, I was actively encouraged to apply for registration as

Incorporated Engineer, with facilities provided freely to me to carry out my investigation in support of my technical report.

It is the stated aim of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service that all future members of the Fire Engineering Team should either be registered at the appropriate level with the Engineering Council, or be actively working towards such registration.

How does your employer benefit from you being professionally registered as an IEng?

My current role involves the identification of significant fire safety deficiencies in proposed new buildings and the rectification of such deficiencies. Ideally this is by the provision of timely advice, to enable designs to be improved prior to the build, however on occasions, this involves assisting in the enforcement of changes after occupation if advice has been ignored.

The demonstration of professional competence afforded by Engineering Council registration, whether at EngTech level for my technicians, or at IEng level for myself and my engineers, assists in limiting the occasions on which enforcement actions are necessary, by fostering a much more open and equal dialogue with the designers and applicants.

Do you have any advice for potential members / registrants?

Yes, for anyone wondering whether to apply for registration; do it. The benefits are not limited to internal recognition within your own organisation. Professional registration demonstrates competence worldwide and opens doors to new and exciting opportunities.

In respect of the effort involved – a journey of 1,000 miles starts with the first step. Start. Even if it takes a long time, constant slow progress will get you there in the end.