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Editorial

The 13th International Conference on Pressure Vessel Technology (ICPVT-13) was held in London 20th to 23rd May 2012. The theme of the Conference was *Next Generation – Best Global Practice*. The Conference was organised by the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on behalf of the International Council and the European/African Regional Committee (EARC) of ICPVT and was held at Westminster Central Hall. Over one hundred papers were presented over the three days together with Training Workshops. Delegates from more than 20 countries attended the Conference.

ICPVT has a long tradition of holding prestigious international conferences with participation of world-leading experts. This is the 13th in the series with the first being in Delft in 1969 continuing in San Antonio, Tokyo, London, San Francisco, Beijing, Dusseldorf, Montreal, Sydney, Vienna, Vancouver, Korea, and London for the second time. With three regions around the world, ICPVT serves to bring researchers, academics and industrialists to an international forum where all can share up to date research findings, latest industrial practices and explore the on-going challenges in the world of pressure systems.

The major considerations for the Conference were the expansion of the global market for new equipment in the nuclear and petrochemical sectors, the management of ageing assets and developments and harmonisation of national legislation and codes and standards. The Conference theme of Next generation – Global Best Practice symbolised the unique contribution that pressure vessel technology is likely to make over the next decade. Next Generation refers to both equipment and people with the design, installation and operation of new equipment and the involvement of new people in the sector.

In the past decade developments in the field of pressure systems technology have become more focussed but the pace has not slackened. In some topics the work is concerned with extending and refining or extending existing applications. In other areas the focus is on moving to the application together with the standardising and codifying of the approach. Economics is now playing an increasing role in driving the direction of development and research. Life extension of plant and minimising outage time is of prime importance. Ageing plant is a major asset and repair, replacement of components and extension of life are important issues. Although analysis methods are usually classified under design their use is often in the area of assessment of ageing plant and its life extension.

Renewed interest in nuclear power is leading to further activity particularly in the areas of design, manufacture and inspection. These considerations reflect the needs of the sector.

The papers selected for inclusion in these two special conference volumes are representative of the high technical quality of the Conference and also reflect the need of meeting the requirements of the sector. The first Volume covers *Design and Analysis*. The Conference attracted more papers on this subject than any other, with over 50% in this theme. This is not necessarily because there is more work being done in this area. The focus is on fracture mechanics aspects, welded joints and high temperature these being the topics where refinement and extension of the approaches are needed.

The second Volume which appears as International Pressure Vessels and Piping Volume 110C covers *Risk, Materials and Operation*. Here several of the papers are from China which may not be surprising. The papers in this Volume provide further understanding on some of the issues that may lead to potential risk in the safe operation of plant these include material degradation, behaviour of specific materials, effects of residual stress and the use of data from small scale specimens.

The pressure systems sector plays a significant role in the world scene ranging from the provision of useable energy to the manufacture of consumables. The International Conference on Pressure Vessel Technology provides a forum for the exchange of knowledge which contributes significantly to a safe and economic society.

The regular Roy Nichols Memorial Lecture, not included in these volumes, was presented by Claude Faigy of EDF which was very appropriate with the renewed interest in nuclear power. Roy was a founder father of ICPVT and for many years the Editor of this Journal.

The next Conference, ICPVT-14, is scheduled to be held in Shanghai in 2015.

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