

APRIL NEWSLETTER

HKA's Engineering team has a fantastic network of specialist experts which plays an important part in our business.

Fifty percent of our revenue in 2019 came from external experts. You are an engrained part of our business and 2019 was our most productive year thus far. As a 'new' firm with old roots dating back to 1970, we have built our project list year on year.

2020 began with a positive start with some interesting and exciting enquiries coming in and some fascinating appointments underway. In addition, we have three more external expert engagement events planned in the UK through 2020.

Quality

Working in the role of an expert witness is not an easy task. It requires precision, diplomacy, confidence and experience. We strive to provide the highest quality

experts and expert reports. To support our experts, we provide a template, style guide and example reports.

I'd encourage you all to look through these and consider your own content before taking your proverbial pen to paper. Appropriate report structure and supporting points with references is key to a robust report. We are restructuring our review process this year which will include more support throughout the report drafting process.

The old roots, which I mentioned, mean we have employees who've worked with us for many years. We have fantastic collective experience both in house and across the network. The peer review process is a wonderful opportunity for newer experts to learn from people with multiple reports under their belt and knowledge to impart to ensure quality across the board.



RODDY WILKIE
PARTNER

Keeping in Touch

We welcome feedback so please don't hesitate to get in touch. Or, if you are close to an office, ordinarily, we'd say come in and say hello. If you are based in the UK or passing through, we welcome you to join an engagement or training day. We look forward to working with you this year and beyond.

COVID-19

Be assured our crisis management team is working hard to ensure the safety of all and has made the decision to close all offices for the foreseeable future.

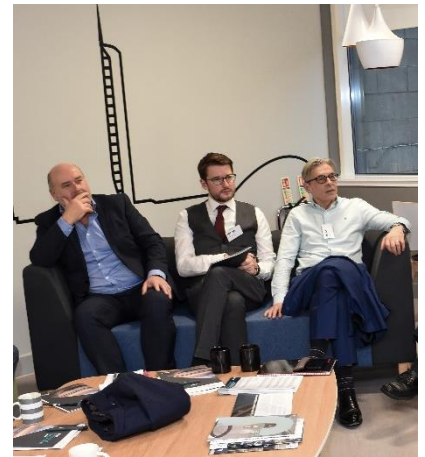


EXTERNAL EXPERT ENGAGEMENT EVENT

After a successful engagement event with our Buildings and Infrastructure sectors in June 2019, we organised another in January 2020. This time, HKA arranged an engagement event between two sectors in Glasgow: Power, Utilities & Industrial and Oil & Gas.

WHAT WAS IT ALL FOR?

- > The workshop was an opportunity for external experts to meet and network with other energy sector experts. It allowed them to learn more about HKA and expert work in an informal environment.
- > The main aim of the event was to improve our overall engagement with experts and provide information about our cases and the company.



‘It was definitely good to get the Technical Experts together, especially ‘new starters,’ to understand HKA’s objectives and to engage with team members.’

Kevin Slater
Technical Director
OIL & GAS

WHAT WAS THE ENGAGEMENT EVENT?

The External Expert Engagement Event was a day-long meeting between internal HKA staff and our external experts. Roughly 15 experts across our PU&I and O&G sectors attended the event, which was followed by a relaxed dinner near our Glasgow office. The event included a number of presentations and talks about HKA, expert witness experience, difference legal cases, open discussion on industry changes and informal networking.

There were also presentations by two of our experts. John Middleton, an expert in electrical and control engineering, discussed his experiences with expert witness work in HKA. Ken McLean, an expert in building services design, discussed his experience giving expert witness testimony and the lessons he learned from it.

Feedback from the event was highly positive, although some experts would have enjoyed a little more time as there was a great deal on the agenda. We are hoping to implement changes based on our feedback in similar events we will be running this year (see page 4).



IN THE < HOT SEAT > WITH...

CAITLIN FLEMING BUILDINGS EXPERT & COMMISSION MANAGER

WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

Glasgow, born and bred! (Even if I try not to sound it...)

WHERE DO YOU LIVE NOW?

Still Glasgow. It's a nice enough place, it just gets a bad rep!

MARRIED / SINGLE / FAMILY?

Terminally single, considering becoming a crazy cat lady (I jest). Will find the right one eventually, no rush there.

HOBBIES / LEISURE?

I like ice skating (even if I never go), singing, baking and holidays. I sang at the Royal Concert Hall with my choir at Christmas time to raise money for a local children's hospital charity which was a real privilege.

PERFECT DAY?

Lie in please – I really like my sleep! And then act on a whim and do whatever takes my fancy. As long as there's some good food there (and maybe some wine too) and some good company, I'm not that fussy.

PERFECT HOLIDAY?

It should be about 2 weeks long, and a perfect split of being able to laze by the pool for up to 5 days, no more or it's too much. Then explore some cities, travel around and take in some culture, and eat something tasty. Good food is a must and is my kryptonite.

ANYTHING ELSE?

My cliched words of wisdom/advice: when you don't know something or how to do something, just ask. You're unlikely to be the first or last, and someone else will also have the same question. We're here to help and importantly, want to help. Also, timesheets and invoices – please do them in a timely manner and help us pay and be paid!

WHEN DID YOU JOIN HKA?

I joined HKA back in July 2018 (that feels like a rather long time ago now!) Or maybe it was August... Well about 18 months ago anyway.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO JOIN HKA?

I have an honours degree in Spanish and an MSc in Translation and TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages). I had come back from teaching in Spain and it was time to find something permanent. As HKA is this big global company, I was hoping there may be some opportunity to use my language skills (there has been on occasion, which is always nice). It sounded like a challenging opportunity for me.

HOW DO YOU APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF MODERN LANGUAGES TO THE ECM ROLE?

This is utterly dependent on the project I'm working on. Sometimes we have an end client in Spain, or a lawyer in Germany or France (although that's significantly more difficult as my fluency levels are pretty low when it comes to French and German). In regard to dealing with more technical pieces of work, I find that the "reshaping your thought process" skill you pick-up when learning a language can help with trying to explain a complex technical term and break it down to a simple explanation.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING PROJECT YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

The most interesting project? Lame cop-out answer here, all of them are interesting if I'm honest (and slightly terrifying too, when you think how common some of the buildings issues are...) However, I've been working on some fire related ones, and they're always super interesting, and the big arbitration (my first one!) was an eyeopener.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2020



After the success of our expert engagement event earlier this year, HKA has decided to expand our engagement initiative. As such, throughout 2020 we are hoping to organise additional events.

As opposed to the event in January, which focussed on experts from our PU&I and O&G sectors, these upcoming events will include experts from *all* of our sectors.

Please note that, due to the Covid-19 outbreak, these dates are subject to change.

Event 1 -

Location: London

Date: Sept. 10th 2020

Event 2 -

Location: Daresbury

Date: October 7th 2020

Event 3 -

Location: Glasgow

Date: Oct. 28th 2020

We understand the importance of regular communications with our experts and appreciate the value of these events.

Furthermore, we are in the process of organising training events for 2020. This includes our external expert One Day Training. This training day is led by Legal Experience Training Ltd and offers expert witness training, including training in

obtaining legal instructions, assembling evidence and writing law reports. Pre-course reading is necessary before the training begins and the course typically lasts a full business day. HKA will pay for the cost of this training.



We are also organising additional training with Legal Experience Training Ltd. The APAWE course (Advanced Professional Award in Expert Witness Evidence) will be taking place later this year as well. This course is designed to assist experts in working effectively with lawyers, clients and courts. It is led by experienced legal tutors in a face-to-face environment. It is accredited at a master's degree level (although not nearly as long!).

The APAWE course lasts five days and priority is usually given to experts who have been appointed a case or who have a 'whale' project looming. HKA

pays for 50% of the training costs and experts are asked to pay the remaining 50%.

Furthermore, HKA will be organising cross examination training later in the year. This will either be led by Legal Experience Training Ltd or Bond Solon. This training primarily focusses on prehearing cross examination and preparation. This training tends to be attended by experts with a hearing in the near future, usually within three or four weeks. We will discuss funding with clients on a case-by-case basis, but experts will not be asked to pay for this course.

We understand the value of having our experts as well-prepared and trained as possible. To this end, HKA will pay the costs of most training courses, but in return we ask our experts to give up their time and meet travel expenses. HKA will be looking to organise additional events this year and will keep you notified of these in due course.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE EVENTS MENTIONED SO FAR, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR ECM.



IN THE < HOT SEAT > WITH...

ANGUS RAMSAY FINITE ELEMENT ANALYSIS EXTERNAL TECHNICAL EXPERT

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I consider my home county to be Cheshire where I spent my teenage years. Since then I have spent a time in Wolverhampton, Exeter, Portugal, Nottingham, Lincoln and I returned to Devon in 2007.

HOBBIES / LEISURE?

I have played the trombone in a number of orchestras around the country; however, my first love is the piano and music from the German Romantic genre, e.g., Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and Liszt. I have enjoyed many opportunities for public performance both as soloist and as accompanist. I also play the organ for a local church near to where I live.

PERFECT DAY?

One where my projects are all up to date, my customers are happy, the sun is in a cloudless sky and I can leave my office early to spend the rest of the day with my family.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING PROJECT YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

An HKA project involving the structural assessment of a scissor lift that failed catastrophically, sadly causing the death of one of the lift's occupants. Of interest in this project was the nature of the structure which becomes a mechanism as soon as one of the members fails, i.e., it had no redundancy. It was also my first foray into modelling dynamic behaviour which, as you can imagine, is important for such a structure which will vibrate under the slightest impulse.

WHAT IS YOUR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND?

I left school at 16 and served a 4-year indentured craft apprenticeship. I then studied mechanical engineering in Liverpool, followed by 18 months at GKN's R&D offices in Wolverhampton. I was involved in the design analysis of components and systems in the automotive industry. I then undertook research at Exeter and two post-doctoral years, the first in Portugal and the second in Nottingham. I subsequently spent 10 years as a consultant at the sharp end of engineering design/analysis in a small company in Lincoln specialising in turbomachinery. In 2007 I began my own company offering specialist finite element consultancy services.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED WITH HKA?

I approached HKA in 2016, was interviewed over the phone and offered a position as technical expert. I am now in my fourth year with HKA and enjoying the variety of projects.

CAN YOU BRIEFLY TELL US WHAT YOUR FIRST CASE AS AN EXPERT WITNESS WAS ABOUT?

Only my most recent project called me as an Expert Witness. It was a multi-track arbitration and involved a dispute between the EPC contractor and plant operator. I was involved in the technical aspects of a set of rotating machines that failed due to fatigue.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WISH YOU KNEW BEFORE?

My first cross-examination was something of a baptism of fire! I vowed to never put myself through it again. However, I later realised I'd considered the cross-examination as a dialogue with the barrister rather than just speaking to the tribunal. So, I would suggest practicing giving evidence and actually forcing yourself to face the judge or tribunal when answering.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE?

I'm used to writing technical reports because of my consultancy. However, the legal norm is to write these in first person and in simpler terms. This is a challenge but one I am up for. It helps the process to be able to present complex data graphically and this is something I already do. The challenge is developing this skill.

LIFE AS A STRANDED EXPERT

By Ken McLean

With soaring alpine peaks, rainforests, glaciers and a soothingly Scottish beauty, New Zealand isn't the worst place in the world to be stranded.

Mid-way through our 3-week campervan trip, PM Jacinda Ardern announced a country-wide lockdown, cancelling all flights and effectively stranding us for at least a month.

Luckily, we managed to find accommodation and I am preparing to organise a makeshift workspace for myself here; good thing I brought my work laptop and electronics with me – although it didn't make my bag very light, to say the least...

On a positive note, we did have a brilliant 2 weeks holiday touring, cycling and climbing mountains. And hopefully I will be up and running, 'business as usual,' by the end of this week!

If you are interested in any of the events mentioned in this newsletter or have any feedback, please contact us by email at:

Email: enquiries@hka.com

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

BY STEPHAN PASTIS

