



NEWS VIEW

IRSE "Brand Refresh"

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One of the points arising from the IRSE Members Survey (IRSE NEWS November 2008) was that a number of members thought the non-members perceived the IRSE as somewhat old-fashioned in, amongst other things, the presentation of some of its material. As a result the Council decided that we should look at making some changes to the "image" of the IRSE as portrayed through the web-site, IRSE NEWS, correspondence and other documentation. Conscious of the pitfalls in doing anything too revolutionary, a design house was commissioned, at modest cost, to come up with ideas as to how the visual elements of the Institution's identity might be updated.

Whilst the logo has not been changed since the inception of the Institution in 1912, the type-face and style of the words "Institution of Railway Signal Engineers" has been updated a number of times, the last being in the mid 1990s when the present letterhead was designed by the Recruitment and Publicity committee. The style of technical papers and the Proceedings has changed hardly at all over the years, but the appearance of IRSE NEWS has evolved; this issue incorporates the changes recommended by the designers.

A style guide has been produced to detail the required standards, and it is Council's intention that these should be followed, sensibly – perhaps more as a Code of Practice than as a European Directive (!) - by all officers and volunteers in the Institution throughout the world, in order to achieve a more uniform visual image. Many of the non-UK Sections do have a distinctive image and more imaginative use of colour, although often a variant on the existing main style used within the Institution, but the one item always used, and instantly recognisable at least to those who know, is the current IRSE logo.

Members will be re-assured, I hope, to know that the original logo will remain the "official" logo for use on legal documents, such as the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Institution seal, the President's Chain of Office and other such items. Over the next few months, the new style will be introduced progressively as existing stocks run-out and as changes can be incorporated into the Institution's main database system and web-site. Council recognise that these changes in themselves will not dramatically change the perception of the IRSE amongst both members and non-members, but they do see it as part of the process of achieving such change.

Colin Porter
Chief Executive

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Front Cover: The Siemens Velaro RUS train was tested for the extreme cold conditions in Russia at Rail Tec, Vienna (see pp 11-15)

IRSE "Brand Refresh" - the thinking behind the changes

Following an initial meeting with the Chief Executive in November 2008, the designers came up with a proposal in a revised set of visuals in early January, with the following reasoning to support their ideas:-

"The new IRSE logo is predominantly made up of elements from the previous logo. Our key objectives were to keep the logo consistent in appearance and an overall modernising of the identity. The elements of the logo were often used separately, with the company name typed out in Times New Roman or any available serif typeface. The roundel often 'sat' on its own and was difficult to read at smaller sizes. To update the IRSE logo, we looked at all the elements as a whole. We have crafted the new logotype on a serif typeface, closing up the letter spacing



and adding an extension to the 'R' which connects neatly with the 'S'. This has created a more memorable logotype and added a modern feel to the roundel illustration. The result is a more memorable and professional logo and identity for the IRSE."

"The type from the previous IRSE logo has been tweaked and customised to form a unique and solid visual identity. The letters have been brought closer together and the serifs redrawn to make the letters 'IRSE' more solid and appear as one logotype. The 'Institution of Railway Signal Engineers' type uses a sans serif typeface which contrasts perfectly against the serif typeface, and which we recommend to be IRSE's new corporate family typeface. The horizontal lines separating the type enclose and link the type nicely into a complete logo, and could be a subtle visual link to a railway track. On previous publications and promotional materials different typefaces have been used to represent the IRSE logo; these inconsistencies are not good for the visual identity of the company. The new logo will be used consistently, solving this problem.

"The oval shape of the roundel has been kept as this is a recognisable element of the IRSE identity. To bring it more up to date we have used the IRSE pantone green, but as a gradient rather than a solid colour. The image of the parent and child was previously an outline, which was hard to make out on a small scale. To solve this problem we have filled it with white and put on a solid background, which also brings it up to date. The 'Institution of Railway Signal Engineers' type which was previously in the outer part of the roundel has been removed as this distracts from the image and does not need to be repeated in the logo. The 'Incorporated 1912' has been kept in the roundel but shortened to 'INC 1912'.



Subsequently, following comments from Council members, the Greek letters used in the original logo, which although understood by some members, were replaced by the letters IRSE since there are times when the logo roundel is used on its own.