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Another milestone achieved in the history of IRSE NEWS. This is a good moment for some reflection. A couple of questions are appropriate in order to test the magazine.

Is the magazine productive? After a slower start (22 years for the first 100) the speed of publications is now gathering pace, with only five years needed for the next 50. That means that from just over 2.5 months between issues, the waiting time for the anxious reader has now been reduced to less than half. Eleven Issues per year with several hundred pages in total is the current status. That is a good sign when it comes to measuring productivity.

Then what about the content? Also here we see a change in both topic and depth. We cannot say it was a straight track over the last five years (and sometimes it was a bit bumpy seeing the heated discussions on some topics) but I hope you agree with me in stating that the current content matches the expectations of many members.

Is the magazine attractive? I think it is. From a somewhat dull image in line with our role as keepers of the safety of the railway we now have a magazine that does invite reading. The new layout is a good step forward. It is in line with many magazines with a much bigger print number and where teams of multiple professional members dedicate themselves to the mock-up and layout of the articles.

Is this good enough? No, I do not think so, but not because of the magazine and the dedication of the team that makes it happen, together with the happy volunteers who submit the articles. It is the because of the role of the IRSE which is becoming more and more global. That change will force the magazine into a new direction. The magazine needs to show more about the world wide activities of the Institution so that the members get information about technology, processes and, above all, events that are relevant to them in their geographical context. That is the challenge. Good luck in the future.

*Frans Heijnen, IRSE President*

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