



Sir Anthony Cleaver's speech at the launch of Engineering UK 2009/ 10 – 01/12/2009

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Many thanks for the kind introduction Phil and for hosting us here today. Thanks too for the work of your Select Committee, previously known as IUSS which certainly helped to galvanise the engineering community, getting us to speak with one voice.

The real meat of our reception today is to launch Engineering UK 2009/10, our annual report and to launch EngineeringUK - more about that later.

Now in its 12th year, the report is important for us in bringing together the evidence which underpins our programmes and really showing the state of engineering today, with a watchful eye on the future too.

Let's look at the report, and I do want to thank the authors, Emma, Anil and Neil, plus the organisations that worked with us to produce it.

We see 3 key themes evolving, giving us cause for optimism and wake up calls for action.

The first is a significant shift in public attitudes to engineering. We monitor perceptions every year and have seen a significant shift, 19%, in the number of people who would recommend a career in engineering to family or friends, now more than 8 out of 10 people. The job isn't quite done yet: the understanding of what engineering is all about isn't there and children don't yet see the link between their enjoyment of Design & Technology in the classroom and a future in engineering. In fact, it all looks a bit boring to a lot of them, so initiatives with school age children that paint a picture of opportunity are tremendously important.

Secondly, we see a real challenge to get the right talent into manufacturing in the future. Working Futures 3 identified the need for 587,000 new people in manufacturing by 2017 and many of these will need engineering skills. Manufacturing and engineering are not one and the same but manufacturing productively depends on engineering solutions and engineering leads to products. The two are intertwined and essential to a rebalanced UK economy. Up skilling is essential.

Thirdly, we see very real issues in education and skills. There has been a 30% decrease in the number of FE lecturers in engineering, manufacturing and technology since 2003. Announcements about the need for engineering skills, particularly technicians at level 3 and above, will need to be followed with investment in our further education sector and further efforts to build the links between business and the education world, within a framework supported by government, in Westminster and in the devolved nations. In the

engineering sector, this must include SME's, a rich pool of talent with opportunities for the next generation of engineers too.

The next question is "what are we going to do about it?" For that next point I'm going to introduce our Chief Executive, Paul Jackson.