

Richard Collman CEng, BSc (Jt Hons), MIOA, Tech IOSH

CASE STUDY

As Managing Director of Acoustical Control Engineers Limited (ACE), a family company with 16 personnel, specialising in providing 'guaranteed solutions to your noise and vibration problems', I get involved in a very wide range of interesting and challenging acoustic problems. I am also a Director of Belair Research Limited (BRL), for which I spend most of my time on consultancy work. BRL specialises in acoustic consultancy (rather than ACE's engineering work).

I joined ACE after graduating in 1984, although I had worked on site during holidays installing noise and vibration control schemes for several years before this. Over 25 years with ACE and BRL I have been involved in many different projects, reflecting the diverse range of clients, fields and applications that we get involved in.

These include:

- Air conditioning for Wimbledon's Centre Court commentary boxes, establishing a base line noise criterion for No. 1 Court, treating the radio interview room and various other projects
- Supplying the attenuators at the base of the Millennium Dome's yellow legs, which project through the structure
- Supplying and adjusting vibration isolators at the Pan Chau subway in Taiwan
- Plant attenuation at The Mailbox (Birmingham)
- Assessing the noise level aboard a client's private Boeing 737
- Assessing plant vibration in the 'Gherkin' (Swiss Re building)
- Designing and providing very high performance acoustic enclosures for ventilation fans to a National Grid cable tunnel into London with 40 tonne acoustic enclosures supported in 10m diameter shafts
- Louvres for the County Hall hotel conversion beside the London Eye
- Defending a kennels against a noise abatement notice in Court, which involved developing the acoustic unit of 'woofs per minute' as a tool for explaining the acoustics to the Magistrates (the dogs won and were awarded costs)



- Reducing noise from the turbines at the Cruachan (Loch Awe) hydro-electric power station / electricity storage reservoir
- Noise at work analysis for the Irish Navy, aboard their patrol vessels.

I became chartered in 2001 through the Institute of Acoustics, who were extremely helpful throughout the registration process. On a personal basis Chartered Engineer status confirms that I have reached a certain level of professional competence and adds credibility to my role as an expert (acoustical) engineer when providing evidence or arguing a more contentious point. The chartering system also highlights engineering as a professional role involving work at a senior level, helping to dispel the myth that engineering is all about spanners and overalls (my main tools are my laptop, sound level meter, ears and brain).

As an employer, I can see the benefits of professional qualifications and encourage all my staff to identify areas for their own development.

Richard Collman, Managing Director of Acoustical Control Engineers Limited.