

## Flt Lt David Littlemore BEng (Hons) IEng MICE

### CASE STUDY

I am currently Officer Commanding Works Services Flight at RAF Brize Norton, and am proud to have become the first serving RAF officer in recent times to successfully undertake the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) professional review process and gain Incorporated Engineer (IEng) and Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers (MICE) status.

Being the only professionally qualified civil engineer in the Royal Air Force has given me greater recognition and professional respect amongst my RAF colleagues and command chain, along with the Royal Engineers and the range of civilian contractors and agencies that I deal with on a daily basis.

In my present role I am responsible for all routine response maintenance and planned new works on buildings and associated infrastructure supported by Works Group Royal Engineers (Airfields). I joined the Royal Air Force at Cranwell in October 2008, following a career in civil engineering consultancy spanning eleven years and gaining a Bachelor of Engineering degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Durham as an ICE QUEST Scholar.

On completion of Initial Officer Training and Professional Training I was posted to RAF Brize Norton to work alongside the Royal Engineers in the delivery of routine maintenance tasks on existing infrastructure and new works projects in support of Programme Future Brize. This will see the Station become Defence's future sole Air Point of Embarkation and the home for 15 per cent of the RAF's uniformed manpower. The challenges involved in both these roles have helped to develop my breadth and depth of experience.

Having completed an ICE approved training scheme in industry, which is a pre requisite for undertaking the ICE review process, I was required to undertake a series of activities to demonstrate evidence of the competencies required by the institution for membership. These included an Experience Report detailing my career experience, a Project Report on an individual project that I had led, a presentation and a formal interview followed by a written examination.

Gaining the necessary experience to satisfy the ICE's Development Objectives and undertaking the review process involved a significant amount of time and preparation.



That said, all the hard work has now paid off and I have a great sense of satisfaction from achieving this significant career milestone. However the hard work doesn't stop here, maintaining and identifying the knowledge and skills that I wish to develop further and planning how I will achieve this through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is just as important as passing the professional review itself.

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My immediate aspirations are to continue to develop my infrastructure experience in the Royal Air Force both at home in the UK and overseas on operations. During this time I also hope to gain further experience to allow me to undertake my Chartered Progressive Professional Review to attain CEng MICE status.

As the only professionally qualified civil engineer in the RAF there was no formal support available from my employer, however they have been more than accommodating and supportive of my endeavours and are now seeing the benefits. Following the disbandment of the Airfield Construction Branch of the Royal Air Force in 1966 with its role being transferred to 39 Engineer Regiment (Airfields) of the Royal Engineers the presence of professionally qualified Civil Engineers in the Royal Air Force had sadly come to an end. Whilst infrastructure management responsibilities have remained through the Personnel (Support) Branch, academic qualifications or membership of a professional institution has not been a requirement to undertake the numerous posts available. However, I hope that my achievement will mark the start of greater professional recognition throughout the RAF, with many others able to follow in my footsteps.

My advice to other young civil engineers would be that in the early stages of your career it may seem like an endless barrage of calculations and setting out checking but this is important career development. It is also important to remember to make the most of the opportunities available to you to go out on site and see things happening first hand or attend professional meetings. If these opportunities don't exist in your organisation then go out and make them happen!

My second piece of advice is never be afraid to ask questions of your colleagues to further develop your knowledge and understanding of the work that you are involved with or would like to get involved with next. Asking what you may think is a silly question today may prevent a silly mistake in the future!

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