

**The Society of Cable
Telecommunication
Engineers**



Communications House
41a Market Street, Watford
Herts WD18 0PN England
Tel: 01923 815500
Fax: 01923 803203
Email: office@scte.org.uk
Website: www.scte.org.uk

THE SOCIETY OF CABLE TELECOMMUNICATION ENGINEERS

2007 Report of the Executive Committee to the Members

The Executive Committee has pleasure in submitting its Annual Report to the 2007 AGM.

1 COMPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SCTE Officers are as follows:-

President	Roger Blakeway
Vice-President	Janhein van Brienem
Treasurer	Chris Swires
National Secretary	Beverley Allgood

Appointed posts are as follows:-

Editor Broadband	Dan Smart*
Deputy Editor Broadband	Graeme Young
Webmaster	Alan Shaw

*Retired in August 2007. Dr Roger Blakeway is currently undertaking this role in a caretaking capacity.

In addition to the above, Dr Mark Burns and Messrs Chris Bailey, John Callas, Paul Flood, John Green, David Hall, David Keeley, Costas Kyriacou and David Woollard are all active members of the Executive Committee. Messrs Frank Summerfield of Harmonic UK Ltd and David Hall are co-opted members of the Committee and have been appointed to assist with organising SCTE social activities (particularly the popular Golf Days) and marketing/PR/media respectively.

The current list of sub-committees plus their Chairmen only are listed below for members' information:-

1	Technical Committee	Chairman - David Woollard
2	Papers Committee	Chairman – Janhein van-Brienem
3	Training Committee	Chairman - John Callas
4	Recruitment Committee	Chairman - John Green
5	Social Activities Committee	Chairman - Beverley Allgood
6	Publications & Sponsorship Committee	Chairman - David Hall
7	Website Committee	Chairman - Alan Shaw
8	IBC Committee & SCTE Ltd	Chairman - Dr Roger Blakeway

2 MEMBERSHIP

From its peak in April 1997, membership has now stabilised over the last few years and currently stands at 551 which is an increase from this time last year. This comprises 26 Honorary Fellows, 106 Fellows, 307 Members, 20 Associates, 70 Patrons and 22 Technicians. The Executive Committee is

currently enlisting members' help in recruiting new members. With the turmoil and mergers in the industry over the past few years, our membership has suffered but if every member could recruit just one new person, then this would help enormously to boost numbers. The SCTE offers its special thanks to Harmonic Inc for introducing a sponsorship scheme in which they have generously sponsored a number of new member subscriptions for the first year. This initiative has been a great help with the Society's ongoing recruitment campaign and offers of free membership have not only been extended to deserving candidates but also to high level VIPs in an effort to spread the Society message. Thanks are also due to Mrs Cathy Wilson, the very enthusiastic publisher of Broadband Library International, who has done a sterling job for the Society over the last year promoting Patron membership and also offering the Society a regular feature in this magazine together with free recruiting and training advertisements.

A popular addition to the website has been the online application form which has been the main way in which new recruits are now applying. In addition, Mr Rien Baan – Secretary of our Benelux SCTE – has done a sterling job in recruiting new members and the SCTE now represents some 44 members from the Benelux countries. Overall a third of SCTE members are now outside the traditional UK base of the Society as it becomes more representative in Europe and further afield.

3 FINANCE

(a) **Society's Accounts for Period 1 January - 31 December 2006.** The Executive Committee has approved the Society's accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2006 and copies have been circulated to Members together with the AGM papers.

Another incredibly successful year for the Society with a surplus carried forward of £245,464 which is mainly due to the high level of income from IBC that SCTE Ltd (and therefore the SCTE) now enjoys as a Partner in this international exhibition. The finances of SCTE Ltd are discussed later in this report.

Although revenue from subscriptions has remained static, the last year has seen a resurgence of interest in training and this has added a welcome £11K to the coffers. Dividends from SCTE Ltd for the 2006 year amounted to £245K, however, as explained in the 2006 AGM report, some of this figure represents dividends for the 2005 year but due to changes in accounting policies and dates dividends were paid, this had to be included in the 2006 accounts. The high cost of production of the journal is still of concern, however, there are plans in hand to address this which will be discussed later in this report.

(b) **Membership Subscriptions.** For the 2007 financial year, membership subscription rates were maintained at the same level which is largely as a result of the revenue brought in by the Society's links with IBC. However, now that we are well into the current financial year, Members in arrears are requested to settle their accounts promptly in order that resources are not used unnecessarily on the collection of monies.

(c) **Credit Card Facilities and online payments.** In addition to cheques, BACS and credit card payments, SCTE members can also pay their subscriptions etc via the secure online payment facility on the SCTE website. Credit cards that the Society can accept include Visa, Mastercard and Visa Delta. We are, however, *not* able to accept American Express, Switch, Solo, JCB or Visa Electron.

4 SCTE WEBSITE

Following the resignation of John Robertson in late 2006, Mr Alan Shaw has been appointed as the Society's new Webmaster. Mr Shaw is currently a director of the CAI and also its Webmaster and his success in redeveloping the CAI's site into an attractive, informative site with a massive hit rate has proved his ability. Plans are currently in hand to totally redevelop the SCTE site to make it more up-to-date and, more importantly, easier to navigate. The SCTE shop continues to be a very useful facility for members to renew their subscriptions and order training courses/dinner bookings etc. Over the course of the coming year, it is hoped that a new and simpler method of member passwords will be implemented together with a bulletin board for the members' area. Membership forms are available for completion online and this has vastly simplified the application process. Additional domains under SCTE ownership are www.thescte.org, www.thescte.eu, www.thescte.org.uk and www.thescte.co.uk.

5 SCTE TRAINING

As part of our ongoing commitment to the enhancement of standards in our industry and the career development of individual technicians and engineers, the Society continues to provide training course

packages for Members. Currently over 3,600 students have now successfully passed the SCTE training courses – these include the Installation Technician training course and the more advanced Service and Network Technician courses. These are progressive, modular courses and are suitable for classroom delivery but by far the most popular option is for home study with regular assessment papers at the end of each module. Although over recent years, the demand for training has tailed off both in the UK and overseas, 2006 saw a revival in course bookings which is good news.

Mr Dan Stroie of Telemach continues to promote the SCTE's training courses in Romania and has recently reported that a new National Occupation has been agreed with their Government using SCTE courses as the necessary underpinning knowledge.

Another exciting development over recent months is the new dedicated training room and facilities at Communications House in Watford. This provides a classroom environment plus outdoor space for any courses which the Society may decide to provide in the future, so watch this space!

6 SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

(a) **2007 SCTE Dinner & Awards.** This year's dinner was held on Saturday 28 April 2007 in the Members Dining Room at the House of Commons, London and was attended by a maximum capacity of 176 members and guests. Perhaps never before, we had a waiting list in excess of 50 before even sending out the information sheet – unbelievable – but for those who were disappointed, we are aiming to have a return visit in 2009. The action-packed evening started with a tour of both Houses in the Palace of Westminster by official tour guides and followed with a champagne reception on the Terrace overlooking the majestic River Thames with all the London sights on view. This was followed by a sumptuous 4-course dinner with wine and liqueurs in the magnificent surroundings of the Members Dining Room. All guests received a House of Commons souvenir as a memento of the evening.

At the conclusion of the dinner and speeches, the 2007 SCTE awards were presented; "*The Tom Hall Award for Outstanding Services to Cable Engineering*" was presented to Professor Franco Mussino who has been a member for over 30 years, and was the winner of the coveted IEC 1906 Award in 2006. Honorary Fellowships were awarded to John Startin, a staunch supporter of the Society for many years, and Dan Stroie, a recent member but the one responsible for setting up SCTE training courses for over 400 students in Romania.

The recipient of the Technician of the Year Award was Network Technician, Simon Hill of Virgin Cable. Simon has recently completed a redesign of the fibre distribution plant for over 300,000 homes with a significant reduction in customer faults. The Member of the Year Award went to Phil Landeg of Virgin Media. Phil has been involved in some pioneering work with Video On Demand which earned him the ntl Networks "Award for Excellence". Today he holds the title of HFC Architect and has specialized in the characterization and optimization of the HFC return path.

The evening concluded with our Host for the evening, Bill Olnier MP, giving a short but well-informed speech on the industry and the forthcoming Digital Switchover, but for those staying at the nearby Royal Horseguards Hotel, the festivities continued into the wee small hours of Sunday morning.

The Society would like to acknowledge its grateful thanks to Harmonic Inc, Motorola, Technetix Ltd, Teleste UK Ltd and Swires Research for their generous sponsorship of this very prestigious event.

(b) **2007 Golf Day.** The fifth SCTE Golf Day was arranged by Mr Frank Summerfield again at the very popular Wokefield Park Golf Course, nr Reading on Thursday 26 July and was attended by 28 members and guests. Teams were sponsored by Ashridge, Aurora, Cisco SA, Cotswold, Harmonic, RGB, SeaChange, Simac, Technetix, Teleste and the SCTE. A thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all despite the absolutely torrential downpour which our stalwart golfers played through, although there were some amusing stories about losing golf balls in the "lake" which one of the bunkers had become!

(c) **2008 Annual Dinner & Social Events.** We are pleased to announce that the 2008 Dinner Dance has been arranged for Saturday 23 February 2008 in the Sculpture Gallery at Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire. Over the years Woburn has become a firm favourite with Society members due to the fantastic atmosphere here and so it is sure to be another hit. Details will be circulated to members shortly, but please get your bookings in early to avoid disappointment. In Spring 2008, we are again hoping to arrange our first SCTE Track Day which is sure to be popular with fans of

motor racing and speed, with the 2008 Golf Day being arranged for later in the year.

7 SCTE PUBLICATIONS

- (a) **"Broadband" - The Society's Journal.** The Society's quarterly Journal saw a major change in January 2006 with the change of name from "CTE" to "*Broadband*", but this was a practically seamless transition with the new name giving the journal a new lease of life, together with a change of format and a more European flavour with the articles and content. The last few issues of the journal have included a dedicated German language section, thus giving it a more European appeal and additional copies have been circulated widely to ANGA members in Germany, at the ECCA exhibition, in the IBC2007 delegate bags and on the stand to name but a few. Circulation figures for the last few issues have been maintained at about 3,000 copies and these increased numbers have enable the Society's President, Dr Roger Blakeway, to break into the advertising market and spur on the resurrection of advertising contributions. The President has also revamped the advertising costings with special offers for multiple ads which has been a winner. Another change is the reduction in issues to 3 per annum for 2007 and 2008. In this way, each issue has been specifically targeted to coincide with an industry event such as ANGA and IBC which has proved to be a winner from the advertising point of view.

Over the past year, *Broadband* has continued to be edited by Dan Smart, with Graeme Young as Deputy Editor, and published by Barbara Sewell & Associates. This publication continues to be a professionally produced, high quality, technical journal that is the flagship of the SCTE.

Dan Smart, Editor of the SCTE Journal since 1992, has recently decided to start taking things a little easier and retired as Editor in August 2007. Dan has done a fantastic job for the Society during this time and he will be sadly missed but I am sure we all join together in wishing Dan a very long, happy and healthy retirement. Thank you Dan. Currently, the Society is advertising in the Watford area for a new Managing Editor to take over the reins from Dan but in the meantime the President has taken over the role in a caretaking capacity.

- (b) **SCTE Members Handbook.** The next issue of the Members Handbook (2008/9) will be published early next year. This handbook is a spiral bound, handy pocket-sized publication with up-to-date technical information and is a very useful reference publication. Additional information included in this issue will include a 2008-2010 calendar, standards update and an expanded technical section.

8 LECTURE MEETINGS

Our Lecture programme continues to offer presentations at the forefront of technology and application and have all been well attended. Subjects covered during our one-day lecture meetings in the past year have included:- "*Are we ready to support the future of TV*" in October 2006 and "*Getting it Together*" in April 2007. Our forthcoming lecture on 4 October 2007 will cover the theme "*Delivering to the End User – and will he like it?*" The lectures continue to be well supported and are a worthwhile recruiting exercise. On each occasion, they are followed by the popular cocktail parties aboard the TS Queen Mary moored on the Embankment nearby.

Included in our lecture programme this year was the next in our series of European Lecture Meetings organised by the SCTE Benelux Secretary, Mr Rien Baan. This was held on 11 September at the RAI Centre, Amsterdam entitled "*VOD Experiences & Related Technology*" and was arranged to coincide with the last day of IBC2007 so that attendees could not only come along to the free SCTE lecture meeting but could also take advantage of complimentary entry to the exhibition.

9 SCTE LTD

SCTE Ltd is the limited company that the SCTE has set up as an intermediary between IBC and the SCTE to separate exhibition activities from the normal running of the Society. The income derived from our position as a Partner in IBC gives us the ability to provide additional membership benefits, produce *Broadband* and subsidise social activities that the SCTE would have difficulty in funding from the membership income alone.

Copies of the audited accounts for SCTE Ltd to 31 December 2006 will be available at the SCTE AGM and on request from the SCTE office. For the financial year from 1 January - 31 December 2006, SCTE Ltd received a £296,507 share of IBC partnership profits and with the allocation of £245K dividend to the SCTE during the year, the Shareholders' fund stands at £171,499 as at 31 December 2006.

The SCTE President, Dr Roger Blakeway, continues to be retained on a paid, part-time basis by SCTE

Ltd in order to undertake the necessary liaison with IBC plus work on standards issues and general SCTE activities. This arrangement is on an annually renewable contract basis and is covered by funding from SCTE Ltd.

10 ADMINISTRATION

The Society's administration, conducted from the Fulton House offices in Wembley since 1991 and from Communications House in Watford since May 2007, now enters its 16th year. The joint CAI/SCTE secretariat continues to be Beverley Allgood, SCTE National Secretary and also Secretary to the CAI and the All Party Parliamentary Cable, Satellite & Digital Group, plus Shirley Brading, Amanda Ward, Fae Simon and Suzanne Hamm-Bury.

As a result of the recent move to Communications House, a new service agreement between the CAI and SCTE has been drawn up by solicitors covering all aspects of costs and staffing.

11 COMMUNICATIONS HOUSE - NEW OFFICES FOR SCTE AND CAI IN 2007

Due to the imminent demolition of Fulton House in Wembley as a result of the continued redevelopment of the Wembley area, the SCTE and CAI moved to their new offices in Watford in May 2007. This is a milestone in the history of the Society and one in which the improved finances of the SCTE have allowed it to purchase Communications House in Market Street together with the CAI. Communications House is a 2,000 sq ft, two-storey freehold building in the centre of Watford with about 6 parking spaces. Including a large office area, it also boasts a reception area, boardroom, 2 kitchen/toilet areas and a large dedicated training room. The building has undergone major refurbishment since purchasing it in September 2006 and, although the works were considerably over budget, we are delighted to say that Communications House now offers very modern and stylish accommodation and represents an excellent investment to both organisations.

12 INDUSTRY EVENTS AND RECOGNITION

During the year, the Society has been represented at a number of industry events including the CAI's 2007 Trade Fair in June, the Informa HDTV Conference, ANGA in Cologne, ECCA in Vienna, NAB, SCTE Expo in Orlando and IBC2007 earlier this month.

IBC2007, Amsterdam - September 2007. 2007 is the thirteenth year that the SCTE has exhibited at IBC as one of the Convention's sponsoring organisations and, as such, is given a complimentary stand in the Sponsors Village. SCTE participation in this event gives the Society the opportunity to meet people from around the world and share ideas with them. It also gives us the chance to promote the activities and knowledge of the SCTE, which is increasingly reaching out around the world.

IBC2007 was the biggest yet and has welcomed more people than ever before. At the close of the show the number of visitors reached 46,964, which is higher than last year's record attendance. Over 1,300 exhibits from over 120 countries made this the largest IBC ever. The expected profit to SCTE Ltd (and therefore to the SCTE) will be in excess of £200K which is another excellent result. The advance bookings for 2008 are again better than previous years so the success of the show for the immediate future looks assured.

As part of the IBC involvement the Society has, over the past years, provided two Bursaries for the event to enable members, who would not otherwise be able through lack of funding, to attend the Conference and Exhibition. This essentially provides a full Conference ticket and £1,000 to cover hotel and travel expenses. As part of the new accord with the North American SCTE a similar deal has been offered to their members.

Dr Roger Blakeway continues to be the Society's representative on the Board of IBC Ltd and Mr Chris Swires acts as his deputy and also sits on the Papers Committee. The SCTE's participation in this event has raised our profile in the world of broadcasting and ensured that cable has been given more exposure within the Conference proceedings.

13 REPRESENTATION

(a) Standards. SCTE Officers and Executive Committee Members have continued to take an active role in the work of national and international technical organisations such as BSI, CENELEC, ETSI, BSG and IEC and to represent the interests of the membership. The President, as Chairman of the UK Cable Standards Committee within BSI, now circulates all committee and final draft standards to interested UK parties for comment.

(b) International SCTE. The Society continues to liaise with the US SCTE with the aim of promoting

the activities of cable telecommunication engineering worldwide.

Agreement has now been reached to sign a new simplified International Charter document which will allow the cross promotion of major events between the UK and US SCTEs, linking of the respective websites and reciprocal member discounts at conferences, conventions and bookstores.

14 SCTE MERCHANDISE

Items available from the SCTE "Shop" include SCTE ties, lapel badges, the Digital Cable Networks Publication, training courses, Proceedings from recent IBC exhibitions and discounted rates on Elsevier books. Further details are available on the SCTE website or via the SCTE office.

The Society once again acknowledges its indebtedness to the principals of all companies who encourage their engineers to participate in its activities.

September 2007

By Order of the Executive Committee
Beverley K Allgood
National Secretary