

# **Toward a New Zealand National Committee of CIGRE**

## **- International Council on Large Electric Systems**

### **Why CIGRE:**

CIGRE is the internationally recognised forum for the development and sharing of electrical power engineering knowledge and experience. The recent reorganisation of the CIGRE Study Committees, with additional coverage at the distribution level plus the inclusion of market systems, renewables and distributed generation, indicates that CIGRE has become relevant to engineers involved at all voltage levels of power networks.

### **Motivation:**

The main reason for the formation of a New Zealand National Committee is to promote the more effective and widespread dissemination of relevant technical information to the New Zealand power industry. Another aim is to facilitate more contact between local specialist engineers and international subject experts to broaden the experience base in New Zealand. Concurrent with these aims is the overall objective of increasing local CIGRE membership to take advantage of cost-effective professional development available to our industry. Young engineers under 35 years of age pay just 36 Euros annual subscription and receive full member benefits.

There is presently no specific formal CIGRE status in New Zealand but there is now a NZ-based CIGRE membership exceeding the 40 equivalent members needed to form a National Committee. Some of these NZ members are, through their companies, subscribing at additional cost to several of the Australian Panels (AP's) established by the Australian National Committee (ANC) of CIGRE. The NZ representation in the ANC and on the AP's is recognised and there is no wish or intention to amend either this relationship or any motivations which presently attract local NZ CIGRE members to participate in the Australian CIGRE activities. NZ members will continue to participate in their AP and hopefully they will also become involved in local NZ CIGRE activities to promote the dissemination and exchange of information in this country.

It is recognised that the ANC structure does specifically provide for a New Zealand representation, either on Australian Panels or simply as members of the ANC. As mentioned before this representation comes at an extra cost which most local NZ engineers and smaller companies will be reluctant to pay. Membership of the AP's is also generally limited to only one or two NZ representatives per Panel.

There has up to now been limited dissemination to the NZ power industry, or to other NZ CIGRE members, of information so derived by NZ members serving on the AP's, outside their respective companies. Although possible reasons for this situation are understood and respected, it is this lack of information sharing that provides the motivation to expand CIGRE activities in New Zealand through a National Committee.

A NZ National Committee will promote co-operation and mutual participation by CIGRE members of both Australia and New Zealand in any events arranged or convened as CIGRE activities in either country. This is not only valid in terms of CIGRE's stated aims and objects but also worthy of encouragement and vital for this Region's technical advancement. This is particularly relevant to New Zealand as it now prepares to move into a major growth phase involving exciting new developments in our electrical power industry.

### **Intended Activities:**

Initially a major focus of a NZ National Committee will be to increase NZ CIGRE membership and thus the dissemination of CIGRE produced or fostered information. The NZNC will do this through meetings in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, as well as organising NZ-based CIGRE conferences and seminars.

A NZ National Committee will encourage specialist NZ engineers to develop contacts with the applicable international CIGRE Working Groups. It is recognised that initially NZ's small size will foster only a few local engineers for international Working Group activities. It is hoped that in time local NZ CIGRE activities will be coordinated with the relevant technical activities of the Electricity Engineers Association (EEA) and IPENZ and cooperative links will be formed with the NZ Chapters of the IEE and IEEE.

A further motivation is to promote local "peer to peer" interactions between engineers in the various sectors of industry through CIGRE membership. CIGRE also has a forum for the promotion of links between academia and industry and this would extend the present ties established by the EPECentre at Canterbury University to provide an "international professional career pathway" to encourage our engineers to stay in this country.

### **Toward the Vision:**

To conclude and summarise, it is felt that the formation of a NZ National Committee of CIGRE will provide the necessary impetus to achieve the potential benefits from advancing international industry 'best practice' and developing our local electrical engineering talent through an expanded CIGRE presence in New Zealand.

Support of this Vision by members of the New Zealand power industry is both sought after and encouraged.