

Results of the OR Practice Survey

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In September I reported on progress with the IFORS-commissioned survey of OR practice in member countries and requested further responses. At the deadline of end-November 2010, 254 usable responses had been received, as summarised in Table 1.

Just over 60% of responses are from the USA and UK, which means that the results of some analyses will need to be interpreted with care. There is, however, a good representation of the different types of organisation. Analysis of the responses is now underway and some initial results have already been obtained. The final results will be presented in two sessions at the IFORS conference in Melbourne in July, as described below.

Some Initial Results

It is clear that OR practitioners are extremely well qualified academically, as Table 2 demonstrates. Overall, 85% of respondents have a postgraduate qualification (PGQ), varying from 66% to 93% between the IFORS regions.

All respondents have a first degree and as expected maths, statistics and engineering are the most common subjects, making up

TABLE 2: POSTGRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS (PGQs)

| Qualification | Number (%) |
|----------------------|-------------|
| MSc - OR | 69 (27%) |
| MSc – Industrial Eng | 16 (6%) |
| MSc – other | 57 (22%) |
| PhD – OR | 30 (12%) |
| PhD – Industrial Eng | 10 (4%) |
| PhD - other | 52 (20%) |
| Total | 234 |
| No PGQs | 37 (15%) |
| Number with PGQs | 217 |
| Sample size | 254 (106%*) |
| % with PGQs | 85 |

almost two thirds of the total.

Final Results

Two sessions at the Melbourne conference are being devoted to presenting and discussing the results of the survey. I will present the background to the survey and the overall results and in addition some country/region Representatives have kindly agreed to add their own perspective and local knowledge to 'their' survey responses.

TABLE 1: RESPONSES by REGION & ORGANISATIONAL TYPE

| Region | ALIO | APORS | EURO | NORAM | Total | % | (USA) | (UK) |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Type of Organisation | | | | | | | | |
| Public | 0 | 3 | 59 | 13 | 75 | 30 | 8 | 16 |
| Private | 2 | 14 | 25 | 41 | 82 | 31 | 36 | 52 |
| Consultancy | 2 | 12 | 21 | 20 | 55 | 22 | 19 | 13 |
| Academic | 8 | 6 | 16 | 12 | 42 | 17 | 10 | 0 |
| Total | 12 | 35 | 121 | 86 | 254 | 100 | 73 | 81 |
| % | 5 | 14 | 47 | 34 | 100 | | | |

TABLE 3: SUBJECT OF FIRST DEGREE

| SUBJECT | NUMBER RESPONDING (%) |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Maths/Stats | 79 (35%) |
| Sciences | 35 (16%) |
| Engineering | 32 (14%) |
| Industrial Engineering | 30 (13%) |
| OR/MS | 21 (9%) |
| Other* | 29 (13%) |
| Total Known | 226 (100%) |
| Unknown | 28 |
| Total Returns | 254 |

The full programme is as follows and abstracts of the individual presentations are given in the Annex to this note:

Melbourne Conference: IFORS Survey on OR Practice

1. Overall Results of the OR Practice Survey

John Ranyard, Survey Project Leader

2. Some Key UK Results from the OR Practice Survey

John Ranyard

3. OR Practice in North America

Karla Hoffman, IFORS Vice-President, NORAM

4. OR Practice in The Philippines

Elise del Rosario, ex-President IFORS

5. OR Practice in Australia and New Zealand

Simon Dunstall, CSIRO, Australia, Baikunth Nath, IFORS Representative Australia, David Ryan, IFORS Representative, New Zealand

6. OR Practice in South Africa

Hans Ittmann, IFORS Representative, South Africa

General Discussion – Implications for IFORS

Come and Join Us

Conference delegates who are interested in OR practice are urged to attend these sessions and contribute to the general discussion which will inform the IFORS Executive on how best to reach out and support practitioners. 🌍

