

Introduction

As we all come to terms with the unprecedented events of the past 6 months, one thing is becoming increasingly evident. Whether it is at home or in work, the old ways of working are no longer viable, at least for the time being. We've seen the rise of home working, the limitations on gatherings, and, the cancellation of many plans both personal and professional. One such casualty was the inaugural Fulmination Symposium with its associated Early Careers stream. In this issue we will look at some of the ways the Early Careers Focus Group (ECFG) is looking at keeping the spirit of Early Careers going in the current climate. We will also look at things that we have got to look forward to when things return to some semblance of normality.

ECFG/IExpE Lunch Time Webinars

One of the key changes to life as we have become accustomed to is the inability to stage large events. The practical upshot of this has been the cancellation of the Fulmination Symposium and the International Explosives Conference, both major dates in the professional development calendar for those in the first few years of their career.

In order to Maintain the focus on continued learning, and to expand people's knowledge of the explosive sector, the ECFG, in conjunction with the Institute of Explosives Engineers is planning a series of online talks for the Early Careers community. Join us on the last Wednesday of every month as we explore different aspects of the explosives sector. The programme

initially aims to cover 4 topics that take in different aspects of explosives. The first talk was by Martijn Van der Voort, of the NATO Munitions Safety Information Assessment Centre (MSIAC), who presented on The Physical Effects of Detonations and Less Violent Munition Responses. The webinars are hosted via Zoom; our next speakers are Mr Dave Welch from Ramora UK on 7th October 2020 and Dr Rob Farnfield from EPC UK on 28th October 2020. As the number of participants is limited, please register at <https://iexpe.org/webinars>

Planned Visits



Whilst the planned Visits for this year have had to be cancelled, (another casualty of the current situation), the ECFG is still committed to helping the Early Careers community experience as much of the sector as possible. To this end, there are several visits still in the pipeline for when the restrictions on travel have been sufficiently eased to allow it.

Foremost amongst these are;

- A visit to EPC-UK in Derbyshire. This ties in rather nicely with Dr Rob Farnfield's planned talk on commercial explosives in industry.
- A tour around the Heath and Safety Executive's Research and Science Centre.
- The Artillery centre at Larkhill on Salisbury Plain
- And a revisit to the UK Armed Forces All Fire Event on Salisbury Plain.

More information about these opportunities will follow as it becomes available.

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Fulmination 2021

With the cancellation of Fulmination 2020, the IExpE has made the decision to roll the programme forward to 2021. In keeping with this decision, the Early Careers section of Fulmination will also be rolled forward. However, given the time that has elapsed between Fulmination 2020 and the proposed new date, there will be some changes to the Early Careers programme and structure.



What we can share with you at this time is the date of the new event, the 20th to the 22nd of April 2021. The conference will still be held at the De Vere Wokefield Estate.

The ECFG was fortunate enough to be able to visit the location along with the institute prior to the UK Travel Restrictions. The facilities available were fantastic to say the least. The dedicated conference space assigned to the Early Careers stream will allow the event to maintain the informal atmosphere synonymous with its predecessor, the Early Careers Symposium. The venue also provides communal networking spaces between sessions that will allow the Early Careers delegates to mingle with and get to know more established members of the wider explosives sector.

As some readers may already be aware, the Early Careers Poster Competition will be continuing this year. Delegates are encouraged to enter an A1 size poster or graphic abstract representing their work within the explosives sector. Participants will be judged and scored by a panel including our very own Dr Jocelyn Peach, Chair of the ECFG. If you wish to enter a poster please contact ECFG@IExpE.org



ECFG

EARLY CAREERS FOCUS GROUP

PART OF THE

SSSG

SECTOR SKILLS STRATEGY GROUP

5 Minutes With: James Brodier

In this issue, we take 5 minutes to talk to James Brodier. James is a Weapons Assurance Consultant within Frazer Nash Consultancy. Providing Ordnance Munition and Explosives (OME) technical, safety and systems assurance, across various areas of the defence sector. These include the Naval, Land and Air domains. His experience ranges from novel warhead design to weapon qualification and weapon certification. James' OME specialism and technical skills which are put to use on a daily basis in Frazer Nash with a diverse range of work.

What unique opportunities does the explosives sector offer new starters?

I think one main observation of the defence sector is the variety. As the defence sector is so large and deals with equipment, facilities and products from cradle to grave, there is immense opportunity to both broaden and specialise your knowledge and experience in numerous areas.

This is also true for the industries involved, from small and medium enterprises, to large manufacturers. Throughout all of it, there is a wide range of technical specialism, and the most unique opportunity for new starters is the ability to get exposure to many of them whilst pursuing your technical passion.

What is the greatest Strength of the UK Defence sector?

The simple answer is the people. As there is such a wealth of knowledge, and although most of it is in specialist areas, everyone is working to a common goal, nominally tackling complex problems, which creates close knit communities. With the UK priding itself in many technical areas of defence, this pursuit of technical advancement, alongside a common goal and community, means the enthusiasm to continue working in the UK defence sector puts it in a very strong position. The most rewarding problems are the challenging ones!

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