

This first issue of the sixteenth volume of the West Indian Journal of Engineering marks an important step in its evolution and development. After careful review of its progress over the last twenty years, a new organizational structure has been put in place, whereby overall responsibility for its publication is now vested in a Publications Board comprised of the most senior members of the academic staff of the Faculty of Engineering of the University of the West Indies. The mandate of the Board is, quite simply, to broaden the focus of its published work, with emphasis on certain carefully selected themes, and to reach a wider reading audience, while maintaining the highest standards of scholarship. The Journal remains a joint publication of the Faculty of Engineering and the Council of Caribbean Engineering Organizations, so that the link between teaching, research and development, on the one hand, and professional practice on the other, will be preserved.

The Board will have as its major concern the formulation of policy relating to the publication of the Journal and will work closely with an Executive Committee with responsibility for all on-going activities necessary for the execution of that policy. In making this statement, tribute must be paid to past Editorial Boards which, under the most difficult circumstances, were able to maintain regular publication of the Journal at an acceptable standard.

Six themes have been selected for emphasis in the work to be published. These are:

- Research and Development
- Energy
- The Environment
- Agriculture and Food
- Manufacture and Industry
- Engineering Education

Clearly these themes reflect the priority that will be given to publishing scholarly work in engineering and technology that relates to the creation of wealth and ultimately to the social development of communities of the Caribbean and elsewhere. They also underscore an acceptance of the concept of sustainable development, in full recognition of worldwide concerns over the impact of engineering works on the environment. Engineering Education is in the throes of a revolution, as advances in instructional technology and the development of multi-media learning materials provide greater scope in teaching methods at universities and widen the appeal of distance-education. There is much room for experimentation and it is anticipated that the Journal will be an important vehicle for the dissemination of knowledge in this field.

In the interest of ensuring the highest standards of work accepted for publication, the Publications Board has been able to assemble a team of distinguished international editorial advisers, who cover a wide range of specialisations. The Board takes this opportunity to express its deep gratitude for their prompt response to its invitation and looks forward to a happy and productive relationship.

Readers will note that an effort has been made to improve the attractiveness of the Journal by changing the format and generally by upgrading the presentation of material. If the Journal is to achieve its full potential and to hold its place among other prestigious engineering journals, it must actively seek from its readership both critical appraisal and constructive suggestions for improvement. It is sincerely hoped that these will be forthcoming.

Prof. H.O. Phelps  
Chairman  
Publications Board