

Personal Manifesto – Richard Stone

We are living in an era of marked geopolitical and technological change. The fundamentals that have underpinned the areas of supply chain, logistics, warehousing, transportation of all types and ancillary functions are changing fast. The basics are still there, a warehouse with a computer in the corner and a truck at the door, cargo coming on and off ships, trains and buses moving freight and human cargo are all still there and unchanged. The Institute should reflect that continuity of fact and purpose. We should offer calm rationality in an environment that is set to become even more complex and challenging in the years to come.

How should we approach this task? To support our membership and our future membership while providing advice and guidance to all interested parties, from trade associations to governmental bodies. To be successful in the role of principal representative of our professional membership we should listen to them. If they are not communicating with us we should ask why?

Have we lost their interest? Or are we not asking the right questions of the right people? The function of the Institute is to follow the membership and the role of the Board is to act as a 'water carrier' to that advance. Not to try to 'shape opinion' nor follow the fashion of the day. That will come to change soon enough. This country is in real need of expert advice and a coordinated approach to the logistical and transport related challenges that it currently faces. Our task should be to engage with these challenges directly and to inform and direct our membership in such a way that they can feel supported as they go out to work to better their own condition, and with it the condition of the organisations that they support, right back to the Charter that underpins this organisation.

That is a big task. Not something lightly undertaken, but something that previous generations of CILT leaders achieved through a combination of persistence, resilience, and good humour. My feeling is that we should, again, take a leaf from the military's book, and adopt an informal doctrine, alongside our mission statements and rules and regulations.

HONESTY. If nothing else we must be honest with our members and speak truth to power. A lot of issues currently engaging them are new, extraneous and challenging. We need to be structured and clear in how we balance debate and bring the value of our depth of knowledge and continuity of understanding to the National Debate.

RELIABILITY. We need to be there for our people. Our members and others who may turn to us for information and advice. People need to feel that not only is there value in membership, but that they belong somewhere. That they have colleagues, peers and mentors.

EXCELLENCE. Membership should be the gold standard for people in our profession. For that perception to grow, we must be rigorous in maintaining standards but mindful that we should also encourage talent.