

# CIHT Dubai Group Newsletter

## Welcome from the Chair

Dear CIHT Dubai Members,

Welcome to this, our sixth issue of the CIHT Dubai Group Newsletter.



**Jonathan Spear, Chair, CIHT Dubai**

Three years since our foundation, we continue to see a growing membership and community of interested highways and transport professionals in Dubai and the UAE. Our programme of seminars, in particular, are designed to cover a range of contemporary technical topics, techniques and avenues to qualifications. We organise these activities online and face-to-face with various public, private and academic sector partners, attracting interest from a wider audience well beyond the UAE's borders and complementing the return of major transport-related conferences and events across the GCC following the end of the Pandemic.

Within this newsletter you will find details of the Dubai Committee, information on online seminars, updates on our 2023 Business Plan, professional qualifications, and a profile of one of our members.

The Dubai Group exists to organise technical, membership and social events which share and develop knowledge, ideas and skills amongst highways and transport professionals in the UAE. We extend our thanks to all those who have helped us in this goal in 2022 through various contributions and look forward to further fruitful collaboration in 2023. Our second Annual General Meeting will be held in May 2023 so please get in touch if you wish to get involved.

## The CIHT Dubai Group

The CIHT Dubai Group currently consists of **17 Committee Members**, pictured below, who meet regularly to discuss progress, and to plan and organise future events, activities and joint working with other bodies. There are over 100 CIHT Members in the UAE and we now have a contacts database of over 1,500 transport professionals.



Jonathan Spear  
(Chair)



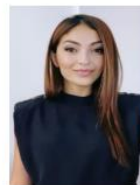
Martin Tillman  
(Vice-Chair)



Prathyush Menon  
(Secretary)



Jarrod Smith  
(Treasurer)



Nebras Radaideh  
(Events)



Andrew Jenkins  
(Membership)



Brindha Sankari  
(Web and Data)



Michelle Wood  
(Professional Development)



Smriti Ojah  
(Young Professionals)



Yara Al Hamdan



Majed Kaddoura



Dr. Khalid Nur



Richard Lewis



Dr. Stephen  
Wilkinson



Sanaz Roigari



Adel Armoos



Jodie Mairs

Additional support is always welcome so if you wish to get involved in, or help, the Committee, please get in touch.

This newsletter is edited by **Jarrod Smith** and published twice a year by the Dubai Group of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT). To subscribe to our newsletter, receive notifications of upcoming seminars, give us feedback, or find out more about CIHT activities, membership and qualifications, contact us via:

General queries: [ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com](mailto:ciht.dubaigroup@gmail.com)

Branch website: [Dubai | CIHT](#)

## CIHT Dubai Events July – December 2022

June 2022 saw our first face-to-face event since the Pandemic, held at the University of Wollongong in Dubai (UoWD) in a hybrid format held simultaneously online. We hope to repeat this successful format moving forward into 2023, along with consideration of expanding activities to site visits and social networking events.

Between July and December 2022, we held three seminars. These lasted 60 to 90 minutes and consisted of a brief introduction to CIHT and Dubai Group, presentations, moderated discussion, questions and answers. Events are recorded and a Bulletin Note generally produced. In addition our Chair, Vice-Chair and a number of Committee Members spoke or moderated at various transport and mobility conference events in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, including the World Green Economy Summit, Dubai EV Show and Fleet and Mobility Summit, as well as being involved in the work of PIARC, UITP and other international transport bodies.

Month	Seminar	Speakers and Organisations
July	<i>Construction Management Planning</i>	<i>Jon Harris - Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)</i>
October	<i>Advancing Air Mobility</i>	<i>Jay Latta – Emerging Technology Strategist, StINT Dr Stefan Breunig – Head of Strategy, Rolls-Royce Electrical Paul Franck Bijou – Senior Vice President Commercial, Lilium Gloria Bouillon – Airport Director, Beverly Regional Airport, USA James Walker – Senior Manager, Aviation Advisory, Atkins, UAE</i>
December	<i>A Life Cycle Approach to Assessing Intermodal Surface Transport Projects</i>	<i>Dr Hamad Jassmi – Emirates Centre for Mobility Research, UAE University</i>

A programme of technical seminars is planned for 2023 either online or in a hybrid format. Come along, brush up on some topical subjects and network with like-minded people. Events are advertised on Eventbrite and [www.ciht.org.uk](http://www.ciht.org.uk).

### In case you missed it.....

#### ADVANCED AIR MOBILITY – READY FOR LIFT OFF? – 11<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2022



The promise of a new generation of flexible aerial vehicles, within a system known collectively as Advanced Air Mobility (AAM), replacing noisy and polluting helicopters and light aircraft that provide urban and regional services across a few global cities today, has been in the air for a long time. Could this decade see the promise of AAM become reality, offering a new form of affordable, electric, autonomous and shared transportation for people, places and things in three dimensions which will help ease urban congestion, boost regional connectivity and challenge conventional operating models, whilst helping to deliver Net Zero.

This seminar, with a panel of industry leaders, discussed aircraft designs, propulsion systems and power sources being developed by existing aviation players as well as a plethora of new start-ups. The panellists considered current projections for technology development, certification, initial commercial deployment and eventual scaling up. Barriers and opportunities for implementation were reviewed as well as the wider linkages and implications for other future mobility technologies and wider ecosystems.

#### A LIFE CYCLE APPROACH TO INTERMODAL TRANSPORT PROJECTS – 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022



Road transport systems often exhibit a wide range of costs and externalities. These include lifecycle and operational expenditure, potential overruns, traffic congestion, pollution, severance, additional user and vehicle operating costs, asset deterioration and falling resilience. These impacts occur gradually over the asset's lifecycle and could have been avoided, reduced or mitigated by opting for alternative options at initial inception, planning and design stage.

Current transport planning practices require a paradigm shift to achieve an optimum ratio of costs to economic, environmental and social benefits that are also in line with net-zero objectives. At project-level, decision-makers have to practice consistency in investment decisions while evaluating interdependent and often conflicting ideas of economy, environmental impact and social performance.

The seminar outlined the pioneering research work undertaken by the Emirates Centre for Mobility Research (ECMR) at UAE University on the development of a comprehensive methodology to assess life-cycle cost and sustainability impacts for intermodal surface transport projects, covering up to 30 years lifespan of an asset.

## Britannia Walk and the CIHT Dubai Business Plan



As part of our agreed working arrangements with CIHT HQ in Britannia Walk, London, all CIHT Groups must submit an Annual Business Plan which is aligned to the strategic priorities set out in the new CIHT Strategic Plan 2022+, namely promoting learning, influencing the future, and promoting the value of membership.

CIHT Dubai Chair, **Jonathan Spear**, discussed delivery of our first Business Plan when he visited Britannia Walk in August, meeting CIHT Chief Executive, **Sue Percy**, and Head of Policy, **Andrew Hugill**. Particular progress was noted on technical events, initiating a local mentorship process and building compliance, integrity and resilience into our governance arrangements.

For our 2023 Business Plan, prepared by CIHT Dubai Vice-Chair, **Martin Tillman**, we are looking to build upon these successes. We are looking to strengthen our financial governance and stakeholder engagement through corporate sponsorship. We are also looking to support activities for young professionals, reaching out to local university career fairs to encourage CIHT membership and promote interest amongst students in highways and transportation careers.

We are working towards a potential CIHT Presidential visit in 2023 and will look at this as a way of further promoting CIHT in the GCC. CIHT is also promoting Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as a major pillar and our Business Plan has been updated to further reinforce this. We will promote EDI initiatives, with a particular focus on gender equality, have representation at future CIHT EDI events and hold at least one local event in 2023 related to EDI.

This is an exciting time to be part of the growth of CIHT in Dubai. The new Business Plan provides the structure to focus local action, align with the resources of the wider Institution and for CIHT Dubai to move forward with confidence.

## Training and Mentoring



Since the inception of CIHT Dubai, Committee Members **Michelle Wood and Andrew Jenkins** have focused on raising awareness of professional training and qualifications in Dubai and the UAE, both amongst CIHT Members and others in the local highways and transport sector. Generally two seminars per year are run focusing on acquiring a professional qualification in transport planning (Transport Planning Professional, TPP) and also on acquiring a professional qualification in engineering (Chartered Engineer or Engineering Technician).

The Dubai Group supports applicants through a set of local mentors in the region who are professionally qualified. Engagement and feedback from individuals and employers who are interested in pursuing professional qualifications is being actively encouraged and the objective is to make access to qualifications as flexible and relevant as possible. An example is professional interviews being carried out via virtual meetings online, removing the need to travel.

Current mentors are **Jonathan Spear, Michelle Wood, Andrew Jenkins, Fergal Hand, Sreeram Kollipara and Herve Etave**. We currently have five candidates going for their professional qualifications via the various routes.

More information can be obtained through the CIHT website (<https://www.ciht.org.uk>). Michelle and Andrew would be delighted to hear from you if you are interested in pursuing a professional qualification and would like to discuss mentoring and support through the process. We would also be delighted to hear from senior professionals who are professionally qualified and willing to act as mentors to others.

## Committee Member Profile – Brindha Sankari



### 1) What's your job and who do you currently work for?

I am currently working for the Integrated Transport Centre (ITC), Abu Dhabi as a Transport Planning and Modelling Expert. Key responsibilities include managing projects involving regular maintenance and update of the STEAM+ (Strategic Transportation Evaluation and Assessment Model) and EEAM (Environmental and Economic Assessment Model) for Abu Dhabi Emirate. I also provide modelling support for Traffic Impact Studies (TIS) and Transportation Master Plans (TMPs) for various land use developments as well as carrying out internal planning studies, providing transport planning and modelling support for strategic planning projects, and other model related queries from different divisions internally.

### 2) Can you briefly summarise your career to date?

After obtaining my master's degree in Transportation Engineering from College of Engineering, Anna University, I worked in New Delhi for 3 years. I later moved into Singapore to work as a senior executive with Singapore Mass Rapid Transit (SMRT) developing an inhouse Cube-based Public Transport Model. After working for 2.5 years in Singapore, I moved to Dubai to join Arup where I worked for 9 years. My experience in UAE involved a wide set of projects ranging from strategic planning, business case assessment, economic assessment, rail studies, transport assessment and feasibility studies. In addition, I also developed a new skill set in big data analytics and created dashboards in Power BI for a variety of planning disciplines.

Apart from UAE, I also remotely assisted modelling teams in other Arup offices (Toronto, Canada and Melbourne, Australia). Recently, I moved from consultancy to the public sector to work as a Transport Planning and Modelling Expert with the Integrated Transport Centre, Abu Dhabi.

### 3) Why did you move to Dubai and what's the best thing about living here?

Moving to Dubai from Singapore was one of the most difficult decisions, but I decided to try the UAE considering the rapid pace of development happening in the region. Having lived in the GCC for over 10 years now, I feel this is the best decision I have ever made and proudly call UAE my second home. With a diverse multinational expat community and safety, this region also offers a diverse atmosphere to raise a family and develop professionally.

### 4) What do you get out of working with CIHT Dubai?

My involvement with CIHT Dubai group offers me an excellent opportunity to be up to date with the best practices in the transportation industry. It also offers excellent networking opportunities with other industry professionals. Volunteering as part of the CIHT Dubai Committee to organise online events, and manage our data, gives me personal fulfilment and an opportunity to give back to the transport community in the Middle East.

### 5) What are the differences between working for a public sector organisation compared to being a private sector consultant in the Middle East?

The public sector, especially ITC, offers a great opportunity to innovate and develop cutting-edge solutions. In the government sector you get the opportunity to take a project from the beginning by writing the scope of work to its completion, with high-level accountability and quality expectations. By contrast, the private sector offered flexibility and a real opportunity to learn different skills at the start of my career

### 6) Are there any plans to further enhance the Abu Dhabi STEAM model that you can tell us about?

STEAM is a sophisticated tool that could be used to plan land use changes, test changes in transport systems such as highways, tunnels, or public transport and forecast the impact of different policy proposals. The model uses a data warehouse that includes billions of rows of data, including mobile data provided by Etisalat, to understand population density, and travel patterns.

STEAM is also enhanced continuously year on year. One of the major enhancements will be to develop representation of micromobility and autonomous vehicle options. The analytical capability of STEAM will also be enhanced by moving to CUBE 7, as well as ongoing improvements to enhance the BirdsEYE visualization platform and Hybrid Simulation Model.