

## Alex Mulholland BSc CEng MIET HFMA



Alex Mulholland is the Head of Supportability Engineering in Edinburgh for Selex ES, part of the Finmeccanica Company. Alex is currently leading a strategic change to the approach taken in product and support solution design to focus on showing how the solution will deliver what is needed of it when subjected to actual operational and maintenance environments. Through this desire to improve the effectiveness of Supportability Engineering he has forged and maintains a close working relationship with the MIRCE Academy.

Alex started his career in the mid-eighties as a Mechanical Technician Apprentice with Ferranti Plc (now Selex ES). During his apprenticeship, he was placed in the Spares and Publications Department as part of his rota of departments. Here he found a passion for support service modelling and supporting products in operation.

On completion of his apprenticeship he joined the Spares and Publications Department, where he spent the next 6 years developing spares models and technical manuals. Whilst on a training course, a chance encounter with a team of Navy Technicians, led to some frank and open discussions on: the need to increase the accuracy of descriptions and maintenance tasks; effective use of the tools they have and the reality of spares availability. This lesson cost Alex many pints of beer, but the encounter convinced him of the need to get much closer to the Users, to have any chance of understanding how to support the equipment in the environment it would be used in.

Driven by this life lesson, Alex applied for a Job in the Integrated Logistics Support Department at Crewe Toll in Edinburgh in the mid-nineties. Where he worked in various roles: from design analysis of Reliability, Maintainability and Testability to Support Solutions Design and Support Services Delivery. As Alex's career progressed from a Senior Supportability Engineer to Supportability Engineering Functional lead, he continued to promote the need to consider Supportability at every stage of the equipment design process.

As his experience and responsibility increased, so did his appetite to effect changes that would make a real difference to the "Functionability" of the product. To this end he has introduced improvements in the Supportability Engineering process to ensure that reliability assessments take account of expected failure mechanisms and not just random component failures.

Alex's efforts in the field of Supportability Engineering were recognised by the MIRCE Akademy in May 2012 with an Honorary Fellowship. Subsequently, in an effort to gain wider recognition of the real engineering behind Supportability Engineering, he applied for professional registration with the Institution of Engineer and Technology. In July 2013 he successfully presented his views on the engineering approach to Supportability and was accredited as a Chartered Engineer.

As Head of Supportability Engineering and an active Member of the MIRCE Akademy, Alex continues to explore and develop new ways of working with design engineers, to help them understand better how their design can be expected to perform in the hands of the Customer.