

Mass Extinction!

(How serious is the apparent shortage of people & skills within the industry and is the industry doing and organised enough to address this issue?)

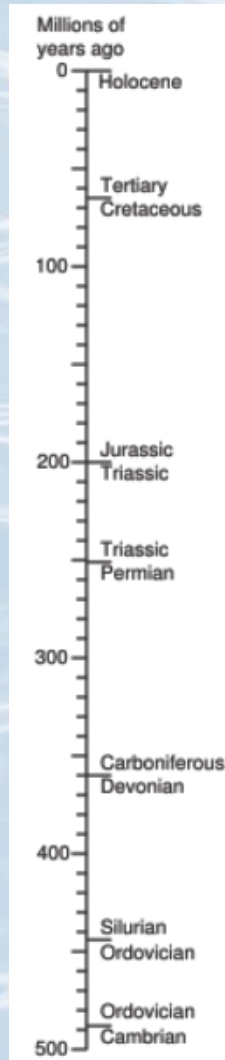
Peter Larkin

Discipline Manager : Geotechnics

Acergy



Mass Extinction : The shortage of geotechnical personnel



OK – maybe a bit dramatic but
let's continue

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- ❑ This is essentially a personal insight, with some views which may be shared by others of you

- ❑ There may be already be some recent and / or historical activity which I may be not aware of which would clarify some of the assertions and questions

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- ❑ Broader issue – not just Geosciences / Geoengineering but engineering / science / technology in general
- ❑ Topic has frequently been subject of debate at industry forums : OPT / SUT 2007 [TP] /
- ❑ Informally amongst ourselves e.g. 40 Year Reunion for Portsmouth Polyversity Eng. Geol. B.Eng Degree course (by way of an aside

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- ❑ I'm searching for clarity / position as to where the offshore geotech community stands at the moment

- ❑ Is there a industry position?

- ❑ Does SUT have a position? (Perhaps not appropriate but then again)

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- ❑ Various Companies have already started to address matters for themselves

- ❑ e.g. Acergy have embraced a number of initiatives to assist with rec. & ret.
 1. “Employer of choice” goal
 2. GEDS [Graduate Training Scheme]
 3. Conversion Course
 4. Structured development for Engineers [EDS]

Maybe not unique but have responded to the situation, as no doubt others have

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- ❑ Demographics & the battle on two fronts :
- ❑ Absolute numbers declining
- ❑ Fewer of the 18 to 20 year old demographic engaging in engineering and science

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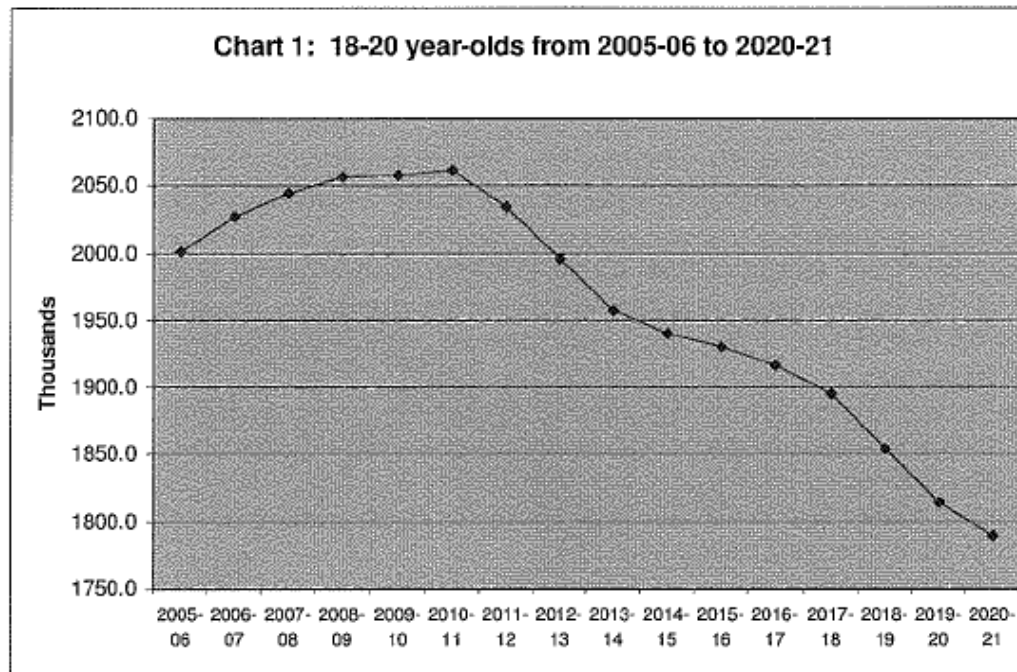


Figure 2 Number of 18 to 20 year olds from 2005 to 2021. Higher Education
Policy Institute: Demand for HE to 2020

As used by Nick Koor of Portsmouth University, October 2007

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- ❑ Grass roots ? Is there any mileage in going to source?
- ❑ A personal tale ; sponsor-a-school with the RGS (www.rgs.org/)
- ❑ Graduate Fairs : N-u-T / Strathclyde / UHW / Dundee / Aberdeen - very variable response.
... of more concern to me NTNU – Trondheim

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- ❑ Grass roots ? Is there any mileage in going to source?
- ❑ A personal tale ; sponsor-a-school with the RGS (www.rgs.org) – engineering equivalents. School visits ? Perhaps BGS do a fair bit already ?
- ❑ Graduate Fairs : N-u-T / Strathclyde / UHW / Dundee / Aberdeen - very variable response.
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Zip!

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- ❑ Advertising : Norwegian / Swedish / Danish & Dutch Technical Journals : Little or no response
- ❑ Views tainted by personal experience – what about others?

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- ❑ Moving on
- ❑ Recent Hydrographic Society presentation in Aberdeen. Andy McNeill presented a slick presentation gave quite an inspiring appraisal of where our Hydrographic cousins are at with this
- ❑ It did leave one with the impression why wouldn't anyone want a career in "*offshore survey and positioning*"

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- ❑ Interestingly, the presentation concluded with :
 1. Oil & Gas salaries probably best for discipline
 2. Surveyors play a critical role in all stages of oil & gas development cycle
 3. Global and dynamic industry driven by technological innovation
 4. Expanding global market with excellent job prospects and security
 5. Good career progression, training and development

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- ❑ Of course all of the preceding would apply to a career in offshore geotechnics
- ❑ Our Hydro cousins seem to be well organized having formed an “*oil & gas offshore survey and positioning skills and competence group*”

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- ❑ This is supported by ~15 key industry professionals and key professional and industry bodies :

e.g. IMCA
 OPITO
 Hydrographic Society (UK)
 OGP

With links into RICS / IMarEST / ICE / IHO amongst others to assist with funding

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- ❑ The group has also stated it's Terms of Reference with clearly defined objectives and an activity plan

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Summary & Conclusions :

- ❑ Have we established where we are at in addressing the extent of this skills shortage
- ❑ Is there a coherent process applied to remedying this skills shortage
- ❑ Is there scope for establishing a unified approach and a “formal” body

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Summary & Conclusions :

- ❑ Corporate / Industry Forum
- ❑ Merits of broader grass roots (schools) approach or limit to tertiary education
- ❑ Are we in danger of becoming a “protected species” if indeed not (effectively) extinct.....

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Thank you for listening ...

... and participating

