**REVIEW OF RELU WORK SHADOW/VISITING FELLOWSHIP SCHEME 2008**

*The Relu Work Shadowing Scheme was launched at the end of 2005. By funding placements of between one week and a month, it aims to introduce Relu research staff to the action-contexts in which their research may be used. These contexts may be commercial organisations, voluntary bodies or public agencies. The third round of the scheme involved 5 work shadows. The Shadowing Scheme was complemented in 2007 by the**Relu Visiting Fellowship Scheme which enables policy makers and practitioners from the commercial, voluntary or public sector to spend between one week and a month visiting Relu research teams with a view to exploring the implications of the research for their work and to raising awareness of their interests among the researchers. This could be return visits by practitioners who hosted a researcher under Work Shadowing or an altogether new collaboration. One visiting fellowship took place in the second year of the scheme. In 2008 additional funding from the ESRC was provided to cover private sector placements (\* in the table).*

***Work Shadowing***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Host** | **Shadower** | **Project** | **Page** |
| Defra Plant Health Division | Peter Mills | Assessing the Potential Rural Impact of Plant Diseases | 1 |
| Institute of Grocery Distribution\* | Brian Ilbery | Assessing the Potential Rural Impact of Plant Diseases | 3 |
| Institute of Grocery Distribution\* | Damian Maye | Assessing the Potential Rural Impact of Plant Diseases | 3 |
| National Farmers Union\* | Brian Ilbery | Assessing the Potential Rural Impact of Plant Diseases | 5 |
| National Farmers Union\* | Damian Maye | Assessing the Potential Rural Impact of Plant Diseases | 5 |

***Visiting Fellowships***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fellow Organisation** | **Fellow** | **Host Research Project** | **Page** |
| Environment Agency Wales | Kathryn Monk | Knowledge Controversies in Rural Land Management | 8 |

**17. PETER MILLS**

**HOST: Defra Plant Heath Division**

**JOINT WORKSHADOWING REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

For the RELU project ‘Growing Risk?; The potential impact of plant diseases on land use and the rural economy, Defra’s Plant Health Division (PHD) based in York (now part of Fera) is a crucially important actor. Understanding the processes employed by PHD, taking a view of the likely future policy landscape, and constraints that are currently in place was thought to be of value to delivery of the RELU project and also of use to staff in PHD. The RELU programme has strongly encouraged researchers to obtain a thorough understanding of the working methods of the organisations they are studying. This has been facilitated through work shadowing by Peter Mills of a series of meetings attended by Dr Stephen Hunter (Deputy Director Plant & Bee Health).

* Meeting 1. January 29, 2009. Contingency Planning Board. Defra. Plant health Preparedness. Presentation by Stephen Hunter and discussion
* Meeting 2. March 3, 2009 Public Accounts Committee briefing for Dame Helen Ghosh (Defra Permanent Secretary) for the Health of Livestock and Honey Bees attended by Stephen Hunter and Chief Executives of relevant Defra Agencies.
* Meeting 3. March 4, 2009. 14th Meeting of Plant Health Risk Management Workstream (CSL, now Fera).
* Meeting 4. March 5, 2009. Launch of the *Phytophora ramorum* programme. Example of Defra stakeholder engagement
* Meeting 5. March 9, 2009. Launch of the Bee Health Programme.

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

One of the aims of the RELU ‘Growing Risk’ project is to understand the constraints under which policy is formulated and explore mechanisms by which stakeholders might be able to contribute to decision making. Growing Risk is attempting to identify both relevant stakeholders within the plant health arena and also to seek ways for 3-dimensional policy framing. The meetings attended during this work-shadowing exercise included both internal Defra/Agency meetings, and also those where invited stakeholders took part. Involvement in these meeting has been immensely valuable to the project. A good example of stakeholder engagement in decision making was presented by the workshop at the Innovation Centre in Reading that discussed future activities by the UK to address the issue of *Phytothphora ramorum* (sudden oak death). Similarly, an attempt to engage with stakeholders affected by the declining health of bees stimulated much debate, but on that occasion potentially fewer solutions. ‘Closed‘ meetings provided an insight into the complex landscape of policy formulation which will inform the RELU programme’s attempt to involve wider stakeholder engagement. This has been an extremely valuable adjunct to the RELU project and has provided an opportunity to access information that would not otherwise have been available to the project.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation (completed by Defra)*

* Exposure of policy processes to an external party is useful in order to get potentially useful feedback (though we didn’t explicitly extract such feedback from the workshadower; this is something we will now do.
* Better appreciation by a key set of contractors of policy processes and constraints.
* Improved outputs from associated projects, both current and future, that require an understanding of policy processes.
* A way of demonstrating government openness and willingness to engage with stakeholders.

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

None, other than a suggestion of reducing the reporting burden on host organisations who are being workshadowed, by allowing a joint report.

**18. BRIAN ILBERY & DAMIAN MAYE**

**HOST: Institute of Grocery Distribution**

**July 2007 – December 2008**

**SHADOWER REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

Dr Peter Whitehead ran the Food Chain Centre (post-Curry) at the IGD until it closed in 2007 and this was the main stimulus for shadowing some of the activities of the IGD between July and December 2008. The main work shadowing activity took the form of two visits to the IGD headquarters in Watford and one ‘knowledge transfer’ event in the CCRI at Cheltenham. The first visit to IGD provided insights into some of their main activities including food retail services, supply/value chain management, efficient consumer response (ECR) and shopping behaviour, promoting business excellence (PROBE), farmer training in marketing, and research/postgraduate projects e.g. food waste. More detailed insights into their work on supply chains and ECR, including the sharing of best practice among 20 countries, formed the basis of the second visit. As well as receiving a demonstration on the supply chain profiles created by IGD for the major food retailers, we gained an insight into the formation of working groups (involving the major retailers) by the supply chain team of IGD to debate ‘hot topics’ such as sustainable distribution, food packaging, lean operations, availability and demand planning, transport optimization and new products. A discussion also took place on where and whether plant diseases ‘fit’ into the supply chain concept. The third meeting involved a debate on possible knowledge transfer activities between IGD and the CCRI. These included knowledge transfer partnerships, the sharing and provision of joint short courses, joint research activities on food and farming, taught postgraduate courses and CASE PhD studentships.

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

While not focusing explicitly on the plant disease management aspect of our ‘growing risk’ RELU project, we learned a lot about some key ‘downstream’ elements of the food supply chain – especially food processing and retailing activities. The shadowing helped us to understand the cooperative rather than competitive manner in which key players in the food processing and retailing industry conduct their market research. It also provided valuable insights into the way IGD conducts both its primary and market research activities in food retailing, food waste and consumer behaviour. Crucially, links with IGD have helped us to appreciate the diverse nature of supply chain management and the need to be sensitive to the differences in the four sectors examined in our RELU project (3 food and 1 non-food). It has also helped us to appreciate the more applied/practical relevance of our own research ideas on the social science aspects of our RELU research. Finally, it is anticipated that the benefits of collaboration with IGD will outlive this particular RELU project and lead to both future joint research projects on food supply chains and different knowledge transfer activities.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

As a member of the Advisory Board to our RELU project, Dr Peter Whitehead and two of his colleagues have learned more about different aspects of agricultural restructuring and the ways in which plant diseases could have a major impact on food supply chains in the UK, especially on some of the ‘downstream’ players who currently feel that plant diseases have little bearing on their supply chain activities (they would simply source elsewhere or seek substitutes). From the outset, the IGD expressed an interest in potential knowledge transfer activities with the CCRI that would outlive our specific RELU project. Thus the shadowing of IGD has helped to strengthen the relationship and links between the two organizations. In particular, there is considerable potential to collaborate on joint research projects on food and farming. The IGD also expressed genuine interest in contributing to taught Masters’ programmes and short courses provided by the CCRI.

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

The relatively short timescale over which the shadowing took place proved to be a slight problem in so far as there was insufficient time to organize other possible shadowing events. For example, we expressed a desire to shadow one of the working group meetings on a ‘hot topic’ such as sustainable distribution, but this could not be arranged because we had just missed one meeting and the next one was not planned until after the shadowing was finished. Likewise, we could not attend a special seminar organized by the supply chain team in London because it clashed with our own ‘internal’ winter school. However, given the interest expressed by IGD in possible future joint activities with the CCRI, it is possible that we can still do some of these things outside this particular RELU shadowing exercise.

**HOST REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

Three work shadow meetings have been held. Each took the form of presentations followed by questions and answers. A fourth meeting was planned but because of diary difficulties the meeting had to be cancelled.

The first two meetings were held at IGD and involved Tarun Patel, Karen Chalmers and Peter Whitehead from IGD and Brian Ilbery and Damian Maye from CCRI.

Both meetings enabled the RELU team at CCRI to understand IGD’s work particularly in relation to supply chain understandings and analysis. This area of IGD’s work encourages amongst other things cross-company working to improve sustainability, efficiency and on-shelf availability.

The third meeting was held at CCRI and involved a team from CCRI and Peter Whitehead from IGD. This meeting was a wide ranging discussion around the topic of training and people development.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

* Greater awareness of the RELU project
* Improved understanding of the work of the CCRI
* Potential opportunities for mutual collaboration

**19. BRIAN ILBERY & DAMIAN MAYE**

**HOST: National Farmers Union**

**August 2008 – February 2009**

**SHADOWER REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

The purpose of this NFU ‘work shadowing’ exercise was to observe and learn how the NFU acts as a lobby and support point for growers and producers and to understand how they communicate information about plant disease issues to farmers. It comprised five main activities, three meetings with different NFU members of staff and two shadowing exercises, where Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery observed two different plant sector board meetings. These activities are described chronologically in more detail below:

* Meeting 1, 15/8/08: Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery met with Dr. Hartfield to learn about the NFU, its structure, membership, lobbying role and core areas of work (all of which are issue driven) and information on horticulture, potatoes and cereals. At the end of the meeting a timetable for future shadowing activities was agreed.
* Meeting 2, 15/10/08: Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery first met with Lee Woodger and Clare Smith from the NFU’s food chain team to learn about some of the issues they were dealing with, which included improving links with food processors and pushing the “Buy British” produce agenda. Discussions also examined what was understood by lobbying and the food chain, as well as the relative importance of plant disease as a food chain issue. Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery then met with Paul Chambers, the NFU’s plant health adviser to learn about the changes to European pesticide legislation (Sustainable Use Directive and Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market [91/414]) and the NFU’s on-going lobbying roll. As was explained in the meeting, the changes to Directive 91/414 are hugely significant for the sector, with major implications also for the RELU ‘Growing risk’ project.
* Shadow 1, 12/11/08: Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery observed the first half of a NFU National Combinable Crops board meeting, including discussions on crop protection and mycotoxins. They also gave a short presentation to the board, explaining the Growing risk project and introducing a methodology/sampling frame to survey wheat farmers in England, which the board commented on (see below).
* Shadow 2, 18/11/08: As above, Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery observed a NFU National Horticulture and Potato board meeting and also presented their thoughts on sampling, in this case potato, mushroom and ornamental growers, for comment.
* Meeting 3, 6/2/09: Dr. Maye, Prof. Ilbery, Prof. Mills and Dr. Dehnen-Schmutz (from the Growing risk project) meet with Paul Chambers and Dr. Chris Hartfield to get an update (since the European parliament vote) on the EU pesticide legislation, the impact of NFU lobbying on the political process and to discuss implications for the project and proposals for future research/conference activities.

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

The NFU work shadow has been hugely beneficial to the Growing risk project both as a means to enable access to resources and information that would otherwise be difficult to come by and, critically, to inform the content and direction of the project. The following key benefits are worthy of note:

* It has helped the applicants learn more about the changing EU pesticide regulations and their potential impacts (from an industry perspective), including NFU lobbying techniques to influence the political process.
* It has greatly informed the sampling strategy for the wheat and potato supply chain surveys. Combinable crop board members suggested, for example, that it was important in the case of wheat to select contrasting case study areas (one core production area and one more marginal), as growers will be responding and managing plant disease under different micro-climatic conditions. Horticulture board members suggested a similar strategy, although noted it as a less significant influence.
* It has provided access to regional-level NFU contacts, who have agreed to act as contact points to help the Growing risk team identify a good sample of growers in the case regions identified for research.
* It has enabled the applicants to learn more about the NFU, its structure, purpose (lobbying) and to develop further contacts for knowledge transfer and future research collaborations.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

The external organisation (the NFU) have benefited from the RELU work shadow in the following three main ways. First, Dr. Maye and Prof. Ilbery have (through the course of the meetings and e-mail communications in between) been able to share review and survey work already undertaken by the ‘Growing risk’ project. This includes material on science/social science definitions of risk, the changing nature of agricultural restructuring in the combinable crops and horticulture sectors and results from a stakeholder survey on plant disease. Secondly, the meetings and discussions have been used as a way to identify knowledge gaps that need to be plugged to assist the NFU going forward (e.g. basic sector information on the size, scale and changing nature of horticulture; the potential impacts of 91/414 on different plant sectors). Thirdly, and most importantly, it has provided the NFU with an excellent opportunity to engage with and help inform the direction of a major RELU research project on plant disease so that results generated are of useful benefit to both the NFU and the wider farming industry. Finally, it has provided the NFU with an opportunity to get involved in future research activities leading out of the RELU project and shadowing exercise.

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

This work shadowing exercise has clearly been very useful to the ‘Growing risk’ project. In terms of future scheme improvements, three things are worth considering. First, in terms of timing, the scheme could potentially benefit from having a longer time span. There are various reasons why this needs to be the case. The most obvious is that those involved in projects run the scheme alongside ‘normal’ project duties and thus a short time period may overly pressure both parties involved (researchers and collaborators). Another significant reason is that allowing a longer time period would allow the shadowing process to identify and capture events and changes that were critical to the project/research focus. In the case of this shadow, the time period was in fact extended a little so that the team could complete the picture regarding Directive 91/414. If the time period is quite short the danger is that researchers and collaborators force shadowing opportunities, rather than wait and identify moments when shadowing will be truly beneficial to both parties. The second suggestion concerns the use of the phrase ‘shadowing’. This may be (unwittingly) a little restrictive. It needs to be made clear to potential applicants that they don’t always have to engage in *pure* ‘work shadowing’. So make it clear that it can include things like meetings between researchers and collaborators, it can involve sharing information/resources and so on, alongside more obvious shadowing-related activities.

**HOST REPORT**

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

I hope it has helped provide the research project with a real commercial and applied perspective on plant health issues. It is vital that such projects accurately reflect the political, regulatory and commercial landscape within which horticultural and agricultural businesses have to function. The work shadowing with the NFU has hopefully helped provide this perspective. In doing so it is also hoped that the outcomes of the project will lead to some actual benefits for horticultural and agricultural businesses – this delivery of real benefits will in turn reflect very well on the project.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

The work shadowing has been of real benefit to the NFU. It has provided us with a significant opportunity to feed into the project to help us ensure the project accurately reflects the functional landscape in which horticulture and agricultural businesses operate, and in turn ensure the project delivers some tangible benefits for the industry. The expectation is that the outcome of the project will influence opinion formers and policy makers. Therefore it is the NFU’s interest that the project outcomes accurately reflect the current plant health environment experienced by its members.

A good example of this ‘benefit’ process is the EU Thematic Strategy on Pesticides. This EU regulation and directive will have significant influence on the management of future plant health issues throughout the EU. Prior to the work shadowing the researchers (and thus the project) had relatively little understanding of this issue. As a result of the work shadowing the researchers have realized the massive impact this thematic strategy will have on future plant health issues, and the project reflects this accordingly.

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

No.

**7. KATHRYN MONK**

**HOST: Environment Agency Wales**

**July 2007 – October 2008**

**VISITING FELLOW REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

I undertook a two-day visit with the Oxford-based team for general briefings on the project, its background, and work package one. We also recorded my briefing to them on the work of Environment Agency (Wales) and in particular how it sources and takes up scientific evidence.

I hosted Oxford researcher Catharina Langstrom as an observer at a one-day Environment Agency Area-Science meeting, and we then examined processes and challenges of KT within EA.

During a four-day visit to the Durham and Newcastle teams we had intensive discussions on work packages two and three: flood modelling and local participation. I also had more general RELU dissemination discussions with the RELU deputy director.

I will join the teams in Pickering, North Yorks for their Open Day to launch the public research group.

I hosted the Oxford team for a seminar at Environment Agency Wales head office, attended by EAW, EA Science, Welsh Assembly Government, and Cardiff University.

We have a follow-up seminar arranged with the Durham team in November.

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

I have raised the project team’s awareness of the constraints and views existing in the Environment Agency Wales towards both the specific use of evidence in policy and operational decision making and possible translation of project results into guidelines, and in more general issues of KT within the EA. I have also provided specific links for the project team with relevant EA staff in EA Science and local offices. This has been done through direct one-to-one discussions and creating further opportunities for the research team to observe and participate in EA(W) activities.

I have also directly contributed to the project development, especially with the Durham and Newcastle teams, as judged by their feedback following my visit to them. It is possible we may establish further longer term linkages.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

For the EAW, my original target was to develop an implementation plan to test innovative ways of working with policy makers to formulate their questions and identify alternative sources and types of evidence that can be used. It is still too early for this within EAW, but the discussions have helped my understanding of social science approaches.

All the discussions have increased my awareness and understanding of these areas of current science developments, providing a stronger basis for me to draw on when advising EAW colleagues. My role means it is essential that I have a high level of appreciation and understanding of a wide range of scientific research, and the Fellowship is an excellent way to help this.

Awareness of this specific research project was originally minimal within the EA(W). This is now increasing within both the most relevant EA Science research programme (EA/Defra flood risk management research) and with the more operationally focused EAW flood risk management team.

More generally, we have an opportunity to increase the uptake of the RELU programme results in both EAW and WAG. I have established initial links with both the EA representative on the RELU stakeholder forum, and will be exploring ways we can increase the uptake of RELU learning within the EAW. In addition, I am now working part-time for the WAG Chief Environment Science Advisor and his team is also interested in benefiting more from the RELU programme.

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

I am really happy with this fellowship so far, as everyone has been very flexible and understanding of the very different and difficult way of working in a government organization. In particular, the extension to allow me to follow the project to completion means we may develop a much more effective dissemination programme.

**HOST REPORT**

*Description of main activities undertaken*

Visits to Oxford, Durham and UEA/Newcastle project teams, focusing respectively on knowledge controversies, flood risk modelling, and interdisciplinary / public engagement working practices. Meetings with RELU Director/Deputy during Newcastle visit. Team visit to TechniumCast (Bangor) on Kathryn’s advice to see state of the art environmental visualization technologies. Kathryn attended the public launch of the Ryedale Flood Research Group report ‘making space for people’ and presentation of CD-Rom to Pickering Library.

WP1 (Sarah Whatmore and Catharina Landström) and WP2 (Stuart Lane) invited to present seminar papers to the EA Wales (modelling, flood management, and public engagement teams) on ‘competency group working’ and ‘doing science differently’ respectively in September and November 2008.

*Description of benefits to the Research Project*

Invaluable collaboration to the Project in terms of insights and public policy ‘testing’ of activities of all Work Packages, demonstrated in uptake of advice (e.g. TechniumCast), contacts (key people elsewhere in the EA organization) and developing interactions (e.g. EA seminar presentations).

Has been particularly helpful in (i) honing our claims about what is new in our working methods in terms of ‘public engagement’ and ‘doing science differently’ and (ii) developing our understanding of how one of the EA deals with public engagement and flood modelling in house.

This latter point is reflected in the arrangement of a ‘work shadowing’ placement for WP1 RA (Catharina Landström) with Kathryn Monk in EA Wales, which will give significant force to the ethnographic analysis of the circulation of flood risk modelling science through a key policy institution.

The renewal of this collaboration will strengthen the tasks of translating our work and findings for policy practitioner audiences, with Kathryn’s interest in, and understanding of, our work providing a unique lens and critical eye on draft materials particularly those relating to the dissemination activities of WP4 and the final conference – which are timetabled for the last 12 months of the project.

*Description of benefits to the External Organisation*

N/A

*Any suggestions for improvement of scheme*

Perhaps build a reciprocal element into all awards (i.e. pair visiting fellowships with work shadowing placements) so that relationship is always ‘give and take’.