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Editorial to the LRN2004 Annual Conference Special Issue fo the International Journal of Logistics: Research and Applications

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Editorial

It is a great pleasure to be Guest Editor for this issue – I hope that the papers which are included will be stimulating and support you in your ongoing research activities. A number of guiding principles were adopted in selecting the papers for inclusion in this issue. Firstly, the papers cover a wide range of logistics and supply chain management (SCM) topics. This is a reflection of the evolution of the field in recent years. In terms of the "buy-make-store-move-sell" model of SCM all the main constituent areas are addressed. Secondly, it is important that the conference issue of this Journal reflects the emphasis and content of the conference itself. I have tried to achieve this in terms of the papers included. One interesting point to note is that outsourcing is a theme which is a major issue in a number of papers. This reflects the increasing importance of this issue to organisations of all kinds and sizes. Economic globalisation and the trend towards vertical disintegration of supply chain architectures have sharpened the focus on outsourcing as a key element of supply chain strategy. The need to move beyond the notion that sourcing of certain activities can be some kind of panacea in evident from the relevant contributions. Thirdly, the LRN Annual Conference has become a more international event in recent years…the number of delegates and papers presented from outside the UK has continued to grow. The papers collected in this issue reflect this internationalization.

Two papers are worthy of particular comment from an LRN perspective. The contribution by Jaafar and Rafiq has been developed from the submission which won the best paper prize at the LRN 2004 event. The paper by Pettit and Beresford is based on research which was supported by LRN seed corn funding. It was developed form the final report on this work submitted to CITL (UK) via the LRN. The seed corn funding is an important mechanism whereby the LRN supports research in innovative aspects of logistics in UK universities.

In many ways, the LRN2004 event in Dublin seems like a long time ago. From my point of view it was one of the most professionally rewarding activities in which I have been involved in my career. It was a time to meet old friends and new and to keep abreast of the multitude of interesting projects being undertaken in over 20 countries. There are too many people to thank for the smooth running of the event. However, my colleague John Mee does warrant a special mention. His logistical skills were seriously put to the test in the weeks and months leading up to September 9th. 2004. I want to acknowledge his particular contribution to the success of the event. Since then we have had the 2005 event at the University of Plymouth. This was again a great opportunity to network with colleagues and many congratulations are due to John Dinwoodie and his team. We now look forward to LRN 2006 in Newcastle…form my part I hope and trust that this issue provides some useful perspectives and insights into the range of topics addressed.