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The UK Government has unveiled their spending review during October, pledging to invest more than 30 billion pounds on transport projects over the next four years, with this sector seen as a particular key driver for economic growth and productivity. This includes 14 billion pounds of funding that will go to Network Rail to support maintenance and investment, including improvements to the East Coast Main Line, station upgrades around the West Midlands and signal replacement programmes in various parts of Wales.

This may be good news for the signalling and telecommunications industry in the UK and in Europe, but how long will it take to undertake the tender process and award the various contracts? Is it now a common issue that signalling and telecommunications contracts take a long time to tender and costs quite a bit of money to do so, both in the UK and the rest of the world? Your feedback from your part of the world would be appreciated.

After becoming a successful contractor and winning work, the next issue is resources. In this day and age, we need experienced and competent resources to undertake any required works. But these appear to be becoming fewer and fewer.

As an Industry, we must start thinking about our current and future resource requirements now, in order to avert problems in the future. As a modern Institution, we wish to assist and develop our current and future members as to their particular needs and requirements for their ongoing career development. Project Sponsors around the world are requested to provide an indication of the resource requirements overall for the Industry and the Institution to work together to ensure these requirements are achieved in a timely manner!

I write these words a few days before departing to India for this year's International Convention, to which I am very much looking forward to attending. Please continue to support the Deputy Editor in my absence to ensure the timely production of the December issue!

The Editor

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