



## CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ELECTION OF PRESIDENT ELECT 2010

### CANDIDATE STATEMENT



**Paul Mylrea MCIPR**  
**Director of Communications for the Department for International  
Development**

Two years on the board has convinced me the CIPR cannot survive by gradual change. It needs major, urgent reform to re-engage with members. Like many institutions, the CIPR has succumbed to the temptation to prioritise the needs of headquarters over those of its members around the UK. Its public position has been eroded by its failure to keep pace with technological change and by competition from more nimble organisations. Staff at HQ have undoubtedly worked hard to deliver professional services but now is the time to re-evaluate what we do, and how we do it.

We need to respect the tremendous efforts of those members who have kept the Institute going through its first 60 years and won it Chartered status, as well as the band of volunteers that keep it running in the regions and in sectoral groups. It is for them that we need to re-energise the Institute and secure its future in a digital age.

The UK is entering a period of austerity from which the PR industry will not escape. The CIPR's Board and senior management must lead by example. That means more efficient use of staff resources, cutting out unnecessary spending, especially foreign travel, and squeezing the best return out of our new, well appointed and well-located offices.

We need immediate action to:

- Secure and build the finances,
- Create a lean, professional centre that is outward facing, not London-centric,
- Build membership and halt the high number of departures by giving existing members a reason to stay,
- Build relationships with other professional bodies, such as the Institute of Directors and the Chartered Management Institute (where I am a Fellow), to make sure PR has a seat at the top table,
- Work more closely with the PRCA, for the mutual benefit of both sets of members and for the good of the profession, and
- Create transparency and accountability to members and regions through online publication of agendas and minutes of board meetings (obviously respecting sensitive commercial or personnel issues).

There are opportunities. I believe my position at the heart of the Government Communications Network (GCN) will allow me to make the CIPR the professional body of choice for government communicators across the UK. I set up one of the CIPR's first partnerships at Transport for London and I have been involved in persuading NHS London to create a new partnership, bringing in 100 more members. We need more of this and I have strong backing from the top of the GCN to make it happen. Building better links with the public sector, a key client for the industry, is vital for all members.

But it's not just about the public sector. We have to give all members from whatever sector reasons to join and to stay involved. To do that, the CIPR has to change. I will assemble a team which will make that change happen.