

# **Attitudes to Ada in the UK High-Reliability Software Sector**

## **Ian Gilchrist**

### **IPL Information Processing Ltd**

AdaUK is the UK equivalent of SIGAda, a not-for-profit body with the purpose of promoting Ada in the UK. In Spring 1999 a survey was commissioned by AdaUK to try to elicit a picture of how Ada is perceived, nearly 20 years after its launch.

The survey was carried out using a well-respected independent consultant, and the sample consisted of forty members of the UK 'high-reliability' software community. Participation in the survey was conducted by questionnaire and telephone/email interview.

The first section of the survey was aimed at establishing the credibility of the sample members in terms of years of Ada experience, and also eliciting their attitudes to the language based on that experience. The more important part of the survey then focused on factors which would lead them to favour Ada over a rival language.

The results indicate that based on past experience most of the sample's experience of Ada was good, and was in fact a clear indicator to continue using it if possible. Reliability/robustness and safety were the definite positive factors. Of the technical features support for real-time/concurrency came top. Of the negative factors, the two principal ones were the cost of the immediate Ada environment and a perceived lack of supporting tools.

The presentation at the conference will provide more details on the sample, and provide full results<sup>1</sup>. If time allows some further general comments based on observations by the sample will be offered. These combine to give a unique and objective view of how the Ada language is seen on the 'other' side of the world.

Ian Gilchrist  
Software Products Consultant  
IPL Information Processing Ltd  
Eveleigh House  
Grove Street  
Bath BA1 5LR  
United Kingdom

Tel (DDI): +44 (0)1225-475114  
Fax: +44 (0)1225-444400  
E-mail: [iang@iplbath.com](mailto:iang@iplbath.com)  
World Wide Web <http://www.iplbath.com/tools>

---

<sup>1</sup> The initial report is included as an Appendix at the end of the Conference Proceedings.

