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Innovative Technology in Heating Circulators

From the Company who patented the first circulator back in 1929 and introduced the first electronic circulator back in 1989 comes a heating circulator with completely in-built pump management.

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WILLO Engineering Ltd., Enterprise Centre, Childers Road, Limerick, Ireland
Telephone: 061-41 09 63  Telefax: 061-41 47 28

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DOI: 10.21427/D71D79
CLEANROOM SOCIETY
EXCELLENT INITIATIVE

That the inaugural gathering of the Irish Cleanroom Society at UCD earlier this month proved so successful is fitting in that it is a much-needed initiative and those responsible for spearheading this development are to be applauded. Hitherto, Ireland was the only European country with a substantial number of cleanroom and controlled environments that did not have a forum to deal with issues facing the industry.

The intention is that the Society will become representative of the entire cleanroom industry with participation by users of cleanrooms and controlled environments; designers; constructors; cleanroom consultants; and suppliers of cleanroom-related products and services.

The objectives of the Society are to provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and working practices, and a support network for members. It is also proposed to publish an annual register of members which will be an invaluable source of information and assistance for all involved in the industry. A further strength is that the Society will be affiliated to the International Federation of Contamination Control Societies. BSNews will have a full report, including how to apply for membership, in our May issue.

Next Month
☐ DIT Facilities Management Conference — full report
☐ Romplas Bathrooms: Serving Ireland — and the world — from Ballyhaunis!
☐ Mostra Convegno: Everything from the kitchen sink to a toilet seat with barbed wire inlaid!
☐ Gas Standard Amended: IDHE focuses on the amendment to Irish Standard 813 “Domestic Gas Installations”
Heating/ Cooling
Room Stats
For applications where programming is not required, J J Sampson & Son has introduced a range of battery-powered, non-programmable Danfoss Randall heating and cooling digital thermostats. These thermostats, which are suitable for a wide range of heating, cooling and air conditioning applications, incorporate a useful, "night thermostat" function that the user can manually select.

McEvitt AC Technology
Philip McEvitt has left Aircon Ltd to form his own distribution company, which is called Air Conditioning Technology Ltd.

With offices at 80 Haddington Road, Dublin 4, Phillip intends to specialise in air conditioning systems, condensing units, chillers, fan coils etc.

No further details were available as we went to press but BSNews understands that distribution agreements have been finalised with a number of leading manufacturers.

Contact: Philip McEvitt, Air Conditioning Technology Ltd. Tel: 01 - 668 1748; Mobile: 086 - 2311330.
**Trade and Product News**

**Storage Heater Charge Optimiser**

The Prefect PRE7000 is an optimiser to control the input charge to storage heaters. Located in a room with a storage heater, it will monitor room temperature fall-off during the day and adjust the night-time charge accordingly ... avoiding unnecessary over-charging and improving comfort control and economy.

There is a fine adjustment control on the facia to account for differing personal comfort levels. This is internal on the PRE7010. The optional remote sensors PRE7011 & PRE7012 will allow the unit to be located in a meter cupboard.

**Benefits include:**
- Avoids unnecessary over-charging;
- Connects to contactor for maximum installation flexibility;
- Works with split tariffs;
- “Learns” user adjustments.

Contact: Des Bradley, EDI.
Tel: 01 - 626 4366;
Fax: 01 - 626 6471.

**DIT Hosts Facilities Management Conference**

A one-day conference on present practice and future prospects for Facilities Management took place on 24 April in DIT Bolton Street.

Twelve leading authorities from across Europe shared their thoughts and experiences with an audience representing most of the major players in the field of facilities management throughout Ireland.

The facilities management profession in Ireland is at an exciting stage, where business cultures and working practices are placing a growing pressure on those involved to be aware of, and to be able to implement, a new range of strategies and skills. The aim of the conference, therefore, was to provide a forum for presenting “best practice” in developing these strategies and skills to those currently most involved in facilities management in Ireland.

Topics included:
- Customer-focused facilities management;
- Facilities management in government;
- Information technology in facilities management;
- Outsourcing.

Other DIT initiatives in the area of facilities management include plans for a new MSc and Short Course Programme to be introduced in the next academic year.

BSNews will have a full report on the conference in the May issue.

Contact: Patricia Vahey, Faculty of the Built Environment, DIT Bolton Street. Tel: 01 - 402 3711.

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**PROTEX**

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Dwyer Instruments’ Smart Loop Calibrator from Manotherm

Dwyer Instruments’ handy new pocket-size smart loop calibrator, Model LC21, is now available from Manotherm Ltd. It is designed for quick, reliable field calibration of instrumentation like 2-wire transmitters, receivers, recorders and controllers, all with exceptional ±0.05% of range accuracy. This versatile device sources 24 VDC, indicates from 0-21 mA, and also simulates 2-wire transmitters.

In addition, it features continuous or fixed-step output. The five fixed-step outputs are available in linear or square root (for flow use) from 4-20 or 0-20 mA, or seven-fixed steps from 4-20 mA for valves. Fixed-step interval is 10 seconds in auto-stepping mode. Use fixed calibration currents to test the calibrate equipment or to control valve stroking. Output currents can be changed manually or automatically.

The LC21 will also source or simulate continuous up/down cycling between 4 and 20, or 0 and 20 mA, ideal for endurance testing.

The LCD indicates in mA or percent of 4-20 or 0-20 mA. Unit is powered by four AA alkaline batteries (included) which will provide up to 64 hours of operation in measuring mode; to 13 hours in source mode at 12 mA. Adapters for 100 or 230 VAC operation are available at extra cost. Additional accessories included are carrying case with Velcro® closure, spare fuse and instruction manual.

Contact: Bob Gilbert, Manotherm. Tel: 01 - 452 2335; Fax: 01 - 451 6919.

Aquadart Shower Enclosures

“Nothing can beat the Aquadart range of shower enclosures”, says Tom Rooney of distributors Sanbra Fyffe Ltd. “This is especially so now that three new selections have been added, providing an unrivalled selection of styles, sizes, colours and glass choices”.

Aquadart offers a solution for any situation, whether its an alcove, free-standing unit or corner enclosure. The choice ranges from the 700mm Turin saloon enclosure to the luxurious 1400 x 900mm inward swinging, Rochelle. Each of the Aquadart ranges incorporates a variety of design styles and all models are available in a selection of frame colours and glass patterns.

A new colour brochure showing the complete Aquadart range is now available.

Contact: Tom Rooney; Sanbra Fyffe. Tel: 01 - 842 6255.

LEFT: Toledo Modesty, one of three new additions to the Aquadart range from Sanbra Fyffe

Homevalue Hardware Appointment

Ms Judy Davoren has been appointed Marketing Manager with Homevalue Hardware Ltd, Ireland’s largest independent hardware group. A commerce graduate of University College Galway, Ms Davoren has a long association with the hardware industry, having worked for many years as marketing manager with Flair International Ltd. Prior to joining Flair International she was employed with A 7 Cross Ltd, the Ballinasloe-based manufacturer of fine writing instruments.

Chemical Dosing for Cooling Tower

AquaChem Ltd has introduced a new range of chemical dosing and control systems which are manufactured by Electronic Dosing Systems.

The range, which is “very competitively” priced, includes: Inhibitor and biocide dosing systems for cooling towers; Conductivity and timer-controlled bleed systems for cooling towers; Boiler dosing systems; Automatic blowdown controllers.

All of the systems are available to interface with BMS systems.

Contact: Kieran J Coleman, AquaChem. Tel: 01 - 825 2755/825 2779.
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FREEFONE 1800 333 600
S&P In-Line, Cabinet-Type, Centrifugal Fans from Ventac

Ventac has just introduced the new S&P series CVAB centrifugal fans. The units are manufactured with an insulated, double-skin, galvanised steel case with two round flanges on the inlet and discharge and twin access doors.

The CVAB have backward-curved centrifugal impellers, making them ideal for air handling grease in commercial kitchen canopies. Air volumes range from 690m$^3$/h to 5600m$^3$/h.

The main features of the CVAB units are:
- Easy to clean
- High energy efficiency;
- Low sound level;
- Speed controllable
- IP 55.

Contact: Ciaron King, Ventac. Tel: 01 - 667 1077; Fax: 01 - 667 1055

Marley Cooling Tower Ups The Heat!

Marley Cooling Tower has commenced a new sales and marketing drive for Ireland with the express aim of establishing the brand as market leader.

Crucial to the new initiative is the strategic alliance of long-standing distribution arrangements for Marley and Davenport respectively, both of which now come under the Marley Davenport Ltd umbrella.

Walkair has been responsible for Marley distribution throughout Ireland since it was set up a couple of years ago.

Managing Director Adrian Cooke and some of his colleagues having been associated with the brand for many years.

Peter Kennedy of Irish Cooling Towers, along with his son John, have an equally long-standing trading relationship with Davenport.

When Marley acquired Davenport it was important that the new company — Marley Davenport Ltd — streamline its distribution arrangements for Ireland and harness the collective strengths of both operations into a cohesive operational strategy.

This has now been achieved. While both companies are independent and will remain so, they enjoy a close trading relationship. In the main, Walkair are responsible for the sales and marketing of Marley Cooling Tower products, especially the packaged equipment, with Irish Cooling Towers handling all the installation, commissioning and after-sales service.

Nonetheless, a key ingredient of the new strategy is flexibility — nothing is so rigid as to detract from the service provided to the client/end-user. Both Walkair and Irish Cooling Towers have the same objective and that is to develop and implement solutions to meet customers' requirements. They will work together, and support one another, in the pursuit of this objective.

Ian Dixon, Marley Davenport Managing Director, and his colleague John Whitehouse, Operations Director, Package Products, were in Dublin recently to cement the new arrangement.

"This is the ideal development from our point of view", says Dixon. "Both companies are dynamic and forward-looking while, at the same time, having strong traditional strengths and values."

"It also echoes where we're coming from at present", says Whitehouse. "We have taken our traditional strengths and applied R&D techniques, new manufacturing methods, etc, and developed a whole new range of innovative and technologically-advanced products which will be released over the coming months."

Details of these will be featured in BSNews in future issues.

Contact: Adrian Cooke, Vincent Mahony, Walkair. Tel: 01 - 456 8070;

Peter Kennedy, John Kennedy, Irish Cooling Towers. Tel: 046 36811.

John Whitehouse, Operations Director-Package Products, Marley Davenport with John and Peter Kennedy of Irish Cooling Towers;

Adrian Cooke, Managing Director, Walkair, and Ian Dixon, Managing Director, Marley Davenport

LEFT: S&P Series in-line, cabinet-type, centrifugal fans from Ventac
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- ROAD SAFETY
- ROUTER BITS
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Preparation for the new millennium is of vital importance to all manner of businesses and Season Control Group is no exception. Its future, and that of its trading partners — both suppliers and customers — will be determined by the strategies now put in place and how they are implemented.

Not that this is a new policy for Season Control ... the process commenced approximately two years ago when the then principals, Ben Kearney and John Grainger, came to the conclusion that to take the company forward required a dynamic initiative which would include a substantial financial injection. Hence the sale of the company to a consortium made up of present Managing Director Chris Hutton, and ACT Venture Capital Ltd, a major Irish financial institution.

Between them Ben Kearney, John Grainger and Chris Hutton have 75 years experience in the air movement industry and that wealth of experience and technical know-how has been applied to devise a strategic development plan which will spearhead the Group’s growth and development well into the next century. The objective is to become the largest HVAC supplier in Ireland with specific reference to creating better environments by way of quality air conditioning, air handling, and related products.

To date, including the buy-out, something like £6 million has already been invested in Season Control Group. The most visible manifestation of this is the new, purpose-designed, company headquarters in the Nangor Road Business Park, Dublin 12. Standing on approximately five acres, the 32,000 sq ft building incorporates state-of-the-art manufacturing plant and equipment, showrooms, offices, and warehouse facilities.

Perhaps less visible though more important is the quality of the manufactured product range, and the scope and diversity of applications catered for. The quality ethos is now deeply ingrained throughout the entire company and, apart from the products, is equally evident in the level of service, after-sales care and support mechanisms provided.

That Season Control has come of age is in no doubt. That the carefully-planned development process will continue to bring success is also assured, and the funding is already in place to underpin that process by way of organic expansion and/or acquisitions.

Chris Hutton and his colleagues recognise and acknowledge the contribution of Season Control’s suppliers and customers to this process, and invite them — along with new trading partners — to share in the future prosperity that will undoubtedly materialise over the coming years.
External sales team

With air conditioning systems Season Control has set a new standard for quality and efficiency. Designed to meet the most exacting needs of commercial, industrial and domestic users, the range delivers the level of performance to which the air conditioning industry has long aspired. However, a key advantage of the Season Control service offering is the ability to devise a tailor-made solution for a specific project, and to manufacture a dedicated system to solve the problem.

Typical of the products manufactured by Season Control are as indicated left.

| Filters | Air Terminal Devices | Spiral Ducting | Volume Control Dampers | Fire Dampers | Plate & Case-Mounted Axial Fans | Roof Units | Mini Air Handling Units |

World-Class AC Systems

With air conditioning systems Season Control has set a new standard for quality and efficiency. Designed to meet the most exacting needs of commercial, industrial and domestic users, the range delivers the level of performance to which the air conditioning industry has long aspired. The objective with the range is to create air conditioning systems that are supremely efficient, attractive, unobtrusive and environmentally-friendly. Above all, they must provide years of trouble-free service.

To ensure world-class performance Season Control designs and manufactures virtually every component. Though by no means the cheapest option, this has certainly proved to be the best. At the same time, the emphasis on quality control is second to none. The entire range conforms – and frequently exceeds – international standards for safety and quality.

To suit the smallest or largest space, Season Control offers the market’s broadest range of capacities and sizes, from a mere 1.3kW to 17.6kW. Whatever the size, they are all designed for use in cooling only or heat pump operation. They will all operate in ambient temperatures between +45°C and -10°C.

People To People

The pursuit of professionalism very often results in an ultra-efficient but clinical service which takes no account of human nature. At Season Control this is not the case. The high quality of service is still delivered in a personal, friendly manner where flexibility and a willingness to listen and provide problem-solving solutions is the order of the day. This applies to major projects where trouble-shooting and design assistance can be provided, as much as to smaller queries taken over the phone and at the trade counter.
Lindab

Lindab is one of the world's leading manufacturers of spiral tubes and fittings, dampers, silencers, ductwork fittings and air distribution terminals. The range is extensive and caters for every conceivable requirement. Renowned for quality and innovative designs, a typical example is LindabSafe. This is a complete programme in circular spiral-seamed tubes and fittings conforming to DW 142 for industrial, comfort and home ventilation. The patented factory-assembled sealing strip is unique. In addition to excellent performance capabilities, it makes installation far simpler and easier for the installer.

Kanalflakt

Kanalflakt ventilation fans and accessories are acknowledged market leaders across a wide range of product types. As the parent company in a global group with 20 subsidiaries, it has massive resources which are applied to research and design programmes in a continuous quest to devise and manufacture ever-more efficient and energy-saving products. The catalogue of products and accessories is enormous. To make selection easier and more precise, it is also available in CD Rom disc format. Products included are circular duct fans; rectangular and square duct fans; centrifugal fans; roof fans; wall fans; heat recovery units; medium pressure fans; air handling units; and electrical and ventilation accessories.

Making Quality Count

While it is all too easy to talk of quality, it is far more difficult to actually deliver on that promise. At Season Control quality — in respect of products and service — is singled out for particular attention.

This quality ethos is now deeply ingrained throughout the entire company and applies right across the board. From how the telephones are answered right through the manufacturing process and on to the final delivery of the product, strict procedures governing quality control have to be followed.

Regular training sessions and informal in-house tutorials reinforce this quality drive, a significant aspect being that all company personnel, irrespective of their function, are charged with individual responsibility for maintaining the collective quality objective.

Strulik

Strulik is all about concept design air diffusers ... if you have a particular problem Strulik will analyse the situation, devise the most cost-efficient and maximum-performing solution, design it, and then manufacture it.

Working hand in hand with Strulik, Season Control provides an all-embracing problem-solving service catering for the specialist supply air terminal sector, whether it be the exacting needs of the pharmaceutical industry, or the "aesthetics" of an architecturally-sensitive project.
Toolpack

Power tools is a fast-expanding market segment and Season Control is keen to develop this specialist niche business area. In seeking a trading partner to work with in this respect, BB Industrial was identified as the ideal choice.

BB is the leading one-stop convenience source for power tools and the range is constantly evolving with new additions and accessories coming on stream.

A typical example is the Toolpack range of 220 volt and 110 volt extension cable reels. Incorporating 13-amp and 16-amp industrial units, there is also the DIY range. Available in 25-metre and 50-metre lengths, benefits include easy-wind facility; built-in carry handle; robust galvanised stand; BS standard black PVC cable and plug.

Also available are 110 volt loose cable leads.

Steel Service Centre

EU Steel Ltd is the steel sheet slitting and blanking division of the Duggan Steel Group from whom Season Control sources all its steel requirements. The Group was founded in 1976 as a steel construction company. The Group consists of seven subsidiaries operating in different sectors of the construction industry in Ireland and also exports to the UK.

Since its inception EU Steel has provided an increasing range of steel products and services, from slitting and recoiling to cut-to-length and blanking. As a steel service centre it offers an immediate service on customers own product, in addition to quality products from mills throughout Europe. Every product manufactured complies with the relevant new European standard (Euronorm) and its British Standard equivalent.

To guarantee the durability and quality of EU Steel products raw material supply has been exhaustively researched as the company has tirelessly sought out the finest suppliers of coil products in Europe. In this regard the company has enlisted the assistance of many technical bodies and professional consultants, both in the Republic of Ireland and in the UK.

Interklima

With Interklima Season Control has become a major player in the air handling sector. This is a very competitive market segment and one which demands exacting and high-performance criteria while, at the same time, being very price-sensitive.

The all-embracing Interklima portfolio (which includes fan coils, chillers, etc) meets these requirements, with capacities ranging from 500 m³/h to 80,000 m³/h. Already well-established in countries such as the Netherlands and Germany, Interklima is now set to become a leading market player here in Ireland.

Highly-qualified personnel at Season Control provide full technical and design support.
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Lindab Ltd, 45 Caswell Road, Brackmills, Northampton NN4 7PW
Tel: 0044 1604 702141; Fax: 0044 1604 709441
BTU at the Island

To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the BTU Golf Society, the overall winner of each outing this year will be presented with a specially-designed silver medal.

The first winner is Brendan Keaveny who had a magnificent score of 35 points playing under very adverse conditions at the Island GC on 14 April last.

His success is partly due to the fact that he was one of the few who could not be moved by the wind, which was blowing strongly all day. Brendan, of course, has also been the matchplay champion for the past two years and, on present form, could make it three in a row.

Despite the wind and the rain, the outing to the island was well attended with a total of 54 members playing. ABB were the sponsors and our thanks is due to Michael Murphy who presented a magnificent array of prizes and entertained us with a well thought out speech.

RESULTS

Overall Winner
B Keaveny (9) 35pts

Class 1
G Hutchinson (8) 32pts
S Smyth (11) 32pts
E McGrattan (10) 31pts

Class 2
B Bracken (12) 31pts
J White (14) 30pts
F Lynch (14) 29pts

Class 3
S Tully (19) 33pts
D Sampson (17) 26pts
N Ryan (19) 26pts

Back 9
J Lavelle (10) 16pts
S Farrell (11) 16pts

Front 9
G Baker (7) 18pts
T O'Leary (12) 17pts

Next outing will be to Powerscourt on 19 May and Matchplay draw is as follows:-

Tony O'Leary v Sean Farrell
Frank Lynch v Ger Hutchinson
John Loughlan v Aubrey Moriarty
Bob Daly v John Lawlor
John White v Michael Melligan
John Lavelle v David Sampson
Michael McDonagh v Michael Wyse
Brendan Bracken v Tony Delaney
Brendan Keaveny v Michael Morrissey
Ray Byrne v Des Prendergast
Jim Duggan v Neil Ryan
Sean Smith v Seamus Tully
Gerry Phelan v Tom Harrington
Michael Matthews v John Littlefield
Bernard Costelloe v Jim Smith
Michael Carroll v Gerry Tobin

First name has home advantage and is responsible to arrange the match.

All matches must be played before the next outing and results notified to Brendan Keaveny.
CIBSE Centenary Dinner Celebrations

Maureen Callanan with Eibhlin and Eoin O'Cionnaith; Rashida and Greg Traynor

Herbert and Mary Taylor with Geoffrey and Janet Brundrett

Michael Buckley with Brian Hunter; Finbar Callanan and Stephen McCully

Simon O'Brien with Joe and Helen Melvin; Michael O'Carroll and Sandra O'Riordan

Maire and Larry McGetrick with Patricia and Paddy Horgan; Ann and John Bradly

Angela Moloney with Rosemary Buckley; Oliver and Betty Reddy

Conor Farrelly with Margaret Dolan; Grainne McCormack and Nick Preston

Mr and Mrs Bill Noone with Mr and Mrs Barry Leach

Eamon and Betty O'Brien with Michael and Nora McDonagh; Cecilia and Seamus Homan

PAGE 18 BSNews April 1998
The success of the recent IDHE Annual Dinner, and especially the move to the new venue of the Red Cow Inn, has prompted the organising committee to re-book the same location for 1999.

The venue change proved an inspired choice and all credit is due to Vice Chairman Jimmy Hamilton and his colleagues for the tremendous amount of planning and hard work which went in to making the evening so enjoyable for all concerned.

Our photographer did the rounds of the tables and some of the more printable results are reproduced here!

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the IDHE will take place on Tuesday 16 June, 1998.

VENUE: Engineers Club, 22 Clyde Road, Dublin 4.

TIME: 7.30pm.

Annual Golf Day

Tuesday, 5 May 1998, Luttrellstown. Tee: 11am to 2pm. Contact office to arrange sheet time. Tel: 01 - 677 8180.
Having pioneered the whole concept of specialist service engineering, it’s appropriate that Oil & Gas Services Ltd, in celebrating its 30th year in business, is now embarking on a brand new development phase. Crucial to this initiative is the fact that the company has just taken possession of a new purpose-designed and specially fitted out premises which is located immediately adjacent to the building it has occupied for the last 27 years.

Back in 1967 when Gerry Griffin and his colleagues first established the business, the idea of a dedicated boiler service company was unheard of. There was no such thing as a service engineer, let alone measurement criteria or qualifications to which those interested in the business could aspire. So, in effect, Oil & Gas Services Ltd was the blueprint upon which an entire industry sector was based.

“To say that they were challenging times is an understatement”, says Gerry. “Nonetheless, we were fortunate in that some of our early recruits were especially competent. Two in particular — Frank Purcell and Colm O’Connor — proved exceptional and they devised and implemented the educational/training programme upon which the company’s success is based. Frank now has his own business while Colm is still with us in the capacity of Service Director”.

Today Oil & Gas Services Ltd has a team of highly-qualified service engineers strategically-located throughout Dublin. Coverage extends to a radius of approximately 30 miles in all directions of the city centre, fast and efficient service being enhanced by the fact that all vehicles are in constant radio contact with the service base.

This is especially important with emergency call-outs. In the vast majority of commercial cases, the response time is between two and four hours, while 95% of domestic emergency call-outs are dealt with on a same day basis.

As the name suggests, Oil & Gas Services Ltd caters for boilers fired by both fuel types. Originally the emphasis was on domestic situations but now the commercial/industrial sector is equally important. Clients include hotels, local authorities, office blocks, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

To cater for its ever-expanding customer base Oil & Gas Services has devised a range of maintenance and service contracts to suit different requirements. These include provision for planned preventative maintenance, in addition to emergency call-out cover. Individually-tailored packages for particular situations are also available.

To further facilitate customers special payment methods are offered. These include staged installments by direct debit, without the penalty of extra charges.

In a nutshell, Oil & Gas Services Ltd offers a comprehensive range of boiler services to cover every eventuality, for both the domestic and commercial/industrial sectors. While currently celebrating 30 years in business, the recent move to new premises and the introduction of ever-more enhanced customer services, proves that it has lost none of its dynamism.

To find out more contact: Rowland Griffin/Colm O’Connor, Oil & Gas Services Ltd. Tel: 01 - 269 4288 (6 lines).

PS: As we went to press Ruairi Quinn, TD, Leader of the Labour Party, was about to perform the official opening of the new premises. BSNews will have a full picture-report in our next issue.
Registration of Contractors

Where Does RECI Fit In?

The need for consumer protection, quality, efficiency and health and safety in the construction industry has led the Strategic Review Committee of the construction industry to recommend the establishment of an independent body to devise and implement an open and fair registration scheme for competent contractors, including sub-contractors. Clear routes of access for new contractors, configuration of technical and business competence, and an appeals mechanism are among the issues addressed in the recommendations.

RECI was set up at the request of the Department of Energy in 1992 as a self-regulatory body for the electrical contracting industry. Its objectives — which are to promote and protect the interests of the public as users of electrical services so that they will obtain an acceptable standard of workmanship and technical competence — seem to be very similar to the intentions of the Strategic Review Committee for quality, efficiency and health and safety.

At the same time CENELEC, which is the EEC harmonisation body for the electrical industry, is working on standards for qualifications of electrical contractors. It intends to publish an ES document on the qualifications of electrical installation contractors. When this is approved by the EEC countries, it will become a voluntary code of practice. It would not be published as an Irish standard. At a future date CENELEC may decide to publish the document as an EN document which would then become an Irish standard.

However, the issue of establishing a control body for the industry took a major step forward in 1988. Following a series of complaints by Dublin Gas that the National Rules for Electrical Installations ET101 published by the Electro-Technical Council of Ireland are not an Irish standard and, therefore, the Minister could not make them mandatory in this way. It is also interesting to note that the building regulations do not refer at all to electrical installations. This is an area of concern for RECI.

The question of standards for electrical contractors dates back to rural electrification in the ’40s and ’50s. Following the establishment of the Electro-Technical Council of Ireland, negotiations began between the ESB, the Electrical Contractors Association and the Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland, to establish some control in the electrical contracting field. Progress was very slow and, prior to the establishment of RECI in 1992, there was little by way of standardised testing of electrical installations, except for the larger operations.

A working group was established in 1989 comprising the ESB, the ETCl, the AECI and the ECA. As a direct result of extensive research into conditions and operational requirements in other European countries, combined with a request by the Department of Energy, RECI was set up in 1992. Today there are over 2,000 registered electrical contractors in RECI, making it the largest regulatory body in the country ... and the number is growing.

However, there remains a strongly-held view in the industry that RECI cannot work effectively as a voluntary organisation and can only succeed in the long run if it is subject to statutory controls. When RECI was established the Department of Energy said it would consider a statutory basis if this became necessary. For example, the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Authority is certainly helped by its ability to enforce its guidelines for safety and health work practices.

It is now six years since the setting up of RECI and there is a danger that the valuable efforts and improvements that have been made in the electrical contracting industry may be lost if sensible consolidation and restructuring does not take place.

With the Forum for the Construction Industry considering registration of contractors and sub-contractors (which includes electrical and mechanical contractors, refrigeration contractors, heating installers, etc); CENELEC about to issue a standard for qualifications of electrical contractors; and the possibility in England of electrical installations being certified by competent persons under the building regulations; it is the perfect time to review the entire situation in relation to the registration of all operatives within the construction sector.

CONTACT

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Main Players
CENELEC – European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardisation. It will soon publish standard for qualification of electrical contractors.
ESB – The Board has been given the role of supervision of Regulatory bodies in the electrical contracting industry. Does this conflict with its primary function as a generator of electricity?
NSAI – NSAI issues Irish Standards which can be made mandatory where safe use by the public is concerned.

Department of the Environment – Responsible for the Building Regulations but which do not cover electrical installation. Why not?
ETCI – The Electro-Technical Council of Ireland is a voluntary body of 22 organisations. It publishes the National Rules for Electrical Installations.

Forum for the Construction Industry – To oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the Strategic Review of the construction industry who are proposing Registration of all contractors.
HSA – The Health and Safety Authority has overall responsibility for the administration and enforcement of health and safety at work in Ireland.

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