

National Conference Addresses Controls Challenges



Doug Robins, BCIA President

Welcome to the 4th National Building Controls Industry Conference and the first event since the formation of the BCIA. The conference is supported by FETA, CIBSE and ECA Education and Training and has been accredited with CPD (Continuing Professional Development) through CIBSE.

The Conference seeks to address the many challenges that we face today and into the future; these are just a few.

Technology:

From technological advances, such as XML and IP networking, to how building control systems have become an integral part of modern buildings. The interoperability of these systems will become more relevant over the coming years and the conference looks to highlight how this can be achieved through technology and more informed procurement.

Regulations:

The building regulations continue to have an impact along with many European directives heading our way. The Association will continue to monitor these to inform and advise, and in some cases direct our members on how to best deal with the changes. Presentations covering Part L of the Building Regulations and the CEN/TC247 are being addressed in the conference.

Energy:

Energy is now top of many people's agenda; rising energy cost and legislative measures continue to impact on energy use. Building controls play an important role in combating energy usage and we are pleased that BSRIA will explain more about life cycle costing during the conference.

This conference is an important step in the development of the Association, allowing much closer links to our allied associations, such as FETA, CIBSE and BSRIA, and to the wider construction market. We continue to seek new ways of improving the industry through partnerships and initiatives to solve the many challenges that we face. Our skills need to be continually tested and improved, standards raised and credibility and reputation enhanced. The Association continues to meet these demands.

Our technical training scheme has been an enormous success with over 100 technical certificates issued and over 650 individual course certificates. The Contacts' seminars continue to attract more people and have now been accredited with CPD from CIBSE. BSRIA is conducting a key performance survey (KPI) on behalf of the BCIA and we will use the information to improve our standing within the construction market and raise the standards needed to compete in the ever-changing world.

Growing Market:

This is reflected in our published marketing statistics which show that the 2004 UK Home Market proved to be our best year yet. Product sales by volume increased by over 9% with OEM sales rising by a staggering two-thirds. Primary installed systems' revenues rose, value added content (system engineering, panels, installations, and commissioning) also grew, together with service and maintenance. All added together, the Controls and BMS industry saw revenues rise by over 10% during 2004.

With each new conference we find ourselves faced with a more diverse audience - a move that we welcome. We hope that you find this conference informative and enjoyable.

TECHNICAL TRAINING ACCREDITATION

The Building Controls Industry Association's (BCIA) technical training course is now CPD (Continuing Professional Development) accredited via the IEE and CIBSE, administered by the Electrical Contractors Association. CPD is the means by which members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives. The programme of courses was developed to provide generic controls training for industry engineers, but their package of comprehensive knowledge is attracting a growing number of contractors and other industry-related professionals.

There are six modules in the programme: Fundamentals of HVAC & Building Technology, Measuring & Control Technology, Hydraulics in Building Services, Control Functions in Heating Plants, Control of Ventilation & Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Technology. Pass marks in the first three modules result in a Building Controls Industry (BCI) Technical Certificate, with further pass marks in the other three modules gaining an Advance Certificate. The BCI Technical Certificate is recognised by JIB, enabling an applicant to register for a JIB certified Skills Card for the construction industry as a Building Controls Engineer.

"Building controls represents a specialised but broad-spectrum discipline, the fundamentals of

which need to be understood outside of the building controls industry," said Doug Robins, BCIA President. "This is being acknowledged by the growing number of contractors and other professionals enrolling on the courses. As a consequence, we felt that both they and the BCIA engineers would welcome the additional qualification of CPD accreditation."

The BCIA Technical Training Programme has been established just over two years but its throughput is impressive. To date, 657 individual course certificates had been awarded leading to 102 BCIA Technical Certificates and 38 Advanced Certificates. In total, 669 delegate courses (equal to over 1,482 delegate course days) have been run during that time.

BCIA Member, Siemens Building Technologies, licensed the use of their training material from which a generic version, including printed manuals as well as CD-based worksheets, has been produced.

The BCIA Technical Training Programme is operated by the Electrical Contractors' Association and details of the available courses and 2005/6 dates can be found on their web site (www.eca.co.uk). "We asked the Electrical Contractors Association to run the scheme as the ECA has a long established and well respected training programme and structure, making them well placed to run these courses on our behalf," concluded Doug Robins.

Seminars Get CPD-ed

Annual seminars run by the Contracts Working Group have been CPD accredited by CIBSE.

2005 kicked off with Pre-Contract Commercial Awareness. Always a popular seminar, this year the high subscription meant that a second date needed to be arranged—Thursday, 26 May. The equally popular Construction Design & Management was held recently and for those interested, the remaining 2005 programme is as follows:

- *Pre-Contract Commercial Awareness*: Thurs 26 May

- *Monitoring of Site Operations*: Weds 15 June
- *Changes to Standard Contracts*: Weds 20 July
- *Commercial Aspects of Contracting*: Weds 5 October
- *Essential Contract Management*: Weds 2 November

For more information on these seminars and the rest of the programme contact Ann Hull 01249 720303 or email bcia@feta.co.uk.

BSI Savings

Don't forget, as a member of FETA you can buy BSI publications at a discount. Contact Christine Ayers at FETA on 0118 940 3416 for more details.

If you wish to receive regular electronic copies of this Newsletter then please advise Ann Hull at bcia@feta.co.uk.