

# British Drilling Association

Founded 1976

# NEWSLETTER

*Committed to Excellence in Health & Safety, Quality of Workmanship and Technical Standards for the Benefit of the Drilling Industry and its Clients*

October, 2010

## Secretary's Column

If we wanted proof of how deeply the recession has bitten into our drilling industry then the BDA's annual accident survey (see page 3) gives us a revealing figure about the reduction in the workforce of BDA members. In the past 2 years, companies overall have shed 20% of their direct employees with 15% disappearing in the past 12 months. This is a massive loss of people in a relatively short time.

Companies have had no other choice other than to cut costs when faced with lack of work, cut-throat competition, declining margins and uncertain prospects. To cut cost by making redundancies is always a reluctant decision. It means releasing many skilled and competent people that have been part of the team, and reorganising those that are retained. Many of those that leave will never return to the industry - they'll find other jobs and when the upturn finally comes it will be hard to entice them back. Skills shortages will appear sometime in the future.

In the meantime the industry still faces what appears to many as further unsettled times. The worst is hopefully behind us in terms of severe job losses but we have to get the government's October spending review out of the way first to fully be in a position to start assessing future prospects.

**All thoughts are welcome, call:  
Brian Stringer  
01327 264622**

Email: [brian@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk](mailto:brian@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk)

## GEODRILLING SHOW June 7th- 8th 2011

**It may be eight months until the next Geodrilling Show which is to be held at the East of England Showground, Peterborough, but now's the time for potential exhibitors to include it in their marketing budget for next year.**

Towards the end of any year companies are preparing their budgets and targets for the forthcoming year. If a particular event and its costs are not included at this stage then it gets progressively more difficult to include it later. The BDA, which is a major supporter of the Geodrilling Show, would like you to consider now the benefits of including it in your 2011 plans.

The 2010 Geodrilling Show had to be postponed. This arose quite naturally because of the economic climate and the uncertainties. Companies were coming to terms with the gloomy atmosphere, the outlook and the need to cut costs. Shows such as SED were cancelled and those that went ahead failed to attract sufficient visitors.

Will 2011 be any different? From a marketing perspective, which is always forward looking, the signs are that it will be. There's always a time lag between sales effort and eventual sales. The Geodrilling Show in June 2011 is a major opportunity to commence marketing activity for the growth anticipated later that year and into 2012.

## Land Drilling Apprenticeship Scheme

**We are now recruiting for a further batch of apprentices to start a 2-year Land Drilling Apprenticeship. Don't miss this major opportunity to take part.**

The Land Drilling Apprenticeship Scheme has proven to be a success since it first started in March 2007. Since then we have had many apprentices and employers participating in the scheme, all of whom speak highly of its quality training and benefits. The Scheme, which leads to the award of NVQ Land Drilling - Lead Driller, comprises both internal and external training on all aspects of what it takes to be a Lead Driller in our industry. Supported by ConstructionSkills grants to eligible employers, it's the best way to take an employee with real potential through all the necessary knowledge and skills that he'll need for the future.

Contact the BDA now for further details of the 2-year programme, its costs and whether grant is available. We'd be happy to hear from you so that we can explain more of how it can benefit your company and your prospective apprentice.

## BDA SERVICES

### BDA PUBLICATIONS

New and existing members may not be aware that the BDA publishes a range of documents that may be of assistance to them. Primarily covering safety aspects they also contain other useful information.

There are documents on:

- Dynamic Sampling (covering window and windowless)
- Cable Percussion
- Rotary "guarding"
- Contaminated Land (see page 4 for details)

Also there is the BDA's Health & Safety Manual issued in 2002 and currently under revision.

Contact the office for further details.

### ENQUIRIES

BDA Members have the benefit of always being able to contact the BDA office on a range of matters. The office can either answer the query directly or refer the enquirer as to where best it will be possible to obtain further assistance.

Recent enquiries have covered CSCS, NVQ qualifications, insurance, health & safety issues, training, tachograph legislation, environmental matters, rig guarding and a host of other matters.

We always like to hear from the members and help them with whatever problems they've got or information that they need. All enquiries are treated in the strictest confidence.

## BDA EVENTS

### DINNER DANCE 2010

**Only a few short weeks are left until this year's ever popular BDA Dinner Dance is to be held. There are still tickets available if you've been waiting to make a last minute decision to attend. But you need to apply as soon as possible.**

**Saturday 6th November 2010  
Macdonald Burlington Hotel  
126 New Street  
Birmingham  
B2 4JQ**

You can book a table for 10 people for £825 (which includes VAT) or individual tickets for £82.50.

The special rate bedrooms at the Burlington Hotel are fully booked but there may be other rooms available. There are other hotels in the vicinity so shortage of accommodation should not be a problem. Please phone the BDA office and we'll try and help you on this if it's a problem.

### EVENT IDEAS

The BDA Marketing Committee would welcome any ideas that members may have of events that could be held.

Should we hold regional meetings? What about another golf day earlier in the season? Would one day seminars be popular? Are there any leisure activities we could arrange (a sailing excursion has been mentioned for example)?

Contact the BDA Secretary and let him know your ideas.

### BDA GOLF DAY

Held on Friday 3rd September at the traditional venue of Woodsome Hall Golf Club near Huddersfield, this year's event was blessed by exceptional good weather. There were 38 players which illustrates the popularity of the event.

Results:

#### Rockbit Trophy

- 1st  
David Allan & Duncan Campbell  
2nd  
Chris Wakefield & Gordon Long  
3rd  
Paul Sherwood & Adam Woodhead

#### Eddie Burke Trophy

- 1st  
Eric Williams  
2nd  
Paul Sherwood  
3rd  
Ian Jones

#### Les Nichol Trophy

The winner was: Eric Williams

#### Nearest the Pin 7th

Eric Williams

#### Nearest the Pin 13th

Colin Brown

#### Longest Drive

Chris Wakefield

Many thanks go to those who donated prizes - M & J Drilling Services, Rockbit, Strata Surveys.

Next year's event will be held on Friday 2nd September and we look forward to once again visiting Woodsome Hall Golf Club which never fails to look after us so well.

## BDA on the WEB

***Our new fully updated website still awaits re-launch.  
It's been a long time coming but we hope you will like it.***

***www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk***

## BDA ACCIDENT STATISTICS to 31st March 2010

For the fifth year running the BDA has obtained a 100% return of Members' accident statistics. Many thanks to everyone for their co-operation.

(Last year's figures in brackets)

### Companies reported 102 (108)

Direct Employees 8002 (9446)

Sub contract operatives 798 (605)

**Total Employees 8800 (10051)**

Fatalities	None (0)
Major Injuries	19 (30)
3 Day Injuries	51 (111)
Dangerous Occurences	15 (21)
Non Reportables	852 (1175)

**Incident rate** for Fatality, Major and 3-day combined was:-

**795 per 100,000**

Last year the above figure was 1403 per 100,000 so there has been an exceptional reduction of 608 (43%) i.e. the industry is far safer than last year for these categories. This cannot be explained by the fewer number of industry employees as this figure is essentially a ratio. It is to be hoped that the reduction is primarily safer working but it also is probably influenced by less working hours per employee than previous years due to the recession.

The number of direct employees is some 15% less then 12 months ago. In 2 years there has been a total loss of direct employees of 20% so the effects of the recession are clear. It is known that some companies have further reduced their workforce since sending us their returns so it is likely that the downturn is even greater measured in number of employees.

The number of accidents all show considerable reductions but the figures have to be taken into the context that there have been fewer employees and these will not have been working flat out. It's impossible to determine from the individual accident figures this year as to the overall trend but it's to be very much welcomed that fewer people have been involved in an accident.

Whatever, we should all work towards improving safety as each of the figures represents personal tragedies for the person, their family & friends, and the employer - they're not just numbers.

## CHILEAN MINE RESCUE Drilling proceeds to bring 33 miners to the surface

At time of writing (September 26), the most intensive drilling operation ever to rescue trapped miners is underway at the San Jose mine in Chile. It's without precedent according to mining experts.

The San Jose copper/gold mine is situated about 28 miles north of Copiapo, Chile. On August 5th, 2010, the roof of the spirally wound access tunnel collapsed at a depth of approximately 600 metres below ground. 33 Miners (32 Chilean and 1 Bolivian) some 100 metres below this level were trapped with no effective means of escape. A vertical ventilation shaft which could have provided an escape route wasn't provided with ladders and caved in a few days after the roof collapse while the first rescue attempts were being made.

Details are sketchy but the mining company, San Esteban, knew that the 33 miners were in all probability safe, albeit with no means of egress from the lower levels. It's not clear yet why the roof fall area couldn't be cleared and there are no reports as to what must have been attempts to gain access via this "direct" route. Perhaps underground drilling established that the extent of the collapse was substantial. An early decision seems to have been made to drill from surface some 2 days after the collapse to intersect the tunnel area where the miners were presumed to be located. Press reports gave the impression that the miners would be confined in a small emergency shelter - the reality is that the shelter (a 50 square metre underground area with emergency supplies) was open to some 2 kilometres of tunnels and galleries in which to move about.

The surface drilling to make contact with the miners seems to have involved some 2 or 3 drill rigs. Again the details are sketchy as to how many rigs, their type and how many holes were drilled. These rigs presumably were brought in from Chilean contracting companies as they would not have been regular mine plant. The story of this part of the operation needs to be written. DTH hammer drilling to 700 metres is not a regular activity, and combined with needing to intersect a particular target must have been a major accomplishment. It is known that several holes failed to intersect before one hole penetrated through on August 22nd to the tunnel some 20 metres from the emergency shelter. This was at a depth of 688 metres and some 17 days from the original roof collapse.

Once contact with the miners was established the second phase of operations swung into place. This has been well documented in the media and comprises 2 parts. Firstly the supply to the trapped miners of food, water, communications and support. A further 2 other holes have broken through for this purpose - these in themselves must have been a significant achievement - were other holes also drilled that missed the target?

The attention is now on the actual rescue programme which is part 2 of phase two. Drillholes / shafts of sufficient diameter (70 cms) to allow a custom built rescue pod to evacuate the miners are being drilled. There are three rigs on site, each using different methods to accomplish this - the so called Plan A, Plan B and Plan C. The scale of activity is immense and to be admired. Rig 1, a 950 Strata Raisebore rig (495 Kw, 0 - 62 rpm) was first on site followed by Rig 2, a Schramm T130XD top drive (563 Kw, 0 - 143 rpm, 12,045 Nm torque) and latterly joined by Rig 3, RIG-422, a rotary table oil well rig. Both the Strata and RIG-422 are drilling new holes but the Schramm is widening an existing hole. Details of bottom hole assemblies are not currently available. As at 26 September the Strata was at 445 metres still drilling its pilot hole, the Schramm at 175 metres widening the existing hole, and RIG-422 at 62 metres on its single pass shaft.

The rescue of these miners has to be achieved. There is every reason to feel confident that the outcome will be successful. Resources, skill and determination are being employed in an unprecedented way in a very unique situation. It is hoped that the full details of all the drilling operations will be published - the drilling industry worldwide shares a keen interest in the technical aspects of all drilling that has and is taking place. At time of writing and probably when you read this the ordeal of the miners is not yet over. Our thoughts for them and their families is foremost.

## Revision of EN 791

EN 791 the 1995 Standard for Drill rig safety has been undergoing revision for over 2 years. The European Committee responsible for the revision reached a milestone at its last meeting in Paris at the start of September in that it had reached a deadline for submission of a 1st draft to CEN (Europe's Standards Body).

From this point the process is one of a public enquiry stage in which each European country has a period to examine the draft, comment on it and give its vote. This enquiry stage ends on 24 May 2011 after which the European Committee will reconvene in July 2011 to examine all comments and work towards a final draft (which has to be ready by 23 January 2012). There then follows a 6-month period to 10 July 2012 for final voting to take place. Should this vote be positive the new Standard will be published in January 2013.

It is fully expected that there will be many comments on the 1st draft. In UK the opportunity to view this draft will occur shortly through the relevant BSI Committee. BDA sits on this committee and will continue to inform and involve BDA members as to what help they can provide.

## BDA Audit Information

BDA Audit is the successor to BDA Drilling Accreditation and differs from the former scheme in that all audited operatives possess an NVQ, level 2, in Land Drilling and valid CSCS card in Land Drilling. It's open to Lead Drillers / Drillers and any drilling discipline.

It's becoming a necessity. Clients will be specifying it in order to conform to Eurocode & British Standards (BS EN ISO 22475-3 which is being published shortly and Amendment 2 of BS 5930 which is being prepared) and also the revised SISG (Site Investigation Steering Group) documents.

Please note that the BDA Driller Accreditation Scheme was wound up in 2005. Those who belonged to it should no longer be claiming that they are currently BDA Accredited. This would be an act of misrepresentation and the Association retains the right to take action should evidence reach it of this taking place.

BDA Audit is the only accreditation now issued for drilling operatives. Don't get left behind in not being able to satisfy tender requirements. Apply for details now to the BDA office and get ahead of the crowd.

## NEW PUBLICATION Contaminated Land

### Guidance for Safe Intrusive Activities on Contaminated or Potentially Contaminated Land

This new document is a complete revision of the BDA "Guidance Notes for the Safe Drilling of Landfills & Contaminated Land" published in 1992. The original document became famous for introducing site categorisation - green, yellow and red - and went on to being republished by Thomas Telford as SISG Part 4.

The new document comprises 52 pages and is in A4 booklet format.

It is essential reading for all who have to specify or carry out intrusive activity on contaminated land and features much on CDM 2007 and how to decide as to the site categorisation.

The document is available from the BDA Office @ £20 + £1.50 post & packing for BDA members. Telephone 01327 264622, fax 01327 264623, email office@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

You may also like to order the Guidance for the Safe Operation of Cable Percussion Rigs and Equipment at the same price which was published in 2005 or its sister document on Dynamic Sampling published in 2007.

## Richard Braithwaite

Many BDA members will remember the contribution that Richard Braithwaite made to the Association and the drilling industry. He was the BDA's 5th Chairman (1985 - 1987), MD of Encore Drilling and formerly with Atlas Copco Craelius.

Richard has suffered from Parkinson's Disease for the past few years. In August this year his condition required a move from his family home (Tayvallich, Argyll) to a nursing home. Belinda, his wife, advises that Richard is comfortable and well cared for, but it would be good if he heard from old friends in the drilling industry - this to still keep his mind active during this very cruel disease.

A message or a card would be appreciated to:

Richard Braithwaite  
Room 33, Willow House  
Lynn of Lorne Care Home  
Benderloch, Oban, PA37 1QW

## AND FINALLY

It's not often that drilling crops up in everyday news but this year we've had two high profile cases - that of the BP oil spill and now the Chilean mine rescue.

The public at large, and no doubt our families and friends, now know a little bit more of what drilling is about.

Every cloud has a silver lining so how can we turn this to our advantage?

*Brian Stringer*

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