

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

December, 2010

Secretary's Column

Soon the New Year is with us and perhaps most will be grateful that 2010 will lie behind us. It hasn't been a good 12 months for the UK drilling industry. In fact for many it's been one of the toughest years on record, following 2009 which was nothing to write home about as well.

But let's be a little more optimistic about our chances in 2011 and adopt some New Year resolutions. In a festive mode, can I suggest what they should be and then see how fast they are broken !!

- I shall not put in a price for a contract that I know will compromise industry quality and safety standards

- I shall insist on 30 day payment terms as a condition of contract

- I shall invest in modern plant, equipment and training to ensure that I'm building for the future

- I shall comply with all relevant legislation and Standards (especially Eurocode)

- I shall take every opportunity to inform clients of their legal and Standards responsibilities

A very merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all BDA Members.

All thoughts are welcome, call:
Brian Stringer
01327 264622
office@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

GOVERNMENT SPEAKS ON CONSTRUCTION

What is Government's latest thinking, programme and assistance for the construction industry of which drilling is a part. BDA Secretary, Brian Stringer, was recently at a meeting where the Construction Minister and Chief Construction Advisor both spoke about what's proposed.

The National Specialist Contractors Council (NSCC) of which BDA is a member held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and lunch at the Institute of Directors, London, on 24 November. Mark Prisk (Minister of State for Business and Enterprise with responsibility for the construction industry), and Paul Morrell (Chief Construction Advisor) both gave speeches. The Minister also answered questions. BDA Secretary, Brian Stringer, who attended the meeting, reports.

By comment consent among the 100 people or so that attended the NSCC's AGM, Mark Prisk gave an impressive performance. He gave a short and to the point speech, and then answered a series of questions from NSCC members. Acknowledging that the construction sector employed three million people in 300,000 firms and generated eight per cent of GDP, he went on to say that the government was taking action on several fronts that would benefit the sector. He said that the National Infrastructure Plan included £10Billion for roads and £14Billion for rail.

Talking about government as a client, he emphasised that red tape had to be slashed. Examples of this were prequalification and he mentioned BSI's PAS 91 (Core questions for pre-qualification in construction tendering) as a way forward for standardisation in this area. There would be more transparency in the way contracts were announced.

He said that government would be making fair payment within 30 days a contractual requirement for Tier 1, 2 and 3 contractors. Answering a question on this, he said that NSCC's fair payment campaign had been listened to and that government would remorsefully try and ensure it happened. The government would set up a confidential hotline for complaints where payment was not happening in 30 days.

Turning to opportunities, both himself and Paul Morrell spoke heavily about low carbon in construction and the green agenda. In answer to a question, Mark Prisk said that DECC (Department for Energy and Climate Change) would publish more shortly on sustainable, low-carbon communities. Paul Morrell, who leads on the Innovation and Growth Team report on low carbon construction (to be published 29 November) couldn't disclose what's in the report but said that it would throw up many opportunities in this area. It was obvious that both were keen to talk about low carbon and to steer minds in this direction so perhaps this is a real pointer.

BDA MEMBERSHIP

BDA EVENTS

Membership Renewals 2011

Renewal invoices for 2011 BDA membership will be posted in the first week of January. We'd appreciate early attention to these in order to ensure that the work of the Association is not held back by delayed payment.

We thank members for their commitment to the BDA in 2010 during which many have been under hardship.

Your BDA Committees have striven hard to keep ahead of current industry difficulties to keep building what is required for the future of the industry. To stand still has not been an option and they'd like continuance of your support to ensure that all matters on the radar are tackled now rather than become real problems down the line.

NEW MEMBERS REQUIRED

The BDA Marketing Committee is committed to encouraging new members to join the BDA and also raising the level of benefits for members.

Existing members can assist in achieving these objectives. What benefits would you like to see that are not currently provided? Do you know of companies that could benefit from BDA membership? What is necessary to attract those companies? Can you let us know your thoughts?

We'd very much like to hear from you. It's your Association and collectively owned by all the members. Your help would be appreciated by all.

DINNER DANCE SUCCESS

Once again the BDA scored a big success with its Dinner Dance held this year in central Birmingham and raised a significant amount for charity.

180 members, partners and guests met at the Burlington hotel in New Street, Birmingham, on Saturday 6 November for the BDA's Dinner Dance. Numbers attending was down on previous years - a sign of the times unfortunately - but this didn't deter those present from having a ball. Finding the hotel by car was not easy owing to postcodes not being totally recognised by sat navs, but the hotel proved to be an excellent venue.

The dinner was excellent but also eventful. Fire alarms seem to be a feature of some BDA Dinner Dance locations and this was no exception. All had to evacuate on to Birmingham's pavements after the main course when a fire alarm went off in an adjacent Starbucks cafe. However this was a temporary interlude and did not spoil the evening. Guests returned and soon "The Blame" cover band, here for its 7th consecutive BDA Dance, was again filling the dance floor.

Through the normal raffle and tombola, and a small auction, £4,126.84 was raised for midlands-based Acorns Children's Hospices. This exceeded expectation and is a credit to everyone's generosity.

We are especially grateful to the sponsors of the raffle and tombola - Allied Exploration & Geotechnics, Atlas Copco, BAM Ritchies, Davaly, Pigott Shaft Drilling, Scientific Analysis Laboratories, and Soil Engineering. Many thanks to these companies.

BDA WEBSITE

The new BDA website, www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk, was launched on November 3rd. Members have been waiting a long time for this to appear and we hope that you're happy with the result.

Through a real concerted and concentrated effort, the BDA now has a website of which we can be proud. If you haven't seen it yet then please log on now and let us know what you think.

What you'll see is not yet fully complete - we have to upload details of each member and introduce a search facility. To this end we need to know the activities of each member. Accompanying the membership renewal invoice being issued in the first week of January will be a form asking you for details of which services and activities you're engaged in. We ask that you return this to us promptly.

Further development of the site will be continuing. It is envisaged that we'll have a members only section. Your ideas on what you'd like to have in this section would be most welcome. In fact if you have any ideas as to how we can improve what's already on the site, we'd like to hear from you.

office@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

BDA on the WEB
Our new website is finally here.
It's been a long time coming but we hope you like it.
www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

LAND DRILLING Sector Accreditation Scheme

The work on LD-SAS (Land Drilling - Sector Accreditation Scheme) has been completed.

In BDA 2010 Newsletters of February, May and August we've reported the aims, benefits and progress of LD-SAS which will provide detailed auditing of an enterprise that provides land drilling services in ground investigation.

The LD-SAS project, for which the BDA has been in receipt of a ConstructionSkills grant, has achieved a major milestone during November in that the scheme document was finalised. It was submitted to and approved by UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service).

The Sector Scheme Advisory Committee (SSAC-LD), which has been drawing up the scheme document, met in late September to go through remaining elements and comments. Tidying up of the document proceeded through October into November.

It has taken nearly a full year to reach this point which may seem a long time but is incredibly quick when compared to similar processes. All credit must go to the various individuals on SSAC-LD who contributed; SSAC's Chairman Barry Clarke, and the project's consultant, John Grainger, for ensuring that the tight schedule for completion was adhered to.

As previously reported, LD-SAS will provide the mechanism for satisfying what will be a requirement within BS 22475-2 and 22475-3 which are two BSI Standards in their final stages of being published. These Standards are linked to Eurocode in the UK's National Annex.

Further work now has to take place to appoint Certifying Bodies (CBs) to carry out the actual audits and the BDA will be working with UKAS and CBs to bring this about. We'll keep you informed about progress on this.

The importance of LD-SAS will take a little while to become established. The BDA, Clients and Contractors all have a major part to play in the uptake of the scheme which provides industry agreed benchmarking of what an enterprise providing Land Drilling services in Ground Investigation should match.

LAND DRILLING APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

First launched in 2007, this specialist apprenticeship programme (LD - SAP) has proven to be a success to individuals, companies and the industry. The BDA now seeks candidates for a February 2011 start.

Developed by BDA with ConstructionSkills, formerly CITB, the LD - SAP is an apprenticeship scheme aimed at newcomers to the land drilling industry or those in the industry who require formalised training to progress to Lead Driller. The outcome at the end of 2 years is the award of NVQ Diploma Land Drilling as a Lead Driller. Unlike traditional apprenticeships which are college based, the LD - SAP is designed around monitored in-house company training and external training courses provided by the BDA. The training incorporates both practical and knowledge learning - it is formulated in accordance with specific frameworks that lay down what has to be delivered. Details of the training are in the scheme booklet.

The breadth, content and quality of the training is unachievable elsewhere. Much care was taken in the scheme development to ensure that apprentices would be the best taught in the industry. ConstructionSkills apprentice officers visit each apprentice on a regular basis to provide support and ensure that their needs are being addressed. Proof of the pudding is in the eating. The apprentices and their companies who have taken part so far have nothing but praise for the scheme.

The BDA invites companies to consider providing candidates for the next batch of apprentices who will start in February 2011. You may have a recently employed person who is showing potential to go on to Lead Driller, or one that has been with you a while who is keen to progress. Age is no barrier to who can start on LD - SAP. Grants may be available depending on whether the company is in scope to ConstructionSkills. Contact the BDA Secretary, Brian Stringer, to discuss further with no obligation. We look forward to hearing from you.

NVQ Land Drilling Get it now or pay much more later!

Possibly for the last time, the opportunity to obtain an NVQ at much reduced cost is being made available for a very short period.

ConstructionSkills' National Specialist Accreditation Centre (NSAC) has obtained funding from the government to enable the Centre's NVQ Assessors to offer much reduced prices for NVQ assessment and award.

As everyone knows, the government is cutting back on expenditure and it is very unlikely that NVQs will attract subsidy in the future. The BDA has consistently said that NVQ Land Drilling is a valuable qualification - over 1000 drilling operatives are now qualified. If your drilling operatives or yourself don't yet have the qualification, you need to move fast to take advantage of this low cost opportunity. The NVQ registrations have to be completed by end March 2011 and achievement by July 2011.

NSAC Land Drilling Assessors can be contacted as follows:

- Lee (Charlie) Allardyce - 01229 584297 or mbl. 07710 402626
- Equipe Training Ltd. (3 assessors) - 01295 670990
- Jerry Russell - 01443 491455 or mbl. 07903 866605

or contact BDA Secretary, Brian Stringer, on 01327 264622 to learn more.

Don't let this opportunity for NVQ qualification pass you by !!

GEODRILLING SHOW
Be there on June 7th - 8th 2011
Find out more on www.geodrilling-show.co.uk

TRAINING

The BDA has, since its inception in 1976, always promoted and encouraged ongoing training. Lifting the skills and knowledge of those in drilling is essential. For many in the industry there has never been formalised training - learn it on the job has been the norm. If the "trainer" has acquired bad habits and knows no better then it gets passed down.

We live in another world these days. Not only should there be evidence of training (does everybody have the records to prove this) but the training itself should be of sufficient quality. Try explaining to a judge and jury that training was entrusted to "Joe" without details about Joe's experience, capacity and qualification to train.

We're fortunate in BDA that at least two of our members provide quality training to the industry at large. They should be supported by BDA Members.

- Equipe Training. tel 01295 670990
- Rotary Test Drilling tel 01942 819557

The buying in of training is often seen as an expense. It should be regarded as an investment, and an insurance for when those awkward questions arise as to who trained the person that failed to meet safety and quality standards.

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 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.

Profile of Drilling

We should end the year with reflection that drilling became high profile during 2010.

The rescue of the Chilean miners was world news although it quickly disappeared once all 33 miners were safely brought to surface. Briefly, the New Zealand coal mining tragedy in November featured a borehole to intersect the underground workings. Previous to these we had the Mexican Gulf oil spillage.

Drilling is a specialist activity and its value is rarely appreciated. It doesn't hit the headlines very often. We know its technical difficulties. The one headline in UK that we have to avoid in future is that of failing to provide sufficient quality works for ground source heating systems. Those who aim to join this market should not underestimate what drilling is about. It's the responsibility of those of us from drilling backgrounds to ensure that drilling is not treated lightly.

AND FINALLY

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our members.

2011 is anyone's guess as to what it may bring, but we should all enjoy the festive break with our families and friends. It's the only time of the year when all are off work together.

Have a good one.

Brian Stringer

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