

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

June, 2009

Secretary's Column

The drilling industry, together with the general economy, is experiencing real difficulties. None of us would say otherwise for the evidence is only too plain - volume of work is declining, rates are tumbling, people are having to be laid off and capital investment has largely ground to a halt. To ignore the hardships and fears it's causing would be to deny the truth.

One particular fear is that we're losing younger people. It's a sad fact that many of these are the first to go when companies have to trim the workforce. Last in, first out, still operates as a maxim in many companies. Retention of those that are not yet fully skilled but show considerable promise should however always be seriously considered along with continuation of their training. Once they've left this industry there's no guarantee they'll return when the upturn comes. Their potential will have been recognised in other employment and it will be harder to attract them back. The industry may thus have lost its brightest future talent.

It's to be hoped during this downturn that, not only are the most capable & experienced people retained, but that we also take the opportunity of keeping on those who will go on to provide the skills, professionalism and endeavour that will be required over forthcoming years. Otherwise our next problem will be a future skills shortage.

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

Email: brian@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

Release of Site Investigation and Drilling Records held by the British Geological Survey

The following announcement appeared in the London and Edinburgh Gazettes on 22nd May 2009. BDA Members should consider whether their interests are affected and take appropriate action.

"The British Geological Survey (BGS), a component body of the Natural Environment Research Council, has acquired or had deposited in the National Geoscience Data Centre (NGDC) a large number of site investigation and drilling records, some of which date back well over a century. These records were produced by commercial, government and other organisations, and many were deposited in the NGDC to meet statutory obligations.

*Following rulings from the Department of Justice (formerly the Lord Chancellor's Office), the Information Commissioner's Office, and guidance from The National Archives, and in the interests of maximising access to this economically valuable data source, the **BGS intends to release into the public domain all records originally deposited at NGDC under cover of commercial confidentiality, that were received by BGS more than four years prior to this Notice of public release of information.***

If you have deposited site investigation and/or drilling record information at BGS and consider that its release will adversely affect and be harmful to your commercial interests, please contact the Borehole Data Manager, National Geological Records Centre, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5GG, United Kingdom, to discuss the matter further.

The proposed release will take place six months following this Notice (in the London and Edinburgh Gazettes). Additional public notifications of this proposal will be made in a number of geoscience-related publications."

BDA Comment

Without further consideration by the BGS, the above Notice means that the site investigation and drilling record information held by BGS, and deposited prior to 22nd May 2005, will be available for anyone to access from 22nd November 2009. The BDA will determine what this will mean in practice as it is possible to buy information from BGS at the moment through its "GeoRecords" and "GeoReports" services. We will advise members of what we find out.

Certainly if companies have deposited information with BGS, on the understanding or agreement that it was commercially sensitive and would not be generally released, then their interests could be damaged. In such cases they should consider their position and contact the Borehole Data Manager to discuss.

Membership

BDA EVENTS

New Corporate Members

We welcome these new members to the BDA and look forward to being of assistance to them.

Belowground Ltd

Piling, underpinning, site & ground investigation

Registered Member
Alistair Garden

**Little Highfield
Woodwater Lane
Exeter
Devon
EX2 5AJ**

Tel: 0800 612 9590
Fax: 01392 211084

Email: info@belowground.co.uk
Web: www.belowground.co.uk

Sonic Drilling Ltd

Soil nailing, geotechnical, grouting, mini piling, geothermal, waterwells

Registered Member
Gareth Phillips

**Yew Tree Farm
Newcastle Road
Bethton
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 4TD**

Tel: 01477 500177
Fax: 01477 500121

Email: info@sonicdrilling.co.uk
Web: www.sonicdrilling.co.uk

BDA Member is honoured

On the 21st April, Pigott Shaft Drilling Ltd (PSD) had the honour of being conferred with the Queen's Award for Enterprise 2009 in the category of International Trade. This was to recognise outstanding achievement for increasing exports by nearly two and a half times over three years.

The BDA congratulates PSD, which has been a BDA Corporate Member since its formation in 1984, and whose Managing Director, Colin Pigott, is a Director of the BDA. In fact BDA records show evidence of membership back to 1981.

PSD, based in Preston, specialises in the design, manufacture and rental of equipment to separate solids from liquids. This equipment is used in the drilling & tunnelling sectors to separate cuttings from the drilling fluid thus allowing the fluid to be reused and recirculated.

Membership Recruitment

It's very encouraging that the BDA continues to attract new membership applications. It's a recognition that BDA membership means something, and that we provide the services and information so essential in these difficult and regulatory times.

There are 119 Corporate Members of the BDA but we could always do with a few more.

Please take every opportunity to encourage others to join so that everyone in the industry can share the burden of what the BDA is doing.

DINNER DANCE 2009

The date and location of this year's event was announced at the BDA's Annual General Meeting in April. Be sure to put the details in your diary.

**Saturday 24th October 2009
Radisson SAS Hotel
Argyle Street
GLASGOW**

This is a superb 5 star hotel situated in the heart of the city and adjacent to Glasgow Central Station. The hotel opened in November 2002 and has won awards ever since for its architectural style, comfort and services. It has 250 stylishly designed bedrooms, health club, 2 restaurants and 2 bars. In all a great venue for the BDA.

We'll once again have the best in entertainment including "The Blame" cover band who'll be travelling up from Lancashire. Gary & his band members really look forward to our "do" having continuously got us on our feet for the past 5 years. We've also been promised one or two surprises from our Scottish members.

Full booking details have been sent out to members.

We've reserved 100 bedrooms for starters - a double room B & B will be £120 inclusive of Vat and you can get ahead of the crowd by booking these now. Telephone reservations on 0141 204 3333 and quote the BDA rate.

LATEST NEWS

Bookings are going extremely well. If you want to be sure of attending it's time to act now.

BDA on the WEB

***Our new fully updated website will be re-launched very shortly.
It's been a long time coming but we hope you like it.***

www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

**Builder's Profile
A Solution to Pre-Qualification ?**

Filling in numerous pre-qualification questionnaires (PQQs) has become an unwelcome and onerous activity for many companies. The Builder's Profile is an online service to exchange common pre-qualification information that can possibly remove the need for paper PQQs. Backed by NSCC (National Specialist Contractors Council) of which the BDA is a member, the Builders Profile may be useful to some BDA members who will also be able to obtain a discounted annual rate.

Anyone who has to fill in PQQs will recognise the problem. There are many pre-qualification schemes and each has its own questionnaire. All are principally asking for the same information but never in a common format. It's become a time consuming and costly process to provide the information. When the government set up Constructionline it was meant to provide recognition to contractors that clients would be satisfied with. This has not worked and subsequently there's been a multitude of pre-qualification schemes set up. It's become a paper chase.

Each pre-qualification scheme claims to be better than any other. The reality is that all are in competition for business and seek to create product differentiation to obtain that business. Hence the variety of PQQs.

Builder's Profile is NOT a pre-qualification scheme - it is a data collection and distribution system and not designed to compete with schemes such as Constructionline, Achilles and CHAS. The idea is simple - upload your company pre-qualification information to Builder's Profile and then point to that information on receipt of any request from a client. The client can download that information on authorisation from yourself.

Whether it's an answer to all your PQQ requests will obviously depend on how well Builder's Profile gains recognition. NSCC is encouraging all specialist contractors to back the initiative and has negotiated a discounted annual rate of £199 + VAT (compared to the normal rate of £275 + VAT) for any contractor in membership to a NSCC member. BDA members are therefore eligible for this discounted rate.

Further details can be obtained on www.buildersprofile.co.uk.

**Lead Driller
Representatives**

The BDA Main Committee has always been keen to hear the views of those at the sharp end, namely the drilling operatives who carry out site works. It's extremely important that Lead Drillers can express their views, suggest improvements and contribute to this industry.

The Main Committee appoints two Lead Driller Representatives to sit on the Committee and represent those views. Currently it's Charlie Allardyce (mobile: 07710 402626) and Keith Spires (mobile: 07831 341084).

Drilling operatives are encouraged to contact Charlie and Keith with their ideas and comments. Of course the greatest weight of comment will come from BDA Audited operatives as they are driller members of the BDA but it's also important that all voices are heard. Let's hear your views.

Manual Handling

We're all conscious that drilling operatives carry out a lot of manual handling. Risk assessments should always take this into account in respect of the Manual Handling Regulations.

Minimising the risk to employees is the responsibility of employers. One solution is to reduce the weights that are lifted. For example, large and heavy casings can be cut down to more manageable weights provided that a supply can be obtained. Manufacturers are always keen to meet market demand if there is sufficient volume of request.

It is the responsibility of contracting companies to create that demand and make it easier for the suppliers to respond. It is not the responsibility of the BDA to place the onus on manufacturers to supply lighter weight equipment, although we would hope that all sides recognise the problem.

**Land Drilling
Apprentices Required**

BDA is recruiting now for its next batch of Land Drilling apprentices. If you have a suitable candidate or would like further details then it's time to act now.

The BDA Land Drilling Apprenticeship Scheme is open to anyone who wishes to progress to NVQ Lead Driller qualification through a 2-year programme of internal and external part-time training. There is no upper age limit. It's ideally suited to those who've been with their Employer and the industry for a short time or those, who to date, haven't had the opportunity to train for a Lead Driller role. The potential apprentice must already be with an Employer whose consent and agreement will be necessary.

For Employers who are in-scope to ConstructionSkills a grant of up to £5,700 is available which is paid over the 2 years and for successful completion. Eligibility for this grant and entry to the scheme can be determined at point of application. The cost of the scheme is £4,500 payable to BDA in stages.

It is envisaged that the next apprentice batch will commence in June. The scheme has been highly successful with 3 batches already started of which the first has just graduated.

Contact the BDA Secretary, Brian Stringer, on telephone 01327 264622 for full details.

**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.

This year it will become a necessity. Clients will be specifying it in order to conform to Eurocode & British Standards, and also the revised SIGS (Site Investigation Steering Group) documents.

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.

Inclined Drilling "Guarding"

The BDA issued the following statement on 26th May after consultation with the HSE (Health & Safety Executive). The statement is also approved by the HSE. It refers to inclined drilling for activities such as soil nailing and anchoring. Following this statement a BDA Working Party is being set up which will have its first meeting in late June. This Working Party will be engaged in drawing up guidance with the HSE.

"A situation arose where the HSE, the BDA and a contractor had a meeting regarding the prevention of access to rotating drill strings for inclined geotechnical drilling activity. It is recognised that to date the contractors considered that guarding to inclined rigs would require full enclosure of the drill string by a physical guard. It is now understood that adequate guarding can be achieved by partial enclosure and/or the use of protective devices that put the machine into slow rotation mode before contact with rotating parts can be made.

The BDA, together with the contractor and other contractors, have resolved to work together with the HSE to attempt to establish compliant methods of providing suitable protection. They will report on progress to the HSE no later than in 3 months time. Members are reminded that until an appropriate method is established the BDA risk assessment and the hierarchy of protection should be rigorously applied to all drilling operations as any unguarded operation could be considered unsafe."

Ground Gases e.g Carbon Monoxide

It will be remembered that an elderly couple died in Dudley in 2005 of carbon monoxide poisoning. This was adjacent to drilling works. As a precautionary measure the HSE and Coal Authority (CA) strengthened their guidance and requirements where drilling might come into contact with, or potentially create, hazardous ground gases. Water flush drilling was preferred if the risk assessment showed a potential for encountering or creating such gases.

Following the incident and during past years, the BDA urged both HSE and CA to come together with the BDA to produce unified guidance. This was not possible for the HSE & CA owing to a legal case being conducted with the drilling contractor that had been drilling at Dudley. That case, involving risk assessment and monitoring, was concluded this May. We hope to report more when full details are obtained.

The BDA, HSE & CA meet together in mid June to now go forward in drawing up a joint statement and guidance.

Accident Return Forms

Many thanks to those members who've sent us their accident return forms for year ending 31-03-09. However we're still awaiting forms from half the membership and would be grateful if these were sent as soon as possible.

It's an essential part of the BDA's work that we receive these forms. It enables the BDA to produce collective data on what's happening in our industry and prove to outside agencies e.g. HSE that, as a sector, our safety record bears favourable comparison to any other trade. This helps members on matters such as insurance.

We also have to satisfy National Specialist Contractors Council (NSCC), of which we're a member, that we've achieved 100% collection of accident statistics. This we've done for several years now and been rightly praised for the achievement.

No one is proud of accidents but understanding the collective record and its trends has to be important.

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.

AND FINALLY

Getting together a new BDA Website has proven to be very difficult and, justifiably, several members have asked whether it's ever going to happen. Now there's light at the end of the tunnel for I've been given much needed assistance to get the text together.

What it's exposed is that the BDA's Secretariat has to be expanded to cope with the workload. Plans are in place to do that. Normal service will be resumed sooner rather than later !!

Brian Stringer

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