



April IMFormation 2006

Skills survey shows better training delivers better outcomes – EEF

A major skills survey of manufacturing companies published by the Engineering Employers Federation, has highlighted the clear link between the productivity and profitability of manufacturers who not only place a high priority on training but, more importantly, relate their training plan to their strategic business goals. The survey published in a report 'Skills for Productivity: can the UK deliver?' by the EEF, the manufacturers' organisation, is the first of a two part analysis of current and future skills, education and training in UK manufacturing.

It shows widespread acceptance of the link between a more highly skilled workforce and improved performance, with two thirds of companies saying productivity was the main reason for increasing training. As a result, over the last year half the companies surveyed had improved their productivity suggesting the gap with their competitors may be closing.

Encouragingly, the survey also showed that firms had increased their training spend over the previous twelve months and were planning to do so over the coming twelve months, despite their margins being under intense pressure. The survey showed that companies which place greater importance on business plan rather than available budget when planning training and target the right types of training across the whole business get more out of their training efforts.

One indicator of such an approach is adoption of the Investors in People (IiP) Standard – framework for linking training to business strategy and communicating this to employees. Of companies with the Investors in People standard, almost two thirds had seen an improvement in productivity in the last year compared to only 20% without the standard. In addition, just under 30% of companies with IiP had improved their profitability compared to just over 10% without.

EEF Director General, Martin Temple commented: 'This report demonstrates that increasing the amount spent on training is not enough on its own to improve performance. The companies that steal a march on their competitors are these with a business culture, which clearly aligns their investment in skills and training to their overall business goals.

Thanks are expressed to EEF for permission to reproduce the above.

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The above conclusion that training is linked to productivity and profitability has also been shown to be true for companies who have embarked on the various courses and modules on surface finishing available from the IMF. In particular the comments from BMW as featured in the February edition of this newsletter.

Courses and modules available from Foundation to Diploma levels. To find out more contact the IMF on 0121 622 7387 or look on the website at: www.ukfinishing.org.uk

Health, Safety and Environment

DEFRA

In collaboration with the Environment Agency and the Welsh Assembly Government a consultation paper has been published seeking views on proposals to create a streamlined environmental permitting and compliance system in England and Wales. The existing PPC and waste management systems are considered to be good candidates for reform for a numbers of reasons, including that some businesses operate with both types of permits, sometimes on the same site, and because some waste operations are currently permitted under PPC, while others fall under the waste management licensing system. The proposals set out in the consultation paper aim to streamline and simplify the



mechanics of the permitting and compliance systems for waste and PPC without undermining environmental protection or human health. Deadline for comments - 15 May 2006. Electronic copies of the paper and partial Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) available from DEFRA: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/epp

HSE publishes guidance on safe vehicle operation in the workplace

Workplace Transport Safety: An Employers' Guide (HSG136) has been launched. The comprehensive guide provides advice on all aspects of workplace transport operations. Workplace transport is stated to be the second biggest cause of accidents, accounting for about 70 fatalities each year, the majority of which are preventable. The guide is available from HSE Books, priced £11.50. HSE has published a revised version of Workplace Transport: An Overview. The 27-page booklet also includes specific sections about workplace issues that should be considered when planning transport operations. The booklet can be downloaded from the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/tranibdx.htm

HSE & EEF to promote health & safety in manufacturing

The HSE has signed a groundbreaking partnership with the manufacturers' organisation, the Engineering Employers Federation, to promote effective health and safety management across manufacturing industries. The agreement, the first of its kind between HSE and other organisations builds on a strong history of cooperation and recognises EEF's expertise in the field of health and safety and the quality advice and services it provides to member companies.

Asbestos containing textured coatings (TCs)

New research on asbestos confirms that risks from asbestos containing textured coatings are much lower than previously thought. The new research published 20 March supports the proposal that work with TCs will no longer require a licence.

The Health and Safety Commission's (HSC) draft amendments to asbestos regulations, which have recently been the subject of consultation, aim to tighten overall controls. The proposed changes include a lower single control limit of 0.1 fibres per cm³ for work with all types of asbestos. Textured coatings contain only small amounts of asbestos and this is bound in a matrix that does not readily release fibres when removed. In response to early comments received during consultation, the HSE commissioned the Health and Safety Laboratory to carry out further research into work with TCs.

Details of research is available on the HSE website at: www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2006/hsl0619.pdf

Company News and Products

Schloetter Company Ltd

Richard Woodward, previously Technical Director has been promoted to Managing Director. A metallurgist by profession, Richard spent 7 years in the Canning research laboratories prior to training at Schloetter in Germany and set up the UK laboratory on return. He is a member of the Institute of Metal Finishing and the Institute of Circuit Technology

Newly released products from Schloetter include:

Alstrip 2006 – an ammonia free nitric acid based tin/tin alloy stripper

Arguna 625 & 626 – selective high speed silver processes

Niphos 965/966 – two new fast electrolytic NiP processes for use under hard gold

Platuna N1 – an ultra bright, innovative platinum process

Slotopas ZE 160 & ZN 200 - additions to the black passivate family

Contact Paul Griffiths for further information – Tel: 01386 552331

Turbex Ltd

New brochure from Turbex illustrating the wide range of cleaning machines available from their 'Cleaning Technology Centre' where trials of customers components can be carried out.

Contact John Huntingdon, telephone: 01420 544909

South West Metal Finishing (SWMF)

It is believed to be a unique agreement in the aerospace industry, Westland Transmissions, part



of the AgustaWestland group, one of the world's largest helicopter manufacturers, has signed an agreement with SWMF, part of EIC Finishing Services, to outsource electroplating requirements, thus allowing Westland to focus internally on its core specialities.

Hardite Coatings

The 'Hardite' coating is a unique gas-phase CVD process that produces a hard wearing, low friction and corrosion resistant layer of tungsten carbide suitable for use on tools and components. It is produced by CVD in a furnace heated to between 500-550 oC. At this temperature, a chemical reaction takes place between the gases which then crystallise on the surface of the components, producing a smooth layer of binder free tungsten carbide with abrasion, erosion and chemical resistant properties. Tests carried out in the US by a test house have shown that the coating outperformed a well-known hard-surface alloy coating by a factor of 2.5 to 1 using the ASTM G75 test. Details from Jeff Rutland, Tel: 01869 353830 Process Automation International (PAL) PAL has formally signed a distributor agreement with Enthone Inc giving them exclusive rights to market and sell PAL surface finishing automated plating equipment throughout Europe including Turkey and the whole of the former Soviet Union. The newly signed agreement which also covers Egypt and South Africa, does not cover PCB, anodising, cleaning and phosphating industries.

Further information on PAL from www.palhk.com and on Enthone Inc, a division of Cookson Group plc, London from www.cooksonelectronics.com

IMF News

New members of Council for 2006/07

Senior Vice President Sam Briggs
Vice President Huw Williams
Elected members Trevor Crichton
Peter Crouch
Tom Eagleton
Richard Wells

Books

Congratulation to Terry Jones for his revision and extension of the book entitled 'Electrodeposition of the Precious Metals: Osmium, Rhodium, Iridium, Rhenium, Ruthenium' has recently appeared in print. Additional chapters include - "Stripping of coatings", "Electroless Platinum Deposition"&"Electropolishing of the Precious Metals". The 220 page book costs £55.00 and can be purchased via the IMF website, under books from: www.uk-finishing.org.uk

New members and transfers

Student Chapaneri R Loughborough
Affiliate Georget, C Bicester
Thomas V Kent
Wurm J Germany
Zhuk, Y Oxon
TechIMF Abeyrathne R * Sri Lanka
Benstead I * Barnstaple
Husband S * Bideford
Killner S * Bideford
Member Allin D * Torrington
Hill-Meldrum S * Bideford
Mitchell D * Bideford
Sleigh C * Bideford
Warren J * Bideford
Fellow Little J * Bideford

* transfer from Affiliate



Midland Branch

At the time of going to press, the event scheduled for 23 May has not been finalised. The event planned is in respect of WEEE and RoHS directives in response to the many inquiries received by IMF asking for information on whether finishes they specify are noncompliant and if so what alternatives are available. The proposed second half of the seminar, on water and waste waters reduction in the surface finishing industries. As and when available further details will be posted on the IMF website at: www.uk-finishing.org.uk

New Sustaining Members

PRA Coatings Technology Centre

14 Castle Mews, High Street
Hampton, Middlesex TW12 NP
Tel: 0208 4870800, Fax: 0208 4870801

The PRA Coatings Technology Centre is one of the world's leading research and technology service providers for the coatings industry. The UKAS accredited laboratories offer an independent, impartial analytical service. Consultants can advise on re-coating, paint failure and environmental problems.

Innoval Technology Ltd

Beaumont Close, Banbury
Oxon OX16 1TQ
Tel: 01295 702800, Fax: 01295 702898

Innoval Technology is a technology supplier to metals and metal finishing companies. Competences include process engineering, metallurgy, training, knowledge management and surface treatment e.g. cleaning, etching, anodising, pretreatment, coatings.

Messier Services (UK)

Cheltenham Road East
Gloucester GL2 9QL
Tel: 01452713111, Fax: 01452 718500

A dedicated 'one stop shop' available to handle Airbus and Boeing landing gear components. Processes include cadmium, nickel and hard chromium plating and passivation of stainless steel. Complies with ISO 14001 standards.

Nickel Institute

The Holloway, Alvechurch
Birmingham B48 7QA
Tel: 01527 584777, Fax: 01527 585562

The Nickel Institute provides a 'free of charge' advice service & technical information to anyone concerned with Nickel, its components or alloys.

Recent Examination Results

Distance Learning Foundation Module
Brehler S # Alcoa Fastening Systems
Distance Learning MF1 General Principles
Smyth, P ** Langford Lodge (NI)
Shelton-Smith J ** MacDermid plc
** pass with merit, # pass with distinction

Institute and Association Events

Institute of Corrosion

3 – 7 April, NACE Basic Corrosion Course
Details: Dr Paulette Sidley, Tel: 020 7460 9408

20 April, Anti Fouling Paints–Jt meeting with OCCA at
17.30 for 18.00 at 'Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese Pub, Fleet
Street, London (Nr Blackfriars Station)

8 June, London Branch Annual Golf Tournament.



Representing finishing professionals in
surface engineering and coatings
since 1925



Details: Derek Hoskins, Tel: 01932 340773

Metal Finishing Golf Society

18 May, Annual Golf tournament at Handsworth Golf Club, Birmingham. Entry forms from Asbury Brodie & Co Ltd, Dover Street Birmingham B18 5HN

American Electroplaters and Surface Finishers

Papers are invited for presentation at SUR/FIN 2006 to be held 18-21 September in Milwaukee, USA
For more information visit: www.sur-fin.net