



News, Views & Comments from the World of Building Service Contracting

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ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

17th Congress Fast Approaching

Norberto Peluso, President of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors writes, "We are very pleased to announce the 17th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors that will be held from October 26-29, 2008 at the Sheraton Buenos Aires Hotel & Convention Center. The organization of this meeting is clear evidence of the development this industry has achieved in the world. It is a real challenge for the Organizing Committee to carry out this meeting successfully. The technical program will be focused on the most important subjects related to this specialty that will be developed in workshops, plenary sessions and symposia by the most renowned specialists. Taking into account the above, we would like to invite the companies related to the building service business to join us and together reach the goals set by this Organizing Committee to invite renowned speakers from all over the world and provide the industry the possibility of properly promoting its products among the participants. We look forward to counting upon your participation so as to exchange both scientific and technical experience and welcome you to this World Event." For more information, go to www.wfbsc2008.com/ar.

AUSTRALIA-SYDNEY

Background And Drug Tests Needed For Guards

Although new laws recently enacted by the State Government allow employers to develop guidelines for their workers under the fitness to work policy and prohibit licensing

for those with convictions relating to terrorism, riot, stalking, firearms, drugs or assault, they do not specify random and drug related tests. Many are concerned that this will not help in efforts to clean up the private security guard industry, which become linked to drug dealers, biker gangs and organized crime, particularly with bouncers, and crowd and venue controllers. Australia's booming security industry is worth several billion dollars a year and there are currently 32,000 licensed bouncers and crowd and venue controllers in the state. Critics believe drug testing could be a more effective way to supervise the industry than fingerprint or background checks, because corrupt guards might not have criminal records and increased use of alcohol, drugs and steroids have led to incidences of security guard aggression. The chief executive of the Australian Security Industry Association, Bryan de Caires, said he was working with a drug-testing kit provider to give companies a cost-effective way to test their employees and many security companies are moving away from giving employees guns.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

Tracking Of Workers By Phone More Prevalent

A recent study by Juniper Research shows that the need to improve business efficiency and personal safety of vulnerable workers is driving companies to use mobile phones to track workers in Western Europe. The report on tracking and navigation estimates that over 21 million phones will be tracked and revenues from wireless tracking services, both of vehicles and people, in Western Europe will reach nearly \$4.8 billion by

2012. The increases will advance as the controlled use of personal location information becomes more accepted and concerns over personal security outweigh reservations over privacy.

BRAZIL-SAO PAULO

Hyundai To Build First Plant In South America

Hyundai Motor Co., which is embarking on a scheme to aggressively expand its presence worldwide, announced it is seeking a site in Brazil on which to build its first automobile manufacturing plant in South America. The plan is to have the factory build for an annual production capacity of 100,000 vehicles. Timing for the start of construction and actual production will be determined. Hyundai is currently the sixth-largest automaker in the world.

CANADA-OTTAWA

Prices Rise On Goods And Raw Materials

Statistics Canada reported at the end of December that factory prices charged by manufacturers for their goods rose 0.6 percent in November and raw material costs jumped 3.4 percent. The increase in prices was the result of higher oil and coal prices. Factory prices rose after six straight monthly declines.

FRANCE-PARIS

Directive Forces Waste To Be Treated As Resource

The European Union Landfill initiative, effective October 2007, requires that all non-hazardous waste - household, commercial or industrial - be pretreated before it can be deposited in an EU landfill, which is proving to be powerful catalyst for change both in and outside the waste management industry as waste is now looked upon as a resource and investment. Waste management company Veolia Environmental Services of France is taking advantage of the new climate by employing innovative and profitable waste treatment technologies such as landfill

gas collection, gas-to-energy facilities, and sorting technologies that allow for material recovery and recycling. The company has outperformed the FTSE World Europe index since August 2007 and in November, the city of Jiujiang in southern China awarded Veolia a 30-year contract valued at \$205.7 million, to build, operate and transfer the first-ever household waste storage center in China. China has a huge garbage problem, over seven billion tons were accumulated in 2007, and waste is growing 8 to 10 percent per year, which will cause landfills to reach capacity by 2020. In desperation, China has turned to Veolia to find alternative technologies fast to manage its waste. The deal is the 21st waste management contract in China for Veolia.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Unemployment Lowest Since 1993

Unemployment in Germany fell to its lowest level since March 1993, at 8.4 percent. In December, unemployment fell by 78,000, the 21st straight decline. And while economists are expecting some slow down, solid economic growth should generate more jobs in 2008 as German companies add jobs to meet firm demand. Airline Deutsche Lufthansa recently announced it plans to hire almost 4,300 new employees in Germany in 2008, including 2,000 flight attendants and up to 360 pilots.

ISRAEL-BETHLEHEM

Annual Cleaning Brings On Holy War

When some Greek Orthodox cleaners encroached upon the Armenian section of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem during holiday cleaning, 50 robed Greek Orthodox and 30 robed Armenian priests went at each other with brooms and stones. The church, believed to be the birthplace of Jesus, is administered jointly by Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic authorities and each group guards its turf zealously. Dozens of priests and cleaners had come to the church to scrub and sweep the floors, walls and rafters in preparation for Christmas, and Palestinian police, armed with batons and shields, had to quickly form a human cordon to separate the two sides so the cleaning could continue.

JAPAN-TOKYO

Government Work Day To Decrease By 15 Minutes

The National Personnel Authority is considering revising a law, which currently stipulates eight-hour workdays, to seven hours and 45 minutes, a reduction of 15 minutes. If passed, this would be the first reduction in working hours for national government employees since 1992. While surveys conducted by the NPA between 2004 and 2007, showed the average working day was found to be seven hours, 45 minutes long for employees of private firms they also found that employees of smaller companies tend to work longer hours. Critics contend that what would essentially be a pay raise for government workers, would also lead to a greater gap between employees of private enterprises and government workers.

NEW ZEALAND-HAMILTON

Man Sustains Serious Injuries From Floor Polisher

A 64-year-old man is in a critical condition in intensive care at Waikato Hospital after he fell off a ride-on floor polisher and was trapped underneath it. The accident occurred at about 2:00 am when the polisher, weighing hundreds of pounds, fell over a 1.5 meter ledge trapping the driver under the machine until he was freed by an ambulance crew. The man, who was working at Centre Place shopping mall in Hamilton, received serious head injuries.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

Company Aims To Improve Migrant Worker Lives

Herald Media, Inc. in a partnership with the government, is aiming to improve the lives of migrant workers with a 3 million won cash donation and by sending a team of employee volunteers to clean and distribute meals to the patients at the Migrant Workers' Hospital in western Seoul. Foreign workers, who number about 1,000,000, suffer from prejudice and discrimination and the hospital, which treats them for free, operates at an annual 200-300 million won deficit. According to figures released by the Justice Ministry, there were about

453,900 eligible foreign workers - excluding foreign industrial trainees - in Korea as of November 2007, of whom approximately 222,900 were illegal.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Employment Rules Changed

The Council of Labor Affairs passed an amendment to regulations governing the employment of foreign workers to require employers to pay monthly wages in full directly to foreign workers after deducting health and labor insurance fees, room and board expenses and income tax and to make sure that housing provided to the workers is safe. Employers who hire foreign workers for construction, manufacturing or caretaking work must submit documents to local government authorities within three days of the worker's entry to Taiwan to prove that their lodgings are legally permitted structures. In addition, foreign students are no longer required to complete two semesters of related courses of study or at least one year of related language training before seeking employment.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

Costs For Employee Training Up

While the amount spent per employee doing a company course was significantly higher in 2005 than in 1999 fewer employees participated in training and the number of course hours per participant decreased substantially. Private sector companies with ten or more employees spent about the same, around 3.1 billion euro, in 2005, as in 1999. But spending per hour of training rose by 60 percent from 1999 to 2005, from 41 to 66 euro substantially larger than the cost of inflation, which was about 16 percent in this period. Participants spent 36 hours on average on training courses, a drop from 48 hours, and fewer course hours were provided in nearly all company size classes and sectors of industry. Only in hotels and restaurants did the number of course hours rise slightly. Thirty percent of companies reported that high pressure of work and limited time available contributed to this. Less than 20 percent of companies cited high costs as the reason for not providing training courses.

UK-LONDON

Cleaner Suspended Over 20p Coin

A supermarket cleaner was suspended from his job without pay after he pocketed a 20 pence piece he found on top of a cash register he was cleaning and later dropped it in a charity box. The actions of the 56-year-old cleaner who worked for contract cleaning company, Carlisle Cleaning, were captured on CCTV at a Tesco in Macclesfield, Cheshire. The company says it is investigating the incident.

UK-LONDON

OCS Welcomes New Directors

OCS, the £630 million international property support services group, recently appointed Alastair Lewis FCMA as finance director of its UK trading subsidiary OCS Group UK Ltd. His current responsibilities as commercial director of the group will be combined into the new role. Alastair has broad experience of many industry sectors having worked for BAA Plc, Amex, Alliance & Leicester and Thomson CSF amongst others. His career has also involved him travelling in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, including a period of 3 years as managing director of the Dutch subsidiary of the group. Commenting on his new role within OCS, Alastair said, "I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to expand my current role, particularly at this time of significant development with SAP implementation and centralization of back-of-house activities driving change throughout the group." I have always believed that finance's primary role should be as a service to the business, bringing focus to business specific issues that require the attention of operational management and driving performance improvements. We plan to re-engineer our finance teams under the SAP project to



bring this change of emphasis throughout the group." Chief executive for the group Chris Cracknell said, "I welcome Alastair to his new position. He joined OCS 8 years ago, bringing with him a very commercially focused, broad experience and his contribution to the business has proved invaluable during a period of considerable growth and continuing success."

OCS, has also appointed Neil Kilshaw as purchasing and logistics director. Neil has over 25 years of experience within procurement, having previously worked for BICC, AGCO Corporation (Massey Ferguson) and RAC/LEX Group, and has a proven track record of effecting improved performance and delivering lower costs to enhance profitability and assist in winning new business. Neil commented he is delighted to be joining OCS and looks forward to contributing to its continuing success as a market leader. He will be working within the OCS group and its divisions to take a strategic view of procurement. This will involve focusing on cost-effective purchasing techniques whilst ensuring that availability and quality of service to the customer is maintained. Chris Cracknell, OCS chief executive, said he is delighted to announce this key appointment to the team and he is confident that with his experience, Neil will be instrumental in delivering significant benefits to the business and to OCS customers. The first priority will be to look at purchasing which affects the OCS group as a whole, with categories such as fleet, utilities and travel being high on the list of projects. He will also be supporting the company mission of social and corporate responsibility by looking at energy saving and personal protection equipment.

UK-LONDON

CSSA Update

The 2nd of November saw a huge turnout of 580 people attend the 2007 Golden Service Awards lunch at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London. CSSA is delighted to have co-promoted these key industry awards with Kimberly Clark. The 2007 awards have been the biggest ever with a record number of entries and a record turnout for the awards ceremony itself. The awards have generated much positive publicity for the cleaning industry in both the specialist and national media and they are the key moment in the year

when the cleaning industry shows the quality of service that it can provide to clients from all sectors. Currently the awards are running on a two-year cycle, but the CSSA has received strong representations from its members that they would like to see an annual event. We will be discussing this urgently with Kimberly Clark and hope that some sort of awards can also be run in 2008. The CSSA also appeared before the Low Pay Commission on 22nd November and gave evidence to the Commission on the effects of the current NMW regime on cleaning employers. Chief among member concerns are the erosion of differentials, the costs of compliance and the downgrading of service standards by clients. In 2007, the Commission responded sympathetically to member concerns and noted that the era of large NMW increases may be over. This year, together with the Unquoted Companies Group and the British Retail Consortium, the CSSA has made a powerful case for continued vigilance over rises in pay, especially as the economic situation looks uncertain. We will report back, as soon as the Commission releases its conclusions early in 2008.

US-ILLINOIS

Cleaning Crew Trapped For Two Days

Two cleaning women were freed by fire crews on Christmas Eve after an employee of a two-story building in a Chicago suburb heard their cries for help. The women had been trapped inside a broken elevator on the first floor of the building for two days, and survived on two cough drops and six aspirin until they were rescued. The women, who didn't have cell phones or water with them, couldn't get the doors open and the emergency call alarm brought no response as the building wasn't due to open until after Christmas. One employee was quoted as saying the moral of the story was simple: "Always take your cell phone with you."

US-NEW YORK

Cleaner Falls 47 Stories And Lives

Two brothers, immigrants from Ecuador who were employed by City Wide Window Cleaning, fell almost 500 feet when scaffolding that was supporting them collapsed. The two had been working for an hour at an apartment building in Manhattan when the accident took place and according to a

Buildings Department official, neither of the brothers was wearing a required safety harness. Edgar Moreno, 30 died instantly but 37-year-old Alcides miraculously survived the plunge. Doctors at New York-Presbyterian Hospital who treated the severely injured cleaner have described the father of three children's recovery astonishing as he is now speaking. However, he still has to have two operations, one for his spine and another to reconstruct his abdominal wall and will likely face life-long complications after extensive physical rehabilitation. Doctors do believe he will walk again but his wife says his days as a window cleaner are over.

CORPORATE MEMBER NEWS

JohnsonDiversey

The new JohnsonDiversey distribution center has earned one of the highest ratings for environmental leadership in the United States. At more than 550,000 square feet or 11 football fields of floor space, the building is the largest LEED-certified distribution center in the U.S. The U.S. Green Building Council has awarded the center LEED certification for new construction (LEED-NC) at the gold level. All electricity at the new JohnsonDiversey distribution center is powered by renewable energy, wind or biomass, making it the only warehouse of its size in the United States to make this claim. In addition, more than 34,000 tons of bottom ash, a byproduct of coal-fired power plants, were reclaimed from a local landfill and used for the building's sub-base. Beyond this, the construction team recycled 941 of the 964 tons of waste generated during the construction of the building for a remarkable 98 percent recycle rate.

UPCOMING EVENTS

17th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 26-29, 2008

Visit the WFBSC website at www.wfbsc.org
for more information.



WFBC MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

ALL BUILDING SERVICE CONTRACTING COMPANIES THAT ARE MEMBERS OF ONE OF THE ASSOCIATIONS THAT IS A WFBC MEMBER, ARE AUTOMATICALLY MEMBERS OF THE WFBC.

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