



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

Submit your news for publication to Carol Dean at cdean@wfbsc.org

ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

Can Government's Figures Be Believed?

While Argentina's government recently said the economy had growth of 2.7 percent in March 2009 compared with the same period in 2008, several economists say that the number is actually not as favorable and predict the numbers will continue to be inflated in the short-term with elections coming up. Economists estimate that the range in reality goes from a 2.6 percent increase to a one percent decrease and predict that GDP will shrink by 2.5 percent in 2009. The government's monthly EMAE economic activity index showed March's activity declined 0.2 percent over the month prior.

AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA

Spotless Expands Through Acquisition

Spotless Group Limited has acquired the business assets of Riley Shelley. Riley Shelley, which provides painting, essential services, and building services - incorporating refurbishment/refit and corporate imaging, has 500 clients across education, retail, health and commercial sectors. Through its acquisition, which it sees as a natural fit with its existing service line, Spotless is adding to its suite of specialized service offerings across Australia and New Zealand. Spotless intends to maintain the Riley Shelley brand.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

Euro Area Unemployment Up To 8.9%

Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities reports the seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate in the Euro area climbed 0.2 percent in March 2009 to 8.9 percent over the month prior and rose 1.7 percent over the same period in 2008, amounting to over an estimated 14 million men and women out of work. The Netherlands at 2.8 percent had the lowest unemployment rate. Spain at 17.4 percent unemployment had the highest. Male unemployment rose from 6.5 percent to 8.6 percent between March 2008 and March 2009, female unemployment rose from 8.2 percent to 9.2 percent during the same period and the youth unemployment rate (under-25s) rose from 14.5 percent to 18.1 percent in the Euro area.

BRAZIL-SAO PAULO

Program Shows Companies How To Innovate

Sebrae has launched the Make a Difference project which offers over 120 radio programs that entrepreneurs can use to see strategies and suggestions on how a small company can be innovative in diverse segments with products, services, management, organization and customer relations. To view the first program, go to the following link:
http://www.cebrasse.org.br/noticias.php?id_noticia=1938

CANADA-OTTAWA

Personal Bankruptcies Soar

With the Canadian economy shrinking by 3.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2008 and the number of companies cutting production and slashing jobs, personal bankruptcies have risen by 57 percent in March 2009 over March 2008. Business bankruptcies while down over the year prior, were up over the prior month. Ontario had the largest increase in personal bankruptcies at 60.3 percent over March 2008 and in business bankruptcies although the number was lower than the year prior. In Quebec, personal filings were up but business filings declined over the prior year.

FRANCE-PARIS

France In Longest Recession Since 1949

The French economy has been continuously contracting since the second quarter of 2008 making it the longest recession France has experienced in 60 years. The economy decreased by 1.2 percent in the first quarter of 2009 and is on track to shrink by 3 percent this year, double the government's previous forecast. Despite the dismal numbers, the contraction in the first quarter was less than expected. While manufacturing, automobile production and exports all suffered severe declines, consumer spending growth was stable at 0.2 percent.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Almost Half Of Wages Goes To Taxes

A new study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reveals that workers in Germany have the second highest tax and social contribution burden of 30 nations. The burden falls heaviest on single households with lower incomes where approximately 47.3 percent of wages go to taxes and social security contributions. The OECD average is 33.5 percent. In contrast due to caps on social security contributions past a certain salary limit, people with high incomes are less affected.

JAPAN-TOKYO

GDP Fall Is Largest Ever

Despite record contraction, economists claim the worst is over and that the second quarter will show positive growth. Dramatically reduced exports and production led to the biggest fall in GDP since records were first kept in 1955. GDP fell 15.2 percent in the first quarter of 2009. Economists are predicting that as other world economies begin to recover, the Japanese economy will grow at an annualized pace of three to five percent in the second quarter. Yet, growth may be curbed by the spread of H1N1 and slack consumer spending given the high unemployment. Another factor may be deflation, which the country has started to experience. In April, the government forecast that the economy would contract 3.3 percent during fiscal 2009 but the economy will still need to expand approximately 0.7 percent quarterly to meet those numbers.

NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

Clean NZ 09 - Another Successful Event

Over 40 exhibitors were at Clean NZ 09, held on May 7 through 8th at the Ellerslie Convention Centre, in Auckland. The exhibitors displayed a wide range of cleaning, hygiene and safety products that demonstrated the cleaning industry's ongoing technological advances. The Best Large Stand Award went to Kimberly-Clark Professional with honorable mentions to Karcher and SCA. The Best Small Stand Award was won by Solemate Safety Solutions with honorable mentions to Jasol and McPhail Group. The Innovation Award was secured by Kleentech Tennant for eCH2O. Honorable mentions went to Auckland City Council and Ecopods. The program and dinner, organized by BSC NZ, were attended by 350 industry executives.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

Korea Makes Top Ten for Dangerous Driving

A recent survey by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on road fatalities among member countries listed Korea as the 6th worst

country to drive in. The survey tracked deaths per million individuals and deaths per million drivers in 2007. Korea had 121 deaths per million individuals, and 939 deaths per million drivers. Russia with 939 deaths per million cars and a government that does not enforce speed limits or prohibit drunk driving, was ranked the most dangerous county in which to drive. Slovakia, Poland, Turkey, Hungary, Greece, the United States, the Czech Republic and Belgium rounded out the list of the Top Ten Most Dangerous Countries in Which To Drive. While Eastern European countries made the list due to their disorganized political infrastructure, the United States and Belgium made the list due to the increasing number of accidents by teenage drunk drivers. Countries like China, India and South Africa actually have the highest number of traffic fatalities but were not ranked as they are not members of the OECD.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Rules Relaxed For Chinese Professionals

With the intent of opening up Taiwan to Chinese investment in 99 industrial and service sectors and the real estate market, the government is now allowing Chinese professionals to stay in the country for 30 days instead of the current 14 days. The provision also made the process to invite Chinese professionals easier with simplified application procedures, increased the number of times an invitation can be extended and increased the number of Chinese professionals allowed to visit Taiwan at the invitation of a given company. The new measures go into effect immediately.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

Unemployment Rises Quickly

From February-April 2009 unemployment, representing 4.6 of the labor force in The Netherlands averaged 360,000 an increase of 0.4 percent. The numbers are accelerating rapidly. Unemployment is now up by 34,000 over 2008. Unemployment among men increased by 26,000 in one year and among women by 8,000. It is the first time in over three years that more women are unemployed than in the previous year.

UK-GALASHIELS

Janitor Injured In Vaseline Prank

An investigation is under way at Galashiels Academy after the school janitor who was cleaning, slipped on the stairs at the school and suffered a concussion and bruising. School officials found Vaseline smeared on the banister and suspect senior students carried out the act as a prank prior to leaving the school. The janitor was kept overnight at Borders General Hospital and is now recovering at home.

UK-LONDON

Apprentices On The Rise

Answering the Government's call to encourage apprenticeships, ten major facilities management companies, including Inter-serve, MITIE, Carillion and OCS have called for the new apprenticeship qualification. Asset Skills, the Sector Skills Council for FM with responsibility for developing the new apprenticeship, is working to fast-track the apprenticeship framework including a National Vocational Qualification, a Technical Certificate and Key Skills. Asset Skills set the standards for the new apprenticeship in 2008 and awarding bodies hope to have an NVQ ready this year. Reflecting the growing importance of environmental issues, the new FM apprenticeship is one of the first vocational qualifications to include managing sustainability. The rising interest from FM companies is the result of the Government's effort - it recently set aside £7 million - to fund more apprentices in the current economy. Across all industries the number of apprentices rose from 65,000 in 1996/97 to 225,000 at present. Over 110,000 people completed apprenticeships in 2007/08.

UK-LONDON

LPC Makes Wage Recommendations

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) has made its recommendations for the year for adult minimum wage, and youth development wages. Starting in October 2009, the LPC recommends that 21-

year olds should be entitled to the adult rate, which should be increased from £5.73 to £5.80, the Youth Development Rate should increase from £4.77 to £4.83 and the rate for 16–17-year olds should increase from £3.53 to £3.57. The LPC has also made a new recommendation to include a minimum wage for apprentices. The Commission, citing the current state of the economy, did not offer a recommendation for 2010.

US-NEW YORK

ISS Ranks High On Fortune List

In its recent 2009 list of top 100 outsourcing companies in the world, Fortune Magazine, known for its Fortune 500 list, has ranked ISS as the seventh best company in the world among the best service providers and advisors. The companies on the list were judged on 18 criteria such as growth, employee management and customer references and each company was also evaluated by the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals (IAOP). ISS was noted for its balanced performance, global presence, business model and service concept in addition to its ability to train and develop its employees and its impressive list of clients, which includes companies such as HP, UBS, BASF and Daimler. The company, which has over 470,000 employees in more than 50 countries, rose from 31st place in 2008. Accenture and IBM topped the list.

US-OHIO

Prisoners As Janitors?

State officials in Ohio and in the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction are reconsidering a plan to use prisoners to replace Statehouse janitors and groundskeepers who were laid off because of budget cuts. The state board that operates the building says it has lost 17 employees since January to budget cuts and the Statehouse employees union has filed a grievance against the plan. Officials want to ensure inmates will not be a security threat to Statehouse employees and won't attract attention. It is unclear as to when or if the plan will be put into place.

US-PENNSYLVANIA

Janitor To Stand Trial Over Threat

After a co-worker reported a conversation she had with another janitor while cleaning at the California Middle and High schools, a District Judge ruled there is sufficient evidence to order a trial. Michael Tiernan, 53, was arrested on May 14th after he threatened to kill everyone at his school if he ever lost his job. He is also accused of harassment and making terroristic threats. The janitor has been suspended.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

JohnsonDiversey

JohnsonDiversey, has responded to the H1N1 outbreak by ramping up production of its disinfection products and providing application and infection control expertise to customers in over 160 countries. Production has been increased by 50 percent or more at JohnsonDiversey plants to build additional supply. Among the most effective disinfection products is a line of accelerated hydrogen peroxide-based technologies, including a proprietary formula that kills viruses in one minute. Most public health agencies have recommended two main hygiene actions to reduce the risk of H1N1 transmission: frequent hand washing and using broad-spectrum disinfection on hard surfaces.

UPCOMING EVENTS

18th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors
Auckland, New Zealand

Congress updates will be available from March 2009
BSCNZ PO Box 31-067, Lower Hutt 5040
EMAIL: info@bsc.org.nz
WEBSITE: www.bsc.org.nz

19th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors
Curitiba, Brazil
2012



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

WFBC ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

ConverPro, Inc.
St-Cesaire, QC
450-469-5588
www.converpro.com

Daniels Associates
Phoenix, AZ
602-992-5192
www.danielsworldwide.com

Ecolab
St. Paul, MN
651-293-2233
www.ecolab.com

JohnsonDiversey
Sturtevant, WI
262-631-4001
www.johnsondiversey.com

TruVox
UK
44 (0) 23 8070 2200
www.truvox.com

Wood Wyant, Inc.
Laval, QC
450-680-9731
www.woodwyant.ca

WFBC MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Algemene Belgische
Schoomaakunie-Union
Generale Belge du Nettoyage
Brussels, Belgium
Hilde Engels-ABSU.UGBN@skynet.be

Association de Empresas de Limpieza
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Norberto Peluso-correo@limpiolux.com.ar

Building Service Contractors Association of Australia
Crows Nest, NSW, Australia
bscaansw@bscaa.asn.au

Quebec Building Service Contractors Association, Inc.
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
Roger Gauthier-fortier.gauthier@sympatico.ca

Building Service Contractors Association International
Chicago, Illinois, USA
Maurice Desmarais-mdesmarais@bscai.org

Building Service Contractors of New Zealand, Inc.
Auckland, New Zealand
Marja Verkerk-info@bsc.org.nz

Bundesinnungsverband des Gebaeudereiniger-Handwerks
Bonn, Germany
Johannes Bungart RA-biv@gebaeudereiniger.de

Cleaning and Support Services Association
London, United Kingdom
Andrew Large-alarge@cleaningassoc.org

Febrac
Brasilia, Distrito Federal, Brazil
Silvio Gaspar-silviojgaspar@upsbeneficios.com.br

Building Managers Association of the Republic of China
Taipei, Taiwan
Kenneth Kao-pacifico@ms37.hinet.net

Federation des Enterprises de Proprete
Paris, France
Carol Sintes-csintes@federation-proprete.com

Japan Building Maintenance Association
Tokyo, Japan
Keizo Kozen-kozen@j-bma.or.jp

Korean Association of Sanitary Maintenance
Seoul, Korea
Young Hoi Um-kasm@kasm.or.kr

OSB
Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands
info@osb.nl