



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

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

ARGENTINA-BUENOS AIRES

New Navigation Program Available For Argentina

NAVTEQ, a Chicago based company founded in 1985, has released navigable map data for Argentina which includes over 200,000 km of road network across the entire country and up to 260 attributes per road segment. The solution allows for accurate route guidance and turn-by-turn navigation by providing information on direction of travel, number of lanes, speed limits, and turn restrictions. It also contains a broad inclusion of addresses, as well as over 3,600 named city or hamlets. For more information go to www.navteq.com.

AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA

Recommendations For Compensation Act Complete

The final review and recommendations for implementation of the Accident Compensation Act 1985 is now complete. In December 2007, Peter Hanks QC was tasked with arriving at fair and effective benefit and premium programs that will secure positive outcomes for injured employees, protecting the operational and financial viability of the programs, identifying and resolving anomalies in the Act with actual operations, improving employer and employee understanding of the Act, reducing the regulatory and administrative burden on employers, and improving the program by eliminating inoperative, irrelevant and superfluous provisions of the Act. In developing the recommendations, of which there are 150, for the Government to consider, over 100 hours of face-to-face consultation were completed and 150

submissions were received. WorkSafe will advise on the implementation timeframes associated with the recommendations. A copy of the Hanks Report, together with a Guide to the Report, can be downloaded at <http://www.compensationreview.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Accident+Compensation/Home>.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

Annual Inflation Down From August

Eurostat reports that annual inflation in the Euro area declined 0.2 percent in September 2008 from August 2008, but was up over September 2007 by 1.5 percent. The lowest inflation rates were seen in the Netherlands (2.8%), Germany (3.0%), Ireland and Portugal (both 3.2%). Sectors contributing most to the inflation rates in September were housing (6.2%), transport (5.8%) and food (5.7%), while the lowest annual rates were observed for communications (-2.6%), recreation & culture (0.1%) and clothing (0.7%).

BRAZIL - FORTALEZA

Dual-Use Contactless Payment Card Now Available

New technology has been developed and released to enable Brazilians, particularly those who do not use banks, in the city of Fortaleza to use a single contactless payment card to both ride local transit and make retail purchases. The Fortaleza program is very the first implementation in Latin America of a combined contactless payment card for transit and retail use. Users can purchase goods and top-up cards for transit pay-

ments at several hundred retail stores in Fortaleza. Over 2 million contactless prepaid cards are currently being used for public transit in Fortaleza and in the three months since the expansion into retail stores with 20,000 dual-use cards, over 2.5 million dollars in purchases have been made. The technology is a product of a collaboration between Libercard, ViVOtech and Inteligensa and the plan is to fully replace the transit only cards with dual-use cards in Fortaleza and to eventually deploy the cards into other cities and states throughout Brazil.

CANADA-OTTAWA

Aggressive Cleaning Enforcement Not Standard

After Maple Leaf Foods, the ready-to-eat plant in Canada that has been linked to the listeria outbreak, identified the bacteria lurking inside two massive automated slicing machines as the likely source of contamination, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) issued an advisory to federally regulated plants to disassemble and perform a "systematic and thorough aggressive cleaning and sanitation procedure" of all meat slicing equipment, including all internal parts. However, the agency has no enforcement authority over the numerous provincially registered plants. Provincially licensed meat plants are barred from interprovincial trade and foreign markets, and can only provide products for consumers in their home provinces. There are 221 provincially registered ready-to-eat meat plants in Ontario, 120 in Quebec, 50 in Atlantic Canada and 42 in Alberta. Industry insiders believe that while the plants are not required to, they will work with provincial inspectors to do a deep clean of their equipment.

FRANCE-PARIS

French Firm Buys Growing UK Cleaning Company

Samsic Group, founded in 1986 and the third largest cleaning, security and facilities management, recruitment and home domestic services provider in France has acquired Regent Office Care Ltd., a fast growing contract cleaning company in the UK. Regent, which was also started in 1986 and which has eight locations and 3,000 employees, had 20 percent growth in 2007. The company special-

izes in commercial, leisure, healthcare and educational sector accounts. Samsic, based in Rennes, also operates in Belgium, Switzerland, Luxembourg, Spain and Portugal and has 40,000 employees in 200 locations servicing over 10,000 clients. Regent will continue under the management of John Critchell and operations director Jonathan King and two new board members from Samsic will be added to Regent's board.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Growth Forecast For 2009 Drastically Cut

While GDP growth is projected to be 1.7 percent in 2008 and it was 2.5 percent in 2007, the German government, which was expecting 1.7 percent growth in 2009 drastically reduced the number to 0.2 percent. According to the government, the outlook for 2009 is very grim and leading economic institutes warned Germany was teetering on the brink of recession.

IRELAND-DONEGAL

Three Infants Test Positive For MRSA

Three newborn infants have all tested positive for MRSA at Letterkenny General Hospital and another baby born four months earlier tested positive the day after it was released. The hospital says the 3 new cases are all linked and the source has been identified. The prior fourth case was not related. Letterkenny is using specialized cleaning and staff screening to ensure the maternity ward is MRSA-free. According to a survey on Irish Health.com, through September 30th, 2008, five percent of patients have claimed to have contracted MRSA or another hospital-acquired infection at Letterkenny General. According to the physician treating the infants, all are fine.

JAPAN-TOKYO

Immigrant Recruitment Encouraged

The Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), the largest business lobby in Japan has proposed that the government increase and encourage immigrant medium-skilled and possi-

bly even unskilled labor to overcome the shrinking domestic workforce. Previously, only highly-skilled foreign workers were recruited. The population, now at 128 million, is estimated to drop by about 30 percent to roughly 90 million in 50 years. In 2005 the ratio of 3.3 persons in the 15-64 age bracket to those aged 65 or older will drop to 1.3 persons in 50 years. The business lobby advocates accepting 10 million immigrants or ten percent of the estimated Japanese population in 50 years. Proposals seek to put the social infrastructure in place in order to encourage immigrant labor to come and stay such as legalizing status, assisting with learning Japanese, promoting research and development, increasing preschools, supporting working mothers and reinforcing education.

NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

Norovirus Strikes Hospital

Fifteen patients of the St Andrew's Village complex in Glendowie, including two staff members, have fallen ill with Norovirus, which resulted in the deaths of two elderly patients. The village consists of a retirement village for independent living and a six-wing facility for 180 people, comprising a hospital (three wings), dementia unit and rest home (two). Only one wing of the hospital has been affected and has been isolated. Isolation protocols include making sure hand hygiene is thorough, extra cleaning of surfaces likely to be contaminated is carried out, staff remain in the wing and no visitors or new patients are permitted in the area. Because the virus can be easily spread in food or picked up from contaminated surfaces, thorough cleaning is vital to stop any outbreaks. The Institute of Environmental Science and Research says 10 people in New Zealand died from the virus last year.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

Bird Flu Found On Duck Farm

Ducks at a farm in Yesan, 134 kilometers south of Seoul were culled after the South Korean Agriculture Ministry discovered a suspected case of bird flu. Detailed tests are being done to confirm whether the suspected outbreak of bird flu is a highly virulent strain of avian influenza.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Taiwan Experiences Record Inflows And Outflows

Taiwan experienced a record number of foreign direct investment inflows (FDI) and outflows in 2007 according to a recent UN World Investment Report. Taiwan was ranked 42nd in the world with US\$8.16 billion in FDI inflows last year, and was ranked 29th in FDI outflows at US\$11.11 billion. Global inflows rose for a third straight year in 2007 and were up 30 percent over the previous year. In accumulated inflows, Taiwan ranked 17th in the world and 3rd in Asia behind Hong Kong and Japan. In addition, the report listed sixteen Taiwanese companies among the top 100 non-financial transnational corporations in emerging economies in 2007.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

Number of Eastern European Workers Jumps

The number of workers from the EU countries in Eastern Europe grew by 60 percent over 2007 to 94,000. Most of the workers are from Poland as workers from countries which entered the EU in 2004 or prior no longer need a permit to work in the Netherlands. The number of Polish workers jumped from 20,000 at the beginning of 2007 to over 80,000 in June 2008. Most of the workers are under age 30 and work via an agency.

UK-LONDON

Snapshot Poll Suggests Benefits In Danger

Four months after the end of the Government's £57 million Deep Clean program, a snapshot poll of cleaners by the CSSA gives evidence that the deep cleans are in danger of being a waste of money.

Key Findings

There are three key findings from the snapshot poll:
1-The deep cleans made a significant difference to the perception of cleaners about the cleanliness of their

wards. 46% of cleaners thought that their hospital was very clean before the deep cleans – rising to 89% after the deep cleans.

2-However, in the four months since the end of the deep cleans, the percentage of cleaners viewing their ward as being very clean has dropped back to 75%.

3-Only 44% of cleaners polled are aware of any changes to daily cleaning routines since the deep cleans finished.

A number of cleaners also made narrative comments about the deep clean process. The consensus of those comments was that the deep cleans should be a regular activity, and be backed up by changes to daily cleaning routines. They also noted that the ability to decant wards of patients and equipment was instrumental in making the deep cleans an effective process.

Comment

The CSSA snapshot poll presents a mixed picture of the results of the deep cleans 4 months on. It is welcome news that they made such an initial difference to the cleaner's perception of the cleanliness of their own hospitals. However it is also worrying that less than half the cleaners polled are aware of changes to their cleaning regimes following the deep cleans. There is a clear potential linkage between this lack of change and the more recent fall in the percentage of cleaners who regard their hospital as being very clean. For more information, go to www.cleaningindustry.org.

UK-LONDON

CSSA Members Triumph at EuroSkills

The UK Cleaning Industry swept the board in the first ever cleaning competition at EuroSkills in Rotterdam. Team Members from Principle Cleaning Services and MITIE Cleaning and Support Services (both leading CSSA Members) beat European opposition to win four gold medals, winning in every category. Fabio Silva, 22, and Sandro De Nobrega, 26, (both from Principle Cleaning Services) and Craig Robinson, 20, and Kirsty Steel, 21, (both from MITIE Cleaning & Support Services) were assessed in cleaning tasks ranging from office to hospital ward environments to win the Cleaning Services Team Gold. Fabio Silva came first as Cleaning Manager while Kirsty Steel shared gold with Austria

for Cleaning Supervisor. Sandro Nobrega and Craig Robinson won the Cleaning Operator Team category. They were all taught their skills by Award winning trainer Mary Schramm, who is based at Merton College in South West London and who had first trained the cleaners to British Institute of Cleaning Science standards. EuroSkills is a new, pan-European skills contest. Watched by around 40,000 spectators, the 400 competitors from 29 countries competed in 25 different competitions covering 49 different vocational skills. This is an unprecedented success for the UK cleaning sector and clearly demonstrates what can be achieved with the right support and training. It bodes well both for EuroSkills in 2010 and for the London WorldSkills in 2011. The CSSA will be working hard to ensure that a very competitive UK team is sent to both of these competitions.

UK-LONDON

Sustainability Round Table

On 16th October 2008, the CSSA hosted a Round Table discussion on Sustainability. This event brought together product suppliers, distributors, end users and management experts to discuss all aspects of how the cleaning industry can contribute to a sustainable economy. The conclusions of the event will be reported to the World Federation Congress at the end of October and will also be widely publicized in the UK.

US-DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

New Diagnostic Test For Human Bird Flu Developed

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control has developed a new test, which the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved, that can rapidly diagnose and identify human influenza infections and human bird flu. The test, which uses molecular analysis of viral genetic material taken from secretions in a patient's nose and throat to detect and identify commonly circulating human influenza viruses as well as H5N1 viruses and other strains, will be available to Centers for Disease Control-qualified laboratories this year.

US-ILLINOIS

Private Firm Selected To Run Midway Airport.

Almost all commercial airports in the United States are owned and operated by local or state governments but Midway, which applied to the FAA to participate in an experimental program 12 years ago to explore privatization, is about to become the first large privately run hub airport in the country. The deal from Midway Investment and Development Company, an investment group which bid \$2.52 billion to win rights to a long-term lease, requires final approval from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Chicago City Council and will be decided this month.

US-MICHIGAN

Cleaning Chemicals Can Make Bacteria Stronger

A new research study shows that biocides, which are commonly used in disinfectants and antiseptics at hospitals and homes to kill microbes, can make bacteria stronger if not used properly. If low levels of the biocides are used, bacteria can survive and become resistant to the chemicals. Researchers found bacteria make proteins that can remove antibiotics from cells and interfere with antibacterial effects, thereby making the bacteria resistant. When low concentrations of a variety of biocides were applied, the number of resistant mutant cells was increased so that over time, when exposed to biocides repeatedly, the bacteria built up resistance to disinfectants and antibiotics. Scientists say that careful use of antibiotics and biocides may reduce the frequency at which resistant strains are found.

US-NEVADA

Cleaning Chemicals Cause Massive Contamination

The Las Vegas Valley has 28 sites contaminated with perchloroethylene, PCE, also known as tetrachloroethylene, or TCE, potential carcinogens according to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection. The worst of the sites, known as the Maryland Square site, sits under acres of

homes, roads, and a golf course in central Las Vegas. Other sites include two at Nellis Air Force Base, three at casinos, and 19 at current or former dry cleaning businesses.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

JohnsonDiversey

JohnsonDiversey has announced that ProSpeed®, a unique floor-finishing system, has helped customers reduce water use by more than 71,400 gallons and reduce floor-finish waste by 8,200 gallons in the first 10 weeks since its introduction in North America in June. JohnsonDiversey scientists calculated the waste reductions based on the sale of 31,276 gallons of floor finish to date. ProSpeed is a closed bag-in-a-box (BIB) system with an ergonomically designed application tool. ProSpeed delivers significant water savings because there is no need to clean mop heads, buckets, backpacks or feed lines. Additionally, ProSpeed contributes to better indoor air quality. Its closed system reduces emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) found in floor finishes. As a result, customers have reported less odor in the floor-finishing process using ProSpeed. Setup is easy and since the packaging is fully integrated into the tool, users do not need to lift or transfer chemicals from the original packaging to secondary buckets or cumbersome backpacks. In pre-launch trials with 150 customers, ProSpeed enhanced worker productivity by reducing the amount of time needed to finish a floor from setup by 85 percent and cleanup by 90 percent compared to mop-and-bucket and backpack methods.

UPCOMING EVENTS

17th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 26-29, 2008

Visit www.wfbsc2008.com.ar
for more information.

18th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors

New Zealand - 2010



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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