



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

Survey Shows Improvement Predicted

A survey of business executives by research firm Dálessio IROL shows that the majority thought the business outlook for the next six months is expected to improve. While 33 percent expected the outlook to improve, almost half predicted that the economy would remain the same. 51 percent of businessmen surveyed expect their sales to rise in 2010 and 44 percent believe domestic demand will rise in the next 12 months, although 46 percent forecast it will remain unchanged. According to the survey, major issues for the executives in the months ahead are financing, rate hikes and salaries.

AUSTRALIA-VICTORIA

Work Safe Week Has Record Registrations

Work Safe Week was held October 26-30, 2009 and included over 100 seminars and events held across Melbourne and regional Victoria. Over 7000 people registered to attend Work Safe Week - on track to beating last year's record number of registrations. Part of the festivities included the 21ST Annual WorkSafe Victoria Awards Dinner, which was held on Thursday 29 October at Crown Palladium. The dinner featured a showcase of cutting edge safety innovations, the presentation of Awards, live music, and a five-course dinner.

BELGIUM-BRUSSELS

New Machinery Directive Deadlines Soon

Directive 2006/42/EC was published on 9th June 2006 and came into force on 29th June 2006. The provisions of the new Directive become applicable on 29th December 2009. Until that date, the provisions of the current Machinery Directive 98/37/EC continue to apply. The new law will apply to all commercial cleaning machines, so manufacturers must adapt their products as well as related documents to the new legislation. Among the significant changes: the requirement relating to risk assessment has been made more explicit; - certain requirements currently applicable to mobile machinery or machinery for lifting are made applicable to all machinery presenting the risk concerned; and requirements concerning noise and vibration emissions are made more precise. The EU will be holding a New Machinery Directive Workshop: in Brussels, on December 9, 2009 - further information will be available soon. For more information go to: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/mechan_equipment/machinery/revdir.htm

BRAZIL-SAO PAULO

Ethanol Prices Rise

While biofuel is usually cheaper than gasoline, a global shortage in sugar has led to ethanol prices increasing rapidly by up to 50 percent in some states

where sale taxes tend to be higher forcing Brazilian drivers to switch back to gasoline. As a result, demand for ethanol in the center-south region fell to about 1.6 billion liters a month from 2 billion liters earlier this year. Price data from National Petroleum Agency showed that ethanol in southern states Minas Gerais and Santa Catarina was more expensive than gasoline. In Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro, ethanol was still cheaper than gasoline. A liter of ethanol in Sao Paulo city costs about US\$3.26 per gallon.

CANADA-OTTAWA

Small Business Owners Do Not Plan

According to the quarterly American Express Small Business Monitor almost half of Canadian small business owners do not plan for the continuity of operations and are unprepared to recover from such disruptions as computer and electrical outages, illness, flood, and fire. As business owners are focused on running their business and making a profit, they tend to ignore or diminish business continuity plans. Despite the fact that the monitor indicated two out of every five respondents have experienced some significant disruption to their operations, of which 46 percent said the impact lasted more than a month, 80 percent of respondents said preparing for potential disruptions is lower on their to-do list, or not even on their radar, and almost half (49%) do not have fire and flood insurance.

FRANCE-PARIS

French GDP Growth Surprises Analysts

The French economy grew 0.3 percent in the second quarter, which surprised analysts and economists predict that France's gross domestic product (GDP) will grow as much or more in the third quarter. The French Government will release third-quarter gross domestic product data in mid-November.

GERMANY-BERLIN

Number Of Redundancies Surges

A recent study by the German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB) found that the number of people laid off in 2009 has risen by 18 percent over 2008. DGB reported

that one ninth of all people qualifying for unemployment benefits had registered for them in the past 12 months and most have since found work. Those with the greatest chance of losing their jobs are contract workers, followed by hospitality, agricultural and construction workers. According to the Federal Labour Agency, 3.346 million people remained unemployed in September 2009 in Germany.

JAPAN-TOKYO

H1N1 Outbreak Closes Schools

The number of H1N1 cases in Japan has risen sharply with the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry announcing that almost 14,000 facilities, including schools and kindergartens, canceled some or all of their classes due to the outbreak. The number is up dramatically from October 18, 2009 when the number of facilities affected was 8,534. Since October 25, 2009, 380 group infections involving more than 10 people each were reported on a preliminary basis, with Hokkaido leading other prefectures with 77 cases, followed by 58 in Tokyo, 36 in Osaka and 33 in Aichi.

NEW ZEALAND-AUCKLAND

Hospital Trying To Combat ESBL Superbug

North Shore Hospital is considering splitting the hospital wards into two distinct sections in order to ward off a major superbug outbreak. One section would be for people with the bug, and the other for those who don't have it or are awaiting test results. The plan under consideration is to split each medical and surgical ward into two parts, each with its own nursing staff. Patients are already divided into "red" rooms for those who test positive, "amber" rooms for those awaiting results and "green" for patients who have been cleared. However one in five patients at North Shore are contracting the ESBL superbug and 70 percent get it during the hospital stay. One reason for the rise in cases is that the hospital is 25 years old making it harder to clean. New Zealand's number of ESBL cases has risen sharply from nearly zero in 1999 to more than 5,000 last year. The worst affected regions are Auckland and Hawkes Bay. ESBL - extended spectrum beta lactamase-producing bacteria - are resistant to a range of antibiotic drugs and live mainly in the bowel and sometimes in the bladder.

SOUTH KOREA-SEOUL

IMF Calls For More Productivity In Services

According to Anoop Singh, director of the Asia Pacific department of the International Monetary Fund, because Korea relies heavily on exports to fuel its economy, the country should look at raising productivity in the service sector. His remarks at a conference in Seoul said that increased productivity will lead to structural reforms that will help balance resources as well as reform the small- and medium-sized enterprises. According to the IMF's projection, Asia's GDP growth next year is expected to stand at 5.75 percent, well below the average of 6.67 percent recorded over the past 10 years, as a result of slow recovery in the Group of Seven economies, which will grow by just 1.25 percent in 2010. The weak private demand in the G7 will limit external demand for Asia's products, and will create a major challenge for policymakers who will need to encourage domestic demand instead of heavily relying on exports.

TAIWAN-TAIPEI

Tourism Named One Of Six Flagship Industries

The government of Taiwan has named the tourism industry as one of its six flagship industries and has appropriated \$926 million to expand tourism operations. Despite the typhoon, H1N1 and the global economic crisis, the number of tourists from overseas is expected to go over 4.1 million in 2009 and increased in the first quarter of 2009 by 11.4 percent over the same period in 2008. Tourist arrivals have increased by 28 percent year to date and 50 percent of the tourists are from China. In addition, Taiwan is increasing the number of direct flights to eight daily flights from Japan's Haneda Airport and Taipei's Songshan Airport.

THE NETHERLANDS-AMSTERDAM

New Feature At Amsterdam 2010 Show

ISSA/Interclean Amsterdam 2010 is offering attendees and sponsors a new pavilion area on the exhibit floor. The Washrooms Pavilion will group the various organizations offering sanitary products

and services in a single hall. This will offer exhibitors the opportunity to target attendees with a total solution for the sanitary sector and will allow trade show visitors to go to one concentrated area for an overview of the various sanitary products. Famous names represented in the pavilion will include: Tork/SCA Hygiene Products, Vendor, Satino and Lotus Professional. According to show organizers, over 78 percent of the trade show floor has been booked with 350 exhibitors many of which are exhibiting at the show for the first time. The show will take place Monday, April 26th through Thursday, April 29th 2010.

UK-LONDON

WH Smith Action Condemned

WH Smith's decision that retail staff takes responsibility for cleaning stores as part of their general duties has been condemned by both the British Cleaning Council and the Cleaning and Support Services Association. In a cost-cutting measure, the use of professional contract cleaners by the high-street chain has been reduced to once a week in some cases, with staff required to sweep floors and clean stores.

UK-LONDON

Cleaners More Important Than Bankers

Diane Abbot, MP for North Hackney, was one of the influential signees of UNISON's campaign A Million Voices for Change at the Labour Party conference, held in Brighton. When asked about the importance of the work cleaners do compared with the financial sector Ms Abbott said: "People need to realize that without the work of people in public services society would collapse. We could live without investment bankers but not hospital cleaners, teaching assistants and refuse collectors."

US-ILLINOIS

Odor Affects Behavior

The odor in a room is enough to elicit a stronger impulse towards fairness, researchers from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University have claimed. They believe their research proves there is a correlation between

hygiene and decency and that by improving our environment we can improve our behavior. The research found an increase in ethical behavior when the scent of a fruit-scented cleaner fills a room. The psychologist who conducted the study, said it shows "morality and cleanliness" are inextricably linked. "Researchers have known for years that scents play an active role in reviving positive or negative experiences. Now, our research can offer more insight into the links between people's charitable actions and their surroundings." The study made subjects carry out several tasks, with some asked to work in unscented rooms, while others worked in rooms freshly sprayed with lemon-scented cleaner. The first experiment evaluated fairness. Participants were given \$12 and were asked to decide how much of it to keep and how much to return to their partners who had trusted them to divide it fairly. Subjects in clean-scented rooms were less likely to exploit the trust of their partners, returning a significantly higher share of the cash. The average amount of cash given back by the people in the "normal" room was \$2.81. But the people in the clean-scented room gave back an average of \$5.33. The second experiment evaluated whether clean scents would encourage charitable behavior. Subjects indicated their interest in volunteering and their interest in donating funds to a charitable cause. Participants surveyed in the clean-smelling room were significantly more interested in volunteering (4.2 on a 7-point scale) than those in a normal room (3.3). Meanwhile, 22% of participants in the clean-smelling room said they'd like to donate money, compared to only 6% of those in a normal room. Follow-up questions revealed that participants did not notice the aroma in the room and that their mood at the time of the experiment did not affect the outcomes.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

Ecolab

Ecolab has acquired the UK pest elimination business of ISS. Sales of the acquired business are currently £4million. The business operations and staff will be integrated with Ecolab's existing UK Pest Elimination business. No further details were disclosed.

JohnsonDiversey

Cleaning industry giant JohnsonDiversey and Clayton Dubilier & Rice - one of the oldest private equity investment firms in the world, announced an agreement under which a

CD&R-managed fund will invest \$477 million for a 46% equity interest in JD as part of a broader recapitalization transaction valued at \$2.6 billion. The recapitalization will provide the company with the financial flexibility to accelerate growth in the global commercial cleaning and hygiene market. In addition to the CD&R fund investment, the transaction contemplates a debt financing package of approximately \$1.9 billion. Under the terms of the agreement, the Johnson Family of Racine, Wisconsin, will retain 50% ownership in the company, and S Curtis Johnson will remain Chairman. CD&R Operating Partner James G. Berges will serve as Chairman of the Executive Committee. Unilever will also retain a 4% ownership interest in the company. JohnsonDiversey will continue under separate agreements to sell and distribute into the commercial market certain Unilever and SC Johnson & Son, consumer-branded products. JD has been one-third owned by Unilever NV since its acquisition of DiverseyLever in 2002. As part of the 2002 acquisition, it agreed to purchase all or part of Unilever's ownership at a future date. The company has also announced that it will adopt a new corporate identity that reflects elements of the strong global brand equity in the current name and also retains the depiction of a water lily in its logo, a reflection of the Johnson family heritage of environmental leadership. The company's new name will be simplified to Diversey, Inc. and its identity will be formally captured in the new tagline, 'for a cleaner, healthier future'. The transaction, which is conditioned upon completing the debt financing and customary regulatory approvals, is expected to close prior to the end of the year.

UPCOMING EVENTS

18th Congress of the World Federation of Building Service Contractors
Auckland, New Zealand
February 6-12, 2011

Congress updates will be available at:
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.

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