

Hail and Farewell

At the AGM, Chairman **David Wilkins**, the longest-serving member of the Management Committee, regrettably announced his retirement from CHTA involvement, after 17 years of sterling service, because of broadened business responsibilities. Characteristically, he leaves us with a hopeful message...

It has been my privilege to serve as a member of the Management Committee for several years and to act as your Chairman twice, during which time our Association and industry have experienced both highs and lows. Financially, CHTA still needs to utilise its sparse resources prudently, but I am confident that the committed work of our Secretary and my fellow volunteer directors ensures the ongoing success of the Association.

I leave the Management Committee at a season of hope for the world, as we approach Christmas. As heat treaters, we know quite a lot about hope.

After all, we are one of the few industries whose member companies do not have an order book in the conventional sense. We rarely know, from one day to the next, just how busy our plant is likely to be. This is one of the factors which make heat treaters such special people, engendering an ethic of trust, camaraderie and downright hard work, well 'seasoned' with great good humour (most of the time!).

Once again our market is in recession and, at times, hope may seem to be all we have to rely upon. However, the tide will turn and, for those member companies with the resilience to stay the course, the continuing trend to outsourcing should provide prosperity for many years to come.

"My hope for all members is that 2003 will herald better times for all our businesses"



We can turn hope to reality by applying the 'tools' of our trade to the objective of continually improving our service and quality standards in the care and treatment of our customers' products.

My hope for all members is that 2003 will herald better times for all our businesses. As fellow members of the CHTA, I wish you all success and, to those of you who know me personally, I would ask that you keep in touch.

Whilst my new role with Bodycote International plc, which I took up last January, is a global one, my office is still at Macclesfield and I will be watching with interest the further development of the Association in years to come.

As a result of the AGM election, David's place on CHTA's Management Committee is taken by Simon Blantern, Business Development Director and Sales Director for Bodycote Heat Treatments Ltd. Simon joins other new full members Mark Florance (Techniques Surfaces (UK) Ltd) and Dave Walker (Beta Heat Treatment Ltd). A new Chairman will be elected at the Committee's meeting in February.

Missing out?

- "A Threat to Fastener Heat Treaters"
- "CHTA Members Immune to Insurance Hikes?"
- "Toolmaker Seeks Heat Treater"
- "Stress Relieving Furnaces for Sale"
- "Metallurgist for Hire"

If you are a CHTA member unfamiliar with the stories behind these headlines, then you're not visiting the "Bulletin Board" in the Members Area of the Association's website at www.chta.co.uk.

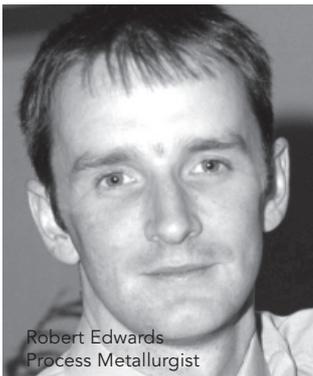
The Bulletin Board was introduced last year to provide a forum for members to share news and raise and discuss issues of common concern. On its launch, the chief executives of member companies were informed by letter of the appropriate username/reference number and password to access it. If you've mislaid these details, please contact CHTA's Secretariat. Please be sure to share them with appropriate colleagues!

Make best use of it...

www.chta.co.uk

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Robert Edwards
Process Metallurgist

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A. That depends on your process! By understanding your oxygen tolerance levels we can help you reduce your costs. To find out more about proven nitrogen atmosphere technologies, visit our website.

tell me more

www.airproducts.co.uk/metals

Business conditions revision

As intimated in *Hotline* 87, our Management Committee, in conjunction with the Association's solicitors, is looking to revise *The CHTA Business Conditions Guide*. This document was published twelve years ago in order to assist members, to establish a "norm" for the industry, and to minimise misunderstandings and consequent disputes.



In the intervening period, many members will have incorporated clauses from these guidelines into their own business conditions. In preparing the groundwork for the revision, CHTA's solicitors ask if members have experienced any practical or legal difficulties with customers that our present guidelines had not covered adequately.

If you have any such experiences to record, please send details, *by no later than the end of January*, to Sally-Anne Hawkey, Brindley Twist Tafft & James, Solicitors, Lowick Gate, Siskin Drive, Coventry CV3 4FJ (tel:02476 531532; fax: 02476 301300; e-mail:admin@bttj.com).

DON'T KEEP IT TO YOURSELF

As reported in the previous issue, *Hotline* is now available on CHTA's website in a down-loadable pdf format to reach a wider audience. Amongst other things, this provides members with the ability to obtain extra copies for the benefit of all staff.

Go to www.chta.co.uk and click on "Hotline".

EHT CONSOLIDATE EPSOM OPERATIONS

In mid-2002, Expert Heat Treatments (EHT) decided to transfer the operations based at their Epsom site in Surrey to other EHT sites in the South East.

Over the past few months, the plant/operations dedicated to the heat treatment of aluminium components have been transferred to the EHT Kent division in Sittingbourne. Those dedicated to induction heat treatment have been moved to the EHT Morden site in Surrey.

These transfers have ensured that EHT's process capabilities and customer service in the south-east region have been maintained and strengthened. They will also enable EHT to focus on further expanding the local, regional and UK-wide commercial and aerospace heat treatment services available from its four plants in Surrey, Kent, Hampshire and Stockton-on-Tees.

BOWMIC INCREASE CAPACITY AND MARKET SHARE

CHTA-member Bowmic Ltd of Leicester is increasing capacity with the addition of a further two Ipsen sealed-quench furnace lines and an Ipsen vacuum facility. This is in response to a turnover increase of 22% on the year to date, and a three-fold increase since 1997.

Chris Smith, Director of the *Investors in People*-accredited company says: "We have continued to grow strongly this year, despite tough market conditions, and have significantly improved our profitability on those sales. Increased sealed-quench capacity will be used primarily to maintain flexibility and responsiveness - we are not in the business of price-cutting. The addition of a vacuum cell will further extend our range of services and attract new business.

Although we continue to offer and promote our *Tufftride* business, the remainder of our salt-bath shop has now been decommissioned, both to facilitate accreditation to ISO14001 and to improve the working environment. We intend to redevelop our existing site in 2003."

TTI GROUP'S PARENT ADDS NEW PLANTS TO EUROPEAN NETWORK

2002 has been a busy year for TTI's parent Aalberts Industries. They have added a further ten treatment centres to the European network during the year, bringing the total number of heat treatment and surface treatment service centres within the European Group to 44.

As well as those recorded previously in these pages (PHT in Strasbourg, Germany, three MPT plants in Southern and Central

NEW MEMBER

CHTA is pleased to welcome, as a new member for 2003, JJ Castings Investments (Heat Treatment) Ltd at Caerphilly Business Park, Van Road, Caerphilly CF83 3EL. Our contact is Works Manager Theresa Rees (tel: 02920 887837; fax: 02920 861900; e-mail: enquiries@jjcastings.co.uk). The company's website can be found at www.jjcastings.co.uk.

Germany, H&ST of Eindhoven, Holland) the other five additions are Metatherm (three plants) in eastern France, Traitessa in Barcelona and a new green-field facility in Lisbon, Portugal.

Metatherm, with three production facilities in the east of France, provides a wide range of heat treatments, including a newly-patented process for applying PVD coatings. These three sites will be part of the European network of service centres and will work closely with the French company Thermi Centre, which already belongs to the Group. Thermi Centre also has three production facilities and is concentrated mainly in central France.

With their joint production facilities, Metatherm and Thermi Centre will be in a position to serve the market in central and eastern France, whilst northern France can be served together with Netherlands-based group company Mamesta. Moreover, collaboration with the German Hauck Group in the French/German border region will enable them to strengthen their market position.

Traitessa in Barcelona employs 12 people, has a turnover of approximately EUR 1million and specialises in induction heat treatment. Early next year, it will be relocating to a larger building nearby and will be adding three vacuum furnaces to expand its range of processes.

In addition to these nine heat treatment plants, Aalberts Group has also built a new surface treatment plant near Lisbon in Portugal. Not bad growth for one year?!

Advertising in *Hotline* – a bargain!

Readers are reminded that advertising in *Hotline* is open to both CHTA members and suppliers to the trade. A quarter-page ad, for example, is a bargain at a cost of only £100. For booking space or further details, contact CHTA's Secretariat.

EXPANSION AT BETA HEAT TREATMENT

CHTA-member Beta Heat Treatment Ltd. has commissioned a new high-temperature fluidised-bed furnace to meet with increased demands from existing and new customers.

The furnace has a usable diameter of 750mm and a depth of 1500mm, a maximum operating temperature of 1100°C and is capable of treating loads up to 2000kg in weight. It will replace a smaller fluidised-bed furnace that has been in constant use since the company started in 1988.

A similar furnace was installed in 2001 to enable Beta Heat Treatment to treat larger-sized tooling as, previously, the maximum furnace diameter was 600mm. The extra capacity created last year was quickly taken up and a number of potential new customers have created the need for more capacity in 2002.

The fluidised bed was designed and manufactured by Clayton Thermal Processes Ltd. and is the fourth new installation in the last three years, bringing the number of heat treatment fluidised beds operated by Beta Heat Treatment to eight. Beta also runs fluidised-bed furnaces for the cleaning of plastic from machine parts and tooling and the stripping of paint from components and jigs.

Fluidised-bed furnaces have enabled Beta (www.claytonholdings.com) to remain at the forefront of subcontract tool heat treatment in the UK. With this extra capacity, they will continue to provide a service of the highest quality, with a fast turn-round and at a competitive price.

HEAT TREATMENT'S VITAL ROLE

"Important, sometimes. Mostly it is vital – both to the functionality of the engineering product in its application, as well as to economy of manufacture and the environmental impact arising during both manufacture and application."

Thus CHTA Chairman David Wilkins introduces an article in December's *Metallurgia* which examines "The Importance of Heat Treatment". In a piece that highlights heat treatment's role, he concludes:

"The subcontract heat treatment industry is well equipped to make an increasingly important contribution to the survival and success of manufacturing industry. The benefits of outsourcing are particularly relevant at times of economic difficulty as at present. A visit to the CHTA website at www.chta.co.uk will illustrate the scope of support and expertise which is available."

BEST WISHES, RODGER / WELCOME BACK, JON

Well known to many CHTA members, **Rodger Easson**, who has been with Expert Heat Treatments (EHT) for twenty-four years, retires at the end of 2002.

Having completed industrial training with UKAEA, SKF, Jessop Saville and Samuel Fox, Rodger qualified as a metallurgist from Aston University in 1967. He then established his career in heat treatment by taking posts with British Heat Treatments (Birmingham and Wednesbury), Thermal Treatments (Cardiff), Zotic Treatments and Blackheath Engineering (Bloxwich).

He subsequently joined EHT (North) as Works Metallurgist in 1978, later becoming Technical/Quality Manager. In 1993, he was appointed General Manager.

With thirty-five years in the heat treatment sector, Rodger has numerous friends amongst customers, suppliers and competitors. Like his colleagues in the various EHT divisions, they will greatly miss his extensive knowledge and experience of heat treatment processing and metallurgy.



Rodger Easson

Jon Race

"We are very sorry to lose Rodger's expertise, but we wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement" said EHT Group's Terry Littlewood. "I am sure everyone will join us in thanking him for his contribution over many years to our industry and to the CHTA".

Terry was also very pleased to announce (in September) that **Jon Race** had agreed to join EHT North, taking over as General Manager on Rodger's retirement.

Jon, who obtained his degree in metallurgy and materials science from Nottingham University, has extensive technical and management experience in the contract heat treatment sector, having worked in his early career for Keighley Laboratories, Flame Hardeners, and Blandburgh Nemo (now Bodycote). He subsequently held senior posts with Keighley Laboratories and Senior Heat Treatment (now TTI Group).

Terry Littlewood said of Jon's appointment: "With over twenty years experience in contract heat treatment and involvement with CHTA committees, Jon is an ideal replacement for Rodger. We look forward to benefiting from his expertise at EHT North and in the wider EHT Group".

CHTA Secretariat

Items for inclusion in *Hotline* and enquiries about CHTA activities should be addressed to:

Contract Heat Treatment Association

c/o WHTC, Aston University,
Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4 7ET.

Tel: 0121 359 3611, ext.5212

Fax: 0121 359 8910.

E-mail: mail@chta.co.uk

Website: www.chta.co.uk

CHTA Secretary: Alan J. Hick

The Contract Heat Treatment Association is not responsible for the statements made or opinions expressed by contributors to *Hotline*.

NEW INDUCTION HARDENING UNIT FOR HAMMOND

Over the last three years, developments to upgrade the induction hardening equipment at Hammond Heat Treatment's Darlaston site have improved throughout rates significantly. In order to reduce lead times still further, the company has invested in an all-new induction hardening machine supplied by Inductoheat Banyard of Poole in Dorset.

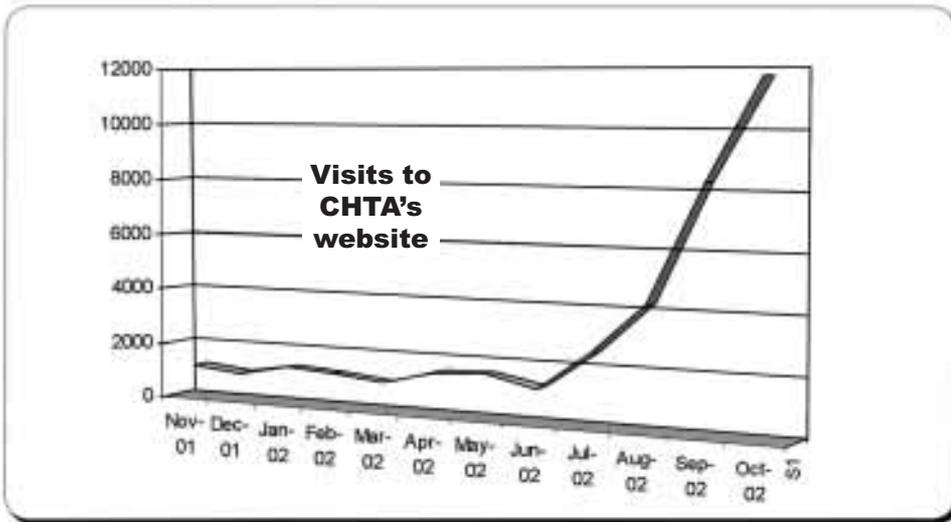
The generator is a CNC-controlled 100kW/30KHz solid-state design and incorporates twin spindles, for dual processing, and quick-change coil facilities. The advantages of adopting the latest technology are the increased speed of working, through modern control systems, increased reliability of the solid-state generator and lower maintenance costs.



This latest addition complements the twin machine purchased two years ago and now puts Hammond Heat Treatment at the forefront of the subcontract induction hardening industry.

All members are urged to feature CHTA's logo on company letterheads, literature, websites and advertisements. For this purpose, the logo is now readily downloadable from CHTA's website at www.chta.co.uk. Go to the "Members Area" and click on "Using CHTA's logo".

CHTA website takes off



Extracted from the monthly report from our "webmasters" Sitemakers Ltd., the above graph illustrates how traffic on CHTA's website has increased dramatically over the last few months.

The latest statistics show that, thanks to Sitemakers' promotional efforts, October was a record month in the two-year life of the site, with 60,514 document hits representing 11,728 visitors.

After the home page, the top pages visited are:

- "Click here to find a heat treater", leading to the up-to-date electronic version of CHTA's Buyers Guide, with automated search facility.
- "Specifying heat treatment", with its downloadable *Datasheets for Non-heat-treaters*, aimed at aiding sensible process selection and specification.
- "Contract heat treatment – the preferred option", making the case for sub-contracting.
- "Using a contract heat treater", advice on making best use of the heat treater's expertise.
- "Find a CHTA member", a full listing of current CHTA members with access to complete contact details.

Interestingly, the reports indicate that the UK is second to the web-wise USA in the

list of visitor countries. Obviously, the UK is the dominant marketplace for CHTA members and raising national industry awareness of our website must be a prime objective.

Sitemakers suggest that this apparent anomaly might be exaggerated. They point out that visits that appear to be from the States will also include many UK users. This is because any user accessing the site through an internet service provider on a .com address will register in the statistics as a USA visitor.

Sounds sensible. After all, the USA has its own "CHTA" for commercial heat treaters...

MTI

NORTH AMERICAN HEAT TREAT SALES DROP 2.3% IN OCTOBER

The Metal Treating Institute reports that latest information from participating members indicates that total sales for October 2002 were \$79.5million, a decline of 2.3% from October last year when sales reached \$81.3million.

For all of 2002 thus far, the industry posted billings of \$737.2million, 5.1% below the previous year's figure of \$776.9million.

2003 CHTA Officers

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Following the recent AGM election, CHTA-member representatives in 2003 are:

Chris Baumann (TTI Group)

Simon Blantern (Bodycote Heat Treatments)

Peter Crowther (Hammond Heat Treatment)

Mark Florance (Techniques Surfaces UK)

Paul Handley (Heat Treatment 2000)

Roger Haw (Flame Hardeners)

Terry Littlewood (Expert Heat Treatments)

Dave Walker (Beta Heat Treatment)

Alan Whitehouse (Tamworth Heat Treatment)

The new CHTA Chairman will be elected at the Management Committee meeting on February 13th.

PUBLICITY SUBCOMMITTEE

This committee currently comprises the following representatives of CHTA member companies:

Alistair Cowie (Midland Heat Treatments)

Peter Cox (Beta Heat Treatment)

Keith Hayward (Controlled Heat Treatments)

Mike Hurley (Tamworth Heat Treatment)

John Jervis (Bodycote Heat Treatments)

Ian Lacey (Alloy Heat Treatment)

Nick Lane (TTI Group)

Rob Weavill (Hammond Heat Treatment)

The Publicity Subcommittee next meets on February 6th. Volunteers from member companies to serve on this committee are always welcome: contact CHTA's Secretariat.

For the best in contract heat treatment,

go to . . .

www.chta.co.uk

SPONSORSHIP CONTINUES

CHTA is delighted to announce that Air Products plc have agreed to extend their kind sponsorship of *Hotline* and the Association's website to cover the 2003 calendar year. On behalf of all members, we thank them for their much-valued continuing support.

Wolfson conference at "Furnaces 2003"

Wolfson Heat Treatment Centre's 32nd one-day conference will take place on 5th March in conjunction with the CHTA co-sponsored *Furnaces 2003* exhibition at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry.

Entitled "**Advances in Heat Treatment Processing**", the conference will examine latest developments to enhance quality, efficiency and/or environmental aspects of industrial heat treatment practice. The following papers will be presented:

- Computer Simulation / Monitoring / Control of Gas Carburising. *Arthur Watson (MPC Division, Almor Group, UK) and Nigel Tucker (Heat Treat Solutions, UK)*
- Heat Treatment Simulation for Heat Treaters and Design Engineers. *Harald Porzner (ESI Group, Germany)*
- A New Case-hardening Steel for High-quality Components with Air-hardening Capability. *Thore Lund (Ovako Steel AB, Sweden)*
- Low-pressure Carburising with Acetylene in New Modular Installations with Flexible Quench Systems. *Winfried Gräfen (Ipsen International GmbH, Germany)*
- Nitrocarburising: the State-of-the-Art. *Steve Plumb and Tony Staines (TTI Group, UK)*
- Case-hardening Titanium. *Paul Stratton (BOC Gases, UK)*
- In-process Temperature Surveying in Heat Treatment Furnaces. *Dave Plester (Datapaq Ltd., UK)*

For full details and registration forms, contact the Conference Administrator, Wolfson Heat Treatment Centre, Aston University, Aston Triangle, Birmingham B4



CHTA is pleased to
co-sponsor...

THE PREMIER EVENT FOR
THERMAL PROCESSING
AND HEAT TREATMENT



FURNACES 2003

4th and 5th March 2003

Stoneleigh Park Convention Centre
Stoneleigh · Coventry · UK

Exhibition opening times

Tuesday 4 March: 09.30 – 17.30

Wednesday 5 March: 09.30 – 16.30

www.furnaces2003.com

7ET, England (tel: +44 (0)121 359 3611 ext. 5212; fax: +44 (0)121 359 8910; e-mail: whtc@aston.ac.uk). For on-line registration, go to www.aston.ac.uk/whtc.

Details about the *Furnaces 2003* exhibition (4-5 March) can be found on dmg's website at: www.furnaces2003.com.

ENGINEERING 2003

Also to be held at Stoneleigh Park (Coventry), on May 13-15, *Engineering 2003* is being billed as a unique event where directors, senior managers and engineers from engineering, technology and manufacturing will come face to face with the tools, technologies and techniques that will drive industry in the next decade.

For details of this exhibition/conference

sponsored by *Engineering* magazine, contact Gillard Welch Ltd (tel: 01622 673396; fax: 01622 675408; web: engineeringnet.co.uk).

SOUTHERN MANUFACTURING 2003

Described as "the largest and most comprehensive engineering solutions event in the South of England", *Southern Manufacturing 2003* takes place at Thorp Park, Surrey, on 19-20 February. Now in its 6th year, the exhibition is said to be on course to break records with a wider showcase of industrial technology, where every component and process can be sourced.

For details, contact Steve Crowther at ETES on 01784 880890 or visit www.industry.co.uk/southern.

DTI LAUNCH E-NEWSLETTER

November saw the first edition of *Materials and Engineering Hot Issues* – an e-newsletter from the DTI that “aims to keep you up to speed with UK and EU policy and regulatory issues that affect your business and give you an opportunity to influence them.”

Introducing the debut issue, Simon Edmonds explains that the newsletter is produced by the DTI’s Materials and Engineering Sector Team of which he is Director:

“The team aims to be a trusted partner for companies, organisations and individuals in the materials and engineering sector, and is particularly keen to support those who are pioneering and driving up productivity.

To fulfil that aim, the Materials and Engineering Sector Team will be working within Government and with key partners to improve the business environment and eliminate the barriers that hold back businesses like yours, in line with the Government’s manufacturing strategy. Specific details of the strategy are available at: <http://www.dti.gov.uk/manufacturing/strategy.pdf>

To make sure that we’re focusing on the issues that matter to businesses like yours, we’ve appointed a number of Relationship Managers – people who will work to build a strong relationship with key companies in the sector and an in-depth understanding of the issues that affect them.

With the rest of the Materials and Engineering Sector Team, we want our Relationship Managers to become powerful representatives for your views across Government – influencing policy makers and regulators, and helping DTI to develop the sorts of support that meet your business needs. We may not always get the result you hope for but I know that you value this service we provide.

Of course no relationship is completely one-sided. Our Relationship Managers will also be looking to challenge the companies they work with to raise their game and giving advice on where companies can get the support they need to do so.

This newsletter has been developed to complement the work of our Relationship Managers, by bringing you the latest news on policy and regulatory developments in your area. We plan to publish the newsletter every two months and we want you to use it to give us your views about the issues it covers. The more you tell us about your thoughts and concerns, the more robust we can be in influencing the policy making process.”

The topics raised in the first edition of *Materials and Engineering Hot Issues* include the Chancellor’s Pre-Budget Report, the Energy Review, the Enterprise Act, EU Environmental Liability Directive, and Climate Change Levy. In the latter case, it is noted that a recently-published

Market Movements

ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE REPLIES RELATING TO 38 CHTA MEMBER SITES

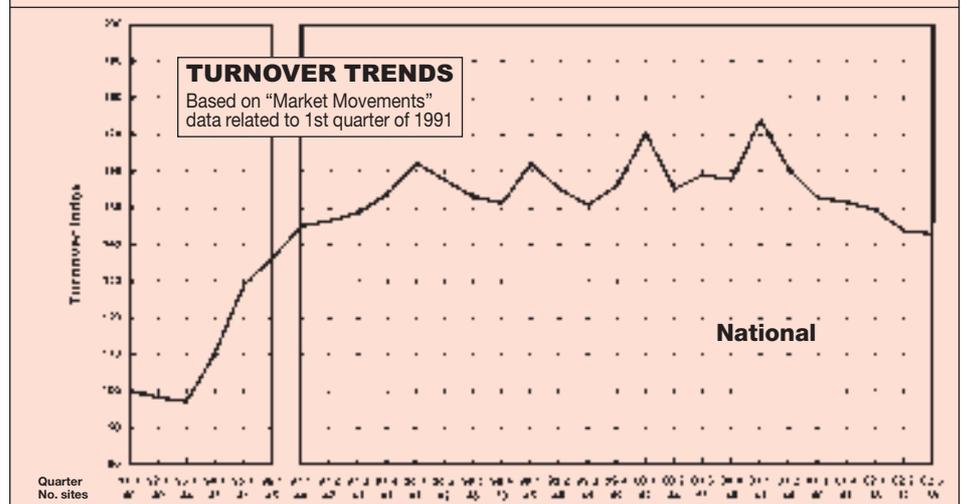
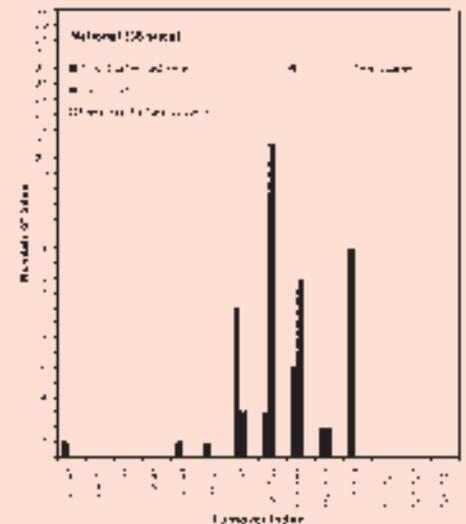
“THIS QUARTER” =

**1 JULY –
30 SEPTEMBER
2002****= TURNOVER INDEX 100**

National

**OVERALL ANALYSIS
(38 SITES)**

	Mean index
This quarter last year	101.8
Last quarter	100.6
Predicted next quarter	101.0



joint CBI/EEF report offers an assessment of CCL’s impact on business since its introduction 18 months ago; copies can be accessed through either the CBI (www.cbi.org.uk) or EEF (www.eef.org.uk) websites

In order to be placed on the circulation list for *Materials and Engineering Hot Issues*, contact Keith Avis at Keith.Avis@dti.gsi.gov.uk (020 7215 1455). Within the Materials and Engineering Sector Team, the contact responsible for surface engineering / heat treatment remains Brian Greenwood (Brian.Greenwood@dti.gsi.gov.uk).

ENERGY-SAVING HELP

Action Energy, a programme run by the Carbon Trust, is calling for UK engineering companies to act now to reduce their energy bills.

Simply by calling 0800 58 57 94 and requesting a free energy survey, organisations can take action now to start saving money and become more energy efficient. Action Energy is a government-backed initiative that provides free, practical and

impartial help and advice on implementing energy-efficiency measures.

Action Energy offers information to the engineering industry across fourteen key areas, including furnaces and heat treatment. Its services encompass a free helpline, providing impartial advice and online information, at www.actionenergy.org.uk, and publications on energy-saving measures.

Action Energy also provides free on-site surveys, to identify opportunities for energy savings, and interest-free Energy Loans of £5,000-50,000 for small and medium-sized companies. The Carbon Trust also administers the Enhanced Capital Allowance Scheme, a tax relief that permits businesses to deduct 100% of their capital expenditure on designated energy-saving plant and machinery against their taxable profits.

Previously-known as the Energy Efficiency Best Practice programme, Action Energy is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, The Scottish Executive, Invest Northern Ireland and the National Assembly for Wales.