

Action on Energy Costs and Business Conditions

This edition of Hotline highlights two issues that all members would do well to focus on, says CHTA Chairman **Terry Littlewood**.

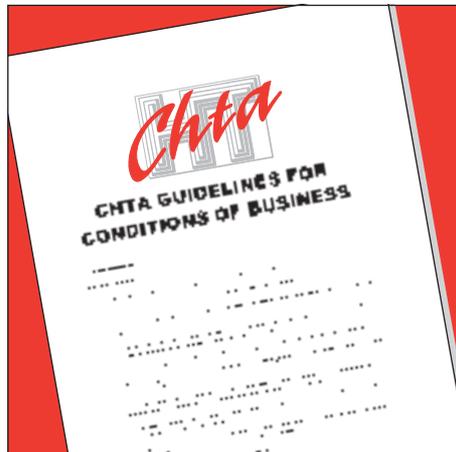
Energy benchmarking

Energy costs are a preoccupation to all of us. Having imposed CCL charges, the Government is, through Action Energy, offering free, confidential, independent surveys and advice on how to reduce our energy costs.

Apart from the benefits that individual member companies can expect to achieve, Action Energy will be enabled to establish industry benchmarks of energy costs for specific heat treatment processes – if enough of us participate. The CHTA Management Committee discussed this programme at its last

meeting and, despite our in-built scepticism (regarding comparison of like with like), we concluded that we should recommend that all members participate in the exercise.

There is nothing to lose and everything to gain. Please read the Action Energy article (page 7), call their Helpline, visit their website and register without delay.



Business conditions guidelines

The need for members to protect themselves by having the right conditions of business in place was clearly illustrated by an item in the *Birmingham Evening Mail* recently.

A Midlands heat treatment company, facing a £300,000 lawsuit over a job worth just £200, was reportedly “saved from disaster” by its legal advisors. The case concluded with a £15,000 settlement and no admission of liability.

On behalf of CHTA’s solicitors, Sally-Anne Hawkey has now finalised her review of

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The CHTA Business Conditions Guide, originally compiled over twelve years ago to support members in this context. She recommended (and has made) a number of changes and provides us with an overview (page 2) that explains each clause.

The new CHTA Guidelines for Conditions of Business are available to members on the Association’s website in downloadable pdf format.

Most of us only refer to our business conditions when something goes awry. However, now we have a new up-to-date set of expertly-prepared guidelines, I suggest you review them in some depth against those conditions that you currently use.

Sally-Anne stresses that you should check that your business conditions are issued and incorporated into every contract you make with a customer, no matter how small. As one of our members notes: “It is at times of low market demand, such as at present, that the incidence of customer complaints increases and the risk of exposure to claims is greater”.

CHTA Secretariat

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

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CHTA is affiliated to the Surface Engineering Association.



Guido Plicht
Senior Research Engineer

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Business Conditions Guidelines for CHTA Members Revised

As mentioned in our Chairman's editorial, the revised "CHTA Guidelines for Conditions of Business" can now be accessed as a downloadable pdf from the Members Area of CHTA's website at www.chta.co.uk.

CHTA GUIDELINES FOR CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS: AN OVERVIEW

Sally-Anne Hawkey, of CHTA's Solicitors Brindley Twist Tafft & James, summarises the essence of the revision for the benefit of the Association's members.

A general re-organisation and some amendment to the Guidelines for Business Conditions ("the Conditions") has been sufficient. We have re-organised the terms so that they now fall into broadly chronological order. I would briefly outline how each of the clauses operates below.

1. Interpretation

This clause includes definitions of the Terms commonly used throughout the Conditions and also some standard clauses that assist in interpreting the other provisions of the Conditions.

2. Formation of Contract

This clause deals with ensuring that the contracts between you and your customers are made upon these Terms and Conditions. It also ensures that the treatment used is not to be carried out if you do not consider the goods to be suitable and that the price quoted may be varied if circumstances change.

3. Prices and Payment

The provisions of this clause establish that price and payment terms are set out in this clause. If more detailed payment terms are required, these should be set out in the quotation and, if paid late, interest can be charged.

4. Interest

The rate of interest can be tailored to your own requirements, although a court may disallow interest at an onerous rate unless it has specifically been brought to the attention of the customer.

5. Transportation

The purpose of this clause is to ensure that it is the customer that has the respon-

sibility for arranging transportation of goods to your premises, together with suitable packing for that transportation.

6. Risk

This clause states that the goods will, throughout the treatment and transportation, be at the customer's risk and should be insured by the customer. This takes into account that the goods may be substantially greater in value than the cost of the treatment being carried out.

7. Delivery

This clause establishes that you will be under no liability if completion of the treatment is delayed. Any date given for completion prior to the commencement of the treatment is considered as estimate. Once notice is given to the customer that the goods are ready for collection, then they must do so within 10 working days and, failing this, you can charge them for additional storage or sell the goods to recover the contract price.

This clause also provides that you will have a lien over the goods. A lien entitles you to sell them if the price is not paid. This does not repeat what is detailed above because the general lien entitles you to sell goods belonging to the customer even if the price for their treatment has been paid but payment for the treatment of other goods remains outstanding.

8. Cancellation

This clause sets out the circumstances in which you may cancel the contract or suspend any further treatment. This applies where payment is late, a customer refuses to take delivery of goods or give you instructions for such delivery, or where certain circumstances indicating financial difficulties on the part of the customer arise.

9. Sub-Contracting

This clause provides that you are entitled to sub-contract your obligations under this Contract.

10. Duties and Responsibilities

This clause states that you are obliged to carry out the treatment with reasonable care and skill. It also states that your employees cannot make any representations about how the treatment is carried out unless a duly authorised employee confirms this in writing.

Further, if a defect is alleged in respect of

treated goods, then the customer must notify you within the timescale specified in respect of the given defect and you should then be given an opportunity to inspect the goods to verify the problem. If there was a problem, you have the option to repeat the treatment or credit the customer with the costs of the faulty treatment.

11. Liability

This clause limits the liability that may be incurred as a result of the problems with the goods. Liability for consequential or economic loss is excluded in its entirety. Liability for death or personal injury due to negligence cannot, under English Law, be excluded from a contract but other liabilities are excluded up to a limit of £1000 or three times the contract price (whichever is lower).

12. Acknowledgement

This clause places the obligation on the customer to ensure that the goods are suitable for heat treatment and makes the customer acknowledge that some risk to the goods exists as a result of the treatment taking place.

13. Indemnity

This clause requires the customer to indemnify you against any losses you suffer which are incurred under the contract in question.

14. Force Majeure

This clause means that you will not be liable for failure to comply with the contract due to circumstances set out in the clauses that are beyond your reasonable control.

15. Waiver

This clause clarifies the position that just because you waive any of your rights under the contract does not mean that you will not be able to subsequently enforce them.

All of the other clauses are self-explanatory and the new headings will allow the terms to be more easily accessible, both to your own employees and your customers. As requested, I have prepared a guidance note setting out the important points to consider when using Business Conditions (accompanying the Guidelines on CHTA's website). Of primary importance is ensuring that the conditions are actually incorporated into your contracts.

Guidance note on other legal issues

CHTA's solicitors have also provided guidance on other legal matters that members might care to consider...

This Guidance Note is designed to give a brief overview of a number of current legal issues upon which you may wish to seek further legal advice. Its content is not designed to be exhaustive nor to set out in any detail the legal position. It is simply intended to be an indication of legal issues that businesses need to give consideration to in order to ensure that they are in compliance with the Law.

Data Protection Act

All businesses that store information regarding individuals on computer systems need to be registered under the Data Protection Act and must comply with the Act's requirements as to how they use, store and keep confidential that information. This includes, in particular, businesses that store information about their employees, such as payroll details, on their computer system. Failure to comply with the Act can lead to both civil and criminal penalties.

Registration under the Act is a relatively simple process which can be done on-line on the Data Protection Act website which is located at www.dpr.gov.uk. There is a fee of £35.00 for registration for a three-year period. The website also gives useful guidance as to whether your particular business will need registration.

Warnings have been issued about organisations offering to carry out Data Protection Registration on your behalf at over-inflated prices. Registration is something you should be able to carry out relatively straight-forwardly yourself and the prescribed fee is limited to £35.

Websites

Terms and Conditions

Consideration should be given as to whether Terms and Conditions for use of your website are appropriate. Strictly speaking, it is advisable to have Terms and Conditions purely for the use of your website which would govern who has responsibility for the information provided on your site and to what extent customers can rely upon it. It is particularly important to have Terms and Conditions on your website when it

is possible for customers to contract with you on-line.

Privacy Policy

The Data Protection Act requires businesses to have a Privacy Policy on their website which details how they will maintain as confidential the information regarding individuals that they store. This should be easily accessible for users of the site to read.

Electronic Commerce Regulations

In October 2002 new Electronic Commerce Regulations came into force. These specified certain information which should always be provided on a businesses' website. This includes the following information:

1. The name of their service provider.
2. Their trading address.
3. Contact details including their e-mail address.
4. Details of any trade registration or authorisation scheme of which they are a member.
5. Details of any supervisory body which operates in their particular trade.
6. VAT registration details.

Businesses should really consider their website as an extension of their business stationary and that information which they are required (if they are a limited company) to have on their headed paper should also be included on their website.

Distance Selling Regulations

Where a businesses' website allows customers to purchase items or services from them on-line, the recently-adopted Distance Selling Regulations must be taken into account. These include quite stringent requirements as to how the on-line ordering system must operate. These apply primarily where a consumer is placing the order.

Summary

If you require further advice or information regarding any of the above issues, then you should consult your Solicitor or alternatively Graham Wilson, Head of IT and Internet Law at Brindley Twist Taft & James Solicitors of Lowick Gate, Siskin Drive, Coventry, CV3 4FJ (tel: 024 7653 1532; facsimile: 024 7630 1300; e-mail: graham.wilson@bttj.com) who will be more than happy to assist.

AALBERTS WIDENS MATERIAL TECHNOLOGY NETWORK TO INCLUDE SCANDINAVIA

TTI Group's parent Aalberts Industries N.V. has further expanded its European network of service centres for heat and surface treatments following the acquisition of J:son Hård AB in Sweden.

J:son specialises in the treatment of large series for the automotive and other industries. With a turnover of over 3million, it is a leading player on the Swedish market, where it has offices in the industry-rich south of the country.

Aalberts Industries has also acquired a minority stake in Hærderiet A/S, a new Danish heat treatment company that has been operating on the market since last year. With an option to convert this stake into a majority interest, this has given Aalberts Industries a foothold in the relatively small, yet attractive, Danish market. Hærderiet specialises in vacuum heat treatment techniques and also operates a unique technology for the heat treatment of stainless steel.

Both companies will form part of Aalberts Industries' European network of service centres, bringing the total number to 50. The group's expansion into Scandinavia will widen its access to one of Europe's key industrial regions, as well as broadening its geographical spread. The move gives Aalberts Industries a base for the further expansion of its heat and surface treatments in Scandinavia.

TOCCO NAME CHANGE

Formerly known as EMA Heat Treatment and Tocco-EMA Heat Treatment, CHTA-member Tocco Induction Heat Treatment has changed its name again. Following the recent merger of Ajax Magnathermic Europe Ltd and Tocco (UK) Ltd, it becomes the Heat Treatment Department of Ajax Tocco International Ltd, based in Kitts Green, Birmingham.

Both Ajax and Tocco are subsidiaries of Park-Ohio Holdings Inc (PKOH), a publicly-traded logistics and manufacturing company with headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio, USA. The merger reflects the global repositioning of the capital equipment manufacturing group of PKOH, with Ajax Tocco International Ltd having increased responsibility for the international market for induction heating equipment and services.

HAVE YOU GOT NEWS FOR US?

News items for publication in Hotline should be addressed to CHTA's Secretariat. Contact details on page 1.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Nicky Watson, research engineer at Tecvac Ltd, who has successfully completed her MSc degree in Surface Design and Engineering at the University of Nottingham. Her part-time three-year course, sponsored by Tecvac, gives her accredited qualification for Chartered Engineer status with the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome two new CHTA members:

Longwear Surface Treatments Ltd, Pleasant Street, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 7DP (tel: 0121 580 1120; fax: 0121 500 5388; e-mail: longwear_nitriding@hotmail.com; website: www.longwear-nitriding.co.uk). Contact: Mr I M MacDonald, Managing Director.

Site Heat Treatment Services Ltd, Unit 2, Henshaw Street Industrial Estate, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan SA12 6NH (tel: 01639 899220; fax: 01639 898697; e-mail: shs@shs-group.com; website: www.shs-group.com). Contact: Mr A. Veysey, Managing Director.

NEW COATING PROCESS FROM TECVAC

Following the development of a unique automated twin-electron-beam physical vapour deposition (PVD) process, Tecvac Ltd, part of the Wallwork Group, has significantly increased capacity for producing titanium and aluminium nitride (TiAlN) coatings, with a hardness of up to 3000HV and an infinitely-variable composition.

The extreme hardness, some three times that of hard chrome, allows dry cutting or drilling tool lifetimes to be extended by many times compared with TiN (titanium nitride) coatings.

The key benefit of Tecvac TiAlN coating is its high-temperature performance. It is stable and resists oxidation at temperatures of up to 800°C. It also has a very low friction coefficient of 0.4 against dry steel. This combination of temperature resistance, extreme smoothness and high lubricity, with a high resistance to abrasion, gives major benefits to manufacturers and users of cutting tools. Cutting, milling and drilling operations can be carried out over extended periods without lubrication. This means that replacement costs, operational costs and maintenance costs of Tecvac TiAlN-coated cutting tools can be significantly lower than uncoated equivalents.

Comparative tests have demonstrated that 'dry drill' lifetimes can be extended by a factor of more than 30 when compared with 'dry cutting' using tools coated with conventional TiN.

Tecvac TiAlN coatings can be applied to all common steels with coating depths of 1-6 microns, but most specifications are met using a 3-5 micron coating. Tools and components can be coated up to individual sizes of 1200mm diameter by 700mm high, and a maximum weight of 250kg.

Tecvac TiAlN also yields substantial benefits when used in medical and aerospace component applications. Its 'molecular-scale' process allows silk and mirror finishes to be faithfully replicated at surface finish levels of 18vdi (RA 0.08) and better.

CHTA Consumable Cost Survey: 2003

Hotline has regularly featured an anonymous summary of the range of prices paid by CHTA member companies for various consumables (fuels, processing media, quenchant) in relation to annual consumption. This much-valued basis upon which to judge comparative purchasing performance (and pressurise suppliers) has always been well supported by members ... until last year!

Despite the unusually poor response in 2002, your Association is persisting with the exercise from which all members benefit. Please ensure that you complete and return the simple questionnaire that accompanies this issue of *Hotline* by July 31st.

Medical instruments and components coated with Tecvac TiAlN "bronze" are classed as non-cytotoxic in tests complying with ISO 10993-5 1992 and BS EN 30993-5 1994. The colour of the coatings can also be controlled, which is useful in keeping batches of surgical instruments together.

Tecvac's ultrahard coating services are available on a 24/7 basis from Tecvac and Wallwork Heat Treatment centres at Bury, Birmingham and Cambridge. For more information on the new TiAlN coating and other coating and heat treatment services, contact John Rushforth at Tecvac Ltd, Buckingham Business Park, Swavesey, Cambridge CB4 5UG (tel: 01954 233700).

NEW SCOPE IMPROVES BRINELL READINGS FOR HEAT TREATMENT 2000

A new approach to measuring has improved the accuracy of reading hardness impressions for a leading heat treatment specialist.

By adopting the latest handheld measuring microscope with built-in LED (light-emitting diode) illumination, CHTA-member Heat Treatment 2000 Ltd has maximised the clarity of Brinell hardness impressions in specimens, enabling inspectors to achieve more consistent measurements easily and quickly. In common with many other firms, the West Bromwich company previously used an external lighting source.

Supplied by Indentec, the new portable microscope is predominantly employed in the quality control of the 120tonne of aluminium and 250tonne of steel components processed each week, many of them in Europe's largest heat treatment furnace, rated for 2.7tonne/hour. In service

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twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the Indentec instrument checks the hardnesses (generally from HB90 to HB120) of a wide variety of processed components, the majority for the automotive industries. They include engine blocks, manifolds, sumps, suspension parts, wheels and bracketry in different configurations.

The impression is first made at the pre-selected point by a Brinell testing machine. The microscope is then located over the indentation, which is illuminated by the LEDs and magnified 20X to allow the hardness to be determined to official standards through a measuring graticule with a resolution of 0.05mm.

Positioned internally to ensure a precise definition of the impression's edges, the four battery-powered LEDs save any need to manoeuvre the lighting to 'pick' a good view for measurement, a practice that introduces variability into the process. The Indentec scope also provides all the necessary illumination itself and is completely enclosed. External light cannot reach the impression to distort the image measured. Provided with a snap-on base so that it can be stood upright when required, it is designed to measure impressions up to the 10mm Brinell ball and to check case depths on footprints down to 16mm long.

NEW PVD CAPACITY FOR TTI LUTON MOTORSPORT DIVISION

Following the successful January installation of extra capacity at its Birmingham PVD Centre, TTI Group has now added an identical PVD machine at its Motorsport Division in Luton. This new machine is a state-of-the-art Eifeler *Alpha 100* unit capable of a multitude of monolayer coatings such as TiN and CrN, plus multi-layer coatings such as *Extraal*, *Varianta* and *Variantic*.

The *Alpha 100* machine is designed for small-batch short-cycle operation so as to provide the best-possible turnaround time. It incorporates the very latest micro-processor control running *Windows*-based software that ensures a high degree of accuracy and reliability. The updated software also allows for the production of multi-nanolayer coatings designed for optimum hardness and wear resistance.

TTI's Luton Division adds this PVD facility to the plasma nitriding and vacuum capacity already installed specifically for high-performance materials (e.g. titanium) and components used in motorsport. The plant also continues to offer the more conventional controlled-atmosphere (with enhanced controls) and stress relieving processes.

Like PVD, low-pressure and plasma



Typical items PVD coated by TTI.

carburising are of increasing importance in motorsport and TTI Group's low-pressure/plasma carburising furnace is a unique capability in the UK. A pioneer with this processing route, TTI has over four years' practical knowledge of this

equipment/treatment and has established expertise and experience second-to-none on its applications and specifications. For more information, contact Peter Sherwin or Les Hobson on 01582 486644 or e-mail lutonsales@ttigroup.co.uk.

MEMBER PROFILE

Longwear Surface Treatments

New CHTA member Longwear Surface Treatments Ltd. is a company dedicated to offering a single process: nitride hardening.

Formed in 1991, the business has expanded steadily and offers large capacity combined with flexible operation. The company provides a full range of cycle times, from 12 to 90 hour duration, commencing at regular scheduled times.

Currently capable of treating components up to 1.25m diameter x 2.5m high, the plant was designed in-house and built to the company's own specifications. All furnaces nitride components in the vertical plane in order to maximise the low-distortion advantages of the process.

With nitriding, the potential value of any particular load, usually consisting of finished, often bespoke, components, is very high. To be successful, the process demands accurate and consistent load control over a relatively narrow temperature band. These two factors ensured that control and safety systems were, from the outset, of paramount importance to the company. In addition to the normal control and back-up instrumentation, Longwear operates a system of load-monitoring instruments connected to a factory-



Forming dies nitrided at Longwear.

based modem, in turn linked by a dedicated phone line to computers at the homes of key personnel. Employing modern telemetry techniques, the system allows the monitoring of all key operations, at any time, from home. Specialisation itself has a very positive effect on quality, with plant and systems geared for a single process. Personnel are exclusively handling, loading and packing high-value finished components. Originally registered in 1995, the company holds BS ISO 9002:1994 approval. BS EN ISO 9001:2000 will be in place by autumn this year. Located minutes from the M5/M6 link, in an area providing all kinds of other services for engineering industry, Longwear is well-placed to service its UK-wide customer base.



Kepston's new mesh-belt furnace in Czechoslovakia.

KEPSTON'S INVESTMENTS AT HOME AND ABROAD

Kepston Ltd, the privately-owned heat treatment and brazing specialists, have continued to invest in new plant during these difficult times. First in the sequence was at the company's site at Wednesbury, West Midlands. Last year saw the installation of the second of its new 460mm (18")

Mahler mesh-belt furnaces there in the last 18 months.

Next was Kepston's first European venture. Concerned with the apparent drain of UK manufacturing to Eastern Europe, Managing Director Brent Millage announced to his senior managers that they should look for opportunities outside the UK.

Within four months, a long-term contract was signed, culminating with the ordering of yet another Mahler mesh-belt furnace to be installed in the Czech Republic, within the customer's own premises. The furnace arrived at the end of May and will be in full production by the end of July. From concept to completion, the whole project took only seven months.

The main business will be the furnace copper brazing of mild steel tubular assemblies for the automotive industry. The customer had already discounted indigenous suppliers and was considering purchasing and running his own plant when approached by Kepston. The decision was made easier by the knowledge that Kepston at Wednesbury was already serving one of its UK sites with furnace copper and nickel brazing of stainless steel assemblies for its automotive customers.

Next came the ordering of a *Tuffride Q* furnace line for Kepston's site at Whitburn, West Lothian. The company had been looking at various options for expanding the Whitburn operation when the decision was taken to install a furnace capable of heat treating components up to 500mm diameter x 2100mm long. The size of the plant will make it amongst the largest in the UK.

Design engineers have been restricted by depth of salt baths offered by British subcontract heat treaters and, by adding this capacity, Kepston will give companies the added benefit of branching out into new and existing markets. Components such as tools, dies, oil-drilling equipment and transmission parts, which need good friction and surface wear characteristics, particularly benefit from this treatment.

The process is especially useful for surface hardening fully-machined parts. They can be heat treated without the distortion associated with other case-hardening treatments requiring a faster quench in order to form martensite. Operations Manager, Tom Neil, explains that, by adding this process capacity, they are offering design engineers the opportunity of massive cost savings by eliminating the need for two parts to be coupled together to form one length.

In addition to heat treatment and brazing, Kepston also offers presswork and precision grinding. In February this year, the site at Aldridge, West Midlands, took delivery of a new £300,000 Hauser S35-400 jig-grinding machine capable of tolerances of ± 1 micron.

Brent Millage strongly believes that modern plant coupled with modern working practices (i.e., ISO TS 16949 2002) is the best way for continued success.

ON-LINE QUOTATIONS

Heat Treat QuoteMaster

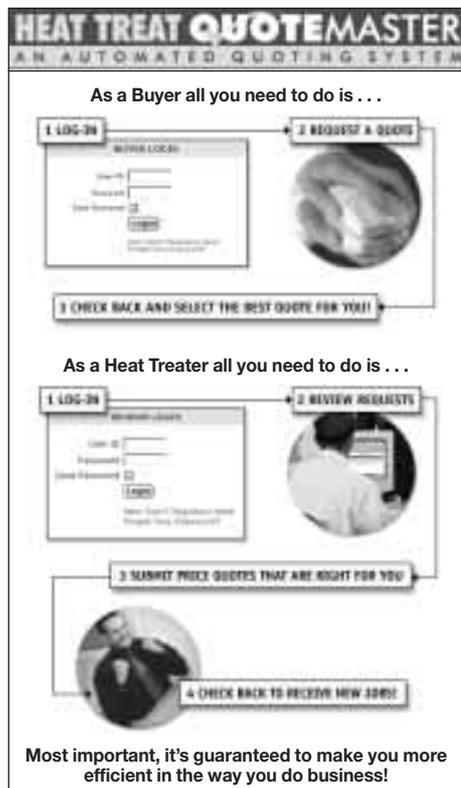
Readers exploring the links from CHTA's website (www.chta.co.uk) may have happened upon that of the Association's sister body, the Metal Treating Institute (www.metaltreat.com), whose membership encompasses over 300 commercial heat treaters in North America.

A relatively new feature on the Institute's site is the *Heat Treat QuoteMaster* (www.heattreatquotemaster.com), a system that facilitates the entire sourcing process by automatically distributing buyers' requests for quotes (RFQs) to MTI members participating on a subscription basis.

Free to buyers, the system is said to provide heat treaters with increased sales, improved efficiency/communications and an expanded customer base, whilst offering security safeguards and "great value".

MTI's Executive Vice President M Lance Miller tells *Hotline*: "We are quite pleased with the acceptance of the only heat-treat-specific e-business vehicle in the marketplace. As *Heat Treat QuoteMaster* enters its second year of operation, there are currently close to 90 MTI member company subscribers. This base includes all sizes of companies offering a full spectrum of heat treatment processes. And with a new (subscription) pricing schedule, we feel even more will come on line."

With regard to effectiveness, Lance notes: "As I write this (May 22), there are six RFQs active. Most of the buyers are "captive" heat treaters, which is our intended audience. Like anything new, it takes a while to catch on, but we are convinced that e-business is the wave of the now as well as the future. More and more we see purchasers of heat treatment only doing business on-line."



The essence of MTI's Heat Treat QuoteMaster, a product of QuoteMaster Systems Inc., Florida, USA.

Reduce your energy costs through benchmarking

Deborah Brzakalik of Action Energy outlines a proposal for a new service for CHTA members.

Cost control is an important factor in maintaining competitiveness for every company. In the heat treatment sector, pressure on margins means that there is a compelling reason to examine low-risk ways of cutting costs.

Energy can account for over 10% of controllable costs at contract heat treatment companies. Therefore there are significant cost savings to be made through energy efficiency. To make cost-effective improvements, you need to understand your energy use and be able to monitor progress in reducing it.

Energy benchmarks can help you reduce your energy costs by providing an indication of how your performance compares with that of other companies in your sector and the potential for energy savings. Action Energy, Carbon Trust's energy efficiency programme, hopes to work with the Contract Heat Treatment Association to develop industry standards for best practice in energy consumption for contract heat treatment.

Monitoring and targeting

To control energy consumption, you need to have a clear idea of how much energy is being used to facilitate the basic activities of your business. If you don't measure it, you can't control it.

Energy monitoring and targeting involves the collection, interpretation and reporting of energy data. It helps you measure and maintain energy performance and identify when energy efficiency has deteriorated, enabling you to make prompt improvements.

Monitoring/targeting starts as an internal process. It involves looking at how your site's energy use changes on a monthly or weekly basis, and setting targets based on your site's best achievable performance.

The next step is to compare your company's energy performance against that of other companies in the heat treatment industry and to set targets based on best practice. This requires an industry performance standard or 'energy benchmark'. Action Energy aims to work with the heat treatment industry to define a benchmark through a study to be funded by the programme.

Proposed Action Energy benchmarking study

The aim of the proposed study is to determine energy benchmarks for the main heat treatment processes:

- carburising;
- nitriding;
- hardening and tempering.

Action Energy has successfully carried out similar energy benchmarking exercises for other sectors, such as the cast metals industry. It is experienced in generating robust data and is aware of possible pitfalls. For example, the study would take into account differences in processes between sites and ensure that the benchmarks compare like with like. All information would be dealt with in the strictest confidence and would not be attributable to a single site or company.



“If you don't measure it, you can't control it”

Action Energy has consulted the CHTA Management Committee and agreed on the need for an initial phase of the study that will require some preliminary surveys of heat treatment sites.

Action Energy provides a *free* review of how well your organisation is using energy. Reviews are conducted by independent energy consultants provided and paid for by the programme. Depending on the size of your energy bill and the nature of your organisation, the survey typically takes between one and five days.

If enough heat treatment sites apply for the free surveys, the next stage would be for Action Energy to collate the information and to decide if there are sufficient grounds for establishing credible benchmarks for energy. If positive, the full

analysis would be undertaken.

What are the benefits to companies?

Action Energy surveys are confidential to each site. They will provide a list of no-cost and low-cost energy savings that you could implement to begin saving energy (and money) immediately. All at no cost to you.

At the same time, information will be gathered in confidence to assess the feasibility of producing a number of common energy benchmarks and best practice guidance on how to operate energy-efficient heat treatment processes. Such energy benchmarks would benefit CHTA members who wish to compare their energy performance with other companies in the sector. It will help them to set realistic targets for energy use and thus control costs.

What is Action Energy?

Action Energy provides free independent advice and information to UK businesses and public-sector organisations to help them cut their energy costs. It offers an extensive library of free publications and a number of services including surveys and interest-free loans. To find out more about Action Energy services and publications, call the Action Energy Helpline on 0800 58 57 94 or visit www.actionenergy.org.uk.

Action Energy is a Carbon Trust programme and is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Scottish Executive, the National Assembly for Wales and Invest Northern Ireland.

How to get involved in the study

Action Energy promotes energy benchmarking, as an important way of helping companies to understand and control their energy costs, and is keen to develop studies where there is the greatest industry demand. But without your support, Action Energy cannot take this study forward. Please give us your views on the proposed project and get involved from the start by requesting a free Action Energy survey.

You can contact Action Energy through the CHTA (e-mail: mail@chta.co.uk) or via the helpline 0800 58 57 94 (e-mail: help@actionenergy.org.uk). Please quote reference (CHTA/Benchmarking) when applying for a survey, so that we can track requests from CHTA members.

SUBCON 2004

"Delivering literally thousands of buyers and specifiers with big budgets to spend, *Subcon 2004* promises to be an incredibly rewarding experience for both exhibitor and visitor alike"

That's the claim at www.subconshow.co.uk for the 15th outing of the biennial show described as "the UK's premier sub-contracting exhibition". It takes place at the NEC Birmingham on 19-22 April 2004. SEA will have a stand there, featuring CHTA, and will be offering member companies an opportunity to highlight their services.

HSE BRINGS ACCIDENTS TO BOOK

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) launched its new Accident Book – approved by the Information Commissioner – at May's RoSPA Conference for Occupational Health and Safety. The new book will help organisations to comply with Data Protection legislation.

The new publication, *The HSE Accident Book* (BI510), has been revised as most existing accident books allow personal details and information to be seen by anyone reading or making an entry in them. The previous version, produced by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), and other similar books, do not comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). In revising the Accident Book, DWP has passed responsibility for production to HSE.

The Information Commissioner, whose role is to enforce the DPA, has ruled that a seven-month lead-in time may be given but that businesses must change their accident book to comply with the DPA by 31 December 2003. The new design allows for accidents to be recorded, while details of individual(s) can be stored separately in a secure location.

In addition to recording incidents, the new book also contains useful information on first-aid and how to manage health and safety information to help prevent

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.

Market Movements

ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE REPLIES RELATING TO 37 CHTA MEMBER SITES

"THIS QUARTER" =

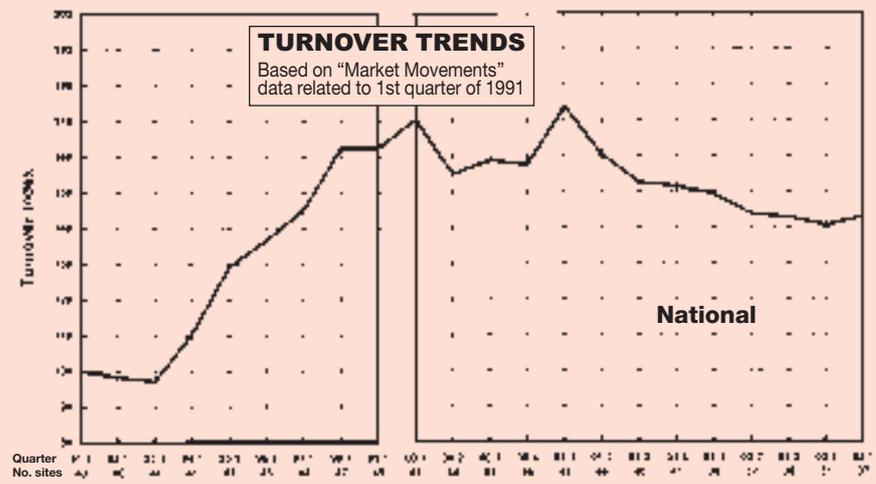
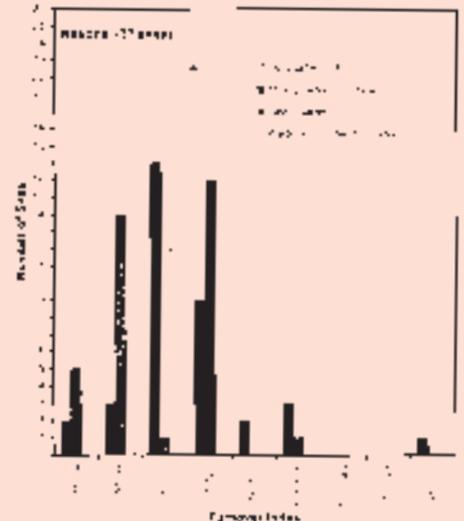
**1 JANUARY –
31 MARCH
2003**

= **TURNOVER INDEX 100**

National

**OVERALL ANALYSIS
(37 SITES)**

	Mean index
This quarter last year	101.6
Last quarter	98.4
Predicted next quarter	101.9



accidents from happening in the first place.

Copies of *The HSE Accident Book* (ISBN 0 7176 2603 2), price £4.75 plus VAT, are available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA (tel: 01787-881165 or fax: 01787-313995). HSE priced publications are also available from all good bookshops.

STATESIDE STATS

NORTH AMERICAN SALES ON THE RISE

After last year's decline, returns from participating MTI members indicate that the market for commercial heat treatment in North America is recovering. March 2003 sales were \$77.6million, a gain of 3.6% on March 2002's \$74.9million. For the first quarter of 2003, reported billings amounted to \$219.2million, an increase of 1.5% over 2002's first quarter when sales totalled \$215.9million.

**CHTA has been
using this logo
since 1990...**



...how about you?

**Please help us to "spread the word"
– proclaim your CHTA membership**

All members are urged to feature CHTA's logo on company letterheads, literature, websites and advertisements.

For this purpose, the logo is now downloadable from the CHTA's website at www.chta.co.uk. Go to the "Members Area" and click on "Using CHTA's logo".