

British Drilling Association

Founded 1976

NEWSLETTER

Committed to Excellence in Health & Safety, Quality of Workmanship and Technical Standards for the Benefit of the Drilling Industry and its Clients

August, 2010

Secretary's Column

The BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has been big news since it began in April. It's several technologies and a whole different ball game from the activities of BDA members but it has put drilling to a wider public. I've been reminded of this several times when people, who know what I do, ask me more about it. No doubt that's been happening to Association members also. Suddenly each one of us has potentially become a local source for information on drilling.

Most people's occupations are readily understood immediately. If someone says they're in banking, construction, retail etc. then we know generally what they do. When we say we're in drilling the usual response is of oil & gas and offshore because no other mental picture crops up. The work that we do in our drilling sector is largely unknown and certainly not understood. It never fails to amaze me that even in construction the majority of trades don't know what we do either.

Underestimating the specialist nature of drilling and the risks involved crops up from time to time. Some fledgling geothermal companies have found this out to their cost having purchased a rig and put non drilling people on the controls. We may not want to be associated with the BP disaster but perhaps there'll be healthier respect for what can go wrong and that drilling is not just another trade.

**All thoughts are welcome, call:
Brian Stringer
01327 264622**

Email: brian@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

Land Drilling - Sector Accreditation Scheme

Work continues on developing the LD-SAS (Land Drilling Sector Accreditation Scheme) for which the BDA is in receipt of a ConstructionSkills grant. Much progress has been made through cross-industry consultation and participation.

In January this year the BDA was awarded a ConstructionSkills grant to develop LD-SAS which will be a scheme for auditing and certifying land drilling enterprises. The project to produce a scheme is partially time driven as the scheme document has to be ready and approved by UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) by November 2010 to fulfill the terms of the grant.

We reported in February and May BDA Newsletters of the aims, need for and benefits of such a scheme. In essence LD-SAS will provide detailed auditing (according to scheme requirements) of an enterprise that provides land drilling services. LD-SAS will interpret the requirements of British Standard BS EN ISO 9001:2008 in the context and specifics of land drilling. Sector schemes in the Highways sector have been in operation for many years and have been made mandatory for certain trades by the Highways Agency. It was because of the variance of 9001 assessment by over 900 certifying bodies that Highways Agency initiated UKAS sector schemes. These are to put more flesh on 9001 bones and thereby separate the wheat from the chaff in the drive for better quality, competence, training and regulatory compliance.

Following the model of existing UKAS/Highways Agency sector schemes, the BDA has been funding and facilitating the process of drafting and reaching agreement on an LD-SAS. Initially this will be for land drilling in ground investigation and numbered as Sector Scheme 24A. The provision of such a scheme will be timely as Eurocode 1997-2 in the UK's National Annex puts technical specifications 22475-2 and 22475-3 (which are being converted into British Standards) as UK requirements. These refer to assessment of enterprises.

A Sector Scheme Advisory Committee (SSAC-LD) comprised of clients (including Highways Agency, Environment Agency, Thames Water, Cross Rail and shortly Network Rail), representative bodies, institutes and others, and chaired by Barry Clarke (CSkills, ICE, Leeds University), was put together by the BDA and formally constituted. This has met in full sessions in May and June to help in the drafting work and review/comment at every stage. Other sub committee briefing meetings have been held. The SSAC-LD, being a cross industry body, is able to take in all points of view and agree on the scheme's contents.

Much has been done in a short time and the work continues to meet the November deadline. We'll report further on progress in our October Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP

New Corporate Members

We welcome these new members to the BDA and look forward to being of assistance to them.

Drift Ground Investigations Ltd

Ground Investigation, Structural Investigation, Diamond Coring, Handheld Window Sampling, Subsidence Investigation

Registered Member

Lee Allardyce

Director

**Springfield Cottage
Springfield Road
Ulverston
Cumbria
LA12 0EE**

Tel: 01229 584297

Fax: 01229 584297

email: Charlie@DriftGI.co.uk
web: www.DriftGI.co.uk

E M Drilling Ltd

Geotechnical and Exploration

Registered Member

Paul Emerson

Director

**Four Winds Farm Buildings
Gloucester Road
Upper Swainswick
Bath
BA1 8AE**

Tel: 01225 855002

Fax: 01225 852795

email: info@emerson-moore.co.uk
web: www.emerson-moore.co.uk

Geo-Ventures (UK) Ltd

Geotechnical Drilling Services and Environmental Drilling Services

Registered Member

Paul Platt

Managing Director

**70 Riverside Close
Waterside
Howley
Warrington
Cheshire
WA1 2JD**

Tel: 01925 240476

Mbl: 07502 437392

email: paul.platt@geo-ventures.co.uk

OAMPS UK Group

Insurance Consultants, Environmental Consultancy, Training.

Registered Member

Andrew Dix

Sales Executive

**Windsor House
High Street
Esher
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KT10 9RY**

Tel: 01372 467266

Fax: 01372 467734

email: andrew.dix@oamps.co.uk
web: www.oamps.co.uk

BDA EVENTS

DINNER DANCE 2010

The ever popular BDA Dinner Dance will be in Birmingham this year, a city that we haven't visited before but one that has a host of attractions.

**Saturday 6th November 2010
Macdonald Burlington Hotel
126 New Street
Birmingham
B2 4JQ**

The hotel has 112 rooms and we've negotiated a double room B & B rate of £99.00 inclusive of Vat to make this year's event more affordable. Rooms will go fast so it's suggested that you book your accommodation now. You can telephone the Reservations Department on 0844 879 9019 but be sure to quote BRIT061110 to obtain the negotiated rate.

Price of tables for 10 people is being held at last year's rate of £825, inclusive of Vat, to follow the affordability theme but with no loss of quality.

BDA GOLF DAY

Our annual golf day is one of the highlights of BDA social activity. If you've never been before then give it a try this year.

**Friday 3rd September 2010
Woodsome Hall Golf Club
Huddersfield**

Held at its regular venue, a challenging and very picturesque course, the day comprises 10 holes in the morning and 18 in the afternoon. Lunch is provided together with evening dinner which is held in the 16th century clubhouse.

Price is £93 per person inclusive of Vat. For further details please contact the BDA Secretary

BDA on the WEB

*Our new fully updated website still awaits re-launch.
It's been a long time coming but we hope you will like it.*

www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

NEW GUIDANCE & STANDARDS IN PREPARATION FOR GROUND SOURCE HEATING

The BDA maintains close links and co-operation with the ground source heating and cooling sector which utilises drilling on an ever increasing basis. The absence of "standards" to which the sector can refer and work to has been of concern for a while. Much work is taking place to rectify this and over the next few months there will be publications issued.

How often are BDA drilling members placed in the position where they're asked to effectively design the ground heat exchanger (GHE) for a ground source heat pump installer? Typically the installer, client, M & E contractor etc. provide little information about ground conditions, exactly what's required or display any understanding about regulatory matters. They just want a price for the drilling and for the drilling contractor to be knowledgeable about all the rest.

Consider the risks for the drilling contractor if it says that a certain number of holes to a certain depth at certain spacing will do the job. Or that holes will be backfilled with pea gravel. Or that he'll supply the loop pipes to whatever specification he considers suitable. All of these decisions if taken by the drilling contractor turn the latter into a designer. Should the installation fail to deliver what it says on the box it's very often that the GHE is undersized i.e. not enough loop pipe for the ground thermal characteristics, can't cope with seasonal changes etc. The efficiency of the system will be affected by type of backfill used, its placement and many other things including flow and pressure through the loops. We have to remember that a system should last 50 years, shouldn't leak over this period etc. How many drilling contractors have the design competencies and the necessary PI insurance to take on these risks? And what about the installers, clients, M & E contractors themselves - what is their design capability, what do they know about the ground or materials or backfill etc.? Where are the standards, guidance, training and qualifications so that there's more professionalism? Rules of thumb are hardly appropriate when all the factors for a sustainable, efficient, durable and environmental friendly ground source system are added up.

The ground source heat pump sector has the potential to significantly grow. Government targets to increase the amount of renewable heat by 2020 while ambitious could lead to a boom in the sector. This from quite a low base at present compared to other countries. The last thing that the sector needs is a poor reputation arising from poorly designed and incorrectly installed systems. This happened in Germany several years ago when its sector started to grow. A series of bad jobs knocked its growth back for a period. There are reports in UK of systems failing or rapidly declining in efficiency within months of installation because someone did not do the necessary calculations or pay enough attention to the GHE. There are also reports of bad drilling practices including health & safety issues, inadequate backfilling creating contamination pathways, interception of artesian water without proper seals being put in place, runoff of flush returns to watercourses etc. etc.

The BDA, through its Secretary, sits on GSHPA Council (Ground Source Heat Pump Association) and in particular on its Training & Standards Sub-Committee. Andy Howley of Loopmaster (Europe) Ltd., also a BDA Corporate Member, chairs the latter. Through these links the BDA inputs and helps bring its experience to what's required in the ground source sector. We've had BSI Standards and BDA Guidance in drilling for many years together with competence requirements for personnel. It's one of the BDA's constant tasks to maintain and improve these so that health/safety and quality are not impaired.

The problem in the UK ground source sector is a lack of commonly agreed standards, guidance and practice. Many people and companies have come into the sector from non-ground backgrounds e.g. heating engineers, boiler and plumbing specialists etc. This lack of standards is even more surprising when we look abroad to other countries who have been installing ground source systems for a great deal longer than UK. In countries such as Sweden, Germany, Austria and the USA ground source systems are commonplace. You would have thought that we could just import their standards and guidance. Sadly however much of what they have is not directly applicable or sufficiently developed for UK circumstances or regulatory framework.

The GSHPA is preparing a document called "Closed Loop Vertical Borehole - Design, Installation and Material Standards". This should be available for a review process within the next couple of months. BDA's Secretary has been one of the contributors to the drafting of the document. The BDA will be invited to review the document and if any member would like to become involved with this then please contact the BDA Secretary.

The Environment Agency (EA) is also preparing a document called "Environmental Good Practice Guide for Ground Source Heating and Cooling Schemes". A recent GSHPA - EA meeting, at which the BDA was present, was held to examine both the GSHPA and EA draft documents so that they would be aligned and non conflicting. EA has regulatory responsibility for open loop systems and an interest in closed loop systems.

Before the end of the year both documents should be widely available. They will for the first time provide a much needed foundation for what should be best practice in the sector. On this base can be built other elements such as qualifications, training, certification, and common understanding between clients, consultants, installers, contractors and regulators. There's still a huge way to go but the prize is worth having, that of a ground source sector that's fully competent, produces quality work and enjoys consumer confidence. For the drilling sector this is crucial as the ground source sector is a major opportunity for growth in drilling itself.

HSE Changes

Dr Donald Lamont, HM Principal Specialist Inspector, has retired from HSE at end of July. He was Head of Tunnel and Ground Engineering in the Civil Engineering Specialist Team, part of the Construction Division.

From August onwards he will be working part time on matters associated with health and safety on the Crossrail project. He also hopes to set up his own consultancy dealing with hyperbaric and tunnel safety issues. He'll continue to be Chairman of BSI committee B/513 (Construction Equipment) and its working group B/513/2 (Drilling, Piling and Tunnelling). Through the latter the BDA will be maintaining contact with Donald on EN standards, particularly on the current revision of 791 and 996.

Donald Lamont has been of much assistance to the BDA over a very long period that stretches back to the 1980s. Always available for both off-the-record advice and on-the-record discussions, his knowledge of the drilling sector was second to none in HSE and therefore meaningful conversations could take place, albeit not always what the industry would have voted for at times. We thank him for the help he's given.

BDA Audit Information

BDA Audit is the successor to BDA Drilling Accreditation and differs from the former scheme in that all audited operatives possess an NVQ, level 2, in Land Drilling and valid CSCS card in Land Drilling. It's open to Lead Drillers / Drillers and any drilling discipline.

It's becoming a necessity. Clients will be specifying it in order to conform to Eurocode & British Standards (BS EN ISO 22475-3 which is being published shortly and Amendment 2 of BS 5930 which is being prepared) and also the revised SISG (Site Investigation Steering Group) documents.

Please note that the BDA Driller Accreditation Scheme was wound up in 2005. Those who belonged to it should no longer be claiming that they are currently BDA Accredited. This would be an act of misrepresentation and the Association retains the right to take action should evidence reach it of this taking place.

BDA Audit is the only accreditation now issued for drilling operatives. Don't get left behind in not being able to satisfy tender requirements. Apply for details now to the BDA office and get ahead of the crowd.

NEW PUBLICATION Contaminated Land

Guidance for Safe Intrusive Activities on Contaminated or Potentially Contaminated Land

This new document is a complete revision of the BDA "Guidance Notes for the Safe Drilling of Landfills & Contaminated Land" published in 1992. The original document became famous for introducing site categorisation - green, yellow and red - and went on to being being republished by Thomas Telford as SISG Part 4.

The new document comprises 52 pages and is in A4 booklet format.

It is essential reading for all who have to specify or carry out intrusive activity on contaminated land and features much on CDM 2007 and how to decide as to the site categorisation.

The document is available from the BDA Office @ £20 + £1.50 post & packing for BDA members. Telephone 01327 264622, fax 01327 264623, email office@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

You may also like to order the Guidance for the Safe Operation of Cable Percussion Rigs and Equipment at the same price which was published in 2005 or its sister document on Dynamic Sampling published in 2007.

SISG Update

The process of revising the SISG (Site Investigation Steering Group) suite of documents published by ICE (Thomas Telford) in 1993 has progressed slowly for a number of years now. One of the documents of the 4-document suite is the so called Yellow Book - "Specification for ground investigation" and another is "Guidelines for the safe investigation by drilling of landfill and contaminated land". The AGS has been revising the former and the BDA the latter.

For various reasons the whole process has been stalled on several occasions and gone into hibernation. Review and comments on the drafts by members of SISG has been lengthy. The BDA recently suggested a way forward - that of combining the efforts of AGS and BDA in a joint working group to push ahead with final agreement on all remaining issues. A meeting funded by BDA was convened at ICE on 14th July of this ad-hoc working group which concentrated on the yellow book draft and will move forward to ensuring that the other draft documents are also dealt with. Hopefully momentum is once again restored.

AND FINALLY

Bob Perry of JKS Boyles, and a former colleague of myself in Craelius days, has hung up his drilling helmet and retired. His contribution to the industry was a large one and he'll be missed.

Bob, his pipe and love for drilling were inseparable. He gave up the pipe on doctor's orders 18 months ago but I suspect his drilling passion will continue well into his retirement.

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