GEOTECHNICAL COURSE DATES:

Rock Description Workshop
17th June 2015, 12th August 2015

In Situ Testing
23rd March 2015

Lab Testing
31st March 2015

GEOTECHNICAL COURSE DATES:

Geotechnical Foundation Design - 3rd June 2015, 16th July 2015

Soil Description Workshop
4th June 2015, 15th July 2015

H&S COURSE DATES:

10SH Avoiding Danger from Underground Services
13th March 2015, 24th April 2015

10SH Safe Supervision of Geotechnical Sites:
29 April - 1 March 2015

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March 2015| Issue 38

Piling for the future of our energy

Geotechnical and structurally designed piles are used on the challenging new Dummaglass windfarm project just outside of Inverness, Scotland

Keeping on the right side of Health & Safely Law - CSCS

The role of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme

Latest release of HoleBASE SI

Transforming laboratory scheduling

Geotechnica 2010 - A Retrospective

A look back at the second Geotechnica as we build towards 2015's show

Contents

Welcome

Welcome to the 38th Edition of **theGeotechnica** - the UK's fastest growing online geotechnically focussed e-magazine.

This month, once again, we have a fantastic line-up of insightful and informative articles that make for a must-read.

The first article of this month's issue is also our cover article and comes from Debbie Darling of Jooce Media on behalf of Aarsleff. This month Debbie reveals details of Aarsleff's recent civil engineering work on Dummaglass Windfarm, just south of Inverness, Scotland.

Writing our second article for this month is Julian Lovell, Managing Director at the Equipe Group. This month Julian continues his series on Health and Safety Law. This month Julian turns his focus to the role of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Cards and which cards are appropriate for geotechnical and drilling works..

The third article comes from Calum Spires of the Equipe Group. This month is the second in a series of articles from Calum that will take a look back at previous Geotechnica events in the build-up to this year's event in July. This month Calum takes a look at Geotechnica 2010 - the second event in Geotechnica's history.

Our fourth article this month comes from Keynetix' Managing Director, Roger Chandler. This month Roger unveils details about the latest build of Keynetix' hugely popular and successful HoleBASE SI software, which now features electronic laboratory scheduling, and also integration with ALcontrol's @mis service.

As with every new edition of the magazine, the Editorial Team here at **theGeotechnica** will be on the lookout for even more new, original and interesting content from all corners of the sector, and would actively encourage all readers to come forward with any appropriate and relevant content - whether it be a small news item or a detailed case study of works recently completed or being undertaken. If this content is media rich and interactive, then all the better. We are looking to increase the already large readership of the magazine through better social media integration and promotion, as well as improving content month on month.

Finally, for any content that is submitted we will ensure that an advertising space, proportionate to the quality of content provided, is reserved should you wish to place an advert in that single edition of the magazine. We hope you enjoy this month's edition of the magazine and are inspired to contribute your own content for the coming editions of **theGeotechnica**.

Editorial Team,
theGeotechnica

AARSLEFF PILES SUPPORTING WINDFARM PROJECTS

Writing for **theGeotechnica** *this month is Debbie Darling of Jooce Media on behalf of* Aarsleff*. This month Debbie reveals details of Aarsleff's recent civil engineering work on Dummaglass Windfarm, just south of Inverness, Scotland.*

Already making a reputation for itself assisting in the construction of a number of wind farm projects across the UK, Aarsleff's latest was the £16 million contract awarded to RJ McLeod by SSE Renewables, to undertake the main Civil Engineering works on Dunmaglass Windfarm, located on the Dunmaglass Estate, 25km south of Inverness, Scotland.

Dunmaglass was awarded to Aarsleff by RJ McLeod, on the back of its already successful involvement on SSE Renewables' (SSER) Strathy North Wind Farm installation, near the northern-most coast of the Scottish mainland. Being closer to Norway than Nottingham, Strathy was extremely challenging for Aarsleff, who undertook the foundation works for the 33-turbine project, installing 5No. foundations (out of 33No. total) with 54No. piles in each.

Also commissioned by SSER and also comprising of 33 turbines, the Dunmaglass installation can claim to be one of the highest mainland wind farm installation, at between 725 and 825 metres above sea level, in the case of the piled foundations. When complete, in 2016, it will provide an installed capacity of approximately 94 megawatts (MW) and contribute to Scotland meeting its renewable energy targets.

"... the Dunmaglass installation can claim to be one of the highest mainland wind farm installation, at between 725 and 825 metres above sea level..."

Main contractor RJ McLeod (RJM), having worked successfully with Aarsleff on a number of similar wind farm projects across Scotland, including Strathy North, appointed Aarsleff to install 5no. piled foundations for the project. Works commenced 2014 and are on-going, on account of Aarsleff having to battle against some of the harshest weather conditions the UK can throw at it, in addition to the region's seasonal heavy snowfalls.

The structural and geotechnical design of the individual piles for the Dunmaglass project were undertaken by Aarsleff, following the detailed design of the piled foundations by Donaldson Associates Glasgow (DAL). Throughout the design phase Aarsleff was in close cooperation with RJM, DAL and SSER and their designers Grontmij, to ensure a buildable piled solution could be achieved in equally challenging ground conditions. Aarsleff also chose to use experienced, local labour where it was practical to do so. Each piled foundation on the project was supported by 40no. 339-mm diameter thick walled (12mm) steel tube piles, which were constructed using recycled North Sea drill casing. The individual piles themselves had a design value of compressive loads nominally 1100kN, with an un-factored value of 800kN.

"The individual piles themselves had a design value of compressive loads nominally 1100kN, with an un-factored value of 800kN."

For the project it was important that the level of joints in the piles were managed, to ensure they were below the zone of induced bending moments. This was achieved through ground investigation, supplemented by the installation of non-working probe piles immediately in advance of the main piling to determine rockhead levels. Compliance with specification was controlled by a regime of dynamic load testing on working piles.

The Dunmaglass project, worth an estimated £300,000, adds to the growing portfolio of successful wind farm projects being completed by Aarsleff and given the often remote locations and challenging weather conditions typical of these installations, is testimony to the company's technical competence and knowledge of the renewables energy sectors. ■

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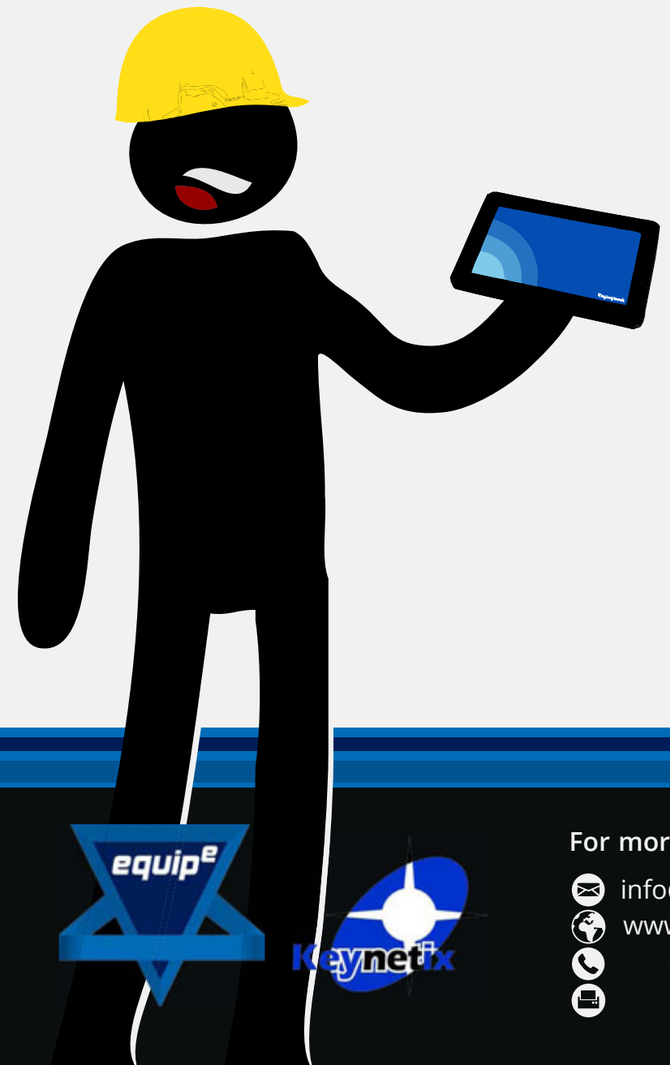

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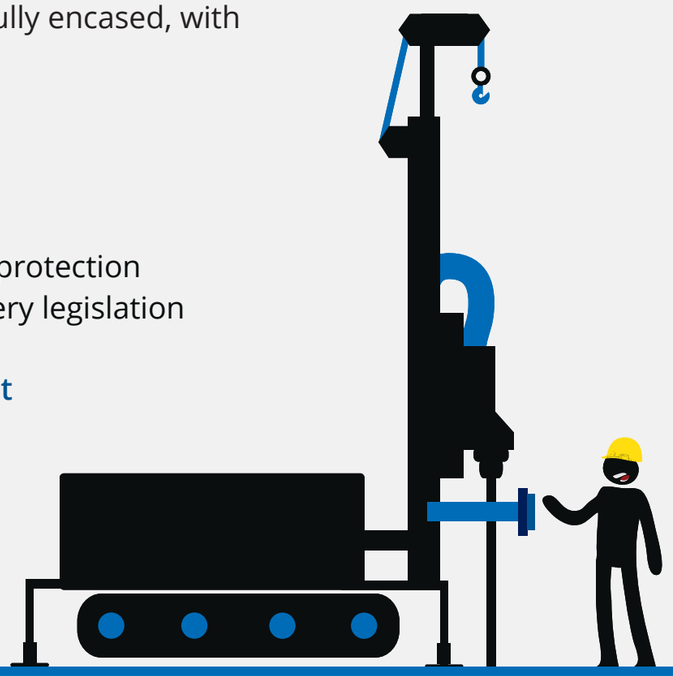

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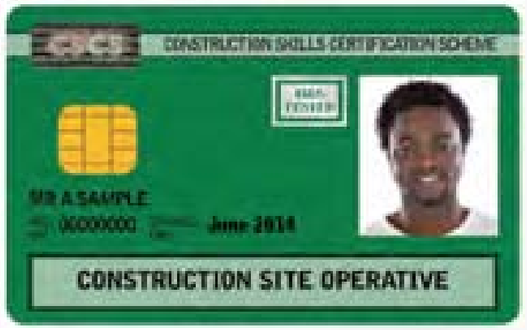
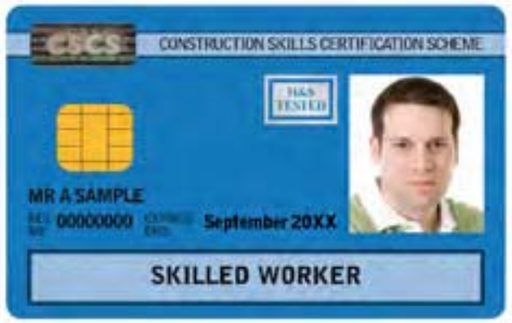
KEEPING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY LAW

CSCS CARDS

Writing for **theGeotechnica** *this month is Julian Lovell, Managing Director at the* Equipe Group*. This month Julian continues to discuss Health and Safety Law, with a focus on the role of Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Cards.*





Images of CSCS Cards courtesy of http://www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/types-of-cards/

Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) delivers a card scheme for industry that requires individuals working in construction related activities to have passed a Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Health Safety and Environment Test. The CITB Health Safety and Environment Test is a computer-based multiple choice test for a basic level of health and safety knowledge and provides a good way of making sure new entrants have threshold knowledge of health and safety. Other similar schemes are available but CSCS with a national database and rapid electronic checking system makes it the favourite scheme for the geotechnical and drilling industry and has been adopted as a mandatory requirement by many clients.

"The CITB Health Safety and Environment Test is a computer-based multiple choice test for a basic level of health and safety knowledge…"

Applying for a CSCS Card

The mechanism for obtaining a card essentially comprises three stages;

1. training,
2. testing
3. and application.

The CSCS card should be directly linked to the work activity carried out by that individual but is not a competency qualification in its own right. Employers need to be careful that the trade or work occupation on the back of the card matches the work activity to be carried out, and that the actual level of qualification, experience and training of the individual is sufficient. In the majority of cases this will relate to a National Vocational Qualification (N/SVQ).

"Where less experienced staff are engaged to carry out construction work, additional supervision must be provided…"

Where less experienced staff are engaged to carry out construction work, additional supervision must be provided to make sure adequate risk control is achieved. It is recommended that the applicant is provided with formal construction specific health and safety training. This could be in-house within a larger organisation or for smaller organisations, a number of providers undertake suitable training courses. See AGS Guidance on Training and Competency.

To apply for a CSCS card the applicant must:

1. demonstrate they have achieved the recognised qualifications required for their occupation
2. pass the relevant Health Safety and Environment test
3. submit a signed application form
4. pay the correct fees for the test and the card.

Types of Card

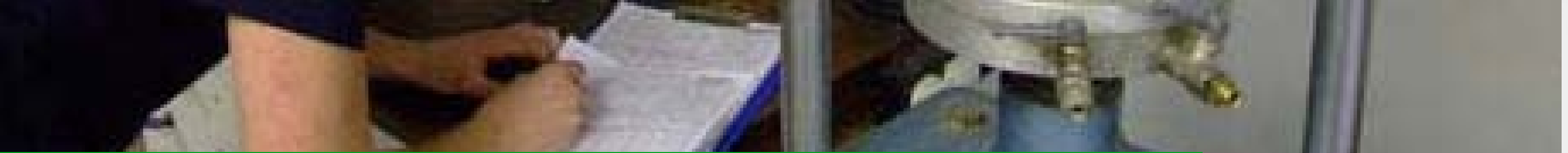
A number of different types of card and associated occupations are available and the choice of card should reflect the training, experience and qualifications of the individual applicant as well as their occupation. The choices of card do change over a period of time but currently the most common cards are:

- Graduate (Technical Supervisory and Management) – Red Card
- Experienced (Technician, Supervisor or Manager – Red Card
- Trainee (Technical , Supervisory and Management) – Red Card
- Manager – Black Card
- Advanced Craft/ Supervisory – Gold Card
- Professionally Qualified Person (Member of ICE, GeolSoc etc) – White Card
- Academically Qualified Person (hold certain degrees, HND's, HNC's, CIOB Certificates and NEBOSH diplomas) – White Card
- Skilled Worker – Blue Card
- Construction Related Occupation (e.g. Ground Specialist) – White Card
- Construction Site Visitor – Yellow Card

The White CRO (Construction Related Occupation) cards are often used as the 'loophole' for obtaining a card for the majority of geotechnical site staff. Numerous occupations are available for this card including Ground Specialist and many employers have chosen this card to get staff on to site. The card often does not relate directly to the work activity being carried out by the individuals and on many sites, particularly those run by Main Contractors, these are now checked and the individuals rejected from site. A more appropriate card, particularly for the site geologists and engineers is the Professionally Qualified Person (PQP) Card as long as the individuals are members of the recognised professional bodies.

"The card often does not relate directly to the work activity being carried out by the individuals and on many sites…"

Blue Skilled Worker cards would be required for all Lead Drillers and Drilling Support Operatives and these should relate to the appropriate Level 2 NVQ and be endorsed against the type of drilling (Ground



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Advanced Laboratory Testing Awareness - £150 + VAT

Laboratory testing has progressed in recent years due to developments of computerised measurements and advances in the acquisition of data. Advances in electronics have also enabled the measurement of small changes in stress and strain both in and around the sample. This seminar will provide perspectives of these advances through the eyes of the practicing Designers, Engineers and manufacturers.

Sponsored by GEOLABS

NEXT SEMINAR DATE: 28th May 2015

Geophysics in Geotechnical Practice - £150 + VAT

The seminar will increase the awareness regarding the correct use of geophysics for noninvasive investigations, structural and geological mapping and ground modelling which can provide an in depth and continuous understanding of both surface and subsurface conditions and can also reduce the risk of underground hazards and optimise budgets.

Speakers: Dr Simon Hughes - TerraDat, Kim Beesley - European Geophysical Services

Sponsored by TERRA DAT geophysical innovation

NEXT SEMINAR DATE: 2nd June 2015

CPT Technical Seminar - £150 + VAT

An essential comprehensive training course and refresher for geotechnical and geo-environmental practitioners involved in Cone Penetration Testing for Onshore and Offshore Geotechnics. The course is devoted to raising awareness of current test procedures, advances, data derived from the tests and the importance of quality control.

Speakers: Dr John Powell - GEOLABS Ltd, Tom Lunne

Sponsored by IN SITU SITE INVESTIGATION

NEXT SEMINAR DATE: 23rd - 24th June 2015

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Investigation/Well Drilling/Geothermal/Marine) and the type of rig (Dynamic Sampling/Cable Percussion/Rotary).

N.B. Older NVQs and CSCS cards may refer to a 'Driller' – this was the previous title for a Support Operative (Second Man) and not the driller (Lead Driller) as the industry knows.

Green cards are for general labourers and do not relate to any specific work activity. Due to the abuse of the system in the recent past, Green Cards will only now be provided by CSCS where individuals can prove that they have passed a one day Health and Safety course. The one day IOSH Working Safely on geotechnical sites course run by Equipe is one of those courses.

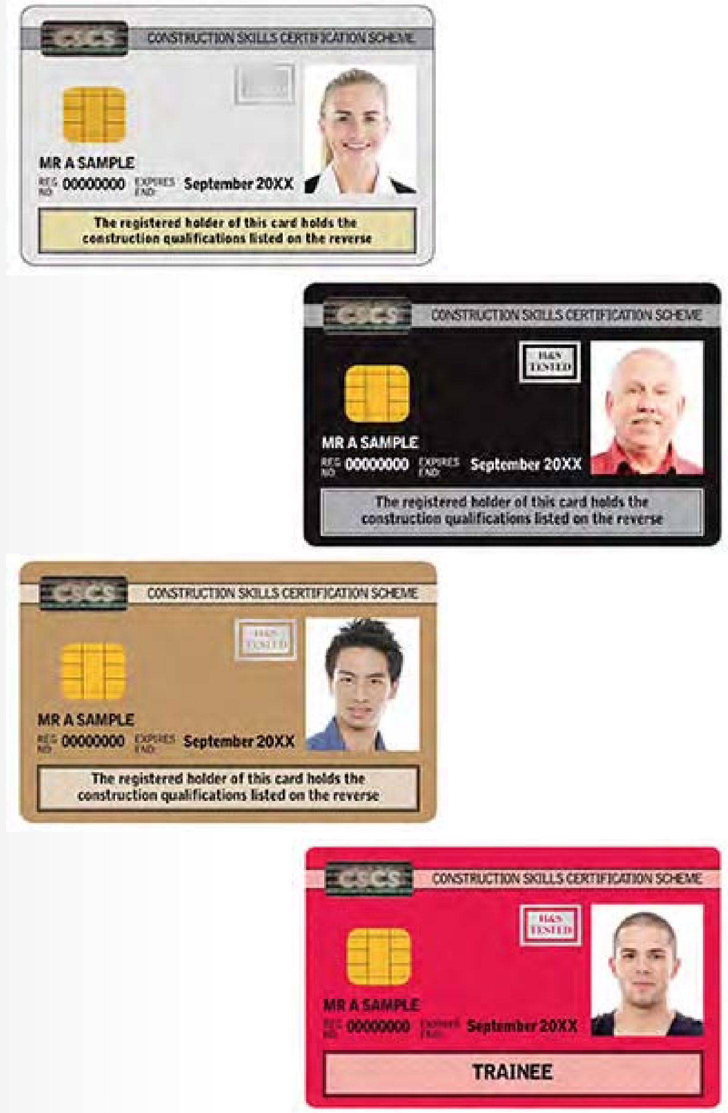
> **"The Yellow Construction Site Visitor card is not considered to be suitable for staff carrying out any work activity on a site and should be applied for with caution."**

The Yellow Construction Site Visitor card is not considered to be suitable for staff carrying out any work activity on a site and should be applied for with caution.

Card Validation

Most construction sites will now require site staff to possess the appropriate CSCS card for their work activity and cards are checked prior to starting on site. The scheme has been introducing a smart card reader which can instantly check the validity of cards on site in real time and Apps are also currently being developed.

It is important on all geotechnical sites that CSCS cards are checked for validity and appropriate to the work activity as this will reflect the level of CITB Health Safety and Environmental Test which has been passed. As well as the site based systems, cards can also be checked on-line at http://www.cscs.uk.com/check-a-card or through a call to the CSCS Helpdesk on 0344 9944 777. Contact www.cscs.uk.com for further information in respect of obtaining cards.



EQUIPE TRAINING

LOLER Training - Lifting Gear Examiners Course

Carl Stahl®

Course Outline

This course is for those involved in the inspection or statutory examination of lifting gear in service, this two-day course aims to provide delegates with a thorough grounding of the law and standards pertaining to lifting gear, as well as teaching the statutory requirements for, inspection, rejection and reporting of lifting gear in service. It will also provide some practical advice that will enable those who attend to carry out lifting gear inspections confidently.

Course Contents

- Definitions
- Law and Standards
- Force influences in lifting gear
- Statutory Certificates & Reporting
- Principles for Selection of Lifting Gear (general)
- Marking, Storage & Handling (general)
- In-service Inspections (general)
- Materials used in lifting gear
- Inspection of lifting gear - Explanation, Demonstration & Imitation, Examination of black museum samples identifying faults, wear and common malpractice etc.
- Examination of lifting gear A practical assessment of lifting gear examination carried out on prepared used samples followed by group discussion
- Legal Requirements (Health & Safety at Work Act), PUWER, LOLER, European Directives, Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations.

24 - 25 MARCH 2015
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Summary

At the end of the course the delegates should be able to:

- Carry out statutory 'in service' inspections.
- Demonstrate knowledge of examination, storage, marking and handling of lifting gear
- Demonstrate knowledge of terminology, law, standards and safe working practices concerning lifting gear
- Offer sound advise to other users
- Maintain a safe working environment whilst working with lifting gear.

JUST £375 + VAT

This two-day course is carried out in accordance with the code of practice for the safe use of lifting equipment as published by LEEA. It includes a number of short written confirmation tests and a practical lifting gear inspection assessment leading to certification on successful completion.

Who should attend?

The course is aimed at those involved in the inspection or statutory examination of lifting gear in service. It is also suitable for those who are involved with, or give advice to, users of lifting gear.

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CPD Approved Courses for Geotechnical Academy Alumni

Specifying Site Investigations

This one day course will look at the various methods available to carry out intrusive and non intrusive investigation. Whilst the course will concentrate on geotechnical methods some geo-environmental methods will be briefly discussed. The course will look at the aims of SI and categorise the various stages in an investigation.

Soil Description Workshop

From 2007 new European Standards have started replacing the British Standards (Codes) under which investigations in the UK have been carried out. UK working practice will have to change to meet these new requirements but few practitioners are aware of the changes or the timetable. The workshop will comprise a series of lectures on the changes, and lectures on soil description followed by practical sessions describing soil samples.

Rock Description Workshop

From 2007 new European Standards have started replacing the British Standards (Codes) under which investigations in the UK have been carried out. UK working practice will have to change to meet these new requirements but few practitioners are aware of the changes or the timetable. The workshop will comprise a series of lectures on the changes, and lectures on rock description followed by practical sessions describing rock and compiling mechanical logs of rock core.

In Situ Testing

The course will cover both the theory and the practice of various In Situ Testing techniques used on typical geotechnical projects. In addition the courses will consider the effect that Eurocodes will have on the UK's current practice. This course provides an overview of in situ tests used in common practice and some of the more specialist tests together with their advantages and limitations.

Field Instrumentation and Monitoring

The course comprises a comprehensive one day appreciation of the complete process involved in Instrumentation and Monitoring in the geotechnical environment. The course provides an overview of the current guidance documents and their requirements. The course will consider the design of both individual installations and the installation of suites of instruments in the wider site contex.

Geotechnical Foundation Design

This one day course will provide a general overview of foundation design. It will include an assessment of the use and choice of shallow foundations and piles. It will cover the derivation of bearing capacity formula and their use. Exercises will be carried out to calculate the working loads and settlement of simple foundations. The methods used to calculate these will be in accordance with those described in Eurocode.

Safe Working on Geotechnical Sites

This one day course is developed by industry specialists within RPA Safety Services and Equipe Training as a foundation to site safety. Its aim is to impart the core safety skills required of those working on geotechnical sites by building on their existing specialist technical skills. After attending the course, candidates should be able to identify hazards on site, understand basic safety legislation, participate fully and confidently in site safety consultation and manage priority risks to a sufficient standard.

IOSH Avoiding Danger from Underground Services

Partnering with RPA Safety Services once again, Equipe provide another IOSH certified health and safety course. This one day course is aimed at anybody involved in specifying, instructing, managing, supervising or actually breaking ground and really addresses the problems and risks related to underground services, which may be encountered during both planning and execution of geotechnical projects.

IOSH Safe Supervision of Geotechnical Sites

Equipe has partnered with RPA Safety Services, an independent occupational health and safety specialist, to provide a unique IOSH certified course for the Drilling and Geotechnics industry. The three day course is certified by IOSH, is specifically focussed on the geotechnical industry and provides a totally unique and relevant Health and Safety course for managers and supervisors.

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GEOTECHNICA 2010 A RETROSPECTIVE

Writing for **theGeotechnica** *this month is Calum Spires of the Equipe Group. This month is the first in a series of articles from Calum that will take a look back at previous Geotechnica events in the build-up to this year's event in July. This month Calum takes a look back at Geotechnica 2010.*

July 2010 may have seen Spain win football's World Cup in comfortable fashion (even despite Nigel De Jong's best kung-fu efforts), and Serena Williams may have dominated Vera Zvonareva to win her 13th grand Slam title, but in the geotechnical world, there was only one focus – the return of Geotechnica. In its freshman year Geotechnica made a statement to the wider geotechnical public – this was the place to be to be for anyone and everyone involved in the geotechnical, geothermal, geo-environmental and drilling sectors. Although the 2009 event was by no means exceptionally large, it was exceptionally well received in the majority of geotechnical eyes and had laid down a marker for all future exhibitions of its ilk. The success of the event had led to concerns about 2010's exhibition, and whether it would be a sophomore slump for Equipe's brainchild, or whether it would make a triumphant return and a comeback of the year.

Reflecting on 2009's success, Managing Director of the Equipe Group, Julian Lovell said, "The success of Geotechnica's debut in 2009 gave us great heart. From the feedback we got we knew that we had created a winner. People were enamoured with the relaxed atmosphere we had created in the beautiful Oxfordshire countryside, and even a year later the geotechnical public were still raving about the geotechnical conference talks. That's what most pleased us about the event, it really got people to stop for a moment, think about the state of our industry, and actually talk about what we need to do, and can do, to improve, grow and prosper."

"That's what most pleased us about the event, it really got people to stop for a moment, think about the state of our industry, and actually talk about what we need to do, and can do, to improve, grow and prosper."

By mid-2010 the UK's economy was by no means prosperous, but following a David Cameron led Conservative win in the May General Election, there were signs that the worst financial period the UK had seen since the 1980's, was in the rear-view mirror. The geotechnical and land drilling industries had taken a fairly substantial hit during the recession, however the workload was slowly starting to increase, with projects such as High Speed 2 (HS2) on the horizon, there was a clamour for more events to help build communication networks and increase collaboration for the forthcoming influx of work.

Operations Director at Equipe, Keith Spires was quick to emphasise the importance for Geotechnica to capitalise on this increasing confidence and workload found in the industry: "After looking at the state of the industry in early 2010 in comparison to 2009, we knew that there would be an opportunity, and a very necessary need for more open discussion and collaboration in the sector. If we were going to tackle the amount of work that was approaching head-on, then as an industry we would need to be prepared. Geotechnica 2010 not only had to live up to the expectations set by the previous year, but it also needed to increase participation from the further reaches of the geotechnical industry. We

"If we were going to tackle the amount of work that was approaching head-on, then as an industry we would need to be prepared."

needed more suppliers and more contractors to tackle this workload to match the client's needs."

Julian continued: "Not only that, but we needed to create more opportunity for networking between all of these companies in order to ensure the most fluid and productive discussions – making all of our lives easier when the level of work kicks up a gear. The better our communication and understanding, the smoother the workflow and the more efficient our projects can become. We were confident that Geotechnica 2010 could deliver the same thought provoking conference talks, alongside an excellent array of exhibiting companies, whilst also offering an increased opportunity for networking and discussions."

"We were confident that Geotechnica 2010 could deliver the same thought provoking conference talks..."

Once again Geotechnica was based within the premises of The Upton Estate, just outside of Banbury in Oxfordshire. However in 2010 the event moved location within the Estate to allow easier access for exhibition materials, as well as the heavy plant and machinery so often associated with geotechnical services. This new location was set against the back-drop of the gorgeous view from the top of Edge Hill – something which was greatly admired and appreciated by the many in attendance.

Before a run of unruly mid-summer weather hit Oxfordshire, Geotechnica 2010 commenced and enjoyed two days of particularly sun-soaked weather. Marquees were erected, flooring was laid and the second Geotechnica took place on Wednesday the 7th and Thursday the 8th of July. Returning to sponsor the event once again were Geotechnical Engineering and Geotechnical Observations, although they were joined by Geothermal Supplies, Drillwell and also Dywidag Systems International. The open-plan nature of the marquees once again encouraged movement and communication from visitor to exhibitor, client to contractor and supplier to buyer – however there was also an added focus on outdoor exhibits, with more rig contractors such as MGS-FRASTE and JKS Boyles opting to exhibit their larger drilling rigs outside.

"The event in 2010 felt noticeably larger-scale then the previous year. We had more exhibitors keen to bring and showcase larger equipment, which although was at times a logistical nightmare, definitely gave the event a more grandiose feel to it. This was achieved whilst the marquees helped to maintain the down-to-earth feel that we had strived for in 2009. We were conscious of the fact that we wanted the exhibition to keep to its roots, whilst also developing into a more mature, international event." continued Keith.

"We had more exhibitors keen to bring and showcase larger equipment, which although was at times a logistical nightmare, definitely gave the event a more grandiose feel to it."

Julian was quick to concur: "With more rigs and plant on show outdoors, we wanted to encourage more people to step outside into the sunshine, and so we created more social areas, creating a kind of 'food court'. It's almost a fact of life that areas involving food and a cup of coffee to be hives of activity and communication.

"We also knew that creating more opportunity for communication and networking was going to be essential prior to the show, and so we decided to introduce a Networking Event on the Wednesday evening. We decided against a traditional 'sit-down meal', as we wanted the evening to be in keeping with the relaxed and informal nature of the rest of the exhibition."

This more 'relaxed and informal' event would come in the shape of a traditional wood-cooked hog roast, complete with a fully licensed bar and soft drinks. However probably the most memorable aspect of the evening was a performance from The Mangled Wurzels – a Wurzels' tribute band.

"However probably the most memorable aspect of the evening was a performance from The Mangled Wurzels..."

"Personally, I loved them, I thought they went down a treat!" smiled Julian.

With the focus on increased networking and communication, in addition to the previous year's rousing success, it was no surprise to the Equipe team that the Technical Conference portion of Geotechnica was once again so widely well received. The conference was again full of insightful and educational talks, achieving the aim of one of Geotechnica's founding principles – to aid industry learning.

"On the first morning of the event the conference focussed on the health and safety responsibilities of everyone, from company directors, right down to on-site technicians."

On the first morning of the event the conference focussed on the health and safety responsibilities of everyone, from company directors, right down to on-site technicians. Natalie Puce of Berrymans Lace Mawer and Sarah Snelling of the HSE both discussed the consequences of not managing risk in drilling and geotechnics, Tony Conlon of Henshalls Insurance Brokers focussed on insurance for the geotechnical industry, whilst Tom Phillips of RPA Safety Services delivered an insightful look into CDM2007 and the roles and responsibilities involved in the legislation. However on the Wednesday afternoon the focus shifted to geothermal drilling. Michael Moggeridge of Magpie Environmental Drilling discussed the economics of geothermal drilling, before James Mansell of Clear Solutions discussed the effective use of polymers to maximise efficiency. Finally Steve Costello of Geothermal Supplies wrapped up the day's talks with a look at loop installation.

The act of obtaining a Class 1 sample and new monitoring innovations were the focal point of the second day's conference talks. Matthew Baldwin of Soil Engineering discussed the UT100 sample, whilst Stuart Tod of Geotechnical Engineering focussed on the U70W. Wesley Wray of Boart Longyear offered another, non-traditional way of obtaining a Class 1 sample using rota-sonic sampling that got a lot of the attending delegates discussing the value of sonic drilling for the future. The following session's speakers all talked about monitoring innovations and their potential to aid best practice. The session was led by the extremely highly regarded slope stability expert, Professor Eddie Bromhead of Kingston University. Eddie discussed the use of monitoring equipment in geotechnics, and asked why the industry should spend time getting to grips with the technology and utilising it to its potential. Dr Andrew Ridley of Geotechnical Observations built on this by introducing state of the art animation techniques to monitor slopes. Finally John Booth of Geotechnics gave a case study of Geotechnics' use of monitoring on the Weymouth Relief Road.

Once again, the technical conference was immensely well-received by the attending delegates. The conference sessions again asked questions about which techniques available would be best suited for upcoming works, as well as educating attendees about the best practices and parameters to use said techniques within.

"The conference sessions again asked questions about which techniques available would be best suited for upcoming works..."

Julian Lovell again offered his summary of the conference, and how it built on 2009's debut effort: "Having introduced our own type of conference in 2009 that was less about 'preaching', and more about educating and promoting discussion amongst the general geotechnical public, we were keen for 2010's conference to follow in those footsteps. However we also wanted to push the boat out and start discussing things that we felt were especially relevant at the time, such as an increasing focus on health and safety, and also the difficult nature of obtaining a Class 1 sample."

Technical demonstrations of Vac Ex's vacuum excavation, Clear Solutions grout pumping, geothermal grouting from MGS, air bursting from Cirrus International, and also the return of Geotechnical Engineering's slope climbing P45 and P60 rigs were also offered.

"Overall the 2010 event built perfectly on the foundations that its predecessor had laid."

Overall the 2010 event built perfectly on the foundations that its predecessor had laid. Networking may have been the buzzword for Geotechnica's second outing, however with the increased size of the exhibition and excellent attendance for the technical conference – communication, promotion and learning were also heavily prevalent. ■

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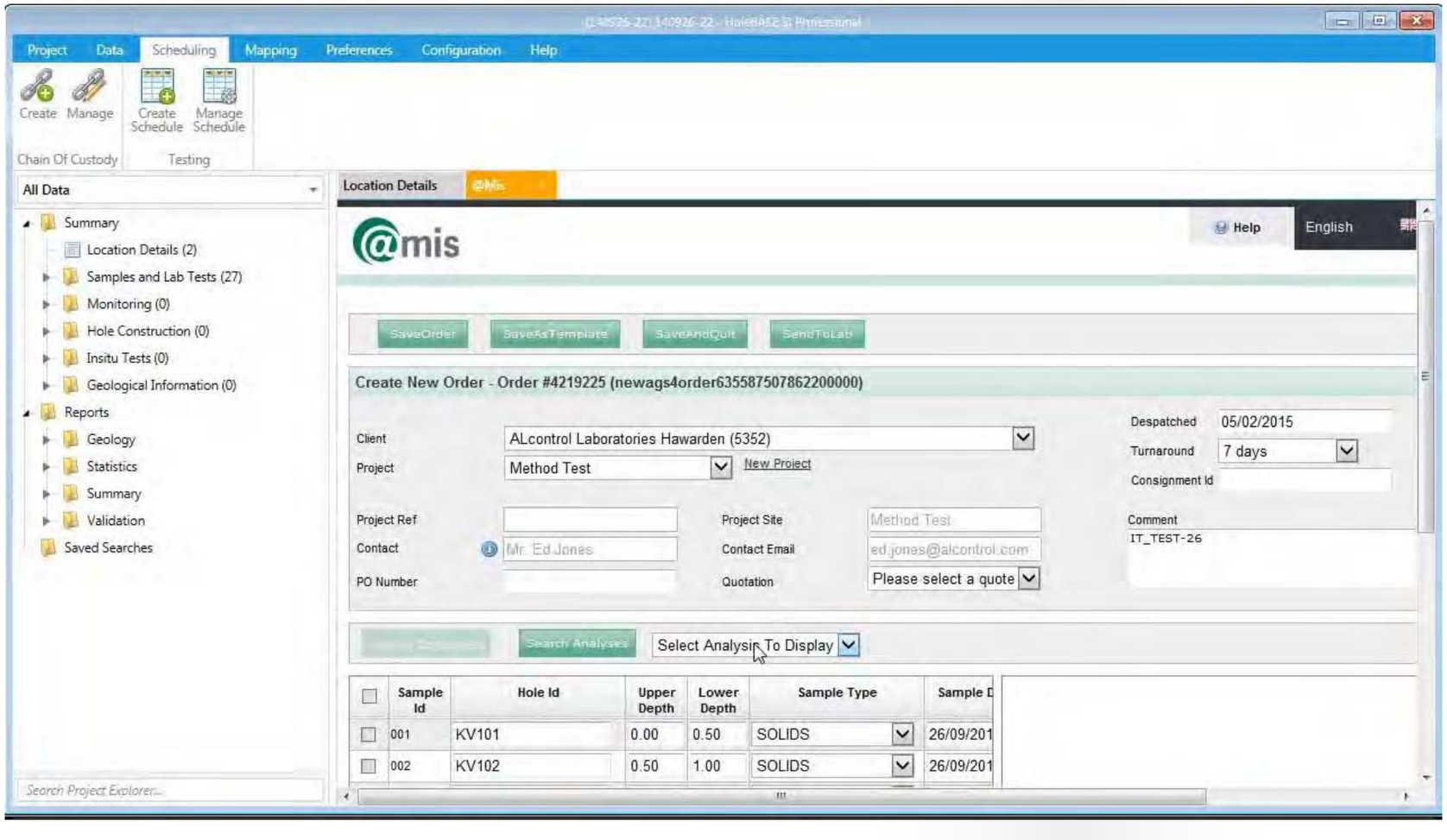

LATEST RELEASE OF HOLEBASE SI TRANSFORMS LABORATORY SCHEDULING

Writing for **theGeotechnica** *this month is* Keynetix*' Managing Director, Roger Chandler. This month Roger unveils details about the latest build of Keynetix' hugely popular and successful HoleBASE SI software, which now features electronic laboratory scheduling, and also integration with ALcontrol's @mis service.*

The new release of HoleBASE SI includes 'scheduling tools' that allow engineers to electronically schedule geotechnical or environmental testing. This major breakthrough is likely to transform the way consultants and laboratories communicate with each other over the coming months.

The new improvements also provide a glimpse of how well integrated customers and laboratories can be with the first UK wide implementation of a web service connection to ALcontrol's @mis online laboratory data management system. This unique development allows customers to schedule testing directly into the @mis system using data and tools inside of HoleBASE SI and then be notified within HoleBASE SI when the testing is completed.

"The new features in HoleBASE SI are going to change the way our clients and their laboratories work together" said Roger Chandler, Managing Director of Keynetix. "For years laboratory staff have been transferring test results using AGS data format but these new additions make it much easier for the engineer to schedule their testing within their data management system, significantly reducing transcription errors by laboratory data entry staff."

Laboratories are able to send clients electronic schedule instructions, including the type of testing they offer and any additional requirements required for each test. This reduces the number of follow up calls the laboratory needs to complete to finalise the testing schedule.

"Although AGS data is now commonly used as the data transfer format of choice by engineers and laboratories, there are often problems with all 4 AGS sample references being maintained and returned to the engineer."

Although AGS data is now commonly used as the data transfer format of choice by engineers and laboratories, there are often problems with all 4 AGS sample references being maintained and returned to the engineer. The addition of these features will significantly reduce occurrences of this problem.

Geotechnical laboratories are able to upload their schedule instructions to the Keynetix website, to give them immediate access to HoleBASE SI users around the world and promote their services to HoleBASE SI users.

In addition to these features the web service interface to ALcontrol's @mis system allows the user to send electronic Chain of Custody information directly to the @mis system and then allows them to schedule their environmental testing requirements in @mis without leaving HoleBASE SI. By using this new technology HoleBASE SI is then able to tell the user when the testing has been completed and automatically download and import the results.

"This new web service is our first opportunity in the UK to directly interface @mis with a leading geotechnical/ geoenvironmental data management system like HoleBASE SI, advancing capabilities we have already successfully deployed in mainland Europe" said Richard Hepburn, Managing Director of ALcontrol's UK & Ireland Environmental Division. "With many man years of time in development @mis seamlessly wraps around our core Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS) and it has been refreshing through working on this project with Keynetix to see a shared mindset in terms of deploying technologies which simplifying the data management journey and reduce errors for customers".

"The creation of the first AGS based web service with ALcontrol has given us an opportunity to show engineers and clients how data transfer will work in the future" said Gary Morin, Technical Director at Keynetix "The service shows what the new technology is capable of and being able to embrace these new techniques was one of the reasons we have upgraded the HoleBASE SI core technology over the last 4 years." ■

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