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Update

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Welcome to the March Update

EPIC PLANT TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT SCHEME USER GROUP

The first meeting of the above group took place at Lafarge's Alrewas Quarry near Burton on Trent on 11th March 2008 as part of the EPIC Plant Training and Assessment Scheme's continuous improvement process. Representatives from member companies expressed their continuing commitment to the Scheme, but there was agreement that Assessment Checklists needed to be updated and that the categories within each checklist needed to be reviewed in line with the latest plant machinery developments.

With Coalpro now being involved with EPIC it was agreed that some of the machines used in open cast operations were considerably larger than those in quarries so there would be additional size categories for dumpers and excavators to cater for Coalpro's requirements.

It was also accepted that, with the Government's greater recognition of employer and training provider training and assessment programmes, rather than solely relying on Awarding Body certification, the EPIC Scheme should continue to be recognized as ensuring continuing competence in the extractive and mineral processing industries. The Scheme has always had support from the Quarries National Joint Advisory Council (QNJAC) and the HSE. It was emphasized at the meeting that the Scheme is supported by the industries and it is EPIC's role to administer the scheme on behalf of the industries.

Other topics discussed were the need to ensure that both EPIC approved instructors and EPIC approved assessors should be competent to the requisite National Occupational Standards to undertake their roles (L11 – Enable Learning through Demonstration and Instruction and L12 – Enable Learning through Coaching for Instructors and A1 - Assess Candidates using a Range of Methods or A2 – Assess candidates performance through Observation for Assessors) in order to comply with the 1999 Quarries Regulations, specifically Regulation 9, and the expectation that all employees will be able to demonstrate competence in the operations they perform by the end of 2010.

There was general discussion about the use of the "Auxiliary Plant" Checklist and its application under current requirements for training and assessment to be more specific for plant categories rather than the current generalized checklist. It was also agreed that the front page of all checklists, which details employee information, site of assessment, etc. should be standardized.

There is still work to be done to review each of the Checklists, but the enthusiasm to be involved in these reviews by those present at the meeting should ensure that over the next few months recommendations for improvements to the EPIC Plant Training and Assessment Scheme will be made to the EPIC Training & Education Committee and that the Scheme will continue to meet the requirements of EPIC's members.

The next meeting of the EPIC Plant Training and Assessment Scheme User Group will take place at Hanson's Shepshed Offices, near Loughborough (just off Junction 23 of the M1) on Monday 28th April 2008. At the suggestion of those at the meeting the morning session, starting at 10am, will concentrate on the Roadbuilding Equipment Checklists, and the afternoon session, starting at 1pm, will concentrate on Quarry and Associated Site Equipment Checklists.

If you would like to be involved in this consultation process or wish to attend the meeting on 28th April, please contact Graham Crawshaw, Training Manager on 07725196225.

LAUNCH OF THE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS ACTION PLAN FOR SCOTLAND

The Construction Skills Action Plan is an initiative led by Scottish Enterprise – Glasgow and partnered by Proskills whereby companies in Scotland, [but excluding the Highlands and Islands Enterprise Zone] who are involved in materials supply into the construction industry can apply for funding for training to develop their employees. The levels of grant funding available are up to 30% of the costs for operative training and up to 50% of costs for managerial, supervisory and technical training.

Companies must create Training Plans, in compliance with guidance produced by Proskills, which are then submitted for funding approval. Once accepted, these companies can arrange for their employees to be trained and then claim back grant at the authorized levels from Proskills. The Action Plan does not cover training that must be undertaken due to specific legislative requirements.

The Plan was launched at the Ramada Hotel in Glasgow on 7th March 2008, which was attended by a number of representatives from EPIC member companies as well as representatives from the QPA Scotland and the BAA.

The good news for EPIC member companies is that most EPIC training courses qualify for this grant support, as does any training and assessment provided under the EPIC Plant Training and Assessment Scheme and for NVQ assessments. The downside is the inevitable paperwork that needs to be completed to apply for grant in the first place. However, there is more good news for EPIC member companies – as highlighted in the February EPIC Update. Stewart Caine, who many in Scotland know as a presenter of EPIC's courses, is supporting Graham Crawshaw, EPIC's Training Manager, in assisting many companies in producing Training Plans to the requirements of Proskills. He will also be assisting companies in completing their grant claims once the training has been completed. Already six companies are receiving support from Graham and Stewart on this initiative.

Although launched on 7th March, any relevant training that has taken place since 7th November 2007 qualifies for grant support. Applications for this need to be made to Proskills by 20th March 2008.

If you think your organisation may qualify for this grant support, which initially is available up to 2010, please contact in the first instance Graham on 07725196225 or Stewart on 07834994339. This support in developing Training Plans, gaining grant approval and submitting grant claims is provided FREE OF CHARGE to EPIC member companies – EPIC helping you to help your employees develop your business!

DO YOU MEET THE REGULATIONS FOR SHOT FIRING & BLASTING?

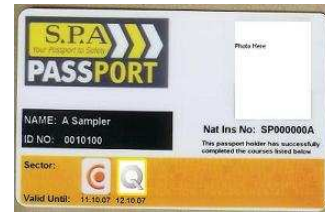
If you have answered no – then we can help you to meet them. The Blasting Operations NVQ or just the relevant units, including those for Shotfirers or Explosive Supervisors, are available through EPIC. Funding in the West Midlands and North West region is available to support candidates at level 3. Contact Trish Jagger for further information on 01522751065.

SHOTFIRER & EXPLOSIVE SUPERVISOR PUBLIC EXAM

The next Shotfirer or Explosive Supervisor Exam is scheduled for 28th May 2008, to be held at the Novotel Hotel, Nottingham/Derby at Long Eaton. For further information or to book a place please contact Kerrie on 01727869008 or email kerrie@epicltd.co.uk.

CONTRACTOR SAFETY PASSPORT

Contractors play an increasingly significant role in the everyday operations in the extractive and mineral processing industries. The Contractor Safety Passport is an industry-wide recognised Scheme which demonstrates that the contractor has attended a 2 day health, safety and environmental course with the second day looking specifically at the extractive and mineral processing industries. Over 21,300 passports have now been issued in our industries.



Day 1 of the course is recognised across a wide number of industries and so makes the passport flexible for the contractor. Industry specific days can be taken should the contractor work across a number of industries. The two day course and the one day refresher course have been designed to raise levels of health and safety and general environmental awareness of contractors. When the passport is issued it is valid for 3 years after which a 1 day refresher course is required. This ensures that knowledge is up to date.

For details of course providers and course dates please visit the EPIC website www.epicltd.com.

EPIC SITE SAFETY AWARENESS AND SAFE BEHAVIOUR FOR ROAD HAULIERS PUBLIC COURSES

Over 11,000 EPIC Driver Skills Cards have now been issued in the extractive and mineral processing industries. If you are interested in accessing public courses for drivers to qualify for the Card, please email your requirements to Lynda Mckill indicating the number of people you wish to attend the course, your preferred location for delivery and also the preferred day of the week for delivery. We are currently logging all your requirements so that courses can be scheduled around your needs as much as possible.

Please see below dates for current public courses for drivers – places are still available!

PUBLIC COURSES

28th March	Loughborough
01 st April	Maidenhead
04 th April	Tunbridge Wells

For further information or to email your requirements please email Lynda Mckill: Lynda@epicltd.co.uk or call on 01727 869008.

EPIC LOOKS FORWARD TO ATTENDING KEY INDUSTRY EVENTS

We look forward to meeting EPIC members at a number of forthcoming events:

BAA Annual Conference	12 May 2008
IoQ Safety Day	14 May 2008
QPA Showcase	03 July 2008



EPIC at QPA Showcase 2007

EPIC PUBLIC COURSES 2008 PROGRAMME

10 th April	EPIC Quarry Safety Inspections	Bristol
22 nd April	EPIC Safe Working and Inspection of Excavations, Trenches and Stockpiles for Quarry Supervisors	London
29 th April	EPIC Understanding the Quarries Regulations (Basic)	Wakefield
8 th -9 th May	EPIC Understanding the Quarries Regulations (Advanced)	Scotland
20 th -21 st May	EPIC Supervising Safety in Quarries	Yorkshire
30 th May	EPIC Risk Assessment in Quarries	Midlands
11 th -12 th June	EPIC Effective Safety Committees	Loughborough
16 th -17 th June	EPIC Understanding the Quarries Regulations (Advanced)	Derbyshire
26 th June	EPIC Quarry Safety Inspections	Yorkshire
3 rd July	EPIC Understanding the Quarries Regulations (Basic)	Newmarket
8 th July	EPIC Safe Working and Inspection of Excavations, Trenches and Stockpiles for Quarry Supervisors	Bristol

Places are available on the above courses – Book in advance to guarantee your place!

For further information or to reserve a place on any of the above courses please contact Kerrie on 01727 869008 or email: kerrie@epicltd.co.uk.

For further information on how EPIC could help you, please call now on 01727 869008 or visit www.epicltd.com