

Trainees in control

Sellafield's Control System Engineering trainees recently attended a joint awards ceremony and celebration dinner, following their successful completion of the Control System Training Scheme.

The awards night, held at Moresby Hall, was hosted by control systems manager John Dickinson. Paul Foster, Director for strategy and transition, also attended, representing the site executive team.

Paul said: "Control System engineers are the life blood of successful plant operations".

The Control System Training Scheme started in 1999 and from its inception has provided the site with a constant source of first class control system engineers. The two year course involves the trainees spending time in operating units undertaking a variety of project work and both internal and external training courses. Each trainee is also allocated a placement supervisor and control system mentor.

John Dickinson said: "As many as twenty per cent of the control system engineers currently within the department have come through the scheme.

"A number of those who have completed the scheme have also gone on to roles in other departments within the company, with only a small number actually leaving." *Continued on page two*



Award winners:

Left to right: Director Paul Foster, Graham Hogg, Adam Irving, Matthew Burns, Steve Jennings Head of Control Systems, Keith Metherell, Arno Wang, David Armstrong

Communications team change their Focus – but are still on award shortlist

Sellafield Ltd's communications team has been nominated for a prestigious award for its bi-monthly publication *Focus*.

The content of the publication was written in house and then the paper was printed by Cumbrian Newspapers in Carlisle.

Ironically the communications team recently replaced *Focus* with a new monthly publication called *Energize*.

They are, however, delighted to have been placed on the shortlist for the North West PRide Awards.

Organised by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, the PRide Awards showcase the best PR work being carried out across the region and the winners will be announced at a ceremony at Manchester's Hilton Hotel in November.

Focus is one of five publications shortlisted in the Best Newspaper or Magazine award category.

Chris Philipsborn, Sellafield Ltd's director of communications, said: "I am delighted that *Focus* has been recognised by our public relations peers as worthy of the PRide award shortlist.

"The communications team work hard to ensure that all our publications reflect Sellafield Ltd's successes and achievements. *Focus* was an integral aspect of this, but we wanted to give it a fresh look and aim it more at employees, so we changed it recently.

"The second edition of *Energize* is just about to hit the streets, and hopefully we can have similar success with that next year."

NVQ lessons net £38k savings

A mixed team from the Flask Maintenance Facility and Business Improvements team have successfully completed their National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) in business improvement techniques, not only achieving outstanding results but also saving the company in the region of £38,000.

The team of three comprising: Dave Milligan and Simon Williamson (Flask Maintenance Facility) and Sharon Hodgson (Business Improvements team) recently completed the project which involved delivering a business benefit back to the company.

The group were tasked with looking at the existing situation regarding stored items in the compressor house which, over a number of years, had become a lay down area for redundant items. The team identified items that could be used in other areas across site and relocated the assets, thus eliminating the disposal costs.

While working on the project the team rationalised the stock levels for Personnel Protective Equipment and consumables by setting up a self functioning 'Kanban' system, which allows for the use of existing stock levels without having to buy new. Once new set levels have been reached, only then will new stock be ordered, done through the use of stock control 'Kanban Cards'.

A visit from Managing Director Barry Snelson gave the team a chance to discuss in detail how the project was delivered. Barry commented: "I believe that this is what we need to be doing - having the people making the changes at the right level. This is the future for our business. By delivering improvements and benefiting from the changes, it will put us up there with the best the world has to offer."

Following the success of the NVQ results and cost savings, Head of Manufacturing for Flask Maintenance Transport & Rail (FMT&R) Firm Ireland has put forward several other candidates to undergo training, which will assist in delivering improvement targets and gaining a recognised qualification for other FMT&R team members.



The team with Barry Snelson (centre)

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Matthew Burns, who received a certificate at the awards night, said: "When I joined the scheme I was surprised to see such a varied cross section of backgrounds among the trainees, which proved useful as we could help each other out during the project work".

Control system engineers undertake the maintenance, modifications and management of a wide variety of both new and legacy plant control equipment, including Programmable Logic Controllers (PLC's), Distributed Control Systems (DSC) and SCADA systems. They also provide input and support into Control systems intended for projects within a new generation of operational plants, currently under construction on the site.

Matthew said: "You are thrown in the thick of it, but the mix of training, placements and projects gives you the skills and confidence to get stuck in and achieve your objectives."

Matthew also highlighted the important role played by the scheme mentors, who allowed individuals to "get an uninvolved objective view on any issues that may arise". Matthew felt that the awards ceremony was a "great way to cap off the training scheme", as it allowed individuals a chance to catch up with the other trainees and "exchange experiences".

This year's Control System Training Scheme is due to start next month, with 10 trainees with a wide range of experience and qualifications taking part.

VIP Visits to Sellafield 13 August – 20 August 2008:

14/08/08 - Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (familiarisation visit)

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