

TOMORROW'S PEST

Invasion of the Asian hornet



Photograph courtesy of Jean Haxaire



Corporate manslaughter
Implications for your business



CPD Diary 2012
How to get your points for free



Choosing your rodenticide
Assessing potency and palatability



Lone working
Who's your guardian angel?



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Networking events

Eurocido

15-16 February / Westfallenhalle Exhibition Centre, Dortmund, Germany

eurocido.dsvonline.net

Expocida

23-24 February / Madrid, Spain

www.expocida.com

ANID National Pest Control Conference

14-15 March / Sirmione, Lake Garda, Italy

BPCA Fumigation Conference

27 March / BPCA office, Derby

www.bpca.org.uk/news.html/

Pest-Ventures

26 April / Yew Lodge Hotel, Kegworth, Nottinghamshire

<http://goo.gl/T1Gne>

The Facilities Show

15-17 May / NEC Birmingham

www.facilitiesshow.com/

FAOPMA

11-13 July / Adelaide Convention Centre, Australia

www.faopma.com

Total Workplace Management

11-12 October / Olympia, London

www.twmexpo.com

PestWorld

17-20 October / Boston, USA

www.npmapestworld.org

PestTech

7 November / Solihull, West Midlands

www.npta.org.uk

www.pesttech.org.uk



Stand booking
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PestEx 2013

10-11 April / ExCeL Centre, London

...see www.pestex.org
or call 020 8269 7919

Training

BPCA's training courses and examinations are run throughout the year at venues all around the UK.

Full 2012 training calendar

www.bpct.org.uk

...and in PPC66!

Examinations	2012 dates	Venue	Member cost (exc. VAT)	Non-member (exc. VAT)
RSPH/BPCA Level 2 Award in Pest Management Exams can be arranged to suit other requirements at the discretion of the BPCA, minimum of six candidates, there may be an additional cost.	20 January	BPCA offices, Derby		
	24 February	Belfast		
	23 March	Warwick University, Coventry		
	20 April	London - TBC	£130	£145
	18 May	Halo Crowwood Hotel, Glasgow		
	18 May	Bristol - TBC		
	15 June	Hilton Newbury North, Newbury		
BPCA Accredited Technician in Pest Control	26 January	BPCA offices, Derby	£225	£305
	31 May	BPCA offices, Derby		
BPCA Certificate in Bird Management	17 February	BPCA offices, Derby	£90	£105
BPCA Fumigation Diploma	17 February	BPCA offices, Derby	£125	£145
BPCA Fumigation Certificate of Proficiency	17 February	BPCA offices, Derby	£210	£265
BPCA Certificated Field Biologist	7 March	BPCA offices, Derby	£285	£390

Courses



Courses	PROMPT CPD	2012 dates	Venue	Member cost (exc. VAT)	Non-member (exc. VAT)
General Pest Control (residential)	24	18-23 March	Warwick University, Coventry	£875*	£1045*
		13-18 May	Halo Crowwood Hotel, Glasgow		
		9-14 September	Warwick University, Coventry		
		9-14 December	Warwick University, Coventry		
General Pest Control (non-residential)	24	20-24 February	Belfast	£700	£900
Pest Control Awareness for Administrators	8	13 March	BPCA offices, Derby	£165	£195
Insect Classification and Identification	10	21 March	Warwick University, Coventry	£165	£195
5 day Fumigation Course	30	21-25 May	BPCA offices, Derby	£875	£1075
Urban Bird Control and Management	20	17-18 April	Hilton Newbury North, Newbury	£300	£365
Stored Product Inspection and Control	10	29 May	BPCA offices, Derby	£165	£195
So you want to be a Field Biologist?	8	28 March	BPCA offices, Derby	£165	£195
Heat Treatment Technicians Course	22	24-25 April	BPCA offices, Derby	£300	£365

* includes full-board accommodation, BPCA/RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management exam fee and 6 weeks' access to the BPCA Online Learning programme prior to the course.

Book by calling 01332 225 113 or via www.bpct.org.uk

Every effort is made to ensure all events run to plan, but BPCA reserves the right to cancel events. A full refund will be given for a booking that is removed by the BPCA.

Online learning

The flexible approach to pest control training, learn at your own pace at times to suit you.

www.bpca.skillgate.com

Regional forums - see page 31

BPCA is running a series of events round the UK designed to help your business compete, and your staff stay safe. Book your place by calling 01332 225 111 or via

www.bpca.org.uk

Online learning		Member cost (exc. VAT)	Non-member (exc. VAT)
Individual modules	Principles of pest control	£100 per module per year	£100 per module per year
	Birds		
	Insects		
	Mammals		
	Rodents		
All modules		£300 per year	£500 per year



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The price is wrong

It's a funny old industry, pest control. Talking to pesties, it seems they work everything out by 'the charge for a wasps' nest', just like measurements on the telly say 'an area the size of Wales', or 'the height of a double decker bus'. It seems we're our own worst enemy. Measurement in our sector shouldn't be by price, but by quality. Talking to facilities managers, they see our efforts as simply an overhead, like cleaning or copier paper. Until our industry can demonstrate we're a vital service, not one up from window cleaners, we'll be doomed to fight it out solely on price.

Talking about price, some good news. It seems the endless pressure on distributors is having an effect, with discounts aplenty, such as PayYours giving their terminal away for a third of the normal price, Barrettine's 20% discount for Mint customers, and now Lodi's 25% off most products – what next, a free van

with every Little Nipper sold?

All you need now is the work to justify buying these items. One way some servicing companies are getting new business is via free articles and quotes in **alexo** magazine (the latest issue hit desks in early December). We've recently trebled the circulation through a deal with the Facilities Management Association, so now 15,000 FMs and building owners get to read about BPCA and our members. So ask yourself how you can be a part of the next issue, which focuses on the hospitality sector. To get involved keep an eye on the alexo blog www.alexo.org.uk/alexoblog

This issue of PPC sees the launch of new benefits and services for members, plus an article on a threat at the border, the Asian hornet. Pest controllers have a central role in helping Government deal with this invasive

species, as we will be some of the first to encounter it should it cross the Channel. That's yet another reason to see pest control as vital to the UK's public health – a point we've been making on your behalf to those in Brussels.

Finally, on behalf of the BPCA Board and staff team, may I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.



Simon Forrester
BPCA chief executive
simon@bpca.org.uk



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CPD for 2011: 2 points



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CHANNEL 5 LIFTS THE LID ON WESTMINSTER PEST CONTROL

The inner workings of central London are being revealed in a six-part series currently airing on Channel 5, which follows Westminster Council staff as they go about their day-to-day jobs running the city. The series, called London: The Inside Story, goes behind the scenes of Britain's busiest borough to reveal the people and jobs that keep the capital moving. It features the pest control team battling rats and maggots, the noise team dealing with urban foxes, and the food inspectors who monitor standards in takeaways, street stalls and Michelin restaurants.

London: The Inside Story is on Tuesdays at 8pm on Channel 5.

<http://goo.gl/ysVMr>



Fumigation – a dying skill?

In the 1960s fumigation was an expanding industry, with almost ten different legally acceptable and effective gases to choose from, according to circumstances and the skill rating of the fumigator.

In 2011 we have just two gases – sulfuryl fluoride for large empty buildings, a substance tightly controlled by both the sole UK supplier (Dow) and the Health & Safety Executive. The other fumigant is phosphine, a 1960s gas imported from Germany and nowadays also made in India, South America and China. This is being more tightly controlled as the authorities realise just how toxic it is to all mammals including humans.

We normally aim for something like 500 to 1,000 parts per million of phosphine gas in air inside the fumigation

enclosure, and the exposure period is a continuous five or sometimes ten days, depending on the target insect. The Human Safety Limit (WEL) for eight hour exposure is 0.1ppm. At a recent conference in Belfast regarding safety in ship cargo fumigations, the Northern Ireland Public Health Agency reminded delegates that at 400 to 600 ppm, phosphine kills humans after 30 to 60 minutes. However, without the use of inexpensive accurate measuring instruments, all fumigation is guesswork, including our safety.

BPCA has put together new guidelines on grain fumigation in ship cargoes. For a copy contact the BPCA Office on 01332 294 288.

enquiry@bpc.org.uk



ALEXO GETS NOTICED!



At the end of November

BPCA produced issue two of **alexo** magazine, aimed at pest control customers. The circulation remained at 5,000 hard copies, with another 10,000 names

getting an online version by email plus a postcard campaign, just like we did for issue one. The initial marketing campaign, plus adverts in magazines such as The Retailer, FM world, the Grocer and FM Journal resulted in almost 400 extra subscribers asking to be sent copies of **alexo**.

Initial feedback from readers has been positive, with comment such as 'well put together' and 'well produced, informative and easily readable' – we even had (faint) praise from Julie Girling MEP, who said "I see a lot of magazines, but this is one I'll actually read".

And **alexo** isn't just making waves with customers. The Society of Food Hygiene and Technology (SOFHT) recognised **alexo** by shortlisting it for its prestigious awards (alongside BPCA member P&L Systems Ltd for their Aura decorative flykiller unit).

Issue three will focus on the hospitality industry, with articles on bed bugs in hotels, flying insects in kitchens and pest problems in contract catering. If you work in any of these areas, why not use **alexo** to get in front of potential customers?

www.alexo.org.uk

HSE report finds workplace getting safer

The trend for fewer 'employer-reported non-fatal injuries' continues, according to the latest Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Annual statistics report.

The HSE was also more active in prosecuting offences – 912 offences were taken to court in the UK, an increase of three per cent. It managed 774 convictions, with a conviction rate of 85%. Fines totalled £18.6

million, or £24,005 per breach of offence.

Local authorities in the UK also prosecuted for offences, taking 924 to court, an increase of four per cent. This translated into a 94% conviction rate. However, fines in the case of local authority prosecutions totalled £2.2 million, with an average penalty of £8,154.

www.hse.gov.uk

Major source	2006/07	2008/09	2010/11
3+ day injuries			
Manual handling (36%), slips/trips (23%)	114,653	98,426	90,653
Major injuries			
Slips/trips (40%), falls from height (16%)	25,544	26,268	24,726
Deaths at work			
Construction (50%), agriculture (34%), waste and recycling (9%)	unavailable	147	171

Let us take the stress out of pests

Established and enthusiastic team ensures that pests – from mice to moths – are eradicated in a safe and effective way

Rokill Pest Control was established in 1980 and is proud to have held the Queen's royal warrant for pest control since 1999. Interestingly, two of the earliest royal warrants awarded were for mole baiting and rat catching in 1799.

Pest control is an essential background service that almost everyone will require at some point in their lives and our pests such as wasps, mice, cat flies or clothes moths from the home. In the workplace most companies have a legal obligation to ensure staff and customers are also protected from pest infestation.

Rokill has a specialist bird proofing division to provide a national service installing humane deterrents to prevent pigeons and other pest birds roosting and defecating buildings. The teams have worked on premises ranging from high street retailers to prestigious listed buildings and monuments, and in all cases their work is guaranteed to be effective and discreet.

Rokill's approach involves total commitment. When requested, teams will often work through the night to complete treatments in sensitive or high-risk areas. The range of premises covered includes supermarkets, hospitals, restaurants and military projects, usually 24hrs for 7 days. This attention to detail results in treatment success where other companies have failed.

Rokill directors Alec McQuinn and Chris Turner are confident about the future of the company. His view: "Pest control is a people business and success relies on well-motivated individuals communicating effectively to work as a focused team. The energy, enthusiasm, and commitment from our office and field-based staff ensures that our service is professional, safe, effective and discreet. Our award winning graduate field technicians provide a technical troubleshooting service of the highest quality. Recently they have been particularly busy advising the hospitality industry on the management and treatment of bedbugs as infestations are currently on the increase throughout the UK."

Rokill has a proven track record, established over 30 years for delivering consistently high standards of pest and bird control.

Call 0800 783001 or visit www.rokill.co.uk

Team Rokill's success is down to their staff

Rokill easy like Sunday morning

Rokill has capitalised on their royal warrant by securing an article in the Sunday Telegraph in early December, alongside other companies who have attained this accolade.

www.rokill.co.uk

Pest control book relaunched for charity

Retired pest controller Peter Burnell has reissued his cartoon book 'Pest Control isn't funny...or is it?' taking a light-hearted look at our industry. All monies go to St James' Church, Lissett. Copies (£5 inc P&P) can be obtained by emailing

peter.burnell87@btinternet.com

PEST CONTROLLER WINS UK FRANCHISEE OF THE YEAR AWARD

NBC Bird & Pest Solutions manager for Scotland, Ian Cain, recently won third place in the UK Franchisee of the Year Awards 2011 and gained first place for Scotland.

Ian joined NBC in 2005, after leaving a career as an industrial environmental advisor – a job which took him overseas and away from his family for 40% of the year.

Through hard work, a clear vision and a desire to exceed clients' expectations by delivering the highest standards and quality of customer care, Ian quickly developed a prestigious client base. His team recently completed Scotland's largest ever bird proofing project on behalf of Hammerson, which his competitors apparently said couldn't be done.

Ian says "With a background in environmental management, I'm passionate about ensuring an environmentally responsible and sustainable approach to pest control." Thrilled with his achievement at the Franchise Awards and never one to rest on his laurels, Ian has moved on to the next phase of his business plan and has opened a new 'Business Hub' near Perth in Scotland, which provides a new home for his 30 birds of prey and a central base for his 11 staff.

www.nbcbirdandpest.co.uk



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New procedure for external use of indoor-only anticoagulants

In September CRD (part of the Health and Safety Executive) introduced its new procedure for those who wish to apply for the outdoor use of anticoagulant rodenticides currently restricted to indoor use only.

Second generation anticoagulant active ingredients brodifacoum, flocoumafen and difethiolone are currently restricted to indoor use only due to the high risk of secondary poisoning of bird and mammals. However, after the issue of resistance was raised by the Rodenticide Resistance Action Group (RRAG) at their November seminar, HSE has developed new guidance.

Great credit has to be given to RRAG and its Chair, Dr Alan Buckle, who with the help of the RRAG members highlighted the issue to HSE. The new procedure has not yet been fully tested, and it is hoped that more information will be available shortly after the first applications have been submitted and hopefully accepted. Dr Buckle commented "RRAG welcomes this new procedure by which effective anticoagulants can now be



used to combat resistance. The scheme will need to be simple, quick and inexpensive if it is going help technicians working in resistance areas but a worry is that it will meet none of those criteria." BPCA will of course keep a watching brief on developments, and inform PPC readers as soon as things change.

www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides

www.bpca.org.uk/rrag/index.html



University launches research into smells and rats

Innovative new research on scent signals as tools for rodent pest control is to be carried out by the Mammalian Behaviour &



ROTHAMSTED RESEARCH

Evolution Group at Liverpool University. In a £4.7m research award supported by BPCA, the University and Rothamsted Research will carry out a five year collaborative project starting in the first quarter of 2012.

The team is investigating the scent signal mechanisms that rodents use to navigate around their habitat, communicate with each other, and reproduce. Scientists aim to use these signals to monitor and manipulate rodent behaviour to contribute to new approaches for better control of the destructive nature of rats and mice.

Professor Jane Hurst, head of the group at the Institute of Integrative Biology said "Our research on rodent behaviour and communication has helped us to understand the complexity of mammalian scents and their meaning, and the role of learning in modifying behavioural responses. We will be working closely with a wide range of stakeholders from pest control, environmental health, animal welfare and food industries to ensure that we maintain a practical focus and establish clear pathways for subsequent deployment of new strategies."

PPC will be bringing you news of how the project is progressing in future issues.

www.liv.ac.uk/mbe

BPCA launches Fumigation Conference

BPCA announces a new fumigation event for the industry aimed at addressing a serious risk to the health of those working around grain shipments. Fumigators throughout the UK are under pressure to give shipments the 'all clear' from grain companies when dangerous levels of gas are still present. BPCA wants to ensure this subject is debated to raise awareness of best practice.

David Heaton, chairman of BPCA's Fumigation and Controlled Environments Committee said "The Conference is designed to increase knowledge levels about the risks posed by fumigation carried out on bulk grain in ships' holds, and also the risks associated with fumigated cargo containers. Our aim is to open lines of communication with major grain import/export/transport companies in the UK and overseas."

Date: Tuesday 27 March 2012

Time: 11.00am - 4.00pm

Location: BPCA Offices, Derby

Target audience:

- Port Health Authority management
- The grain industry
- The transport and haulage industry
- Professional fumigators.

Speakers and topics include:

- Mike Kelly of Acheta (phosphine deaths on ships, explosions due to misuse of product)
- Dr Anne Wilson of the Public Health Agency (health issues and the role of Port Health Authorities)
- Danny Hawkins (current International Maritime Organisation guidelines)
- A representative from the grain industry
- A representative from the transport industry.

Call 01332 225 113 to reserve your place.

www.bpca.org.uk/news.html

Cost: £30 per person to help cover food and speaker costs

Attendees: 35 maximum, so register your interest to avoid disappointment.



OBITUARY: RICHARD JONES

By Peter Priestley

On October 16 we lost Richard from our industry. Our thoughts go out to his wife Mary and daughters Lucy and Fleur.

Richard, together with business partner Chris Pollard, ran Pest Control Services of Exeter for around 30 years and both of them were well known to many pest companies throughout the country. Richard was also one of the longest serving members of the BPCA Executive Board.

He was also a keen contributor to his local community as a Silverton Church Bell Ringer, Youth Club Leader, Community Hall Committee, Parochial Charities Committee, Parish Councillor, Silverton Street Market Organiser and Twinning Committee Member, but his real passion outside of work was scuba diving. So much so that the congregation at Richard's funeral were treated to the sight of his flippers placed on top of his coffin.

I have known 'Dicky' for around 20 years as a friend, competitor and more recently fellow director of Envirocare. He was a gentleman and a thoroughly nice bloke. Everyone who knew him will miss him but no-one will miss his jokes, they were awful.

Donations in Richard's memory to Cancer Research UK.

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Online video training launched

Pest Practice is a new service for pest controllers who need to keep up-to-date, but find it difficult to spare the time to attend training seminars and conferences. The service delivers high quality video presentations from recognised industry experts, on demand, via the web. The first six modules have a strong technical element but plans are already being made to extend the topics covered to include business and management skills.

The system tracks CPD points and the webinars cost around £30 each (to find out more on how to get your CPD points see our article on page 26). The concept has been developed by technical experts Adrian Meyer and Clive Boase. They have worked closely with new media company Glow, and Pest Publications.

"In a competitive world, the need for technical training has never been greater," suggests Adrian Meyer. "Whilst nothing will replace on-site practical and group training, the benefits of access to high quality, targeted

technical training and refresher sessions, taken at a time and place of your choosing are clear for all to see. No travel costs, minimal time away from work and the ability to choose the combination of topics that suit your personal needs make these webinars attractive and very cost effective."

Subject so far include:

- Mammal protection legislation
- Insecticide labels
- House mouse behaviour
- Insecticide gels
- Phantom biting
- Rodenticide labels.

From now until 31 December you can sign up for an account and watch the video on house mouse behaviour and its impact on effective control with Adrian Meyer for free.

PestPractice
Online Pest Control Training & Development

www.pestpractice.com

Mentoring for success

Businesses who do well often have outside help. Sadly, research shows UK businesses are among the last to ask for assistance, even when it's guaranteed to boost their profitability. One proven way to improve is to use a mentor, who is a successful individual from another industry who's been through what you are finding difficult, and succeeded.

The Mentor SME service offers support and guidance from an experienced business professional. Just use the search engine to access a list of quality-assured mentoring organisations in your area that help businesses at your stage of development.

www.mentorsme.co.uk

Annual return – reminder to members

Annual returns were issued at the start of November and for those of you still to return yours – it's overdue! For members who do not return the forms, it will be presumed that your membership category has increased to the next subscription band for 2012. So please ensure you're paying the right amount, and return your form. If you require a copy, please contact our membership officer, Rachel Eyre on 01332 225112 or email rachel@bpc.org.uk

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Barrettine award win for Oa2ki

In the recent Pest Magazine Product Awards, Barrettine scooped the top prize with their Oa2ki Diatomaceous Earth powder in a can. Due to its solely physical means of action, not only does it fall outside of the current HSE registration requirements (enabling flexibility to sell product on to non-professionals etc.), it also means that the insects cannot develop resistance.

Totally natural, diatomaceous earth is finely-milled fossilised diatoms, which under the microscope have incredibly sharp edges, causing insects to damage their outer wax cuticles and desiccate when they come into contact.

Helen Ainsworth, Barrettine's new technical sales manager said "We are very proud to have won this award for the second year in a row, demonstrating Barrettine's approach to innovation and delivering products to market that work and are in demand."

www.barrettine.co.uk



CRRU amends rodent bait sheet

The Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) has updated its Anticoagulant Rodenticide Environmental Information Sheet, which points out the risks to the environment from ready-to-use rodenticide baits, and sets down control procedures to minimise contamination of soil and groundwater.

CRRU director Dr Alan Buckle said "CRRU, after consultation with HSE and Natural England, has produced a new Environmental Information Sheet at the completion of the BPD review of anticoagulants. We rely on these rodenticides and this will be the case for many years to come. When used responsibly, and in the hands of properly trained pest control technicians, they are effective and have no unacceptable impacts on the environment. However, their use does carry risk, particularly to companion animals and birds of prey. CRRU is explicit about the risks and promotes methods which minimise them."

<http://goo.gl/RfdU3>

RODENTICIDE SUSPECTED IN LEEDS PARK DOG POISONING ATTEMPT

Amateur users' access to rodenticide products was drawn into the media recently after an apparent dog poisoning attempt using what appears to be a grain formulation. Dog biscuits laced with what is suspected to be rodenticide were discovered in Churwell Park in Leeds on Halloween when a dog walker alerted police after her pet ate the biscuits. Leeds City Council removed all remaining biscuits.

A Yorkshire Police spokesman said "Morley Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) has arrested and bailed a 44-year-old woman from Cottingley on suspicion of criminal damage in connection with a suspected dog poisoning incident in Churwell Park."

The BBC news website referred to Inspector Paul Sullivan, who leads Morley NPT. He said "Incidents of this nature are offences under the Animal Welfare Act,



and anyone found guilty faces a fine of up to £20,000 and possibly six months in prison. We will be pursuing these incidents vigorously, and anyone responsible can expect to face the full force of the law."

BPCA member Mac Hussain from Bradford-based Bugoff Pest Control alerted BPCA to the story. "Incidents such as this are always concerning for professional companies" Mac commented. "They draw attention away from safe and effective services that are carried out by pest control companies on a daily basis."

www.bugoffpc.co.uk



WASPBANE SEMINARS

An invitation is extended to all PCOs to attend a WaspBane seminar day on Integrated Wasp Management on a mutually convenient date.

Seminar dates are flexible and run almost weekly through from now until June/July 2012 depending on demand. Seminars are preferentially limited to six people per day to make them more informal. They take place in Godmanchester, near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire and cover the following topics:

- Understanding the nuisance wasp hazard and duty of care obligations
- Understanding the wasp
- Tools of the trade and the science of trapping
- Integrated wasp management and the nuisance wasp market
- Closing questions.

The seminar is worth five CPD points under the PROMPT BASIS scheme. All food and drink is provided free. The seminars are free to PCOs (normal fee is £245) but PCOs who don't show after securing a place will be charged a £100 'no-show' fee.

To book a place, call 01480 414644 or email info@waspbane.com

Cancellation rights

BPCA has produced guidance for members on customers' rights to cancel pest control contracts, written in conjunction with Robinsons Solicitors. The information sheet includes the required wording to supplement your existing Terms and Conditions for compliance with the Cancellation of Contracts made in a Consumers Home or Place of Work etc. Regulations 2008.

The regulations are important to your business, as pest control work is often urgently required. Ignoring them may prevent you getting paid and put you at risk of a criminal offence, punishable by fines.

The information sheet is available from the BPCA office: call 01332 294288 or email enquiry@bpca.org.uk



IT saves the day

We all know it's sometimes difficult to travel to courses and exams – but what if the exam is in Derby, and you're in Malta? This was the problem faced by Nadine Galea on the recent BPCA Module 4 Ships Fumigation course exam.

Examiner Mike Kelly said "We discussed the costs of Nadine coming over from Malta, but it wasn't financially viable for her employer. We therefore realised the best way to deal with the spoken exam/technical discussion was to use IT, and in particular Skype, to allow her to sit the exam. I was very pleased to be able to use technology to solve the problem, and I'd certainly do it again."

Nadine, from Comtec Service Limited of Malta, felt this was the perfect option for her,

and allowed her to take the exam much quicker (and cheaper) than waiting months for a face-to-face meeting. We're pleased to say Nadine passed her exam, and is now a fully-fledged fumigator, working mainly on grain in ships and other commodities on the island.

BPCA training officer Tammy Pratt said "BPCA will always consider using technology to help those UK and overseas pest controllers with long journeys to sit exams remotely where appropriate. We are also looking to bring exams to pest controllers in other countries – watch for more details in the next issue of PPC."

www.bpct.org.uk

www.comtecpestcontrol.com

CHANGES TO RIDDOR

From September 2011, statutory reporting to HSE of work-related injuries and incidents under RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995) will move to an online system. RIDDOR highlights your legal duty to report to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) certain cases of workplace:

- Injuries
- Disease
- Gas-related incidents
- Near misses
- Death.

Revised online forms will make the reporting process quick and easy. Fatal and major injuries and incidents can still be reported to HSE's Incident Contact Centre by telephone.

HSE's Infoline telephone information service has also now ended, which is why BPCA is introducing a free replacement for members to access (see page 17).

www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY | feature

KEEP YOUR DIGITAL DATA SAFE

We all know the danger of computer viruses, and most people have some sort of backup for their essential files. But what about malicious attempts to steal digital data? Your digital data can mean your confidential computer files, such as:

- Customer lists and pricing information
 - Accounting data including online banking passwords and tax codes
 - Marketing plans and branding e.g. logos
 - Research and development findings
 - Trade secrets.

Digital data is one of your most valuable commodities, and cybercriminals know it. They are increasingly choosing to steal this, rather than try and hack into bank accounts, because there is often little or no protection to stop them.

That's why it's critical that you keep

your IT systems safe from data breaches. BPCA is not immune to this – last year our website got taken down by a malicious attack from persons unknown, and since then we've had to remove a lot of the functions the site had previously (a new site will be up and running in early 2012 – see PPC66 for details).

Simple ways to stay safe include:

- Encrypting sensitive servers, folders and files, using your existing operating system (such as Microsoft Windows).
- Asking your internet service provider (ISP) if it uses encryption technology known as SSL (Secure Socket Layer). Most do, change ISP if yours doesn't.
- Having a recovery plan in place in case your data is stolen.
- Using robust firewall and anti-virus software, and keeping them up to date.

For more tips on IT security see

<http://goo.gl/M3bXL>



In October BPCA sent delegations of Board members and staff to both the European Parliament in Brussels and also constituencies in the UK. The purpose of the visits was to meet MEPs and UK Government representatives to discuss the importance of professional public health pest control.

**EUROPEAN
STANDARD DEBATED**
See page 28

Entering the lobby



Lewis Jenkins and Simon Forrester discuss business with Struan Stevenson's colleague

The lobbying days were provided through BPCA's membership of CEPA, the pan-European umbrella body for pest management associations. BPCA is the first CEPA member to hold one of these lobbying days, and we have expressed an interest in repeating the process in the future. We targeted members of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee (known as ENVI) as these are the people deciding the future shape of our industry.

The politicians were very interested to hear about BPCA and the challenges facing our industry: including loss of actives, the threat from rogue/cowboy companies, the potential dangers from amateur users, and of course our goal to drive professionalism. We explained about the importance of professional pest control to maintain public health, food safety, control the spread of disease, and ensure responsible stewardship of biocides. More than one person we spoke to was surprised to learn that under the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 and

BPCA focused on three key messages:

- 1 The Common European (CEN) standard for Professional Pest Control – BPCA wants to ensure those people using biocides are competent to do so, both through self-regulation and working with legislators, and we see the CEN standard as a good first step
- 2 Integrated Pest Management (IPM) – emphasising control not eradication, through an extremely efficient method which is more environmentally friendly
- 3 How BPCA can help MEPs and Government with the problems they face.

1997, while it's an offence for a 'professional use only' pesticide to be used by someone who is not a professional user, it is not an offence to sell or supply these products to an unqualified purchaser, nor is there any active monitoring to prevent illegal use ie by amateurs, often purchased through game fairs or the internet. This seemed to spark the interest of several MEPs, who quickly grasped the dangers inherent in the current system.

Our visit to Brussels was very timely, as it was on a day of in-depth discussions regarding the Biocidal Products Directive,



Linda McAvan MEP with Lewis Jenkins and Simon Forrester

which will cover our sector. MEPs' focus was on Article 5, which covers training and certification for users, distributors and advisers. So our push for CPD and competence to practice was very well received. Most of the people we met understood that ineffective treatments can lead to resistance, and we drummed home the message that though we are a safe industry, amateur users are less likely to interpret safety instructions correctly or to understand how to use products to best effect.

Roland Higgins, CEPA Director General said "I have been involved in many lobbying events during my career in Brussels, and I was very pleased with the way this worked. I am pleased to say that of those MEPs who were unable to see us on the day, the majority have said that they want to meet BPCA in the future, as professional pest control is something they want to understand, and they will be looking to BPCA to inform them. I will also be meeting other MEPs who are at the heart of the SUD and BPD through



James Nicholson MEP takes a look at alexo magazine

future lobbying days so our message will be spread throughout the European member states."

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) modern living conditions, international travel, urban sprawl and climate change are making the spread of pests and pest-borne diseases more likely, and the threat from them ever more serious.

BPCA chief executive Simon Forrester said "This was very much a first step for BPCA, but we have started creating some strong links in Europe. The BPCA Board believes strongly that we need to be talking to these people, or else decisions will be taken without us. I was

very pleased with the response from the people we met, and I know that we can use this to influence the direction of policy on public health pest control."

Lewis Jenkins of Check Services Ltd attended the meetings in Brussels. He said "I didn't know quite what to expect, but I was very pleased with how we were received. The MEPs listened and took in what we said, and I think it is important they met a 'real life' pest controller, so I was pleased that BPCA asked me as a Servicing Company Member to attend these meetings."

Nigel Binns of Pestex Services said "I met Julie Girling, MEP for South West England who is passionate about sustainability, and was very keen to support our work to professionalise the sector. Julie is a senior member of ENVI, and is very keen to learn more about pest control. Julie listened to what we said, agreed with it, and helped us identify a clear way forward."

BPCA will be setting up further meetings with MEPs and UK Government to ensure the BPCA message is driven home. If you'd like to get involved with the policy side of BPCA's work, please join the relevant committee. Email rachel@bpca.org.uk to find out more.



Who we met

Gian Marco Currado

First Secretary (Environment), British Permanent Representation to the EU

Struan Stevenson MEP

Substitute Member of ENVI Committee*

Glenis Willmott MEP

Member of ENVI Committee*

Chris Davies MEP

Member of ENVI Committee, Spokesperson on Environment for the Liberals

Linda McAvan MEP

Member of ENVI Committee

James Nicholson MEP

Substitute Member of ENVI Committee

Julie Girling MEP

Member of ENVI Committee, Shadow Rapporteur on Biocides

*representatives

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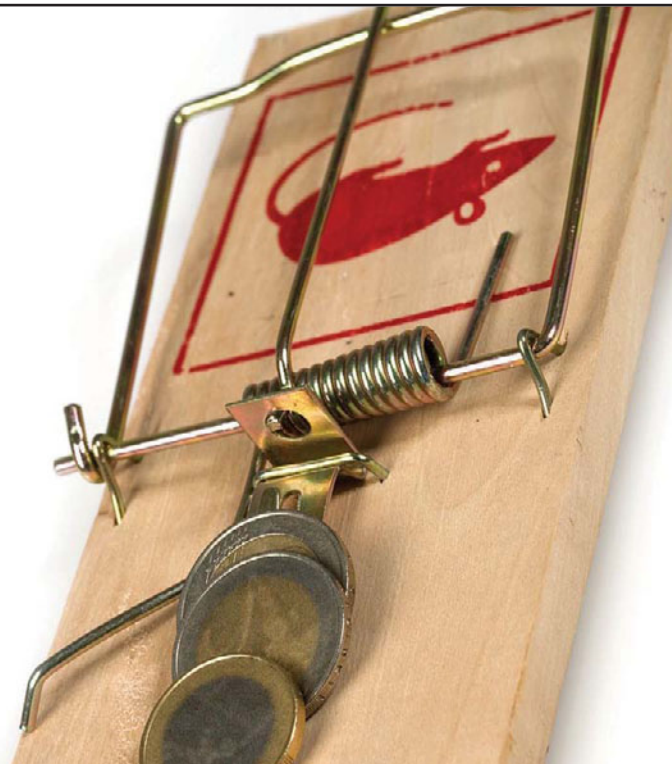
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ALUPHOS PRODUCTS latest update

RAMPS UK

“Distributors must meet a variety of legislation to hold stocks of aluminium phosphide, and registration on the BASIS Store Inspection Scheme is recommended.”



All persons handling aluminium phosphide must be able to demonstrate that they have a suitable qualification at the point of sale, so that they can purchase products such as Phostoxin and Talunex. By January 2015, the City & Guilds award will be the only acceptable qualification for purchase. Up until this date, other training certificates will continue to be accepted at the discretion of the distributor. There is currently no legal requirement for candidates to sit the exam.

So what hurdles must be overcome to get such a potentially dangerous product from the manufacturer to your store? Distributors must meet a variety of legislation to hold stocks of aluminium phosphide, and registration on the BASIS Store Inspection Scheme is recommended. Once an order is received (on headed paper and detailing where the products are to be used and on what pest species), distributors will check you have the relevant training and/or qualifications, and ensure the sale is legitimate. All sales will be entered into a register (sometimes called the Poisons Book).

Similarly, those companies actually delivering the products to servicing companies must meet certain criteria under the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) and also the relevant national regulations.

Currently RAMPS (UK) is considering

how to deal with the supply and distribution of aluminium phosphide products, as this is still undecided. The three main distributors are working with RAMPS (UK) to establish common standards for purchase, based on the existing and new qualifications, the legislation around this subject, and of course industry best practice.

RAMPS (UK) is creating a national network of approved trainers to deliver the training package that meets the needs of the qualification. While we have heard concerns regarding the quality of this training, we are assured that any ‘bugs’ in the system are to be ironed out. BPCA has been invited to take up observer status with RAMPS (UK), and the BPCA Board is considering this in December. Please note that the BPCA Fumigation Diploma already satisfies the requirements for the sale and use of aluminium and magnesium phosphide for invertebrate control.

A RAMPS (UK) spokesperson strongly recommends any potential registrants to do so soon, as fees are about to increase.

Why should sales be restricted?

- 1 Aluminium phosphide products are dangerous and in untrained hands can cause significant harm or death
- 2 To keep products on the market, suppliers and users must demonstrate a responsible approach to handling and using aluminium phosphide products
- 3 By professionalising the use of aluminium phosphide products with agreed self-regulation, this may avoid measures being inflicted on users that would be more restrictive, complicated and costly
- 4 The introduction of the Sustainable Use Directive means that an appropriate registration scheme and qualification, recognised by Government and others, needs to be in place by January 2015
- 5 By having an approved register of stockists, trainers and end users, it helps spread the latest information (e.g. label text, MSDS, emergency and incident information and support) so everyone is up to speed.

To register, email
information@cityandguilds.com
 or phone 024 7685 7300.
 To find a trainer near you visit
www.ramps-uk.org

Get smarter, get richer, stay out of trouble!

BPCA's detailed membership survey has helped us understand your needs. Overall, about 50% of the membership responded to the survey, giving the Board a strong mandate to take action. These results have directed our strategy for the future.

In the short term, the BPCA Board has agreed to deliver key benefits as requested by you, the membership. And once we've delivered your top three, we'll work our way down the list, demonstrating that BPCA listens to your needs and continues to deliver outstanding benefit for your membership fees.

In servicing companies alone, BPCA represents*:

- Over 800 managers
- Over 700 admin staff
- Around 250 field biologists
- And nearly 3,000 technicians...

...making BPCA the only organisation that truly represents the pest control industry.

* Based on responses to the survey.

Servicing companies

40% of servicing companies responded to the survey. Their top three benefits are:

- Health and safety support and advice
- Products and equipment at a discount
- Reduced cost advertising.

We're dealing with health and safety overleaf, with an amazing free benefit worth thousands of pounds to every member. BPCA has invested a significant five-figure sum to give you access to 24 hour health and safety support and advice, seven days a week.

We also have a new benefit from Auditel, designed to make significant savings on some of your key expenditure lines. And our **alexo** magazine is one of the best ways to get your company's name in front of thousands of potential customers – for nothing! You just have to read the blog to see the upcoming articles, comment on them, and get involved.

Servicing company members want three key things from BPCA:

- BPCA to be recognised as a source of quality companies
- Good quality technical and other information
- Access to business leads.

You'll be aware that we are already well up on the first and last of these. BPCA launched **alexo** magazine, spending tens of thousands of pounds to get your business in front of customers, and to tell them why they should use a BPCA member company every time.

We've now trebled circulation to enhance this benefit.

Similarly, our technical information is second-to-none, and just this week we have launched guidance documents on grain fumigation, customer cancellation rights, and how to get your CPD (see page 26).

Manufacturing and distribution companies

Understandably, M&D members want different things from BPCA. Their key benefit (by a long chalk) is in-depth market research. So BPCA has started a UK pest control research programme, spearheaded by two projects.

The first is a detailed analysis of every UK Local Authority to find out what pest control activities are carried out, who by, and what changes there have been to the staffing levels within each region. BPCA chief executive Simon Forrester said "the industry is crying out for robust and believable data on a range of subjects, and currently there is little out there of any value. We want to build a strong foundation of quality industry research, and use this to put BPCA members ahead of their competition by lobbying decision makers using the data."

The second research activity is a scoping exercise to find out the size and shape of the UK market. Many of BPCA's M&D members have agreed to help gather data, and these companies will be given the results well ahead of the launch. We will do more research at the European level, and also find out exactly what products and services our members offer, and their relative efficiency. Any business needs benchmarking to know how they are doing, and we'll provide our members with this – something you can't get elsewhere.

So in summary, BPCA is continuing to deliver value-for-money benefits and services, keeping your business safer, more efficient, and ahead of the competition.



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Not a member yet?

Join now - we can save your business much more than the cost of membership.

To find out more about how to access these benefits or to join BPCA contact Rachel Eyre on 01332 225 112

rachel@bpca.org.uk



BusinessShield

BPCA BusinessShield Helplines:
two new free membership benefits for BPCA members to call for health and safety and employment law support.

We've listened to your feedback and are pleased to announce a new FREE Membership Benefit from January 2012. BPCA BusinessShield; our free one-stop-shop for advice and guidance to support your business. Working with new partners Stallard Kane Associates Ltd, the free helpline covers Personnel and Employment Law, Health, Safety and Environmental matters. It's an added value service aimed at helping member companies protect their businesses and to give the right advice – all free to BPCA members!

BPCA BusinessShield: health and safety

For most companies health and safety is a minefield, and the press is full of prosecutions against companies who have fallen foul of some minor but vital rule. We are very aware our members take health and safety seriously, but we also know everyone could do with a little help now and again. So from 2012, BPCA members get a free helpline, plus access to thousands of standard H&S documents via the BPCA website, all designed to give your business the edge. And for a small extra fee you can have access to the following services:

- A designated health and safety consultant for your business, available by phone
 - An annual update of your health and safety policy and procedures
 - Production of annually-updated employee health and safety booklets
 - A health and safety manual complete with reference and guidance material
 - Monthly newsletters to alert you of any changes in health and safety law that may affect your business
 - Annual visits to audit the implemented systems and update as necessary
- BPCA BusinessShield to act as Competent Person under "The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999" (regulation 7)
 - Unlimited access to your designated health and safety consultant
 - Ongoing support for senior staff in your company.

Members can buy into this enhanced service if they wish, at an additional (though heavily discounted) price.

The BPCA BusinessShield service is offered by Stallard Kane Associates, a company with 30 full-time employees around the UK, including in-house risk specialists plus CHAS, ISO 9002 and IIP accreditation. Stallard Kane Associates provides similar support to a wide range of clients including the Property Care Association, GlaxoSmithKline, BAA and the Hire Association Europe.

Announcing the new service, Simon Forrester said "This is an exciting development for the Association as we continue to work hard to support our members in these difficult economic times. BusinessShield offers a high value solution targeted at pest control companies who may be on the verge of spending a fortune on expensive consultants or advisers. Sadly many of these 'experts' are simply not

knowledgeable about matters affecting pest controllers."

"Our new partnership with Stallard Kane Associates Ltd demonstrates BPCA is committed to giving its members services to make their business stronger, safer and more profitable." BPCA BusinessShield offers free helpline support to our members on any health and safety, environmental or employment law topics, and members can add in a wide range of additional services for a small fee.

Commenting on the new helpline, Richard Kane from Stallard Kane Associates, said "We are pleased to be able to offer members of BPCA peace of mind that help and assistance is available in all aspects of personnel, employment law and health and safety. All our consultants are from an industry background and are committed to

providing no-nonsense practical advice. BusinessShield will enable BPCA members to deal with the complexity of employment law and health and safety issues in a simple and straightforward manner."

Research from both the Health & Safety Executive (see page 7) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development shows that in the current climate, businesses are facing a greater likelihood of legal issues on health and safety and employment law.

While a helpline is useful as a reaction to an existing or new problem, there is nothing like staying 'upstream' of potential issues. That's why BPCA members are also invited to meet the BPCA BusinessShield team at the six regional forums scheduled for the first half of 2012 (see page 31), and also find out more about how BPCA BusinessShield can help your company.



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To find out more about how to access these benefits or to join BPCA contact Rachel Eyre on 01332 225 112

rachel@bpca.org.uk

BPCA BusinessShield: employment law

Employment law is the other area that gives our members the most sleepless nights. From January 2012, BPCA members get a helpline staffed by employment law experts, plus a wide variety of standard documents and templates through the BPCA website.

Once again, if you wish to upgrade your package, member companies can get access to all of the following:

- Revising and updating your employees statement of terms and conditions of employment
- A designated employment law practitioner for your business
- A visit from your designated employment law practitioner, to assist in the development of a company-specific employee handbook covering all the relevant rules and procedures for your business and to assist in the implementation of personnel folders
- Printing of employee handbooks
- Monthly e-newsletters to alert you of any changes in employment law issues
- An employment manual complete with reference material
- Unlimited access to your designated employment law practitioner for prompt and pertinent telephone advice for employment law issues
- Assisting in and compiling any necessary letters, i.e. dismissal/disciplinary matters
- Inclusive of Essential Business Legal Insurance Policy underwritten by Arag Insurance plc: this policy provides insurances for both legal representation costs and compensation awards in connection with employment.



Further details on the BPCA BusinessShield service and how to access it will be sent to all full BPCA members in good standing after the Christmas break. The online access will be available following the launch of the new BPCA website (see the next issue of PPC magazine).



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Doug Bralsford is an Auditel consultant, who offers his own expertise, along with the vast knowledge base of the Auditel network, with its national buying power, helping businesses everywhere to save money and become more efficient. He is working closely with BPCA and savings are already being seen.

Businesses are offered a free business health check which enables them to benefit from Auditel's unparalleled professional, effective cost reduction analysis advice, with no risk. This means Auditel will only charge fees once they have proven savings, or should you want a project undertaken through a pre-agreed fee structure. Equally as powerful is that Doug once owned and ran a large pest control business (Predator) and knows all the pitfalls and areas to address.

Overhead areas that are typically covered include:

- Business consumables
- Communications
- Environmental and waste management
- Energy and energy efficiency
- Finance and merchant cards
- Fleet management
- Insurance
- Premises including intruder alarms, stationery and photocopiers
- Water and sewerage
- Clothing, cleaning and janitorial supplies.

Download more information, including the Auditel brochure from www.auditel.co.uk

To arrange your free business health check, ring Doug Bralsford on 01404 831 016 or 07720 561505, alternatively email on doug.bralsford@auditel.co.uk

If you'd like to hear more about this benefit, Doug will be speaking at the following BPCA regional forums:

Thursday 23 February – Belfast

Thursday 22 March – Walsall

Tuesday 24 April – Central London

Tuesday 15 May – Glasgow

Thursday 24 May – Chepstow

Wednesday 30 May – Stockport

See page 31 for further information.

Not a member yet?

Join now - we can save your business much more than the cost of membership. To find out more about how to access these benefits or to join BPCA contact Rachel Eyre on 01332 225 112

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Assessing rodenticide potency and palatability

“No pest controller was ever interested in how much product would kill half of a target rat or mouse population.”



When choosing rodenticides we are bombarded by high-powered marketing, technical overload and confusing or even conflicting data. JO Wade, technical director at PelGar

International Ltd, asks “What is the key to ensuring rodenticide does the job it is supposed to do, and does the size (potency/strength of active) matter?”

The efficacy of modern rodenticides can be described in two ways: by the intrinsic potency of the active materials, and by the palatability of the formulated bait to the target rodent species. Both these factors can be determined within a laboratory environment and bait palatability can be further confirmed by ‘field experimental review’, using ‘real’ rodents. Laboratory efficacy reviews may suffer from in-built faults however, and there may be considerable variances between the performances of even a single active substance when reviewed by different scientists against the same pest species.

It is interesting to note that there are several strains of rat used for bio-medical testing but three strains in particular are commonly used: The Wistar rat, Sprague Dawley rat and the Long-Evans rat. Undoubtedly there will be subtle differences between the responses of these different strains to the effects of rodenticides. Further modification of response may be caused by rodent age, weight and condition although scientists try to minimise variance in their experiments. For these reasons laboratory data must be regarded as indicative rather than conclusive. It is not uncommon for results to be expressed in a partisan manner whereby companies with vested interests make efforts to promote their products in a biased way, perhaps selecting only the best results achieved rather than taking an overall view of both good and less good results.

The second generation rodenticides include the following active substances: difenacoum (1975), bromadiolone (1976), brodifacoum (1976), flocoumafen (1984), and difethiolone (1986). (Figures in brackets indicating approximate date of development).

Second generation anticoagulant rodenticides are very much more potent than first generation products like warfarin, although their spectrum of activity against commensal species is by no means identical. The most powerful – brodifacoum and flocoumafen – are classed as single-feed rodenticides, which confines them to indoor use under UK law. Ironically ‘indoors’ is a less likely environment for rats

(*Rattus norvegicus*) which more commonly burrow and nest outdoors in earthen banks or under buildings as well as inhabiting our sewers. Only brodifacoum, however, is able to demonstrate a true ‘single-feed kill’ against both rats and mice.

In contrast, lower potency multi-feed anticoagulants like difenacoum and bromadiolone can be used around the outside as well as within buildings and are excellent ‘all rounders’. Difethialone, first marketed in Europe in the late eighties but only recently introduced into the UK market at an active material inclusion rate of only 25ppm rather than the 50ppm a.i. (common to all other second generation products) has been placed within the ‘multi-feed bait’ category but also within the ‘only for indoor use’ category.

To illustrate the issue of selective reporting, consider the table in figure 1 showing published data derived from experimental review of several second generation anticoagulants compared to the first generation anticoagulant warfarin between the 1950s and the 1980s.

A similar story is told when reviewing the data for mouse control. It is noteworthy that the figures assembled for use in the Pesticide Manual sometimes adopt the low figure, sometimes the higher but it serves to exemplify that one should not rely too much on numbers. It is mindless, perhaps even foolish to deliberate about the second and third decimal place in respect of product efficacy calculations when the rodents themselves do not live in this same world of precision. Laboratory workers often express their findings in terms of a product’s LD50 or its Median Lethal Dose. We can be fairly sure however that no pest controller was ever interested in how much product would kill half of a target rat or mouse population.

Nonetheless, almost all researchers will agree that there are wide differences in intrinsic potency between today’s most advanced second generation anticoagulant rodenticides, and that their ‘spectrum of efficacy’ against the common commensal species is also quite broad. It is important, indeed vital, not to lose sight of the fact that these are laboratory results. The only real gauge of a product’s efficacy is how it performs ‘in the field’ against wild rodents.

Formulation chemistry can modify intrinsic toxicity so that it is possible to formulate any of the more potent active substance ‘badly’, reducing product palatability therefore potentially compromising field efficacy. It is a strategic point of view that by preparing low palatability, high toxicity baits then the amount of active substance introduced into the rodent population, and therefore into the wider environment is reduced and the numbers of chemically ‘hot’ rodents is vastly diminished. High palatability combined with high potency may result in rodents ingesting 20-30 lethal doses prior to death – a serious case

of ‘overkill’ and a significant threat to non-target predators and scavengers. Products showing this combination of features must be used with extreme care.

Conversely molecules of comparatively lesser toxicity can be formulated as high palatability baits and therefore yield extremely good cost efficacy. Increasing the amount of anticoagulant active material presented to the environment does not pose the same threats and risks as illuminated above. For example, when using difenacoum as an active substance for mouse control; make the difenacoum bait super palatable and the finished product can be almost as efficacious as a brodifacoum bait against mice, and potentially up to three or four times more efficacious than a flocoumafen bait. Combined with the other major asset of difenacoum, i.e. its low toxicity to many of the common non-target animals, and you have a potential winner.

Figure 1: acute oral LD50 values of several anticoagulants to albino Rattus norvegicus

Anticoagulant (and common products)	LD50 from literature (mg/kg)	LD50 from pesticide manual rodent sex shown if recorded (mg/kg)	Bait concentration (% a.i.w/w)	LD50 (g of bait/250g rat)
Brodifacoum (Vertox, Klerat, etc.)	0.22-0.27	0.27 ♂	0.005	1.1-1.4
Bromadiolone (Rodex, Slaymor, Deadline etc.)	1.1-1.8	1.125	0.005	5.6-9.0
Difenacoum (Roban, Neosorexa etc.)	1.8	1.8 ♂ 2.45 ♀	0.005	9.0
Difethialone (Rodilon)	0.56	0.56	0.0025	5.6
Flocoumafen (Storm)	0.25-0.56	0.25	0.005	1.25-2.8
Warfarin	14-323	186	0.025	14-323

So how should such potency and palatability differences be taken into account in professional practice? There are bait preferences amongst rodent populations that are evident on a local scale, regional scale and even a national scale. Across the English Channel, where the prevalence of Black rats increases, there will be significant changes in bait preference compared to our indigenous Brown rat. Rural rats may be considered more conservative in their food preferences, often feeding exclusively on cereal baits. High or enhanced palatability baits using an identical cereal matrix may be needed to draw such rats away from their ‘normal’ food. One farm may offer a completely different scenario to another only one or two miles down the road (e.g. chicken culture versus pig culture) each demanding a different control strategy and baiting programme. Conversely the urban rat, pampered by the delights of the British sewer system or by an excess of fast-food waste and bird-table offerings demonstrates a wider food preference and will happily take paste baits, wax-based baits or multi-grain ‘muesli’ baits.

As the urban rat may change its food source frequently, then high potency bait will offer more secure control – the target rat only needs to find and consume the 2g lethal dose, a single meal, to ensure death.

Rural (house) mouse control is largely confined to building treatment and protection and there is a greater chance of ‘non-target’ kills in this circumstance as wild rodents venture into areas treated for house mouse control. These animals then leave to die outside, and become available to carrion feeders and scavengers when dead or to natural predators when moribund or slow-moving. The multi-feed rodenticide difenacoum demonstrates particular potency against mice, which makes it an especially attractive indoor as well as outdoor choice here. Not least for the fact that gramme for gramme it is somewhat less toxic to a wide range of pets and farm animals than any other second generation anticoagulant.

Urban mouse control in certain areas of the UK is becoming quite difficult as mice are refusing to accept certain types of bait. Also, the ability to manufacture baits from concentrates has been denied to the pest control industry. Novel approaches are needed in this circumstance and both difenacoum and brodifacoum contact gels are available to augment control by standard bait formulations that rely on the rodent eating the formulation, rather than ingesting it via grooming.

Successful rodent control is becoming more problematic. Rodent numbers are probably increasing, as is the amount of bait used to control them, and new areas of potential anti-coagulant resistance are being identified as more cost effective methods of testing for resistance become available, such as tail testing. Observation of rodent behaviour and a lucid understanding of this behaviour and biology are more vital now than ever before. Some of the main reasons why rodent control operations fail are:

- Paying ‘lip-service’ to pest control by using formula-ised bait station placements, often irrelevant to actual sites of infestation
- Not laying enough bait
- Making inadequate re-visits to bait stations and therefore inadequate bait top-ups.

In many cases, it is not the result of poor quality baits or resistance amongst rodents, it is the fault of the operator who has failed to take the basic steps that ensure the pest species is controlled.

And so, back to the question “does size (potency/strength of active) matter?” As long as the pest controller understands rodent behaviour and biology and the features and characteristics of his chosen rodenticide, then “no, size (potency) is not necessarily the key.”

A less potent product will have excellent results if it is presented to the rodent in a highly palatable formulation that the pest feeds on readily. Most of the rodenticides available in today’s market will do the job when it comes to controlling rodents. It’s not a case of how long the rat or mouse will take to die, all second generation rodenticides will take about the same time to kill. It’s more a case of how good the bait palatability is and how easily a lethal dose can be ingested in combination with overall cost-efficacy and environmental safety.

www.pelgar.co.uk

In the next issue, Bayer discusses its new Rodilon product range and how it has met the challenges of bait palatability.



Photograph courtesy of Jean Haxaire

Asian hornet

a new pest on the horizon?

Dr. Gay Marris, science coordinator, FERA National Bee Unit, has contacted BPCA with details of a new non-native pest species that could decimate UK bee colonies. This insect could also prove a handful for those who have to deal with it.

Photograph courtesy of Jean Haxaire

The pest in question is the Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina*, an aggressive predator of honey bees and other beneficial insects. Its lifecycle begins with mated queens emerging in early spring, to form embryo nests. Larger nests are rapidly established, and worker hornets attend to the needs of the growing colony and predate a variety of insects to obtain the protein-rich diet that the developing hornet brood requires. Prey is often caught on the wing, but hornets also enter severely depleted honey bee hives to raid the colony.

Mature hornet nests, which can be huge and comprise several thousand individuals, are seen from May onwards. Sexual stages emerge from July until November, and one colony may produce hundreds or even thousands of mated queens that seek out suitable sites in which to over-winter. They emerge in early spring, to begin the cycle again. A key feature of the Asian hornet's biology is that a single, mated queen can found an entire new colony.

Understanding the risks of arrival in the UK

The Asian hornet has recently extended its native geographical range from Asia to mainland Europe, following accidental introduction to France in 2003-2004. In conjunction with The Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS), the National Bee Unit (NBU) is seeking answers to four key questions regarding this species:

- How likely is it that the Asian hornet will arrive in the UK?
- How likely is it that it will establish in the UK?
- How likely is it to spread in the UK?
- What would be its impact?



Mature nest of the Asian hornet

How likely is it that the Asian hornet will arrive in the UK?

The life-stage of the Asian hornet that possess the greatest risk of entry is a newly-mated queen. It is believed that the entire population of Asian hornets in France originated from a single incursion. A number of routes in to the UK have been highlighted by the NBU: flight across the Channel being most likely, as the shortest distance between England and France over the English Channel is 34km, and it is suspected that the Asian hornet can fly many miles in a single flight.

Several other potential pathways exist for the Asian hornet to enter the UK. These include commodities such as wood, flowers and fruits. Man-made goods can also offer potential harbourage points, as the insects attempt to hibernate in small, well insulated harbourages. Soil and leaf litter are also potential hibernation sites, which then become potential entry routes in to the country. Transport, freight, containers, and even bee colonies being imported for trade could also be points of access in to the UK.

How likely is it that the Asian hornet will establish in the UK?

Vespa velutina is highly adaptable. Although its native range is Asian, they have established in many regions of France, including Northern Brittany. Since its entry and establishment in the EU, *Vespa velutina* has rapidly adapted to its new environment, colonising urban, suburban, agricultural and wooded areas. These man-made and/or unmanaged environments are equally available in the UK. Preferred food is the European honey bee, but they predate other social Hymenoptera, flies, butterflies etc., so the Asian hornet would not have to rely on honey bees for establishment and spread. This suggests that if the Asian hornet makes it to the UK, it will establish itself quite successfully.

Once established, how likely is the spread of Asian hornet?

Based on the experiences of French beekeepers, we must assume a very rapid spread. Potential for arrival and subsequent spread may be greatest in the following areas:

- Areas where winters are milder (southern English counties)
- Open areas near water, hornets tending to follow rivers and watercourses
- Near ports and airports, where controlled and uncontrolled consignments of commodities that may harbour overwintering queens are most likely to enter the UK
- In the event that *Vespa velutina* crosses the English Channel, either on shipping or by natural spread, coastal counties of southern England will be most at risk
- Given that the requirements of *Vespa velutina* are broadly comparable to those of the European hornet, we may expect its potential geographic distribution in the UK to be similar.

/continued over...

Entry pathways by which the Asian hornet could enter the UK



Ceramic bonsai pots imported from China on sale in a UK garden centre

	PATHWAY	LEVEL OF RISK (LIKELIHOOD OF ENTRY)
1	Cross Channel flight	HIGH
2	Imported wood/wood products	HIGH
3	Imported man-made goods	INTERMEDIATE
4	Imported fruit/cut flowers	INTERMEDIATE
5	Imported soil	LOW
6	On freight containers/transport vehicles	LOW
7	Movement with honey bees	EXTREMELY LOW

Photograph courtesy of Nigel Jones



Photograph courtesy of Jean Haxaire



Hornet comparison	EUROPEAN HORNET <i>Vespa crabro</i>	ASIAN HORNET <i>Vespa velutina</i>
Length	3.0cm	2.5cm
Head	Yellow	Orange-yellow, black head
Thorax	Lighter brown with dark pattern	Dark brown, velvety
Abdomen	Mostly yellow	Fine yellow band on fourth segment, remainder dark brown
Wings	Reddish-orange	Brown
Legs	Brown	Brown with yellow ends
Activity	Can be 24 hours	Daytime only
Found	Southern England up to Midlands and South Wales	No current UK sightings

What would be the impact of the Asian hornet in the UK?

The arrival of Asian hornets in the UK has the potential to impact honey bees, the wider natural environment, and also has social implications. These potential impacts are summarised as follows:

Impact on honey bees

The primary food of Asian hornets is honey bees, the most obvious effect of predation by Asian hornets being death of adult workers. Honey bees are the primary managed pollinator of commercial crops in the UK (total value hundreds £m/annum), and honey production is worth between £10m-£35m each year. Asian hornets also have indirect effects on honey bee health. Chronic hornet activity around a colony causes honey bees to mount a constant defence of the hive entrance, thus greatly limiting time spent foraging. Pollen reserves become depleted, leading to mortality in developing bee larvae, weakening of the colony, and potential colony loss. Adult hornets will enter weakened colonies, decimating brood and reserves.

Environmental impact

The environmental impact of the Asian hornet within its existing geographic range has yet to be documented. However, ongoing research in France shows that it affects not just honey bees but also social wasps, other Hymenoptera, several types of fly and various unclassified insects, several of which are likely to provide beneficial unmanaged pollination services in a variety of man-made and 'wild' scenarios – pollinator services that will be adversely affected if predation by Asian hornets significantly reduces their numbers.

Social impact

The social impact of the Asian hornet should it become established in the UK will be important for pest control operators. A recent survey of Asian hornets in nests in France shows that, in contrast to those of forest-dwelling *Vespa crabro*, almost half (49%) are found in relatively close proximity to human activity. Moreover, at least a proportion of these are located less than 2m off the ground, in bushes or hedges. In the autumn of 2009 at least seven people went to hospital after being attacked by a

single swarm of *Vespa velutina*. As a result, French authorities are warning people not to approach the nests, and to contact the police for help.

Because of its large size and partly by virtue of its appearance, like many wasp species *Vespa velutina* is intimidating to the public. Fairly or otherwise, their mere presence is likely to constitute a public nuisance, by disrupting human enjoyment of outdoor parks and gardens etc. Hornet abundance in urban areas will vary according to the time of year. In the autumn, Asian hornets search for sweet, carbohydrate-based foods and may be attracted to human habitation/sites where such foodstuffs are available (e.g. picnic sites).

Conclusions and reporting suspect sightings

There is a real possibility that UK pest controllers will see this new pest within the next couple of years. We will need to be aware of the differing habits of this new species with its preference for nesting in or around inhabited areas, remembering the destruction it can do to our native species.

If you think you are dealing with Asian hornets, please report sightings, along with a photograph and details of where you saw it, to

alert_nonnative@ceh.ac.uk

If possible, send in a sample to the National Bee Unit for examination to confirm identity. Your vigilance can help keep our bee colonies safe.

Further information

BeeBase

www.nationalbeeunit.co.uk

Asian hornet information sheet

<http://goo.gl/7R2ZX>

European hornet information sheet

<http://goo.gl/nHB0d>

Asian hornet PowerPoint presentation

<http://goo.gl/3pbJO>

Comparison of trap designs against the Asian hornet

<http://goo.gl/ZRkq6>

Stephen Woolley of Robinsons Solicitors explains this important legislation and how it may influence your business.

Corporate manslaughter

The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 came mostly into force on 6 April 2008. It is not retrospective, and it runs in parallel with existing legislation. It allows blameworthy directors, officers or individuals to be personally prosecuted. It takes potential liability to the heart of the boardroom in order to impose liability and thus penalty for breach, upon the organisation as a whole.

The expression 'organisation' is wide. It includes not only companies but also partnerships; trade unions; public bodies; most government bodies; voluntary groups and charities – provided that they operate in the UK. It almost certainly includes your company.

If a death occurs and a prosecution is brought, the court will consider whether the organisation owed a duty of care, whether to employees or other workers; or as occupier of premises; or in the carrying out of construction and maintenance; or any other activity carried out on a commercial basis. If the judge decides that there was a duty of care, then the jury will consider whether the organisation was in breach of this and of health and safety legislation, and whether this breach was due to the failings of senior management. In particular, the court will consider the attitudes and accepted practices of an organisation; its policies and systems and how these compare with available and authoritative health and safety guidance and whether in breach of health and safety legislation.

It is important to note that liability cannot be avoided by senior management stating 'we have delegated responsibility for health and safety to others'. It is the health and safety



AREAS OF RISK These are just examples but senior management should view the activities of their organisation laterally.

- Safe storage and transit, including driver /operative protection, of noxious poisons and gases
- Full risk assessment of the use and methods of use of such items
- Driver/operative training ensuring containers/vehicles are fully and properly marked to identify substances within
- Ensuring staff awareness of symptomology of poisoning/contamination
- Availability of full toxic material information to assist all stages of medical treatment, including first aid
- Ensuring driving time/distances are not excessive and with opportunities for adequate rest
- Ensuring adequate operative training if ladders/gangways/flat or glass roofs are to be accessed with adequate prior risk assessment if access required to elevated or confined spaces.

culture of the entire organisation which is under scrutiny.

The penalties for breach are severe and include an unlimited fine (the first case successfully prosecuted against the relatively small company invoked a fine of £385,000). The Act also has power to order the making of a remedial order (i.e. to remedy management failure) and a publicity order.

In order to protect its position, every organisation should consider whether its health and safety leadership and culture meets the standards set out in the Joint Guidance issued by the Institute of Directors and Health and Safety Commission, and should ask itself whether improvements can be made to its safety management systems and whether this may be helped by an independent audit of those systems and compliance. Organisations should develop an incident response plan and, most importantly, consider ways to strengthen the health and safety culture within the organisation as a whole so that everybody takes responsibility for improving health and safety.



Insurance is available to defend the costs of an unsuccessful prosecution but, as a matter of public policy, no insurance is available for penalties or prosecution costs.

<http://goo.gl/q3S5N>
www.robinsons-solicitors.co.uk
www.bridgeinsurance.co.uk
www.pestcontrolinsurance.co.uk



Point taken!

The PROMPT Professional Pest Controllers Register is an industry-wide initiative designed to ensure that professional pest controllers can show they have received proper training, have achieved the required level of competence, and have invested time in keeping their knowledge and skills up to date through regular CPD activities.

So what do you have to do?

PROMPT requires full members to achieve 20 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points over the year, starting 1 January. This article shows you how to plan your CPD calendar for 2012 in order to reach your target.

Twenty CPD points should take between 10 and 20 hours of qualifying activities, depending on the content and level of participation. Many members gain in excess of 20 points each year and are clearly benefiting from the experience of this additional CPD. Remember, an event does not have to be an expensive training course: it could be an internal team meeting, BPCA regional forum, supplier day, attending an exhibition or an update from your own technical reading and/or research. In November alone 32 points were available

to achieve, the majority of which were at no cost to individuals.

Whether you are a technician or manager (or both), you can accrue points from a wide variety of sources, from attending events to phone conversations, from online webinars to reading trade magazines.

CPD doesn't necessarily require attendance on training courses: any activity that can be defined as personal development whether maintaining, improving or broadening the knowledge or skills necessary for the execution of your daily work could be allocated CPD points. In fact you are doing a CPD activity right now! Reading industry magazines is an easy way of picking up a couple of points and keeping you updated on industry developments which can benefit you in your job.

Many companies are now in the habit of registering internal meetings between managers and technicians and receive CPD points for activities that have always been part of their working lives.

Meetings with representatives from manufacturers and distributors are an important source of knowledge transfer, and as long as a record of who was involved, the duration of the meeting, where it took place and the technical content is recorded, these meetings can be eligible for CPD points.

Just by attending your local regional forum, an exhibition, and reading and completing online and paper CPD tests, you should be well on your way to achieving the 20 points

BPCA launches free online CPD tests

The Association is developing a series of CPD tests that can be taken from the comfort of your desk. We are developing additional training registered with PROMPT, the first being on ladder training, with more to follow.

There are documents or films containing the learning material, and a short survey to complete. The survey allows us to show you have understood the training. We mark the survey and then send the results to PROMPT, who add the points to your record.

www.bpca.org.uk/cpd

needed. To see a list of points available for future events, visit the Diary of Events on the BASIS PROMPT website

<http://goo.gl/cOVTr>

These are just some of the ways that you can improve your knowledge and skills to do your job, have it recorded and show by producing your PROMPT ID card that you have kept up to date with regular CPD activities.

So next time that you are attending a training course, industry meeting or trade fair, ensure that you sign the attendance sheet, or make sure that the bar code on your PROMPT membership card is scanned to register your attendance. The list opposite is by no means exhaustive.

If you have an event you'd like to register for CPD points or if you have attended an event that has not yet been registered, please contact the PROMPT team to get your points. You will be surprised how many of your current activities qualify for CPD and, provided the PROMPT team is aware of them, these can significantly contribute towards your annual PROMPT points total.

BASIS PROMPT encourages everyone involved in the pest management industry to seek the professional status that registration on the PROMPT Professional Pest Controllers Register can deliver for them, their employers and their customers.

www.basispestcontrol.com

BPCA helps you plan your CPD calendar for the New Year!



2012	EVENT	Free to take part	CPD points allocated (estimate)
January	BPCA membership		2
	BPCA online quiz	✓	1
	Prep for PA6 Assessment – hand held		12
February	BPCA Regional Forum, Belfast	✓*	5
	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
	PPC 66	✓	2**
	Rodent Control		12
March	BPCA Regional Forum, Walsall	✓*	5
	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
April	BPCA Regional Forum, Central London	✓*	5
	Pest-Ventures, Nottingham		2
May	BPCA Regional Forum, Glasgow	✓	5
	BPCA Regional Forum, Chepstow	✓	5
	BPCA Regional Forum, Stockport	✓	5
	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
	PPC67	✓	**
June	BPCA online quiz	✓	1
July	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
August	BPCA online quiz	✓	1
September	BPCA Regional Forums	✓	5
	PPC68	✓	**
October	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
	BPCA Regional Forums	✓*	5
November	PestTech, Solihull	✓	3-10
	Pest Magazine Pest Test	✓	2
	BPCA Regional Forums	✓*	5
December	PPC69	✓	**

*First place free **For four issues



TECHNICIANS

Let's say once a quarter your employer holds an update meeting on the latest products or equipment bought by your company to help you to do your job; they can even invite the supplier in to do this. You can get PROMPT points for these updates – at no cost to you or your company. If it's an hour, you might get two points, depending on the meeting content and individual participation. In a year that's over a third of your way to the target.

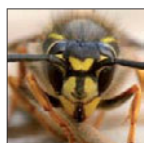
MANAGERS

As a member of BPCA, you are entitled to free technical advice from BPCA's trained staff. For example, if you have a technical query you can log this call and receive PROMPT points for it – it can count as technical updating for CPD. Simply mention it to a BPCA member of staff to find out more.



Are you a registered BASIS PROMPT professional?

PROMPT is an independent industry-recognised register of suitably qualified people who can genuinely claim to be professionals in public health pest control and related activities.



Members make a commitment to lifelong learning Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which all professionals in leading industries are expected to make.



Show your customers that you're a true professional.

For further information, go to www.basispestcontrol.com



PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROLLERS REGISTER

Standard bearers

Two recent industry events have placed the spotlight firmly on the CEN European Standard for Pest Control Professionals. Simon Forrester attended both, and he reports on progress and the debate so far.

PestTech

This year's PestTech event at the National Motorcycle Museum hosted a Pest Control News workshop discussion about the CEN Standard. This debate was a big draw, and I was very pleased to see it on the programme, as concerns had been expressed that industry was not being given the chance to comment. Thanks are due to Killgerm for putting on the event. Chris Suter, director of qualifications at the Royal Society for Public Health gave the 'case for the defence'. Chris is chair of the UK's BSI committee, which represents the views of our sector alongside the other EU nations. He was at pains to point out that we are at an early stage in proceedings, and that the Standard is being written by and for the industry – it's not something imposed on us by Brussels (or anyone else).

In its current form the Standard is a voluntary one, and further work outside the scope of CEN would need to happen to develop it into something statutory resembling the Gas Safe Register or even a BRC Standard developed by our customers. The proposed Standard is about what a professional pest control business should be doing, not how it should be doing it – that is up to you as an individual professional to decide. Nor will the Standard be admin-heavy – nobody wants to create more unnecessary red tape. According to Chris, the Standard is all about good businesses being able to distinguish themselves from the competition, and while a compulsory system would be ideal, this is a positive first step along this road.

Jonathan Peck from Killgerm stated that he welcomed CEN as he welcomed anything which improved industry standards. He had reservations about the practical impact that may be felt by the introduction of a voluntary scheme which may favour larger companies at the expense of smaller firms and one-man bands. He also outlined some concerns regarding the possible cost of the Standard, and how franchises might be dealt with. It was confirmed that both these issues will be discussed in detail before the launch (likely in late 2013). Chris Suter clearly stated that not only did the standard not favour large companies, but would more likely be more difficult to achieve.

When we reached the Q&A section of proceedings, it was very encouraging to hear from sole traders that they welcome the proposed Standard, and the cost is not an issue for them – they see it as a positive move and one which should in time exclude the 'cowboys', as long as end users are made aware of the Standard and what it means. The end result being a better and more professional industry for all concerned.



CEPA General Assembly



CEPA, the umbrella body for 19 European pest management associations (including BPCA) held its General Assembly on 2 December in Brussels. Guest speakers included Christa Klass MEP, the Rapporteur for the EU Parliament on the Biocides Directive; Jennifer Hopkins, European Regulatory Strategy and Advocacy Manager for Bayer; and Rob Fryatt, Chair of the CEN Standard Committee.

Christa Klass has been a German MEP since 1994, and is heavily involved in public health regulation, so it was a real coup for CEPA to have her speak. Mrs Klass stated that in her belief, sustainable use of biocides will only increase in importance over the years ahead: primarily by issues such as resistance, novel diseases (e.g. from tropical pest species introduced through climate change and movement of goods/people), and consumer pressure. She reported that the Biocidal Products Regulations have been agreed in principle, and will be voted on in January, with a likely introduction in September 2013 across all EU Member States. In 2017 there will be a further review.

Mrs Klass stated her regret that there is still no European definition of a professional user, nor the training and education which users must undertake. She expressed her hope that this would be addressed in the near future, and was very positive about the CEN Standard as a step to establishing what professional user looks like. She also stated that the EU is sympathetic to biocide manufacturers, and the latest regulation changes should both help keep products available through a risk-based approach, and also help companies bring products to market.



Jennifer Hopkins from Bayer gave the manufacturer's view on current regulation



Rob Fryatt, chair of CEN TC 277

This last statement was not wholly supported by the next speaker, Jennifer Hopkins of Bayer, a member of the industry BPR working group. It currently takes around nine years to achieve cross-Europe approval for a new active substance. The new process will take a minimum of seven years, and cost at least €110,000 for central registration of products. This may well prevent products from being commercially viable. Under the new regulations, it is also mandatory for manufacturers to share data (e.g. on environmental impact or toxicology), which penalises those companies who do the research in the first place – another disincentive to launch new actives.

Jennifer reported that while initially the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD) met with a lot of scepticism from MEPs, there is growing momentum behind its implementation. In her opinion training and registration schemes like PROMPT and CEN are a significant positive move towards professionals keeping actives on the market post-SUD, and a definition of professional users needs to link to these types of scheme.

Rob Fryatt, the Chair of the CEN Project Committee gave an update on a recent meeting in Malta and progress so far with the CEN Standard. Rob reported that the project is progressing well. We are now three meetings into the process, and there is still the same level of commitment from those involved. The feedback mechanism within the National Mirror Groups is much improved (a criticism levelled at the UK group). Rob reported that one of the working groups is looking at definitions and terminology (e.g. definition of a 'professional user'), the other looking at requirements and competences, i.e. what should be done by a professional PCO.

Between the recent Committee meeting in Malta and the next in London scheduled for late April, the workgroups will produce the first draft of the Standard document. Rob

was pleased to report that the Committee is still on target to deliver the Standard within the three year timescale set down by CEN. Rob highlighted the need for increased communication and debate, as recently witnessed in the UK (see above), and PPC will address this in the next issue.

I was also invited to speak at CEPA alongside my opposite number from the French association about our recent lobbying experience in Brussels (see page 12).

In summary: the CEN project is moving on at a pace, and if the same momentum is kept we will be ready with a Standard just as the European Parliament implements Biocidal Products Regulations and begin to look at the next stage. To have a Standard in place at that point is a brilliant move, and will almost certainly keep EU bureaucracy from setting a Standard itself without the knowledge of our sector. BPCA is heavily involved in driving the CEN project forward at both a national and European level. We will represent the views of our members, ensuring the final document reflects the needs of professionals.

www.cepa-europe.org



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BPCA Membership Manager Kevin Higgins investigates ways to stay safe when working alone.

LONE WORKING

Who's your guardian angel?

BPCA is well aware of the challenging economic climate in which our members operate, smaller companies in particular. Personal safety doesn't always reach the top of the agenda, especially as a sole trader.

A typical busy day can mean working on sites in remote areas looking for sources of pests or means of ingress. This usually means working alone, often without anyone knowing where you are, or how to find you.

Even though we all have mobile phones, they should not be totally relied on to get you out of difficulties. A pre-arranged system of checks and alerts will cover most eventualities and ensure you have a guardian angel to watch over you.

SitexOrbis, specialists in the protection of property and people tell me that alongside 171 work-related deaths last year, there were almost a million incidents of violence or physical assaults on British workers. An injury can be disastrous for the individual, the business and of course the employee's family. Workers can suffer serious physical and mental repercussions, while the employer can be impacted through staff retention and recruitment costs, increased absenteeism through sickness, low productivity, litigation and negative publicity.

There is a raft of legislation protecting employees, the latest being the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, which places the greatest emphasis and liability on employers to protect lone workers. An organisation will be guilty of an offence if, through the way it is managed, it causes a person's death in a gross breach of the relevant duty of care. And with a reverse burden of proof, the employer is guilty until proven innocent!

Since the Act came into force there have been two prosecutions for lone worker fatalities. The first could put the company concerned into liquidation, with a £385,000

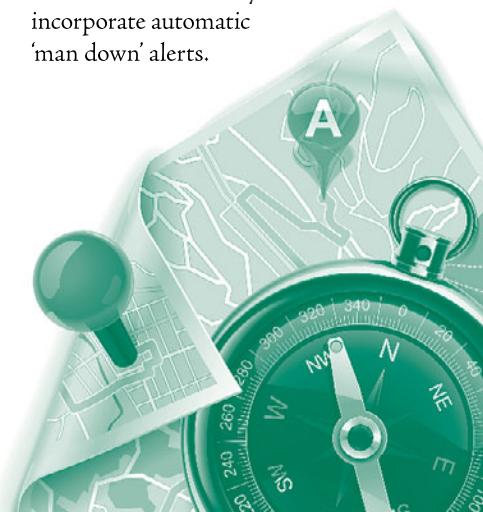
fine. More recently, Lion Steel Equipment was charged with corporate manslaughter following the death of an employee who fell through a fragile roof at work. Three directors are also individually charged both with gross negligence manslaughter and with breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act by reason of their consent, connivance or neglect.

Most organisations are turning to technology to help them comply with the law. These systems can provide an affordable, easy to use, way of managing the risk. Systems that comply with BS8484 should be your guide.

Lone worker tracking systems monitor people rather than vehicles and offer an excellent way of managing and protecting your staff. There are many different ways to track an individual including:

- Mobile Phone/PDA – any handset that is GPS enabled can be tracked
- Identity badges
- Two-way radios (walkie talkies)
- Small standalone devices (smaller than a business card).

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust recommends the employee be able to raise an alarm when in distress via a panic/SOS button integral to the device, and some systems also incorporate automatic 'man down' alerts.



Specialists such as SitexOrbis meet BS8484 with highly trained operators who monitor, record, locate and act on your pre-agreed emergency protocols to protect the safety and wellbeing of lone workers. Another supplier who can help is Answer-4u. BPCA members can take advantage of the special arrangements offered by these companies.

Introducing lone working protection technology enhances staff welfare and productivity, and improves efficiency as jobs can be completed with the same or fewer staff. And because employees feel supported and looked after, they have higher job satisfaction and greater employer loyalty. So if you haven't found your guardian angel yet, now's the time to look.

www.suzylamplugh.org/lone-worker/

www.answer-4u.co.uk

<http://goo.gl/T73rA>

How to comply

Assess the risk – identify and categorise the low/medium/high risk workers; define and control the risks

Write policy and guidelines around these controls

Assess the solutions available to you, then choose and implement one compliant with BS8484

Implement your policy, manage and maintain it: embed it into your work culture

Assess each lone worker's risk annually and monitor any productivity/efficiency gains.

BPCA regional forums 2012

Designed to deliver CPD, help your business compete and your staff stay safe.

Following an extremely successful run of regional meetings through 2011, BPCA is pleased to announce the first half of our regional networking programme for 2012. This year delegates gave us overall a score of 8.9 out of ten, so we are repeating the style and structure of the meeting programme (if it ain't broke...). We will run several round the UK, with the first set kicking off with Belfast in February.

"...really enjoyed the day. Thank you."

Danny Beginn, Shield Pest Control

PROMPT

2012 to May...

Thursday 23 Feb – Belfast
Thursday 22 March – Walsall
Tuesday 24 April – Central London
Tuesday 15 May – Glasgow
Thursday 24 May – Chepstow
Wednesday 30 May – Stockport

The second set of locations is not yet booked so if want a meeting close to you, or want to see something else on the agenda, then please get in touch. Watch out for information on the BPCA website for venues, times and agendas.

Events consist of a range of technical and business speakers, and attendance comes with both PROMPT CPD points and BPCA certification. Topics, chosen by BPCA members, include:

- European Pest Control Standard (CEN) – what it means to you
- Risk and COSHH Assessments – refresher training on their importance including examples, responsibilities and follow up documentation
- Urban Wildlife Control (foxes, badgers, etc.) – tackling this emotive and increasing pest problem
- Feral Bee Control
- Pest Control Apprenticeships: how they can improve your business.

BPCA regional forums provide a chance to network with likeminded professionals. With both BPCA and expert guest speakers, they keep you up to date with industry developments, product news and what BPCA is doing for you. These fantastic training and CPD opportunities are open to all members.

DID YOU MISS OUT IN 2011?

In 2011 we focused on safe use of ladders, asbestos awareness, face fit testing, and the Animal Welfare Act. If you were not able to attend and would welcome this training then please let us know.

For more information and to book a place contact Sofi on 01332 225 111
sofi@bpca.org.uk

If you'd like us to hold a forum in your area, please let us know and we'll do our best to get there:

www.bpca.org.uk/contact.html

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