

EUExcert NEWS



Leonardo da Vinci

**Date has been set
for the next
World Conference**

**The second
World Conference in the explosives sector will take place at Cranfield University, UK, the 13-15 June 2007**

NEW APPLICATION HAS BEEN SENT IN

In the beginning of February, a new application was sent to the European Commission.

Several new countries are interested in joining the partners in EUExcert in another project.

- It is of big importance that we continue the harmonisation of the competence development in the explosive sector, says Mr. Hans Wallin of KCEM.

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The British experts had the opportunity to discuss the facilitator role through distance communication.

British experts visited Sweden

In December 2005 UK beneficiaries travelled to KCEM in Sweden to visit their learning centres and industries who are taking part in the certified vocational qualification in the explosives sector. The UK beneficiaries were all involved in developing core competencies and National Occupation Standards for workers in the explosive industries, some of the beneficiaries will be the users whilst others are the developers.

The outcomes of this mobility project were:

- exchanging ideas and experiences with the partners in Sweden.
- Exploration of the Swedish Certified Vocational Qualification with the view to using this in the UK.
- To set up collaboration between the two countries to support the exchange of students in a web based vocational education in the explosives sector.

The mobility programme met all the objectives and more. This mobility project was the 2nd phase of an exchange visit. In November 2004 a group of Swedish delegates, on a mobility exchange project, visited Cranfield University to explore the UK vocational training system and distance learning facilities within the explosives sector, with a view to setting up collaboration between both countries.

Handling explosive products is associated with risks that can usually be dealt with, but incidents that have serious consequences for personnel and materials do occur from time to time.

Investigations into the causes of such incidents have often found that these have been due to human error and lack of necessary competence and training.

A common view within the explosives industry is that the cause of accidents in recent years can be divided into 80% human and 20% mechanical error.

This is in sharp contrast to 15-20 years ago when the cause could be divided into 20% human and 80% mechanical error.

"I was astonished by the number of people that we have to replace in 6 years"

Hans-Frode Homb

NAMMO RAUFLOSS AS

The survey was made within the FEX project. For more information: www.fex.se

The survey report can be found on our website www.euexcert.org

Competence transfer a big issue for Nammo Raufoss AS

A survey in Nammo Raufoss AS, Norway, of the 56 years and older age group indicates that competence transfer is more or less taken care of at the company, but there are still a few things to improve.

Based on the answers given in the survey there are many ways in which to exchange competence, both at organizational level and between individuals.

ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

Elements that are important for being able to strengthen the competence transfer work are:



Hans-Frode Homb

- Strengthened and more systematized theoretical training.
- Salaried workers who shall work in and with explosive areas must have taken basic courses, using visual and electronic aids, for example 3D models.
- Improved work instructions training objects and "kits" for the purpose of training.
- Increased use of job rotation both between lines and departments.
- Regular repetition of theoretical training with emphasis on safe handling of explosives and on past near misses and incidents. Repetition must be concluded with a theoretical and practical test to document competence.
- Improved survey of competence in the company and definition of the positions, products, machines and production methods that require special competence in the future.
- A list of personnel approaching retirement age shall be made at regular intervals in order to ensure continuity in competence transfer.
- Contingency plans should also be developed for replacement of key personnel and resources must be allocated so that these are executable.
- Establishment of experience databases that are readily available, e.g. use of the Product Data Management system (PDM).

Hans-Frode Homb presented the survey when the partners in the EUExcert project met in Stockholm in December.

EFEE JOINED THE EUEXCERT-PROJECT

The European Federation of Explosives Engineers (EFEE) is now a partner of the EUExcert project.

EFEE's main objectives are:

- Advancing European Explosives Engineering
- Expertise, Technology and Management
- Education and certification
- Health and Safety

EFEE is an strategically important partner in the project.

EFEE embraces all European countries, including those outside the European Union. EFEE is open to national, but non-governmental, institutes, associations or societies that are officially registered and whose members are professional explosives users and whose aim is the advancement of explosives engineering. These member associations represent their countries.

Today, the national societies of the following countries are members of the Federation: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Slovak Republic, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The federation is represented by Marie-Christine Michel, France.



Marie-Christine Michel, representing the EFEE in the EUExcert project.

For more information, please visit
www.euexcert.org

An overview of the project from the Italians

- On a general basis the most important achievement of this project is the visibility which has been given to the serious problem of competencies and education in the explosive sector.

These are the words from the Italian partner, Nitrex, in the last 6 months period of the EUExcert project. Dr. Roberto Folchi and Mara Battocchio also underline the importance of discussing the safety matters in Italy, where the respect of the law not always is so strict.

- Our approach was to focus our attention on the practical aspect of the EUExcert project so that people could realize that even if this is a project it is not only theoretical but also practical. The first gain we obtained from was the educational material we used during the courses. Up to this point we have collected a box of dummy detonators – used to give practical evidence to the theory studied - four books – three experts in a specific sector offered to put their knowledge at the service of the project. Nitrex has also widened the national contacts in the sector of explosives.



Dr Roberto Folchi and Mara Battocchio, Nitrex, Italy.

”A PRIVILEGE TO STUDY ON A DISTANCE COURSE”

To study as an adult is something completely different from studying in the traditional school system. Gunilla Wikström in Karlskoga, Sweden, was 40 years old when she began studying at Learning Centre Masugnen in Lindsberg. She has never studied at a distance course before, and appreciates the flexibility to study when it suits her best. It is indeed a privilege.



Gunilla Wikström

Gunilla Wikström is technically interested and is very satisfied with the Qualified Vocational Training programme for Technicians handling pyrotechnical material in the explosives sector.

The training is available at several companies, and the students can use mini learning centres with computers. The theoretical parts are based on skill which the industry demands.

Gunilla Wikström has previously been unemployed and she is happy to have the opportunity to learn about working in the explosives industry. She is very interested in technique. But as she has recently moved from Piteå, in the north of Sweden, she is also eager to develop new contacts.

Due to the family reasons, she is not interested in studying abroad at the moment. There are several candidates for trans national exchange in her class, Gunilla says.

Gunilla is keen to continue further studies in the future.

”- You have to be prepared to broaden your knowledge, Gunilla says. There is so much happening in the world, so you have to accept the fact that you constantly need to develop your competencies.”

Gunilla Wikström at Saab Bofors Dynamics, where the facilitator Lea Mattsson works.



You have to accept the fact that you constantly need to develop your competencies”

Gunilla Wikström, student

A FACILITATOR HAS TO PLAN AND INFORM THE STUDENTS

- First of all, it is important to plan and inform the students, Åke Eriksson says. He is the facilitator at Bofors Test Centre in Karlskoga, Sweden. Åke has valuable experience from the industry where he has worked for more than 30 years.



Åke Eriksson has chosen some instructors for the students at the different departments, which is a kind of mentorship to support the students.

- It is important for the students to have relevant background for this education, Åke Eriksson says.

- It is important that the students feel comfortable in the group, Åke Eriksson says. He always invites the students to meetings etc.

Åke plans the first period of the vocational training, and after the students have experienced the departments, they have a choice where to continue their further workplace training.

A FACILITATOR MUST BE THE LINK

A facilitator in the Qualified Vocational Training programme for Technicians handling pyrotechnical material in the explosives sector has the following tasks:

- Be the representative for the company and the education.
- Along with the educator plan for the student's vocational training.
- Be responsible for showing and instructing the student at the workplace.
- Support and together with the student continuously organize, adjust and document the student's workplace learning.
- Be a link between the educator, the student and the company.
- Spread the thoughts about workplace learning among the staff.
- Work for a learning environment at the company.
- Reflect with the student.



Åsa Klaw gets support from the experienced Åke Eriksson.

"It is important that the facilitator is interested in the students and the education"

Åsa Klaw, student

EU Excort

Certifying Expertise in
European Explosives Sector



Leonardo da Vinci

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EFEE, European Federation
of Explosive Engineers
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www.euexcort.org

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AIMS OF THE NEW PROJECT:

European competency and qualification framework,
glossary and transfer of educational material

The partners of EUExcort have together with new partners from different European countries applied for a new project.

The aims of the new project are:

1. To build-on the UK competency and qualification framework developed in UK during the previous EUExcort programme period and investigate if those can be transferred to a European competency and qualification framework.
2. To increase the number of partners and associated partners in Europe.
3. To set up a Foundation who will advise, regulate and issue certificates.
4. To transfer the educational material already developed for the EUExcort programme to make it trans national and deliverable in a flexible media
5. To form a new network of industries and institutions in the explosives sector
6. To produce a Basic European glossary for the European market which includes a terminology which can be transferable and used in each country.
7. To build on the exchange programme between the UK and Sweden and transfer this to a student exchange programme or distance education programme between other European countries

The new application has been sent to the programme office. In June we will know if the project has been accepted.

EUExcort in Brussels

A delegation from the EUExcort project visited Brussels in February to discuss progress and outcomes from the EUExcort project with a representative for the European Commission.

Dr. Jackie Akhavan, UK, Marie-Christine Michel, EFEE, together with representatives from the Swedish organization KCEM, General Manager Erik Nilsson and Project Leader Hans Wallin were successful in the contacts.

Mr Maik Schmahl, Chemicals Unit Legislation, Sustainable Development, will make sure that the commission get adequate information about the work in the EUExcort project. He pointed out that there is a strong interest in these questions from new membership countries Bulgaria and Romania.

A representative for the Commission will participate in the next EUExcort world conference at Cranfield University in June 2007. EuExcort will be invited to the permanent commission working with explosives directives.

Two applications about mobility

Could the vocational training methods in Sweden be used in Italy? And is it possible for Swedish vocational training institutions to co-operate with Italian industry and institutions working in the explosives sector?

Is there a chance that students can go abroad in an exchange programme?

Two applications for mobility have been sent in to the Leonardo da Vinci programme. One for the Italian partners to visit Sweden, and one to realize the plans for the students.