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EDITOR'S WELCOME

Dear Reader

With many exciting things happening this year, PIESA is also about to experience an exciting year, with many changes already in place. A new look, a new secretariat, a new e-bulletin and new ventures are all in store for 2008.

We have prepared a very special edition for all our members about all the new changes and faces and exciting ventures we are set to embark on. We look forward to your feedback and comments.

As this bulletin carries the objective of keeping its readers up-to-date with the latest industry developments, I welcome and encourage you to send me your thoughts, editorial contributions and comments. I would also like to thank you for the information and support already kindly received.

I look forward to working with you in putting together another successful edition soon!

Please note that the views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Power Institute of East and Southern Africa.

Dion Abrahams

Dion Abrahams
News Editor

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ESCOM BENEFITS FROM WORKSHOP TO LEARN ABOUT METER SEALING TECHNOLOGIES

By Claudia Coetzer – Integrity Control Systems (Pty) Ltd

Electricity Supply Company of Malawi (Escom) recently made contact with Integrity Control Systems (ICS) to learn more about the latest technologies in meter equipment sealing. Both ICS & Escom participated in the PIESA – IERE Africa Forum held in September 2007 in Livingstone, Zambia. Subsequent to the insights of a paper delivered by ICS, Escom identified the need to improve meter sealing as a means to deter tampering and revenue theft.

ICS is a South African based company specializing in the supply of uniquely numbered tamper evident seals to the utilities sector. Mr Wiseman Kabwazi, Marketing Manager for Escom, coordinated a one day workshop in Blantyre, Malawi, comprising customer service staff, revenue management staff, faults staff and engineering designs. Moses Mbewe, the Deputy Regional Manager for Distribution, Elias Maziya and Roy Chideru, both Senior Meter Engineers and staff from the Engineering Designs, which is headed by Alfred Kaponda who is also a member of the PIESA Standardisation workgroup, were some of the 25 delegate group who came from the northern, central and southern regions to participate in the workshop.

Although electrification statistics in Malawi are around the 8% mark (population approximately 13 million), the percentage of revenue loss is high. The group acknowledged that the old fashioned means of meter sealing (ferules and wire secured with pliers), is no longer adequate, especially in light of Escom's plans for extensive electrification projects. 'This method of sealing is not a viable deterrent to tampering' says Wiseman Kabwazi who is also convener of the NTLR workgroup for PIESA.

The workshop with Escom contributed to a case study being conducted by ICS to establish the extent of the problem of tampering in the utilities sector; the subsequent financial impact; to explore the sealing options available to energy authorities, and to evaluate operational and management practices applied to this area of revenue protection. Preliminary findings indicate that; tampering is a wide spread problem, that; supply authorities who do not have a dedicated Revenue Protection focus suffer higher percentage non-technical losses than entities who do and that; the percentage loss due to tampering is significantly higher in areas where ferules / lead seals are used instead of uniquely numbered seals (14% vs 1.21%)

Claudia and Tony Coetzer of ICS delivered a comprehensive presentation which emphasized the importance of sound operational and management practices which support a holistic sealing programme. Various sealing options were demonstrated and lively group interaction raised many questions and field observations.

After a day of intensive knowledge sharing, Escom embraced the notion that revenue protection has to be a focused initiative and that the use of uniquely numbered tamper evident seals had to be implemented along with a structured sealing policy. ICS commends Escom for arranging this participative workshop and for their proactive approach in seeking to combat tamper related revenue loss.



Seal demonstration by Tony Coetzer from ICS



Escom/ICS workshop 18 March 2008 Blantyre Malawi

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BURUNDI, RWANDA, TANZANIA PLAN 60MW HYDRO PROJECT

Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania have proposed a 60 megawatt hydroelectric dam project, expected to cost \$100 million, to meet growing demand for power in the region.

"All regional countries are affected by a serious energy crisis which causes a great impact on our economies," Burundi's director-general for water and energy, Idi-Presadi Buhanga, said. "There was an obligation for our three countries to take up a common project to overcome that energy deficit," he continued.

Buhanga said the three countries would each get 20 MW from the dam, to be sited in Tanzania along the Kagera river.

Feasibility studies are underway, and the three nations have pitched the project to the African Development Bank and the World Bank. The expected completion date would be 2012.

Burundi's energy production capacity is 32.5 MW, but the country has to import 15 MW of electricity from the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo. Despite that, the country still has a 12 MW deficit that constrains economic growth, Buhanga said. "We need enough energy to develop our mine sector for instance," he added.

Burundi has an estimated 200 million tonnes of nickel, which cannot now be exploited due to the lack of sufficient power supply.

Engineering News Online
By: Reuters

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POWER SYSTEM ANALYSIS

The next meeting will be held on 19-20 May 2008 in Cape Town, South Africa.

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PIESA SECRETARIAT NEWS

Since the PIESA's inception, Southern African Development through Electricity (Pty) (Ltd), - formerly trading as SAD-ELEC - had provided PIESA with secretarial and administrative support services formalized under annual agreements.

During 2007, the PIESA was notified that a further contract for the provision of the support services would not be sought. Accordingly, the PIESA Board mandated the PIESA Chairman to identify and contract a new service provider to assume responsibility for the PIESA Secretariat from 1 March 2008.

The new secretariat, Van der Walt and Co (VdW&Co), have for some years provided secretariat support services to numerous energy related organisations in the region, e.g. the AMEU, SARPA, SANEA and it is expected that synergistic advantages will accrue to PIESA through this new arrangement.

It is perhaps fitting that the Secretariat was handed over by Judi Koncz, who was the consultant responsible for the first phase of establishing the PIESA: between November 1995 and June 1996 she undertook wide-ranging consultations in East and Southern Africa to ascertain the response to a concept of a power utility association with the aim to share information and harmonise research and standards in the area of power distribution. She drafted the PIESA's Constitution and recruited Jean Madzongwe who ran the Secretariat until October 2004. In 2002 she recruited Arnot Hepburn who provided technical support to the Working Groups until the end of 2005 when Mike Page (another Judi 'recruit') took over that role. In 2007 Judi assumed responsibility for the Secretariat for a year.



After some 30 years' involvement in the power sector throughout Southern and East Africa, she now enjoys being at home in Port Alfred and especially spending time on the beach with Tasha (the Rottie) and Seamus (the Great Dane).

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VDW&CO - THE ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY

Van der Walt & Co was established in 1953 by its founder, Bennie van der Walt. The original practice focused on accounting and secretarial work. Over the decades the practice changed owners within the family and also expanded into association management activities in line with business models followed by Association Management Companies in North America and Europe. We operate from well appointed offices in Randburg with a staff of 15 people and also have a representative in Cape Town.

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MEET THE VDW&CO TEAM



Jean Venter

Jean is a shareholder and the Chief Executive of Van der Walt and Co. He is a professional accountant with many years experience in the corporate sector. He has, since 1995, managed and owned this family business focusing on the growth of the business.



Paul van Niekerk

Paul is a professional electrical engineer with many years experience in the electricity supply industry. He serves as a consultant to the EIUG (Energy Intensive User Group of South Africa). He is the Chief Operating Officer of PIESA (Power Institute of Eastern of South Africa), and also the technical advisor to STSA.



Gillian le Cordeur

Gillian is the Chief Operations Officer and Director of Van der Walt and Co. She completed her Degree in Education and taught for a number of years in London and South Africa. She has been with the company for 5 years and specialises in events and projects.



Adrie Da Silva

Adrie is a financial manager and director of Van der Walt and Co. She holds a diploma in accounting. She has been with the company for 5 years and manages the financials for all Van der Walt Associations.



Cynthia Badenhorst

Cynthia entered the corporate environment after 16 years of functional and administrative experience within a state department. She is assistant to the CEO as well as the committee administrator. She has been with Van der Walt and Co. for a year.



Bruce Turner

Bruce is the web master in the media department at Van der Walt and Co. He has been working in the on-line industry for nearly 10 years and has been with the company for two years.



Claudia Liebenberg

Claudia started as membership manager with Van der Walt & Company at the beginning of 2008. She has about two decades of database-design and management experience. Claudia takes care of our clients' membership needs as well coordinates the membership team to keep all members happy.



Dion Abrahams

Dion is the In-house news editor of the e-bulletins of all the associations. He studied media studies and majored in journalism. He previously worked in the print media industry for 5 years.



Thenjiwe Roda

Thenjiwe is the communications administrator in the media department. She holds a Bachelors of Arts Degree and has recently joined the company.



Roberta Govender

Roberta is the credit controller for most of the associations managed by Van der Walt and Co. She studied Computer Business Management and has been with company since October 2007.



Anna Mogashoa

Anna is an administrator and is responsible for the supervision of administrative matters of associations. She has been with the company for 7 years.



Germinah Bochedi

Germinah is a membership administrator and liaises with new members of associations to enable her to manage memberships effectively. She has been with the company for 12 years.



Cindy Maree

Cindy is the committee secretary and oversees the administration within committee management. She has eleven years of administration experience prior to recently joining the company.

Natasha Romans

Natasha is an event manager and has worked in the events industry for several years, she has since joined the van der Walt events team.



Marissa Bester

Marissa is an event manager and she supervises the logistics for the associations. She has recently joined the company.



Ruth Mogaswa

Ruth is the general office administrator. She sees to the daily upkeep of the office at Van der Walt & Co.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

African Utility Week 2008

Last year this prestigious event attracted the highest level of delegates yet, with over 1000 from 47 countries!

Focusing on the Why, What and How of the business of utilities in Africa, this year's event has been streamlined into three distinct tracks: Generation Africa; Transmission & Distribution Africa; and Metering, Billing/CRM Africa.

Unique training, networking and discussion platforms will demonstrate how utilities can be more efficient and offer cost-effective services through improved infrastructure maintenance, load management, delivery and revenue management choices.

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IN MEMORIAM



It is with profound sadness that we learnt of the passing on 18 March 2008 of Mr Alex Kabata Okien, who was the SNEL member of the PIESA Board for many years.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his family and friends. May his soul rest in peace.

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EXCITING NEW E-BULLETIN AND WEBSITE

PIESA will be looking to revamp its e-bulletin, which will be sent to members every three months. Your input and ideas in this regard will be appreciated. Send us your thoughts, ideas, editorial snippets or any contribution to dion@vdw.co.za

The new PIESA website is currently under development and will be available soon.

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