

SEC GROUP **focus**

Voice of the Specialist Engineering Contractor

*The members of the
SEC Group are:*

Association of
Plumbing and Heating
Contractors

British Constructional
Steelwork Association

Electrical Contractors'
Association

Heating and Ventilating
Contractors'
Association

Lift and Escalator
Industry Association

SELECT

Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the New Year from the President, Chairman and Staff at SEC Group

END OF TERM **KEY ISSUES**

MEETING WITH TREASURY CABINET MINISTER ON RETENTIONS

Claire Curtis Thomas MP has arranged for SEC Group to meet with the Chief Secretary to the Treasury Paul Boateng MP – in the early New Year.

The meeting will be a further opportunity to explain to the Cabinet Minister – who is responsible for public expenditure – the extent to which retentions are seen by SEC Group members to be an unreasonable and intolerable burden on current business activities and future business development.

STRATEGIC FORUM TOOLKIT FOR INTEGRATING THE INDUSTRY

The 'Accelerating Change' Report set a target for 20% of construction projects by value to be undertaken by integrated teams and supply chains by end 2004. This figure to reach 50% by end 2007. It committed the Strategic Forum to produce an 'integrated toolkit' to help the industry achieve this target

The toolkit is planned to be launched on 9 December and can be viewed by visiting the Website address - www.strategicforum.org.uk

REGIONAL SEMINARS ON 'PROMOTING PROJECT TEAMS'

The first SEC Group regional seminar on 'Promoting Project Teams' was held in Nottingham on 27 November. The second seminar is planned at the RAC, London on 24 February. There is much talk about the need for the industry to work together more closely to improve its service to clients. If you do not want to avoid being left behind and are keen to discover the commercial benefits that a collaborative approach to construction has to offer, then these seminars will be for you. Further information from John Nelson on contact@secgroup.org.uk



SEC GROUP REPORT ON 'ARE LOCAL AUTHORITIES APPLYING BEST VALUE IN CONSTRUCTION PROCUREMENT?'

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister – responsible for local government – had agreed to a meeting in late January to discuss this Report

The Report was based upon a survey of firms within the specialist-engineering sector carrying out construction work for local authorities. The overwhelming response from the survey was that local authorities procurement was still characterised by lowest price rather than best value.

The Report is available on www.secgroup.org.uk

REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION ACT

The SEC Group recent survey on the operation of the Construction Act has confirmed that the dominant theme was 'payment practices' with the lengthening of the payment cycles – in particular at the final account stage. The SEC Group would be producing a Report based on the information/evidence gathered in the survey to be submitted to the Minister for Construction.

The SEC Group would also be exploring the options for promoting a campaign to move away from traditional payment mechanisms towards alternatives such as project bank accounts. The issues raised will need to be pursued, in the first instance, with the public sector procurers.

CDM REGULATIONS

CONIAC – Working Group on the Revision of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 and Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996

Following representation by the SEC Group the Health and Safety Executive has agreed to allocate a seat for the 'specialist engineering' sector, which will be represented by SEC Group on the Working Group. As a member of the Working Group SEC Group will be very active in urging change to the CDM Regulations that will promote a more integrated approach to the management of health and safety risks.

BRIEFING NOTES

These can be viewed on the website – www.secgroup.org.uk – the most recent briefing note was on 'Advice on Design Liability – Will you pay for Consultants Mistakes?'

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