

Early Birds Get MCERTS Certificates at WWEM



By Graham Meller

**WATER/
Wastewater**



Siemens and Aquamatic were the first instrument manufacturers to receive MCERTS certificates at the inaugural WWEM event that took place on 29th and 30th June at the Bretby Conference Centre near Burton on Trent, England. WWEM (Water/Wastewater and Environmental Monitoring) is a new event designed to provide the latest news and information on the monitoring of water quality and quantity. It was jointly organised by the Environment Agency, SWIG and Environmental Technology publications.



Packed conference session on Water MCerts



Paul Wiggins - Environment Agency

Much of the focus at WWEM was on the Environment Agency's monitoring certification scheme, MCERTS, which aims to improve the quality of monitoring data delivered by operators of regulated processes.

Under the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) regulations operators of processes are obliged to use 'MCERTified' equipment if they are appropriate and available.

Manufacturers of monitoring instruments are now able to seek MCERTS certification for their equipment, and the first two companies to achieve this were presented with their certificates by the Agency's Head of Monitoring and Assessment Catherine Wright. In her speech, Catherine noted the importance of the MCERTS scheme for water providing regulators, stakeholders and the public with confidence in the results produced by the industry. She said "MCERTS is here to stay. However, if it weren't for the people in this room there would be no scheme, so it is with great pleasure that I can thank you for the contribution you are making to the scheme".

David Hewitt who received the Certificates on behalf of Siemens, expressed his thanks to SIRA and the Environment Agency for their help and guidance throughout the process, adding "As soon as we learned about MCERTS we recognised that it represented an opportunity for us to provide our customers with third party accreditation of our specifications, and to take a lead in the water flow monitoring sector. We are delighted to be the first company to receive MCERTS accreditation for two of our ultrasonic open channel flowmeters, the HydroRanger 200 and the OCM 111 as it shows the confidence in the reliability of our instruments."

Aquamatic's certificate was collected by Jeremy Smith who, following the presentation, said that he is "very proud to be the first recipient of an MCERTS certificate for water samplers. This demonstrates that we are a high quality manufacturer, and in

accepting this award I would like to acknowledge the assistance that has been provided by SIRA throughout the process."

Aquamatic's certificate was awarded for the Aquacell P2-Coolbox portable automatic sampler, which is the company's most popular product - Severn Trent Water recently ordered 100 units. In addition, a fixed sampler from Aquamatic is currently progressing through MCERTS evaluation.

Before seeking MCERTS Jeremy explained "the portable sampler already had the Environment Agency's E32 accreditation which meant that we were able to avoid some of the testing that would have otherwise been necessary; this made the process faster and less costly. We believe that the MCERTS certificate will secure our position in the market and make the Aquacell even more popular."

MCERTS certificates were also presented to MCERTS Inspectors that have been assessed by Sira as competent to conduct site inspections of effluent flow monitoring arrangements at wastewater treatment works. There are currently 11 Inspectors working for 6 organisations, and these are: Bestobell, Critical Flow Systems, Flowcheck, Hydro-logic, Trueflow Surveys and Siris Environmental Flow Surveys.

Alan Apps from PPM was pleased with the acknowledgement that was given for the progress in MCERTS that the PROTOC TOC analyser has made, and his colleague Steve Tuck added "the WWEM event was a superb networking forum that successfully raised the profile of MCERTS and culminated in presentations which recognised manufacturing companies that have already embraced the scheme including Pollution and Process Monitoring Ltd"

Michael Scott

A special presentation was made by Dr Rhys Lewis, chairman of SWIG (sensors for water interest group) to Michael Scott who

recently retired as its Secretary. SWIG was founded in 1993 as a DTi funded special interest group. Initial funding was provided for a three year period with Michael as secretary. At the end of this period many of the other groups folded but SWIG continued, forming itself into a limited company with Michael remaining as secretary. In this capacity Michael was the main organiser of events on a wide range of topics covering measurement and control in the water and wastewater industry. 12 years on, Michael has retired whilst staying on as a director and also as the main organiser of the new DTi funded knowledge transfer network project of which SWIG is a member.

In acknowledging Michael's services to the industry Dr Lewis said "Michael has worked tirelessly to promote sensors in water and to stress the importance of using sensors in the most intelligent way; to think about what you want to measure and why, where you want to measure it to get the most informative result; what to do with the data once collected, and how to maintain the instrument so the data has value.

He has created a forum where the industry talks to each other and the whole industry through academics, suppliers, users, and regulators are stronger for it."

WWEM Conference

Paul Wiggins, who leads the Environment Agency's MCERTS activity in the aquatic sector, opened the Conference by showing the assembled 100+ delegates a slide depicting his new baby grandson, saying "MCERTS and my grandson have a lot in common - they both have a lot of growing and development ahead of them, and they are both going to be around for a very long time!"

Paul went on to describe the progress that has been made with MCERTS, emphasising that the Agency is strongly in favour of a collaborative approach. It is clear therefore, that any party involved in the monitoring of water has a golden opportunity to influence the development of its regulation. Paul was keen however, to impress upon the gathered audience the importance of MCERTS and cited its role in air pollution control, a sector in which MCERTS was applied several years ago, and in which a large number of 'MCERTified' instruments is now available to the operators of Environment Agency regulated processes.

Looking back at WWEM, Paul says that it was the busiest 2 days of his life; "We have been delighted with the enormous level of interest in MCERTS from both UK and overseas instrument manufacturers. The industry has generally taken a very positive attitude, which is obviously very pleasing. WWEM provided us with the opportunity to raise the profile of the MCERTS scheme enormously, to provide stakeholders with an update on progress, and to recognise the first instrument manufacturers to achieve certification. It was very useful to be able to meet the whole water monitoring industry in one event and we are greatly looking forward to WWEM 2006"

Further information on the MCERTS scheme can be obtained from the Agency's web site at www.mcerts.net

Bob Cooper from SIRA acknowledged that MCERTS represents an extra burden for process operators and manufacturers, but reassured delegates, saying, "As facilitators of the MCERTS scheme, we are actively developing more manageable, less complex procedures and performance standards. We recognise that many manufacturers already possess high levels of acceptable test data and use of this data in support of MCERTS certification can represent one of the ways in which we are able to make the scheme more cost-effective."

Stuart Newstead ex-Environment Agency and now the new Secretary of SWIG commented: "the MCERTS conference session was very well attended and lively with many questions to the presenters. Later, talking to instrument manufacturers I was concerned about their apparent lack of knowledge about the Agency's Modernising Regulation agenda. This will have a significant impact on the water industry and MCERTS is at the heart of it. I know the Agency and Sira are willing to listen and learn how best to progress MCERTS and SWIG will look to help by providing a co-ordinating and liaison role in the future."

WWEM Workshops and Exhibition

WWEM delegates were also provided with the opportunity of attending any of a large number (more than 50 each day) of Workshops and an Exhibition.

Dr Iain Naismith, Business Development Manager at WRc commented "WWEM is probably the best exhibition I have taken a stand at in recent years. We were promoting a range of services that WRc provides for instrument manufacturers, service companies, utilities and industrial dischargers to support introduction of MCERTS, and both the number and

quality of the leads we made exceeded our expectations. I particularly liked the informal atmosphere, the way all beverage breaks and lunches were taken by delegates in the exhibition halls, and the equal importance afforded to all exhibitors by the organiser's policy of keeping stands to 6 square meters. The conference, the gala dinner and various breakout meetings provided a much needed opportunity for all sides of the industry to consider the implications of MCERTS."

Many of the workshops reflected WWEM's focus on MCERTS with presentations from ABB, Nivus UK, Flow Measurement, Siemens and WRc all covering MCERTS related topics. In addition, many of the workshops covered water quality monitoring applications for a wide variety of parameters including heavy metals, DO, nutrients, turbidity, pH, algal blooms, cyanide, chlorine, ammonia, VOC's, endocrine disruptors and many more. Further presentations covered scanning spectrometry, aeration control, SRT control, coagulation control, and laboratory automation.

Darren Hanson from YSI Hydrodata presented a Workshop on long-term deployment of water quality instruments and remote data acquisition systems and commented afterwards "The combination of workshop and exhibition worked well. We like focused events such as WWEM because whilst the visitor numbers are relatively small the relevance to our business is very high." Steve Kent from Brixham Environmental laboratory concurred, reporting, "the workshops and exhibition mix complemented each other well".

Tom O'Reilly said "The conference provided a solid platform for both the market and suppliers to review the progress of MCERTS certification and with regards to business; many new contacts made were made, making the event an outstanding success for Labmedics Ltd"

Simon Wills from Ott Hydrometry reported "The event is the first that we have attended in recent years which is dedicated to our market place and as such we would certainly look to attend WWEM 2006" Dr Mike Strahand from Analytical Technology added "We are so happy with the show we are definitely coming back. It was useful to have all the relevant bodies in the same place at the same time" Darin Stell from HACH LANGE said "The show was well organised and the WWEM team were helpful throughout"

Industry News

WWEM also provided an opportunity for delegates to learn the latest industry news. For example, EauSys and Partech have merged, and as a single entity, the companies believe that shared R&D and manufacturing capabilities will enable them to make a greater investment in the development of new products. Endress + Hauser has acquired STIP and this, they believe, will intensify their activities in municipal and industrial wastewater treatment.

HACH LANGE has acquired Danfoss Analytical, which will expand the range of dissolved oxygen options available and fill a gap in the company's range for in-situ wastewater nutrient monitors.

YSI Hydrodata announced their appointment as the UK's can distributor for natural water applications.

Idexx announced that Denmark has approved the Colilert-18/Quanti-Tray for compliance testing of drinking water.

WWEM also provided an opportunity for Ashtead Technology Rentals to publicise its recent initiative to invest heavily in a range of environmental monitoring rental instrumentation.

New Products

A number of new products were launched at WWEM including Triton Electronics' automatic CST and automatic SSVI equipment, HACH LANGE's DR5000 UV spectrophotometer, Partech's new range of analytical equipment, the IDEXX Quanti-disc for total viable counts and a new test for Enterococci, Jenway's Aquanova, Anachem's Titrafast high throughput titration system, and pocket meters from Eutech Instruments.

Delegate Feedback

A post-event survey of delegates revealed that 83% of delegates regarded WWEM as very useful or good, and the remainder found WWEM to be satisfactory. Almost 85% confirmed that they like the combination of Conference, Workshops and Exhibition.

100% of responding delegates confirmed that the Workshops were informative and 100% said that they would return for WWEM 2006.

Commenting on the success of the event, WWEM organiser Marcus Pattison said that he was very pleased with the first WWEM, and that plans are already in place to make



Nick Richardson of SIRIS receives an MCerts Inspectors award



David Hewitt receives MCert award from Catherine Wright



Jeremy Smith receives MCerts award for the Aquacell P2 - Coolbox



Mike Scott (left) and Dr. Rhys Lewis (right).

WWEM 2006 bigger and better. "Launching a major new event such as this is a journey into the unknown, but we have been delighted with the level of support that we have received from all concerned. Fundamentally, everyone wants to see better, reliable, accurate and representative monitoring and it is clear that MCERTS represents a major step in that direction. The Environment Agency has been intimately involved in WWEM preparations for over a year. SWIG helped us to design the Conference agenda and instrumentation manufacturers signed up for the exhibition and workshops almost as soon as the event was announced. My only regret is that we were unable to accommodate the 30 plus companies that we had to place on the exhibition waiting list. The good news, however, is that next year's event will be much larger, taking place in Telford on 1st and 2nd November 2006. A new venue will be necessary because by November 2006, MCERTS will be affecting a much larger number of people from within the water pollution control sector, and WWEM looks set to become the focal point for the water monitoring community"