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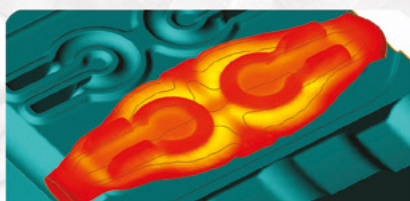
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Front cover image courtesy of In-Comm

up and coming events

Health, Safety & Environment Group Meeting:

Via Zoom 22nd September 2021 please email Melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk

METALLURGY FOR NON-METALLURGIST MOHS Workplace Health:

Course Tuesday 12th & Wednesday 13th October 2021, for further details please email melinda.jean@thebcm.co.uk

Subcon, The Engineer Expo and Manufacturing Management Show:

14-16 September at the NEC Birmingham

Technology Transfer Group :

Hot Forging - Presented by Hatebur AG, via Zoom 30th September at 2pm

Forge Fair 2021:

North America's largest forging industry trade show. 26 - 28 October 2021. TCF Center, Detroit, Michigan.

Advanced Engineering 2021 :

3-4 November NEC Birmingham.

Fastener Fair Stuttgart 2021:

9th International Exhibition for the Fastener and Fixing Industry. 9 - 11 November 2021. Stuttgart Exhibition Grounds, Stuttgart, Germany.

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CBM members face challenging times ahead

I cannot believe how quickly the request for my President's review comes round, it shows how busy we still are, despite just coming back from the industry shutdown weeks. I am still waiting for a time when I can write positively about our members fortunes, and the industry as a whole, but unfortunately, wherever we look we face issues.

Despite a slight delay in the Government roadmap, we emerged from the lockdown on July 19th and some sort of normality began to return to our lives. However, this has not been without its challenges to our members, on top of the existing issues they had been dealing with, which included huge increases in steel prices and other commodities, freight costs spiralling, and a shortage of drivers are now also in short supply. We can further add to this, a worsening in the supply of semi-conductors to the automotive sector and employee's having to quarantine due to Covid rules. These factors combined have seen many suffer a severe downturn, in fact we almost had a 'perfect storm' through July and August.

The automotive sector had shocking figures through this period with SMMT data showing production at the worst figures for July since 1956.

The global shortages of semi-conductor chips are stifling the pent-up demand in the automotive sector, with all OEM's having to reduce production, added to this the 'pingdemic', as it was named when people had to quarantine, caused many OEMs and supply chains widespread disruption. This was even seen in global supply chains with semi-conductor production halted in Malaysia due to Covid outbreaks exasperating the supply issues.

Alarming, there is no end in sight to the semi-conductor issue, with well informed predictions stating 2023 before we see any sign of normality in supply.

This is worrying, as we are already seeing huge reductions in volumes in the OEM's here in the UK, which is in line with what we have been seeing globally, with all major OEMs around the world announcing downtime.

This comes as we face a winding down of the Furlough Scheme, which will stop at the end of September. Whilst the reliance on this scheme has reduced in our sector, the timing of its end will coincide with all the factors above coming into play and will trigger widespread redundancies, specifically on those solely aligned to the automotive sector but also the slow recovering aerospace sector.

Steel Safeguarding

Steel Safeguarding has been a major concern, despite our initial delight that our submissions to the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) had led to most of our members, who raised issues, being supported in those recommendations to Government. However, our initial joy was short lived as the Government decided to override most of the recommendations, which impacted on our members.

The Secretary of State used public notice legislation to circumvent her limited responsibilities under existing trade remedy laws. She did so, allegedly, on new evidence that has never been made public and that interested parties other than steelmakers, which presumably provided it, have not been able to scrutinise and submit their own evidence and perceptions. The Secretary of State's decision was therefore unfair and unbalanced, which has now been demonstrated, causing catastrophic consequences for British downstream steel users.

To compound this issue the TRA has confirmed in writing to the CBM that applications for reconsideration cannot be accepted in relation to the five steel categories where the Secretary of State disregarded a thoroughly researched TRA recommendation.



• Steve Morley,
CBM President

We have recently met with Department of International Trade (DiT) officials, where we have clearly and unequivocally detailed the reality of the situation right now. Irrevocable damage is being done to several of our members and up to 400 British downstream steel users/manufacturers, entirely as a consequence of the Secretary of State's ill-considered and untransparent imposition of safeguarding, particularly on Category 12, which as I write is now exhausted, and we, our members, are now facing 25% tariffs.

CBM felt we were the only one who wanted elements of Steel Safeguarding removed, we felt we were a lone voice, we have worked hard to make our points heard. As I write this, we continue to make our voice heard with regular correspondence with senior Government officials across DiT and BEIS to find a resolution.

Steve Morley,
**President of the
Confederation of British Metalforming**

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CBM is the UK's only specialist manufacturers' organisation for experts in metalforming

We're a member-driven association that champions the unique interests of forgers, fasteners, press workers, cold rollers and sheet metal workers– the building blocks of the British industrial base.

As a CBM member, you benefit from our national reach across stakeholders, sectors and supply chains. And you have access to services that promote innovation, foster collaboration and help you capitalise on opportunities.

It's a crucial time for British metalforming – so there's never been a better time to join the CBM.



Why Join the CBM

You get valuable influence, business support, technical expertise and market insight as a CBM member.

Lobbying & Promotion

Get your voice heard within Government and the wider manufacturing industry

- Benefit from our active lobbying support, which has played a key role as post-brexite trade negotiations accelerate and the Government makes crucial coronavirus decisions.
- We collaborate with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on a weekly basis, covering issues ranging from Rules of Origin, electricity prices, Steel Safeguarding, to name but a few.
- Our mission is to represent UK metalforming in those industry discussions – and help you access opportunities through collaboration with a broad stakeholder group.

Compliance & Cost Management

Save money through your CBM membership

- As a CBM member, you get access to a range of practical services that save money and make operations easier.
- Our accredited energy tax rebate service is a key benefit – it's saved members £4 million+ annually in Climate Change Levy.

- You can boost your savings with our cost-effective Streamlined Energy & Carbon Reporting compliance service and Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme assessments – as well as discounted meeting room hire, our free business support hotline and more.

Marketing & Business Development Support

- Build relationships and develop opportunities
- CBM members come from across the supply chain – and work across automotive, aerospace, rail, defence, energy and Construction. We help you build relationships with potential customers and partners.
- You can also use our platform to promote your business – in Metal Matters magazine, at industry events and among our growing social media audience. Our popular website directory and Buyers' Guide is a popular way to get noticed by supply chain managers.

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Technical Support

Leverage expert knowledge of metalforming techniques

- Whether you have a problem or want advice on a new process, our sector specialists are here to help. With your CBM membership, technical support is quick and cost-effective.
- Over 130 years' experience with our Sector Specialists who cover Forging, Fastening, Press work and Sheet Metal

Innovation & Knowledge Sharing

Keep your business on the front foot

- CBM events give you opportunities to share knowledge and best practice. Thanks to member days, sector group meetings, monthly market reports and more, it's easy to learn about developments that will help your business.
- Through your membership, you also benefit from our established links with universities and innovation hubs like Warwick Manufacturing Group, Advanced Forming Research Centre, Imperial College and Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre.

Training & Skills Development

Fill skills gaps and boost retention

- We offer training opportunities for technical and non-technical roles, so you can fill gaps in your business.
- In response to CBM member feedback, level 6 Apprenticeship (degree level) programme was developed by the CBMs Trailblazer group.
- The level 6 Tool Process Design Engineer Apprenticeship was specifically created for the metal forming sector in recognition of increasing skills shortages. It is the only Apprenticeship that recognises the unique and specialist skills for this senior technical role.

Health & Safety

- Our popular Health & Safety Group meetings provide a vital forum for sharing successes and getting advice on overcoming challenges.
- You have access to our HSE helpline, as well as discounted private healthcare and occupational health services.



TESTIMONIALS

The CBM continues to lobby government at the highest levels on behalf of its members. This is most evident recently on the critical discussions with Government ministers on the Steel Safeguarding Quota issue, which was having a real and detrimental effect on member companies. Anthony Thomas – The Crosby Group

To you all at CBM. May we take this opportunity to thank you for your assistance, diligence and professionalism in ensuring that we metal forming businesses manufacturing throughout the UK are kept up to speed within this ever-changing situation and providing a link to government as you have over a significant period of time. Steve Tinley - APS Metal Pressing Limited

CBM membership pays for itself thanks to the opportunities, access and cost management benefits you receive. Contact us to discuss your business needs and the best membership package.

**CONTACT CBM NOW ON
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Thousands of manufacturing jobs could be saved if furlough scheme is extended predicts CBM - MAY 2020

Steve Morley, President of the CBM, commented: "Whilst there was some optimism in manufacturing prior to COVID-19, the sector had suffered from lack of investment throughout the insecurity caused by Brexit. So, whilst our members are all hoping for an immediate bounce back in the economy, the reality is that volumes will increase at a much slower rate and industry will need help to protect workers in the meantime."

"Feedback from our members has been built into a new proposal, which highlights an extension to the furlough scheme and additional flexibility that companies can recall staff before the three weeks are over in light of sudden upturns in activity."

"Our members range from SMEs to large companies supplying direct to OEMs and their day-to-day requirements will differ. The smaller firms may need to call employees in daily if they get new orders, whilst the larger companies - working off schedules - may be faced with having to employ short-time working, possibly 3-day weeks instead of five. These different scenarios will all need to be covered by the Government's scheme."

He continued: "If the Chancellor listens to this, our firms would expect the need to make redundancies to drop from 30% to just 10%." zTrade credit insurance is proving another major issue for manufacturers, with cover being reduced or taken away altogether.

This is impacting a good number of CBM members, who use invoice discounting to draw down money as soon as they raise an invoice. In some instances, this could be 100%, but with credit insurance reduced, it means that this could now be as little as 25%, causing a major hammer blow to company cashflows.

There is also still plenty of concern around access to the Government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the reluctance of banks to back viable firms, leaving many looking for alternative financial support.

"This remains one of our biggest challenges - the restrictions placed on banks are not covering those larger SMEs as the Bounce Back loans have done. The liquidity test for CBILS needs to be less restrictive, after all there is an argument that if you've survived 3 years of Brexit uncertainty, you are a viable business," added Geraldine Bolton, Chief Executive Officer of the CBM.

"COVID-19 has created unprecedented economic circumstances for our members and we have been trying to guide them through these difficult times by giving them a collective voice and route into decision makers within the Government."

"What has worked really well is our regular weekly calls with officials from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), which has firstly allowed us to understand the support on offer and, secondly, given us a perfect vehicle for making sure our members' concerns are heard."

He concluded: "This has been ably supported by strong relationships with CBI, Make UK and SMMT, who all share our passion and commitment to give industry the best possible chance to recover from COVID-19."

CBM calls for Government rethink on Trade Credit Reinsurance closure - JUNE 2021

The Confederation of British Metalforming (CBM) has been lobbying Whitehall to extend the support until the end of the year to help companies fighting back from Covid, but still at the mercy of rising material prices, paying back debt from the pandemic and coming to terms with the winding down and removal of furlough.

President Steve Morley believes taking away this intervention will see many insurers simply remove credit insurance that covers thousands of manufacturers from the threat of bad debt at home and abroad.

Many of its members are already reporting receiving emails telling them that they are no longer covered, despite the insurance sector promising Government that they would 'continue to work closely with policy holders and their clients to understand their insurance needs'.

"This is the biggest threat to industry's recovery, it's as simple that," explained Steve, who has been involved in manufacturing for more than 30 years.

"There are lots of positive signs around volumes, new car model introductions and of course the emergence of the UK's electrification industry. However, firms are still finding it really tough and they need protection against bad debts from their customers and their invoice discounting facility, which can be affected by the removal of credit insurance."

He continued: "The Government scheme gave insurers the confidence to cover manufacturers and we are already seeing examples of those same insurers withdrawing cover now that the deadline of June 30th is approaching."

"We were told that we can't get sector specific support, which seems crazy considering all of the rightful assistance retailers have received. It's not a case of asking for handouts, just a level playing field that gives firms the opportunity to trade their way out of the recovery."

CBM highlights importance of industry stimulus packages and urges Government to review loans if sector is to sustainably recover - JUNE 2020

Steve Morley, President of the Confederation of British Metalforming, commented:

"We would really like to see the same flexibility of approach employed by the banks when considering CBILS/CLBILS applications. These loans can make a huge difference to protecting the future of some fantastic businesses and giving them the chance to recover - that lifeline shouldn't be taken away because of legislation not fit for the current situation and a viability test based on three years of Brexit uncertainty."

"This review, alongside the Trade Credit Insurance changes due to be announced this week, will build on the platform of support given to manufacturers."

Steve continued: "Going forward, we will be pushing the Government for some form of stimulus to aid all sectors. This will be critical to supporting growth to help markets recover, especially as we are already seeing our European competitors providing assistance to their automotive and aerospace industries...we can't afford to be left behind."

"With the ongoing trade deal negotiations with the EU in the background, it's clear manufacturing can't afford a no deal on top of the severe disruption caused by Covid-19... the path needs to be as smooth as possible"

CBM members have given their unanimous approval to the furlough scheme changes and many firms are confident it will allow them to weigh up manpower requirements against a fluctuating order book.

The tapering of the incremental payments through until October was also welcomed and seen by many as giving them additional breathing space to make future decisions on employment levels.

Steve went on to add: "Manufacturers have been given a framework now to map out workforce requirements against a very mixed and fluctuating sales outlook."

"This was desperately required as the additional flexibility - to bring staff back for a number of days and not after three weeks - will mean they can attempt to scale up and start the economic recovery with more confidence."

"The ongoing support will underpin financial planning at least until the end of October, but whilst this is one piece of positive news, other actions are required to support business and aid its recovery."

He concluded: "It's inevitable that, despite the much welcomed government intervention on the furlough scheme, redundancies will still happen. What we have to do now is work together to ensure every effort is made to keep them to a minimum."

New Covid-19 support measures will save thousands of jobs in the metalforming sector - SEPTEMBER 2020

Geraldine Bolton, Chief Executive Officer of Confederation of British Metalforming, commented: "A lot of our members are heavily involved in the automotive and aerospace sectors and these are two of the worst affected industries due to factory closures and the air travel falling off a cliff."

"The furlough scheme has been a great success, but the October deadline is fast approaching and our members are starting to plan for future staffing levels against the reality of sales they are expecting."

She continued: "The Job Support Scheme will give them more time to look at new revenue streams, whilst providing flexibility to get people back into work at reduced hours."

"We have spent so long addressing skills shortages in our sector, the last thing firms need is to lose skilled people as it will hamper them in their longer-term recovery."

CBM has been lobbying Government for the last four months about a reverse Job Retention Scheme that incentivises businesses to bring back staff in some capacity. It had also been asking for a raft of other support measures to help the cashflow of viable companies hit by the pandemic and is happy that the requested VAT and Corporate Tax extensions have been put in place to give businesses a further 12 months to make payments.

"Coming to terms with Covid-19 is one thing, but it is also clear that our members are very worried about the impending spectre of Brexit and the increasingly likely reality of a 'no deal,'" added Steve Morley, President of the Confederation of British Metalforming.

"58% of companies in our sector feel leaving the EU will have a detrimental effect on their business and, importantly, more than half would like to see an extension to negotiations."

He concluded: "The message is clear...leaving without a deal should not be an option. It would have been a testing time for business in a normal world, let alone one that has been turned upside down by the pandemic."

Brooks Forgings Produce M90 X 4550mm DIN 261 Hammerhead Bolts for Fossil Free Kiln Expansion Project in Sweden.

The removable hammerhead foundation system is used in heavy industry installations all over the globe. The fabricated tube assembly and forged t-bolt are produced to very specific requirements with no off-the-shelf solution available. Over the years, Brooks Forgings has made a considerable investment in its capabilities and range of production tooling to be in a position to offer bespoke requirements to the DIN 261 and DIN 7992 hammerhead standard with sizes ranging from M24 up to M100 and 6-meter lengths.

Our latest production was for a client requiring manufacture and delivery of 68 total DIN 261 hammerhead t-bolts in grade 8.8 material and M90x4550mm in size, each weighing 220 kilograms.

The combination of weight and length presented us with several challenges from safety and logistics to simply achieving a consistent production workflow. A dedicated production team was assigned to the project and through a combination of meticulous planning and utilisation of special lifting and moving jigs we were able to fully optimise the manufacturing process. Brooks Forgings is the only UK company capable of producing these hammerhead bolts in the lead time required.

These particular M90 hammerhead bolts were shipped to an expansion project located in Sweden that involves the installation of a new fossil-free kiln used during pulp production. With the launch scheduled for Q4 2021, it was essential that the bolts were manufactured and supplied on time so the foundation works could commence in preparation for the final delivery and commission of the equipment.



The bolts were shipped via land on dedicated transport and supplied complete with extensive quality documentation to fully support the material supplied.

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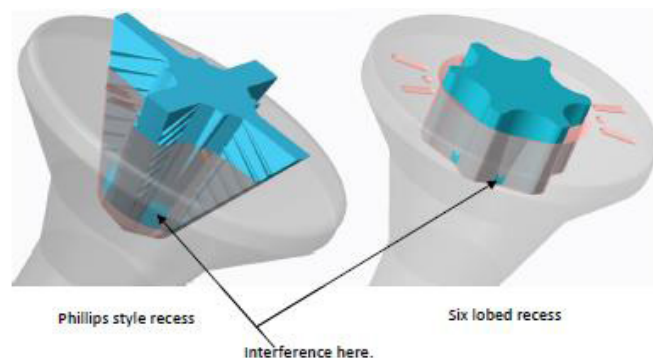
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How to achieve a “sticking” fastener recess to driver bit connection.

We all know the frustration of trying to hold a screw on to a screwdriver or driver bit along with trying to hold a bracket or hinge in place, nine times out of ten one of the components drops on the floor and the process starts again.

In an industrial automation environment it's slightly different in that you need a different method to hold onto the screw without it dropping off and having a hole with a missed fastener. Traditionally magnetic bits or vacuum suction systems have been used, but they have their own drawbacks. You can't use magnetic bits with stainless or non-ferrous screws and vacuum systems can wear needing constant attention with associated assembly downtime. So, how do you “stick” a screw to a bit so that it doesn't drop onto the assembly area or factory floor? Well, it's all in the geometry. The images below show the geometric interference between the driver bit and screw recess. This interference creates the “stick” effect. A combination of clever tolerancing, precision tooling and heading and strict quality control combine together to create drive systems with the following benefits:

- no dropped fasteners in the assembly area and on factory floor
- reliable one-handed application of screws at point of assembly
- magnetic bits or vacuum screw holders not necessary



The regions of interference are located on the inner surfaces of the driver bit, this negates wear on the wings/lobes of the bit ensuring that it does not wear prematurely and slip out of the recess. The slip effect is known as “cam-out”.

There are other geometric interference systems that use a button at the end of the driver bit which interferes with an extended recess in the bottom of the primary recess. This system works but, has the drawback of increasing the total recess depth thus reducing the wall thickness between the recess and the screw shank creating a weaker screw.

If you want to save time and have less waste (who doesn't) and would like more information on the above technologies with details of fasteners that contain the technology please contact sszczurek@phillips-screw.com



Illustrated designs are covered by one or more patents held by Phillips Screw Company.

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Stress Relaxation

Preload Loss from Stress Relaxation

By Dr Bill Eccles, Bolt Science

In this article on the non-rotational loosening of threaded fasteners, I will be looking at a mechanism called stress relaxation. Stress relaxation results in a loss of bolt preload, without any rotation of the fastener occurring.

At an elevated temperature, if a metal part is subjected to a tensile stress, creep or cold flow can occur resulting in the part increasing in length. The amount of deformation the part will experience depends upon the magnitude of stress, the properties of the metal and how long the part is exposed to the elevated temperature.

With preloaded threaded fasteners, the fastener is already stretched, and the effect of the creep process at an elevated temperature is to reduce the amount of stretch that, consequently, reduces the preload. This creep process in preloaded fasteners is referred to as stress relaxation. It is the reduction in the axial stress that reduces the fastener preload. In many applications in which a bolted joint is required to sustain loading at an elevated temperature, the amount of load loss from stress relaxation is usually a key consideration.

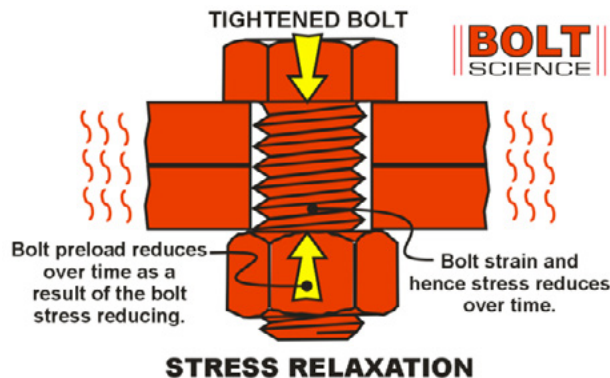
When the wrong bolt material is used in an application operating at an elevated temperature, often initially no issues, such as gas or liquid leakage, is noted. The amount of stress relaxation depends not only on the operating temperature but also on time at temperature. Over time, the stress reduces and so subsequently, the preload, until a critical level is reached. Joint failure can then subsequently occur.

Although steel melts at a very high temperature (approximately 1500o C), the usable range of steel fasteners is significantly more restricted. This is due to concern over not only stress relaxation but also the reduction in strength and stiffness that occurs as the temperature increases and oxidation and corrosion considerations. The ISO 898-1 standard (that defines bolt property classes such as 8.8 and 10.9) states that fasteners included in the standard are used in applications up to 150 C. Between 150 oC and an upper limit of 300 oC, users are advised to consult an experienced fastener metallurgist. Bolting property classes such as 8.8, 10.9 and 12.9 are engineered to achieve the strength and other property requirements using minimum cost steels. To do so, alloy content is minimised. To achieve improved stress relaxation resistance, a higher alloy content is required with the subsequent impact on fastener cost. As a rule, the higher operating temperature that you require the bolt to operate at, the higher the cost of the bolt material.

The 300 oC upper limit for standard steel bolts can be seen in a classic paper published in the 1970's shown below. After 300 oC the preload in such bolts can be expected to decrease to a very low level. In applications requiring greater resistance to stress relaxation, bolts are frequently specified to the ASTM A193 standard.

In applications requiring covered in this standard are alloy and stainless-steel bolting materials for high temperature applications.

Grade B7 from this standard is a chromium-molybdenum steel is usually the default bolting material used in the chemical and petroleum industries. The upper useful limit for this material is 400 oC. Grade B16 is a chromium-molybdenum-vanadium steel



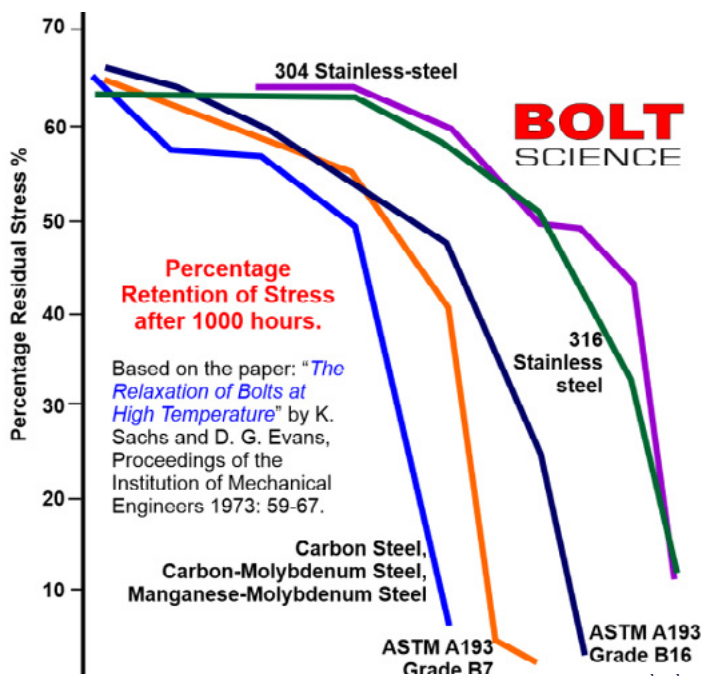
is usually the default bolting material used in the chemical and petroleum industries. The upper useful limit for this material is 400 oC. Grade B16 is a chromium-molybdenum-vanadium steel whose upper limit is 500 oC.

If the application operates at temperatures exceeding 500 oC, more exotic materials are needed. ASTM A286 is a common alloy used up to 700 oC and Inconel 718 (a nickel-based alloy) up to 760 oC. A recently introduced ISO standard is a useful guide to bolting materials that are suitable for use at elevated temperatures. The standard is BS EN ISO 3506 Part 5 Mechanical properties of corrosion-resistant stainless steel - Special Fasteners - including fasteners from nickel alloys for high temperature applications.

About Bolt Science

Bolt Science was founded in 1992 with the intention of becoming the recognised worldwide quality provider of independent technical expertise in bolted joint technology. Its clients include many of the major engineering organizations of the world.

<https://www.boltscience.com>



We are not out of the woods yet

A thought-provoking viewpoint from Steve Hardeman, Managing Director of Clevedon Fasteners Ltd.

Having hopefully survived the pandemic, many people are talking a return to the “new normal”. Unfortunately, in terms of businesses, the new normal is a very scary place. It is a very well used phrase, but as we come out of the pandemic, businesses large and small are being buffeted by the outlying winds of a “perfect storm”. A combination of factors conspiring to make the post-pandemic business landscape very difficult for businesses large and small.

Many UK businesses took advantage of a number of government schemes designed to help them through the pandemic. Bounce Back Loans, CBILS, BBILS etc have added billions to UK plc's balance sheet. These loans must be paid back. The support provided by the government was predicated on very low interest rates. However, all these support measures do not have fixed interest rates, they are variable. So, if the Bank of England interest rate increases, so do the repayment schedules.

But that's okay because interest rates are at an all-time low and they're going to stay there, right?

Wrong.

The Real World

Because of the pandemic and other issues, things that we took for granted have changed significantly. Due to the insatiable desire for cheap sparkly, new products, UK manufacturing has been progressively hollowed out by governments of all political hues. Companies have off-shored, predominantly to Asia for their consumer and business-to-business products. The supply chains supporting this business model, have been developed and honed into a very slick, low-cost operation resulting in these products being readily available.

During the pandemic the worldwide availability of containers used to bring the shiny products to the UK effectively halved. Now, as economies recover from the pandemic, global demand for sea-freighted product has escalated to the extent that more than 99% of the world's fleet of container vessels are in operation or under repair. There simply is no spare capacity. As a result, a container, which pre-pandemic might have cost £800 to £1600 to ship from China to the UK, is now costing between £10,000 and £16,000. These costs inevitably have to be passed on to consumers.

In our business we must compete with imports brought in by our competitors from Asia. This is where most fasteners used in all sorts of manufacturing in the UK and worldwide come from. However, the cost calculation these importing companies now have to make has changed dramatically. On a container containing, perhaps, £30,000 worth of fasteners, with relatively low margins, can their business stand an on-cost of £10,000 to £16,000 for transport? I suspect the answer is no. It's not just fasteners. This calculation has to be made in boardrooms up and down the UK, in businesses as diverse as supermarkets to clothes stores. Due to the low margins many of these work on in order to compete, even if the container has £100,000 worth



of product on it, the transport inflation is between 10% and 16% - on products where these businesses may only be making a 5% margin.

In addition to these cost increases, the actual time from shipment to arrival has increased significantly. This has been exacerbated in recent months due to the problems with the Suez Canal, which have been well documented in the press. Containers used to seamlessly go from say a Chinese manufacturer to the port and were then loaded within a few days and arrived in the UK four weeks later. Those days have gone. Many Chinese manufacturers cannot get their products booked into the shipping port for between two and four weeks. When they are loaded, the transit and offload time can be up to six weeks, so the supply chain time is doubled, playing havoc with just in time deliveries.

While the transport issues and their stealth inflation on input costs are being wilfully ignored by economists, advisors and mainstream media (wilful as these costs are hiding in plain sight) they will undoubtedly start having real-life impacts, which will apparently come as a surprise. But unfortunately, this is just part of the storm.

Due to the effects of the pandemic and lockdowns, many steel manufacturing plants either closed or were running at very low capacity. As we started to unlock across the world, these plants were not able to keep up with the increase in demand. The costs of raw materials for steelmaking - iron ore, coal and steel scrap - have also increased massively, a combination of demand and the impact of the pandemic on their supply chains. The result is steel shortages worldwide and when there are shortages prices go up - and they have at a pace that is unprecedented. This issue has been made even worse in the UK and therefore the on-cost implications even greater, by Steel Safeguarding measures. These have meant UK manufacturers importing steel grades they are unable to source from UK mills are faced with the risk of 25% import tariffs, if the quotas set by Government are exceeded. To make matters worse Liberty Steel, a UK steelmaker, is struggling to stay afloat, creating supply uncertainty which means manufacturers need to obtain supplies from abroad, using up the quotas much faster, potentially obliging the manufacturers to either swallow or pass on the tariff cost on top of the increased cost of the material itself.

Continue on page 10

Continue from pg 9

All of this would be bad enough, but again, as a result of the pandemic and lockdowns, and particularly the ban on air travel, many integrated petrochemical plants worldwide had to reduce their throughput drastically. These plants convert crude oil into vehicle and jet fuel, but also provide the basic materials for products we directly or indirectly rely on every day, such as plastics, fertilisers for farms. As planes aren't flying, and vehicle mileages have fallen radically, these secondary products are in short supply, again driving major price increases, and also compromising production and supply chains.

Automotive companies worldwide are struggling with lack of supply of semiconductors – the 'chips' that today are critical to all vehicles, as well as phones and computers, and myriads of the systems we don't even think about. With this crisis has come the realisation that a huge proportion of the global supply of these vital components is concentrated in a handful of geographic areas, most notably Taiwan. Vehicles are being manufactured and parts then retrofitted or worst of all not being manufactured at all, hence the reason many new vehicle deliveries are being put back.

A perfect storm indeed.

These broken supply chains are going to have to make companies and governments think very carefully about the strategic position of manufacturing in the UK and its value, as opposed to its cost.

The results of all of the above is that there is an inflationary shockwave heading our way, which no one seems to want to talk about. When the full effect of these inflationary pressures start hitting businesses, already hobbled by the loans they have taken out in order to survive, they will be faced with increasing costs of financing existing loans and the near impossibility of getting new ones.

Business's ability to fight back against the above issues, will be further compromised by the UK Government's decision to remove the trade credit insurance safety net at the end of June, which means that businesses relying on invoice discounting for their cash flow are going to find their availability severely compromised.

This is the business version of a pandemic, and it is coming to a High Street near you.

Titan Steel Wheels Claims Queen's Award

A Kidderminster business which has established itself as one of the world's largest manufacturers of steel wheels for the off-highway and mobile crane industry has received the royal seal of approval.

Titan Steel Wheels, based in rural Cookley, has been awarded the Queen's Award for International Trade for Outstanding Short-Term Growth in overseas sales.

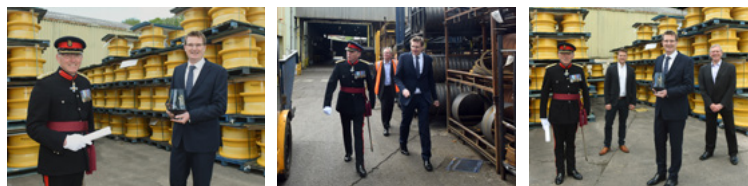
The company, which is part of Titan Europe Limited and was established in 1991, has put itself at the forefront of the global off-highway and mobile crane markets in recent years and has now received one of the UK's top business honours through an award which was aptly presented to them by Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire Brigadier Roger Brunt CBE.

Titan Steel Wheels received the accolade for its outstanding export performance over the last three years.

Chris Akers, managing director, said: "Winning the Queen's Award is a fantastic honour and is testament to the hard work and dedication of the entire team.

"We are proud of the fact we are a significant local employer in and around the Cookley area and many of our team live in relatively close proximity to our headquarters

"The entire production process is based here – from design to manufacturing to testing – and many of our staff have spent most, if not all, their careers with us.



"It's a very talented and committed team who all work tirelessly to ensure we display the innovation and expertise – supplemented by investment in the latest technology – to keep us at the forefront of our markets.

"Exports account for around 98 per cent of our sales and we have witnessed substantial growth in that area over the last three years.

"Whereas once we were predominately providing sales to Europe, we now have a truly global presence with major businesses and projects using Titan Steel Wheels products in North and South America, Asia and Australia.

"We have made excellent progression as a business and this award reflects that success."

The products – which include multi-piece wheels as well as a specially designed and patented single piece product - are being used on some of the world's largest and most demanding infrastructure.

Mining and transport projects include the Cadia East Underground Mine, construction of the New Silk Road in China and expansion of what will be the world's largest port, the Port of Singapore.

Issued on behalf of Titan Steel Wheels by 8848 Agency

For further information, please contact Natalie Dukes Tel: 01562 850561 Email: Nataliedukes@titaneurope.com

www.thecbm.co.uk



Sertec's £1.7m investment drives UK's first EV battery Busbar assembly line

Sertec Group Ltd, the global automotive components manufacturer, has invested £1.7million into its research and development (R&D) programmes, to enable the UK's first mass production assembly line for electric vehicle batteries.

The new assembly line will be fully operational in September 2021 and when in place will have the capability to produce in excess of 40 million electric vehicle battery Busbar assemblies per year. As the first mass production Busbar assembly line, it marks a vital step forward in electric vehicle technology for both the Midlands region and the UK.

Alongside the Busbar assemble line and at the heart of Sertec's R&D investment is the fully equipped pre-production facility and testing lab. The Lab, built at a cost of £500,000 alone, has been invaluable in developing the Group's abilities to design and test Busbars in modular battery production. The £1m pre-production facility has enabled Sertec to build prototypes and complete low volume orders for its customers. The production cell is currently being used to prove design concepts for assemblies requiring welding of dissimilar Busbar materials.

As well as developing new technologies essential for electric vehicle production, Sertec Group has also invested in similar technological innovation to support its customers in the consumer goods (FMCG) and distribution sectors.

Sertec's investment extends to the recruitment of various highly skilled, specialist roles to support the technological innovation required within the EV sector.

Grant Adams, Group CEO at Sertec, said: "The investment we have made in new technology facilities are vital to the automotive industry's ever evolving requirements for lightweight material production, which is set to become critical in future vehicle structures.

"As a UK first, the Busbar assembly line is integral to taking electric vehicle production forward both in the region and across the UK.

"It will help establish Sertec as one of the sector leading companies for this type of battery technology and put us at the heart of a regional manufacturing hub renowned for meeting the new technologic challenges of the future."

With expansion into the electric vehicle sector key to Sertec's future business vision, the Group is also preparing to build a larger footprint in mainland Europe, including bringing new leadership into the organisation. As a result, various senior staff have been recruited including a new European Sales Director, Chief Finance Officer, Vice President of Quality and Environmental Affairs, Vice president of Human Resource and a new Managing Director to run Sertec's Hungarian facility.

Sertec are also looking to set up a technical centre in Germany, similar to the one they have in China.

The plan going forward is to repurpose the German plant as an electric vehicle component site using the know-how that's been developed in the UK.

Sertec Group Ltd operates a number of sites in the UK, Hungary, Germany and China.



CBM would like to welcome Process Parameters

Process Parameters Ltd is an established UK manufacturer and distributor of industrial temperature measurement products for the metals industry whether this is low temperature secondary processing applications or very high temperature molten metals. The range includes standard and bespoke Thermocouples and Platinum Resistance Thermometers.



Process Parameters is also a distributor for Optris, who are a German manufacturer of precision Infrared Pyrometers and Thermal Cameras. The short wavelength Pyrometers can measure from 0°C to 3000°C. Their product range includes thermal imaging cameras, which are made specifically for metal applications and are suitable for temperature measurements on metals due to their short measuring wavelengths of 500 nm, 800 nm and 1 µm. With their high maximum image frame rate of 1kHz, these cameras can be used for very fast processes.

Accessories are available for all products, along with a

comprehensive calibration service.

Experienced engineers will be happy to talk you through options whether you are looking for a replacement thermocouple probe or want to look at how modern technology can upgrade your measurement performance. You can contact the team at Process Parameters on sales@processparameters.co.uk.

processparameters

CBM would like to welcome Kumi Solutions

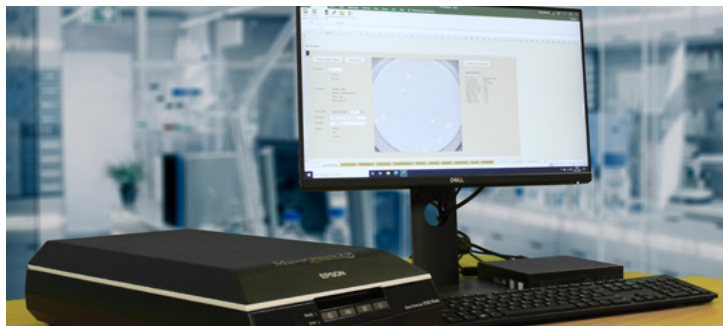
Kumi Solutions - Your Midlands based specialist degreasing and parts cleanliness experts.

Helping Precision Engineering firms solve parts cleaning and cleanliness related manufacturing processes and problems. For two decades Kumi Solutions has worked with Aerospace, Automotive, SpaceX, White Goods, OEMs and sub-contract companies to improve their parts cleaning processes and gain insights into their parts cleanliness and suitability for the next manufacturing step.

Particle Counting with MicroQuick, a state-of-the-art particle scanning system. Its low cost makes it ideal for SME's and multinationals. Approved to VDA19 and ISO16232 automotive standards MicroQuick is perfect for tool for the counting, sizing, and categorising of particles.

Surface Tension measurement of solids with the KRUSS MSA. A one click system delivering data about the suitability of a surface for painting, plating, welding, bonding and many more applications. The optional adhesion software allows users to determine bond strength and potential adhesion rejection over time.

Instantly measure the concentration of mixed fluids with Teqwave from Endress & Hauser. Using Titration to establish concentration levels is subjective. With Teqwave, reliable concentration levels are measured in seconds. If you monitor concentrations of any process involving fluids, Teqwave can measure, record, and track your results.



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Manufacturing Oils from Oest – Specialist German producer Oest Group manufactures a range of metal working fluids designed to deliver cost reductions through excellence.

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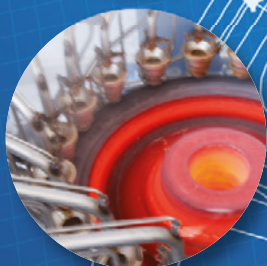
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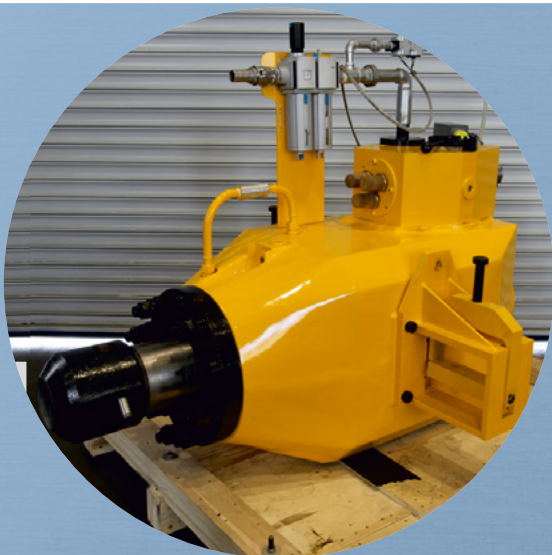
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2 This year the Manufacturing Management Show conference joins Subcon and The Engineer Expo! The conference will be focused on providing best-practice advice to today's senior manufacturing leaders.

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Unique Metal Forming Apprenticeship ready to recruit – with Degree and HNC options

The level 6 Tool Process Design Engineer Apprenticeship was specifically created for the metal forming sector in recognition of increasing skills shortages.

The Tool Process Design Engineer apprenticeship and end point assessment have been developed by the CBM and member organisations. It is the only Apprenticeship that recognises the unique and specialist skills for this senior technical role. Organisations of all sizes can access government funds towards the cost of the apprenticeship. The Apprentice may be an existing employee wishing to formalise their qualifications or for a new recruit. The apprenticeship can lead to Incorporated Engineer status with the Institute of Mechanical Engineers.

Employers can choose their preferred training provider including Universities as the apprenticeship has 3 optional routes.

Option 1 Level 6 Tool Process Design Engineer Apprenticeship. The learner undertakes practical and theoretical training on a block release basis. (typically, 88 days over 2 years). Then an assessor visits the workplace every 2 months to continue the training and assessment. Once the training is finished the apprentice must complete an independent end point assessment conducted by the CBM. The funding value assigned to this option usually covers the full cost of both the training delivery and end point assessment

Option 2 Level 6 Tool Process Design Engineer Apprenticeship with HNC units. As option 1 above but provides the additional opportunity for the Apprentice to complete a HNC in Mechanical Engineering. This option incurs an additional cost in order to complete the full Higher National Certificate.

Option 3 There is the possibility of a degree option for suitable candidates. This option requires collaboration between the university and training provider. Again, this option incurs an additional cost to complete the full Degree. The collaborating partners use the Degree's engineering curriculum to provide some of the underpinning knowledge required in the Apprenticeship standard.

These options allow greater flexibility during these difficult times and ensures this Apprenticeship meets the needs of your business and your workforce.

In response to CBM member feedback this level 6 Apprenticeship (degree level) programme was developed by the CBM's Trailblazer group in collaboration with the Institute of Apprenticeships and technical education. Previously no Tool Process design apprenticeship existed at this level and many employers were dissatisfied with generic qualifications.

In this new apprenticeship skills knowledge and behaviours are specific to our members needs and the employing organisation can choose which university/training provider they work with to achieve the standard. There is the opportunity for the apprentice to work on industry standard training equipment. This equipment was specified by the CBM on behalf of members and procured by the University of Wolverhampton and the Black Country Local Economic Partnership.



The CBM will be the independent end point assessment organisation. This will allow industry specialists, trained in assessment techniques, to become part of the assessment panel. The panel will ensure the apprentice has achieved the required level of knowledge skills and behaviours necessary to meet the needs of modern manufacturing.

We are asking members to become actively involved to ensure this standard adds real value to our sector by encouraging existing and new members of staff to become professionally qualified via this apprenticeship.

The first step is to undertake a demographic and skills analysis of the Tool Process Design capability in your organisation. Using the analysis consider whether to recruit new talent who can undertake this apprenticeship, or whether to up skill your existing workforce as a means of staff retention and to ensure business continuity.

For further information please contact Geraldine Bolton at the CBM.

A hidden benefit of Apprenticeships

Gareth Jones, Managing Director of In-Comm Training, explains why not enough firms are using Apprenticeships to upskill existing members of staff.

When people think of Apprenticeships, they automatically think of someone leaving school or college and taking their first steps into the world of work.

Whilst it is fair to say these individuals make up most of the vocational talent pool, it would be doing a disservice to thousands of more mature employees who have decided to become an apprentice to reskill in another job role or to gain additional skills that make them even more valuable to their company.

Yes, you read it right. Businesses can use an Apprenticeship to bridge competency gaps or to address an emerging skill they didn't know they needed twelve months ago. The rise in digital manufacturing is only going to accentuate this demand, yet not enough management teams understand this is a real possibility.

As part of our 'Equip the Recovery' Campaign, we are looking to speak to employers and show them how they can upskill their staff through this route. The good news is that it is a very cost-effective approach, with the Apprenticeship Levy offsetting a large part of the cost.

Better still, Apprenticeships are designed by industry so the new standards focus on skills, knowledge and behaviours, meaning an apprentice will be trained in competencies they will be using in their daily roles.

Each learning journey will be unique, and this is where training providers need to step forward and make sure they're not delivering off-the-shelf options.

The best results come when you understand the need of the firm and the individual, so that you can guide them through the Apprenticeship and both parties get what they need. In some cases, this may be identifying additional courses that can be added to the Apprenticeship programme at an additional cost.

In the past six months, we have seen machinists retraining to be toolmakers, mechanical maintenance engineers becoming electrical maintenance engineers and fluid control specialists developing their metrology capability.

Organisations, such as ZF Lemforder, Gestamp and Fablink are already benefiting from upskilling through Apprenticeships and we're starting to see other firms take the opportunity.

The pathways cover vital areas of business excellence including Quality practitioners aligned to industrial quality standards, Improvement practitioners aligned to continuous improvement, Safety Health & Environmental practitioners aligned to IOSH & NEBOSH qualifications for example. And,

of course, we must not forget Leadership & Management.

Don't get me wrong, it's not always easy as there is considerable off-the-job training and an Apprenticeship can take between one to four-years to complete depending on the pathway, so there is a sizable commitment from everyone involved. But when have good things ever come easy?

We can help by supporting you along the journey and learning can be delivered around shift patterns, the current competency of the learner and any additional qualifications they may want to bolt on along the way.

Companies and individuals have been missing out on this underutilised opportunity for too long. With the recovery showing signs of promise and pent-up demand leading to increased orders and the need for more capacity, there has never been a better time to take a fresh look at using Apprenticeships for Upskilling.

Any strategic piece within a business starts with a gap analysis that helps you formalise a plan, the skills agenda should be no different.

We are offering our clients an initial skills Organisational Needs Analysis (ONA) that can be used as a platform to develop a formal strategy. This can then later be developed into more detail to fully understand what an employee requires in an organisation to make them successful, as every business is unique with unique requirements.

To take advantage of the In-Comm ONA offer or to register for our 'Simple Guide to Apprenticeships', please email cassieg@in-comm.co.uk. Or click here to register for a 121 Client Manager consultation.



R&D Tax Claims Saves Millions for Businesses

R&D Tax Claims Limited has been helping businesses across the UK to claim relief for their research and development activities and encourages manufacturing and engineering companies to investigate their eligibility for these significant benefits.

Managing Director, Mark Evans, has helped SMEs across the UK claim back more than £43m since 2009. Mark set up R&D Tax Claims in 2012 to provide a dedicated research and development tax relief service to the engineering and manufacturing sector.

With 5 account managers, who are all engineering consultants by profession, R&D Tax Claims provide their clients with over 100 years of experience of the sector at a senior level. The consultants combine this industry experience with expertise from active involvement in thousands of R&D tax relief claims to provide clients with the very best service.

The consultants specialise in preparing and submitting research and development tax relief claims on behalf of their clients, and as an associate member of CBM, the company has helped 5 CBM members claim back research and development tax relief totalling £1.1m.

APS Metal Pressings, a leading Birmingham-based manufacturing business has received over £450,000 of research and development tax savings following their 10th consecutive year of securing a claim. The Managing Director of APS Metal Pressings, Paul Smith, explains "It was not until we were approached by R&D Tax Claims that we were aware that we would qualify for tax relief."

Which is often the case in the manufacturing and engineering industry, where companies are unaware of the significant relief they are entitled to.

Paul describes working with his account manager to secure these rewards, "From the outset, it was clear to see that he understood our industry, bringing with him decades of experience working in the Automotive, Aerospace and Electronics industries in both the UK and worldwide." Paul continues to explain that R&D Tax Claims make the process "simple and easy".



APS Metal Pressings, which started from humble beginnings in Peter Smith's garage in 1970, now has a turnover in excess of £7 million. With innovation at the heart of their success, research and development will continue to drive this business even further forward. Meaning there will be many more R&D tax relief claims to come from APS Metal Pressings relationship with R&D Tax Claims.

The benefits of working with R&D Tax Claims is significant both in terms of time spent and size of reward. The account manager will do the vast majority of the work involved in a claim, asking for only a few hours of their clients' time throughout the process. With an average total tax saving of £60k for an initial two year claim, the benefits compared with time spent are nothing short of outstanding.

Over the course of the last 18 months, the team has found that the level of research and development activity has reduced across the UK due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the government furlough scheme. But as the world reopens, the company anticipates a significant uptick in organisations utilising research and development. With the UK's exit of the European Union and the post pandemic landscape, research and development activities will be more important than ever to promote the future growth of the economy and support companies in moving forward with many new ways of working.

R&D Tax Claims' process is at the heart of their success, and with a long-standing relationship with HMRC, most of their clients receive their refund within six weeks of submission. Mark Evans, MD explains "Manufacturing companies all too often perceive R&D as something undertaken by scientists wearing white coats in laboratories, rather than engineers in oily factories." But APS Metal



Pressings have proved this is simply not the case, with manufacturing businesses relying, and thriving, on research and development innovation, there is a lot of activity for these sectors to claim relief on.

If you are a manufacturing or engineering company unsure about whether you can claim research and development tax relief, or how the claims process works, speak with one of R&D Tax Claims' expert consultants today on 0845 003 0140 or email refunds@rdtaxclaims.co.uk.





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We help CBM members navigate renewable energy options and take control of energy costs. Why not get in touch to find out how we can help save your business money?



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Don't you want me 40 years later?

In January 1981, with the Human League's number one hit "Don't you want me" playing in the background, Control Energy Costs was set up in a small office in Streatham.

We incorporated on 10th March that year and are still going strong 40 years later. Clients, it seems, DO want us!

It's been a great journey, that saw us move to Tollers Farm in Coulsdon and then to Kingsgate in Redhill, where we are today.

There has been massive change in the energy industry in that time, with deregulation, competition and the move to green energy and net zero. We have been at the forefront of those developments, ensuring our clients get the right business energy deal.

Our people have made the last 40 years possible. Going forward, we have a wellbeing programme to support them and are setting up an apprenticeship scheme to grow talent in-house.

We were awarded Investors in People accreditation in 2020 and were shortlisted for their "Small Business Award".

I have been with Control Energy Costs since 1997 – not far off my 25th anniversary now – and became a director in 2007. In 2014, Dan Oman, Chris Ellis and I completed a management buyout from the previous owners.

Looking forward, as well as supporting our people, we have a strong focus on helping clients achieve net zero and securing them best energy contracts.

We have returned to the office flexibly, driven by what is best for each team member and their work-life balance.

It is such an achievement to reach this milestone. Our big celebration is on hold for the time being, but we will be doing something as soon as we can.

Phil Ager, Managing Director



Net zero buildings

As the UK works towards its target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, we take a look at the part that buildings play. In the context of architecture and business, a net zero building (NZEB) is one that has no net carbon emissions during its construction and operation.

What does a new build need to be a net zero building?

The optimisation of building energy efficiency typically considers the following, which work together to ultimately reach the goal of net zero energy:

- Lighting
- Walls and roof
- Glazing
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- Building usage and employee behaviours

An air-tight, highly insulated building envelope is an integral part of the NZEB strategy. Insulation represents significant potential energy savings. For example, quality insulation, used throughout the building interior and exterior construction, can help buildings realise heating energy savings of up to 70%, reducing dependency on fossil fuels.

To achieve high performance buildings, complete building energy modelling and thermal analysis are needed to help architects, designers, specifiers, contractors, building owners and energy consultants maximise efficiencies. A well planned and integrated team approach is typically necessary to achieve NZEB.

How can an old or existing building become net zero?

An existing building is, as you would expect, a more challenging prospect than a new build.

There are three main aspects, with a combination of all three likely in most scenarios:

- Use of renewable energy and /or onsite generation
- Carbon emission removal
- Building refurbishment and/or retrofitting to create greater efficiencies

Moving to 100% renewable energy is the ideal step forward. To complement, or perhaps replace, bought in renewable energy, it may be possible to implement onsite clean energy generation. This will depend on the practicalities of the building itself and may be challenging in older buildings.



The second approach is to neutralise emissions, by removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through carbon capture technologies and natural carbon sinks such as oceans and forests. However, climate change experts believe we cannot plant enough trees fast enough for this to be the solution on its own.

About 19% of the UK's emissions come from heating buildings – 77% from homes and 23% from commercial and public buildings. Therefore, retrofitting/refurbishing existing buildings to make them more energy efficient is critical.

For refurbishment/retrofit projects, there is a strong argument that efforts should be first focused on improving the fabric of buildings to reduce energy demand, for example improving insulation, heating and cooling systems, as well as moving to renewable energy.

The benefits of a net zero building

If you are looking to make your business net zero, there are a number of advantages to focussing on your premises, including:

- Excellent levels of insulation minimising heat loss and reducing costs
- Clean energy generation and potential revenue from integrated solar PV roofs
- Affordable construction with zero running costs for new builds
- Airtight construction
- Negative carbon emissions asset rating

And don't forget to install electric vehicle charging points for your employees!

Achieving net zero

If you would like to learn more about renewable energy and net zero, you can download Control Energy Costs' free "Guide to green" eBook.

And you can always give Control Energy Costs a ring on 01737 556631 to discuss your energy requirements, including EV charging points and moving to a renewable energy contract. www.cec.uk.com



Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting (SECR)

Mandatory Reporting Requirements for Eligible Companies – Don't miss the deadline, contact CBM today for help and support in this

Climate change agreement approved eligibility is for companies in the metalforming sector, and saves over £4m per year, that these companies would otherwise be paying in climate change levy; a tax on all gas and electricity bills. In order to receive this rebate one option is to be in a climate change agreement with the CBM.

The CBM is offering a SECR service to all its members that fall under SECR umbrella. The expected members rate will be £2,500.00 per year which is far cheaper than the main external consultants. The items included within the service are:

Data collection

- Assistance in putting systems in place to collect the relevant data e.g. transport.
- Setting a base year and calculating the relevant Co2 figures
- At least 2 meetings to discuss and finalise the energy efficiency narrative that forms part of the report
- Compiling a SECR report that can be added to the company's annual Report.
-

CBM have for over 25 years now, had an approved Climate Change Levy rebate agreement. So If you are a metalforming company who is not already getting these rebates, please contact us now so as not to miss out. We have a specialist energy engineer who can guide you through this process with ease, we keep a full auditable evidence file for you and support you at all levels. The majority of the CBM manufacturing members are eligible and receiving these rebates.

CCL Rate Changes

Over the last 4 years the Climate Change Levy has increased significantly. The levy on electricity has risen by over 30% and more than doubled on gas. To compensate for this the government have increased the maximum percentage rebate. To prevent overpayment of your CCL you must complete a new PP10 form for HMRC and a new PP11 form for your energy supplier. Remember a new energy supplier will not automatically give you your CCL rebates

Please contact louise.campbell@thecbm.co.uk for more information or to find out if you have eligible qualify



Employers warned about dangers of ‘fire-and-rehire’

The next few weeks could see industry hit with a double whammy of the end of furlough and shortages of materials as stretch supply chains stall a post-lockdown boost.

Employment law expert Julia Fitzsimmons says this combination of factors could see many employers looking to dismiss staff but then re-engage them at a later date – sometimes on less favourable terms.

“This is a practice known as ‘fire and rehire’ which should be avoided at all costs unless employers want to end up in front of a tribunal.

“Although industry wasn’t affected in the same way as other sectors during Covid as many companies continued to operate as essential businesses, what we are currently seeing is that a combination of the pandemic and Brexit has hit supply chains.

“This delayed effect, combined with the end of furlough, with around 150,000 people expected to be made redundant, could see employers having to make difficult decisions.

“They may not have sufficient stock and materials to keep their staff employed currently and with the furlough scheme no longer an option, they need to be aware of the dangers of letting people go and later re-hiring on different terms.

“Changes to contractual terms and conditions must be done in a fair way, or industrial action could be hot on their heels. Since the pandemic, fire-and-rehire practice has become more common. Of course, for some businesses to stay profitable or indeed afloat over the past 18 months, it may have been necessary to adjust employee terms and conditions to ensure the workforce could be flexible to the new normal.

“But there is growing concern that some employers are taking advantage of the uncertainty in the job market to force through contract changes without proper consultation and without working with staff on possible alternative solutions.

Current unfair dismissal and collective rights give workers protection against fire-and-rehire and several big name companies (including British Airways, Jacobs Douwe Egberts, British Gas and Tesco) have been involved in disputes around the use of such tactics, as well as many small and medium-sized employers, according to ACAS.

To avoid getting into a legal wrangling with staff over contract changes, employers are advised to work with their employees in the first instance to come to an agreement over any proposed amends. As well as avoiding the possibility of unfair dismissal claims, it will also help to maintain a positive working environment where staff feel valued.

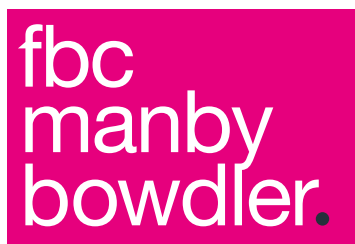
The Government has said that it doesn’t intend to ban fire-and-rehire practice but its line is clear that it should only be used as a last resort – and not a negotiating tactic.



If the number of disputes continues to rise, there may well be official Government guidance issued in the future, however a change in legislation is not likely to be on the cards just yet.

As best practice, employers should avoid incendiary negotiating options and instead work on building solid industrial relations with their workforce to gain the trust and support of staff, who will then be more willing to come to the table over contractual changes.

If you’d like to discuss the best way to approach contractual terms, contact Julia Fitzsimmons on 01952 208420 or email at julia.fitzsimmons@fbcmb.co.uk.



S O L I C I T O R S

12 Month Catch Up

A lot can change in a year...



When employment law changes, it doesn't always make headlines, meaning you might not know which updates affect your business. So, what has changed in the last twelve months that you need to be aware of?

Here's a summary:



Zero Hour Contracts

Multiple cases have found that individuals working on zero-hour contracts are workers, and not self-employed. **Are your staff on the right contract?**



National Living Wage

The threshold for those receiving the NLW was reduced from 25 years old to 23, **are you paying your staff correctly?**



The Job Retention Scheme

Furlough may be coming to an end, but the implications it has on pay and employment will be felt for years to come. **Have you used the scheme correctly?**



Statutory Redundancy Pay

If you make staff redundant, you must pay eligible employees based on weekly pay, length of service, and age. **Are your calculations correct?**



Right to Work Checks

During lockdown, right to work checks became digital, this was due to change on 21st June. Now, we will return to physical checks from 31st August 2021. **Are you ready?**

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Call your VIP Advice Line today & quote your association number for advice

 **0844 561 8133**

Sustainable Manufacturing Insights

Hosted by **WMG** and the High Value Manufacturing Catapult in partnership with **NatWest**

Sustainable practices can lead to positive impacts on profit as well as the environment. In the run up to COP26 and with the UK Government set to invest millions in a green recovery, join this webinar series to find out how your business can get on board.



Subcon returns in-person 14-16 September at NEC

Registration for Subcon 2021, which is co-located with The Engineer Expo and - new for 2021 - Manufacturing Management Show, is now open.

Taking place in-person at Birmingham's NEC on 14 – 16 September 2021, the 44th edition of Subcon will feature around 200 exhibiting companies, including Hoffman Group UK, Wilson Process Systems and Oldham Engineering, with IAMP and SCS Concept Group as headline sponsors.

The event is co-locating this year with The Engineer Expo and Manufacturing Management Show and visitors get free access to all three events by registering for Subcon.

Manufacturing Management is also curating a three-day conference at Subcon with panel discussions and keynotes from Make UK CEO Stephen Phipson (who is presenting a State of the Industry address), Made in Britain CEO John Pearce who will look at the post-pandemic opportunities for the industry, Professor Nadia Kourra discussing the next generation of engineers, and many more.

Gordon Kirk, Subcon event director, said: "We're delighted to bring Subcon back and provide a long overdue opportunity for UK manufacturing to meet face to face. The event will shine a light on the untold challenges and opportunities this industry is facing, including pandemic-induced supply chain disruption and the true value of a reliable, local supply chain offering short lead times and better quality. It is a timely, unique platform for UK manufacturers to source or develop a robust, localised network of UK partners."

Register for Subcon now for free at <https://bit.ly/3subconreg>



Advanced Engineering is back in 2021

The UK's leading annual gathering of engineering and supply chain professionals, Advanced Engineering, will return to the NEC, Birmingham on November 3 and 4, 2021. Here, the UK's talented and vast engineering industry will come together to generate business.

Bringing together thousands of attendees from OEMs, tier 1 manufacturers, and supply chain partners, Advanced Engineering is the UK's leading annual advanced engineering and manufacturing event, promoting supply chain business and technology transfer across a vast range of sectors.

The show, which attracted over 10,000 visitors in 2019, highlights all aspects of engineering, from materials and production, design, test and measurement and inspection from sectors including aerospace, automotive, composites, marine, medical and more.

Visit the exciting new Space and Satellite zone, supported by ADS and UK Space, with innovative feature exhibits and headline topics in the Aero and Space and elite Forum. For the first time, Advanced Engineering will be co-located with its sister show, Lab Innovations. A long-awaited opportunity, visitors can move between the two shows without even leaving the hall.

The show offers a diverse range of exhibitors the opportunity to showcase their expertise, and offers engineering professionals the opportunity to source new products and solutions, and hear from a wide range of speakers in the free-to-attend open forums. To confirm your place at the show visit advancedengineeringuk.com, and register with the code 7062.

We look forward to having you at the show in November.

ADVANCED ENGINEERING



3 & 4 November 2021, NEC Birmingham

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Sammet Consulting Birmingham	t: 07885 489 176 www.linkedin.com/stuart-mellor-sammet
Total UK Ltd West Yorkshire WF11 8JY	t: 01977 636 303 www.total.co.uk



75TH ANNIVERSARY GOLD MEDAL DINNER



FRIDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2021

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5 Course Dinner followed by the presentations

**2021 ISME GOLD MEDAL AWARD
TO PROFESSOR JIANGUO LIN, IMPERIAL COLLEGE
FOR A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE UK SHEET
METAL INDUSTRY.**

**FOLLOWED BY THE PRESENTATION OF THE DAVY UDAL AWARD
TO DAVE GILBERT, SKILLCRAFT PRODUCTS LTD. FOR SERVICES TO
THE SHEET METAL INDUSTRY**

Reception Drinks 7:00pm | Ticket Price £49

Tables of 8 or 10 available for single or company groups

Please reserve your places by emailing adriannicklin@btinternet.com

Please dress smartly for the occasion with gentleman lounge suits and ties

Overnight accommodation is available to guests, with discounted rooms
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