

impressions

the newsletter of Alcan Packaging Cramlington



A warm welcome to the 2006 edition of Impressions, which I hope you'll find interesting and pleasing.

As you'll see, a lot has happened since our last edition and even more to come during the next 12 months!

These are very exciting times for us with significant further investment under way to cope with the planned growth in the business over the next few years. Of course, in these times of doubt and change within the industry, that's excellent news for all who work here, as well as another expression of confidence and assurance about the certainty of our future for our customers and suppliers.

Such investment forms a key part of maintaining and improving our very high levels of service and quality, as well as enhancing our market leading position and our competitiveness on larger order sizes.

There's also fantastic news about our terrific success in the Alcan President's Awards - having done so well last year, winning four "Best in Class" awards, to surpass that with six this time is a marvellous achievement and a testament to the continued hard work and dedication from everyone involved at the site. I'd like to take this opportunity to personally recognise and thank everyone here for their involvement and participation. It will be harder to improve on this for next year, but we like a challenge!

Our excellent safety performance also warrants a special mention and to emphasise how important it is that this is maintained. Needless to say, it isn't being taken for granted - the quite spectacular picture of the new CO2 fire control equipment test illustrates that we're continuing to invest to minimise risk as much as possible.

Another important theme within Alcan Packaging is to ensure a good Work / Life balance, so that all of us properly and fully enjoy the benefits of our labours. With this in mind, it's good to congratulate those who have become parents for the first time during the last year and to see the range of outside interests pursued by members of our team.

In closing, a welcome to those who have joined us in the last year - I'm sure our culture is one you'll appreciate and thrive in.

Should you have any comments which might help us to improve the content of future editions of the newsletter, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

John Roberts

Managing Director

John.Roberts@alcan.com

2005 President's Awards Recognition

The annual President's awards are based on the ongoing results of each and every site within Alcan Packaging Europe and honour the best Pharma Flexibles and Glass Tubing production sites within the Business Unit, in a total of nine categories.

Following on from winning four "Best in Class" awards last year, we've done even better this time round being successful not only in five individual categories - Safety Performance, Cleanest Plant, Working Capital, On Time Delivery and Scrap Performance - but also maintaining the accolade of 'Best Overall Performance'.

Lionel Lob, President of Pharmaceutical Packaging Europe, was again most impressed with our results and remarked: "Cramlington has once again shown the highest level of performance and so congratulations to the whole site team for this great achievement. Consistency like this is key for meeting customer expectations and for building future success."

John Roberts, APC Managing Director, thanked Lionel and commented "We feel that receiving these awards is a true reflection of the dedication of the AP Cramlington workforce and our determination to maintain the highest standards.

"They demonstrate our strength in depth, our understanding of our market and serve to reinforce the confidence invested in us by our customers. We're continuing to reap the rewards of the commitment and hard work done by everyone within the business and so my thanks go to all staff."

"Best Overall Performance" tells its own story and is something of which we can be truly proud of, placing Cramlington at the very top of our peer group - but we know we face strong competition from our sisters, who will be looking to challenge us for the 2006 awards. So we have no intention of becoming complacent and hope to do even better next year!



Above: Best Safety Performance.

Below: Best Overall Performance.



Left: The team standing proudly with all awards received.

SPOTLIGHT ON: NEW INVESTMENT

In previous issues, we've focussed on a different operational area of the company to provide staff and customers alike with a real feel for what goes on in different departments on a daily basis.

However, this time we'd like to tell you about the latest plans for the site as a whole, as the end of this year actually signals a new beginning in the successful evolution of Alcan Packaging Cramlington.

We are delighted to announce that the start of 2007 will see the completion of both the commissioning of a new printing press and an extension to the factory, taken together representing the largest ever investment in our history. Construction firm ROK have already started work and are making swift progress, having already laid the foundations on the 120 square metre addition, so it's all systems go!

Managing Director John Roberts said: "The extension reflects a period of solid market growth for Alcan Packaging Cramlington and so we recognised the need to expand to meet the growing

needs of our customers. There will be many benefits - on a basic level, helping to improve productivity and adding capacity but the broader picture encompasses even further environmental, health and safety improvements and a more comfortable working environment for our people."

The 30% increase in floor space will not only create extra space for new equipment but will also mean that areas within Production can be better positioned, allowing them to work more effectively.

Manufacturing Director Ken Foy said: "The extension means that we will be able to move the Packing facility into an area all of its own. It has previously been based adjacent to the Slitting department, which didn't allow easy segregation of wood, for example from pallets, from product. We will now be able to achieve this, along with a much improved work flow."

Coupled with the new expansion, technological advances are also being made with the arrival of a new print machine.

Ken continued: "As the new print machine comes from the same manufacturer as our existing 6-colour press, it's fully compatible so allows some design inter-changeability and thus greater production flexibility. In line with the Alcan Group EHS First requirements, a lot of effort has gone into designing

out many of the traditional risk areas associated with a machine of this type. An example of this is the consideration given to creating safe access to all operational areas, thereby limiting the need for stretching and climbing".

The new machine will also be the first on site to use thermal oil, rather than gas, as a heat source for drying ink. Use of this method will give us greater control of temperatures and improve the efficiency of our pollution control system. In due course, we will also be converting our existing machines to the same system to gain those advantages there as well.

We'll be reporting on the changes in the next Alcan newsletter so you'll be able to see more of the benefits of the project. Watch this space (or should that be spotlight?)!



The factory extension is well on its way to be completed.

CO2 System Installed

Reducing risk to protect the interests of our stakeholders is a key objective for Alcan Packaging. With this in mind, a CO2 fire suppression system has recently been fitted to the six colour CMR press, supplementing the conventional water sprinkler system already installed on the machine. The new system is both manual and automatic release, having three break glass activation points along the machine, as well as having seven flame detectors fitted to look at the high risk areas around the ink trolleys.

Following the installation, a full discharge test was carried out on Monday 27th February to prove the systems performance. As can be seen from the picture, it looked quite spectacular!

When the system is activated, either manually or automatically, the following discharge sequence begins:-

1. Audible and visual alarm for 30 seconds, during which time:-
 - ◆ internal house alarms will sound and evacuation will begin (operators can comfortably reach a production area fire door from the upper gantry in 30 seconds)
 - ◆ the machine emergency stop circuit is automatically triggered, shutting down power to the whole press
 - ◆ a signal is sent to the alarm monitoring station who will contact the fire brigade
 - ◆ dampers will close in the supply and extraction duct work to contain the fire in the press
 - ◆ dampers in the oxidiser central duct will automatically divert to atmosphere



The CO2 system in action.

- ◆ the site gas valve will close
 - ◆ fire shutter doors will be closed between all production departments
2. On completion of the time delay:-
 - ◆ the system control solenoid will release the CO2 from all points on the machine
 - ◆ complete discharge lasts around 60 seconds
 - ◆ once the release has started, it cannot be stopped

After the discharge test, the area around the press was checked using an air quality monitor to ensure the normal 20.9% oxygen content was present before allowing personnel back into the area. After a visual check, the machine was able to be powered up and once all e-stop alarms were cleared, returned to the operators for production.



The Fire Triangle.

CO2 (carbon dioxide) acts as an effective clean fire suppressant by removing the oxygen surrounding a fire without leaving water or residues like foam or powder. Removing any element of the fire triangle will extinguish the fire.

Graeme Cuthbertson, Engineering Manager, said: "This installation brings the machine into line with the requirements of Alcan Group EHS First Policy and ensures that, should there be an incident, it would be very quickly controlled limiting any damage to a minimum."

EHS comes FIRST at Alcan

Alcan's EHS vision: *"To be a recognised leader of environment, health and safety excellence in everything we do and everywhere we operate."*

Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) has never had as high a profile within Alcan Packaging Cramlington as it does today. Thanks to a lot of hard work by many people, we are making this site an ever more environmentally friendly, healthy and safe place to work.

Globally, Alcan recognises that it has a vital role to play in reducing the environmental impact of its operations, conserving natural resources and ensuring healthy and safe communities and workplaces. Our vision to be recognised as a world leader in EHS excellence builds upon our company values, our expectations of our employees and is realised through the Alcan Integrated Management System (AIMS).

Initially launched in 2003, EHS FIRST is a set of common standards, procedures and, most importantly, a mindset for achieving excellence in Alcan's performance - for the benefit of its employees and the communities in which it operates. EHS FIRST represents a commitment from each Alcan employee - and from all levels of the organisation - to continuously improve through increased awareness, knowledge sharing and by applying best practices.

The EHS FIRST system links the corner stones of EHS excellence:

- 1) Management commitment and leadership
- 2) Line ownership
- 3) Meaningful employee involvement
- 4) Effective two-way communication

However, EHS FIRST is more than just a management system - it also promotes a proactive attitude and an acceptance of responsibility and accountability. It demands willingness to change, and a commitment to do the right thing.

EHS FIRST incorporates ISO14001, a globally recognised environmental standard and OHSAS18001, an international occupational health and safety certification. It also ensures that we comply with and, where possible, exceed increasingly strict government regulations around the world regarding transparency, responsibility and accountability.

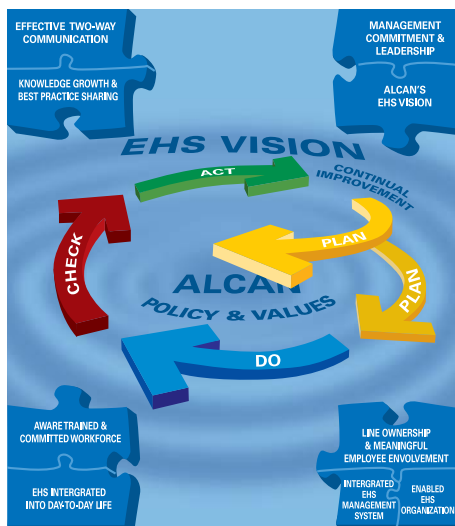
The positive benefits of such a culture are already starting to be seen, both globally within Alcan and, more specifically, on this site.

Last year, AP Cramlington won four Global Pharmaceutical Sector EHS awards, including the prestigious President's Award, granted to the plant that demonstrates leadership and superior performance in EHS systems and related activities including training, auditing, environmental stewardship, health and safety. In addition we were awarded the Best in Class and Most Improved safety performance within Alcan Packaging Pharma Flexibles. This year we have again won the Best in Class safety award. In addition, we're aiming to reach a milestone this coming November of three years without a lost-time accident. These achievements are great news for the company, our staff and our customers - as studies show that a good safety record is associated with good quality performance.

The pursuit of EHS excellence requires that we assess all aspects of our operations in search of "weak links" in our chain of operations, and only by addressing all aspects of our day-to-day activities can we ensure nothing is overlooked.

Some of our recent initiatives include:

- ◆ Mobile equipment/pedestrian segregation
- ◆ Risk reduction of fire and explosion caused by static electricity



- ◆ Machine safeguarding equipment upgrade
- ◆ Increased waste recycling, to help minimise the amount we send to landfill
- ◆ Investigations into energy reduction opportunities
- ◆ New software to help manage Material Safety Data Sheets for hazardous substances
- ◆ Introduction of monthly EHS refresher training
- ◆ Creating an EHS mindset among visitors (visitor EHS observation form)

Of course, the biggest EHS challenge this year is the construction of our new factory extension - we've spent a lot of time planning the EHS requirements of the new building, including the layout as well as safe production methods for both during the construction phase and when it will be in use. Now the work is underway, we're managing the project closely to ensure everyone continues to work in a safe manner, during what is bound to be a demanding time.

Since the position was established in 2002, as EHS Manager I've co-ordinated the EHS efforts at Cramlington, though the resulting progress could not have been achieved without the support and commitment of all employees. My role is to facilitate the development of the right culture within the company, but ultimately each individual needs to be responsible for the health and safety of themselves and their colleagues.

As we continue on our journey of EHS excellence, we have to re-assess where we are and where we want to be in the future. We cannot afford to stand still, and using continuous improvement techniques we'll strive to build on the good work done so far and make sure that AP Cramlington does its bit to help ensure Alcan worldwide achieves its EHS goals.

Richard Sewell,
EHS Manager.



Richard Sewell,
EHS Manager.

New GMP Training Tool

Given our specialisation in supply to the pharmaceutical industry, clearly it's very important that everyone in the business should have a thorough appreciation of the manufacturing principles that are operated by our customers and why these are used to ensure their products are made properly and safely.

Whilst we previously arranged large-scale sessions to cover a relatively large number of people, AP Cramlington has now developed its own tool to enhance our GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) training capability.

Employees can now use a computer at a time to suit them and work through a CD-ROM training package.

It's designed to give a good understanding of what is required in order to maintain GMP standards and explains why it is so important to maintain them.

Topics covered include: - Personal Hygiene, Production Hygiene, Material Handling and Procedures - and users are asked to complete a questionnaire in order to evaluate their understanding of the training once it has been completed.

"The advantages of this are the flexibility it gives and the particular relevance to our own type of business" says HR Manager Peter Hyde, who produced the training package.

"We no longer have to organise large training sessions and can carry out refresher training in small groups or

even with individuals to fit in with shift requirements or take advantage of convenient time slots.

"In addition, the training uses material that is familiar to our own employees e.g. photographs, video clips and even forms which they use on a regular basis. Another big advantage is that it can easily be updated to adapt to any changes in the future."

A pilot of the training was tested earlier this year and, after some minor modifications suggested by the employees themselves, is available now for refresher training for all existing employees and induction training for new starters. We're now working on a similar package for EHS (Environment Health & Safety) induction training.

New Starters

Emma Stanley

Emma has joined our team in the role of full time Accounts Assistant and we wish her a warm welcome.

She has over 10 years experience working in finance and started out working part time as a purchase ledger assistant while she was at college, studying for her A levels.

Emma, 27, feels that her job will be a good experience. She said: "The role is varied and new to me, so is going to be a challenge. Alcan is a well known and respected company, and was able to offer me exactly what I was looking for - good job prospects and great training opportunities."

Emma's aspirations for the future are to further her studies and increase her financial knowledge so that she can adapt them to her role.

Rob Dunsire

Rob joined the company in May 2005 as a Business Development Manager, helping customers maximise their use of our services and working with pharma colleagues from our network of sister plants to help them interface with their UK customers. Father of two, Rob has over 20 years experience in pharmaceutical packaging and chose Alcan because of its enviable reputation. He said: "Alcan is a market leader; the job has not disappointed me. The team in Cramlington have been very supportive and I am proud to be a part of the company."

Rob's hobbies include writing and performing poetry. He's come a long way to his present position; his first job was during school days, potato picking on a farm at the tender age of 14!

Carole Kelly

Carole has joined us as an Internal Sales Co-ordinator and her responsibilities involve day to day customer services administration. Carole, 35, began working here after her previous company announced it was closing down. A temporary position became available when two other members of the Customer Services team were on maternity leave and this developed into a full-time permanent position when the new mothers decided to come back on a part-time basis.

Carole has nearly 20 years experience in customer service and her qualifications include a BTEC Business in Finance. Already a respected member of our team, she wants to develop her knowledge of our business further so as to help customers even more effectively.



Carole Kelly,
Internal Sales Co-ordinator.

Births

Ian Wales

Technical Manager, Ian Wales, has a one year old daughter called Charlotte. She was born on the 7th May 2005, weighing eight pounds six ounces.

Hayley Dunn

Sales Co-ordinator, Hayley Dunn, has a 14 month old daughter called Alana. She was born on the 29th March 2005 weighing seven pounds.

She has just had her second girl and has named her Georgia. She was born on 10th April 2006, weighing seven pounds 13 ounces.

She and husband Jeff are delighted - but exhausted!

Alex and Paul Sullivan

Sales Co-ordinator Alex Sullivan and her husband Paul, who is a Mac Operator with us, have a son, Joseph. He weighed six pounds 13 ounces at birth and is now 15 months old.

Steven Pringle

Steven Pringle, a Planner with us, became a father last November. His daughter Jennifer was born on the 18th of the month, weighing six pounds 13 ounces.

Congratulations to all!

Guardlid® Success

Towards the end of last year, the rules relating to packaging for certain pharmaceutical products (Paracetamol, Aspirin and Iron) were changed, requiring that specified child resistant standards should be met.

This meant that traditional lacquered push through blister foil would no longer be acceptable, potentially giving our customers a headache!

They asked us for a solution that could use their existing equipment, tooling and line conditions, thereby avoiding what could have been high capital expenditure for modifications or increased running costs.

The technical team at Alcan Packaging came up with the perfect answer - Guardlid®. This combines the customary 20 micron hard temper blister foil with a lamination to a thin PVC film, thereby making it more difficult for children to push through. Keeping the same thickness of aluminium, the barrier properties of the package are preserved, so avoiding



Guardlid® is a success.

the potential need to conduct expensive stability testing. The cosmetic appearance of the blister was also maintained which, bearing in mind that these are over the counter products, is an important consideration.

Unlike some other materials, Guardlid® has been fully tested and approved to the new standards for both children and adults.

Both existing and new customers have been delighted with the success and simplicity of the solution - keep an eye open for the new packages on the shelves of pharmacies and supermarkets!

Packing a Punch

Alcan Cramlington hardly needs worry about security when it has an employee like Yvonne O'Malley, its very own kickboxing champion!

Yvonne, who works in the Finance department and has responsibility for ensuring customers pay their bills on time, started Kung Fu Kickboxing two and a half years ago to keep fit and recently passed her latest exam. She's now only one stage away from achieving black belt status.



Yvonne O'Malley in kickboxing action.

She believes her hobby benefits her work performance as well as her confidence. Yvonne, who started at Alcan in 2001, said: "You are taught to have respect for, and tolerance of, others. Martial Arts also stimulate mental growth which affects your attitude, behaviour and character."

Mother of two Yvonne, would definitely recommend kickboxing, remarking: "Co-ordination and concentration techniques are enhanced but, most of all, it is a great way to keep fit and a great stress buster too!"

It isn't just a hobby for her though; she has already used her skills in a real life situation, fending off an unwelcome physical approach from a man whilst she was having a drink in a local bar.

She also has a few more skills under her red / black belt, qualifying as a First Aider in 1992, when she was running her own Pre-School Nursery.

Yvonne, 42, trains at East Meets West Martial Arts Group in Ashington. Her goal is to gain black belt accreditation, and when she does, work mates (and debtors!) would be well advised not to make her angry!