



# TAKING STOCK

AN UPDATE FROM THE ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTORS' ASSOCIATION

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## Distributors must work closely with manufacturers to prosper

President highlights importance of relationship between wholesalers and manufacturers, and says each must appreciate the other's role



Electrical wholesalers that together wield about £3 billion of purchasing power gathered at the InterContinental Hotel in Park Lane, London for the EDA's Annual Awards Dinner – where they were joined by representatives from all 65 of the Association's affiliated manufacturers.

According to EDA President Tom Jones, the relationship between wholesalers and manufacturers symbolised by this gathering is essential: 'I believe that wholesalers and manufacturers must increase their appreciation for each other. There is a tendency for us to take each other for granted.'

'Wholesalers are the extended sales arm of our manufacturer partners, providing an unparalleled level of time face to face with customers

at a local level. For us to grow our businesses, we need to be out selling – together whenever possible.

'We must also establish better channels of communication between the EDA and manufacturers, so that there is understanding of each others' challenges and concerns.' For example, he said, faster product introductions and shorter life cycles lead to products becoming obsolete more rapidly than before.

As an example of better communications, Jones cited the EDA's recent deal with the Lighting Industry Association (LIA). 'This agreement covers a wide range of shared member benefits and services, but is to help the wholesalers have confidence that in a world of counterfeit grey market imports, we are clear

that what we sell is compliant and performs to its claims.' (For more about the agreement, turn to page 10.)

Later in the evening, branch managers who were deemed to have done the most to help their staff progress in their branches – either by becoming an apprentice through EDA Apprenticeships Plus, or by taking product knowledge modules from MOL, the EDA's training provider – were presented with their trophies. (Turn to page 2 for all the details.)

The learners who took the product knowledge modules or became EDA apprentices received their own trophies the next day at a lunch held at the Shangri-La Hotel on the 34th floor of the Shard skyscraper in London. (For more, turn to page 4.)

## Manufacturing trio sign up as affiliates

Three manufacturers have joined the EDA in the first quarter of 2016.

The first, BT Cables, has been making copper cable products at its factory in Manchester for 120 years. Its portfolio includes cables for telecommunications, BMS, data, security, fire resistance and detection, industrial automation and optical fibre cables.

The other new affiliate manufacturers are CK tools and Contactum. For over 100 years, CK Tools has made hand tools for trade professionals. CK Tools is part of Carl Kammerling International.

Contactum has rejoined the EDA this year as part of its strategy to expand in the UK. Contactum is one of the few remaining UK manufacturers of wiring accessories and circuit protection products.

We urge EDA wholesalers to support our affiliated members.



### FROM THE BOARDROOM

It was great to see more than 560 of you at our recent Annual Awards Dinner which took place in London on 10 March. The EDA's board meeting and AGM took place earlier in the day and I am pleased to report that the board is working hard on your behalf.

As well as our focus on education and training, a key commitment is to help EDA members embrace the technologies required to facilitate multi-channel distribution and the exciting opportunities that this brings. There will, of course, be challenges. Wholesalers and manufacturers will have to work together to digitise many aspects of their businesses.

Working together is my consistent message to you. I urge you to

continue to build solid relationships with your manufacturers' local external sales people. A joint sales call to customers is a sure way to improve all aspects of the business relationship. Working together to win projects and orders is guaranteed to translate into improved turnover and margin for all.

**Tom Jones**  
EDA President





In his speech to the EDA Annual Dinner, President Tom Jones addressed the changing market for distributors and the Association's strategy for the future

## Look to the future

As electrical distributors and manufacturers gathered in London to celebrate the achievements of managers and learners who have invested time and effort in training, President Tom Jones set out the challenges that they, and the rest of the sector are likely to face in the coming years. The first is the rapidly increasing digitisation of almost everything –

the Internet of Things, factory automation devices and systems, security issues and the popularity of buying on the internet.

### A fast-changing world

'Together we are faced with new multi-channel opportunities and also threats. Working together will safeguard our longstanding relationships and ensure that, together, we remain the principal route to market and strong in the face of new and unwanted entrants.

'Our staff will need training on these smart, connected products and contractors will have to be upskilled to install them as the future of electrical and digital building infrastructures grows.

'It would be reasonable to describe the EDA as being behind the curve on this subject, but we no longer want to be in that position. We intend to get ahead of the curve to help galvanise our wholesale members and affiliate manufacturers into working together on projects that will assure a joint route to market for the decades ahead.'

### Strategic thinking

With the changes, challenges and opportunities in the industry, the Board decided last July that it would dedicate a day to the future strategy of the EDA.

It appointed consultant Liz Male to facilitate the strategy day. Liz Male specialises in UK construction, property and sustainability, and her client list includes TrustMark and the National Energy Foundation.

'This strategy meeting,' said Jones, 'proved to be incredibly productive, pulling together all our views and creating a positive road map for the future of the EDA.'

The participants studied the buy-

ing habits of customers using mobile technologies. Online ordering has grown globally by 20 per cent in the past three years. Not only that, but the use of portable devices has grown 34 per cent over the past three years. They are now being used more than desktop computers because people are more inclined to order on the move.

'I do believe that the relationships with our customers are key and that localised distribution through the wholesale channel is paramount. However, wholesalers must provide electronic ways for their customers to order their goods, provide information... and sell.'

### Multi-channel survey

One result of the strategy day is that EDA members will be surveyed about their views on multi-channel distribution, whether they are ready to embrace it and their aspirations for the future.

'After this,' said Jones, 'we'll need our wholesalers' support to move our initiatives forward. We also plan to engage with our affiliate manufacturers and BEAMA to be clear about how the EDA can galvanise, maintain and improve the principal route to market through the wholesaler distribution channel using digital platforms.

'Building on the example of our agreement with the LIA and our ongoing dialogue with BEAMA, it is very much on our agenda to work more closely and seek advice from our partner associations: SELECT, BESA, BCA and the ACI.'

### The near future

The EDA has set out some vital milestones for itself and its wholesaler and affiliated members over the next few years.



They are: the successful completion of the trailblazer EDA apprenticeship; digitisation of the training enquiry and application process; and creation of an online academy for all aspects of training, including a database of manufacturers training for wholesalers.



## MOL PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE MANAGERS WINNERS

Colin Gordon, head of MOL (front row, second from left) helped Tom Jones present trophies to the managers who have invested the most in training through Product Knowledge Modules.

Front row, left to right: **Andy Hutchinson**, commercial manager, Lamps the Electrical Wholesaler, Long Crenndon branch, Bucks, part of the AWEBB buying group; **Bill Ennis**, director Rifina, Tewksbury, Gloucestershire, part of the ANEW buying group; **David Brown**, Circuit Supply, Waterlooville, part of the FEGIME buying group; and **Jon Madge**, Edmundson Electrical, Coventry.

Back row, left to right: **Nigel Bithell**, UK Electric, Warrington, representing other independent wholesalers; **Mark Rasbury**, group manager, City Electrical Factors, South Wales and Jersey; **Andrew Allen**, Newey & Eyre, Cambridge, part of Rexel UK.

## EDA APPRENTICESHIP MANAGERS WINNERS



John Henry, MD of EDA Apprenticeships Plus (second from left), with the winners of the apprenticeships managers awards. From left to right: **Julian Williams**, Devondale, Barnstaple, part of the ANEW buying group; **Miriam Booth**, UK Spares, Bristol, representing other independents; and **Chris Mizen**, Edmundson Electrical, Peterborough. The fourth winner was **David Philpott**, Electric Centre, Aberdeen, part of Edmundson Electrical.



## Dinner raises over £5,400 for charity



The EDA has long supported the Electrical Industries Charity and it has been the custom for many decades for the Association to hold a raffle on its behalf at the Annual Awards Dinner. This year's prize was a Sonos Play 3 wireless hi-fi system. A delighted Chris Lugg of Lamps the Electrical Wholesaler (right) received his prize from Tessa Ogle, managing director of the charity, and EDA President Tom Jones handed over a cheque for the raffle proceeds – £5,455.







For the second year, EDA members gathered at the Shard in London to reward the efforts of a dozen learners and apprentices



## On top of the world

The day after the EDA's Annual Awards Dinner, 12 award-winning learners took the high-speed lift to the 34th floor of the Shard in London – the home of the Shangri-La Hotel – to attend the 2016 EDA Education & Training Awards lunch.

The crowd included EDA top brass and Ambassadors, the EDA's training partners, and various branch managers who work with the winners. Each learner was accompanied by a guest of his or her choice, such as friends or relatives who have been important to them in their education and careers, so they could share this significant moment with them.

Even though the Shangri-La is just half-way up the landmark skyscraper, the views across London Bridge station, Southwark Cathedral, the Thames, HMS Belfast, Tower Bridge, St Pauls and the entire northern sweep of London are stupendous, and the learners were – for the second year in succession – blessed with superb weather to enjoy the view.

After pre-lunch drinks and networking, there was lunch and the awards presentation. EDA Director Margaret Fitzsimons singled out the EDA's training partners, EDA Apprenticeships Plus and MOL, for special thanks, and each of

the young learners, was introduced by their branch manager or a senior member of staff from their company.

EDA President Tom Jones congratulated the learners on their commitment to self-improvement, urging them to continue their hard work – and develop themselves through life-long learning. He said: 'It's important to upskill, and the youngsters here today in this great building are to be justly rewarded. Lifelong learning will be a crucial part of their career progression.'

Reach for the highest pinnacle you can,' he told them, 'you are the stars of tomorrow.'

## APPRENTICESHIP AWARD WINNERS

The five apprentice learners who most impressed their assessors and managers

“**Doing my apprenticeship was the best thing I ever did**”



**Ronnie Flockhart**  
Edmundson Electrical, Greenwich

'I had to learn what the business is all about – the trade counter, the warehouse... It's been good for my career. My regional director said there's so much opportunity out there and you can reach any goal you want to. It's been a great day, especially as I've never been to the Shard before.'



**James Wakefield**  
Newey & Eyre, Kings Lynn

James says of his apprenticeship: 'It was a prerequisite for getting the job really. The beginning was difficult because my assessors kept changing. There was no continuity. But all this improved greatly when EDA Apprenticeships Plus came on board. It was fine after that.'

**Tomas Forecast**  
Edmundson Electrical, Edmonton

Tomas couldn't be at the Shard on the day, but we called him for a comment. He said: 'I started with Edmundsons about two years ago, following college and a gap year. I'd seen information about EDA Apprenticeships on the web so asked my branch manager if I could take part. 'I started in June 2014, and I've now worked in every area of the branch. Doing my apprenticeship was the best thing I ever did. I should have done it much sooner.'

**Luke Shawsmith**  
Medlocks, Essex



It was Luke's own idea to become an EDA Apprentice. He is clear: 'For me, it was the best way forward, and I loved it – both the work and the apprentice side of things. It's been really good for me and I've worked all over the branch; the office, the trade counter and the warehouse. I want to progress as far as I can.'



**Jack Shortridge**  
Devondale, Barnstable

'I was an electrician, but decided to go into electrical wholesaling. At Devondale, my manager signed me up for the EDA Apprentice scheme. To start with, I found it quite hard, but now I enjoy it and have done well. I'm in telesales, but I've also worked on the trade counter and in the warehouse.'

## PRODUCT KNOWLEDGE AWARD WINNERS

There were seven awards for learners who gained highest grades in seven EDA groups



**ANEW**  
**Neil Walkingshaw**  
BEMCO, Edinburgh

Neil's experience with the MOL Product Knowledge Modules started when he was looking online to improve himself. He asked if he might take them. 'I found them quite difficult,' he said, 'I took all 10 over two to three years and it turned out to be a bigger undertaking than I'd realised. I got two distinctions, four credits and four passes. It's certainly given me a lot more knowledge – and of course, I'd love to be a branch manager. And it's been brilliant today!'

'I progressed within Crossfold and enjoyed it, and now the company's also given me some proper training – the MOL Product Modules. I'd like to do all 10. Even with just three, I've definitely found that my product knowledge is much better – though they weren't easy to do, especially as we've had a baby recently! But it's 100 per cent good for my career – how could it not be?'

“**I've definitely found that my product knowledge is much better**”



**AWEBB**  
**Robert Hensley**  
Crossfold, London



**CEF**  
**Amy Long**  
CEF, Bangor, Ireland

'I took Fundamentals of Electricity and Lamps & Lighting, and I got distinctions in both. They were really, really good. I've learned a lot and am now much more confident with my job, selling and dealing with customers; it really helps my progression. I'm here with my dad today – he's my branch manager. I'll take his job one day, though he doesn't know it yet!'



**Edmundson Electrical**  
**Michael Chandler**  
Edmundson Electrical, Park Royal

Michael took five modules – Switchgear & Distribution, Renewable Energy Systems, Fundamentals of Electricity, Lamps & Lighting and Cable Management, and got distinctions in them all. 'I got put onto a learning development programme. I wanted to exceed expectations. I thoroughly enjoyed the modules and it's the technical aspects I thrive on, so it's been great. I'm currently an external account manager at Park Royal, but to become a branch manager is obviously my plan.'



**Fegime**  
**Alexander Marengi**  
Circuit Supply, Waterlooville

Alexander was introduced to the product knowledge modules by Fegime CEO Alan Reynolds, who said: 'Alexander is now an important member of the team, and I'm proud of him.' Alexander took three product modules and gained a distinction. He's also worked in all areas of the Waterlooville (near Portsmouth) branch.

**Rexel UK**  
**Daniel Haggerty**  
Wilts, Trowbridge



Daniel has five distinctions, and explained that he's still studying some product knowledge modules. 'Taking them,' he said, 'will definitely help my career progression – and already are doing so, especially in my current role in which I have to have a degree of product knowledge when processing tenders.'



**Other independents**  
**Alex Benwell**  
Stearn Electric, Bristol

'I did five modules, including Fundamentals of Electricity, Lamps & Lighting, Health & Safety and Heating & Ventilation. The product modules have been good for my career and there are plenty more to do. My goal is to manage one of Stearn's businesses. And today has been great, really special and beyond what I would have expected!'

“**Taking the modules will help my career progression**”



# Ashworth and Poole join the Board

Board members have more than half a century of experience in the sector between them



At its AGM on 10 March, the EDA announced two new appointments to the board after the resignation of two of its members. It also appointed Simon Barkes as Vice-President to succeed Tom Jones when he completes his two-year term in March 2017.

Having completed successful two-year terms, **Geoff Kerly** of Kew Electrical (*above right*) and **Terry Yallop** of CEF (*below right*) resigned from the board to concentrate on activities in Fegime and CEF respectively. EDA President Tom Jones thanked them for their input and commitment, in particular their success in increasing their organisations' engagement in the activities of the Association.

Two new appointments were made: **Chris Ashworth**, general manager for the Hinckley region at CEF (*above left*); and **Dan Poole**, director of Phase Electrical Distributors Ltd, which is also a member of the Fegime Buying Group (*below left*).

Ashworth brings 30 years of electrical wholesaling experience to the table. After a short flirtation with electrical contracting, he joined the Redditch branch of CEF in 1986 as a van driver and has been with the company ever since. He is currently general manager of CEF's Hinckley region, which comprises 76 branches. Also, he has spent time in Germany managing a similar sized business.

Ashworth is no stranger to the EDA – he has been an EDA Ambassador since November 2014, helping the EDA spread the training message throughout the industry. He is also an active member of the EDA Trade Business Services Apprenticeship Trailblazer, which is working to create a standard for the industry.

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Chris Ashworth is married with two children and enjoys watching and trying to play most sports.

Dan Poole joined the wholesaling sector 21 years ago as a van driver and after seven years teamed up with three colleagues to create Phase Electrical based in Hastings in 2002. Fourteen years later, Phase has a network of six branches and a turnover of £15 million. Phase joined the Fegime buying group five years ago. Dan is an active member of the Fegime UK Board and was chairman last year. Poole says: 'I hope that my involvement with the EDA Board will help to make a positive difference for the wholesaler members of the Association and the affiliate members too.'

Poole and his partner of five years, Hayley, have five children between them ranging from 11 to 22. He enjoys all sports and in particular likes a round of golf, watching rugby and cheering on Crystal Palace.

The other members of the EDA Board are:

- Simon Barkes, Vice-President, BEMCO
- Alan Dunnet, Holland House Electrical Co Ltd
- Margaret Fitzsimons, EDA Director
- Chris Gibson, Rexel UK
- Andrew Johnson, Lincs Electrical Wholesalers Ltd
- Tom Jones, President and Chairman, Lockwell Electrical
- Bob Robertson, R&B Star (Electrical Wholesalers) Ltd
- David Schofield, Steam Electric Co Ltd and
- Ray Smith Edmundson Electrical Ltd.



Did you go to the EDA Annual Dinner this year? Here's a glimpse of how things were done in the 1950s

Things were different 60 years ago. When the Electrical Wholesalers Federation – and others from the sector – gathered at the Dorchester hotel in London more than half a century ago, it was a differential time.

The tone of *The Electrical Wholesaler's* report on the Annual Dinner reflected the attitudes of the day, setting out the evening's events in great detail and hanging on every word of each of the guests.

'The first toast of the evening was the Loyal Toast, proposed by the President, and the National Anthem was ably rendered by the assembled gathering,' the *Wholesaler* declared, adding some comments on the sartorial elegance of the ladies present: 'It was delight to see amongst the severe black dinner jackets of the diners the attractive evening gowns of Mrs SH Barlow and Miss J Dent, the two lady Members.'

The principal toast of the evening, that of the Federation, was proposed by Norman Collins, deputy chairman of Associated Television – one of the pioneers of independent television in the UK. 'He understood that a wholesaler was someone who sold in large quantities either what the retailer did not want or what the Government made it impossible for people to buy – in fact, someone who lived on an extra margin of discount.'

The response of EWF President RE Silvey came in for special attention: 'The President, RE Silvey, was received enthusiastically when he rose to respond to the Toast. He felt it was a pleasure and a privilege to have the honour of responding to a Toast so wittily, graciously and entertainingly proposed.'

'After the interval, TD Woods, Vice-President of the Federation, proposed the toast to "Our Guests".' 'The evening ended with entertainment, which was very well received. Joan Turner again appeared on the bill, and she was as popular as before, particularly with her singing of straight songs, and she was brought back by the applause for an encore.'

'The other act, Daisy May assisted by Saveen with his dogs, was also warmly received.'

In spite of all the changes of the past 60 years, one thing has remained constant, according to the final paragraphs of the *Wholesaler's* report: 'This concluded the festivities for some, but not all, of the Members, and their guests. Some found various parties which continued until the early hours.'

## Are you ready to take the dragon boat challenge?

The Electrical Industries Charity is hosting its first dragon boat event at Peterborough rowing lake on Saturday 6 August.

The charity is urging companies in the electrical sector to sign up for what promises to be an unforgettable experience for participants and spectators.

The dragon boat event will bring together industry professionals in a picturesque location to compete

against their industry rivals and will offer plenty of entertainment for all the family. It will also be a great opportunity to build business relationships with fellow electrical industry professionals.

Dragon boat racing is one of the fastest-growing water activities in the UK and, by signing up for the event, teams are guaranteed an unforgettable experience – and all for just £1,000, which includes a



donation of £300 to the Electrical Industries Charity.

Managing director Tessa Ogle said: 'This is our first dragon boat event that will bring together a range of companies from our industry for a fun-filled day of friendly rivalry.'

'It is a fantastic way to re-ignite your team spirit and enjoy the fastest-growing water activity with your friends, family and colleagues.'

● Does your team have what it takes to line up against its industry rivals and be a winner? Sign up and find out. Contact Stacey Burrows at [stacey.burrows@electricalcharity.org](mailto:stacey.burrows@electricalcharity.org) or visit [www.electricalcharity.org](http://www.electricalcharity.org) for more information.



## Forty years of organising the EDA Annual Dinner

To gasps of astonishment, Wendy Alders, director of society events at the InterContinental Park Lane bounded onto the stage to receive a small gift from the Association in recognition of the fact that she has been involved with organising events for the EDA for 40 years.

All 560 guests furiously did mental calculations and came to the conclusion that Wendy must have worked on her first Annual Dinner at the age of five.

Wendy recalled several years of the then Electrical Wholesalers Federation dinners taking place with entertainment from the Derek Pyke Orchestra and the likes of Roger de Courcy and Nookie Bear. Although there has been a change of name of the Association and the choice of entertainment for the evening, one thing that has not changed are the packed bars well into the early hours after dinner.

Margaret Fitzsimons said: 'When

organising a big event like the EDA Annual Awards Dinner it is enormously reassuring to work alongside someone who understands the Association and its guests and who works so hard to get everything right year after year. We have been so lucky to have had Wendy looking after us for such a long time and appreciate the fact that she will do everything in her power to make the evening the best possible. Thank you Wendy.'

## DIARY DATES FOR EDA MEMBERS

**19 May**  
**Regional Business Forum**  
This half-day seminar will combine the EDA's key priorities – networking and education. It will be held at the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Glasgow.  
Call Rosanna Lorrison on 020 3141 7353

**19 May**  
**EDA Sportsman's Dinner**  
This invitation-only event is organised by the Scottish Section and takes place at the Glynhill Hotel, Renfrew, Glasgow.  
Call Monica Gray on 0141 776 8834

**2-4 June**  
**61st Convention of the EUEW**  
For EDA members that are committed to growing their businesses in Europe, this event is not to be missed. The 2016 Convention will take place in Sardinia, hosted by the Italian members of the European Union of Electrical Wholesalers.  
Call Margaret Fitzsimons on 020 3141 7350

**16 June**  
**Regional Business Forum**  
A half-day seminar to spread the EDA message throughout the membership and provide opportunities for business networking. At the Aspire Conference Centre in central Leeds.  
Call Rosanna Lorrison on 020 3141 7353

**7 July**  
**EDA Summer Event**  
After the success of the 2015 cruise, this hugely popular, invitation-only event is once again a Thames trip on the *Dixie Queen*.  
Call Rosanna Lorrison on 020 3141 7353

**15 September**  
**Regional Business Forum**  
This is a great way to meet key suppliers and industry peers in a friendly and professional atmosphere. Forums are only open to EDA members and affiliated members, and are free of charge. At The Lighting Industry Association Laboratory in Telford.  
Call Rosanna Lorrison on 020 3141 7353





## One more sensor means fewer false alarms

This multi-sensor fire alarm from **Aico**, the Ei2110e, contains optical and heat sensors. Between them they can detect all fire types.

The Ei2110e uses these dual sensors to constantly monitor smoke and heat, sending and receiving information through its intelligent detection software. It is this sensor information that alters the alarm's sensitivity and trigger points, automatically providing the best response to all fire types. It also reduces potential false alarms.

Aico says this fire alarm can be positioned anywhere in a home where there should be a smoke alarm – so it is easy to specify.

The company's AudioLINK technology has also been built into this alarm, so a smartphone or tablet app can extract real-time data from the device using the sounder. This creates an alarm status report. Information is generated in real time, so if there is an issue, it can be dealt with instantly.

For wireless interconnection, add a Radio-LINK+ module – an Ei100MRF – to each alarm and accessory.

[www.aico.co.uk](http://www.aico.co.uk)



## LED 'Bright Stik' for every socket and pocket

These are revolutionary times for the lighting industry. Low-cost LED lamps appeared on the market with the promise to cut people's home power consumption without breaking the bank. Many are disappointing.

However, the new LED Bright Stik stands out, according to manufacturer **GE**.

Fittings come in many shapes and sizes and so should lamps, the company believes. Everyone has seen fittings with unsuitable light sources, so, with this in mind, GE designed its cylindrical LED Bright Stik to fit more sockets than ordinary lamps.

GE says Bright Stik is more cost effective than many lamps on the market, using 80 per cent less energy than an incandescent and 20 per cent less energy than a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL). By replacing an incandescent lamp, a user can save as much as 750kWh.

The Bright Stik emits warm, white light at full brightness instantly. It provides 760 lumens, almost as much as a 60W incandescent, and comes in two colour options. Beam angle is 240 degrees.

The light source contains no mercury and can be disposed of more easily than a CFL.

[www.gelighting.com](http://www.gelighting.com)



## Downsize downlighting costs with LED PL-C lamps

**Philips** says the CorePro LED PL-C is the first PL-C lamp replacement for downlighters that cuts energy use by 60 per cent, lasts three times longer than conventional fluorescent lamps (30,000 hours) and has a robust, shatterproof plastic housing.

It is a retrofit lamp that is simple to install, is suitable for fittings with electromagnetic or high-frequency ballasts, and needs little maintenance and servicing.

Among the many features of the LED PL-C lamp are its high energy efficiency (over 60 per cent more efficient than fluorescent PL-C lamps), saving on energy costs; and its life of up to 30,000 hours (compared with 10,000 hours for fluores-

## Efficient LED lighting meets latest ECA updates



Lighting firm **Dextra Group** says that, with the latest round of Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) updates, luminaire efficiency must now exceed 82 lumens per watt to qualify for the financial support offered under the scheme. These demanding standards, the firm points out, now render fluorescent lighting all but excluded from the ECA scheme.

Fortunately, advances in LED technology ensure that manufacturers that embrace the latest products on the market – with their chips, drivers and optical materials – can manufacture luminaires that greatly exceed these standards. This will ensure that customers not only benefit from financial support under the ECA scheme, but can also achieve rapid return on their investment through reduced energy bills.

Dextra Group has invested heavily in surface-mount (SMT) machinery, so it can design and manufacture customised LED circuit boards as efficiently as possible.

With five SMT lines now installed, and the capacity to manufacture circuits containing up to 750,000 LEDs per day, the burgeoning demand for LED luminaires can be met as customers and government incentives demand ever increasing energy efficiency.

These modern light engines are being incorporated into luminaires such as the Rubix, which make it possible to design compliant office installations with luminaire spacings up to 3 x 3m, and luminaire wattages as low as 26W per luminaire. This means installations can achieve minimal energy consumption using the fewest possible luminaires.

<http://dextragroup.co.uk>



## Water heating training – online or in-branch

**Redring Xpelair Group's** online academy and in-branch training programme is for wholesalers who want to learn more about Redring range of instantaneous hot water systems.

The training covers subjects such as higher kW ratings, Beab approval, the importance of British manufacture and easy installation, using technology such as SmartFit2.

The online academy is delivered with construction industry e-learning provider Cortexa and comprises three 20-minute modules. These cover everything from the basics of water heating to the features of Redring's water-heating products.

The 40-minute in-branch training sessions give wholesalers tips on how to cross-sell shower units to contractors working on new or replacement shower installations, equipping them with the technical and product knowledge to recommend the most appropriate electric shower solution.

[www.rxgacademy.com](http://www.rxgacademy.com)

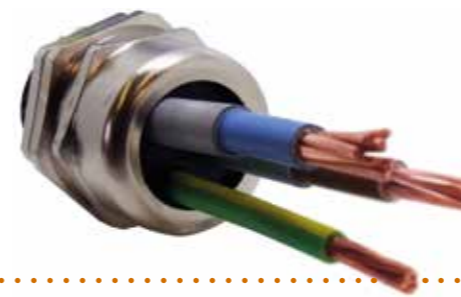
## Hot news on cable glands for consumer units

**SWA** has launched a range of special cable glands as new rules came into force aimed at preventing house fires caused by overheating consumer units.

Regulation 421.1.201 of BS7671 has been introduced because fire investigators reported increasing numbers of fires involving consumer units in plastic enclosures. The regulation, which came into force in January 2016, requires that replacement consumer units must be made of 'non-combustible' material. All cable entry points must have glands and seals to help contain fire.

SWA's new range of glands has specially designed inserts that are an effective seal against flames. Available in metal and nylon versions, it covers the full spectrum of applications, including meter tails, earth tails, and twin and earth cables.

[www.swaonline.co.uk](http://www.swaonline.co.uk)



## Amendment 3 is not just about consumer units

Regulation 421.1.201 in Amendment 3 to the Wiring Regulations is not just about non-combustible enclosures for consumer units. It requires non-combustible enclosures on 'similar switchgear assemblies' too, such as switchgear that is used for circuit protection in domestic households.

**Wylex** has introduced additions to its (BS7671: 2008) Amendment 3 range. As well as the NM range of consumer units, there is the range of meter cabinet consumer units (previously known as skeleton units) in non-combustible all-metal enclosures. These bespoke units are for use in high-rise and similar applications, where the electricity meter is inside a cabinet outside the dwelling and the consumer unit is in the same enclosure above the meter.

Also, there is a range of domestic switch fuse units in metal non-combustible enclosures. These are for large buildings that are being converted into several flats. They are for sub-main circuit-protection applications in 60, 80 and 100A ratings.

Wylex has also launched a range of accessories including intumescent, flame-retardant grommets, non-combustible blanks and mains tails glands. [www.electrium.co.uk](http://www.electrium.co.uk)



## Megaman launches online cost-of-ownership tool

**Megaman UK** has launched a simple-to-use online service to help homeowners, contractors, specifiers or anyone involved in lighting to calculate the potential savings that can be achieved when switching from standard light sources to the company's energy-saving LEDs.

The online tool calculates annual cost savings, payback and energy use in kW and indicates CO<sub>2</sub> emissions prevented. Different lamp types can be compared to show the savings involved in changing one room, two rooms or even a whole house, to LED lamps using a mixture of LED lamps.

The tool can also generate a series of results that can be downloaded immediately or saved for assessment at a later stage.

[www.megamanuk.com](http://www.megamanuk.com)

## Shedding light on LED downlight flicker

Flicker measurements are to be added to specification sheets on all downlights in the **Collingwood Lighting** Halers range to boost best practice in the industry and improve light quality.

Flicker from LEDs is like someone turning the light on and off very quickly – 100 times a second. This strobing can make for an unpleasant environment at best, and at worst, can cause headaches or dizziness.

The company has worked hard to ensure low,

almost non-existent flicker. Testing by independent test house Lux Tsi indicates that the flicker from Collingwood downlights has an index of 0.0024 and flicker at 0.33 per cent.

Collingwood Lighting's research and development manager Tony Allison said: 'We hope this will help buyers make more informed choices when deciding on the best quality and most comfortable lighting for their living and working environments.'

[www.collingwoodlighting.com](http://www.collingwoodlighting.com)





## Concerns about LED products bring EDA and LIA closer together

Fears about the quality of products using new lighting technology emphasise the need for clear communication throughout the supply chain

**The transition to LED technology has brought its challenges for both manufacturers and distributors**

Steve Davies LIA

The Lighting Industry Association and the Electrical Distributors' Association have announced a joint agreement to work together and share member benefits.

The move has been driven to a large extent by the popularity of light-emitting diodes. 'The transition to LED technology has brought its challenges for both manufacturers and distributors,' said Steve Davies, CEO of the LIA. 'By improving our ties with EDA we can help provide the information [electrical distributors] need through access to expert training. Furthermore, EDA members now have access to our new UKAS-accredited lighting laboratory.' (See story opposite).

The agreement covers services from training to social events, but should also improve supply chain links between manufacturers and distributors.

EDA President Tom Jones said: 'It is vital that the wholesaling channel

works with its upstream suppliers to ensure a successful flow of products to the market.

'There are many factors to take into account to achieve this success. One is open and clear communication between supply chain partners so that each understands the opportunities and challenges of the other. Another is training and education of wholesaling staff to understand new products and technologies and also recognise compliant and non-compliant products.

'At a time when new and unfamiliar LED products are appearing on the market, it is important to have the reassurance of LIA certification.'

He added: 'There has been a seismic shift – specifiers have been asking if products have been through the LIA-Verified scheme. Although there will always be someone who is after the cheapest products, the number of enlightened purchasers and contractors is growing.'

## Manufacturers support safety initiative



The drive to eliminate unsafe and non-compliant products across Europe has been bolstered by the launch of the Market Surveillance Support Initiative (MSSI) at the Frankfurt Light + Building exhibition (left).

MSSI operates at national level in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Poland and Spain. It is intended to inspire local market surveillance authorities to test more electrical equipment.

Although local laws differ, after potentially non-compliant products are identified, third party bodies will sample and test products. If products are found to be non-compliant, relevant market surveillance authorities are informed, and they decide what to do next.

The initiative is supported by brands including ABB, Eaton, Legrand, Schneider Electric, Hager and Siemens and covers a range of electrical equipment such as switches, circuit breakers, RCDs, arc fault products, cable management

systems and home, building and process electronic systems – all for commercial, residential and industrial applications.

Non-compliant electrical products give companies that sell them an unfair commercial advantage. However, if all distributors stocked only compliant products, companies would be competing on a level playing field. Selling non-compliant products can also damage a distributor's reputation.

For many years BEAMA has been working with the supply chain to forge agreements and take action against counterfeit and non-compliant products. It is working with its EU partners CECAPI and CAPIEL to launch a web portal that will be the gateway to information and training resources for supply chain operators, customs and governments.

The overall objective of MSSI is to ensure all products used across Europe are safe and compliant.

[www.beama.org.uk](http://www.beama.org.uk)

## ACI warns distributors about cable claims



Beware non-compliant cables used in fixed wiring applications

The **Approved Cables Initiative (ACI)** has warned wholesalers that some cables offered for use in fixed wiring applications in the UK don't comply with the standards their manufacturers say they meet.

Under the provisions of the UK Wiring Regulations (BS 7671) certain types of cables, meeting British Standards (BS) or UK adoptions of European Standards (BS EN), are designated for use in fixed installations. Their proper selection and use can be part of ensuring compliance for the full system. If installers choose to use a cable that does not meet one of the designated standards, they must satisfy themselves, and any independent inspecting authority, that an equivalent level of safety is ensured.

The ACI, however, said it continues to find evidence of cables being used and offered for use in UK fixed wiring applications that, when tested,

do not comply with the provisions of the standards, although their manufacturers say they do.

Recent examples include 'NYY' cables with external markings that say they meet IEC 60502-1, and a 'CY' cable with markings indicating compliance with BS EN 50525-2-11. When independently tested, the thickness of the outer sheath of the first cable was significantly less than that required by the standard, and the construction and marking of the second did not conform to the requirements of the standard.

BS EN 50525-2-11 specifies harmonised flexible cords such as H05VV-F (318\_Y in CMA coding). Low-smoke, halogen-free equivalents are in BS EN 50525-3-11. Cables designated SY,YY or CY are designed for instrumentation and control purposes. They often have thinner insulation and sheaths compared with BS EN flexible cords,

and/or taped beddings. They would therefore not conform to the harmonised standards, and their manufacturers should not say they do using a BS EN marking because this is a fraudulent claim.

The best way to ensure compliance with the Wiring Regulations is to choose only standard cables referred to in BS 7671. Distributors should also check that the external marking includes the manufacturer's name, the BS number for that cable (or the correct cable code), and other details such as voltage rating and conductor size. There should be no other ambiguous marking.

Finally, look for a third party mark of approval such as BASEC or HAR. The picture (above) shows ACI 273 CY cable with external markings indicating that it complies with BS EN 50525-2-11 (image courtesy of BASEC).

[www.aci.org.uk](http://www.aci.org.uk)

## SELECT launches industrial and commercial design course

SELECT has worked with Napier University in Edinburgh to develop an industrial and commercial electrical design course.

The course, which will be held at SELECT's headquarters in Edinburgh and at Napier's Merchiston Campus, is for those who wish to build knowledge and skills in relation to industrial and commercial electrical work. It starts in May and finishes in August.

The programme consists of five training days and candidates are expected to study and work on course materials between those days. Learning materials have been prepared to support this self-study.

Anyone attending the course should be a qualified electrician and hold a current (within the past five years) BS 7671 qualification. The course has been designed to SCQF Level 8 and can help those who are considering progressing on to degree-level study.



The programme covers the Wiring Regulations, 17th edition, BS 7671: 2008 (Amendment 3:2015) including supply system components and ratings, load identification, cables, wiring and installation methods.

Among the other topics are overload protection, protection devices, selectivity and fault levels, earthing, protection against electric shock and protection against overcurrent. Complete circuit design calculations are included.

[www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk)

## LIA scheme gives peace of mind

It is often difficult for distributors to be certain that a lighting product meets its specification.

According to the Lighting Industry Association (LIA): 'Any company that sells lighting needs the peace of mind that the products they stock will deliver the performance their customers expect. In parallel, those customers want assurance they are buying high-quality products.'

The association says that independent verification of lighting performance not only provides the reassurance the customer wants, but it is also a valuable sales tool.

The LIA's Lab Verification Scheme, from the LIA Laboratories, is designed to reassure distributors



and users that products have been independently tested and will meet the expected safety and performance requirements.

Accreditation to ISO/IEC 17065 endorses LIA Laboratories' competence to provide accurate, unbiased data and conformance with legislation.

The association runs the scheme with the Energy Saving Trust so compliant products can be marked with both the LIA Lab and EST brand marks.

Another benefit is that certified lighting products are promoted online at [www.lialabcert.org.uk](http://www.lialabcert.org.uk). As a result, distributors, lighting professionals and users can quickly and easily source products that meet the manufacturer's claims.

The site has a variety of lamps and fittings from respected companies including Ansell Electrical Products, BSS LED Lighting, Dar Lighting, LED Group, LED Hero, and Scolmore International, and numerous products have been verified.

[www.lialabcert.org.uk](http://www.lialabcert.org.uk)

## TWITTER

A selection of tweets from the Association's awards night

### EDA

@EDA\_UK

Setup for the #EDAAnnualDinner is under way at the @InterConHotels in London!

### Kew Electrical

@kewelectrical

We're really looking forward to tonight's @EDA\_UK Annual Dinner! It'll be great to see industry friends and colleagues. Are you going? :-)

### Eclipse

@Eclipse\_Event

Finishing touches coming together for the @EDA\_UK event tonight at the brilliant @ICParkLane. #eventpros

### Gary Groves

@Groover14

On my way to the #EDAAnnualDinner tonight. Look forward to seeing you there.

### MOL Learn

@MOLLearn

Managers getting awards for supporting their teams and succeeding at MOL Awards. #EDAAnnualDinner

### Bemco

@bemcoelectrical

Congratulations to Neil Walkingshaw, our trade counter/warehouse manager, winner of EDA Education & Training Award.

### Heat Mat Ltd

@HeatMatLimited

A fantastic night had by all at EDA event on Thursday @EDA\_UK. Great to see friends old/new! Thanks to @lockelec for their hospitality.

### Alan Reynolds

@AlanReynoldsktm

Fantastic #EDAAnnualDinner. I was truly honoured to be able to address such distinguished people from our industry by saying grace. #EDA.

# Association has key apprenticeship role

More than 80 per cent of the organisations developing the Trade Business Services trailblazer apprenticeship for the government are EDA members.

EDA members involved include R&B Star, Lincs Electrical Wholesale, City Electrical Factors, Edmundson Electrical, Kew Electrical, Steam Electric Company, Rexel UK and Lockwell Electrical.

The performance of the EDA Apprenticeship service has continued to grow in 2015, with the number of companies interested in taking on an apprentice growing by 100 per cent in 2015. The EDA has received 679 expressions of interest.

Almost 350 people started an Apprenticeship in 2015, 79 per cent of them in distribution and warehousing or trade business services. However, there has been an increase in the number of members enquiring about business administration and sales/telesales apprenticeships, with a focus on the potential of apprentices across their wider business.

The EDA had 670 unique learners studying Product Knowledge Modules during 2015, across 392 branches. There was a 25 per cent increase in the number of Product Knowledge Modules sold to mem-

bers during this time period, 1,808 in total.

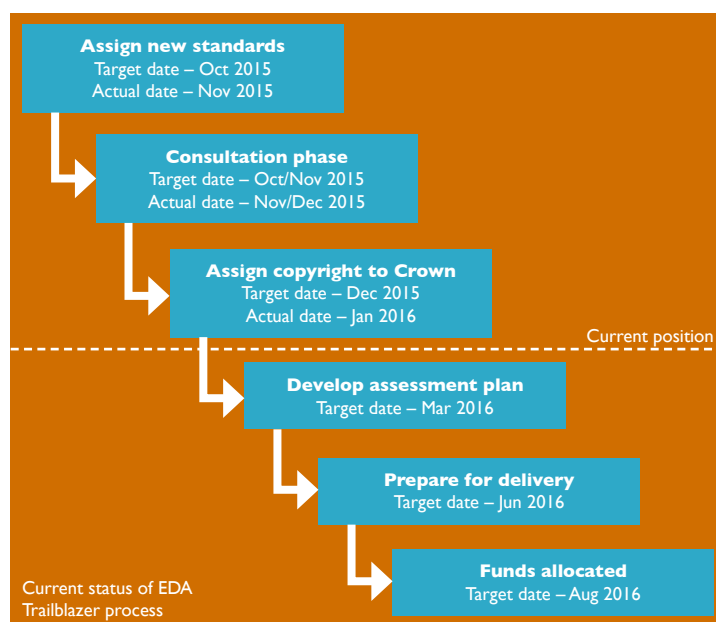
Twenty-six per cent of participants achieved a distinction grade.

The most popular module taken by learners in 2015 was Fundamentals of Electricity which represented 24 per cent of modules taken, with Lamps & Lighting maintaining its position with 14 per cent. However, the number of learners studying the Renewable Energy Systems module grew by 7 per cent and accounted for 11 per cent of all modules taken in 2015.

The EDA is in the process of developing new Product Knowledge Modules in 2016 to meet a growing demand for the employees of electrical wholesalers to have an ever wider product knowledge. The subjects of these new modules will be, Fire Safety & Security, Data Cabling and Smart Technology.

The EDA has 10 Product Knowledge Modules, tailored specifically for electrical wholesalers and manufacturers.

The EDA specialist Product Knowledge programme enables individuals to increase their awareness of customers' needs, equipping participants with the skills and knowledge to support consistently high-quality customer service.



## KCD update

A couple of errors found their way into the Key Contact Directory. Here are the correct details:

Page 52 – **Cembre Ltd** is an Affiliated Manufacturer, not an Affiliated Member.

Page 55 – **Channel Lighting & Safety Systems** is an Affiliated Manufacturer not an Affiliated Member.

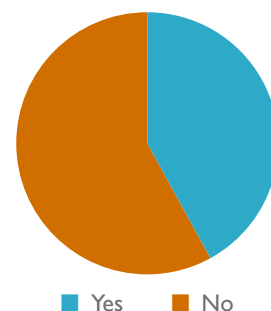
## EDA members split on effect of Brexit

How do electrical wholesalers think they will fare if the UK votes to leave the European Union in the referendum on 23 June?

The EDA asked its wholesaling members if they thought leaving the EU would affect their businesses and whether, in their personal opinion, they think the UK should remain a member or not.

The results of the survey were close. Overall, 58 per cent of the Association's members felt that Britain leaving the EU would not adversely affect their businesses. Many said their businesses would remain stable because they do not export, and most of their business is done in the UK.

Do you think Britain leaving the EU would adversely affect your business?



On the other hand, some of the 42 per cent of members who thought leaving the EU would affect their businesses believe trade barriers would be introduced and that leaving could affect relationships with manufacturers.

When asked if they personally think the UK should remain a member of the EU, 51 per cent thought the UK should remain a member.