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FIA membership  
reaches an all-time  
high of 218

## A warm welcome to the following NEW MEMBERS

### Corporate

- 528 - Cookwell Optronics Limited
- 529 - Ortronics
- 530 – FTI Limited
- 532 - Sonet Communications
- 533 - Huber + Suhner (UK) Limited
- 534 - Communications Technologies
- 535 - EDS Systems (North Wales) Limited
- 536 - CCL Fibre Services
- 538 - Avaya UK
- 539 – BP Cabling and Communications
- 540 - Total Communications Training Ltd

### Overseas Corporate

- 537 - Major Fibre Sdn Bhd
- ### Associate
- 531- The University of Leeds

## New Technical Support Documents from the FIA

Following a long and exhaustive development programme the FIA is pleased to announce publication of the Technical Support Document covering the maintenance of polarity within optical fibre cabling channels. FIA-TSD-2000-3-3 addresses cabling terminated not only with simplex and duplex interfaces but also array interfaces as used in pre-terminated systems.

Mike Gilmore, Technical Director of the FIA, said “While there are a number of US TIA documents that address specific aspects of polarity, the FIA TSD is the first document worldwide that fully addresses the topic, linking the issue into the need for User Guides”.

Members of the FIA can download the document from the “Members Only” section of the FIA web-site at [www.fibreoptic.org.uk](http://www.fibreoptic.org.uk).

In addition to the publication of the “Polarity Maintenance” document, members should also download the latest revision of the LAN Application Support Guide. Issue 3 has just been uploaded to the web-site and contains both editorial corrections and technical amendments - fully including the data surrounding 10 Gigabit Ethernet and the OM1, OM2 and OM3 cabled optical fibre Categories.

## FIBREOPTIC INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

*The FIA is a Company Limited by Guarantee*

### Management Council

- Mike Phillips - Chairman  
(Fibre Optic Solutions)
- Peter Thompsett - Vice Chairman  
(Ensign Communications)
- Mike Gilmore - Technical Director and Treasurer  
(The Cabling Partnership)
- Unallocated - Commercial  
(Anixter International)

### Industry Sector Directors

- Adrian Buckingham (IBS Limited)
- Dave Carswell (Black Box Network (NW))
- Paul Bateson - Test & Measurement  
(Optical Test and Calibration)
- John Colton - Training and Qualifications  
(Lucid Optical Services Ltd.)
- Installation
- John Cupitt - (Dwellight)
- Peter Thompsett - (Ensign Communications)

## CSCS Skillcards – and how to get them

Installer companies bidding for contracts or working at sites controlled by a member of the Main Contractors Group (MCG), or at any site where the owners support CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme), may be asked to produce their “CSCS passport”. Full details of CSCS are to be found on [www.cscs.uk.com](http://www.cscs.uk.com). A booklet explaining the scheme can be obtained from CSCS, PO Box 114, Bircham Newton, King’s Lynn, Norfolk PE31 6XD.

Following negotiations with the CSCS organisation and other representatives of our industry, the FIA has agreed to the issue of a Skillcard for data cabling installers. Skillcards are personal to the worker and not “global” to the employer.

All CSCS Skillcards are based on relevant National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). For FIA installers ‘Communications Technologies (Infrastructure) Installer’ is the chosen title. For a two year period, installation companies can obtain cards for their experienced staff through ‘industry accreditation’ which means that employers certify their card holders as competent in a stated set of skills. Following that period, NVQ registration will be necessary. Cards are available now for trainees and for workers returning to the industry after an absence (‘Experienced Workers’), but in each case registration for NVQ must be in place.

NVQ details are to be found at [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk).

Pre-requisites to obtaining a Card are to register with CITB and to pass the CITB Health & Safety Test that currently can be taken at nearest DVLA centre. This is a multiple choice answer type test administered by Thomson Prometric which provides a revision guide book with all the questions and answers from which the actual test questions will be chosen.

- 1 Register your workers with CITB on the CSCS Helpline (tel: 01485 578777) or by fax to CSCS on 01485 577601.
- 2 Request a test by Prometric (tel: 0870 600 4020) for an individual or a group. A block booking form is available for a group. The cost is £35 per worker (receipts and revision books are sent normally to individuals, or to the Employer on request).  
  
 You will be asked which test you require, and the answer is ‘CSCS Operative’ – there are lots of different test schedules. If you wish to test your people a little more, ask for ‘CSCS Supervisor’ which has 5 more questions! You will be asked for a preferred date of test – allow revision time even though very many of the questions are common sense.
- 3 When the test is done and the pass obtained, apply to CITB for Card application forms.
- 4 Complete the application(s) and send £20 per worker to the CITB.
- 5 The Skillcard is valid for 5 years under Industry Accreditation (but 3 years for Trainees and Experienced Workers as defined above).

## FIA Membership Fees

Amazingly, it is ten years since basic FIA Membership Fees were last increased. To be precise it was at the AGM on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1993 at which it was agreed to amend the fees that we all pay each year. Since then inflation has increased the cost of everything else by almost 30% but the cost of FIA membership has not just remained static but has, in effect, fallen by that percentage. Not only that, the FIA has modified the way it operates to ensure that most FIA services are either free to members or provided at a substantial discounted.

Unfortunately, the time has come to increase the fees once more. We do not need to impose huge increases but we do need to fund an ever-increasing workload in the technical and standards areas where a new set of programmes is beginning. The current proposals are to make the changes shown in the table to the right.

The increases for most members will be 25%, still below the inflation level over the last ten years. Member status with lowest fees will see the largest percentage increases but the majority of members will see an increase of £50 - the cost of a good meal for two. We hope that FIA membership is worth more than that. We are also proposing a discounted fee structure for members that pay by direct debit. Paying by DD simplifies collection of fees for the FIA and could save your company up to 4% per annum.

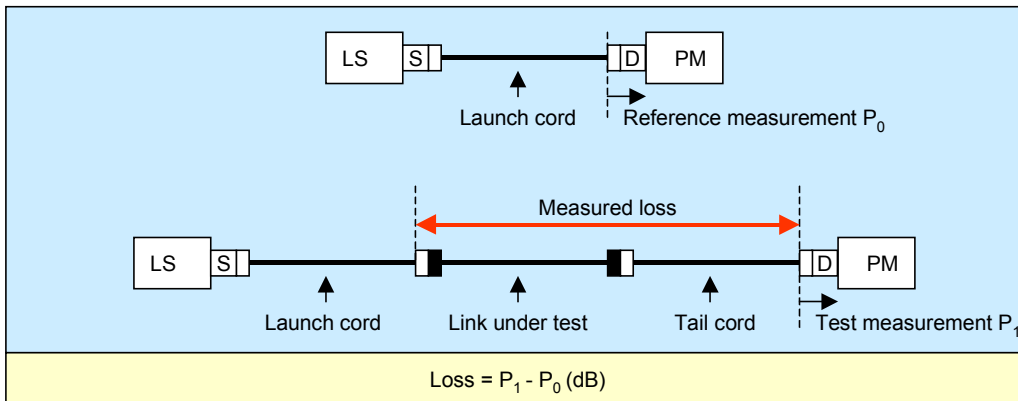
These proposals will be discussed and voted on at the FIA AGM on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003 (see details in this Newsletter).

Member Status	Existing since 1993	Proposed fees for 2004
<i>Personal</i>	£50.00	£75.00
<i>Associate</i>	£75.00	£125.00
<i>Corporate A</i>	£200.00	£250.00
<i>Corporate B</i>	£400.00	£500.00
<i>Corporate C</i>	£600.00	£750.00
<i>Overseas Associate</i>	£75.00	£125.00
<i>Overseas Corporate</i>	£250.00	£300.00

## Testers - Clean Up Your Act

It is a sad fact that there are still a number of installers, many of them FIA members, undertaking testing of installed cabling using the wrong methods - getting incorrect results and passing these on to their clients without realising the impact of their mistakes. The FIA Technical Support Document **FIA-TSD-2000-4-2-1 "Testing of Installed Cabling: LSPM"** was written to emphasize the unanimous nature of all the testing standards bodies around the world with regard to test methods.

The IEC, the US TIA, CENELEC in Europe and BSI in the UK (where it all started with BS 7718) agree on exactly how to test cabling using the older simplex light source and power meter equipment. Just so we are all quite clear about it, patch panel – patch panel cabling should be tested as shown below (with a SINGLE REFERENCE CORD or jumper as the US standards call them).



This is the only way to do the test. Any other configuration in the reference set-up is, in effect, cheating since the final result does not include the connections at both ends.

So why are installers doing it wrong?

Mike Gilmore, Technical Director of the FIA, blames a combination of ignorance of the rules and test equipment manufacturers for providing inaccurate advice.

Things are going to have to change and change quickly if installers are not going to suffer the cost of re-testing their installations. The ISO/IEC and CENELEC standards groups responsible for optical fibre cabling test methods are preparing to update their standards to reflect equipment like the Fluke DSP-4300 which have fixed test heads with bi-directional test systems. The FIA TSDs on both LSPM and OTDR testing are being used as a basis for the update. **In the meantime FIA members should be using the methods in our TSDs - read them, if you don't understand them and want FREE assistance then contact the FIA Technical Director at [mike.gilmore@btinternet.com](mailto:mike.gilmore@btinternet.com).**

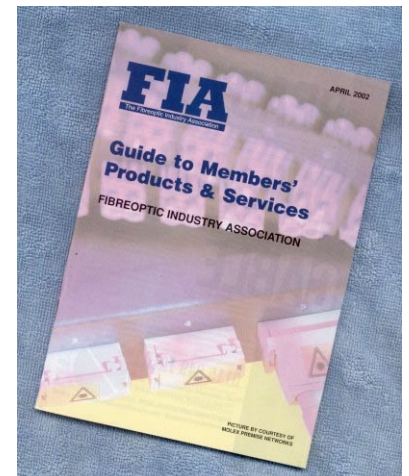
## FIA Members Guide

The publication contains full contact details about every FIA member with Approved organisations being highlighted throughout. In addition, a comprehensive index allows users to look up products and services by company or by the product/service required

Containing 74pp of valuable information about 200 national and international organisations, this is the most comprehensive guide to most of the leading installers and manufacturers in the fibre optics sector.

It will be available at all exhibitions, seminars, and conferences where the FIA has a presence.

**Copies are available free-of-charge. If you would like further Guides for yourself, a colleague, or another organisation, please contact the Secretariat with your requirements.**



## FIA Annual General Meeting

**All FIA members should make a note of a very special date in the FIA calendar.** The Association's Annual General Meeting is to be held at 11.30am on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2003 at the Saracens Head Hotel in Towcester and all attendees are invited to join Council Members for a buffet lunch following the event.

The FIA came into being to serve the Fibre Optics Industry and those working within the sector. A glance through our web site will show just how much has been achieved since its formation in February 1990. The Association now has an international presence and has played a very big part in the raising of the profile of the fibre optics industry in both the UK and internationally. Many of its publications have become the definitive guides to achieving good practices in the industry.

However, inputs to the FIA Council from members are a vital element in the process of moving the Association forward in a way that brings more benefits to both members and the industry. The AGM presents the membership with a prime opportunity to offer new ideas, make criticisms, and actually become a part of the decision-making processes if the desire exists.

New people are always welcome to play a role within the Management Council – and can be voted on to the Council at the AGM or opted to carry out specialist roles. This year new Council Members are required to replace Dave Carswell and Adrian Buckingham, who have recently announced their intention to stand down, and also Steve Strange of Anixter who resigned in the summer of 2003 due to pressure of work. If you would like to become a Council member (which involves appointing you officially as a director) please see the AGM material that has been sent to you (posted out by the Secretariat on 31<sup>st</sup> October).

The secretariat will be happy to provide any further information.

## Exploiting Photonics in Alternative Markets

by Professor David N. Payne FRS, Director, Optoelectronics Research Centre, Southampton University.

### Thursday 27th November 2003, RSA, 8 John Adam Street, London, UK

Research laboratories are looking to exploit the wealth of devices and techniques developed for telecommunications in other market areas: materials processing, oil exploration and the biosciences. This talk will review the historical development of photonics in the context of one of the largest crashes the market has ever seen and explore prospects for building new technologies and applications through harnessing light. To see full details on the synopsis of the presentation and to register please visit the web site:

[www.iee.org/events/davidpayne.cfm](http://www.iee.org/events/davidpayne.cfm).

The IEE, Event Services, Michael Faraday House, Six Hills Way, Stevenage, SG1 2AY, UK  
Tel: +44 (0) 1438 765597 Fax: +44 (0) 1438 767 291

This Newsletter is provided as a means of maintaining communication between and with our Members.

It can, therefore, promote the activities of Members to other Members. Articles, product information, news items etc. are always welcome.

Please send the information via email (jpg illustrations) to Roy Atterbury via [roy@attassoc.demon.co.uk](mailto:roy@attassoc.demon.co.uk)

## Changes to UK Installation Standards

November will see the circulation of the Draft for Public Comment (DPC) of the new BS 6701. Entitled “**Telecommunications equipment and telecommunications cabling - Specification for installation, operation and maintenance**” the document has been prepared to reflect the publication of the BS EN 50174 series of installation standards and the withdrawal of BS 7718. The new BS 6701 is a BS specification - and not a simply a Code of Practice - making it a tool for determining conformance within contract law. Moreover it is referenced from the 16<sup>th</sup> Edition Wiring Regs making it almost mandatory for every installation.

In effect, BS 6701 (2004) will become a one-stop shop for specifiers and installers wishing to simplify their quality assurance methods. It extends the requirements of the BS EN 50174 series of installation standards to all types of cabling, the equipment connected by the cabling and most importantly the operation and maintenance of both.

**“Don’t be fooled into thinking that telecommunications is voice services – it is everything that we use cabling for”** said Mike Gilmore, Standards Director of the FIA and Chairman of the BSI group that has produced the new BS 6701. **“It (BS 6701) is possible the most important installation standard to be produced since the original BS 7718 in 1991”**.

As soon as the DPC is available electronically the FIA Standards Forum will enable comments to be made direct to Mike Gilmore for inclusion in the final editing process.

## Shedding light on optical fibre

FIA member TRITEC continues to develop its web presence with the introduction of a new animated online guide to fusion splicing. This guide has been designed to answer the many questions asked by newcomers to the fibre optics market. Flash<sup>®</sup> animations are extensively used to illustrate the different splicing and cleaving processes making the site both interesting and informative.

The new section of the web site (which is available at [www.tritec.biz/faq](http://www.tritec.biz/faq)) is split into three main parts. The first section of the site “*What is optical fibre?*” covers topics such as how optical fibre is made and what it is used for. The second section “*What is fusion splicing?*” explains why fibre needs to be spliced, the different techniques for jointing fibre and the fundamentals of fusion splicing. The third section “*What is fixed alignment splicing?*” explains the technique of fixed v-groove splicing and its advantages. The answers to these questions can be accessed by clicking on the light bulb logo from anywhere within TRITEC’s main web site. Links are also provided from the FAQ to relevant product pages to give practical examples of the topics being discussed.

It is planned to extend this section of the web site in future with more in-depth information on the various aspects of optical fibre and fusion splicing.

For further details, contact Jonathan Hunt, Tel: +44(0) 1925 220 466 [sales@tritec.biz](mailto:sales@tritec.biz) [www.tritec.biz](http://www.tritec.biz)

### **Are You a Training Provider Within the FIA?**

Please ensure that you update your details that are held on the FIA Web Site as regularly as possible.

It is a valuable resource on the site which is accessed many times each day. Both Approved and Non-Approved Training Providers are featured.

The original printed guide to FIA Training Providers has been replaced by the web site guide.

### **OTDR Product Selector**

As a first step towards the provision of useful product selection information to FIA members **Paul Bateson**, FIA Industry Sector Director responsible for test and measurement issues, has put together a comprehensive spreadsheet containing the comparative performance specifications of more than 80 different OTDRs from a range of manufacturers.

A limited technical glossary is also included with internal hyperlinks to relevant text.

Paul intends to maintain and enlarge the information provided and may also include other test equipment such as light source and power meter equipment.

To access the information go to the members-only section of the FIA web-site and click on "Product Reviews".

### **BSRIA: Hope for the Structured Cabling Markets**

The Western European market for structured cabling, which includes copper and multimode fibre products used in LAN applications is estimated at US\$ 1.18 billion (at manufacturer sales prices) for 2002, according to a new study from BSRIA. The study comprises 13 European countries including the biggest markets in Europe - Germany, UK, France, Italy, and the Netherlands. These countries account for 80% of the total market value.

Germany and the UK are by far the largest individual markets, with a combined market value of US\$ 654 million - more than half of the total. According to BSRIA, almost all of the countries researched suffered a recession over the last two years. The value in Germany declined by 19%, the UK by 16%, Italy by 12% and Spain by 14%.

The total market fell by 10-15% in volume in most countries; the decline in value was even bigger due to price erosion. Over the next four years, BSRIA expects the markets to grow at 2.3% compound annual growth rate until 2006. Growth will, however, be unequally distributed between countries. Mature markets such as the UK or Holland are forecast to grow only modestly or shrink even further.

UTP remains the most popular cable type in Europe, leading in 10 of the 13 countries researched. Shielded cable, however, also holds a notable share because it dominates in Germany, France, and Switzerland. Fibre technology is used mainly in backbone and campus installations and it did not gain significant ground at horizontal level in fibre-to-the desk installations.

The study shows that Cat 5e was still the most common solution seen in 2002, but this is changing rapidly as Category 6 solutions are making rapid progress. Promoted by all major suppliers, Cat 6 cabling represents the dominant solutions in many countries during 2003 and by 2006 they will be the norm everywhere. Category 7 systems represent only a niche market in the shielded markets and are virtually non-existent in UTP-dominated markets.

Visit [www.bsria.co.uk](http://www.bsria.co.uk) or contact Chris Marney by email: [wmi@bsria.co.uk](mailto:wmi@bsria.co.uk).

### **FIA Seminars - Your Turn to Choose**

As regular readers will know, throughout 2003 the FIA has been offering a range of technical and commercial seminars relating to optical fibre matters in conjunction with the ECA and SELECT.

We are now getting organised for 2004 and we are keen to know what topics FIA members wish to have discussed at seminars in the future. Please contact the Secretariat if you wish to have specific areas of interest.



## OTT's Special Tritec Offer

There has never been a better time to invest in fibre optic cabling training. FIA communications cabling training provider, Optical Technology Training (OTT), has announced that any delegate completing the City & Guilds 3466-02 (Fibre Optic Cabling for Datacoms), course can also claim a £500 discount off a FASE II fusion splicer from TRITEC Developments Ltd.

Richard Ednay, Director of OTT states, "The FASE II is recognised as a tough, rugged and reliable unit as well as being one of the most affordable fusion splicers on the market. The increasing use of single-mode fibre in IT cabling means that more installations will adopt splicing of pre-terminated pigtails. This offer is an excellent opportunity to buy a brand new splicing machine at a bargain price."

All delegates completing the course by the end of November 2003 will receive the discount voucher. In order to take advantage of this special offer, the delegate needs to complete the voucher and send it to TRITEC before the end of 2003. The offer is conditional on the purchase being made directly from TRITEC.

TRITEC Developments are equally pleased to be involved in this partnership, as their sales & marketing manager, Jonathan Hunt, confirms "OTT is the UK's longest established communications cabling training company, and we are delighted to be working with Richard Ednay during this promotion. OTT's City & Guilds five-day training courses enable electrical contractors or installers, new to fusion splicing, to receive the most professional training available. Most importantly, this offer gives the customer not only the opportunity to gain the knowledge, but also the chance to purchase the equipment necessary to become proficient cable installers.'

For further information contact:  
Jonathan Hunt, TRITEC, Tel: +44(0) 1925 220 466  
[sales@tritec.biz](mailto:sales@tritec.biz) [www.tritec.biz](http://www.tritec.biz)

Or Richard Ednay, OTT, Tel: +44 (0) 1756 797155  
[richard@ott.co.uk](mailto:richard@ott.co.uk) [www.ott.co.uk](http://www.ott.co.uk)

## FIA APPROVED INSTALLER SCHEME

*'There's something in it for you!*

The few that have it – *renew it every year*. It's an *exclusive club* and a *'badge'* with value. It *costs little*, but we do not just *'give it away'* but the

**FIA Approved Installer Scheme  
(the FIA-AIS)  
needs more members.**

If you are active in fibre installations - consider the **selling advantage**. The FIA Council works hard to promote fibre optic industry benefits and members' business interests. The **FIA-AIS** is an industry benefit and **you** are a member. Put the two together for a marketing edge - **added value** for your prospective customers.

If you are active in fibre installations with a strong track record and an ISO 9000 QA 'ticket', talk to us now about your Association's *Approved Installer Scheme*.

More *FIA-AIS* members will help us to persuade the specifiers, consultants and end-users on the value in choosing an *FIA Approved Installer* for their next fibre project.

If you would like to receive more information the criteria and application form can be downloaded from the FIA web-site – <http://www.fibreoptic.org.uk/PDF/Ais.pdf>

## Guide to Forthcoming Shows and Conferences

**Public Wireless LAN** London 27-28 November 2003. For details, visit website [smi-online.co.uk/pwlan.asp](http://smi-online.co.uk/pwlan.asp)