Listening to and acting on your views

As part of our 50th anniversary year, we were keen to hear from our members to build a picture of their needs, preferences and expectations of the JIB. In the summer we conducted a wide-ranging survey that gave companies the opportunity to give views on the JIB’s membership offering and strategic direction.

We’d like to thank everyone who took part in the recent JIB membership consultation – we’re now analysing all the feedback and looking at how we can improve products and services for JIB members.

We will report back to you in the New Year.

Celebrating 50 years...

To commemorate the JIB’s 50th anniversary we commissioned a series of videos looking at the JIB’s work and how we are striving to improve employment standards across a range of areas. Seven videos in total were produced on the topics of: health, safety, ECS, disputes resolution, apprenticeship and training, the JIB Skills Development Fund and an introductory overview from JIB Chairman Paul Corby.

Our thanks go to all those who took part in the videos, including EdF Energy, Unite the Union, ECA, ECIS, JTL, ECA and JIB member Melvin John Electrical Contracting and past Apprentice Exchange winner, Samantha Jones.

You can watch all the videos at www.jib.org.uk/50years

In this issue...

January 2019

Raising and Maintaining Standards

- ECS Registered Electrician
- ECS Check
- Card Changes
- ECS successes
- Construction Charters and client recognition

Delivering great benefits and savings for our members

- Occupational Health Assessments
- Cost Benefit Calculator
- Skills Development Fund
- Mental Health support

Supporting the wider industry

- Apprentice exchange
- Raising money for the electrical community
- 90% decrease in industry accidents since 2001
- Women on the Tools
- New York JIB visits UK
Currently over 15,000 ECS cardholders have signed up to become ECS Registered Electricians since the initiative was launched in late 2017.

The JIB established the ECS Registered Electrician status to recognise cardholders who are not only working at the industry-recognised Level 3 status, but also have the current edition of the Wiring Regulations and are committed to Continuing Professional Development.

Feedback from our cardholders shows that the Registered Electrician status is a highly attractive and positive move for the industry, raising not just standards but also the profile of electricians and electrical contracting.

**ECS Check**

ECS Check is an online system that allows main contractors and clients to verify the skills and qualifications of electrical personnel working on projects.

It delivers the next step in skills visibility by promoting the industry’s highly trained workforce to its clients and raises the profile of electrical contracting amongst the wider construction sector.

As an electrical contractor you can take pride in your workforce and demonstrate to your clients that you have a skilled and qualified team working on their projects.

Clients, main contractors and project managers can have confidence in the quality of the electrical workforce on their projects through ECS Check’s online portal, which allows users to validate the electrical workforce on site and produce electronic summaries for auditing and reporting.

We are currently trialling ECS Check on a project in London and we will start a second trial on another London project in the New Year.

We’re also at the final stages of developing ECS Check for application on public sector projects in Northern Ireland.

Steve Burley, director of JIB member firm Derry Building Services has been working with the ECS as part of the pilot project:

“I am totally supportive of the JIB’s ECS Check scheme,” said Steve. “This enables us as a sub-contractor to demonstrate to clients that we are confident in offering the transparency for them to check the competence of our workforce employed on their projects.

“I believe that this approach provides a positive impression for our industry and the skilled workforce that we employ.”

**ECS successes**

Further to the 2017 boost in ECS gold card applications, throughout 2018 the Electrotechnical Certification Scheme experienced yet another increase in electricians looking to formally certify their skills.

Over 60,000 cards were produced during the year and 98% of applications were made online. Turnaround times for ECS card applications have also substantially reduced again over the last 12 months and in Autumn the scheme renewed its ISO9001 accreditation, maintaining internal high standards and quality.
Construction Charters and client recognition

The JIB is continuing its work to promote JIB members to local authorities and other clients – we are pleased to report that more and more councils and local authorities are signing up to Construction Charters – currently over 20 across the UK. Construction Charters pledge to promote better conditions for construction workers by supporting the JIB National Working Rules and other national collective bargaining agreements in construction. The Welsh Assembly Procurement Advice Note also recognises the use of JIB member companies for public work in Wales by adhering to the relevant collective bargaining agreement for the industry.

Some of the key local authorities who have signed up to Construction Charters include:

- Liverpool
- Sheffield
- Wakefield
- Durham
- Newcastle
- Bristol
- Crawley

Delivering great benefits and savings for our members

Occupational Health Assessments

Since the start of 2018, JIB members have been able to receive funding for Occupational Health Assessments for all operatives who participate in the JIB Benefits Scheme. This is a great new benefit from the JIB that will help you to protect your employees from work-based health risks.

Each operative can receive one funded Occupational Health Assessment (OHA) every three years, via one of our JIB-approved providers. You can obtain this funding from ECIS up to the cost of the OHA, or £85 (excl. VAT), whichever is the lower amount.

To help our members understand more about this new opportunity we produced a whole range of communication material including videos, infographics and web information, all accessible via www.jib.org.uk/oha.
Cost Benefit Calculator
The JIB is not only committed to maintaining and raising employment standards, but also to providing a range of great benefits and savings for our members.

In Winter 2018 we were pleased to launch a new online calculator that shows the potential savings and benefits of JIB membership in a number of areas such as lodging and mileage allowance, ECS card discounts and in-house invigilation, the Skills Development Fund and Occupational Health Assessments.

Why not take a look at the calculator and try it out for yourself? www.jib.org.uk/benefits-calculator

Skills Development Fund
Following feedback from our members, the financial support available from the JIB Skills Development Fund has recently been increased. This means if you have employees studying on courses, or thinking about up-skilling, as a JIB member you can greatly benefit from the fund.

The amounts available depend on the level of qualification undertaken, ranging from up to £750 per year for Level 3 courses, to up to £1250 per year for Level 6 courses and covers 75% of the course fee up to increased ceiling limits.

Mental Health support
Last year the JIB launched a new online resource to help its members promote a positive mental health environment in the workplace. Working in partnership with Acas, ECIS, the Electrical Industries Charity and Mates in Mind, the guidance is broken into three key areas: prevention; intervention; treatment and support, to signpost useful tools and resources that are available to help JIB members at each stage. In addition to the information for employers, a separate section specifically for individuals highlights what help is available if you’re seeking mental health support for yourself, or are trying to help a colleague.

Via the JIB Benefits Scheme, JIB members and their employees can access services such as telephone counselling and Bupa specialist mental health teams to address problems at an early stage, or deal with them effectively should treatment be needed.

Outside of the benefits scheme, all workers in the electrical industry can also seek counselling support from the Electrical Industries Charity.
Apprentice exchange

A report comparing the UK and Australian electrical contracting industries was published last year by JIB Apprentice Exchange winners George Stickings and Josh Horton.

The two young men, who spent six weeks working in and around Brisbane, provided a detailed analysis on areas such as working practices, skills and competence, the role of apprentices and the industrial relations system. The main recommendations presented in their report were:

1) The belief that a licensing system would help to raise skills and competency and add value to the job title of ‘electrician’. In Australia all electrical work must be carried out by a Licensed Electrician; there is a penalty fine of up to 40,000 dollars if this rule is broken.

2) Taking best practice from the Australian apprentice training system, which saw electricians joining apprentices in the classroom to help with their learning, and widening the scope of the apprenticeship to include new and emerging technologies.

3) Introducing low voltage rescue and first aid training, so that electricians can help to improve H&S knowledge and standards on site. This CPD is mandatory and renewed annually for Licensed Electricians in Australia.

The JIB Apprentice Exchange programme is a partnership between the JIB, ECA, Unite the Union and JTL and is funded by the JIB Skills Development Fund. Additional support from the Electrical Industries Charity in 2017 meant that, for the first time, two apprentices could be funded and benefit from the exchange.

The JIB was also pleased to host Josh Donoghoe, Electrogroup Apprentices in Brisbane, to the UK for 6 weeks in October 2018. Josh spent time with T Clarke plc and J Brand Ltd working on sites throughout the UK. Josh will be reporting on his experiences in the UK in due course.

Raising money for the electrical community...

JIB Chief Executive Steve Brawley and Employment & Skills Manager Andy Reakes stepped up to the plate to support the Electrical Industries Charity in their quest to raise money for the family of Caz Dickinson, who spent 15 years working in the electrical industry until a Grade 4 brain haemorrhage left her with irreversible brain damage.

In May Steve cycled 250 miles across Wales and back in 26 hours. He travelled through day and night and climbed a total of 16,500ft. In April Andy Reakes undertook an epic adventure travelling to the Arctic to combat the elements - skiing, hiking and crawling through the sub-zero conditions to complete a 5-day ‘Challenge for a Cause’.

90% decrease in industry accidents since 2001

The latest JIB Survey of Accidents at Work has shown that the 2017 accident incidence rate (AIR) for RIDDOR-reportable accidents is less than 10% of what it was in 2001.

This highly impressive statistic highlights the continuing commitment from electrical contractors to reduce accidents in the workplace, following the JIB, ECA and Unite the Union’s major industry-wide ‘ZAP’ safety initiative which launched 17 years ago.

90% decrease in industry accidents since 2001
New York JIB visits UK

The JIB played host to its US counterparts in 2018 when the New York JIB visited London and Edinburgh as part of the JIB’s 50th anniversary celebrations.

Dr Gerald Finkel, Chairman of the New York JIB, representatives of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union No. 3 and the Electrical Contractors of New York were guests of JIB and ECA member T Clarke plc during a site visit to 22 Bishopsgate, the 62-storey commercial office development currently under construction in London.

The delegation also flew to Edinburgh, where the Scottish Joint Industry Board hosted a visit to a hydro electric scheme and a tour of the royal yacht Britannia.

Looking to 2019…

We look forward to working with our members and partners in 2019 to progress a whole range of projects to support the industry, including:

- Improving and promoting JIB membership and its benefits by recruiting a Head of Membership and completing work on a template procurement route for Councils which have signed a Construction Charter
- Launching ECS Check on new projects after the completion of the trial phase
- Introducing Continuing Professional Development for ECS Registered Electricians
- Presenting the outcome of work on improving industry productivity
- Expanding the JIB Apprentice Exchange
- Updating the governance of the ECS Steering Committee to embrace other industry institutions

Women on the Tools

In July the JIB was pleased to support the launch of a new online network to allow women working ‘on the tools’ in the electrical industry to connect, share views and create a forum for discussion and ideas.

Open Circuit – the name given to the network – has been established by the charity Women on the Tools, in partnership with the JIB, Certsure and ECA. Any female electrician is eligible to join the group, which is available via Facebook.

The idea to create such a group was inspired the Amber Light Society, a group of female electricians in New York who take an active role in supporting each other and the industry. Samantha Jones, the UK Apprentice who worked in New York in 2015 as part of the JIB Apprentice Exchange Programme, reported on the role of women in the electrical industry and promoted the role of a society similar to the Amber Light Society. Samantha has been involved in the establishment of Open Circuit and continues to support the role of women in electrical and engineering trades.

In New York, 10% of the workforce in the New York JIB is female compared to less than 2% in the UK industry.