From Humble Beginnings to the PSES

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers best known as the IEEE has added its first new society in nearly twenty years. The new society is the Product Safety Engineering Society (PSES) and began official memberships in 2004. For more than a decade the group has been functioning as a Technical Committee under the EMC Society.

This writer was fortunate enough to be invited to the second meeting of the informal group in 1987 that would eventually grow into the PSES. The group was formed by SEL's founder Lee Ould Jr. to help address arbitrary interpretations of the standards by CSA, making it almost impossible at that time to build an ITE product for both the US and Canada (in those days there was only one viable option for Canadian certification for most products, and this group accelerated the competitive environment we see today between agencies in North America).

The first meeting consisted of Lee and representatives of four of SEL's larger clients. From this meeting Lee generated a draft letter of the specific issues that were making Canadian certifications unnecessarily challenging. Since Lee and I often discussed certification issues, he sent me a copy of the letter and invited myself and a colleague to join the group for their second meeting, held at one of SEL client's facilities. With five of SEL's clients

Come visit SEL at the first annual Product Safety Engineering Symposium on August 13-15th at the Santa Clara Convention Center!

and us in attendance, the next meeting — which was only supposed to last around an hour — extended several hours, as strategies were worked out and issues with other agencies crept into the mix.

Additional meetings followed, each getting larger with more

Inside this issue:

Special points of interest:

- For agency visit dates to SEL and seminar dates, see www.SELdirect.com
- For info between newsletter issues, see our website or contact us directly.
- To see our larger facility where SEL has been since early 2002, visit our website, for directions (www.seldirect.com/map.html).
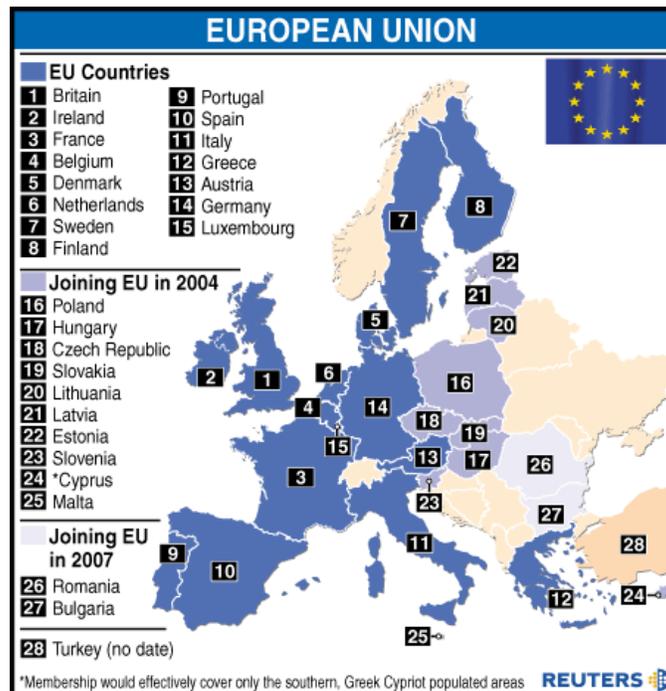
Expansion of the European Union

The European Union extended its boundaries and added 100 million people, by including the following ten countries on May 1st, 2004, for a total population of around 450 million.

- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Estonia
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Slovenia

Those that did not make the cut in this round:

- Bulgaria
- Romania
- Croatia
- Turkey

While manufacturers can access more countries for their CE Mark, there are more requirements in the coming years as more and more Directives and Standards are introduced, such as the RoHS and WEE Directives. Stay tuned!

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Product Safety Engineering Society (continued)

companies being added to the assemblage. When we reached approximately 15 participants, with many prominent companies in Silicon Valley, the final version of the letter was sent to CSA, including a request to meet with the group. A senior engineer and senior member of management met with the group, in a productive effort, resulting in CSA responding quickly to the group's concerns and moving to address the issues raised.

Lee's enthusiasm and persistence had spawned a creative seed in the group. It became clear to all involved that there was no good communication tool or system in place for product safety engineers to exchange ideas and voice concerns. So we continued to informally meet once a month. The momentum continued to build, and we started receiving inquiries from all over the country. We realized the need to more formalize the group. Several of its members were actually EMC engineers who were also tasked to handle the product safety certifications for their companies. Most of those were already members of the existing IEEE EMC society so they recommended that the product safety group be formed under the auspices

of the EMC Society. After several months of negotiations we became a Technical Committee of the EMC Society.

Along the way, the group formed an internet bulletin board and started a newsletter. The community seemed to explode from that point on. The group has had regular meetings ever since with new members joining all the time. Today, the PSES discussion group consists of around 900 members, in 31 countries worldwide.

This summer the PSES will put on its first symposium August 13-15th immediately after the EMC Symposium. Both symposiums will be at the Santa Clara Convention Center. For details visit http://www.ieee-pses.org/symposium, with the costs for full participation of $125-$400 depending on your membership status. Visit http://www.emc2004.org for the EMC Symposium details.

We invite you to come by the SEL/CKC booths (#318/320) to say hello, and while you are there, be sure to enter our giveaways and try your hand at some safety related challenges.

-Rick Buck, SEL

Did you know?

- *CB Bulletins 107A and 107B with the most recent national differences to the IEC standards has been published.*

- *UL61010-1/CSA 22.2 No 61010-1 2nd edition was finally published on 7/12/2004*

- *On 6/30/2004, UL's president sent out a letter to all of UL's customers. To download a copy of the letter on SEL's website click here.*

SEL Handouts

For our clients, we offer 2-4 page summaries of those traditional problem areas, including:

- Plastics flammability
- Labeling
- Manuals
- Factory Inspections
- Standards Evolution
- Process Flowchart
- Spacings
- Why Do Product Safety?
- CB Scheme
- CE Mark and the European Union

Useful Websites

For the main PSES website, visit…

http://www.ieee-pses.org

SEL posts its agency visit schedule on…

http://www.SELdirect.com/calendar.htm

Compliance Tip!

Manufacturers of products that incorporate laser devices are required to keep records about the number and type of products shipped each year (ending June 30th). 21 CFR Part 1002 requires the preparation of Annual Reports, which often need to be submitted. According to Laser Notice 42, this requirement for these record keeping efforts extends even to manufacturers of products that simply incorporate "off-the-shelf" Class I components that have already been submitted to the CDRH, and don't have to submit a Laser Product Report themselves. And why are we mentioning this now?? Such reports are supposed to be prepared by September 1st! Did you know that the CDRH can conduct random inspections of your facilities, to confirm compliance with this and other requirements?

For details on this reporting and the types of products requiring what level of effort, see…

http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?CFRPart=1002&showFR=1