

GEOTECHNICAL COURSE DATES:
 Rock-Description Workshop
 23rd January 2014
 In Situ Testing
 6th March 2014

GEOTECHNICAL COURSE DATES:
 Geotechnical Foundation
 Design - 8th January 2014,
 9th May 2014
 Soil Description Workshop
 13th February 2014
 29th April 2014

H&S COURSE DATES:
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 7th February 2014, 21st March 2014
 Safe Supervision of
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Here's to 2014!
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
 from everyone at the Geotechnica

- Included in this month's issue:**
- CDM in 2014 or 2015
 - Explaining Geotechnical Risks to Clients
 - The Geotechnical Academy - Passing Out of Group 1

Issue No.
26
 December 2013



SAFE SUPERVISION OF GEOTECHNICAL SITES - £450 + VAT

This three day course is certified by IOSH, is specifically focussed on the geotechnical industry and provides a totally unique and relevant Health and Safety course for managers and supervisors.

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NEXT COURSE DATES: 29th - 31st January 2014
12th - 14th March 2014

AVOIDING DANGER FROM UNDERGROUND SERVICES - £150 + VAT

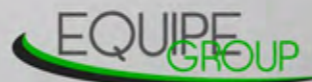
This one day course is aimed at anybody involved in specifying, instructing, managing, supervising or actually breaking ground. Important aspects include the use of real examples from the geotechnical industry and delivery by chartered advisors who are from within the industry.

This course is definitely not another CAT and Genny course and is the **only** externally verified course in the UK carrying the IOSH badge. The course is built around HSG47 and current industry best practice.

NEXT COURSE DATES: 7th February 2014
21st March 2014

To book your place, please contact Equip Training:

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UPCOMING COURSES - 2014

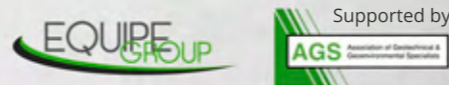
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Welcome

Welcome to the 26th Edition of **theGeotechnica** - the UK's fastest growing online geotechnically focussed e-magazine.

Firstly, we would like to wish our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone here at **theGeotechnica**, and also our parent company the Equipe Group. 2013 has been a very successful year for us and we hope that you have all experienced an equally satisfying year. With the industry showing some strong signs of recovery heading into 2014, we will all be hoping for an even more prosperous year to come.

Getting back to the matter at hand...

The first article in this month's issue comes from one of our more regular and highly valued contributors - our resident Health and Safety expert - Tom Phillips of RPA Safety Services. In previous editions Tom has visited the issue of CDM Regulations - particularly the 2007 revisions. However in this issue Tom will be looking ahead to 2014 and 2015 as new revisions and examinations of the regulations are set to come into place. Hopefully Tom can impart some much needed advice on what to expect from CDM in the upcoming couple of years.

Following on from Tom's feature on CDM Regulations comes an article from Tim Chapman of Arup. Writing for **theGeotechnica** for the first time Tim discusses the importance of properly explaining geotechnical risks to clients and the processes and provisions that need to be in place in order to avoid these risks.

Our final article of this month's issue comes from our own Technical Director, Peter Reading of the Equipe Group. Over the past year Peter has been representing Equipe Training Limited in their delivery of a number of training modules for the highly successful Geotechnical Academy that is run in partnership with Geotechnical Engineering Limited. In this article Pete outlines the success of the Academy, as well as it's benefits as it's first batch of graduates complete their passing out. For further details on The Geotechnical Academy and what it can offer you, please visit: www.geotechnicalacademy.co.uk



This month we have a number of recruitment advertisements being placed throughout the magazine, notably from Soil Consultants, Geotechnical Engineering and the Equipe Group, who are in the lookout for experienced rotary drilling specialists.

As with every new edition of the magazine, the Editorial Team here at **theGeotechnica** will be on the lookout for even more new, original and interesting content from all corners of the sector, and would actively encourage all readers to come forward with even the slightest bit of appropriate and relevant content - whether it be a small news item or a detailed case study of works recently completed or being undertaken. If this content is media rich and interactive, then all the better. We are looking to increase the already large readership of the magazine through better social media integration and promotion, as well as improving content month on month.

Finally, for any content that is submitted we will ensure that advertising space, proportionate to the quality of content provided, is available for that single edition of the magazine. From then on, if you have submitted content, you will receive a discount on all further advertisements placed within **theGeotechnica**. We hope you enjoy this month's edition of the magazine and are inspired to contribute your own content for the coming editions of **theGeotechnica**.

Editorial Team,
theGeotechnica

CDM 2014... OR 2015...

Returning to write for theGeotechnica this month is our resident Health and Safety expert Tom Phillips of [RPA Safety Services](#). In this month's edition Tom returns to the subject of CDM Regulations - this time discussing the HSE's recent review of CDM2007.

While main contractors and large construction companies have made great strides in improving health and safety on site over the last 10 years, injury and fatality rates on small and medium sized construction projects remain stubbornly

"It is questionable if the improvements achieved by main contractors have been as a result of CDM or from stakeholder pressures."

static. It is questionable if the improvements achieved by main contractors have been as a result of CDM or from stakeholder pressures. Certainly the increased responsibility placed on the Client in the 2007 regulations has helped, where the clients are larger and better-informed, but many clients and contractors still view CDM as a bureaucratic paper chase without fully understanding the requirements of the process.

The HSE are concerned about this fact and carried out a review of CDM2007, in conjunction with the construction industry

advisory body CONIAC.

'Bureaucracy is still problematic and a primary source of dissatisfaction to the industry. For those who favour it, often as a way of transferring the risk of non-compliance to others, there is little within the existing CDM portfolio to clearly identify it as bad practice.' - CONIAC meeting July 2013 - Evaluation of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 - A paper by Andrew Maxey.

With an industry and economy slowly climbing out of recession, there is little appetite for extra burden on business, but a distinct possibility that CDM will change in 2014 because as a nation, we are in non-compliance with 'EU Directive 92/57/EEC - temporary or mobile construction sites' as we have exempted domestic clients from any responsibility

"The HSE and CONIAC have recognised the need for change and do not want to discard those areas they feel are effective..."

on projects. The HSE and



CONIAC have recognised the need for change and do not want to discard those areas they feel are effective, but with a government committed to stopping 'gold plating' of legislation from Europe and committed to direct 'copy out' of European directives, what can we look forward to?

If we see a direct copy out, the

responsibilities for safety will still rest with the Client, but be extended to cover domestic clients. It is likely however, and possible under the scope of the directive, that the Client may pass this responsibility to the contractor but how this will happen, is still unclear. Projects where there is only one contractor will also be less onerous, but there will still be a

need to plan health and safety in all instances.

Notifiability is also likely to change, but not dramatically (although as outlined above, domestic projects may also become notifiable), as the directive currently states that where work is scheduled to last longer than 30 working days and on which more than 20 workers are occupied simultaneously, or on which the volume of work is scheduled to exceed 500 person-days, the client or the project supervisor shall communicate a prior notice to the competent authorities before work starts. This would be similar to the current need for F10 submission on notifiable projects under CDM2007.

Gone would be the role of Principal Contractor and the CDM Coordinator and in would come two new role holders - Coordinators for Safety and Health matters at the project preparation stage and Coordinators for Safety and Health matters at the

"It is possible within the scope of the directive that these can be internal appointments, but it is likely that on larger projects, these may be two different entities."

project execution stage. It is possible within the scope of the directive that these can be internal appointments, but it is likely that on larger projects, these may be two different

entities.

The first, the coordinators for project preparation stage, may be fulfill a similar role to the current CDMCs and may require a similar skill set and I can foresee that this will be a role strongly aimed at designers. The directive places great emphasis on the responsibilities of those involved in the design process to employ the principles of prevention, which are in line with UK duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. The role of the coordinators for project preparation stage will be to ensure this happens.

Coordinators for project execution stage however, seems to me to be a role more suited to the contractor, in more of a site-safety coordination role. This must be done in proportion with the levels of risk involved in the project and there seems little in the regulations to suggest this must be a stand-alone entity. On larger projects I think this is likely to be an independent appointment but on smaller projects I see no reason why it could not be done by suitably trained site managers.

In both cases, they will be responsible for ensuring parties communicate regarding risk during design and build and that the required plans and paperwork are in place. Little change from the current format here.

The Construction Phase Plan is likely to be replaced by the Safety and Health Plan, which looks to be a fairly

similar document. The extent to which it becomes a paper chase though is likely to be down to the coordinators of safety, but it is hoped that the 'proportional risk' message will be emphasised.

One area of interest, which I think will reduce bureaucracy, will be the HSEs wish to see a vastly reduced Approved Code of Practice (ACoP), replaced instead by industry guidance documents. The requirement will be for duty holders to satisfy the regulations, not to blindly follow the ACoP, which should go some way to reducing the torrent of generic paperwork currently frustrating everyone involved.

Another area of change, is likely to be the removal of the formulaic 'competence assessments'

many organisations seem to have adopted as a result of CDM2007- currently the headache of many contracting

"Some have suggested this might mean there will be no need to check the competence of appointees in future, but I don't think so."

businesses. Some have suggested this might mean there will be no need to check the competence of appointees in future, but I don't think so. Everyone has duties to check contractors under the Health and Safety at Work Act, but at least it will be an opportunity to make checks proportional.

Earlier in the article I said there was a distinct chance of new regulations in 2014/15 to leave some room for manoeuvre. The HSE were due to publish a 12-week public consultation in the late summer of 2013, with a view to revised regulations coming into force in October 2014, but as the leaves on the trees are falling and we get the first early frosts, there is still no sign of any consultation. That coupled with an election in May 2015, in which at least one of the possible winners is proposing a referendum on Europe, and an industry reluctant to see further change, who knows what will happen!

Additionally I understand the directive is currently up for review so watch this space - perhaps... ■

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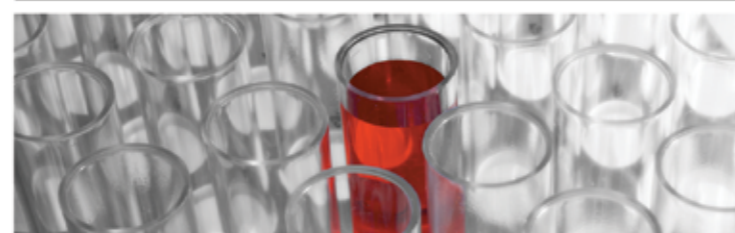
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EXPLAINING GEOTECHNICAL RISKS TO CLIENTS

Writing for *theGeotechnica* this month is Tim Chapman of leading geotechnical consultancy Arup. In this edition Tim discusses the vitally important process of explaining geotechnical risks to clients.

We often lament that clients don't properly value what we as geotechnical engineers do, or invest adequately in what we would like them to do. As a response to this lament, we have two broad options:

- We can keep on lamenting, like British people complaining about the weather, as something that is always mildly inclement and we can do nothing about,
- Or we can engage with them, explain the relevance of what we do in terms they can understand, so they better value our contribution to their success.

The key thing to understand about our clients is that they have many different designers on their side and a myriad of external stakeholders to satisfy too, with a limited and often finite budget. Thus they experience many clamouring voices seeking a greater share of the cake, and every concession leads to a smaller share of the cake left for them at the end. Hence they have evolved strategies for dealing with people seeking money invested which they can't see directly contributing to their

own final bottom line. On a typical building project, there may be 18 different design disciplines, all convinced that their own issues are the most vital for the overall project, and all threatening dire consequences if their demands aren't met. All the client hears is a shrill clamour of voices.

"To make our case, we need to raise ourselves above that fray."

To make our case, we need to raise ourselves above that fray. The critical thing that we need to learn is to understand and speak a language to which our clients can understand and relate. This isn't the techie argument, as most of our clients aren't engineers and won't necessarily appreciate the issues in the way we would like them to; instead it has to relate to the success of their overall project business case, and in particular to cost and delay, to which their plans are most vulnerable.

As geotechnical engineers, our contribution to a building cost is small – perhaps 5 to 7% of

"Hence for those direct project costs, we provide great value..."

a typical urban building project for the various geotechnical elements, including GI, piles and basement costs. Hence for those direct project costs, we provide great value and small perturbations don't massively influence the out-turn cost, provided our work is delivered reliably - that is, without delay - as geotechnical works are inevitably on the project's critical path.

We all know that delays happen all too frequently on construction projects. We are notorious as an industry for our delayed delivery. That being said, the UK's international reputation for timely delivery has improved on the back of large projects like HS1 and the London Olympics. But available data suggests that for ordinary sized projects, significant delays (>1 month) occur in perhaps 40% of projects (which obviously wasn't an acceptable option for the Olympics). Fascinatingly it seems that geotechnical issues seem to be responsible for about half of these significant delays, or perhaps 20% of total significant delays. The significance of these delays need to be seen from the client's perspective. If he or she has a loan of say £100M (£70M for the site and a £30M construction bill for the new build) and is paying 7% interest per year, then a delay costs him £7M per annum or £600,000 per month or £20,000 for every day. Hence a 2 day confusion in an email



exchange would cost him as much as the site's ground investigation (of perhaps £40,000) and a one month delay due to adverse ground conditions that occur on one in five projects would cost at least £600,000, ignoring the costs of putting the delay right – and of any legal costs incurred while he seeks remedy. This equates to at least £120,000 averaged for every project, which in this case would be at least three times the appropriate ground investigation cost.

And for that building project, a reasonable ground investigation would probably only cost some 0.1% of the project cost. And in that reasonable ground investigation, only maybe 0.03% of the soil under the site would be seen, leaving 99.97% of the soil unseen until main construction starts.

An extra dimension to this argument concerns the nature of geotechnical risks. The effects of most risks are normally distributed - hence they are generally manageable and can be considered as "mild". **"However, many geotechnical risks can be catastrophic in their effects..."**

However, many geotechnical risks can be catastrophic in their effects – consider the discovery of valuable archaeology or an abandoned mineshaft late in the construction process, which would generally stop the entire project dead for many months, or conceivably in the latter case lead to site injuries or deaths. Such risks are "wildly" random in terms of their effects, according to

Nassim Nicholas Taleb, author of the "The Black Swan". Mild randomness can be dealt with by the client accepting the risk but maintaining a contingency, as the remedy is likely to be proportionate. But wild randomness can only be dealt with by direct mitigation of the risks, because the consequences are so disproportionately awful. Which means that these hazards need to be engaged with at an early stage and not abdicated or delegated in an uncontrolled way, as sadly can often be the case.

This article is a very abridged summary of Chapter 7 of the ICE Manual of Geotechnical Engineering, published in 2012 by ICE Publishing – if you want to learn more about the data behind this article, please read that chapter. ■

THE GEOTECHNICAL ACADEMY

PASSING OUT OF GROUP 1

Writing for *theGeotechnica* this month is Peter Reading, Technical Director of the [Equipe Group](#). This month, Pete provides readers with an update on the first group of successful graduates from The Geotechnical Academy - a collaboration between Geotechnical Engineering Limited and Equipe Training Limited.

Last month saw Group 1 of the Geotechnical Academy complete their final module at the Geotechnical Academy, and January will see the start of Group 5.

What started out as an idea from Andrew Milne the Managing Director of Geotechnical Engineering has now developed into a sought after concept which has gone from strength to strength. So what has makes this training concept different to others?

The original idea from Andrew Milne has been developed together with Equipe Training into a thriving training network. The concept was to produce a series of training modules held at monthly intervals to further the understanding and knowledge of people relatively new to the geotechnical world or who require an update. Each module deals with a separate geotechnical subject. The modules are designed to take delegates on a journey from concept to completion of a

geotechnical investigation and build into a comprehensive series of modules. The courses use current standards and codes throughout.

“The structure of each day is devised to develop debate and discussion.”

The structure of each day is devised to develop debate and discussion. The day starts with a lecture on the subject for the day. This is generally about 1.5 to 2 hours. For most modules this is followed by practical demonstrations or a site visit. The courses are held at the offices of Geotechnical Engineering which means there are superb facilities available including a yard; stores and a laboratory for the delegates to see and handle equipment and understand how it works.

These practical sessions focus and make the subject matter much more relevant.



They enable the delegates to see equipment in use and whenever possible actually carry out tests. This gives a real insight into how for example testing is carried out. The practical sessions are followed by exercises and discussion these are less structured but are guided by the tutor they either develop some of the messages from the day or they will revolve around issues brought to the discussion by the delegates.

The tutor Pete Reading explained “I have been very pleased with the format we have adopted with a good mix of technical presentations and practical exercises and demonstrations. The afternoon open discussion sessions have been particularly successful

and have opened some very good in depth discussions both on technical aspects and some of the challenges our industry currently faces”.

“Subjects include design of an investigation, CDM and working safety on geotechnical sites, this is followed by a look at investigation methods what they deliver and some of their limitations.”

Subjects include design of an investigation, CDM and working safety on geotechnical sites, this is followed by a

look at investigation methods what they deliver and some of their limitations. The next sessions deal with insitu testing; instrumentation and monitoring and laboratory testing. These all include practical sessions where the delegates are instructed on how to do tests and what the results should look like. The final modules include building the ground model and identifying and managing risk. One of the strengths of the academy is that the delegates generally come from very different backgrounds and this means they bring their own perspective to the discussions. This has led to some very lively debates.

By running the courses within a geotechnical facility has

enabled people such as Andrew Milne Managing Director of Geotechnical Engineering and Ken Lee, Supervisor/Training officer for Geotechnical Engineering Ltd, to join the sessions and impart their vast experience to the group. It was particularly enlightening when Ken joined the group to talk about drilling and investigation **“It’s always good to be able to temper theory with sound practical experience.”**

methods. It’s always good to be able to temper theory with sound practical experience.

To bring the experience into the real world visits have been arranged to Stroud ►►



to see the redevelopment of the canal. Here boreholes were drilled in the most difficult terrain. During the visit the logistics of drilling alongside a very overgrown water course was discussed along with health and safety issues. This site also gave the delegates the opportunity to see the end result and examine the reconstructed canal basin with contiguous bores piled walls, designed slopes and ground anchors. As well as the obvious health and safety issues the group were able to discuss what parameters and testing would be appropriate in this situation.

More recently two groups have visited the Cinderford site. Here several rotary rigs were seen working in a highly sensitive location. The group were able to discuss issues of access and impact of rig and vehicle movements along with the measures needed to ensure the large colony of bats were not disturbed along with Dormice and great crested newts. This site demonstrated how various disciplines such as ornithologists ecologists Natural England and other interested bodies are commonly required to work together to ensure the impact of investigation works is minimalised, but at the same time trying to complete the works to the contract programme and deliver the technical requirements of the Consultant.

Between sessions the groups keep in touch with the use of LinkedIn. This enables discussion to develop following on from the previous session...

of LinkedIn. This enables discussion to develop following on from the previous session and also looking at the subject for the next session. The linked in groups are only accessible to the group and their sponsors. These groups will continue to communicate and develop after the end of the set of modules.

It is clear from the delegates that the Academy is catering for a diverse set of engineers who need a better understanding of the geotechnical investigation and data collection process. In today's very demanding environment many companies are finding they need their staff to be better informed but do not have the time for them to be trained in house and on the job. The current market is too demanding to allow time for this nurturing. The Geotechnical Academy can provide this need.

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Email: geotech@geoeng.co.uk

RGI GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION

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Tel/Fax: 01926 886329 **Mob:** 07748871546
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drilling equipment

DRILLWELL

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S21 2JU
Tel: 0114 248 7833 **Fax:** 0114 2487997
Email: sales@drillwell.co.uk

field instrumentation

CONCEPT

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Tel: 020 8811 2880 **Fax:** 020 8811 2881
Email: si@conceptconsultants.co.uk

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Email: info@geo-observations.com

geophysics

EUROPEAN GEOPHYSICAL SERVICES

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Email: eurogeophys@europeangeophysical.com

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Email: web@terradat.co.uk

geotechnical software

KEYNETX LTD

Systems Park, Moons Park, Burnt Meadow Road,
Redditch, Worcestershire, B98 9PA
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Email: sales@keynetix.com

geotechnical specialists

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Email: hawarden.sales@alcontrol.com

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Tel: 01923 892 190 **Fax:** 01923 892 191
Email: admin@geolabs.co.uk

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Unit 8, Olds Close, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 9RU
Tel: 01923 711288 **Fax:** 01923 711311
Email: office@k4soils.com

site investigation

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Email: si@conceptconsultants.co.uk

training and education

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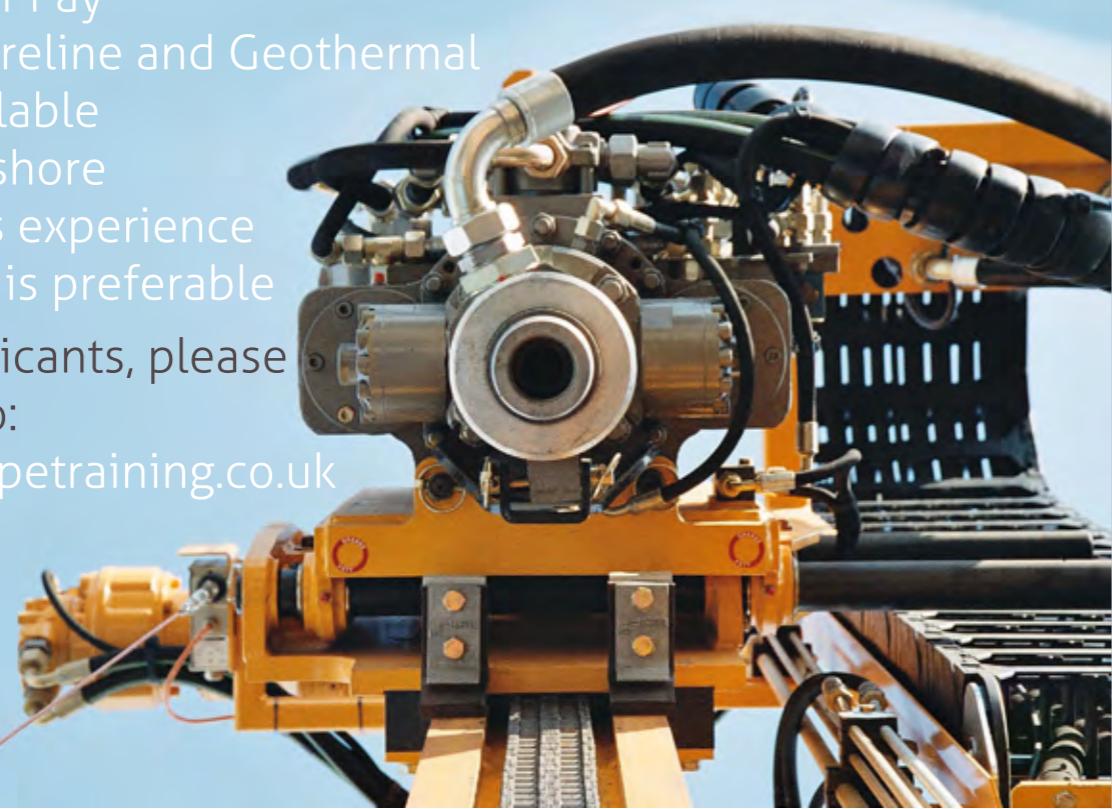
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