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SARPA
ASSOCIATION
PROFIBUS & PROFINET

NEWSLETTER

Students receive PROFIBUS training

The Automation Training Council in South Africa, established as a joint effort between the Southern African Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the PROFIBUS User Group of Southern Africa, has trained 61 students since August 2007. In addition, nine lecturers at South African educational institutes have benefited. In effect, this means that seven local educational institutions now have a base of cutting-edge lecturers. This has been made possible by initial funding from the German Federal Ministry of Cooperation and Development through its agency SEQUA.

Support from local companies

Local companies – Siemens, ABB, LappKabel and IDX Online – have also supported the initiative, with in excess of R560 000 raised to match the SEQUA funding which includes equipment supplied to training institutions.

Dieter Dilchert, initiator and former chairman, said, "It is encouraging to see that the German industry is prepared to throw its weight behind South African skills upliftment for disadvantaged students, especially in this case where cutting-edge technology is naturally associated with German technology."

Invitation to participate

Dieter invites more companies and organisations to become involved in this opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the much needed skills development process in South Africa. Dieter said, "If your plant runs on PROFIBUS, or you are considering the technology, you can only benefit by contributing to this initiative, as it opens up opportunities for very bright and talented students to become immediately employable.

Training courses have been run in Johannesburg, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Anyone interested should contact Dieter on 082 456 0903 or email dieter@solarcon.co.za.

Development of PROFIBUS and PROFINET increases

Interest in PROFIBUS and PROFINET and the umbrella organisation behind them, PI (PROFIBUS & PROFINET International), continues. The 21st PI meeting was held in early July 2009 in Krakow, Poland. Over 80 representatives attended from 22 countries, including Australia, South Africa, China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, USA, and Chile, as well as numerous European countries. This year's event was the largest since the PI organisation was founded in 1995. It also marked

the first meeting attended by a representative from India, where a regional PROFIBUS & PROFINET Association (RPA) is currently being established. The main purpose of the annual PI meetings is to promote the exchange and transfer of knowledge among RPAs. This international cooperation produces significant synergy effects in the development of innovative solutions that are tailored to applications. In addition, cross-country projects and marketing actions as well as global marketing strategies are developed and coordinated within this international body.

The PI Competence Centres (PICCs) as well as the PI Training Centres (PITCs) and PI Test Labs (PITLs), which stand for technical support and quality assurance in the areas of technology and training, also met in Krakow at the same time as the PI meeting. Here, too, the number of accredited service providers continues to grow constantly. Today, a total of 42 PICCs and 16 PITCs are part of the global PI organisation. They provide support to users and manufacturers in case of technical issues and offer certified training courses for becoming a 'Certified Engineer' or 'Certified Installer'. No other community of interest in the area of industrial communication can rival this comprehensive network of expertise and know-how.



Presentation of a Profibus training board to the Vaal University of Technology (VUT) by SA Profibus and the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry). From left: Dieter Dilchert, Professor Irene N Moutlana (Vice-chancellor and Principal of VUT), Annelie Jordaan (Durban University of Technology) and At Roux (VUT and Chairman of the University Automation Training Council).