



Annual Activity Report 2005

ECED – European Confederation of Equipment Distributors

Since 1999, SIGMA - the Belgian trade federation - acts as secretariat for ECED, the European umbrella federation of importers, distributors and hirers of equipment for civil engineering and material handling.

ECED, with registered office in Brussels, unites the national organisations of the following countries: Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Austria, the United Kingdom, and the Czech Republic. This year ECED has also welcomed the Hungarian federation. Mister L.M. Lubbers from the Netherlands is ECED's President.

Because of this membership, ECED is to be considered as a representative European professional association. ECED will expand this representativeness even further in the future, more specifically towards the new (and future) Member States of the European Union. To this purpose we received the aid of a Hungarian student in 2005 to help us get an overview of all national federations within these 10 new Member States, as well as an overview of all other European countries wanting to join the EU shortly. This was called the "Enlargement Project".

It soon became obvious that not many organised professional federations existed in these (primarily) Eastern European countries. That is why individual companies were contacted with the proposal to make use of the expertise and experience of ECED's members to help build new federations. In this respect ECED is also checking if it is possible to apply for EU funds or to participate in already existing European programmes.

Moreover, together with its American counterpart A.E.D (the American Equipment Distributors), ECED constitutes ILC (International Liason Committee). The latter promotes the sector's interests on the international level. As already demonstrated by the Enlargement Project, the President was likewise motivated to tighten the connections on an international level and a meeting took place in Brussels between the "lobbyists" of both federations.

On the European level, ECED represents and promotes the interests of its members and every year some new topics and projects are prepared by these members during the General Assemblies (in 2005 these took place in Paris and Stockholm).

Please find below a selection of matters presently being dealt with within the different ECED meetings:

- The continuous development of a Stolen Machinery Database (www.eced-register.nl/eced/public/), into which all members of the national federations can feed their stolen machinery, so that all possible interested parties (like the owners of course, but also the police, insurance companies, etc.) can look these up when in need for this kind of information. This project was created on the proposal of 4 countries, being Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Germany, but is already backed by the other members of ECED. All of whom will, on the national level, urge their member companies to actively use the database. This is good news, considering the growing thefts of machines on sites and the growing interest in European initiatives on this matter.
- Another important initiative is the development of a common policy concerning the rental activities in the affiliated countries. That is why it was decided, during the assembly in Paris, to lay the foundations for the incorporation of the rental business within ECED and of a possible department or section especially founded for this purpose. Steps are being taken to create the “ECED Hire Section” as such. In this respect ECED also continued to develop and analyse a specific questionnaire, emanating from the “Hiring Room”, a separate committee within ECED.
- Furthermore a European “Code of Good Conduct” was drawn up containing specific notions on the relationship between manufacturers and importers/distributors/hirers to avoid unnecessary vagueness about mutual contractual obligations. Linked to this, there exists also a mechanism for mutual dispute settlement through mediation.
- As a logical consequence steps were also taken towards approaching the European manufacturers federation CECE, and mutual intentions were exchanged to cooperate on certain points (*i.e.* European and technical regulations and standards, theft of machinery, rental activities, statistics, etc.).
- Entirely new was the draft of a “Position Paper”, showing the position and concern of the members regarding the proposal for a European directive leading to the liberalisation of the provision of services in the Internal Market (the so called “Bolkestein Directive”). This document was sent to all European institutions and other federations and was positively welcomed by some key players within the European Parliament.

If you want a copy of this “Position Paper” or further information concerning ECED, please have a look at the updated website www.eced-association.org.

President: Leo Lubbers (NL)
 Secretary General: Philippe Decrock (B)
 Deputy Secretary General/ Tom Antonissen (B)