

2nd April 2009

***'Building'* for the Future**

- Construction industry determined to weather the storm -

"We're here today at the Construction Plant Show to protect one of the country's most important industries that has raised billions for the economy and developed Ireland's infrastructure dramatically over the past ten years. It's crucial that the Construction industry continues to promote itself and maintain a presence which is why this year's Construction Plant Show is more important than ever before," comments Tom Parlon, Director General of the Construction Industry Federation (CIF).

Taking place at Punchestown Event Centre from today (Thursday 2nd April) until Saturday, the Construction Plant Show is supported by the **Irish Contractors Plant Association (ICPA)** and **Construction Industry Federation (CIF)**. Together, the organisers and industry bodies have taken the valiant decision to continue with this year's biennial show, despite the postponement of numerous trade shows including the British Commercial Vehicle Show and Hillhead.

Mr. Parlon continues:

"There are currently 190,000 people employed in the sector and it's vital that we fight to keep these jobs in the industry. Just a few days prior to the budget, we would call on the government to ensure continued investment in infrastructure, as a substantial portion of private industry dovetails on the back of public projects also."*

Celebrating talent in the industry, the quirky Caterpillar Operators' Challenge, run by industry stalwarts, McCormick MacNaughton, takes place at the Construction Plant Show from today. Although a more modest event this year, the Challenge measures operators' skills in standardised equipment. For business owners and managers, educational seminars from the Hire Association Europe will be delivered on upcoming legislation, best practice and duty of care plus how to get the most out of your insurance.

Garret Buckley, Joint Managing Director of Expo Events (Organisers of the Show), adds:

"The Construction Plant Show was borne out of interest in heavy plant machinery six years ago. Attracting 4,500 visitors in 2007, it was amongst the most well-attended trade shows in the country. With all-industry support for this year's show, combined with the commitment of long-term exhibitors such as Pat O'Donnell, McHales, Liebherr, JCB, Swan Plant Hire Ltd, and McSharry Bros, we're determined to ride out the storm and sustain interest in construction in this country."

Tom Parlon concludes:

"The number of school leavers signing up for trade apprenticeships has plummeted and talented tradesmen are emigrating in order to find work. We must endeavour to nurture the workmanship in this country and encourage the next generation as the tide WILL turn. Activities such as the Caterpillar Operator's Challenge are a great way to engage younger people and construction trade shows will ensure the industry stays front-of mind in the coming years."

The inaugural Recycling and Waste Handling show is running alongside the Construction Plant show. The trade show has been created to encourage businesses to take responsibility for their waste management needs and help to maintain Ireland's reputation for excellence in recycling.

The Construction Plant Show and Recycling & Waste Handling Show takes place from 2-4th April at Punchestown Event Centre, Co. Kildare. The Caterpillar Operators Challenge will be running from 1.30 - 4.30pm tomorrow and from 11am - 1pm, and 2-4pm on Saturday, 4th April.

For further information: www.constructionplantshow.com and www.rawh.ie.

- Ends -

*Employment in construction has fallen from 255,000 in the last quarter of 08, to 190,000 currently.

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