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NEW SURFACE TREATMENT CONTROL & MONITORING SYSTEM DEVELOPED BY VACU-BLAST FOR DEMANDING APPLICATIONS

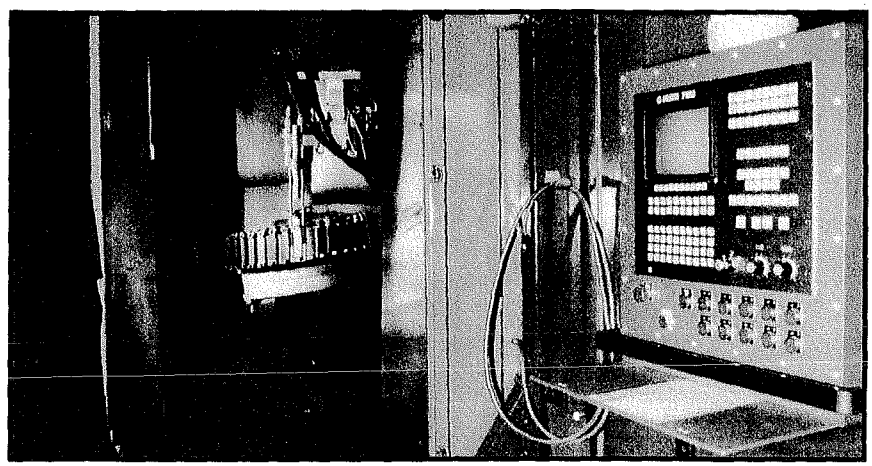
Vacu-Blast Ltd (Slough, Berkshire, UK) has introduced a new process control system for the regulation and monitoring of specialist aerospace and other critical shot-peening and surface treatment equipment.

The system – called 'Vacutrol' – was developed originally to meet the growing demand from the aircraft industry, for an advanced, 'user friendly' means of controlling the critical surface treatment operations which are now an integral part of aerospace production and maintenance procedures. Additionally, the system is already being adopted in other areas of manufacturing industry for demanding surface treatment applications where reproduceability of surface finish is vital.

Built to the toughest industrial standards, 'Vacutrol' is an interactive system providing machine operators with step-by-step set-up and control instructions via a video display. Operators can interrogate the system for component identification, and all parameters affecting the correct processing of a component can be displayed in real time.

The system can store and recall operating programs dedicated to particular components and can be taught to handle new components on a point-to-point basis, using the associated 'Vacuteach' programming software.

'Vacutrol' also has the capability to perform multiple operations on the same component, even when a change of tooling is involved. It monitors shot or abrasive media flow conditions and processing pressure, in addition to other machine functions. If necessary, the system will take over responsibility from the operator in order to ensure exact compliance with processing parameters. These exceed Mil Spec requirements.



The 'Vacutrol' process control system from Vacu-Blast is used here for monitoring the shot-peening of an aerospace component.

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