



So What Are We To Do?

In the past few weeks, we've received letters announcing price increases from several suppliers. The reasons range from increased costs for oil, copper and steel, to new anti-pollution laws in China. You have to wonder if these increases are the start of an inflationary period that will slow the economic recovery.

Price increases were a big topic of discussion among OEMs at the Metal Casting Congress in Chicago this spring. Everyone we talked with at the show feels like they can't pass prices on to the consumer. On the positive side, these same OEMs are busy and have many orders so they aren't being squeezed to raise prices at this time.

Take Control

So what are we to do about the uncertain economy? One of the things we did at EI was to develop a big valve that throws 3,000 lbs. of shot a minute. While that sounds counter-productive, it's really not. Many Asian and European blast cleaning facilities want controlled blasting processes and the WM 3000-24 was built in response to that demand. It will reduce media usage, downtime, and wear and tear on the blast machines. A controlled process cuts costs for our customers in several areas and the valves provide a fast return on investment.

We've also taken a close look at our own engineering and manufacturing programs and made improvements where needed. Because EI is working smarter, we can do things like offer a new value-added Almen strip without price increases.

It used to be that working lean implied that we were skimping on something, either manpower or materials. The irony is that lean processes can yield better results. There's no better example than shot peening. A designer can spec a smaller component if it's been shot peened and the

component will be stronger with a longer fatigue life.

Look to the Future

The ICSP-11 Organizing Committee has been very encouraged by the quantity and quality of paper submissions to the upcoming conference. If the paper topics are any indication, we can anticipate that shot peening and related processes will continue to be a viable industry for the future. For example, research will be presented on nano materials, medical implant peening, roller burnishing, laser shock peening, residual stress measurement, non-destructive testing and much, much more.

Get Involved

I know that I bring this up all of the time, but please consider volunteering your time to SAE committees like AMEC. There is no better way to control your own destiny than to actively participate in the development of new specs and updating existing specs. Another benefit is that you'll be working with other industry leaders. Have you ever heard that if you want to improve your game, you play with someone better than you? The people on the AMEC committee are the best of the best and they want you to join them. ●

In Memory

The shot peening community has lost two wonderful colleagues: Bob Gillespie and Dominique Schwab. We offer our heartfelt condolences to their families, friends and business associates.

In Appreciation

We stand in awe of the strength and courage of the Japanese people.