



Professional Electrical Apparatus Recyclers League (PEARL)

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New Remanufacturing Industry Council Director Wants to Define, Raise Remanufacturing Awareness

AURORA, Colorado, June 17, 2013 – Derek Guest, the new executive director of the Remanufacturing Industry Council (RIC), has a few ideas on where he'd like to take the organization.

He describes two major goals: expanding RIC membership – which would help to increase the organization's influence and thus support growth of the remanufacturing industry as a whole – and more clearly defining what the industry does.

Half a year into his tenure, he has already taken important steps toward achieving these goals. In April, in part to increase visibility of the RIC – and thus build its membership – he organized and administered the 2013 Remanufacturing Industry Roundtable, held at the Golisano Institute for Sustainability (Rochester, New York). The meeting featured a host of distinguished speakers from across the industry discussing an array of topics. Among them: the economy, the impact of environmental regulations, and research and technology developments.

At the end of the meeting, attendees sat down to discuss priorities for growth and sustainability, as well as the variety of obstacles and opportunities the industry faces. They agreed that one of the greatest impediments to industry growth is that the definition of remanufacturing is poorly misunderstood. Too often people confuse it with other practices such as recycling and refurbishing. Bill Schofield, PEARL member, PEARL Past-President, and President of Circuit Breaker Sales Co., Inc. (Gainesville, Texas) chairs the RIC committee tasked with helping to define remanufacturing. "My committee is lucky to have input from both large and small remanufacturing companies so that we can develop a working definition that clarifies and promotes the economic and environmental benefits of remanufacturing while helping to overcome remaining trade barriers," he explains.

Guest and other RIC members decided to meet this challenge head-on. "One of our major goals is to increase understanding of what remanufacturing really is and distinguish it from other practices," Guest says. This would strengthen its reputation and help when engaging governments about trade barriers, for example – an important issue for the industry.

"PEARL and RIC are facing some of the same issues in the United States regarding product acceptance," adds Malcom Frederick, PEARL member, PEARL Past-President, and Houston Operations Manager for Shermco Industries, Inc. (Angleton, Texas). "These challenges stem from a lack of understanding in the value, quality, and reliability that remanufactured products have. There are many companies producing remanufactured products that are as good as new, and in many cases the remanufactured products are better than when they were new. This is possible since most products are retrofitted with components that have newer technology, which increases the quality, safety, and reliability."

He continues: "Remanufacturing is a smart process for our future and will continue to make our country stronger, cleaner, and more competitive in the world markets. PEARL and RIC are a great team and have a mission to educate our industries on the facts, values, and to improve the processes which will ensure that remanufacturing delivers safe, quality, and reliable products in an efficient, clean, and effective process. PEARL continues to set higher standards for the reconditioning and remanufacturing industry

through our reconditioning standards, technical certification program, annual training, and industry collaboration to ensure that reconditioned and remanufactured electrical equipment is safe and reliable.”

More clearly defining remanufacturing is an ongoing effort, even within the industry. In recent months, RIC has been collaborating with other industry organizations to determine a globally accepted definition, “something that associations worldwide can agree on so we can advocate together,” Guest says. “It sounds like a simple task, but given the diversity of the industry and the regional and national differences, it’s actually quite a challenge.”

He added, though: “We’re very, very close.”

All of these efforts are taking place alongside the usual business of heading up the industry organization. In October of last year, the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC), an independent, nonpartisan, quasi-judicial federal agency, released a report on the remanufacturing industry, conducted at the request of Congress as part of an ongoing effort to promote U.S. exports. RIC invited the USITC and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to the April roundtable to discuss the findings, as well as ways in which the organizations might work together in the future.

Guest emphasizes the importance of strengthening these relationships. Since the April meeting, China has issued a proposal to develop a series of ISO standards for remanufacturing mechanical products. “It’s important for us to be part of the dialogue,” he says, “and working with the USTR and other groups will be critical to that.”

About PEARL

Founded in 1997, the Professional Electrical Apparatus Recyclers League (**PEARL**) creates, collects, and disseminates information, policies, procedures, and standards to ensure the proper recycling and reuse of electrical power equipment. Its 70+ corporate members must meet strict technical, safety, and operational requirements. For more information, visit www.pearl1.org.

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