

ESTA Directions December 2003

by Mike Wood

As was reported during the ESTA Annual Dinner at ETS-LDI (which, by the way, is becoming an event not to miss – over 300 attendees this year) rapid progress is being made on the Entertainment Technician Certification Program. The groundwork that the working groups have done on the bodies of knowledge is in place and it will soon be time to get the test experts involved to begin the exhaustive process ensuring that the programs are rigorous yet fair and unbiased.

You won't be surprised to hear that producing such a program to develop high quality, rigorous certifications is extremely expensive and that it cannot go forward without the support of the industry. The good news is that it is fully expected that the program will become self-sustaining once the whole process is in place but there's an awful lot to do before we reach that point. So we are asking for donations for development costs only – a one time commitment paid out over three years.

The fundraising campaign was officially launched in Orlando at LDI but several companies and individuals had already stepped forward to take the lead and kickoff the fundraising campaign. In fact, at the time of writing, we've already raised over \$195,000 towards our goal of \$750,000! That's a great start and we all owe these early, farsighted, contributors a debt of thanks for leading the charge. I would like to particularly thank Bob Theis and Tom Young of J.R. Clancy who not only made a large contribution but also were the first to come forward, completely unsolicited.

If you think personnel certification is important to our industry and will help make it a safer place to work then we hope you will join these contributors to help make this program a reality. Please act soon - the program won't happen if you don't.

It's been a few years now since ESTA established its Code of Conduct and we have had very few grievances reported. However, this year the Ethics Committee received its first formal complaint to be taken the whole way through the process including a formal hearing. In this case the grievance was accepted and was felt to be significant enough for the strictest sanction to be applied resulting in the member company being expelled from ESTA. So - the process works and has now been seen to work. Remember it is there for you to use if you believe that any ESTA member is breaching the conduct rules.

Turning to a happier topic, the election results for 2004 are now in and congratulations on their re-election are due to Cindi Manning (Vincent Lighting Systems), Dealer Vice President; Tim Hansen (Oasis Stage Werks), Dealer Director and Graham Likeness (Pathway Connectivity), Manufacturer Director. A new face on the Board will be Duncan MacKenzie, (Proskenion Design) elected as Affiliate Director. Thanks are due to Warren Cunningham (Communilux Productions) who steps down this year.

Finally, I have a confession. We forgot Erik in the elections, we'd been thinking of him as Secretary for life but he really isn't! He got left off the ballot in error. In these circumstances ESTA is permitted to carry out a special fax ballot. You will have received this in early December – thanks to all those who returned it promptly, Erik was duly re-elected and we have a Secretary for the January Board meeting...