



UKCA Comes into Effect on 01/01/2021

The UKCA (UK Conformity Assessed) marking is a new UK product marking that is used for goods being placed on the market in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland). It covers most goods which previously required the CE marking. The UKCA marking alone cannot be used for goods placed on the Northern Ireland market, which require the CE marking or UKNI marking. The technical requirements ('essential requirements') you must meet – and the conformity assessment processes and standards that can be used to demonstrate conformity – are largely the same as they were for the CE marking.

The UKCA marking came into effect on 1 January 2021. However, to allow businesses time to adjust to the new requirements, you will still be able to use the CE marking until 1 January 2022 in most cases. In some cases, you need to apply the new UKCA marking to goods being sold in Great Britain immediately from 1 January 2021.

The CE marking is only valid in Great Britain for areas where GB and EU rules remain the same. If the EU changes its rules and you CE mark your product on the basis of those new rules you will not be able to use the CE marking to sell in Great Britain, even before 31 December 2021.

The UKCA marking is not recognised on the EU market. Products need a CE marking for sale in the EU. You only need to use the new UKCA marking before 1 January 2022 if all of the following apply. Your product:

- is for the market in Great Britain
- is covered by legislation which requires the UKCA marking
- requires mandatory third-party conformity assessment
- conformity assessment has been carried out by a UK conformity assessment body

This does not apply to existing stock, for example if your good was fully manufactured, CE marked and ready to place on the market before 1 January 2021. In these cases, your good can still be sold in Great Britain with a CE marking even if covered by a certificate of conformity issued by a UK body before 1 January 2021.

Taiwan CSC Back to Pre-pandemic Profit Level in Jan. 2021

Taiwan CSC's revenue in January 2021 reached NTD 30.81 billion, hovering above the 30 billion mark for two straight months. Pre-tax net profit reached NTD 3.61 billion, up 42% over the previous month and up a whopping 386% over the previous year. CSC expects the recovery of the main economic entities including the U.S., Europe, Japan and China will create an uptrend for the steel market in the second half of 2021 that outperforms the first half.



CSC was in deficit until last July. The steel market reversed the downtrend in the second half of last year, and saw the monthly and quarterly steel price rise which increased CSC's profits. Last November, CSC turned the deficit into profits. In January 2021, CSC's profit landed at NTD 3.61 billion and was back at the pre-pandemic level.

The steel prices from January to March 2021 increased by 6.1%, 9.5% and 2.5 respectively. CSC said its price adjustment has been mild. It raised the price by less than 20% in the first quarter. It sold 874.8 thousand tons of carbon steel in January 2021 which marked a domestic sales ratio of 71%. The domestic sales ratio this year is expected to be higher than last year thanks to business owners returning from China, infrastructure construction, a vibrant housing market, and more demand from fastener clients.

CSC expects to deliver up to 3.05 million tons of steel products in the first quarter of 2021 and hopefully 3.1 million tons in the second quarter of 2021. The uptrend of the economy as a whole has a positive influence on the steel market as electric vehicle development and public construction are driving the market.

Quintain Steel Raises March Wire Rod Price by NTD 1,000

Quintain Steel announced on February 25 the wire rod price for March which was up NTD 1,000. It came as a result of the heightened price of steel billets as well as vibrant downstream demand. The announced price applies to wire rods for low carbon hardware, fasteners and threaded rods used for construction.



Formosa (Taiwan) Plastics Group's Steel Plant in Vietnam Turns Losses into Profits

The Vietnam plant (Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation, FHTS) grows rapidly and has had its first turnaround with profit gains since its establishment in November 2020. With the steel price expected to steer up continuously from last December to this February, the Vietnam plant could see monthly growth during this year. The plant spans up to 30 million square meters with a third furnace to be in place

and a "steel satellite city (2 million square meters)" preliminary plan in arrangement to draw dozens of companies in steel processing, fastener manufacturing, transportation, inventory and maintenance in June this year. The plan gained support from steel-related industries.

FHTS President Chen Yuan-Cheng says arranging a large industrial land for Vietnam requires compliance to environmental requirements. The demand in Vietnam is large and this country is now the most popular place in Southeast Asia drawing investments from multiple industries. The fastener industry also sees it as a critical base, especially because the said Vietnam plant provides a stable source of steel and will create massive midstream and downstream steel-consuming industries.



Malaysia Automotive Association Releases Production & Sales Results for 2020

According to the association, a higher than expected performance in the last quarter of 2020 helped to reduce the expected decline in the total sales for full year of 2020. On the whole, the total sales registered in 2020 were 529,434 units, a decrease of 74,847 units or 12.4% compared to 2019 with 604,281 units. Despite a double-digit drop, it was nonetheless a good achievement for the local automotive industry given the extremely challenging environment. It was higher than what MAA had forecasted at 470,000 units. The sales tax exemption announced by the government effective from 15 June 2020 boosted sales in the second half of the year.

Production of new vehicles in year 2020 also decreased 86,446 units or 15% to reach a total of 485,186 units compared to 571,632 units in 2019. The industry lost over two months of vehicles production in 2020.

EU Offers 2.9 Billion Euros Funds to Enhance EV Battery Production

EU announced to provide multiple corporations including Tesla and BMW with 2.9 billion euros to enhance EV battery production within the region. EU has started public fundraising and estimates the total investment value at 12 billion euros. The fund receivers are 42 corporations including a joint venture between Fiat Chrysler and PSA, as well as the startup EV battery developer Northvolt AB.

EU hopes to reduce dependence on Asian companies by procuring EV batteries. The European EV battery market value will reach 250 billion euros by 2025.



Companies Development



PROFIL® Launches New Website

PROFIL®, a PennEngineering® company and leading global manufacturer of mechanically attached fasteners for the automotive market, has announced the launch of a new website, www.profil-global.com. The new website, available in English and German, provides visitors with an enhanced user experience that makes it easy to learn about PROFIL® products, installation methods, and application usage.

PROFIL® is the world's premier global manufacturer of Mechanically Attached Fasteners (MAF), an alternative to traditional weld fasteners, for the automotive industry. For over 50 years, PROFIL® has partnered with the world's leading automotive OEMs to develop and engineer high integrity, cost-effective joining solutions for a wide range of demanding vehicle applications.



Bulten Inaugurates New Factory in Taiwan

Bulten has inaugurated a new production facility in Taipei, Taiwan through its subsidiary PSM Fasteners Taiwan Ltd. With the establishment of the new facility, Bulten has strengthened its position as an international supplier of fastener solutions and created very good conditions for managing future growth.

“Taiwan is a center for fastener manufacturing in Asia and the world, with great know-how and proximity to necessary infrastructure as a machine and tool manufacturer. Having a modern manufacturing facility in Taiwan is important for Bulten and is an essential step for our future growth,” says Anders Nyström, President and CEO of Bulten. The move to the new factory has been carried through according to plan. The new facility enables more efficient and sustainable operation and forms a basis for further expansion.



Grainger Announces Appointments of Chief Financial Officer and President of Grainger Business Unit

Grainger, the leading broad line supplier of maintenance, repair and operating (MRO) products serving businesses and institutions, announced executive leadership appointments. Deidra (Dee) Merriwether, currently Senior Vice President (SVP) and President, North American Sales and Services, has been named Chief Financial Officer. Paige Robbins, currently SVP, Chief Technology, Merchandising, Marketing and Strategy Officer, has been named SVP and President of the Grainger Business Unit, comprised of Grainger businesses in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Puerto Rico.

The Grainger Business Unit will merge all commercial functions for the Grainger brand in North America into a single organization. This new structure will help drive profitable share gain and exceptional customer solutions across geographies. Merriwether and Robbins will assume their new roles effective immediately.

SOUTHCO Expands India Operations Footprint

SOUTHCO® is pleased to announce the official opening of its expanded facility in Ranjangoan, Pune, India. The 20,000 square foot expansion, which commenced in 2019, has tripled available office space and doubled the manufacturing space and distribution footprint, positioning Southco for future growth in the fastest growing market in the world.

After a decade of phenomenal performance in the Indian market, Southco India's increased production capacity, coupled with continued investment in sales, engineering and marketing resources will allow Southco to better serve its local customers. Southco will continue to bring new manufacturing technologies to India and produce more parts locally to support the "Make in India" initiative of the Indian Government.

“The expansion of our operations footprint in India contributes to Southco's strategy of driving global business growth” said Prakash T. John, General Manager of Southco India. “This is not only an opportunity to bring more jobs to the area, but it is a long-term commitment of Southco to deliver more value to our customers and meet the growing needs of the Indian market.”





OPTIMAS

Optimas Completes Global IATF Certification

Optimas Solutions, a global industrial manufacturer/distributor and service provider, announced it has completed IATF Certification for its worldwide operations by adding its center of excellence in Pune, India, and new distribution sites in Mexicali, Mexico, and Lockbourne, OH, placing it at a level of quality assurance certification unmatched in the fastener industry. IATF Certification comes from the International Automotive Task Force and represents the highest level of quality assurance in the automotive industry and beyond. This coupled with the company's annual achievement of ISO 9001 certification is a high-water mark for Optimas as the first time all its global operations have achieved these levels of certification.

According to Optimas CEO Marc Strandquist, this achievement opens more doors for securing new business and working at new levels with existing customers. "We are one of very few fastener suppliers and manufacturers that have IATF registration, which is well recognized outside of the automotive industry as a premiere level of quality assurance in the business world," he said. "Our Manufacturing Solutions strategy announced last August is once again paying off for our customers and suppliers alike."

Simpson Strong-Tie Announces Mike Olosky to be New Chief Operating Officer

Simpson Strong-Tie, the leader in engineered structural connectors and building solutions, recently announced the appointment of Mike Olosky to Simpson Manufacturing Co., Inc.'s executive leadership team as Chief Operating Officer (COO).

A senior executive with more than a decade of global management experience in Asia and Europe, Olosky was most recently President of Henkel North America and Head of the company's Industrial and Electronics division. Previously Olosky was Head of Innovation for Henkel's Adhesive Technologies



business and President of Henkel Asia Pacific.

Olosky holds degrees in mechanical engineering from Michigan Technological University and Oakland University and received his MBA from Michigan State University's Eli Broad School of Business. Simpson Strong-Tie is the primary subsidiary of Simpson Manufacturing Co., Inc.



Super Cheng to Invest NTD 0.7 bn in Setting up a New Plant and R&D Center in Kaohsiung

Focusing its product sales mainly in the N. American market, Taiwan's leading lock nuts and high-strength bolts manufacturing giant, Super Cheng Industrial Co., Ltd., plans to invest NTD 0.7 billion in setting up a brand new "low-carbon-emission and energy-saving" plant and R&D center in Gangshan District of Kaohsiung (Taiwan), in response to the increasing market demand for customized products and automotive fasteners, as well as reinforce the manufacturing capacity for special fasteners and diversify its existing product range. The new plant will be completed with the introduction of Smart Manufacturing and Fully Automated Warehouse to improve capacity and efficiency. In addition, Super Cheng will also hire more product R&D staff to develop more suitable products according to various customers' demands at the new products R&D center.

Established in 1982, Super Cheng's main products include: all metal lock nuts, nylon insert lock nuts, flange nylon insert nuts, flange bolts, socket head cap screws, OEM parts, and auto parts.





Acquisitions

WINA Acquires Atlantic Fasteners, Inc. to Grow New Construction Services Division

Würth Industry North America (WINA) announced that it has acquired Atlantic Fasteners Inc., a mainstay in the structural industry with 36 years of history manufacturing structural bolts and distributing standard and specialty fasteners. The purchase will better serve the needs of Würth Industry's customers in the construction and structural markets by providing end to end distribution and manufacturing support and will deepen their geographic footprint in the mid-Atlantic region. Atlantic Fasteners will join Würth's new construction services business division, Würth Construction Services.



This acquisition fits into Würth Industry's strategy to provide expert supply chain solutions of structural fasteners, safety, and MRO products and complements Würth Industry's strength in the construction market as the premier distributor of structural products for fabricators, erectors, and the metal building industry. The acquisition of Atlantic Fasteners Inc. supplies Würth with new manufacturing capabilities that increase their ability to serve customers and offer competitive lead times on a range of end to end structural products. Atlantic Fasteners, together with Würth House of Threads, Weinstock Bros., and Würth Action Bolt and Tool, as Würth Construction Services, will provide expanded services to its structural customers across the US, Mexico, Canada, and Brazil.

Master Automatic Merges into the MFCS Engineered Solutions Group

MacLean-Fogg Component Solutions (MFCS), Mundelein, IL, and Master Automatic, Plymouth, MI, announce the merger of Master Automatic into the MFCS Engineered Solutions Group. The new division will be known as MacLean Master LLC with locations in Plymouth and Livonia, MI.

MacLean-Fogg President, Duncan MacLean, said, "We are thrilled. Master Automatic is a terrific, family-owned business with a culture similar to ours. This merger enables us both to further diversify and expand our customer base, and increase our capabilities, technology, and products in precision machining. We are able to better support our customers with an expanded portfolio of high-quality products and services."

Founded in 1942, Master Automatic, an Evasic family business, is a premier supplier of precision machined components and assemblies, and a market leader for critical automotive propulsion and steering components, providing a broad range of manufacturing capabilities, engineering, customer focus and commitment to quality to leading automotive OEM and Tier 1 companies.




Association



George Hunt III Elected as New MWFA President

George Hunt III, Regional Manager of Brighton-Best International has been nominated and elected as President of the 2021 Mid-West Fastener Association (MWFA). The new Board of Directors of MWFA include Matt Delawder of SWD Inc. as Vice President, Bob Baer of Abbott Interfast Inc. as Treasurer, Jake Davis of BTM as Secretary. Directors are Glen Brin of Innovative Components Inc., Rich Cavoto of Metric & Multistandard Components, Paula Evitts of Avante Imports, David Gawlik of Stanley Engineered Fastening, and Bobby Wegner of Beacon Fasteners and Components. ■

