

## Firbimatic multi-solvent machine offers a flexible choice for vapour degreasing applications

Sheffield-based aerospace manufacturer C W Fletcher & Sons Ltd has recently installed a Firbimatic 'EK150V' multi-solvent degreasing system, supplied by Standard Industrial Cleaning Systems Ltd, for processing a wide variety of components – particularly large diameter rings and machined fabrications of up to 1.5 metres in diameter.

The chemical suppliers' 'Industry Voluntary Code', regarding the cessation of supplies of trichloroethylene to non-sealed systems after 2010, has given some operators cause for concern. Traditionally, sub-contractors to Rolls-Royce have been allowed to use a variety of solvents for general cleaning but under the long standing RPS128 specification (soon to be Global 51000), for vapour degreasing, trichloroethylene specifically is required for the cleaning and degreasing of titanium. With the approval of modified alcohol RG63 from Richard Geiss GmbH, this is now set to open up new possibilities.

Comments works manager, Tim Smith: "At C W Fletcher & Sons we are committed to offering our customers the very best in technology. Despite continued reassurances from the chemical suppliers we have to keep a close eye on the future. Investing in single solvent technology could not form part of our agenda and so we extensively examined the full range of options.

"Flexibility is paramount and so we decided that the future for modified alcohols was looking very bright indeed and this formed a base criterion in our quest for a system supplier. We had ruled out any form of top loading or so-called enclosed technologies and decided that front loading was the way forward. One or two German manufacturers appeared to offer the required technology but in the Italian Firbimatic brand we found the right vacuum technology for both chlorinated solvents and modified alcohols at a very competitive price."

Says Glenn Greenlees director of Standard Industrial Cleaning Systems: "C W Fletcher & Sons made the decision to opt for a multi-solvent system early in 2009. As it has transpired, with the recent announcement that Geiss RG63 has now been formally approved by Rolls-Royce, Tim can now certainly claim to have had the foresight to plan for the future."

### "Massive reduction in solvent consumption"

Another Firbimatic machine installed by Standard Industrial Cleaning Systems, which Glenn Greenlees describes as being "run in anger and proven over a period of time" is at Leengate Surface Coatings in Nottingham, which has been operating a Firbimatic 'SF200VS' since September 2008."

Used for cleaning a range of metal fabrications of many configurations utilising perchloroethylene, the SF200VS system replaced a traditional open top trichloroethylene system.



Standard Industrial Cleaning Systems supplies a range of Firbimatic, ranging from large multi-solvent systems as shown above, to budget-priced machines.

As with the vast majority of Firbimatic installations, vacuum drying and vacuum boil-down distillation are the key to achieving compliance with The Solvent Emissions (England & Wales) Regulations 2004 and EuroNorm EN12921/4.

Comments operations director of Leengate Surface Coatings, John Newman: "Of course we expected Firbimatic machine to guarantee performance and long term compliance but the additional and most welcome bonus has been the massive reduction in solvent consumption. After nearly two years full production and some 6500 cleaning cycles we have topped up with just two drums of solvent."

John also explains that he spent some five years analysing many different degreasing and cleaning systems before choosing the Firbimatic machine. "I strongly believe we made the right decision," he says.

As well as addressing large scale installations within the aerospace sector and equally high integrity tasks to be found within the field of Formula 1, Standard Industrial Cleaning Systems is now set to address a far wider range of applications with the introduction of the Firbimatic 'Logic'A' system. This budget priced range is available in three sizes offering basket configurations from 300mm x 450mm x 200mm.

Glenn Greenlees says: "We have grown our business steadily over many years by offering excellent technology and a firm ongoing nationwide support structure with many reference sites and satisfied clients happy to offer personal recommendations."

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