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Welcome

Goodbye to 2012 - not a good year for most of our businesses! But let us summarise this year: ERMCO has been very busy defending the interests of the industry. We have continued to develop our contacts with the European Institutions, and have made good progress in clarifying and improving our positions with driving hours and truck weight limits.

The Board and the EcoTec Committee have both met three times. The President and the Strategy and Development Committees have also had a number of meetings, most recently by Internet, which enables it to discuss issues more frequently, and without the need for travel.

The highlight of the year was, of course, the Congress in Verona in June. In spite of everybody's economic difficulties, the organisers (the two Italian Associations, ATECAP and ANCE) succeeded in attracting a good attendance, though the number of exhibitors of equipment was less than we would normally expect, reflecting the difficulties in our sector. The next Congress will be in Istanbul, in 2015.

ERMCO continues to contribute to European standardisation, and to the setting of common industry platforms. In this, we are dependent on, and helped by individuals from our national organisations. Thank you to everybody, in all countries, who contribute to what ERMCO does: in particular we wish to acknowledge the continued support and positive contributions from V. Antilla, O. Assbrock, A. Berrig, C. Clear, M. Peterson, J-M Potier, C. Ressler and J. Troy. The work they do includes chairing EcoTec Task Groups and representing ERMCO or as national members on CEN Committees on concrete,

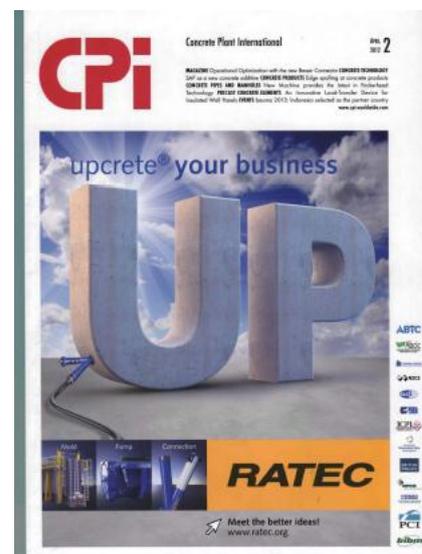
aggregates, cements, and sustainability. A lot of this work has centred on revising the European concrete standard, EN206, and we hope that most of what we want, as ERMCO, will be accepted by the wider construction industry.

So at the end of this year, may we wish you all a good Christmas and New Year holiday, and we look forward to serving our industry, and its people, in 2013.

ERMCO Secretariat team ■

Safe cleaning of ready-mixed trucks

A recent issue of 'Concrete Plant International' describes a prize-winning method of using high-pressure water jets to remove hardened concrete from inside the drum of truckmixers. Read more ([here](#))

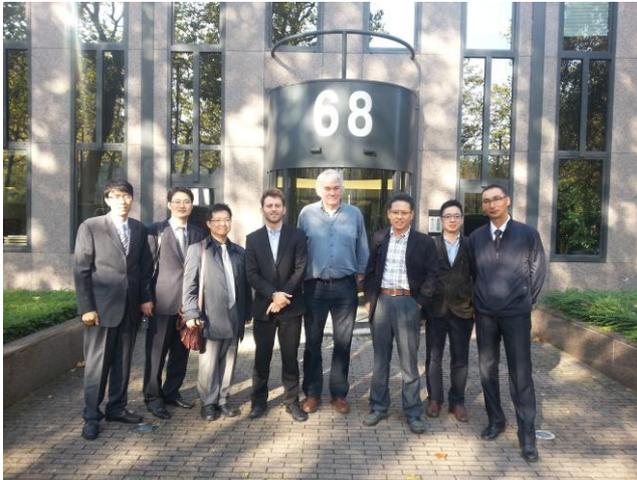


Visit from South Korea

A few weeks ago a delegation from the South Korean construction industry visited ERMCO office in Brussels. They were principally interested in the use of blastfurnace slag, which is normally used there at an addition rate of 50%. They were particularly interested in fast construction methods, and told us that a lot of work has been done on the use of

alkali activators to accelerate the setting and hardening of slag concrete.

Interesting fact: annual production of rmc there is over 2m³ per person - in Europe, ERMCO statistics tell us it is about 0.6m³!



EFCA - The European Federation of Concrete Admixtures Association

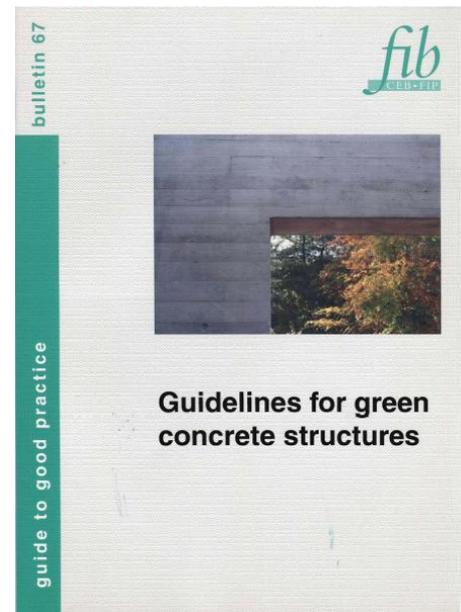
Most of the concrete that we produce includes an admixture. Admixtures are essential to the quality of our product. But do we all know who are EFCA? If not, here is their introductory brochure - ([click here](#)).

The use of macro-fibres in concrete

ERMCO has recently produced Guidance to Fibre Concrete (available on the [website](#)). Now in UK *Concrete* magazine, there is an article about the use of synthetic macro-fibres. It is commercial (describes one company's product) but partially answers questions we may have about the extent to which such fibres can replace conventional steel reinforcement. Read more [here](#).

A systematic approach to 'green' concrete

All of us, in every country, must be aware of the need for sustainability in construction. We must demonstrate concrete's credentials. CEN/TC104/SC1 has established a task group to look at this. The TG will find it useful to consider a recent document from *fib* (International Federation for Structural Concrete), *Guidelines for Green Concrete Structures*. And, probably, so will you. [Click here](#) to see the contents and foreword of this document - we have not got space to copy all of it.



News from Aggregate Research

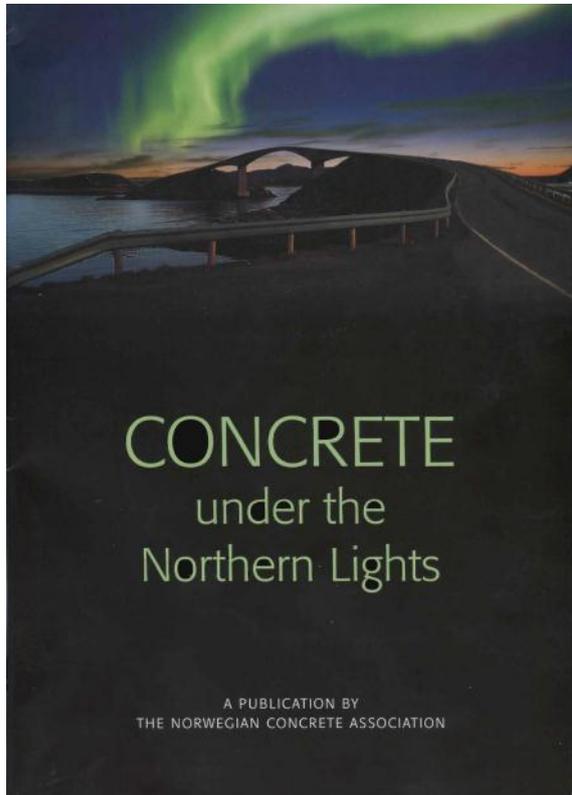
www.aggregate-research.com is a good website for news about our industry. Recent subjects have included:

- a story about the world's biggest concrete pump (Chinese) ([click here](#));
- an article about the need for better understanding of hydration processes as a predictor of durability / sustainability ([click here](#));
- an article about construction of a new cathedral in New Zealand, made of cardboard, after the earthquake last year. A large concrete raft is still required for the foundations. [Click here](#).
- news from America on pervious concrete pavements – the NRMCA sees this as a very big potential market indeed. Now, from Canada, comes an attempt from the readymix to explain the differences between this 'pavement' and conventional 'concrete'. [Click here](#).

Concrete in Norway

Congratulations to the Norwegian Concrete Association, which has

produced (in English) an astonishing 82 page document, *Concrete under the Northern lights*. It describes projects, the work in Research and Development, and technology – a summary of the essential contribution of concrete to the well-being of the country. Click [here](#) to see the list of contents.



Processing returned concrete

The use of processed returned concrete is now defined and considered in EN206. The latest issue of 'Concrete Plant International' describes a sustainable process for such concrete, developed in Italy. It seems to include the fine aggregate fraction, and thus avoids production of any waste. Read more [here](#)

Two x two

Two new ERMCO Publications available on the website: *Guide to Fibre Concrete* ([click here](#)); and revision of *Guide to Control Charts* ([click here](#)).

Two new papers from Francesco Biasioli available: *Trends in the readymixed concrete market, 2007 – 2011* ([click here](#)); and *Sustainability and construction materials: myths, facts and fallacies* ([click here](#)). This one was presented at the Concrete Marketing Conference in October, and describes how concrete sustainability should be presented, and how concrete compares favourably with other materials.