

Sound Attenuators at British Steel again

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Acoustics specialist Sound Attenuators Ltd (SAL) has recently completed a complex lagging and cladding application at the British Steel Port Talbot Works in South Wales. British Steel knew that SAL had carried out a similar application at the BOS (Basic Oxygen Steelmaking) plant some five years earlier, working on three sets of fans and a complicated arrangement of associated ducting. In this case, the main problem was to obtain acoustic isolation between the inner ducting and fan casings and achieve the twofold specification criteria of 85 dBA at 1 metre and make no increase to the existing noise levels at the boundaries of the plant adjacent to housing, this being approximately 50 dBA at a radius of 1,000 metres around the plant. The company's innovative solution more than met the client's specification.

The contract was in a brand new continuous annealing process plant, where two large fans and associated hot air ducting needed to be lagged and clad. Hot waste gas was passed through the smaller fan and finally to a chimney stack and protective gas (nitrogen and hydrogen) recirculated by the larger fan back into the process furnace. The first fan was a four metre Howden Sirocco

centrifugal fan for waste gases, with associated ducting reaching a height of over 12 metres.

The second fan, a six metre HGJC Howden Sirocco centrifugal fan, had associated ducting reaching a height of some 18 metres. The 2-3 metre diameter ducting was of an especially complex and convoluted design, necessarily making the installation operation complicated.

SAL devised the solution, using SALEX products, and supplied project management. Sub-contractors Kitsons provided installation. Areas to be treated were wrapped in a foot of fibreglass material and then clad with aluminium to provide protection from accidental damage and the environment. To avoid direct metal to metal contact and subsequent noise transmission, SAL used sophisticated acoustic pads and floating frames to eliminate noise through the lagging and cladding.

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ALARMING NUISANCE

Police guarding some of Britain's most expensive houses have decided to stop responding to burglar alarms because they assume that they have been set off accidentally. Surrey Police's new stance raises the question of why householders should fit alarms if police will not investigate. "If there is merely an alarm ringing we do not, as a matter of course, attend," said a police spokesman. The Association of Chief Police Officers admitted that, after a second false alarm, officers stopped going to empty properties. Surrey's police, in an area including the stockbroker belt and many multimillion pound country homes, came to light after Bernard Parke, a Guildford resident phoned police because a nearby alarm was sounding at night. He was told by an "off-hand switchboard operator to phone the local environmental health office and report it as a nuisance. "I appreciate the police are understaffed but this is very worrying," he said. "When I phoned environmental health, they were not very happy at turning out in case there really was a burglar. Their staff would be at risk."