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Paul Goodhew Retiring from Sepro UK; Glen Eves Named as Successor

After almost 25 years with Sepro Robotique Ltd., Paul Goodhew is stepping down as head of the French robot manufacturer's UK subsidiary.

A well-known and respected figure in plastics equipment sales since 1979, Paul Goodhew will retire at the end of this year. Goodhew has directed UK robot sales for Sepro Robotique Ltd. since the company was founded in 1990. After Interplas, the British plastics trade show being held in Birmingham, September 30 – October 2, he will begin to hand over the reins to Glen Eves, who joined the company as Sales Manager in December 2013.

Sepro Robotique Ltd., Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England, is a wholly-owned daughter company of Sepro Robotique, La Roche Sur Yon, France. Commenting on his service to Sepro over the past quarter century, Sepro CEO, Jean-Michel Renaudeau said “Paul Goodhew started with us when Sepro was a relatively small regional player in the injection-molding automation market. Thanks to his expertise, his hard work and his always-ready smile, he was instrumental in building the UK market and helped set a foundation for the global expansion we see today. We truly appreciate his many contributions over the years and wish him all the best in his retirement.”

Paul Goodhew began his plastics career as an apprentice toolmaker in 1965 making compression and injection molds. After qualifying and graduating from Medway College of Technology, he moved into mold and component design for L & P Plastics, part of the then Reed Group. Following this he joined London trade molder Paramount Plastic Products first as Technical, and then General Manager. In 1977, he started selling injection-molding machines and, over the next decade, assumed increasingly responsible sales positions with

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Klockner Ferrromatic and later, Demag. In 1988, he joined a firm that briefly acted as an agent for Sepro Robotique in the UK and then helped establish the Sepro daughter company that exists today.

“In the early days,” Goodhew recalls, “we had a hard time convincing British molders that they needed to automate. Management believed that no robot could replace their highly skilled operators and the operators themselves resisted because they feared losing their jobs. Gradually, however, we were able to show them that letting the machine control the operator was far better than having the operator control the machine. Quality and consistency are better, and you keep the product away from possible contamination.”

During his tenure, he’s seen the British plastics industry through a lot of ups and downs. Once Sepro Robotique was established in the UK, sales rose steadily under Goodhew’s guidance and, in 1998, a record 104 robots were sold. Then came almost a decade of decline. In 2005 sales hit a low point of just over 20 units and, although this increased to 40 units again in 2007, the global financial crisis hit in 2008 and sales fell again into the 20’s. Over the last 5 year, however, the trend has been steadily upward, with sales more than doubling since mid-2011. Indications are that Sepro will sell well over 60 robots in the UK in 2014.

Goodhew says he is optimistic about his company’s future. “Sepro has always made an excellent robot and, in recent years, we have revamped almost the entire product portfolio, introducing new designs for all except the largest machines. We’ve introduced new 5-axis and 6-axis robots and specialty units for two-material molding, dual-arm robots for use with 3-plate molds and in-mold labeling solutions. These are very exciting times.”

He also speaks highly of Glen Eves, who will take over at year end. “Glen is experienced and technically very knowledgeable. He is already well-liked by customers and is rapidly building a base of trust in the industry. I expect he will do very well for Sepro and for British injection molders.”

GLEN EVES

Glen Eves started his career in plastics as a technical apprentice in 1987 with Battenfeld Gloenco Extrusion Systems. He earned an HNC in Electrical Power Engineering and worked in design, service and commissioning. In 1992, he got his start in robotics when he joined Piovan-Star as Service Manager in 1999. He subsequently worked for another robotics and automation company, eventually rising to Sales Manager before joining Sepro in December 2013.

Eves sees his biggest challenge in maintaining Sepro’s upward momentum in the UK. “Paul Goodhew did a great job of getting Sepro established,” he says. “He’s one of the nicest people in the industry and he has had a very positive impact on my life. Now it’s up to us to carry on, opening new markets and growing our presence in the industry.”

Sepro, Eves says, has always made good, reliable products but recent introductions have really expanded opportunities. He cites the new 5-axis Sepro 5X robots as an example. “The 5X Line gives you the speed and simplicity of a Cartesian robot, but the 2-axis servo-driven wrist allows it more flexibility to perform functions normally associated with 6-axis articulated-arm robots.

ABOUT SEPRO

Sepro is a global company, with in-depth engineering and manufacturing capabilities, strong technical and marketing partnerships, unmatched service and support, and a diverse product offering. Founded in 1973 and now headquartered in La Roche-sur-Yon (France), Sepro Robotique was one of the first companies in the world to develop Cartesian beam robots for injection-molding machines, introducing its first CNC controlled “manipulator” in 1981. Today, Sepro is one of the largest independent sellers of Cartesian robots. Customers around the world are supported by wholly-owned daughter companies in Germany, Spain, Benelux, the United Kingdom, the United States, Mexico, Brazil and China. Numerous direct sales and service offices as well as independent business partners, distributors and service hubs extend Sepro’s global network to over 40 other countries. To date, Sepro has equipped more than 25,000 injection-molding machines worldwide. The company’s global turnover for 2013 was €66.5 million, with 90% of sales exported from France and 45% sold outside of Europe. Sepro anticipates it will grow 18% in 2014.

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Paul Goodhew (left), retiring Director of Sepro UK, and Glen Eves, Sales Manager, who will succeed him.
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