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## Yet another massive Rentokil acquisition

The ink was hardly dry on the purchase of the previous two pest control companies in the US (Fischer Environmental Services and Batzner Pest Control) than the announcement was made on 13 November of a further acquisition in a slightly different, but complimentary market. This was for the purchase of Vector Disease Acquisition (VDA), North America's largest provider of mosquito control services.

VDA operates from 52 offices in 32 US states with annualised revenues for the 12 months prior to acquisition of c. \$47m (£36m). In line with this acquisition, the company is establishing a new global centre of excellence in North America for mosquito control – maybe akin to its new UK Innovation, Science and Training Centre which opened this September.

Watch out readers, as commenting on the acquisition, Andy Ransom, CEO of Rentokil Initial, said: "Our mergers and acquisitions pipeline remains very strong and therefore we now expect spend to be £100m+ in the second half of 2017." This backs up the report regarding the big companies just getting bigger, as reported in **Pest 53**: October & November 2017.

## Hands across the world

During PestWorld 2017 (see report on pages 34-35), the National Pest Management Association (NPMA) hosted a further meeting of the Global Pest Management Coalition to discuss the structure of the organisation and its focus areas for the coming year. This follows their last meeting held in New York in April 2017 during the Global Summit of Pest Management Services for Public Health & Food Safety (see **Pest 50**: April & May 2017).

"The Global Coalition participants used the opportunity at this meeting to discuss structure, funding and strategy for moving forward," said NPMA CEO Dominique Stumpf. "Ultimately, the Coalition will drive collaboration among global pest management associations in achieving our common goals – particularly those involving the protection of public health and property."



## Proposed safety legislation for drone users

The use of drones within pest control is becoming well established, so, is the announcement on 26 November that drone users in the UK may have to take safety awareness tests under legislation planned by the government, good or bad news?

The answer is simple – it's good news. Like several other practices within pest control, applying legislative standards restricts the 'cowboy element'.

As Gareth Davies, Mitie's regional director (South) for pest control & drone solutions explained: "We welcome these new proposals. There are far too many

people thinking they can make a fast buck flying drones and giving CAA qualified pilots a bad name. The current flight restrictions are to a height of 400ft high and the drones must always be in the line of sight. Mitie, as a qualified drone business, can apply to the CAA, case by case, to fly above the current limits. We are one of the few companies granted night time flying which is a real bonus for wildlife management using a thermal camera."



## Mosquito genetic engineering gets a step closer

Researchers at the University of California, Riverside have developed transgenic mosquitoes that stably express the Cas9 enzyme in their germline. The addition of Cas9 will enable the use of the CRISPR gene editing tool to make efficient, targeted changes to the mosquitoes' DNA. Or, for those of us who are not top flight scientists, this means that this method may accelerate scientists' work towards identifying the genes to target for disruption of mosquitoes' ability to carry and transmit human diseases.

As proof of this technique, the researchers used the system to disrupt genes associated with cuticle pigment causing *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes to turn from black to yellow, and disruption of genes associated with eye pigment, caused eye colour to change from black to white.







## Special award...

This edition includes a report on PestTech (pages 23-25) and also on the winners of the **Pest** Best Product award (page 9) but in the **Pest** office we have decided to make an *ad hoc* best giveaway award!

At events we are all very pleased to be given pens, USB sticks and the like, but, our special award goes to Bell for their 'goodie bag' freely given to all visitors to their stand at PestTech.

Nestling within a carrier bag were not only two keys rings, two quality pens, two keys for use with their bait boxes, an on-the-move drinks bottle plus, star of the show, an LED extendable torch with a flexible top section. Well done Bell.



## On the international pest control circuit

Backing up our comments on previous occasions on how international professional pest control has become, we have received reports from two events far from our UK shores.

The first was Peruplagas held in Lima, Peru on 9 & 10 November. It followed the well worn path of an exhibition with associated technical seminars and attracted delegates from South and Central America.

The second was Pest Summit 2017, organised by the Federation of Asian and Oceania Pest Managers Association (FAOPMA) and held in Thailand on 22-24 November. No small affair, this attracted close to 1,500 delegates from 35 countries.

NEW PRODUCT RANGE

**Permost CS**

**Permex 22E<sup>®</sup>**

**Permost Uni Fly Spray**

**Piretrox<sup>™</sup>**

**Tetrapiu**

**Piretrox<sup>™</sup> PU**

**SoFast**

**HokoEx**

Piretrox<sup>™</sup> and Piretrox<sup>™</sup> PU contain pyrethrum, Permex 22E<sup>®</sup>, Permost Uni Fly Spray and Tetrapiu contain permethrin and tetramethrin, SoFast contains Imidacloprid and HokoEx contains cyromazine. Use biocides safely. Always read the label and product information before use.

[www.hockley.co.uk](http://www.hockley.co.uk)

## New leader for Octavius Hunt

Octavius Hunt, the Bristol-based developer and manufacturer of smoke generators and pellets, has appointed a new managing director. Nick Dale takes over from Seamus Butler who has left the company. Nick started his career at Octavius Hunt some 26 years ago as a projects technician and for the last 10 years has been technical director. He is a qualified chemist and has product development, regulatory and commercial knowledge and experience.

As Nick explains: "When I relocated to Bristol, I thought my stay with Octavius Hunt would only be short term, but 26 years later I'm still here! It's a great team to work with and I feel really positive about the growth and future of the company."



## New team member at PestFix

Tom Dacey joins the Littlehampton-based distributors, PestFix as a key account manager in their sales team. Tom's brief is to work closely with key customers to provide day-to-day sales support.

Tom started his career with the Household Cavalry Regiment, culminating in the post of Lance Corporal Tank Gunner, known in the trade as a CVRT. During his time in the army he saw action around the world, including serving in Afghanistan. Following his seven year action-packed army career, Tom moved to a more sedate role in executive recruitment before joining PestFix in August.

Two weeks after joining PestFix, Tom welcomed his first child into the world with wife Sam. Baby Theo is doing well and Tom is learning what sleep deprivation feels like. Wish Tom well as he is sitting his RSPH Level 2 in December, a pre-requisite of all PestFix sales and support staff.



## All change at Bureau Veritas

Jessica Morgan who has looked after the CEPA (Confederation of European Pest Management Associations) certification initiative since



December 2015 has left Bureau Veritas. She returned to full-time study to complete her professional diploma in interior design in The Netherlands, where she now lives.

Roberto Zimbello has taken over her duties as CEPA manager UK and Ireland. He has worked for over five years at Bureau Veritas where he led the operations for key accounts in the food and beverage industry.

Robert said: "I am really excited to be building relationships with key stakeholders in the pest management industry and will be fully supporting the development and growth of CEPA certification in the UK and Ireland."



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## Irish government tightens rodenticide regulations

Regulations governing the access to and, use of, rodenticides in the Republic of Ireland will come into force on 1 January 2018.

It is interesting to note that the Irish authorities have pretty much followed the French approach, albeit only for rodenticides at present. The French system licensing pest management professionals is known as Certbiocides, covers all aspects of pest control, last five years and requires annual registration with the Ministry of the Environment.

In a nutshell from 1 January 2018 Irish pest controllers wishing to buy or use professional strength rodenticides outdoors, around buildings, in open areas and in sewers must be licensed as 'trained professional users'.

To obtain a licence they must hold the IPCA Diploma in Pest Management, or the RSPH Level 2 Award in Pest Management, or other course deemed equivalent by the Irish Government plus the CRRU-IASIS Wildlife Aware Certificate. They must also register with the Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. The Department will issue a PMU license number which will then be required as proof of competence at the point of sale.

New rules greatly curtailing 'permanent baiting' have also been adopted.

The continuous use of toxic bait can now only be used at sites with a high potential for re-invasion and when other control methods have proven insufficient. Only licensed professionals can deploy the technique and only products containing either bromadiolone or difenacoum may be used. Environmental Risk Assessment should be carried out prior to any application of these products.

Clearly UK businesses operating in the Republic will have to comply with the new requirements. Will such a system be introduced in the UK? It seems unlikely as the UK Government has consistently supported a voluntary industry-led approach i.e. the now established UK rodenticide stewardship regime. However, should things change the UK already has all the basic elements in place plus a continuing professional development scheme through BASIS PROMPT.

## PestWest USA moves to larger premises

Having been established in the US for the last 15 years, PestWest USA has now out-grown its original facilities, so this autumn moved to larger premises, also in Sarasota, Florida. The new base combines both warehouse and office space on the same site.

"We're enthusiastic to start this next chapter for PestWest USA at our new North American office," said James H Shaffer Jr, president.



## Christmas decorations?

This festive picture of a bait box 'decorated for Christmas' was sent in by a **Pest** reader. It was discovered on a routine inspection of external bait boxes placed to counter a current rodent problem.

What must have been a field mouse was making good use of a bait box as a winter store for collected rose hips!

## Pests in the White House?

There have been plenty of reports about the mice and other pests infesting the UK's Houses of Parliament but, according to reports on the BBC, the White House in the USA has similar problems. Mice, cockroaches, ants and a broken toilet seat are some of the dozens of issues reported to maintenance workers by Donald Trump's White House staff.

Rodent sightings were reported in the Navy mess food service area as well as the Situation Room. Hundreds of requests were received over the two years. "They are old buildings," Brian Miller, former inspector general for the US General Services Administration (GSA) which oversees maintenance work, told NBC Washington. "Any of us who have old houses know old houses need a lot of work."

## Rodent detection dog retires

Archie, the first dog in the UK to be trained to detect rodents, has retired. Archie worked for Mitie identifying and locating active mouse infestations with a high degree of accuracy whilst ignoring old infestations and other rodent types.

He was trained by experts in the narcotics detection industry.

Mitie says that clients were receptive to the use of a sniffer dog at their facilities, Archie also proved very popular with employees. He was a valued member of the Mitie pest control team!"

