

REPORT ON ARM INTL SARD KOCHI MEET

VENUE	:	Kensington Room, Hotel Renaissance, Palarivottam
DATE/TIME	:	May 5, 2007/ 3 p.m (Registration)
ATTENDANCE	:	24 Participants
JOINT SPONSORS	:	MPlast, Carris Pipes, Southern Polymers
REPOT PREPARED BY:	:	S.B. Zaman, Manager South Asia Regional Division (SARD)

There were many significant firsts for the ARM Int'l SARD Kochi Meet. It was the first Regional Meet of year 2007 and the first since A. Baheti took over as new SARD Chair. It was also the first Meet to be held in the beautiful Port City of Kochi which is home to some prominent moulders of the country and which is commercial capital of the state of Kerala. The state itself has been appropriately labelled "God's Own Country" in tourism lexicon.

SARD Chair, A. Baheti welcomed attendees and explained how the Regional Meets will continue to play a crucially important role in serving the interests of its member companies with a regional thrust to the dissemination of rotomoulding "info – Knowledge", interaction and networking. This was followed by the customary round of attendee self introductions.

As per recent practice, the Presentations were led by the **Regional Moulders Viewpoint** by **N. Bhaskaran, Carris Pipes**. Dwelling first on the difficulties faced on the input side he advocated efficiencies and stability in input costs of raw material, additives and power with an urgent need to focus on technologies to save energy wastes . When it comes to coloured tanks strict quality control has to be exercised in the use of additives, especially UV additives. Recycled material should be used, if at all, with great caution. It is time for all concerned to realise that the market potential is good, but achievable only when there is no sacrifice in quality. He exhorted the region's industry to use the forum provided by ARMI-SARD to protect the long term interests of the industry. His list of advisories for the region's moulders comprised of : 1) making maximum use of expanding market scope provided by the construction boom happening around the Kochi area 2) tackling high transportation costs, 3) adopting successful practices to reduce cycle time, 4) diversifications in rotomoulding that will replace conventional items and 5) never to take eyes off developments abroad.

The next presentation was by **TCN Sairam, RIL Chennai** on **Emerging Landscape – Materials & Products** The Presentation began by commending the role of ARMI- SARD in the charting of a new course in the dissemination of knowledge and technical advancements. A basic premise underlined was that there are innovative opportunities to be unearthed and that rotomoulding is the investment opportunity for customized and engineered solutions. Opportunity was also seen in the way the existing low parameters as compared to global figures on consumption and production fronts in the Polymer related business had combined with the transformation of the Indian economy which has set it on course to be the 4th largest in the world by 2014. The presentation did a historical review of rotomoulding development as well as its raw material use followed by an analysis of advantages and disadvantages of the rotomoulding process and resins used. It also stated RIL's commitment to develop a suitable PP grade for rotomoulding. Specialty resin for specialized applications was stated as a basic thumb rule for growth and development in the industry. It was also emphasized that compounding and pulverising should be an independent specialized activity instead of being an adjunct in a moulders workplace. To look ahead was to look at Designing as a promising feature for value addition in rotomoulding. The industry should get aligned with sectoral growth trends of the economy. The Automotive sector, the gigantic National Highways project, the Retail boom promise phenomenal scope for rotomoulding Moulders have to get

abreast with new roto ideas like 2-Wheeler bodies and seat shells among many others that were cited. Real projects undertaken were given the real touch through actual dates and other specifics like the one to replace a metal body, or with the Govt. Fisheries Dept. for insulated boxes. A RIL promise was reiterated to partner moulders in Product/ Market development work. To fire their imagination they were led through a picture gallery presentation of product samples from the advanced North American rotomoulding market. The presenter readily agreed to R.P.Shukla's suggestion to provide to moulders CDs of the picture gallery through the SARD office so that they could begin thinking of translating into reality some of them. Goethe's appropriate quote "Knowing is not enough, we must apply" ended the presentation.

Satish Gokhale, Design Directions presented on **Managing Innovation** next, Calling his presentation. "How Design helps" he set out to give examples of cases where Design made the difference to the success of products. A basic truth that was illustrated was that cost is deceptive and that it was alright to pay for a beautiful product if it does not affect functionality. There is little doubt that Design triggers sales and several examples along with photographs that showed how products were transformed in their looks and improved functionality were presented. The WOW element is very important to ensure product appeal. When it comes to designing machines it is important to ensure that the user feels comfortable and likes the feel of the machine and is excited to work on it. Citing the example of a Cathlab, it was extremely important that the machine should have a friendly look. Pictorial examples were also given of how price reduction was brought about through good designing. Visualising a product is extremely important and once the final shape is clear the rest of the engineering falls into place and it should never be forgotten that Design is a team activity. Interesting examples were given on how bylaws were changed based on design and how Customs officials raised questions about a well designed product returning from an overseas exhibition as they felt such a good looking product could only have been made overseas. The limitless possibilities of enhancing success of a product through good designing was emphasized as being equally relevant to rotomoulding. Photographs of product designs illustrated that. Basic principles ensured success in design like the one to avoid visual clutter and ensure smooth eye flow. Design always makes the difference-the same Tata trucks look visually rugged when produced for the Army.

Following a Tea break **R.P.Shukla, M Plast** as collaborator of global leader Norstar Aluminium Molds brought great interest to his presentation on **Moulds for Rotational Moulding**. He first listed out the types of moulds for Rotational moulding – Fabricated, CNC machined, Cast Aluminium, Electroform Nickel, Spray Metal & High Temp Epoxy- before discussing their relative advantages and disadvantages. The suitability of different moulds for particular applications was illustrated with photographs. Cost advantages requirement of patterns, requirement of differential thickness, needs of surface details and textures, Degree of shrinkage, Manufacturing time, and Duplication of moulds were among the various factors that determined the comparative advantages of the different kinds of moulds. Cast Aluminium Moulds were discussed in great detail. The great advantages gained from their thermal conductivity was highlighted and a graph was presented showing its superiority to other metals in thermal conductivity. The fact that this mould facilitated design freedom involving more complicated geometry, more uniform heating and cooling, multiple moulds at cheaper cost, and the ease of modification or repair made it relatively more advantageous. Photographs of high quality surfaces obtained through cast aluminum mould made its efficiency and efficacy really stand out.

A.Baheti, Pure Ganga put together a presentation that had great relevance to a region which is predominantly water tanks manufacturing and where helpful tips in processing can make a significant difference to the quality obtained in manufacturing. The need to have internationally accepted norms as our Tank Standards and not the anachronistic and poor benchmarks of present Indian standards formed the first part of the presentation. The very fact that by definition the existing standards were for water Tanks and not all Tanks was itself a major shortcoming. It is important for these standards to include liquid used for food and beverages and chemical solutions at atmospheric pressure

Realisation has dawned that only a dual pronged approach can ensure the kind of change that propels the industry into a different growth trajectory. While new technologies have to be adapted for diversifications and new applications, it is equally critical to raise the quality bar so that world class tanks get produced in this huge segment of the Indian rotomoulding industry. Technical parameters are being redrawn, the appropriate tests are being prescribed and coloured tanks are being included to ensure that the Standards play the desired role for taking full cognisance of market realities and provide a modern and internationally acceptable reference point. Wide consultation and expert feedback have played an important part in bringing them fast to conclusion so that these standards can be released across the SARD region as the ARMI-SARD Tank Standards.

The second part of the presentation was a Trouble Shooting compilation to provide practical solutions to numerous problems encountered during processing

SARD Manager, S.B.Zaman making the **ARM Int'l SARD presentation** pointed out that with the first full fledged Division of ARM International outside of USA due to complete 3 years, in a month's time in June, it was opportune time to review for the benefit of those present the fulfillment of targeted goals and the inherent organizational strengths to meet the challenging tasks already.

The meet ended with discussions carrying into cocktails and Dinner.

Feedback collected at the end of the Meet had praise for Topics, Presentations and the Meet Venue.

Positive fallout of the Meet was the prospective ARMI-SARD membership of two companies – **Hycount Moulders** and **Cochin Polymers**

