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Concoat Systems becomes Gen3 Systems to enable new company to tackle enhanced engineering reliability challenges posed by move to lead-free manufacturing and ongoing miniaturisation trends in electronics generally

New company Gen3 Systems is founded on the former Concoat Systems, and was retained by existing family business management owners as a prelude to sale of sister company Concoat Limited to US firm Chase Corporation in 2005. Sale of Concoat Limited has helped fund the formation of Gen3 Systems and will underpin its long-term growth plans

FARNBOROUGH, UK – June 15, 2006 – Brand new company Gen3 Systems Limited, founded on the former Concoat Systems Limited, announces its new identity and management structure in order to better tackle the demanding electronics reliability challenges of lead-free assembly and further miniaturisation.

Gen3 Systems was launched by its family owners after former – highly successful – sister company Concoat Limited was sold to US firm Chase Corporation in 2005, in part to underwrite the long-term expansion plans of Gen3 Systems.

These include tackling the new long term field reliability challenges created as a result of the transition from fully-characterised lead-based solder alloys, to brand new lead-free formulations. This transition affects electronics manufacturing companies importing products into Europe after July 1, 2006, and is likely to be extended to other markets in the medium term – notably including China.

Concoat Systems Limited and its company slogan “Engineering Reliability in Electronics” (which has been retained by Gen3 Systems) was a familiar name in Europe, Asia and much of North America. This is due to the company having built an excellent reputation for its wide range of electronics reliability test and measurement instruments, and related reliability process equipment including conformal coating application systems.

“Our decision to retain Concoat Systems Limited was based on where we wanted to take that side of the business in the long term,” explains Gen3 Systems Managing Director Graham Naisbitt. “We had worked hard to build the business over four decades. This included acquiring the former SPCID equipment division of Multicore Solders from Henkel of Germany in 2002, a loyal customer base, immense experience within our long-serving staff and a renowned range of industry benchmark test and measurement equipment.

“We now have the opportunity to use the assets we have worked hard to build up as the foundation of our new company – Gen3 Systems – and we will continue to adhere to our customer-oriented tradition while forging a new identity and new services,” continues Naisbitt. “Our customers can expect to see a seamless continuation of service and some exciting, genuinely ground-breaking new products in the years ahead.”

ENGINEERING RELIABILITY IN ELECTRONICS

—FORMERLY CONCOAT SYSTEMS LTD

Chairman: **A.W.Naisbitt**, Managing Director: **G.K.Naisbitt**
Registered office as above. Registered No. 4639449 (England & Wales)
VAT No. GB 838 6776 67

According to Gen3 Systems Chairman, Arthur Naisbitt, the Gen3 Systems name reflects the plan that the founding company's 40-year tradition will be carried forward into a third generation of the Naisbitt family through one or both of Graham's sons in the longer term.

Arthur and Graham Naisbitt are respected in the electronics industry for their expertise in solderability testing and surface insulation resistance (SIR) measurements. These test techniques are critical for assessing the reliability of electronics operating in harsh environments.

Graham Naisbitt currently sits on several standards setting bodies including the US-based Association Connecting Electronics Industries (IPC) and International Electro-Technical Commission (IEC). Both organisations are recognised globally for their contributions to improving the reliability of electronics.

"Gen3 Systems specialises in measuring the reliability of the kind of electronics where lives are put at risk if the electronics systems fail," explains Graham Naisbitt. "And while there are of course compelling environmental reasons for switching to lead-free solder alloys – you might not feel so comfortable about moving from the tried and tested [tin/lead] into the less tried and tested [lead-free] if you're a passenger on an aeroplane or even in a car. Our mission is to remove all doubt – but that won't be a trivial task."

Solderability and SIR testing in particular have become increasingly important, as manufacturers have begun to make the transition to lead-free alloys in order to comply with, for instance, the EU's Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) legislation that passes into law on July 1, 2006. To support this transition, new standards for Gen3 Systems' MUST Solderability Tester (IPC-J-STD 002 & 003) and its award winning Auto-SIR (IPC 9201A SIR Handbook & IPC-TM-650, 2.6.3.7) are due to be published during the (northern) summer.

"This is a huge challenge for manufacturers," says Graham Naisbitt. "Electronic products manufactured with lead-free alloys require a totally different test regime to the traditional methods used for lead-based solder to ensure their reliability. Gen3 Systems will be at the forefront of the change and will be able to provide equipment and test expertise for manufacturers needing to assess their lead-free products."

Gen3 Systems operates from new UK premises near Farnborough Business Park, on the M3 corridor and just 30 minutes from London's Heathrow Airport. The company has an entirely new management team focused on the needs and requirements of its customers around the world, and a stated, dedicated mission of "Engineering Reliability in Electronics".

Gen3 Systems is also currently training personnel in the establishment of new North American distribution and technical support operation.

About Gen3 Systems

Gen3 Systems is a specialist manufacturer of test and measurement equipment used to reliably predict the reliability of electronic circuits and systems in the field. In addition, the company designs and manufactures conformal coating process equipment in both in-line and bench-top formats.

Gen3 Systems also provides training, equipment and expertise for manufacturers requiring assessment of their electronic products' reliability. The company also assists with standards development via both the IPC and IEC.

The company's product range and services include:

- **AUTOSIR** Surface Insulation Resistance (SIR) test system

- **MUSTSYSTEM2+** solderability test system
- **SOLDAPRO** thermal profilers
- **CM**SERIES cleanliness test systems
- **SC**SERIES spray conformal coating systems, both batch and in-line
- **DC**SERIES dip conformal coating systems, both batch and in-line
- **TESTSERVICES** for circuit reliability, solderability and cleanliness

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