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**E-Tech Group**  
Sailing into new world

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The **voice** for energy in the East of England

# E-Tech Group is face of the future



## **E-Tech Group is showing a new face to the world - a single entity with a united front in the world of electrical engineering and supplies.**

Director Gary Williams admits it has been a long time coming but now, 14 years into its life, he believes E-Tech is ideally positioned to challenge for major contracts in ever widening fields.

Best known for its electrical engineering and its specialist supply divisions servicing the oil and gas business and shipbuilding industry, it has also extended its expertise into transport systems, water treatment works and the rather more glamorous international world of superyachts.

Amongst the contract awards this year E-Tech Group won a £1m turnkey project for the electrical design, installation and commissioning of a new gas process and distribution plant – similar to the Bacton terminal - off the coast of Tunisia

It is a far cry from 1993 when E-Tech was launched as two companies, Peto Services & BCD Cables, one in electrical engineering, the other in cable supplies.

Almost by public demand, it grew to an amalgam of 14 companies over the years.

"Clients liked what they were getting from us so much, that they wanted more," said Gary. "They asked if we could widen the scope and do other work as well."

They took up the challenge and expanded through acquisitions, mergers and setting up complementary companies.

Each was managed independently

but came under "group" control.

"It had become an administrative nightmare," admitted Gary.

So about four years ago, E-Tech began the painstaking business of dissolving the 14 separate companies and bringing them under one umbrella. Two years later, it began phasing out the old company names – although suppliers BCD Cables and Global ES have retained their trading names.

"The corporate entity has given us new strength and the chance to chase bigger projects," said Gary. "We had been giving out a confused message. Now clients have a clear idea of what we do and can clearly see us as we are and the benefits we can bring to a contract."

It has also meant that the various quality assurances spread around the companies have been unified into one single certificate to BN ES ISO9001 covering every discipline and location.

New major clients have been attracted and turnover in the last two years has risen from under £11, to about £16m.

Recently agreed is a five-year long-term agreement with the UK's largest ship refurbishment company A & P for exclusive electrical contracts on their refits – worth £31/2m to the group last year.

Around six years ago E-Tech set out to diversify into new markets to attempt to evade the peaks and troughs of the

oil and gas sector, by taking its expertise and quality into new arenas like the road tunnels and underpasses of London and water treatment works.

With the help of the UKTI Passport to Export it also increased its international business, setting up bases in Dubai, Marseille and Palma.

The French and Majorcan interests developed from a move into the superyacht business, doing electrical engineering work for multi-million pound floating paradises ranging from 40m to 150m and where an electrical refit alone can be worth around £1/2m to the business.

And in September, the E-Tech team headed for the World's most prestigious Superyacht exhibition in the exotic setting of Monaco.

"Nice work if you can get it," agreed Gary. "But not all of the locations we operate are quite as glamorous, in fact many border on the downright awful and dangerous."

E-Tech Group has its worldwide HQ in Great Yarmouth with bases along the east coast from Tyneside down to Harwich and along the south coast at Southampton and Plymouth.

It has a core of around 170 key staff, all buoyed by the new joint enterprise.

"It has brought benefits internally as well. Instead of departments competing with each other, we are now all fighting together for the same profits and causes," said Gary.

The group also has a proud training record, taking on several indentured

apprentices annually and turning them into qualified electrical engineers.

"It probably costs us around £40,000-£50,000 over four years to train an apprentice. It's not just for us but for the industry. We recognised the likely skills shortage from year one," he said. This year E-Tech has taken on eight apprentices across the group

E-Tech Group has always recognised the need to network and be part of industry events. As such, they joined EEGR in its early days, seeing the benefits of networking and making contacts, spreading the company name and helping both the industry and the region collectively.

Gary said he was privileged last year to be asked to join the EEGR board as a director.

His particular passion is to try to assist smaller companies who know their aims but are not sure how to get there.

"We've been happy to lend an office or share an exhibition stand. We might get nothing out of it ourselves but it is what is needed to maintain the industry."

He is delighted with E-Tech Group's progress.

"More and more clients want a complete project service – it's not cost effective for them to chase ad hoc contractors.

"We can go in there and take on a complete electrical project for the client, providing everything from concept and design to supply, installation, testing, commission and even future servicing and maintenance."