

GLENEAGLES - A PREMIERE HOTEL



When a Gleneagles meeting room is transferred into...

Gleneagles Hotel in Scotland, known throughout the world as a five star hotel with excellent sporting and leisure facilities, now enjoys the benefits of a Strand Lighting Premiere® control system. Visitors come from around the world to play on the famous golf courses at Gleneagles, and with its leisure complex, equestrian centre, shooting school and falconry centre there is something for everyone to enjoy; all this set in one of the most beautiful areas of the Scottish countryside.

Gleneagles Hotel has been a conference venue for many years, indeed the Strand Lighting MMS lighting control was introduced at a sales conference held in the Ballroom in October 1973, although at that time the Hotel had no dedicated conference facilities. New management taking over from former owners British Rail constructed a suite in an under-used part of the hotel complex but the space suffered from a number of limitations; in particular the ceiling was low for a room of its size. Enter Strand dealers Northern Light who were invited to join the design team in 1991 to advise on the audio visual requirements for a new Conference Suite.

Although the decision had been taken to demolish the existing facilities and rebuild on the same site there were constraints as the area is surrounded on all sides by other buildings, including guest bedrooms imposing a limitation on height, plus strict requirements on acoustic separation.

The final design proposed a suite of 24 x 14 metres with folding partitions to divide the area into three for smaller meetings, with a small stage at one end and two control rooms for audio visual facilities. The new ceiling height varied from 4.4 metres at the lowest point to 8 metres at the centre rooflight in each area. But maximising ceiling height restricted service space in the ceiling void requiring careful planning for the layout of lighting, loudspeakers and other building services.

The requirements for the audio visual equipment were simple. Firstly all the A/V facilities that a conference organiser might reasonably require were to be included. Secondly the systems were to be easy for the user to operate - ideally a single pushbutton to initiate a whole sequence of events. It was decided that a full-time audio visual technician would be provided for technical backup to the conference staff which simplified the design as patch fields could be included for use by the technician.

The solution to the problem of controlling and coordinating all the audio visual facilities was a Strand Lighting Premiere® architectural control system. Careful planning, taking full advantage of the flexibility of the PC based configuration software enabled Premiere to become the heart of the control system. Premiere controls all the decorative lighting, four motorised screens with tilt facility for overhead projection, front stage curtains, window blinds, power sockets for slide projectors

and an electrically operated platform which lowers a video projector down from the ceiling.

This is achieved by a new addition to the Premiere range of control interfaces - the 2620 Relay Driver - which can be used to control either momentary or maintained relays or contactors. The interface also has 16 fully assignable inputs which in this case are wired to buttons on a custom room combination panel. The flexibility permitted by Premiere's room combination facilities allow both lighting and blinds to combine, while facilities that would not be used for certain room layouts are automatically disabled.

Premiere is linked to the fire alarm system so that in the event of an emergency, lighting is established, blinds opened and the screens retracted into the ceiling. The sound system is also linked to Premiere via a Programmable Logic Controller so that each area combines in accordance with the room combination. The sound system is also shutdown by Premiere in the event of the fire alarm being activated.

Premiere push button control stations are located at each entrance door, in each control room and in two lecterns. These panels are configured to control both lighting and other facilities. Infra red hand held controls with receivers are provided in each suite. Using Premiere's Macro facility, a single button on a hand held control will lower and tilt a screen, close the blinds, dim the lighting and switch on power to the overhead projector ready for a presentation. This same button will automatically change its macro function according to the room layout so that the correct screens and blinds are operated!

STOP PRESS!

As part of the EMAP Architecture Hilight Awards the Gleneagles Hotel has just won the "A J Focus Award for the most innovative and ambitious use of a new product" for their recent Premiere® installation.

Chandeliers on electric hoists are provided but it was decided that these would be operated independently of the Premiere system for set up before a conference or dinner in the suite.

A 60 way Strand EC90 HD dimmer rack is used for both the decorative and production lighting. The decorative lighting channels have dual multiplex inputs so as to allow them to be controlled from the MX48 production lighting desk as well as from the Premiere. Facilities panels around the suite provide multiplex input sockets, three-phase 32 amp outlets, technical mains, telephone, ring intercom, projector and A/V tie lines, loudspeaker sockets and sound desk inputs.

Mike Smyth of Northern Light commented that, "Construction of a building as complex as this is never easy and it was made no easier by the fact that there was only 16 weeks from the time the main contractor took possession of the old building in May to the first booking for the new facilities by HM Government in September." *

Photographs by Piers Cavendish



... a conference hall, Premiere® adapts to suit the new layout.