



A vital but often unsung part of the total studio lighting package - suspension systems - has now been added to Strand Lighting's range of services. An agreement has been signed with Evans (Stage and Studio Engineering), under which Strand acquires the specialist services and design of suspension systems, to be provided through our Scottish factory. We look at the background.

NOW WE CAN KEEP YOU IN SUSPENSE

Efficient suspension systems are a key feature in production studios where fast rigging and de-rigging times are needed. Systems must also be versatile to meet the needs of lighting directors and studio managers. And who says so? Studio lighting technicians, whose experience has been used by Evans over the past decade to develop a new concept in lighting hoists.

Evans first set up their subsidiary in 1982 to provide a service to the television industry. At that stage they offered a range of grid-mounted barrel hoists with unique features; studio structure design skills, and a general supply service for TV studio hardware. The first 'single point' hoist was introduced in 1986, followed by self-climbing barrel-type hoists, plus many other products.

Modern production studios need to meet a wide variety of needs. From the suspension point of view, the answer is the saturation rig, using lighting barrel hoists with a comprehensive scenery hoisting system, or a single point system - telescopes and pantographs, for example. A powerful control system is also necessary to maximise the resulting benefits.

To achieve the best layout and design of the suspension system, all aspects of design must be closely co-ordinated

right from the initial concept. Production studios need a substantial structure if they are to support the roof of the building, the suspension system and the other building services.

One solution is the 'walk-over' grid system using a lattice truss arrangement. This allows hoists and mesh panels to be placed, creating a full walk-over grid, and without adding substantially to the height of the building.

An effective suspension system represents a considerable initial capital 'spend'. However, a system fully integrated with the building structure generally offers substantial financial and weight savings. Project involvement at the building design stage is therefore very important.

The facility must remain in use for as much time as possible. Equipment reliability and minimal maintenance and inspection periods are essential for an efficient operation.

European safety inspectors are becoming more involved with suspension equipment for entertainment industry. Similarly insurance companies are now more insistent on the regularity and thoroughness of equipment inspections. Hoists must typically be inspected at 12 monthly intervals. The system design must allow for quick and thorough inspection - and this is

a feature of Strand hoists.

There are many different forms of lighting hoist available. The main distinctions are between barrel hoists, telescopes and other 'single point' systems. There is always a great deal of discussion between lighting directors as to the best system. We have listened to many of these discussions over the years and also considered the engineering and operational merits of each type and designed effective products for each form.

A wide range of circuit sizes and fittings can be provided on each device for lamp supply, PALS operation and also technical facilities for audience reaction.

The range of lighting hoists is complemented by Strand's scenery suspension systems. These include portable and trolley mounted single point hoists, and grid mounted systems.

In order to maximise studio productive time, rigging and de-rigging must be completed as quickly as possible. The lighting and scenery suspension system in a new studio offers the opportunity to

provide this production efficiency. Close co-ordination between the architects, studio engineers and Strand at the design stage will lead to a highly efficient and cost-effective building/suspension system for your studio.

Managing Director Chris Waldron said that this agreement 'strengthens Strand's position as the leading supplier of complete lighting solutions. In addition to complementing our existing range of studio lighting products, it provides a key element in the development of the totally automated lighting systems that will be required in the future. It supports Strand's commitment to servicing the TV studio market through all stages of design and implementation.'

Evans products will be manufactured at Strand's Kirkcaldy factory in Fife, Scotland. The range includes: Barrel Hoists, Telescopes, Pantographs, Scenery Hoist, accessories and hoist controls. In addition, Evans are able to design and supply special products for Studio use. ■

REPORTERLIGHTS MAKE THE NEWS

New Reporterlight and Remote Lighting kits have been added to Strand Lighting's Quartzcolor range of portable lighting, to meet the many lighting needs of ENG/EFP camera work.

Strand's new range includes daylight kits, with two heads available, powered either



battery power options.

The Reporterlight 125 and 200's provide all the lighting needs of the ENG camera crew in a range of easy-to-use kits. The generous reflector size provides high light output and evenly distributed beam angles. Focus ratios are adjusted by a thumb-control and the unit can be hand held, stand or camera mounted.

A number of Reporterlight and Remote kit options are available, including mains operated, battery or belt battery versions.



from 125 or 200w single-ended daylight lamps through lightweight, easy-to-use electronic ballasts. Tungsten kits, for dedicated tungsten use, employ three other kits within the range, with mains or

NEW STRAND DEALERS

New distributors have been appointed by Strand Lighting in Britain and Scandinavia. They are Cerebrum Lighting, based in Surrey (contact: Mike Fisher, tel: 081 949 3171); P & G Stage Electrical, in Manchester (contact: Jeff Demain, tel: 061 226 5858); Playlight Hire, in North London (contact: Mark Pitelen, tel: 081 965 8188); Oscar Lighting, in Stockholm (tel: +468 665 65 10); and Maho Lighting in Helsinki (tel: +358 0 406 211).