GALAXY CONTROL FOR BERLIN'S SPACESHIP

With a design resembling a spaceship, Berlin's convention centre is one of the most striking buildings in the world.

Looking like something from a set of *Star Wars*, Berlin's new International Convention Centre has become one of the most striking and best known buildings in the world.

Constructed on an 'island' site, surrounded by motorways, it houses two large auditoria, plus 80 small-to-medium meeting halls with the latest conference facilities, controlled by a central computer. A wide variety of restaurants caters for the many visitors to dinner-dances, civic events, cabaret shows, sports events, motor shows and political events.

The ICC is opposite the 'Berliner Funkturm', where exhibitions of all kinds are staged and where the annual, 'Internationale Funkausstellung' takes place, drawing attention from all round the world.

Changes in lighting needs since the original installation was put in ten years ago meant that Strand was called in last summer to replace the original lighting controls with three Galaxy 3 systems.

The two main auditoria — one, seating 8,500 people and the other, 4,500 — both share the same stage area. One hall is fitted with raked seating which can be lifted to reveal a flat floor area, but in doing so, blocks access to one of the control systems, so a third control board is needed at floor level.

The main auditorium can seat 8,500 people.

Each Galaxy 3 board is capable of controlling any combination of the three spaces. Currently installed are: 308 5kW dimmers and 12 10kW dimmers, although it is intended to increase the number of dimmers by at least 120 over the coming year.

The variety of uses and allocation of stage areas call for special interlock circuits, preventing channels outside selected areas from being switched on and off. This interlock device is also used for house lights and other stage facilities.

Galaxy 3 systems control auditorium lighting.

All three control systems are Galaxy 3 Memory systems, which are virtually identical. They are equipped with memory and output panels, channel and control panels, six group masters, 20 preset masters, two theatre playbacks, programmable effects and an Alpha keyboard.

Motion control panels have also been installed, since the ICC intends to install 80 PALS luminaires when funds become available.

Systems are equipped with a dimmer test program, which constantly monitors any dimmer status. Each control room also has its own electrical back-up system via memory back-up. In addition, the old pin patches have been retained, allowing the same inhibit function manually through dimmer patching.

Dimmers manufactured by Strand Lighting GmbH are Andi 5kW closed loop types fitted with Dimmer Fault Detection circuits. Unlike standard British dimmers, each module is fitted with a local control potentiometer, an output test point, Dim/Non Dim selection switch and asymmetry detection and shutdown.

A video routing push provides a headline on the channel output screen, with an integrated display of current dimmer fault, with the channel number shown in red.

The Galaxy system dimmer and racks, and all auxiliary controls, have been installed and commissioned in a cycle of eight weeks from order to handover and although there are still details to be fine-tuned, the controls have been in use since last August. The full scope of controls will probably only be utilised when the motorised luminaires are installed, including colour change control.