

Association News

› BIAFD Autumn Conference Highlights CBAM Challenges and Workforce Strategies

The British and Irish Association of Fastener Distributors (BIAFD) brought together 125 delegates from more than half of its member companies for its 2026 Autumn Conference, featuring discussions on market conditions, regulatory challenges and workforce development. Results from a membership survey of 64 businesses revealed that respondents collectively generate £1.64 billion in annual turnover and employ 4,720 people across the UK and Ireland. **Two-thirds expressed optimism about the coming 12 months, while CBAM emerged as the issue members most want the association to address.**

CBAM took center stage during the afternoon sessions. Jamie McLeod, director at Crowe UK, outlined practical implementation challenges, particularly customs data requirements and preparations ahead of January. His colleague Max Pyot also briefed delegates on the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR). A panel featuring representatives from TR Fastenings and Hexstone shared their early CBAM experiences, **highlighting the importance of default values.**

The conference also explored generational differences and talent retention. Gen Z expert Alex Atherton discussed workplace expectations, while industry representatives from Accu and Pugh and Sanders shared strategies for attracting and retaining younger employees, emphasizing transparency about workplace opportunities and benefits. **BIAFD Chairman Gary Henderson said the survey provided valuable evidence of the sector's economic contribution to present to government, with CBAM remaining its top priority.**

BIAFD
Our Members are Better Informed

CBAM Frontline

› EU Moves to Expand CBAM Coverage for Steel and Aluminum Products: Fastener Industry Urged to Prepare Early

On September 15, 2026, the European Parliament voted in favor of expanding the scope of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) to cover more steel, aluminum, and downstream processed products. Fasteners, including screws, nuts, and bolts, have consequently become a key concern for the industry. The European Commission's original proposal envisages including certain downstream products from 2028, although the final list of products and implementation details will depend on the outcome of subsequent legislative negotiations.

European Parliament

The current annual 50-metric-tonne cumulative net mass exemption threshold remains in effect. It applies to the combined weight of relevant CBAM-covered goods imported by the same importer in a calendar year, rather than to individual orders or shipments from a single supplier. If an importer's total annual imports exceed the threshold, the relevant goods may become subject to the full range of applicable CBAM obligations.

For fastener manufacturers, immediate priorities include checking the EU Combined Nomenclature (CN) codes of exported products, confirming customers' annual import volumes of CBAM-covered goods, and preparing data on steel sources and production-related emissions. As EU importers may purchase relevant products from suppliers across multiple countries, manufacturers cannot determine whether a customer qualifies for the exemption solely on the basis of their own shipment volumes. **As the EU gradually extends carbon regulations further down the supply chain, accurate product classification, emissions transparency, and regulatory compliance will become increasingly important competitive factors for fastener suppliers seeking to expand in the European market. Manufacturers should coordinate with European customers and upstream steel suppliers early to prepare the necessary data, reducing future compliance burdens and pricing risks as the scope of CBAM expands.**

Industry Development

› Chinese Fastener Maker Barred from Challenging U.S. Aerospace Patent as Ownership Links Come Under Scrutiny

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) has explained why it rejected a patent challenge filed by China-based Meishan CRRC Fastening System Co. Ltd. against an aerospace fastener patent owned by Howmet Aerospace. The patent covers a method for installing blind fasteners. Meishan CRRC sought to use the U.S. inter partes review (IPR) process to challenge the patent's validity, but the USPTO ultimately refused to accept its petition.

The key issue was ownership and control. The USPTO determined that China's State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission of the State Council (SASAC) holds a majority stake in Meishan CRRC and therefore has controlling power over the company. Although Meishan CRRC argued that it had independently funded and prepared the petition, the USPTO said the review must consider not only who pays for and handles the proceedings, but also whether a government entity behind the company could influence or control the process. The decision does not mean that the U.S. has definitively ruled Howmet's patent valid. Rather, Meishan CRRC's petition to challenge the patent was rejected.

For Taiwan's fastener manufacturers, the case highlights the importance of intellectual property protection when entering high-specification markets such as aerospace and automotive. In addition to improving product technology, companies should carefully assess patent coverage and infringement risks. **The U.S. has begun to take into account "who controls the companies that file patent challenges" in its review. When international patent disputes arise, a company's ownership structure, business relationships, and related legal responsibilities may also become important factors affecting the outcome.**

› Kaohsiung Metalworking Industry Targets Aerospace and Drones, Opening New Opportunities for Taiwanese Fastener Makers



Amid global supply chain restructuring and the transition toward net-zero manufacturing, Kaohsiung's metalworking and fastener industries are accelerating efforts to enter higher-value markets. With established aerospace clusters in Gangshan, Luzhu and Renwu Districts of Kaohsiung, together with strong capabilities in precision machining and metal manufacturing, local companies are increasingly targeting aerospace certification and drones as key areas for industrial upgrade.

According to Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs, Taiwan's aerospace industry generated NT$161.2 billion in output in 2025, with Kaohsiung accounting for approximately NT$48.3 billion, or nearly 30% of the national total. **About 75% of aircraft engine component orders manufactured in Taiwan are processed by Kaohsiung-based companies, highlighting the city's capabilities in precision chemical processing and surface treatment.**

As demand for next-generation fuel-efficient aircraft engines increases, the International Aerospace Quality Group's Performance Review Institute has also revised the NADCAP Chemical Processing accreditation standard AC7108, introducing additional requirements related to green chemistry, sustainability management and risk control. Kaohsiung's Department of Economic Development has launched advanced certification training to help local fastener and metalworking companies prepare for the new requirements, reduce transition costs and strengthen their ability to pursue aerospace component orders.

Meanwhile, **the rapid growth of the global drone market is creating another potential application for the region's metalworking and fastener manufacturers.** Drone systems require precision-made metal components such as frames, motor housings, landing gear, heat-dissipation parts and numerous fasteners. For Kaohsiung-based companies with expertise in CNC machining, aluminum and magnesium alloys, as well as surface treatment, aerospace and drone supply chains could provide new opportunities to upgrade existing manufacturing capabilities and move toward higher-value applications.

› EU Steel Traceability Rules Take Effect in October, Creating Potential Opportunities for Taiwan Fasteners



The European Union introduced new "Melt & Pour" traceability requirements for steel products on October 1, requiring the origin of steel to be traced back to the initial steelmaking stage. The measure is designed to tighten controls on origin circumvention and third-country transshipment. Combined with reduced duty-free import quotas and a 50% tariff on imports exceeding the quota, the new rules are expected to accelerate restructuring of the steel supply chain.

Under the new system, European importers will need to provide information on the country where steel was melted and poured, as well as relevant furnace identification data. Subsequent processing in a third country, such as galvanizing, cutting or painting, will no longer be sufficient to change the original steel origin.

For Taiwan suppliers, supply-chain traceability could become a competitive advantage. China Steel Corporation (CSC) operates an integrated steelmaking system capable of providing comprehensive material and production records. Downstream manufacturers that have long sourced steel from CSC, including Chun Yu, can also connect their products with documentation showing the origin of their steel inputs. As European buyers place greater emphasis on supply-chain transparency, the new rules could create additional opportunities for Taiwanese steel and fastener manufacturers to capture redirected orders.

Companies Development

› Sheh Fung Screw's September Revenue Hits 4-Year High as Orders Extend Through Yearend

Fastener manufacturer Sheh Fung Screws reported consolidated revenue of NT$193 million in September 2026, up 23.9% year on year, marking a 4-year high for the same month. Third-quarter revenue reached NT$639 million, rising 16.75% quarter on quarter and 32.21% year on year, the highest quarterly level in nearly 13 quarters. Revenue for the first 9 months totaled NT$1.731 billion, up 11.98% year on year. **Sheh Fung attributed the growth primarily to stronger shipments to major customers in Europe and the U.S., along with increasing sales of higher-value products. U.S. non-residential construction investment continues to benefit from major projects such as data centers, supporting demand for building hardware and fasteners. The company's order visibility now extends through December.**



sheh fung screws company 世豐螺絲股份有限公司

Looking ahead, Sheh Fung plans to deepen cooperation with key European and U.S. customers while pursuing new customers and product opportunities in Europe and Southeast Asia. Customized product development and product upgrades will help improve order quality. The company is also optimizing its dual-site production network in Taiwan and Vietnam, advancing process improvements, workforce training, and customer certifications at its new Vietnam facility. These efforts are expected to enhance production efficiency and supply flexibility, supporting future business growth.

› LindFast Integrates 3 Fastener Brands into New U.S. Online Ordering Platform

LINDFAST Solutions Group

U.S. fastener master distributor LindFast Solutions Group (LSG) has launched a new eCommerce platform integrating products and online ordering services from 3 brands: Star Stainless, Stelfast and Lindstrom Fasteners. The platform provides U.S. customers with a more convenient purchasing channel.

Launched on September 1, the platform allows customers to place orders online while retaining access to LSG's technical sales team for product selection, application advice and sourcing support. The initiative is part of LSG's broader omnichannel strategy, which includes further integration of ERP systems, eProcurement platforms and automated ordering workflows to improve purchasing efficiency. LSG also plans to expand the platform into Canada in 2027, continuing to invest in digital services and system integration to enhance the customer experience.

› Powell Gee Adds Sixth Automated Washering Machine to Boost Roofing Fastener Capacity

British fastener manufacturer Powell Gee has continued investing in its manufacturing capabilities with the addition of a sixth automated washering machine. **The investment expands production capacity for self-drilling screws used in roofing and wall cladding, strengthening the company's specialized fastener solutions for composite panel applications.** The new machine can assemble washers onto screws with diameters of 4.8, 5.5, 6.3 and 7.0 mm and lengths ranging from 50 to 300 mm. It can process up to 400 pieces per minute, delivering a maximum output of 24,000 washered fasteners per hour. The additional capacity has also reduced machine changeovers and downtime, enabling longer production runs and more flexible scheduling.

Powell Gee said that as construction schedules become increasingly compressed, the ability to supply large volumes of specialized fasteners while maintaining reliable lead times gives customers an important competitive advantage. The new equipment complements the company's existing injection-molding and powder-coating capabilities, further improving manufacturing efficiency and service for roofing and cladding fasteners.

› UK Hardware Store Namrick to Close Physical Shop After 45 Years Amid Online Shopping Pressures

Namrick, a well-known hardware store in Hove, England, has announced that it will permanently close its physical shop after 45 years in business and continue operating primarily online. **The company said changing shopping habits since the COVID-19 pandemic have placed increasing pressure on traditional retail, with the past 18 months proving particularly difficult.** Established in 1980, Namrick initially supplied fasteners to classic car restorers before expanding into a hardware business serving trade customers, DIY enthusiasts and other buyers. Following the announcement, many customers expressed sadness over the closure, highlighting the expertise of its staff in identifying unusual nuts and bolts, matching sizes and recommending suitable alternatives in person. The company thanked customers for their support over the past 45 years and said it would continue its online operations to serve customers across the UK and overseas.



› All State Fastener Expands Heavy Truck Distribution with New Ohio Facility

All State Fastener (ASF), a family-owned global fastener and component distributor, has opened a new distribution center in Chillicothe, Ohio, expanding support for heavy truck manufacturers and their tier suppliers.

Located at 360 Douglas Avenue, the facility replaces ASF's previous local operation and is already fully operational, housing tens of millions of dollars in inventory. It supports inventory management, kitting and assembly, sequencing, vendor-managed inventory, cross-docking and quality inspection. The center employs more than 40 people, doubling ASF's workforce in the Chillicothe area and bringing inventory and services closer to customers.



The investment is part of ASF's 2026 North American expansion, which has added more than 100,000 square feet of distribution capacity across Ohio, Washington, Quebec and Mexico. ASF plans further expansion in Mexico and the northeastern United States in 2027, while pursuing acquisitions and partnerships to broaden its distribution capabilities and product offerings beyond traditional fasteners.



› KYOCERA SENCO Expands Cincinnati Operations

KYOCERA SENCO Industrial Tools announced an expansion of its operations in Cincinnati, Ohio, expected to create 37 new jobs and generate an additional US$3.2 million in annual payroll. **The investment includes new equipment, technology development and increased robotic automation to enhance manufacturing capabilities.** SENCO primarily produces nails, staples, screws and fastening tools, including pneumatic and cordless nailers. Some of its products are manufactured using U.S.-sourced steel. Established in Cincinnati in 1951, the company has also expanded into tool assembly and the design and engineering of automated fastening systems in recent years. SENCO said it will continue investing in U.S. manufacturing, combining local talent with automation technology to increase production capacity and strengthen product competitiveness. ■