

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS UPDATE

BACKGROUND

1. This paper introduces a health and safety news update.

SUMMARY

2. This paper introduces a health and safety news update advising members of health and safety developments that have taken place since the 47th meeting.

ACTION

3. Members are asked to note the contents of the news update and to raise any queries regarding the update at the 48th meeting.

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS UPDATE 08/03

1. The following is a description of some of the developments that have occurred in the health and safety field. It has been compiled by HSE's Manufacturing Sector. For a regular update on recent developments see the "What's new" section of HSE's web site at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/new/index.htm> A fortnightly list of new HSE publications is also available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/flist/> Advice on occupational health and safety is also available from the HSE Infoline on 08701 545500.

New Publications

2. A new set of health and safety statistics is now available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/books.htm>. Included are provisional statistics of fatal accidents for 2002/03.

3. The research report *Falls from height – Prevention and risk control effectiveness* has recently been published (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr116.pdf>). This provides:

- a definitive baseline for measuring improvements in the incidence rate of falls from height;
- a quantified model of the influences affecting falls from height covering human, hardware and external factors; and
- a toolkit for selecting measures, setting performance targets and monitoring improvement

Some of the key issues highlighted are:

- The importance of design and designers in eliminating work at height hazards;
- Enough guidance and information is available but people need to be aware of risks and actually use guidance available;
- The importance and large number of 'low falls' especially on stairs. The report states around 60 per cent of non-fatal accidents and injuries over the past five years have been due to low (under two metre) falls

4. The latest supplement to update EH40 - the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) list of occupational exposure limits (OEL) - has been published on the Internet. The document, EH40 Occupational Exposure Limits Supplement 2003, is available to download free on HSE's web site at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/eh40sup.pdf>

Amongst the changes is a new MEL for manganese of 0.5 mg/m³ that is to be compared to the previous OES for manganese fume of 1.0 mg/m³.

Manganese is present in fume from welding and allied processes. The revision also withdraws OESs for nitrogen dioxide and nitrogen monoxide both of which are generated by welding and allied processes. They have each been replaced by a Chemical Hazard Alert Notice (see

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/chan28.htm> and

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/chan29.htm>). Consequently, assessments of these processes will need to be revised.

5. *Health and safety responsibilities of company directors and management board members* <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr135.pdf>. Advises that organisations assign directorial responsibility to a board director outlining the range of board level tasks.

6. *Job retention and vocational rehabilitation: The development and evaluation of a conceptual framework* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr106.pdf>)

This research report is aimed at identifying the issues that employers, in partnership with their employees, need to address in order to facilitate the continued employment of such workers via the provision of vocational rehabilitation.

New Features On The HSE Web Site

7. Updates to the pages devoted to the European Week for health and safety include a promotional presentation that can be downloaded and used to help raise awareness of the campaign. This can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/euroweek/action.htm>.

8. Issue 51, the latest edition of the Toxic Substances Bulletin is available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toxicsubstances/issue51.htm>

9. Hand-arm and whole-body vibration exposure calculators have been added to the vibration web pages (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/vibration/index.htm>)

New website areas

10. Slips and trips (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/index.htm>)

11. Dermatitis (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/dermatitis/index.htm>)

12. Falls from height (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/index.htm>)

13. Draft management standards on work-related stress: Pilot project (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/stresspilot/index.htm>)

14. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health - COSHH - portal site (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm>)

Free Leaflets – New

15. INDG354 *Safety in electrical testing at work - general guidance - indg354* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/elecindx.htm>)

16. *Managing asbestos - your legal duties* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/manageasbestos.pdf>)

Free Leaflets – Revised

17. *INDG95 - Respiratory Sensitisers and COSHH Breathe freely* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg95.pdf>)

18. *INDG273 - Working safely with solvents* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg273.pdf>)

19. *INDG289 - Working with asbestos in buildings* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg289.pdf>)

20. *INDG199 (rev 3) - Managing vehicle safety at the workplace* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/tranindx.htm>)

Other guidance

21. *Tax rules and the purchase of occupational health support* (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/taxrules.pdf>)