

**COI LIVE EVENTS AND BROADCAST FACILITIES
TRANSCRIPT OF GOOD JOBS, GOOD HEALTH CONFERENCE
HELD AT THE INSTITUTION OF CIVIL ENGINEERS
IN LONDON
ON TUESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2006**

FACILITATOR

Without further ado, I will start off by welcoming somebody from the world of Health and Safety, my very illustrious gaffer, Bill Callaghan, Chair of the HSE, who will open the conference.

MR BILL CALLAGHAN

Thanks very much Judith. I suppose that is better than Britain's chief nanny, but there you are.

Well welcome colleagues. You have got a packed programme for today, so let me just take a few minutes to underline one of the key themes that is vital to achieving the goal of Good Jobs, Good Health. There is the need for teamwork and partnership. I hope you will see from today that the Commission is functioning as a team, and we need Ministers and all our stakeholders, whether medical, management or trade union, to act as a team if we are to meet the challenges of good health and good jobs. And the Commission very much welcomes Professor Dame Carol Black's appointment as the National Director for Health and Work, and we look forward to hearing from Carol today along with Rosie Winterton, the Health Minister. I am sorry that Philip Hunt can't be with us, he very much wanted to be with us today but he has to attend to his day job, he is a Lords Minister and has got parliamentary business today which he can't excuse himself from.

This morning Rosie Winterton will be launching the government's Action on Stigma initiative to coincide with World Mental Health Day, and the Commission is fully behind efforts to raise awareness of mental health issues and promote greater support for those affected. Being mental health friendly is good for our businesses, helps our employees and customers and improves the health and well-being of all. And I don't need to remind you that last year when 28 million working days were lost because of ill-health, 13 million of those were attributable to stress, and 4 out of 10 of those on incapacity benefit are suffering mental health problems. Indeed the health, work and wellbeing strategy is designed to tackle these very issues, and central to that strategy is that work is good, because not having work can and does impact detrimentally on health, creates health inequalities and considerably reduces life opportunities. So having a job is better than not having a job in terms of health.

But of course what makes a good job? I suppose you all have your views, but to my mind amongst the key features is a good health and safety record where there is leadership from the top in companies, from the board of directors, where there is involvement from the shop floor through the involvement of safety reps, teamwork, partnership, where there is priority on preventing work-related injury and illness, where there is early intervention when problems arise, when treatment is provided quickly and when there is appropriate rehabilitation support for those who have been long term sick and where workplace adaptations and return to work support is available.

Now colleagues these are tricky issues and we have to grapple with these as a modern regulator and as a major influencer. Our stress management

standards take us into the area of job design and human relations, and obviously we cannot tackle these issues in isolation, that is why we are working closely with the CIPD and ACAS, teamwork and partnership.

By the way, as our commitment to being a better and smarter regulator we will be publishing tomorrow our simplification plan on our website and our clear focus is on simplifying legislation to make it easier to comply with and so improve health and safety results. It is certainly not about reducing protection for workers or the public, it is about our commitment to maintaining and improving standards.

So colleagues, as I said, there is a lot to talk about today and I look forward to the presentations, the debate and the workshop sessions. But I do hope that out of today you will all go away convinced that health and safety is a key component in taking forward the good jobs and good health agenda. But I think beyond that we all need to have a clearer understanding of the issues we need to tackle and the actions the Commission would like you to take forward, in particular to support Dame Carol Black in her work as National Director and to develop in practice the good jobs and good health agenda in the workplace, and I think that can only be done on the basis of teamwork and partnership.

FACILITATOR

Bill, thank you very much indeed. I now have great pleasure in introducing our keynote speaker for the morning, Professor Parveen Kumar, who is the current President of the BMA and also a consultant physician and gastroenterologist at Barts and the London and Hoverton Hospitals. Ladies and Gentlemen, Professor Kumar.