

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE
AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**A PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE TEMPORARY AND
MIGRANT PROJECT GROUP**

Summary

1 This paper provides a progress report on the work of the temporary and migrant project group to the beginning of October 2007. The group has made considerable progress towards achieving its aims and objectives. Notable successes include:

- (1) the development, publication and distribution of basic Health and Safety guidance for migrants and temporary employees within Agriculture and Horticulture (pocketcard INDG410) in May 2007; and
- (2) the development and publication in October 2007 of guidance for employers in the agriculture and food processing sectors on employing workers from overseas (leaflet INDG414).

Background

2 The aim of the working group was to reduce the levels of risk, injury and ill health experienced by casual and temporary migrant workers or other vulnerable workers in agriculture, horticulture and related on - farm food processing sectors through the provision of authoritative guidance.

3 Key objectives included:

- (1) The development of basic guidance for casual, temporary and migrant workers employees on their rights and responsibilities under health and safety legislation.
- (2) Exploring the scope for and promoting the translation of key advice into the appropriate foreign languages
- (3) Developing good practice guidance for employers on managing health and safety in these sectors in conjunction with key stakeholders; and
- (4) Developing a communications strategy to support the products.

Progress

4 The group has achieved the first two objectives by developing and publishing the migrant worker pocketcard in English, Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Russian, Romanian and Bulgarian. A communication strategy was agreed to include web based distribution and hard copy distribution through industry and other stakeholders

5 Whilst encountering some obstacles, the pocketcards are now available in hard copy and electronic formats. The objective of developing a communications strategy to support the products was also achieved to support the pocketcard and will be reactivated in support of the employers' guidance.

6 Notable distribution successes include support from the Border & Immigration Agency at ports of entry, Job Centre Plus / European Employment Services (EURES), the Ethical Trading Initiative etc. The establishment of a dedicated HSE migrant worker website which it is hoped will be in place by late 2007, will further support distribution and dissemination.

7 The group has benefited greatly from wide partnership involvement including 'Unite the Union' - TGWU, UK Immigration Service, Young Farmers, National Association of Agricultural Contractors, ASDA (Ethical Trading Initiative), the Association of Labour Providers, National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux (NACAB), NFU and Lantra. This has allowed for extensive support to HSE staff and has extended networking capacity to allow for wider consultation at all stages. This partnership has added greatly to the value of the work being undertaken by the HSE staff.

8 In addition to an initial distribution of approximately 40,000 pocketcards distributed through partner organisations, approximately 5,500 further copies have been distributed through HSE Publications as follows:

- English 1300
- Latvian 470
- Romanian 500
- Bulgarian 700
- Polish 830
- Ukrainian 480
- Lithuanian 430
- Russian 730

9 Twenty-six priced multipacks (incorporating 4x English + 3x each of the other languages) have been sold. It was also posted on HSE's agriculture website at (www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/overseas.htm). By the end of September there had been 3,547 downloads of the English and approximately 2,644 downloads of the translated versions:

- Latvian 229

- Romanian 265
- Bulgarian 265
- Polish 1270
- Ukrainian 164
- Lithuanian 253
- Russian 198

10 Having achieved its first two objectives, the group has gone on to develop guidance for employers who employ migrant workers or who may, from time-to-time, take on temporary workers. Whilst relevant to all employers, it has been specifically targeted at the needs of small and medium sized employers who are heavily represented within the agriculture and agricultural produce processing sectors.

11 The leaflet has been the subject of extensive consultation within the group and HSE and it is hoped it will have been published by the time of the AIAC meeting on 29 October 2007.

12 It is anticipated once this document has been fully developed the group will have achieved all the objectives set out in the original project plan. A communications strategy had also been produced.

13 As Chair of the group on behalf of the working group I would like to take this opportunity to thank the HSE staff in particular Graeme Walker who has taken on board this work with great enthusiasm and has in many cases developed work for us to evaluate and take forward and has with unstinting enthusiasm taken back to HSE our concerns and ideas and has pushed things forward internally. In addition thanks must go in the later stages of this work to Chris Molde for developing the communications strategy.

14 Three further possible areas of work were identified by the group at the outset, namely:

- (1) Reviewing and exploiting the outcomes of HSE research into the best mechanisms for delivering key messages to foreign workers in agriculture. This project encountered real difficulty in reaching a representative range of migrant worker groups and as a result has not, to date, been supported beyond an initial pilot phase;
- (2) Reviewing mechanisms - including the fresh produce supply and retail chains - for raising the skills, knowledge and competences of labour providers and users in managing health and safety in the industry; and
- (3) Exploring the potential for disseminating information on employees' rights and responsibilities under UK health and safety legislation through the recruitment and labour supply chains based on the European mainland.

Action/ Recommendation

15 These three areas of work pose fundamental challenges beyond the scope of the existing project. If they are to be pursued it will require the commitment and support of the full AIAC, a review of the membership of the group and a fundamental revision of the Project Implementation Document.

16 It is the recommendation of the group that either the AIAC decides to commit to and support a revised project (as described above) or to formally stand the group down.

Contact

Madge Moore
Lantra
024785 8433