

RUBBER INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RUBIAC)

Minutes of the 58th meeting of RUBIAC held at the HSE offices, Newcastle-under-Lyme on Thursday, 10TH OCTOBER 2002.

Present

Mr A D Porter
Mr D Simpson
Ms S Ikin
Dr J K Straughan
Mr H Thomas
Mr T DiGravio
Mr W Holmes
Mr M Khalik
Mr C Flint,
Mr P Green
Mr King
Ms Cathy Bonner
Dr D Gaubert
Miss A Rayner
Mrs W Drammeh

Representing

Chairman, HSE
British Vita
RMA
BRMA
TGWU
PIRELLI TYRES
MSFU
GMB
Secretary, HSE
HSE
HSE
HSE
HSE
Minute Secretary, HSE
Minute Secretary, HSE

Apologies

Mr A Harvey
Dr A Dost
Mr J Cash

Observers

Mr K O'Brien
Mr J Sunderland

Summary of Action agreed:

- 1. (Min 2.1)** Mr Flint to amend minutes to show correct venues for 58th and 59th meetings of RUBIAC.
- 2. (Min 3.1)** Mr Flint to process Register of Interests forms.
- 3. (Min 3.6)** Mr Green to prepare text for a special edition of the RUBIAC newsletter dealing with recent fatal accidents in the industry.
- 4. (Min 3.10)** Mr Flint to check on progress of HSE Specialist Inspector preparing guidance on implications of the DSEAR for the industry.

5. **(Min 3.12)** Mr Flint to invite a speaker to the next meeting to explain in more detail the recent review of carbon black and implications of proposed changes to OEL system.
6. **(Min 6.1)** Dr Straughan to forward a copy of report by Dr Ian White to Dr Gaubert which is relevant to the current work item looking at collecting information on skin disorders in the rubber industry.
7. **(Min 6.6)** Dr Gaubert to finalise questionnaire to collect information on skin disorders in the rubber industry with Dr Straughan and Mr Thomas. Distribution and collection of the questionnaire also to be agreed.
8. **(Min 7.1)** Mr King to have final version of retread guidance ready for approval by next RUBIAC meeting.
9. **(Min 7.3)** Mr King to speak to the Environment Agency about tyre recycling to see if there is any possibility for “joined up working” in the context of tyre collection and delivery.
10. **(Min 8.1)** Mr Green to analyse the rubber industry manual handling statistics further for the next meeting.
11. **(Min 9.1)** Mr Flint to make enquiries to see how the noise solutions, in the RUBIAC publication dealing with noise, can be kept available if the publication is deleted from the publications catalogue.
12. **(Min 9.3)** Ms Bonner to discuss with Mr Flint how to ensure the RUBIAC booklet, “Control of Rubber Fume at Extruders, Calenders & Vulcanising Operations” remains available whilst it is under review as present stocks are low.
13. **(Min 9.4)** Mr Flint to review the short RUBIAC training booklet and decide the future of the text.
14. **(Min 10.1)** Mr Flint to send the draft COSHH Control Guidance Sheets for certain rubber processes members for comment by 8 November.
15. **(Min 10.1)** Mr Flint to send members details of the HSE COSHH Essentials website.
16. **(Min 11.1)** Drs Straughan and Gaubert to keep the Committee informed of the future of the NHS Scheme for undertaking urinary cytology for rubber workers.
17. **(Min 12.2)** Mr Flint to discuss with Dr Dost the possibility of Polymer Training Limited being approached to offer training for trainers to enable them to deliver the BRMA supervisors workshop.
18. **(Min 13.2)** Mr King to liaise with Dr Dost on the issue of threading up at calenders and report back on progress to the next meeting.
19. **(Min 14.1)** Mr Flint to circulate the BRMA “Isocyanates Survey in the Flexible Foam Industry” report to members.
20. **(Min 5.1)** Mr Holmes to talk to Mr Owen Tudor & Mr Jim Marshall and obtain formal TU support for the RUBIAC Action Plan and supporting activities 2002-2005.

21. **(Min 5.2)** Mr Flint to speak to members outside the meeting to discuss a pledge and what possibilities existed for a signing up ceremony.
22. **(Min 15.1)** Mr Flint to send members details of the Home Office website where the review of Fire Safety Legislation document was posted.
23. **(Min 15.2)** Mr Flint to look into replacement members for the Committee on both the CBI and TU sides so as to get back to full complement.
24. **(Min 15.3)** Dr Gaubert to make available to members draft copies of the Health Surveillance leaflet.
25. **(Min 15.4)** Mr Flint to discuss with Dr Dost the BRMA concern about the weights at which polymer bales are supplied throughout the industry.

1. Welcome & Chairman's Introduction

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Keith O'Brien to the meeting as an observer and introduced Mrs W Drammeh as a new minute secretary to the team. Due to the travel difficulties encountered by Dr Dost it was agreed that items 4 and 5 be moved to later in the meeting in the hope that Dr Dost would arrive to give his input on those matters.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th June 2002

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as correct except for an error in the location for both the current meeting and the meeting on 27th Feb 2003. These are both being held at HSE's offices in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

3. Matters arising

- 3.1 Register of Interest forms (Min 2.6) have now all been received and are ready for inclusion on the website.
- 3.2 Risk Control Indicators (Min 3.1) were sent to members.
- 3.3 The issue of a free leaflet explaining the Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy for small firms (Min 3.3) had been raised by the Chair with the relevant HSE section and it was perceived as a good idea.
- 3.4 The RUBIAC Action Plan (Min 4.4) is on the agenda at item 4.
- 3.5 Dermatitis in the Rubber Industry (Min 5.4) is on the agenda at item 6.
- 3.6 Review of Fatal Accidents in the Rubber Industry (Min 7.1). Mr Green hadn't been able to obtain sufficient information as a number of the

incidents were still under investigation. He hoped to have information for a special RUBIAC newsletter by January 2003.

- 3.7 Supervisors Workshops (Min 8.1) is on the agenda at item 12.
 - 3.8 Review of RUBIAC Publications (Min 9.1) is on the agenda at item 9.
 - 3.9 Urinary Cytology (Min 10.1) is on the agenda at item 11.
 - 3.10 DSEAR (Min 12.1). Mr A Tyldesley HSE Specialist had agreed to familiarise himself with the industry, review existing guidance and produce any new guidance needed. This is on the agenda at item 13.
 - 3.11 Banbury Mixers (Min 14.1) this is on the agenda at item 13.
 - 3.12 Carbon Black Review by WATCH (Min 14.2) had been sent to Mr Flint. In the light of current evidence and because of changes to the OEL structure to be made in the next few years WATCH didn't recommend any changes. Members had concerns over some of the information from WATCH. Dr Straughan also commented that Britain is the only country that has a rubber process dust & fume limit. Mr Flint agreed to invite a HSE representative to the next meeting to discuss the matter further as the rubber industry is the biggest user of carbon black and members wanted to know more about proposed changes to the current OEL system.
 - 3.13 Nuisance Dust Masks (Min 14.3) Mr Flint said that feedback had been received and misuse was not felt to be an issue in the rubber industry.
 - 3.14 Internal Mixers (Min 14.7) This was on the agenda at item 13.
- 6 Collection of Data on Dermatitis in the Rubber Industry.**
- 6.1 Dr Gaubert discussed the questionnaire she proposed to give employees in the industry to record skin disorders. Dr Straughan wanted clarification on how the questionnaire would be distributed and expressed the view that in its present form little meaningful information would be obtained. He referred to a survey by Dr Ian White relevant to this work and carried out in 1986 in tyre companies and agreed to obtain a copy which he would forward to Dr Gaubert.
 - 6.2 Mr Holmes suggested not many incidents of dermatitis would be reported under RIDDOR and the only way to get a more accurate

picture would be for employees to be approached. Dr Gaubert suggested unions distribute the questionnaire and also collect them on completion. The trade unions agreed to this. Mr Khalik said that surveying employees was a positive move but stressed if the forms were not confidential employees would have worries.

6.3 It was agreed to add job titles, company and employee names to the questionnaire.

6.4 Mr DiGravio was concerned the results might be misleading and cause panic amongst the workforce. Dr Straughan suggested more structure was needed and wondered where the results would take the Committee after they had been collected. Mr Holmes felt a working group would be needed to consider the results and next steps.

6.5 The Chair spoke about a similar survey in the printing industry and the problems encountered on trying to get the questionnaires back. Mr Thomas suggested distribution at the Annual Tyre Conference in November and offered to hand them out. Mr Holmes asked the Chair about the printing survey and the problems and the solutions on getting returned questionnaires.

6.6 The Chair suggested after the meeting Dr Gaubert, Dr Straughan and Mr Thomas discuss the questions on and distribution of the questionnaire.

7 Update on RUBIAC Working Group Activity.

7.1 Good progress has been made at the Retread Working Group. A draft of the health and safety in retread guidance will be ready in the next few weeks and the final version will be available for the RUBIAC meeting in February 2003.

7.2 The Manual Handling Working Group looking at the Delivery and Collection of Vehicle Tyres had held a first meeting which was well attended and good progress made. Ergonomist, David Riley of HSL in Sheffield had been commissioned to gather information for case study guidance. Mr King explained that simple improvements to the storage of tyres awaiting collection at depots would increase safety. It was suggested tyre companies could put pressure on some tyre depots to improve storage arrangements. Mr King reported he was in discussion with the BRMA on this point and Ms Ikin offered to help.

7.3 The Environment Agency (EA) was mentioned as they were working to increase the number of tyres being recycled. There was an obvious link to the WG activity. Mr King agreed to speak the EA to ensure

there was “joined up working”.

8 Review of RIDDOR Statistics for the Rubber Industry 2001/2002

- 8.1** Mr Green presented the statistics showing the progress towards the RUBIAC Action Plan targets. Mr DiGravio commented that inroads into manual handling incidents had not been significant and suggested that other factors, such as employee age and lack of investment in new machinery were contributory. Mr Smith asked if the trend was worse in some areas more than others and suggested doing and asked if a more detailed analysis could be undertaken. Mr Green agreed to do an analysis for the next meeting that would show if manual handling accidents had failed to decrease as a percentage of the total in all sub-sectors of the industry and break the manual handling accidents down by type in more detail.

9 Review of RUBIAC Publications

- 9.1** Mr Flint and Ms Bonner told the meeting that 4 RUBIAC publications needed reviewing. A list of all RUBIAC publications was circulated showing sales for the last 3 years and current stock levels. The Committee noted the low sales in the last 2 years which maybe due to the higher sales figures in the previous years. Low sales of the Training Pack were disappointing and all agreed this should be promoted. Mr King agreed to take responsibility for coordinating the review. Publications would be amended and reprinted or deleted if no longer adding value. In the case of the noise solutions publication if it were deleted enquiries would be made to see how best to preserve the solutions for future reference.
- 9.2** Of the 4 publications needing reviewing 2 dealt with the control of rubber dust and fume. It was agreed it was worth investigating merging these together with all other publications dealing with rubber dust and fume to create a one stop publication.
- 9.3** Ms Bonner pointed out that there were only 3 copies of the publication, “Control of Rubber Fume at Extruders, Calenders & Vulcanising Operations”. It couldn’t be re-printed as the text and pictures were no longer available. Mr Flint suggested issuing photocopies of the booklet until a decision was made on whether to merge it with the other dust & fume control publications. Ms Bonner agreed to look into the possibility of copying the booklet but was unsure whether this was possible. Another possibility was to see if stocks were available from elsewhere in HSE.
- 9.4** The Chair also suggested discontinuation of the publication ISBN 0 717614581 – Health & Safety Training in the Rubber Industry if this was covered in the publication ISBN 0 7176 2404 8 – Health & Safety Training Package for the Rubber Industry 1998. The Committee agreed to this. Mr Flint said he would look to see if any information from the shorter booklet needed incorporating into a revised training

package in the future. Ms Bonner said that rather than destroy copies of the shorter training booklet it could be sent out with the training package.

10 COSHH Essentials for the Rubber Industry

10.1 A number of COSHH Essential Control Guidance Sheets (CGSs) had been prepared for a number of rubber processes and members comments were invited. It was agreed members would be e-mailed the CGSs for their comments. Responses were needed by 8th November 2002. COSHH website details were also given. Mr Flint agreed to send details of the COSHH Essentials website, where the CGSs would be placed, with the minutes of the meeting.

11 Urinary Cytology Update

11.1 Dr Gaubert spoke about the NHS screening scheme and asked Dr Straughan to explain it in more detail. Dr Straughan gave some background information on the BRMA rubber workers scheme and the difficulties with the NHS scheme especially in persuading GPs to offer bladder cancer screening since doctors have been given charge of their own budgets and don't generally view it as a priority. Dr Straughan explained he had now received correspondence from HSE and thanked Mr Flint for ensuring he was included in the debate to determine the future of the NHS screening scheme. Dr Gaubert would also liaise with the HSE's Chief Medical Officer. Both Dr Gaubert and Dr Straughan would keep the Committee informed of the outcome of future discussions.

Dr A Dost telephoned to say he wouldn't make the meeting due to traffic conditions on the M6 and surrounding roads on the day. Dr Straughan agreed to lead on items for Dr Dost having been briefed by him.

12 Supervisors Workshops

12.1 Dr Straughan reported on supervisors workshop pilot at the Avon Rubber Company which had been well. The course was a success and 300 supervisors from the industry have been identified to attend it over the next 12 months. Mr King commented on the positive feedback he had read from the evaluation sheets and Dr Dost should be congratulated on this work and its success.

12.2 Mr Smith asked whether there could be a train the trainer course to roll out the workshops in-house. Mr Flint said Polymer Training Limited might be able to offer this kind of training and said he would discuss this with Dr Dost.

13 Internal Mixers – Isolation of Top Doors During Cleaning. Calenders – Threading up.

13.1 Dr Straughan said the matter had now been resolved and it had been an isolated incident rather than widespread in the industry as had been initially thought. Reassurance on this was given to the TU side.

13.2 Dr Straughan reported that Dr Dost had carried out a survey and received 38 responses on threading up of calenders. This had been carried out because of suggestions that current RUBIAC guidance wasn't being followed due to practical difficulties. Mr King agreed to follow up with Dr Dost and visit some of the Companies who have responded. A HSE Specialist Inspector would be asked to assist.

14 BRMA Isocyanates Survey in the Flexible Foam Industry.

14.1 Dr Dost had sent the survey report to Mr Flint who had brought it to the attention of others in HSE dealing with asthmagens. Having checked with Dr Straughan, Mr Flint agreed to send it to members.

4 RUBIAC Action Plan 2002-2005.

4.1 Mr Flint said that although half the committee had written supporting the plan others had not yet responded including the trade associations and some unions. It was necessary to get everyone's agreement on the matter. After a discussion the RUBIAC Action Plan was accepted and supported by all.

5 RUBIAC Action Plan: supporting activities 2002-2005.

5.1 Mr Flint said agreement was needed to the objectives drawn up to deliver the Action Plan as these placed obligations on all stakeholders represented on the Committee. As with the Action Plan there had been no response from the trade associations and some trade unions. The BRMA and RMA gave their agreement at the meeting. Mr Holmes agreed to talk to Mr Owen Tudor TUC and Mr Marshall to confirm TU support within 2 weeks.

5.2 Members wanted the signing of a pledge in support of the Action Plan by all stakeholders. However, it was felt the BRMA conference was too close a deadline and not necessarily the right forum. Mr Flint agreed to explore alternate means by which signing up could be achieved. Signatures from the HSC Chair and a TUC representative were needed in addition to those from the trade associations. Mr Smith stressed the need for more momentum with the Action Plan to kick-start the improvement plan. He suggested presentations to CEOs

on the business case for health and safety and real case studies from the first Action Plan.

15 Any other Business

15.1 Mr Flint mentioned the Home Office review of Fire Safety Legislation. A summary of the proposals and the full document is on the Home Office website and Mr Flint agreed to provide details.

15.2 Mr Flint informed members about current vacancies on both TU and CBI sides of RUBIAC. Mr Flint agreed to pursue membership of the Committee outside of the meeting.

15.3 Dr Gaubert spoke briefly about the progress made on the RUBIAC Health Surveillance guidance leaflet. Draft copies are to be made available to members for comment.

15.4 Dr Straughan commented on manual handling polymer bales. The issue was around the weights these were being supplied. It was agreed that Mr Flint would discuss with Dr Dost outside the meeting.

15.5 Mr Holmes offered his thanks to the Chair for all his hard work over the years and wished him a healthy and happy retirement. The rest of the Committee supported this.

17 Date & Venue of the next meeting

17.1 The next two meetings were confirmed as: 27th February 2003 at HSE Offices in Newcastle-under-Lyme & 26th June 2003 at HSE Headquarters at Rose Court, London. The latter would be an open meeting.

18 CLOSE