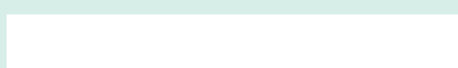
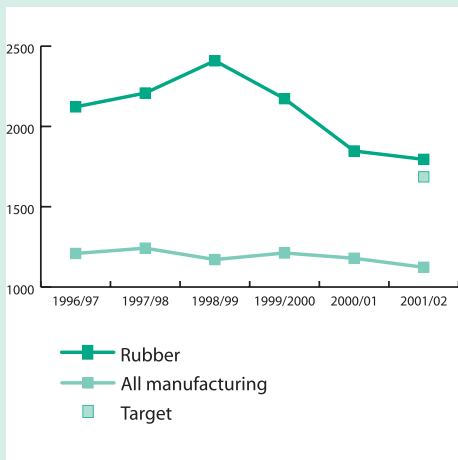
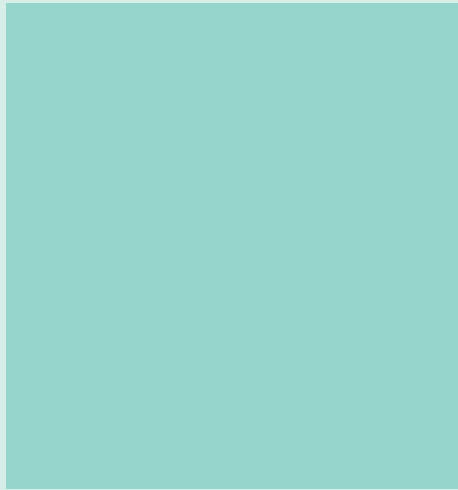




RUBIAC

The Newsletter of the Rubber Industry Advisory Committee



RUBIAC Recommended Practice Approaches

Further RUBIAC Recommended Practice Approaches will also be published. The topics planned include falls from height, workplace transport, working in partnership, selection and management of contractors, health surveillance and rehabilitation.

RUBIAC seminars and workshops

RUBIAC will also run seminars to develop and promote the new Recommended Practice Approaches. If you would like to register an interest, please do so using the contact details below.

Open meeting

A RUBIAC open meeting will be held at The Pavilion at Goodyear in Wolverhampton on 26 June this year to report on progress with the second Action Plan and listen to industry's views. It will involve a shortened formal meeting followed by a combined seminar/workshop covering the RUBIAC training matrix and the new Recommended Practice Approaches. If you would like to attend please register your interest at rubiacc.area14@hse.gsi.gov.uk or contact Anne Rayner at Marshalls Mill, Marshall Street, Leeds LS11 9YJ, Tel: 0113 283 4354.

BRMA seminar for health and safety officers

BRMA organised a joint seminar with HSE at the National Motorcycle Museum on 5 February 2003 to launch the RUBIAC second Action Plan. The seminar raised awareness among member firms of the health and safety work programme that BRMA will both contribute to and deliver to improve the management of health and safety in the rubber industry.

Review of RUBIAC publications

A number of RUBIAC publications are currently being reviewed. These are:

- *Control of rubber fume at extruders, calenders and vulcanising operations* (1994).
- *Dust and fume control in rubber mixing and milling* (1996).
- *Dust control in powder handling and weighing. A revised COSHH guide* (1997).

RUBIAC invites comments on the content of these publications, highlighting inaccuracies, omissions or out-of-date information. Comments can be sent to rubiacc.area14@hse.gsi.gov.uk

In addition RUBIAC has recently agreed to delete the following from its series of publications:

- *Noise control in the rubber industry* (1990). (Industry-specific solutions from the noise publication will be available on the HSE website.)
- *Be on your guard. A risk assessment approach to machinery safety in the rubber industry* (1995).
- *Health and safety training in the rubber industry* (1998). (NB RUBIAC's *Health and safety training resource pack for the rubber industry* (1998) is still available.)

BRMA flexible foam survey

In June 2002 BRMA collected industry data to contribute to the Health and Safety Commission/Executive work relating to future strategies for reducing the incidence of occupational asthma. The findings of the survey suggest that the estimated annual contribution to the incidence of occupational asthma arising from exposure to isocyanates in flexible foam manufacture is likely to be well below one case per year.

BRMA has pointed out that this is very low when compared with the estimated number of cases annually for all isocyanates users. It has suggested that any future HSE strategy for reducing the incidence of occupational asthma should focus on users of isocyanates where exposure is known to be poorly controlled and where the incidence of occupational asthma is known to be high.

Manual handling risks in tyre collection and delivery

RUBIAC has set up a working group to look into the manual handling risks to which lorry drivers and others are exposed when collecting and delivering new and used vehicle tyres.

Although the industry has made progress in reducing manual handling risks at tyre manufacturing and retread plants and at the larger tyre distribution depots, delivery drivers are still often exposed to unacceptable levels of risk in some sectors of the industry. For example, drivers collecting used tyre casings from tyre fitting depots and other yards often find that the casings are stored horizontally or even in a massive pile in a haphazard fashion in the open air. They become filled with rainwater making them even heavier and more difficult to handle.

With truck tyre casings weighing up to 70 kg, drivers are exposed to a very serious risk of musculoskeletal injury or hernia. If the tyres were stored upright, it would make it easier to roll them to the collection lorry's tail-lift for loading.

The working group, made up of representatives from HSE, local authorities, trades unions, tyre manufacturers, distributors, retreaders and the haulage industry have commissioned an ergonomist to visit a number of companies who are involved with collecting and delivering tyres. The aim is to produce case study guidance showing good practice for eliminating and reducing the risks to an acceptable level.

The initial view of the working group is that there are reasonably practicable measures that can be taken to control the risks. Following the distribution of guidance to the industry and associated publicity it is likely to recommend that HSE and local authority inspectors should take a strong line in enforcing these control measures.

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