

HSE Small Business Trade Association Forum

Wednesday 17th April 2007

Paper SBTAF/07/02

UPDATE ON ITEMS FROM RECENT MEETINGS

ACTION POINTS FROM JANUARY 2007 MEETING

Secretariat to keep the forum up to date with GHS developments and inform them of any future consultations:

Following the January meeting members were sent the contact details for the members of HSE staff directly involved with the work on GHS. A FAQ sheet compiled by the GHS team was also sent out to members on January 19th.

Secretariat to investigate establishing an online e-community for the SBTAF:

An online e-community has been established and all members have been invited to join. Our intention is to eventually use the community as the main route of communication between secretariat and members. The idea of establishing an online community for the SBTAF to hold discussions and share papers was discussed at the January forum meeting. The community is one of many such groups within HSE, some of which can be found by looking under 'find a group' on the community website. This community is a closed community however, meaning that documents/discussions can only be viewed by fellow members of the SBTAF and the secretariat.

The community enables SBTAF members to:

- Check the dates of forthcoming meetings;
- Notify the secretariat of their attendance at meetings
- View papers from past meetings;
- Engage in and establish new 'discussion' groups. New discussions are begun by pressing 'send message' under the 'All discussions' section.
- Receive updates from HSE
- On joining the community members are given the option to receive email updates of all changes to the site, periodic (weekly) updates or no updates at all. You can change the frequency you receive updates at any time by using the "My Settings" link" There is also a button on the site itself that allows members to check 'what's new.'

The community can be found at: <http://webcommunities.hse.gov.uk/>

We would appreciate any feedback you may have regarding the site. There's a feedback form on the community homepage and a discussion has already been established concerning your feedback enabling you to respond on the community website itself.

Secretariat to establish whether anyone in HSE is aware of the health and safety risk of using MP3 players in the workplace and whether there is a need for guidance regarding this issue:

HSE do not have and are not currently considering producing guidance on this subject

Secretariat to send forum members the 'Inspector Checklist' referred to during the workplace transport presentation.

Members were sent this link alongside the minutes of the January meeting on 9th February. This can be found at: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/forms/transport/wtchk1.pdf>

Carol Grainger to correspond with members of the SBTAF regarding research on safe loading as necessary

Carol gave a presentation regarding this issue at the AGM of the Confederation of Paper Industries. HSL is now working alongside the industry and the possibility of HSL hosting a workshop for employers in the industry has been proposed. Further discussions are due to take place.

Tim Harris to confirm the details regarding the implications of REACH on waste disposal

Waste management is subject to separate European control regimes and is thus exempt from REACH

Kenny MacDonald was asked to provide access to the web statistics demonstrated during the presentation

Members were sent this link alongside the minutes of the January meeting on 9th Feb
This can be found at:
www.hse.gov.uk/testbed/consoles/overview_console.htm

ITEMS PRESENTED AT JANUARY 2007 MEETING

REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals)

Arrangements to establish the UK Competent Authority within HSE for the new Registration, Evaluation, and Authorisation of Chemicals (REACH) Regulation are progressing well. The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) are currently consulting on the arrangements they will put in place to enforce the domestic aspects of the new system, in which HSE expect to play a key role - the Consultative Document is available from the Defra website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/reach-enforce/index.htm>.

For further information about REACH, a helpdesk has been established on 0845 408 9575 or via email at ukreachca@hse.gsi.gov.uk. More information will be made available as arrangements progress.

GHS (Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals)

There has been a delay in the publication of the European Commission Regulation based on the UN Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. It is expected that the European Commission will publish its formal proposal in late May, with negotiations starting in June/July.

As previously mentioned at the last SBTAF in January, and in recent correspondence, the European Commission has hinted that it is open to suggestions from the UK Government for ideas for tools that could assist SMEs in complying with the new Regulation.

This is an excellent opportunity to influence the European Commission, and assist SMEs in complying with the new Regulation across Europe. Therefore we would welcome:

- Constructive suggestions for 'tools' that could assist SMEs to comply/prepare for the GHS Regulation, that the EC could feasibly undertake
- Any best practice examples/ideas from other recent European legislation which we could suggest to the European Commission
- Do you have any suggestions that HSE/UK Government could be doing to assist SMEs

We would appreciate any responses as soon as possible

HSE has also produced a short summary 'flyer' which should hopefully give you a quick background to the policy if you are unfamiliar with the GHS:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/ghs/summaryguide.pdf>

If you have any question please do not hesitate to contact either Steve Mason (steve.mason@hse.gsi.gov.uk) or Jan Harris (jan.harris@hse.gsi.gov.uk)

HSC/E Merger

HSE received 162 responses to the consultation on merging HSE and HSC. The majority agreed with the merger in principle, but some of them sought assurances that the merger would fulfil our overarching aims of remaining independent and at arm's length from ministers. Others asked that we continue to reflect the interests of employers and employees, and include those groups who may be currently underrepresented.

The full results of the consultation will be discussed by the Commission on the 17th April. At the meeting they will decide whether to proceed with the merger and if so, which legislative route to take. HSC will publicly announce the outcome of the meeting and next steps by the 27th April.

Managing Workplace Transport Risk – A Route Map

The paper discussing the routemap will be presented at the May HSC meeting. We will update the SBTAf on the outcome of this discussion.

HSE internet pages

Work on the redesign of HSE's Website continues. Our aim is to make the draft site available from our current Website in July - and ask for comments. You can see the site develop at <http://development.login@www.hse.gov.uk/testbed/newwebhomepage/demo/index.htm> - any comments are very welcome.

At the most recent SBTAf meeting - an issue was raised about the search facility on HSE's Website. We adopted Google some time ago and continue to improve the effectiveness of searching. We'd like to hear of any examples where the results were poor. You can use the search box at the top of every page - or the [advanced search](#).

The [free e-bulletin](#) service now has over 70,000 subscriptions - and there are plans for more 'topic' related bulletins. Please let us know if members wish to suggest a bulletin topic.

ITEMS PRESENTED AT OCTOBER 2006 MEETING

Better Regulation/Sensible Risk Management

The Embedding Sensible Risk Management Project is progressing well. We have held discussions with a number of organisations and are currently developing example risk assessments for the following sectors: retail, hospitality, general cleaning, and estate agents. In addition we are shortly to start the same process for the hairdressing sector, and will be attending the NHF health and safety meeting on 17 April. We would still welcome any comments, criticisms or suggestions on the examples already in existence on the HSE website from any SBTAf organisations or their individual member companies.

CDM (Construction Design and Management) Regulations

On 15 March, David Cameron tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) under the negative resolution procedure, "praying" against the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM 2007). The EDM seeks to have CDM 2007 annulled, but this is standard Parliamentary wording. In reality it is intended to secure a debate - to seek

assurances over implementation and subsequent review of the Regulations. To date, the EDM has been signed by about 10 other Conservative MPs, including Andrew Selous (Shadow Minister for Health and Safety) and Philip Hammond (Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions).

Since becoming aware of the EDM, key stakeholder representatives from the rest of the construction industry have been very supportive and proactively lobbying in favour of CDM 2007.

ITEMS PRESENTED AT JULY 2006 MEETING

RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)

Following the fundamental review of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) instructed the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to improve and simplify the way the reporting process is communicated, particularly for SMEs.

RIDDOR has now been consolidated into a single website with simple messages focussed on the ease of reporting, particularly through calling the Incident Contact Centre (ICC) and interactive online methods. You can view the new web pages at www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/index.htm

Please note that there has been **no change** to the Guidance or what is reportable under the Regulations.

The web content is simply a new, user-friendly and easier to understand presentation of the current guidance. The site has been user-tested with EEF - The Manufacturer's Organisation, where 80% of their members are SMEs. Their feedback has been considered in developing the site. The site has been designed to offer quick access to key points about the Regulations, with the option of accessing more detailed information if required.

HSE is also in the process of upgrading the performance of the e-mail forms which will be available later in the year. Improved features will enable users to download, complete and save an electronic copy, plus more.

HSE's free publications about RIDDOR will also be replaced over the coming months with a single page flyer focused on the essential information duty holders need to know about RIDDOR (e.g. what RIDDOR is, who needs to report and the easiest ways of reporting). The intention is to move away from complex explanation of the precise legal duties (although detailed information is available on the web pages) towards a simple, easy to understand message that if there has been an accident at work, you may need to report it by simply calling the ICC. This new publication will be more widely distributed than the previous leaflets (e.g. by inclusion in all HSE Books dispatches). Stocks will be available from HSE Books in due course.

The website's performance will be monitored and evaluated over the coming months and any necessary improvements will be made.

Worker Involvement Consultation on Improving Worker Involvement in Health and Safety

HSE's Worker Involvement and Inclusion Team presented the results from last year's consultation exercise on strategies to improve the quality and quantity of worker involvement in health and safety risk management to the Health and Safety Commission in March 2007.

Analysis of the responses determined that stakeholders supported improved guidance; that there was limited interest in developing voluntary approaches, and that there was no stakeholder consensus on the case for regulatory change. The Commission has asked HSE

to discuss options surrounding regulatory change amongst social partners and report on progress at a later HSC meeting.

The new approach to worker involvement will build on the foundations created by achievements thus far. Work being taken forward will concentrate on four key areas:

- Revitalising the guidance available on involving workers. Updating and simplifying existing guidance, and making better use of practical examples and illustrative case studies to share good practice.
- Extending the work on mainstreaming worker involvement activity in HSE, with a particular focus on the construction industry and the public sector.
- Ensuring that HSE Inspectors and Local Authority Enforcement officers promote the value of consultation and involvement during interventions with businesses both large and small.
- Working closely with other key stakeholders, such as ACAS, to encourage worker involvement more widely in business.

ITEMS PRESENTED AT APRIL 2006 MEETING

Directors' duties on health and safety

The Steering Group led by the Institute of Directors (IoD) is making good progress at preparing a new version of the guidance for directors on their responsibilities for health and safety. Forum members may recall that the FSB is represented on the steering group and that the new guidance will replace the current leaflet 'Directors' Responsibilities for Health and Safety' (INDG343). The steering group anticipates making a draft of the guidance publicly available for comment in May 2007. Comments will be invited and handled by the IoD; HSE expects to make a link to the relevant section of IoD's website through the consultation section of HSE's website. Comments from SBTAF members will be welcome. Subject to the results of that exercise and to HSC's agreement, the intention is for the new guidance to be published in Autumn 2007.

A separate version of the directors' guidance aimed at small businesses is also being prepared. This will adopt the same lines as the other document (which focuses on the needs of larger organisations), but will be written to better meet the needs of small business. SBTAF members will be approached for their comments on the draft guidance in due course. It is intended that the small business version will also be published in autumn 2007.

**SBTAF Secretariat
April 2007**