

**MINUTES OF THE 39th MEETING OF THE
TEXTILES INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
held on 14 July 2009 at Community Union, Earls Barton,
Northampton NN6 0HF**

Attendees

Representing

Mr Huw Jones (Chair)	Courtaulds and UK Fashion and Textiles (formerly BCIA)
Ms Angela Worthington	Confederation of British Wool Textiles
Mr Alan Edmond	Community
Ms Elaine Davies	British Footwear Association
Mr Robert Sneddon	Community
Mr Paul Pearson	UK Leather Federation
Mr Gary Dickson	Scottish Leather Group Limited
Mr Brendan Gold	Unite
Mr Terry Britton	Unite
Mr Tim Small (Secretary)	HSE
Mrs Rosie Bricis	HSE
Mrs Wendie Drammeh (Minutes Secretary)	HSE

Apologies

Ms Anne Carvell	UK Fashion and Textiles (formerly BCIA)
Mr Clive Moss – <i>now retired</i>	Performance Textiles Association/MUTA
Mr Chris O'Neill	Performance Textiles Association/MUTA

Observers

Mr Peter Charlesworth	Textile Centre of Excellence
Mr Paul Mills	Community

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THIS MEETING

No	Actions
1	(Min 2.1) Mr Small and Mrs Bricis to co-ordinate TEXIAC's work plan for submission to HSE's Board.
2	(Min 2.2) Mrs Bricis to forward information about <i>Live Wire</i> to members.
3	Min 2.7) All members to forward to Mrs Bricis their comments and suggestions for the TEXIAC work plan, including how the actions can be implemented.

No	Actions
4	(Min 3.1) All members to forward to Mrs Drammeh names and contact details of possible attendees for the TEXIAC Open Meeting.
5	(Min 4.1) Mrs Bricis to prepare the draft risk assessment checklists for textiles, leather and footwear and arrange for them to be put onto HSE's website.
6	(Min 5.4) Mrs Bricis to find out if information about the FLIHSC Conference could be put on HSE's <i>Revitalising</i> web page.
7	(Min 5.7) Mrs Worthington to forward to Mrs Bricis CBWT's accident and ill-health survey.

MINUTES

1. INTRODUCTION AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and introduced the two observers: Peter Charlesworth and Paul Mills
- 1.2 Apologies received from Anne Carvell, Chris O'Neill and Clive Moss.

Clive Moss has now retired. His replacement at MUTA/Performance Textiles Association is Ian Dawson. MUTA has been contacted to see if Mr Dawson would be interested in joining TEXIAC.

- 1.3 All actions from the previous meeting were cleared (please see pages 8-10 of these minutes).

2. TEXIAC WORK PLAN FOR 2009 ONWARDS

- 2.1 Judith Hackitt, the HSE Board Chair, had written to each Industry Advisory Committee Chair, asking them to produce a work plan for their industries to support HSE's Strategy. This work plan needs to be ready for September 2009, when it will be discussed by HSE's Board.

It was agreed that Tim Small and Rosie Bricis would co-ordinate responses on behalf of TEXIAC but that all members would contribute towards what the work plan should contain. It was stressed that the work plan should:

- be sufficiently ambitious;
- be tailored to - and focused on - delivering HSE's strategic goals;
- deliver real and tangible outcomes in terms of improved health and safety in the industries represented by TEXIAC;
- focus on industry-specific issues and needs - and not just recycle generic advice under a textiles or footwear heading;
- ask the question "what does this add?" - TEXIAC should not be doing things simply for the sake of doing them.
- be SMART, ie Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

The Strategy themes on which TEXIAC can focus include:

- encouraging strong leadership;
- focusing on core aims and dispelling myths;
- competence;
- worker involvement and consultation; and
- customising support for SMEs (particularly those that are not unionised or members of trade associations)

2.2 Robert Sneddon highlighted the *Live Wire!* campaign in the wire drawing industry as a possible model / exemplar for TEXIAC to consider, particularly the awards scheme that it runs to encourage shop-floor staff. For TEXIAC members who are not familiar with *Live Wire!*, an overview is provided below:

- The Wire Industry Health and Safety Committee, together with UK Steel (the trade association representing the main wire companies), launched *Live Wire!* in July 2006 as its response to a challenge from HSE's Manufacturing Sector to improve the health and safety performance of the industry. The initiative is run by and funded by the industry itself with UK Steel taking a leading role in terms of funding and administration. HSE involvement is minimal. Britain's biggest steel maker, Corus, also supports the initiative in various ways.
- Wire drawing is a traditional and highly specialist sub-sector of the engineering industry. It has declined significantly in recent years - there are now fewer than 2,000 people involved in the industry in the UK and probably no more than 30 or so companies.
- In line with other manufacturing industries, the most common causes of accidents within the industry are manual handling, slips, trips and falls; and being struck by falling or flying objects (especially flying wire).
- The aim of *Live Wire!* was to reduce accidents in the UK wire drawing industry by 10% during 2007 and re-focus industry efforts on accident reduction. The campaign also encouraged worker involvement by making an award to the individual who contributed most towards improving health and safety during the campaign. Shop floor workers were encouraged to attend cross-industry safety seminars (often at competitors' factories) and to play an active role in the campaign.
- Participation in the scheme was open to any UK wire drawing company and the eligibility criteria stipulated that participating companies needed to conduct an active campaign involving management and the workforce in order to reduce accidents in their workplaces. The eligibility criteria included:
 - sharing best practice with other wire drawing companies;
 - reporting all accidents in a verifiable way;
 - confidential disclosure to UK Steel of annual RIDDOR incidents and total hours worked;
 - permission for anonymous inclusion in an industry league table; and
 - conducting an internal selection process to put forward an individual who had contributed most towards health and safety in their workplace.
- The results of the campaign after the first year looked impressive: overall accidents in the companies involved were down 17% and RIDDORs were down by nearly 15%. Five sites reduced accidents by 30%, with another achieving a 60% reduction. However, it should be noted that the number of accidents involved was very small (last year there were only 14 RIDDOR reportable incidents in total) and even small

fluctuations can look very large when expressed in percentage terms.

Members should be mindful of these characteristics when considering how applicable *Live Wire!* type initiatives would be to the industries represented by TEXIAC.

- 2.3 It was agreed that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) should be TEXIAC's priority and different ways of reaching these organisations needed to be established. Members suggested / discussed the following as possible means of reaching and influencing small businesses:
- working with schools and colleges to reach future employees before they start work;
 - working with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Chambers of Commerce and other business organisations;
 - encouraging / promoting workers' safety advisers (often known as roving safety reps) – these are individuals competent in health and safety and representation and who have a right to represent effectively groups and individuals in workplaces other than their own. However, this does require some form of reasonable right of access to workplaces;
 - promoting good health and safety as:
 - an economic benefit for businesses, good for business efficiency;
 - corporate social responsibility;
 - a means of avoiding legal consequences;
 - encouraging large organisations to mentor smaller businesses;
 - persuading large businesses to encourage their suppliers (which are often small businesses) to improve health and safety standards, eg can a good health and safety record form an essential requirement for letting a contract? or for continuing with a contract?
 - encouraging companies to sign up to the Strategy Pledge (www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/pledge.htm) but in addition also stating what they would actually be doing.
 - using *Facebook* (and *Twitter?*) to get out health and safety messages – NB this is something that would have to be done by individuals.
- 2.4 Asbestos was proposed as a priority topic for TEXIAC's work, as many textiles companies are based in old premises that contain asbestos. A campaign by employers and the unions would be a worthwhile and relatively straightforward action to implement.
- HSE's *Hidden Killer* campaign (www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/hiddenkiller/index.htm) is a useful starting point for this campaign. Additional information can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm.
- 2.5 The health and safety implications of nanotechnology were discussed briefly. HSE will be asking the Health and Safety Laboratory's Horizon Scanning Unit to look at the possible health and safety risks posed by new technical textiles – we will suggest they also address this issue too. There is already a body of research on this topic.

Some information about health and safety and nanotechnology can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/horizons/nanotech.htm.

2.6 It was agreed that machinery guarding and safe interventions, particularly in relation to compactors and balers, should also be priority topics in the work plan.

2.7 Some common themes running through the ideas generated during the meeting were:

- better communication;
- raising standards;
- using different strategies in order to reach small and large businesses; and
- recognition that the 'health and safety' brand / product is now badly tarnished in many peoples' eyes - perhaps management of health and safety needs to be re-cast as managing business risk.

It was agreed that members would forward to Rosie Bricis their comments and suggestions as to how their organisations could promote and improve health and safety in their industries and that these would be incorporated into the TEXIAC work plan. The suggestions needed to show both how the work could be done and also why.

3. OPEN MEETING – JANUARY 2010

3.1 The TEXIAC open meeting is to be held at the Textile Centre of Excellence in Huddersfield in the second week of January 2010.

It was agreed that the following topics would be included in the event:

- managing health and safety in the recession
- safe interventions in machinery
- upper limb disorders and the new ART tool
- control of noise
- asbestos

It was suggested that the event should be structured differently to previous ones, eg:

- perhaps having two sessions on the same day so that people could attend either and so need lose only a morning or an afternoon of work;
- presenting the topics in a different way, eg by using a drama group.

It was agreed that members would send Wendie Drammeh names and contact details of possible attendees for inclusion in the mailing list for the event.

4. TEXTILES RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

4.1 An example risk assessment checklist for textiles, footwear and leather was discussed.

It was agreed that Rosie Bricis would continue with the work and arrange for the checklists to be put onto the HSE website.

5. FEEDBACK FROM INDUSTRIES

5.1 Paul Pearson – UK Leather Federation

A lot of work was being focused on REACH, particularly registration. There were small signs of improvement in the industry but there was still uncertainty. Slaughtering for food was at a historic low point, down by 40-50% from September 2008 to January 2009, but was now increasing (this determines the price of hides). Quite a lot of farmers were moving out of the business as they were no longer being paid to produce.

5.2 Gary Dixon – Scottish Leather Group Limited

The situation was fairly stable, although some temporary staff had had to be released and several companies were on short-time working. Businesses were focusing on REACH and the CDG-CPL Regulations (Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (Classification, Packaging, Labelling and Provision of Information) Regulations 1996).

5.3 Elaine Davies – British Footwear Association

There had been a slight upturn in the footwear industry with new companies joining the BFA. The FLIHSC is currently working on guidance for COSHH and safe systems of work.

5.4 Alan Edmond – Community

Leather processing appeared to be holding its own in the recession, although jobs had been shed in the made-up leather goods industry. The FLIHSC Conference is to be held on 11 November 2009 at the SATRA Technology Centre in Kettering and it was hoped that it could be publicised on HSE's Revitalising website.

5.5 Robert Sneddon - Community

The findings of Community's national survey of its health and safety reps are to be published shortly. Community now has around 1,200 reps dealing with health and safety. A conference is to be held that will focus on occupational health, hazard identification and environmental management systems.

5.6 Terry Britton – Unite

The textiles industry in Yorkshire is continuing to decline as much of the cloth that was made in the area is now being made abroad. Many people are on short-time working.

5.7 Brendan Gold – Unite

The Unite textiles group will now form part of the chemical processing group. The number of textile members has decreased greatly. There have been many closures and short-time working, which is part of the wider demise of UK manufacturing. Unite is campaigning for help for the industry from the UK Government.

5.8 Angela Worthington – CBWT

CBWT is to close and its staff have been given redundancy notices. CBWT is currently working on its accident and ill-health survey and would send a copy to HSE when completed. CBWT has carried out a lot of audiometry tests and was finding that many younger people were suffering with hearing loss, possibly due to loud music in nightclubs and at concerts and the increased use of iPods and personal music systems.

5.9 Huw Jones – UKFT

BCIA was now included in the United Kingdom Fashion & Textiles Association. UKFT represents a lot of retailers but also other manufacturing organisations such as the British Narrow Fabrics Association and the Knitting Industries Federation. The Knitting, Dyeing and

Lacemaking Industries health and safety committee has not met for around 20 months.

5.10 **Peter Charlesworth – Textile Centre of Excellence**

Mr Charlesworth thanked the Committee for letting him observe at the meeting. The TCE was currently working with a lot of companies that were very innovative eg producing coffins from textiles, new technical textiles etc.

5.11 **Paul Mills – Community**

Some businesses were starting to pick up slowly.

6. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 **Fit Notes**

Members had a brief discussion about the new electronic 'fit note', which will replace the current medical certificate (sick note). Fit notes were developed with the support of healthcare professionals, employer representatives and trade unions and will roll-out across Great Britain in the Spring of 2010.

The aim of the fit note is to help GPs switch the focus of their advice to what people can do, rather than what they can't, and help more people stay in work rather than drift into long term sickness. It is hoped that the changes would improve the flow of information between employers, individuals and GPs.

Members discussed some of the possible negative impacts of the fit notes, eg how would GPs know what work their patients could do? there isn't always suitable "light work" available for workers just back from sick leave, particularly in the current recession, where organisations have had to cut back; many people have been working through their illnesses as they were scared of losing their jobs.

6.2 **Swine Flu**

Many businesses were concerned about the impact of swine flu on their businesses.

The Department for Health, working with the Health Protection Agency and HSE, has produced guidance for businesses in the eventuality of a flu pandemic. This is available at www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_097137 and contains advice on facemasks and good hygiene, as well as a risk assessment matrix and checklists.

6.3 **Rehabilitation, REACH, textiles and the environment and ISO 14001**

Huw Jones gave brief presentations about REACH; the importance of rehabilitation after illness; and textiles in relation to the environment and ISO 14001.

6.4 **Comment on the HSE Strategy**

Robert Sneddon asked that these minutes noted Community's objection to one of the items on TEXIAC's submission for the Strategy consultation earlier this year - Community did not agree with the comment that HSE should change its name.

7.0 **PRESENTATION on TEXTILES, THE ENVIRONMENT & ISO 14001 – Huw Jones**

Mr Jones gave a presentation on how manufacture of textiles affects the environment.

Meeting Closed