



Health and Safety Commission

From the Chair

Bill Callaghan

Letters
Rail
Bretton Court
Peterborough
PE3 8DZ

15 June 2004

Sir,

Rail magazine has now published two features (487 and 489) penned by Alan Osborne, self-styled 'Former Director of Rail Safety at the HSE'. Both at best demonstrate his skewed understanding of our work and at worst, are scandalous in their attacks on the integrity of his former colleagues.

He says that those involved with railways should frame and display the words of Minister Jane Kennedy from a recent ROSPA conference. We hope they do too, given that the Minister's address was drawn from the Health and Safety Commission's recently published 'Strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain'. That Strategy also sets out our goal for a society where risk is properly appreciated, understood and managed; not a risk free society. We wish our detractors would stick that on their mirrors.

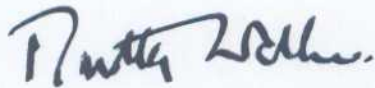
Alan wonders whether at the fatal incidents in Glasgow and on Brent Bravo HSE prior involvement was defective. This is a slur on the professionalism of our staff. He is not party to the facts of either case, and as a former HSE official should know better than to muse on possible prosecutions. Such decisions in Scotland lie with the Procurator Fiscal, not HSE. And Alan and others can read all about HSE's prior role inquiry report into Ladbroke Grove – it is on our website.

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Reducing risks – protecting people

We understand that Alan is now working as a consultant; we hope he gives his clients more accurate advice.

Yours,



Timothy Walker
Director General
Health & Safety Executive



Bill Callaghan
Chair
Health & Safety Commission