

**Seventeenth Meeting of the Asbestos Liaison Group**  
**25 May 2006**  
**Held at Rose Court, London**

**Minutes**

**Present**

**HSE**

Anne Wilson, Chair, Head of Health Unit  
Trevor Johnson, Head of ALU  
Colin Seditas, ALU  
Matthew Ramsey, ALU  
Martin Gibson, HSE Specialist Group  
Kevin Walklin, HSE Cancer & Asbestos Unit

**TAs/TUs**

Terry Jago, ARCA  
Grant Belgan, ARCA  
Rob Blackburn, ATAC  
Mike Wilkes, ACAD  
Jean Prentice ACAD  
Susan Murray, TGWU  
Mike Keeligan, ATPWG  
Richard Morgan, GMB  
John Harris, NFDC  
Carole Bonner, UCATT

1. Introductions, apologies, welcome, etc (Anne Wilson)
  - 1.1. Apologies received on behalf of Peter Austin.
2. Minutes of meeting held on 26 January 2006 (Anne Wilson)
  - 2.1. The minutes were agreed.
3. Matters arising from the minutes (Anne Wilson to lead)
  - 3.1. (item 4.3.8: Draft code and comments were received by all, Mike Keeligan and Trevor Johnson expressed their thanks).
  - 3.2. (item 7.1: Worker registration scheme) Terry Jago gave an update of the scheme. 25% of ARCA members have signed up, with records for 800 people. There is hope of making it a mandatory scheme soon with a view to opening the scheme up to the whole industry. The cards issued will carry all the workers details and aims to counter forged documents. Terry asked for HSE's endorsement.
  - 3.3. (item 7.1.3 Central medical database) Trevor Johnson reported that HSL had recently produced a report on asbestos workers, based on medical records. A presentation of its findings was proposed for the next meeting.
  - 3.4. (item 8.3 Licence fees) The new licence fee of £1023 has now been introduced.
  - 3.5. (item 8.6 Local authority enforcement activity) Further 'Action' for ALU: to look at Local authority (LA) Unit's prosecution database and enforcement data based on LA 'returns' to HSE. Question raised of how much work is divided between HSE and LAs.

**Action: Colin Seditas to investigate sources of data regarding LA work. To update ALG at meeting in September.**

4. Training Providers Working Group – update. Mike Keeligan

- 4.1. Mike Keeligan informed the group that received comments had been incorporated into the code of conduct. Further information is to be released in May.
  - 4.2. Terry Jago questioned how strictly the requirement for annual refresher training would be interpreted. Trevor Johnson put forward HSE's view that there would be a "failure to manage health and safety" where contractors failed to carry out refresher training every 12 months. It was realised that there might, occasionally, be valid reasons for missing the deadline (illness, availability of courses etc.): in exceptional circumstances an extra month's leeway might be accepted. In such cases the contractor should be able to demonstrate that the member of staff was already booked on to an appropriate course. The onus is firmly on contractors and training providers to ensure training is carried out in time. Terry Jago added that training providers automatically sent out reminder letters a minimum of one month before training was due.
  - 4.3. Susan Murray asked if there could be a link to 'construction skills' training schemes. Mike Keeligan responded that there were plans in progress for CITB/NVQs qualifications for hazardous materials removal. There were general queries from the group about the role of assessors/verifiers and the cost implication for each individual undertaking the qualifications. (£900 - £1200)
  - 4.4. Workers requiring a CSCs card will require an NVQ as of June 2006. The group expressed some uncertainty about how this development would impact the industry.
  - 4.5. Susan Murray asked if there was any trade Union representation in the training providers working group. Mike Keeligan responded that currently they do not see the need for any TU involvement.
  - 4.6. Martin Gibson asked if there had been any progress on training standards for those in "Category 2" and "Category 3". As yet the training has been focused on licensed contractors, though the aim is to eventually incorporate all asbestos work.
  - 4.7. Colin Seditas asked about the strategy of the working group and suggested the future need for enlarging the group to include representations from those in wider "categories", outside the licensed industry. It was acknowledged that this was an area to be looked at as the working group moved forward.
5. ALG – moving forward (report back from work of ALG sub Group)
- 5.1. The ACAD audit scheme should be up and running by June 2006. Trevor Johnson suggested that another meeting be convened with ACAD to discuss this progress. HSE recognised the good work that ARCA has put into their scheme and praised them for it. NFDC stated that they would also be introducing their own audit scheme shortly.

**Action: Trevor Johnson to meet with ACAD and feedback at next ALG meeting.**

6. Asbestos Policy Group update

- 6.1. The discussion led by Kevin Walkin centred on the new regulations and codes of practice. Details of which are available on the asbestos web page. Kevin gave the group a break down of the changes. He reported that there was widespread support shown through the consultation exercise for almost all of the suggested changes. The

issues of “sporadic and low intensity” and “textured coatings” were debated and remained contentious to many members of the group.

7. Relevant issues to be raised by Trade Associations

Terry Jago asked HSE about their policy on CCTV after receiving a letter from two ALPIs. Trevor Johnson replied that the ALU expected all work to be properly supervised and CCTV was one of the options open to companies. He also suggested that this issue would be discussed at the ALPI conference in September.

**Action: Trevor Johnson to feedback at next ALG following ALPI discussions.**

8. ALU Update – End of year Statistics & Leadership summit

- 8.1. Colin Seditas supplied details of the number of HSE inspections and enforcement actions taken by field Inspectors within the asbestos removal industry. He also provided a statistical update on the licensing work carried out by the ALU in 2005/2006.
- 8.2. Colin updated the group about the ongoing step change events being held around the country.
- 8.3. The TUs applauded HSE’ stance on licensing.

**Action: Colin to circulate the stats in the form of an ALG memo, alongside minutes.**

9. Any other business

Asbestos Surveys: Martin Gibson reported that there is growing anecdotal evidence that asbestos surveys are incomplete and/or of poor quality. HSE will be looking at this issue and will be consulting to gain information on current practices and on how to improve standards.

10. Date, time, location of next meetings

- 10.1. The next meetings will take place at 10am on
  - 10.1.1. Thursday 28 September, in Edinburgh
  - 10.1.2. Thursday 25 January, in London

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