

Engineering Industry Noise Task Group 14th Meeting

Held at EEF West Midlands, Birmingham on Tuesday 23rd March 2004.

Present

Gary Booton – EEF (EINTG Chairman)
Peter Wilson – Industrial Noise and Vibration Centre
Tony McCarthy – National Union of Domestic Appliances and General Operatives
David Frost – Corus
Jason Miers – British Turned Parts Manufacturers Association
David Allison – Marine Painting Forum
Tarla Patel – HSE
Tim Ward – HSE
Tim Humphries – Association of British Insurers
Sarah Haynes – HSE Manufacturing Sector (incoming EINTG Secretary)
Graham Watson – HSE Manufacturing Sector (outgoing EINTG Secretary)
Bob Hanlon – EEF West Midlands

Apologies

Martin Bevan – GMB
Mick Millichamp – Amicus-MSF
Alan Robson – CSEU
Peter Scott – Jungheinrich UK Ltd
David Jeffery – Rolls Royce
Nigel Day – Personal Safety Manufacturers Association

Bob Hanlon welcomed members. There was a brief round of introductions for the benefit of new members. Graham Watson was thanked for producing the last minutes, which were approved by members.

Former members, Colin Holdhusen of Corus, and Bob Taylor were thanked for their input.

Action: Gary Booton to send letter of thanks to them both.

Matters arising from last minutes

Application for EU funding by Gary Booton. Apologies, not done through lack of time.

Martin Bevan not here to feedback on Hazmap, defer to next meeting

Action: Place on agenda for next meeting

EINTG membership

Members had been asked to identify likely intermediaries to extend membership to the whole manufacturing sector, but no information has yet been received. Suggested that those attending Physical Agents seminars may

be suitable, but these were mostly individual companies rather than associations, and so not suitable. Graham has identified a number of suitable intermediaries, including industry advisory committees for textiles and ceramics. But maybe now is not the time to increase membership. If noise control seminars or toolbox talk get off ground, people may be keener to become actively involved. Gary Booton asked for views. David Allison suggested approaching construction industry as noise and vibration is a significant problem- the likes of Amey, AMEC, etc. It was agreed not to include the construction sector because they, in the main, have different noise problems. Most advisory committees already have an interest in noise, we will be approaching those in the manufacturing sector to generate one task group who face similar problems

Action: Sarah to liaise with relevant IACs, find out what doing, learn from other's good practice.

The Physical. Agents directive will probably stimulate interest. The CD will be published on 5th April. When CD issued and in the public domain could use the carrot "let us help you get to grips with the new regs". The Manufacturing Sector noise portfolio holder still to be confirmed.

Action: Sarah to confirm identity of portfolio holder. *Update: this has since been confirmed as Sarah.*

Good Neighbour Scheme

Members were asked to identify suitable candidates for a similar approach to "Workwell". Suitable companies are those who are doing a good job with noise control, and who would be willing to help other local companies. There is the potential for companies involved to get good publicity. We're not looking for perfect noise management, but people who've had good ideas on specific aspects. The opposite to "naming and shaming".

Action: Members are asked to consider any companies that they're aware of, and bring information to the next meeting.

Sarah to Contact Trevor Hay for foundry examples.

Review of HSE inspector contacts only picked up 3 companies as possible candidates.

Action: Tim Ward to follow up one particularly suitable contact.

Guidance

At the October meeting, members proposed sending a joint letter to Timothy Walker, HSE's Director General. Gary Booton received a reply yesterday, which will be circulated to members. The letter stated that the moratorium reflected a 'pause', which is 'coming to an end'.

Action: Gary Booton to circulate Timothy Walker's reply to members.

Manufacturing Sector has submitted a communications bid for work in 2004/5, which includes the toolbox talk.

The draft toolbox talk is on the HSE website at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/eintg/index.htm> The toolbox talk has hyperlinks to the noise induced deafness simulation.

Action: Members to comment on the toolbox talk. Please forward your comments to Sarah Haynes (e mail address sarah.haynes@hse.gsi.gov.uk, or by post to HSE Arden House, Regent Centre, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 3JN) by 31st May. Tim Ward is helping to complete section 3, Nigel Day supplying material on selection of ear protection.

Issue of the toolbox talk as an Internet version only was discussed, but members felt strongly that this would reduce its impact and take up. Peter Wilson suggested that, in the absence of a paper version, issue on CD might be a reasonable compromise.

Tony McCarthy reported that they had successfully used a noise toolbox talk in two foundries; use of hard copy (together with posters) was key to success in this industry. Graham Watson tried to get additional posters as part of the EINTG pack, but this was not approved.

Action: Sarah to see copies of foundry industry posters and any evidence of changed attitudes.

Peter Wilson had a number of ideas for evaluating the impact of the toolbox talk, which he felt should be incorporated in the toolbox talk pack. One success marker is generation of ideas from workforce who've been shown the pack. Companies should also keep log of the numbers of people not wearing ear protection. Add to do list on pack, look before the toolbox talk is given and then monthly for 6 months after training.

When the talk is launched, ways of increasing its uptake were discussed.

Action: Bob Hanlon to write an article on the talk and its evaluation for the Safety and Health Practitioner Magazine.

Tim Humphries is to explore promoting the talk through insurance surveyors.

Tim Ward pointed out that we are coming away from hearing protection as a first resort. Peter Wilson found that getting companies to look at the cost of disposable ear protection often makes them reconsider the economic benefits of permanent noise control measures.

Action: Sarah to amend talk to cover evaluation and the above.

The issue of employees feeling harassed by management for not wearing ear protection was discussed.

Information sheets:

The three current EINTG information sheets are now on the HSE website at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/noisindx.htm>. Members who produced sheets were thanked.

Action: Sarah to get HSE information on the number of times that the sheets have been accessed and downloaded.

Members to raise awareness of information sheets and identify suitable topics for future sheets.

Graham Watson circulated a noise control checklist (see attached), based on the NIOSH hearing evaluation checklist circulated at a previous meeting. This is intended to be a downloadable resource on the HSE web site.

Action: members to consider and digest & comment to Sarah by 31st May.

Discuss amended version at next meeting.

No progress on noise induced hearing loss case studies- Martin Bevan and Mick Millichamp who are to action were not present.

Action: Sarah to place on agenda for next meeting.

Noise control

Case studies

Thanks to Robert Wright EEF West Midlands for the studies, which have been forwarded to authors of revised 'Sound Solutions'. The issue of making the case studies freely available elsewhere was discussed, views were heard that it was wrong for HSE to subsequently restrict access to materials which had been freely provided

Action: Tim Ward to raise with DIAS.

Peter Wilson felt that the noise enclosure case study was very expensive for the amount of noise reduction. Graham Watson is aware of a noise enclosure, which increased noise exposure. If constructing a noise enclosure it is important to do it correctly. He circulated HSE woodworking information sheet 'Noise control on band resaws' which gives advice on the production of enclosures, on the HSE website at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wis5.pdf>

Graham Watson circulated noise control case studies taken from a German study (see attached).

Action: Members to feedback any comments to Sarah by 31st May.

Sarah to identify any relevant foundry case studies/ sheets available, which show common noise control principles.

Graham Watson had explored HSE inspector contacts for references to quieter machinery. He identified few examples, including use of purchasing policy and process change. The most frequent example of purchase of quieter machines was change of air compressors.

Action: Sarah and Tim Ward to explore developing a compressor case study.

Noise Supply side initiative

Tim Ward updated members on the initiative detailed at the last meeting. The seminar has been held for major manufacturers of metal cutting saws, CNC punch presses and power presses. A questionnaire is to be sent to the manufacturers on benchmarking against standards.

The issue of correctly CE marking machinery was discussed. Peter Wilson advised that when purchasing a machine place a clause dealing with noise emissions in the contract and enforces it if necessary. Tim Ward stated that machinery should not be sold with noise enclosures as optional extras. He would like any examples that members may have of this occurring.

Noise Training

A paper produced by Tim Ward and Bob Hanlon was circulated, and the issue of holding noise control seminars was discussed.

Action: EEF and INVC agreed to run regional seminars with the local involvement of HSE.

It was noted that Martin Bevan is organising a local safety rep training day in June (Midlands region).

Physical Agents (Noise) Directive

Tarla Patel reported that the consultative document (CD) will be launched on 5th April, comments by 25 June. The CD will be available at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/index.htm> or as hard copy. Requests for hard copies to be made to Tarla at tarla.patel@hse.gsi.gov.uk or on 020 7717 6976. Tim Ward recommended that members go beyond the actual questions posed in the CD when making their responses.

European Week of Health and Safety 2005

Noise is the topic. EINTG needs to start thinking and planning soon.

Action: members to generate proposals for next meeting.

HSE Enforcement of Noise at Work Regulations

Enforcement statistics show that enforcement is strong on assessment, but not so strong elsewhere, particularly with regard to noise control. This is an issue that needs addressing.

Any Other Business

Members applauded Graham Watson's efforts as outgoing secretary. Graham also thanked members for their contributions and wished them well.

Attendance at meetings is low.

Action: Members were asked to formulate ideas for improving this to discuss at our next meeting.

Dates and venues of next meetings

Tuesday 19th October 2004 at EEF, Broadway House, London.