

MOTOR VEHICLE REPAIR HEALTH & SAFETY FORUM

Twelve Meeting, Wednesday 12 May 2004
Health & Safety Executive, 1 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8HS

Present:

G Begley	Association of Colleges
P Concannon	Commercial Workers Union
S Biddle	Road Haulage Association
M Hooker	Solihull MBC
P Cooper	Motor Dealer Safety Group
J Nelson	Garage Equipment Association
A Bird	Vehicle Builders and Repairers Association
S Prest	Society of Operations Engineers
D Innes	Scottish Motor Trade Association
D Littleford	Signum Publications Ltd
D Reed	Motor Importers H&S Group
P Preece	Birmingham City Council
M Whitley	Transport & General Workers Union
P Barlow	Retail Motor Industry Federation
S Dean	Vehicle Operator Services Agency
C Copelin	Confederation of Passenger Transport
I Taylor	Motor Vehicle Repairers Association
S Kirton	Institute of Vehicle Recovery
T Moore	Automotive Skills Ltd
T Gallier	Unison
I Holmes	Sigerson Associates
John Graham	SAFED
E MacDonald	Transport & general workers Union
Gary Satchwell	Association of Vehicle Recovery Operators
John Brigham	Association of Vehicle Recovery Operators
Dale Wallis	British Printing Industries Federation
J Miller	British Printing Industries Federation
J Pickschneider	Observer
J Powell	HSE Manufacturing Sector (Chair)
S Shelley	HSE Manufacturing Sector (Secretary)
A Garrod	HSE Chemical Risk Assessment Control Group
J Corbridge	HSE Northern Specialist Group
S Tomlinson	HSE Operational Group, North West Division
Mark Piney	HSE Midlands Specialist Group
J Fordham	HSE Local Authority Unit
M Bradley	HSE Midlands Specialist Group
J MacAlinden	HSE Chemical Risk Assessment Control Group
A Lake	HSE Manufacturing Sector

1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

John Powell welcomed guest speaker Dale Wallis and Jane Miller from British Printing Industries Federation; also Jurgon Pickscheider, who was attending as an observer. John Graham (replacing Jim Malcolm) from SAFED was attending for the first time.

Apologies for absence were received from Brian Spratt, Automotive Distribution Federation; Robert Walker, SMMT; Alison Higginson, National Tyre Distribution

Association; Ian Lewis, Motor Insurance Repair Research Centre; Malcolm Downey, HSE Northern Ireland; Mike Battrick, British Coatings Federation; Paul Harvey, Chief & Chief Assistant Fire Officers Association; Steve Schofield, Institute of the Motor Industry.

2 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting 11 November 2003

A copy of the minutes of the previous meeting has been posted on the HSE MVR website. John Nelson had contacted John Powell about his reported comments on progress with the Compressed Gas Association 'Passport Scheme' with the result that the website version differed slightly from that sent out in the post. No other comments on the minutes had been received.

INDG387 *Safe working with LPG fuelled motor vehicles* can now be downloaded from HSE's MVR website. Members should have received their bulk orders. John Powell commented that he had seen a feature article on Alternative Power in VBRA's magazine BODY which promoted the new leaflet.

Members were given a copy of a recent HSE Press Release urging businesses and other organisations to ignore any requests for payment in return for compliance with health and safety law. HSE is liaising with Trading Standards Officers and the Police who are investigating three companies purporting to regulate health and safety legislation.

Members were given copies of two new HSE Leaflets –
INDG385 *Take a fresh look at health and safety* which explains about HSE/LA priority topics and why inspectors are concentrating on these topics during inspections;
INDG395 *Avoiding falls from vehicles* which sets out the basic steps to prevent falls during un/loading. Every year 700 people die or are seriously injured falling from vehicles.

3 Static eliminator devices used in vehicle respraying.

Mark Bradley described the operating principles of 'guns' containing radioactive sources used in paint refinishing to reduce surface static before spraying. He explained the radiation hazards, protection methods and the compliance issues users need to follow.

He was pleased to report that the main supplier of static eliminators to the MVR industry had now produced a 'gun' which did not use any radioactive substances. Versions incorporating radioactive materials were not being replaced.

4 BPIF scheme to recognize Good Practice in the Printing Industry

Dale Wallis from the British Printing Industry Federation (BPIF) demonstrated a soft wear package, developed initially for the Printing Industry, to enable employers carry out an on-line 'health check' on their compliance with health and safety requirements. Completion of the questionnaire would produce a report detailing the steps needed to be taken to improve safety/training. The software also included other management areas including Human Resources, Employment Law, and Legal Advice. He thought the package could be adapted to cover other industries, including MVR.

5 Enforcing Authority Issues

Jenny Fordham, a Local Authority Inspector currently on secondment to HSE's Local Authority Unit, updated members on progress with the revision of the Enforcing Authority Regulations (EAR). Work on the revision of EAR has stopped following the publication of HSE's *Strategy for Workplace Health and Safety to 2010 and beyond*.

The new strategy envisages a significant change in how HSE and LAs work together with the aim of making them collectively more effective in improving health and safety. Some of the areas being looked at were shared databases and guidance literature, and joint initiatives. For example, by 2005/2006 all LAs will adopt the priority topic inspection approach currently part of HSE's work programme. Also, a new LA website is planned for September 2004. Further revision of EAR will not take place until all these changes have been assessed.

6 Skills Training in the Motor Industry

Tony Moore, Education and Training Manager for Automotive Skills Ltd (formally the Motor Industry Training Council), updated members on the role of the Skills Council for the Retail Motor Industry. It had recently received its licence from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to set national standards for the industry. They were working towards a programme where in future everyone who worked in the motor industry would be expected to update their skills every 5 years.

Standards covering the whole MVR industry were being developed. These include training for managers/supervisors, NVQ's, technical certificates, foundation degrees, short courses, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeship training for 14 – 16 year olds etc. The current Standards expire on 31/7/05 and during 2004 the complete suite of motor vehicle national occupational standards and associated qualifications will be reviewed. Forum members, Employee Working Groups, Training and Education Councils, are all invited to comment. Further information can be found on its Government funded website www.automotive-skills.org.uk. Arrangements are being made to link this website to the MVR website.

7 Safety of Two- Post Vehicle Lifts Without Arm Locking

Jim Corbridge raised concerns regarding the safety of two-post vehicle lifts following a recent fatal accident where the absence of an arm locking system was considered to have been a major factor. A mechanic was fatally injured when the car he was working under fell from the lift. At the time, the rubber pads from the pick-up plates were also missing. He invited the Forum to consider options for future guidance including retrospective fitting of arm locking systems, prohibiting any lift not fitted with arm locking, providing additional protection eg axle stands or props.

John Nelson stated that this only applied to lifts supplied before 1983 when BS AU 161 required arm locking devices to be fitted. He thought that possibly about 300/400 lifts of this type were still in use, mostly at smaller premises. Other members thought that this type of lift was unsuitable for use with modern cars, there may be a training need, and that the lack of rubber pads was also an important factor in the accident.

There had been two other recent accidents, one resulting in serious injury, involving two-post lifts but in both these cases arm locking devices had been fitted but not maintained. It was proposed to meet with representatives of the companies that carry out the LOLER thorough examinations to discuss the various options.

8 Proposed COSHH Essentials guidance on selection of PPE and RPE

John McAlinden informed members about proposed changes to COSHH Essentials to provide improved advice on risks of skin exposure from chemical substances and on the selection of appropriate PPE (eg gloves) and RPE. In MVR, potential routes for skin exposure include 'deposition' during spraying, 'immersion' when degreasing and 'contact' during valeting. New Control Guidance sheets will help users provide PPE suppliers with the necessary information to ensure that the correct protective equipment is obtained. There will also be help on the selection of RPE.

Members were concerned that the process described was too complicated for small garages, especially those not able to access HSE websites. Even if the information was found on the Internet, it was thought unlikely that businesses would complete the datasheets. What was needed was a simpler package aimed specifically at the MVR industry. John Powell wondered if the existing Guidance sheets could be customised for the MVR Industry and he would discuss this further with John McAlinden.

9 Bodyshop WG and other Isocyanate matters

Andrew Garrod, Chair of the Bodyshop WG, reported back on the outcomes of the meeting in April '04 when issues concerning the use of isocyanates in vehicle refinishing raised at the November '03 Forum meeting had been discussed. According to the industry, there were no safer substitutes currently available. The WG agreed to draft guidance on the standards for spray booths/spaces and the minimum checks to be carried out during inspections/examinations. A representative from the insurance industry explained the problems in trying to link Employers Liability insurance premiums with good practice in bodyshops. There is still concern about the risks involved with 'SMART' repair techniques. Andrew Garrod announced that a project had been agreed to assess possible exposures.

Andrew Lake reported on his contacts with Trade Associations for other types of vehicles, eg caravans, tractors and motorcycles where isocyanates may also be used. There was no evidence of its use in the refinishing of farm vehicles but he had had a favourable response from the caravan industry. As a result, a feature article appeared in its trade magazine drawing attention to the risks. He was hoping to make contact with the motorcycle repair industry.

10 2004/07 Workplace initiative on isocyanate spraying in MVR

Mark Piney informed members about the launch of a new three-year influencing and inspection initiative by the HSE targeted at MVR bodyshops spraying 2-pack isocyanate paints. He reminded them that the spraying of isocyanate paints in MVR was one of the main causes of occupational asthma. Recent HSE evidence indicated that sprayers working in smaller businesses and not belonging to one of the trade associations, often do not appreciate or understand the dangers from exposure to isocyanates. Over the next 3 years, it is proposed to organise technical seminars around the country with the emphasis on practical demonstrations. Local body repair workshops will be targeted and expected to attend. At the same time, HSE scientists will visit a range of bodyshops to audit conditions. The aim is to reduce exposures to isocyanates in the MVR industry with a consequent reduction in occupational asthma in the UK of at least 20%.

11 Roadside Recovery and Repair

There is a very high risk of serious injury to people at work who provide roadside assistance. One trade association estimates that there are approx 6 – 8 fatalities every year to roadside recovery/repair technicians. Whilst the protection of workers and members of the public from traffic risks on public roads is mostly a matter for road traffic law enforced by the Police, Highways Agency etc, workplace health and safety legislation could apply where safety cannot be adequately controlled by more specific legislation. A new HSE initiative starting in 2004/05 will see Inspectors enquiring about safe systems of work, provision and maintenance of suitable equipment and training, at visits to MVR and other premises offering roadside assistance. New advice is being issued to inspectors on the standards expected of duty holders.

Concerns were expressed about the costs of some of the training materials eg BSI PAS43 *Safe working of vehicle breakdown and recovery operators*. John Powell pointed out that this document was published by BSI not HSE. He drew their attention to the training courses being offered by the trade associations within the breakdown/recovery industry.

12 Progress with proposed new legislation

(i) New Work at Height Regulations are due to come into force before the end of 2004. In 2001/02 there were 69 deaths at work from this cause, for example from vehicles(8), ladders(11) and roofs(11). The Regulations will apply to any place from which a person could fall and injure himself, including distances of less than 2metres. The main risks in MVR are falls from vehicles; raised storage areas; portable ladders eg used for access to vehicles and building maintenance; and into inspection pits.

(ii) A Consultative Document CD196 (available on the HSE website or from HSE Books) has been published on proposed new Noise at Work Regulations. Any comments on the proposals must reach the HSE by 25 June 2004. It is expected that they will come into force by February 2006. The proposals include a reduction of 5dBA in the current Action Levels and a new Exposure Limit Value. In MVR, the Exposure Limit Value is not likely to be a problem but all noise levels, particularly in body repair, will need to be managed. Guidance on good practice can be found in HSG67.

(iii) New Control of Vibration at Work Regulations are due to come into force in June 2005. Exceeding an Action value will trigger requirements to carry out a risk assessment, eliminate or control exposures, and for health surveillance. Hand-arm vibration from powered hand tools such as grinders, sanders, air tools is a risk in MVR, particularly in bodyshops. INDG338 and HSE ID 246/31 (both available on the HSE MVR website) contain advice on good practice controls that should include a policy to purchase only low vibration tools and regular tool maintenance.

13 MVR website

The HSE MVR website (www.hse.gov.uk/mvr) receives over 3,500 hits a month. The website was updated at the start of 2004 to include a facility to 'bookmark' it as a 'favourite' and easier access to e:COSSH Essentials isocyanate worksheets. A further update is due in August 2004.

14 Any other Business

- (i) Work is continuing on the proposed guidance on the application of the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002 to MVR. Details of any problems that the industry has encountered should be passed to John Powell
- (ii) John Powell asked members for copies of any industry guidance on valeting which could be included on the MVR website
- (iii) John Powell asked members if they had any evidence of eye/nose/throat/chest irritation linked to exposure to diesel engine exhaust emissions.

15 Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the MVR Forum will be held on **Wednesday 17 November 2004** at HSE's Birmingham Office at 1 Hagley Road, Birmingham