MINUTES OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE SHIPBUILDING AND SHIP-REPAIRING HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON 9TH APRIL 2003 AT A&P TYNE'S HEBBURN YARD, TYNE AND WEAR.

PRESENT

Mr Keith Strachan, *Pyeroy*
Mr Jeffrey Arkle, *British Maritime Technology Ltd*
Mr Alan Clisby, *Babcock Naval Services*
Mr Andy Forbes, *Babcock Rosyth Defence Ltd*
Mr Peter Callaghan, *Pallion Engineering Ltd*
Mr David Allison, *Marine Painting Forum*
Mr Brad Hicks, *Fleet Support Ltd*
Mr Barry Irvine, *Fleet Support Ltd*
Mr Bill O'Neill, *HSE (Northern Ireland)*
Mr Jim Skilling, *HSE*
Mr Joe Atkinson, *A&P Tyne Ltd*
Mr Mark Lomas, *Devonport Management Ltd*
Mr Pete Harding, *Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Ltd*
Mr Geoff Johnson, *Portsmouth Naval Base*
Ms Kay Nicholson, *BAE Systems (Marine) Ltd*

Mr Graham Watson, *HSE*
Mr James Barrett, *HSE*
Mr Roger Sykes, *HSE*
Miss Gemma Currie, *HSE*

APOLOGIES

Mr Nik Parker, *British Marine Federation*
Mr Gregg Renfree, *A&P Falmouth*
Mr Jim Picksley*, GMB, BAE Systems (Marine) Ltd*
Mr Eddie Paton, *BAE Systems (Marine) Ltd*
Mr John Brown, *George Prior Engineering*
Mr Steve Evans, *Appledore Shipbuilders*
Ms Sue Leycock, *Warship Support Agency*
Mr Alan Robson, *Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions*

WELCOME

Members were welcomed to the 47th meeting by Dave Skentelbery, an A&P Tyne main board director. Mr Skentelbery gave an informative account of the current make up of the A & P Group and recent developments at A & P Tyne.

1) CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Mr James Barrett welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for attending. Mr Barrett welcomed as a new member, Mr Callaghan, a director of Pallion Engineering.

2) MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Mr Barrett gave details of the following changes to the SSHSCC membership: Graham Morrison has now left the WSA, a permanent replacement for him has still to be appointed; Captain Gerry Costello has replaced Captain Andrew McFarlane as the Naval representative from the Faslane Naval Base; Mr Barry Brown has replaced Mr Alex Guerandel at A&P Southampton; Small & Co (Marine and Engineering) Ltd and Richards Dry Dock and Engineering Ltd have joined the committee.

3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Members accepted the minutes from the last meeting as a true record.

4) MATTERS ARISING

a) Plate Clamps

Members were updated on the situation regarding plate clamps operating by friction having a minimum safe working load. Since the last meeting the Lifting Equipment Engineers Association has revised their literature on the safe use of vertical plate clamps to include reference to the importance of the minimum safe working load, where a clamp operates by friction. The sheet states that wherever possible reference should be made to the manufacturer's instructions but in the absence of specific guidance the minimum load should not be less than 20% of the maximum safe working load and the plate thickness not less than 20% of the maximum. The adoption of the 20% rule mirrors that adopted by Camlok, who are members of the LEEA. Discussions with Camlok have revealed: a) generally all plate clamps operating by friction will have a minimum safe working load although it only really becomes important when due to wear and tear on the clamp more force is needed to lift and secure the plate. b) as the minimum safe working load partly depends on the level of wear and tear it is not something that can be calculated exactly but is instead a figure decided by the manufacturer. Consequently not all manufacturers adopt the same minimum safe working load. c) when a clamp drops a plate there are often other additional contributory factors including contamination of the plate with dirt or lubrication or errors in the lifting techniques.

Mr Watson made members aware of a fatal accident involving a plate clamp, which is detailed in the accident investigation summaries. The relevant issue here is not to do with a minimum safe working load, but with the plate being moved between the horizontal and vertical plane. This has been involved in a number of accidents. The operation of turning plates should be restricted to those clamps specifically recommended by the manufacturer for turning duties. Some plate clamps including those equipped with locking devices are not suitable for such duties. Members of the committee were advised to make sure that they and their employees know what their clamps are designed for and that they have procedures in place to make sure they are only used for the correct purpose.

b) Passport Schemes

It was reported that there has been only limited progress with an industry Passport Scheme. Mr Atkinson advised members the Tyne passport scheme has still to secure funding for a SMART card and that despite initial support for standardising certain procedures in the yards on the Tyne, it has yet to happen. Mr Sykes provided details of the IOSHH passport scheme and advised members that he had contact details for IOSHH should they wish them. Mr Barrett stated that there was an HSE Policy Branch looking into the issue of competence and that the committee should see if any links can be made between this and the passport scheme. Mr Watson was also to look into how other passport schemes are funded.

Action: Mr Watson

c) Ultra High Pressure Water Jetting

Additional details were provided of a new type of protective footwear for use when ultra high-pressure water jetting. The Water Jetting Association has revised their Code of Practice for the use of high pressure and ultra high-pressure water jetting equipment. The revised Code of Practice updates and enlarges the previous guidance and includes additional information on medical treatment of injuries, hose re-ending and confined space entry.

d) Video Loaning Scheme

Mr Watson informed members that videos have been put forward for the loaning scheme and asked if anyone else was interested in taking part. The information required is the title of the video; an indication of its subject matter if this is not apparent from the title, the running time and relevant contact details.

e) Medium Pressure Ductile Iron Gas Pipe Work

At the previous meeting members had been asked to check whether they owned their gas pipe work and if so, was it was made of MPDI as this type of pipe work has the potential to fail without warning. Members reported that no such pipe work had been found.

f) SSA Guidance

Members were advised that the Health and Safety Guidance Notes on the SSA web site have now been provided with an index page. As this is hyperlinked to each individual guidance note it makes them easier to access. During the recent guidance review it was agreed to redraft the housekeeping and the occupational health services guidance notes. This has now been undertaken and members were asked to forward any comments that they had on the guidance to Mr Watson.

Action: Members

It was intended to redraft the guidance notes covering hot work, fuel gases and confined spaces when DSEAR came into force. While DSEAR is now in force it was agreed to delay redrafting the guidance until the DSEAR Approved Codes of Practice have been published.

5) THE WORK OF THE SSHSCC

Mr Barrett informed members that following the HSE review of Sectors the Engineering and Utilities Sector is to become The Manufacturing Sector. For the Sector to continue to support the work of the committee the committee needs to adopt a project type approach by setting visible targets and agreed outcomes against which the success of the committee can be judged. Mr Barrett suggested that the chair of the committee could be taken over by one of the other committee members. A number of the members present however, expressed concern regarding this. Mr Harding thought that the Committee had done some good work over the years, especially the "Three steps to safety" video. He felt that a programme of work followed by an annual report could raise the committee's profile. Mr Barrett strongly supported this idea provided health and safety improvements were made. It was also important to make sure that the good work done by the committee was clearly visible. Mr Sykes stated that if a suggested programme of work were put forward it would need the industry's support and input.

6) CHROMATE PRIMER PAINTS

Mr Watson updated members with the latest developments on chromate primer paints, including a recent meeting with the Marine Painting Forum where the issue of chromate primers was discussed. The MOD representative on the forum indicated that due to a loss of records the MOD was unable to tell shipyards exactly what coatings have been applied to their ships. The most recent edition of Warpaint refers to zinc chromate and states that there is a strong probability that zinc chromate primer may be present in internal compartments of RN vessels. It can be anticipated in vessels of CVS, T42, T22 and all apart from the last 4 T23 classes. If the exact nature of the primer is unknown and cannot be traced through records it must be assumed that zinc chromate is present and full precautions undertaken. The MOD are now addressing the issue of providing details of hazardous substances onboard their vessels, and on future refits, they, in conjunction with the paint suppliers, will detail on the specification what paint has previously been applied. The new type 45's will also carry a manual detailing all the hazardous substances onboard, although it is taking a long time to gather all the necessary information. As chromate primers are still being applied to the Astute Class of submarine the issue does not just revolve around their removal.

The British Chamber of Shipping has been approached to see if they can assist in identifying whether this is an issue, which also affects commercial ships. They have undertaken to report back within a 4-week period. *Update:*

only one member of the BCS replied, they stated that they have never specified the use of chromate primers.

Fleet Support Ltd have sourced a method for detecting the presence of chromate primer, details of which were circulated (enclosed for members not at the meeting). The accuracy of the test kit has however still to be validated. FSL have also started using an alternative method for removing chromate primers involving the use of dust collection units fitted with HEPA filters, details of which were circulated (enclosed for people not at the meeting). A & P Tyne now include a question on chromate primers on the questionnaire sent to ship owners when they tender for work. Mr Barrett identified the industry undertaking testing for the presence of chromates as an example of a project that the SSHSCC has achieved.

7) WORK IN CONFINED SPACES

Mr Watson presented paper 47/A relating to work in confined spaces, and which included a press release detailing four fatalities involving this type of work that occurred within a four-week period. These included a double fatality involving shipyard employees, a single fatality involving a contractor working in a boatyard and a single fatality involving a welder working in a premise out with sector. Members were also advised there had been five fatalities in the last 18 months involving petrol-powered equipment being used without sufficient ventilation.

Mr Watson asked members for their thoughts on the confined space self audit tool. Mr Arkle said he had used it in another industry and that it was useful to put in front of management to make them appreciate all the issues involved. Members were asked to forward any additional comments on the audit tool to Mr Watson. A discussion was held regarding the proposed series of seminars focusing on confined space work. Whilst Mr Watson was going on secondment Mr Barrett hoped the seminars would not be put on hold until his return. Mr Allison suggested that the Marine Painting Forum could undertake an initial seminar addressing this issue. Mr Watson asked members to notify him of any particular problem areas regarding confined space work, which could usefully be included in a seminar. It was mentioned by Mr Harding that it was important to include boat yards in any measures taken.

Mr Watson informed members that he had queried whether medicals were required for confined space work and had been advised that whilst they were not compulsory they were recommended. Medicals were however required for the use of self-contained breathing apparatus. Mr Hicks stated that they were unhappy with employees attending a 2 day course in confined space work as a one off measure, as a result they have introduced quarterly follow up training and toolbox talks addressing confined space work.

Mr Allison spoke of the difficulty of getting organic vapour detectors, which can cope with a mixture of solvents. Mr Watson undertook to look further into this issue.

Update: A scientist at the Health and Safety Laboratory has advised that the above problem can be tackled by calibrating the detector to the least sensitive gas (or vapour) present and setting the detector at 10 – 20% of the lower explosive limit. Setting the LEL at a low level, building in a factor of safety. The detector will alarm before reaching the LEL of any more sensitive substances present. While this will not provide a high degree of accuracy it can provide a useful indication of risk. It must not however, be used as an initial line of defence and has instead to be used in conjunction with providing LEV, RPE etc. Catalytic detector sensors are the most frequently used type of detector and are also the cheapest. Suppliers of detectors include Crowcon, Draeger and Shaw City. Advice should be sought from the supplier of the detector used.

8) MANAGING ASBESTOS

Mr Jim Skilling, Head of Asbestos Licensing Unit in HSE, gave a presentation on the new duty to manage asbestos that will come into effect from May 2004. Copies of the overheads used are enclosed/attached. Mr Lomas asked for clarification of the asbestos licensing requirements for minor work on asbestos insulation board. Mr Skilling informed members that a licensed contractor is not needed for short duration work; this means any work that lasts a maximum of 2 hours. These 2 hours include preparation for the work and the cleaning up afterwards, i.e. if the actual job will last 2 hours but the cleaning up is on top of that, a licensed contractor is compulsory. Members were also advised of HSE's policy on granting wavers for asbestos work, additional information on which (and on licensing requirements) is available on the HSE web site at: http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/information.htm

9) EUROPEAN DIRECTIVE UPDATE

Mr Sykes provided an update on the following issues:

ASBESTOS

The Asbestos Worker Protection Directive will require further changes to the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations. The key proposals are: a single control limit for all types of asbestos; a proposed 'duty to manage' similar to that coming into force in the UK and detailed requirements on training. It is likely there will be an adopted Directive in mid/late 2003 and a revised Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations in mid/late 2006.

PHYSICAL AGENTS (VIBRATION)

It is expected that there will be a consultation document available before the next meeting, possibly August 2003, which will include draft Regulations and draft guidance.

PHYSICAL AGENTS (ELECTROMAGNETIC FIELDS)

The Danish Presidency of the European Union introduced a proposal for a Physical Agents (Electromagnetic Fields) Directive in December 2002. The Greek Presidency has now put forward changes that look favourable to UK interests. There is still some way to go before there is agreement. EMF's arise whenever electrical energy is used. In general electricity supply and electrical goods generate low frequency EMF's and communication devices and transmitters generate high frequency EMF's. Welding equipment is of interest in shipyards.

TEMPORARY WORK AT HEIGHTS

This Directive will be implemented by stand-alone regulations, which will replace the staging parts of the Shipbuilding Regulations. A draft is currently being developed implementing regulations and formal consultation and this is expected soon. The CD should be out in July 2003.

10) REVITALISING HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr Sykes reminded members that the priorities under the Revitalising Health and Safety initiative are workplace transport, stress, falls from height, slips and trips and musculoskeletal disorders. He also advised members of the availability of a recently published Contract Research Report (038) *Review of workplace control measures to reduce risks arising from the movement of vehicles.* An interesting finding in this report is that about 40% of companies who reported being aware of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations said they had not conducted a risk assessment of workplace transport.

11) ACCIDENT STATISTICS

Mr Sykes presented paper 47/B regarding accident statistics for shipbuilding and ship repair. He informed members of a change in the way the statistics are compiled and classified which affects comparisons made with different years. However, appendix 1 of 47/B indicates a downward trend in accident statistics, which will hopefully continue. If members own accident profiles are more favourable than those presented they are asked to share their experiences with the committee on how this has been achieved. This is particularly so if they have been successful in reducing the types of accidents which occur more frequently in the industry. To progress this issue members can either embark upon their own initiatives or come back to the committee with an idea for an initiative, which could be included in a programme of work for the committee. A plan of work for the committee will be developed for the next meeting.

Action: Members and the Secretariat

12) FALLS FROM A HEIGHT

Mr Watson presented paper 47/C, including a draft Sector Information Minute (SIM) about falls from height in Shipyards. The total number of falls from

height accidents has recently declined although accidents involving major injuries have declined far less than those involving over 3 day accidents. The SIM provides details of accidents investigated in shipyards involving falls from a height and details action that could have been taken to prevent them. Members were asked to look at the preventative measures detailed and to verify where appropriate that they have such measures in place in their yards. 47/C also lists notifier's initial comments from F2508's when reporting falls from heights. These comments are a useful indicator as to the main agents involved in falls from a height accidents i.e. ladders, steps and stairs.

A discussion was held on reducing accidents involving ladders and the problems caused by shipyard employees using ladders brought in by contractors. One possible way forward is to hold ladder awareness days when the standard of safety of ladders available for use could be assessed and ladder toolbox talks could be held. Mr Watson circulated an example of such a talk (MISC485) incorporating the use of a plastic card illustrating the correct angle for ladders. Both the toolbox talk and the angle card are available from HSE Books.

Members undertook to report back at the next meeting on what steps they have taken to reduce falls from height.

Action: Members

Mr Atkinson stated that they had sourced training for their managers and charge hands etc. on how to identify if scaffolding was safe to use or whether it had been tampered with. At inductions they also point out that just because a scaffold has been tagged as having been inspected that does not guarantee it is safe. Following these measures they had a measurable improvement in the quality of scaffolding.

13) SLIP AND TRIPS

Mr Watson thanked Mr Arkle and Mr Paton for their help in redrafting the good housekeeping guidance. Members were asked for their thoughts on using the guidance as a tool. Mr Harding said that the checklists were good and thought that a small laminated sheet that would fit into employee's pockets would be a good idea. Members were asked to look through the guidance and to report back at the next meeting on what use they have made of it and on any other measures taken to progress this issue.

Action: Members

14) DATES AND VENUES

17th September 2003 – Babcock Engineering Services, Rosyth
3rd December 2003 – HSE, Newcastle upon Tyne