

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS UPDATE

BACKGROUND

1. This paper introduces a health and safety news update.

SUMMARY

2. This paper introduces a health and safety news update advising members of health and safety developments that have taken place since the 46th meeting.

ACTION

3. Members are asked to note the contents of the news update and to raise any queries regarding the update at the 47th meeting.

HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS UPDATE – 28/03/2003

The following is a description of some of the developments that have occurred in the health and safety field since 02/12 and has been compiled by HSE's Engineering and Utilities Sector (see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/fod/engship.htm> for contact details). For a regular update on recent developments see the "What's new" section of HSE's web site at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/new/index.htm> A fortnightly list of new HSE publications is also available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/flist/> Advice on occupational health and safety is also available from the HSE Infoline on 08701 545500

The Health and Safety Executive web site – contains a new new *first aid* web page drawing together HSE's advice on all aspects of First Aid at Work into one place and is located on the HSE web site at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/index.htm> A range of *interactive forms* are now available on the HSE web site (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/forms/index.htm>) supporting legislation under which businesses are required to submit information to HSE including the reporting of accidents. It is designed to be a secure and convenient service developed to make HSE forms more accessible for use. Information on *the Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations 2002* is now available on a dedicated area of the web site at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/chip/index.htm> A further new area of the web site covers *work related road safety*. 3 500 people are killed on roads in the UK each year and a further 40 000 are injured. A significant proportion of these accidents can be connected with work, for further information see: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety/index.htm> *Occupational asthma* now has its own web page at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asthma/index.htm> This outlines: i) the main causes of occupational asthma ii) what it is like to get the disease iii) what employers have to do to protect their employees; and iv) what HSE and stakeholders are doing to tackle the problem.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work – a new UK link to the Agency has been launched – the UK Focal Point, which is the formal contact point between the UK and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. The purpose of the Focal Point, which is located on the internet at <http://www.uk.osha.eu.int/> is to support the exchange of information between the UK and the Agency. A fresh new look with improved navigation provides access to free UK health and safety information.

European Week for Safety and Health at Work 2003 – the theme of this year's campaign commencing on 13 October is "Dangerous substances – handle with care." Further details are available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/euroweek/index.htm>

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 - HSE is currently evaluating the above regulations to ensure they are cost effective and meet the needs of business. A questionnaire allowing Health & Safety Managers, Safety Representatives, etc. to provide information for the survey can be downloaded from the HSE web site. For further details see: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/spd/spdnew.htm>

Ladder safety - the HSE has joined forces with trade unions UCATT (Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians) and Amicus -AEEU and industry body the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) in a pilot project aimed at reducing fatalities and injuries due to falls from height. The most common agent involved in falls accidents to both groups is ladders. The joint initiative involves toolbox talks providing information about ladder safety, and the distribution of an 'angle -aid' card to remind ladder users about general ladder safety and how to position their ladders properly. The notes accompanying the toolbox talk include details of real life accidents that could have been avoided, to help people relate the circumstances to their own work and take action to avoid the risks. If the pilot is successful then HSE plans to widen its application to include other unions and trade organisations early next year.

Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWP) alert - an incident in which a work basket became detached from its supporting boom has raised concerns about the safety of other MEWPs of the same construction and make. The MEWP made by Access Machines Ltd was a Micro 95 trailer mounted MEWP (class A1) made in 1998, with a Safe Working Load of 120 Kg. The basket of the MEWP that failed was bolted to a round plate by four bolts and in turn the plate was welded to a pin or stub axle on the main boom. In this instance the pin to plate weld failed allowing the basket to fall off the end of the boom. There was some evidence of fatigue in the weld but HSE is concerned that poor quality welding may have contributed to the failure. This is possibly a one off incident nevertheless HSE strongly recommends that owners/operators of these and similar machines have this pin/plate connection thoroughly examined by a competent person at the earliest possible opportunity.

Confined spaces – following 4 deaths in 4 weeks the Health and Safety Executive has issued a press release alerting employers to the dangers of confined spaces. The press release is available on the HSE web site at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2003/e03048.htm>

Nuisance dust masks – HSE is encouraging the voluntary withdrawal of nuisance dust masks, also known as comfort masks or hygiene masks, from sale and is urging the use of approved disposable respirators instead. Nuisance dust masks often resemble disposable respirators but are not classified as personal protective equipment and should only be used when dusts are not hazardous to health. The availability of these masks means that they are found in a variety of occupational environments and consequently could be used for purposes for which they are not intended.

“Falling down on the job” – is a TUC report looking at preventing slips and trips at work. The report sets out the findings of a TUC survey of nearly 800 workplace union safety representatives. The safety reps who participated in this survey were asked a series of questions aimed at finding out more about slips and trips at work and in particular the extent to which they can be prevented. The report can be accessed on the TUC web site at: http://www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-6076-f0.cfm

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) research – managers and employees from small to medium sized companies are needed to help with a major new Health and Safety Executive (HSE) study, looking at attitudes towards musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) at work, which affect muscles, joints and tendons. The project and research team will also work with consultancies, which deal with MSDs to develop and implement solutions to help prevent these kinds of injuries from occurring. The results of the study will be used to draw up guidelines for employers, consultants, employees, trade unions, and health care practitioners. Companies interested in participating in the research should contact Zara Whysall, by the end of June, on 01509 228481, or by email: Z.J.Whysall@lboro.ac.uk

Duty to investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and diseases – after taking views in response to a wide-ranging consultation exercise the HSC has decided to issue guidance on investigating accidents etc. rather than bringing out new legislation. The guidance will come in a range of formats and the first of these will be published later this year. They will include paper and software investigation tools, and basic and more detailed information leaflets.

Coxall v Goodyear Great Britain Ltd Court of Appeal Case – Goodyear were deemed negligent in a civil claim when they failed to remove an employee from work involving spray paints after the works Doctor had advised that he should be removed from working with the paints as he was predisposed to asthma. While the health and safety manager received the Doctor's report the man's manager did not, as a result he was not removed from the work for a further 3 weeks. It was deemed by the Court of Appeal that Goodyear should have discussed with the claimant all available options

once the work's doctor had made his view clear. If the claimant had insisted on working the case would have been different.

Engineering Supply Chain Environmental Initiative – Envirowise is a government body providing practical environmental advice for business which on average saves British business £1000 per employee by better design and production processes. They have recently launched a supply chain initiative for the engineering sector. This seeks to encourage host companies and their supply chains to work in partnership to identify where financial savings can be made from reducing waste generated by their joint business activities. For further information see: <http://www.envirowise.gov.uk>

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE DEVELOPMENTS

Published guidance

Priced – other

British Compressed Gases Association Code of Practice CP 19 Bulk liquid oxygen storage at users' premises – covers installations where the individual tank water capacity is between 1 000 and 175 000 litres (1.14 and 200 tonnes respectively). The BCGA can be contacted on 01491 825533 or see www.bcgga.co.uk

The Code of Practice for the use of High Pressure and Ultra High Pressure Water Jetting Equipment - as well as updating and enlarging the existing Code of Practice additional information has been included to cover ultra high pressure water jetting, medical notes regarding the treatment of jetting injuries, hose re-ending and confined space entry. Copies can be purchased from the Water Jetting Association, 17 St Judith's Lane, Sawtry, Cambs PE17 5XE, via their website at www.waterjetting.org.uk or by telephoning 01487 834034.

HSE – priced

Effects of prescribed medication on performance in the working population (Research report 057) - presents the findings from an investigation of the effects of medication prescribed for anxiety and depression on working life. Workers found it difficult to distinguish between the effects of medication and symptoms of anxiety and depression. Both the symptoms and the medication were reported to impair work performance. Participants described a variety of accidents and near misses that they attributed to their condition or to the side effects of medication. Workers with responsibilities for others, such as managers, appeared to present a particular risk to safety in the workplace. Non-compliance with medication was common due to unpleasant side effects, lack of improvement in symptoms or because the medication initially made them feel worse. Drawing on the evidence collected, the report makes recommendations for the prevention and management of anxiety and depression in the workplace and outlines areas for improvement. ISBN 0717625958

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr057.pdf>

The role of managerial leadership in determining workplace safety outcomes (Research report 044) - reviews the theoretical and empirical literature that examines the role of managerial leadership in determining organisational safety outcomes. Identifies three different levels of management with special responsibilities for health and safety: senior (or corporate) level managers; middle level managers (including site managers) and supervisors (also known as front line managers or team leaders). Clarifies distinctions between the levels, explores the unique contribution of each level, and examines the paths of influence between them. A holistic model of the leadership factors at each level was developed, to show how they interact to influence safety outcomes. ISBN 0717626091

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr044.pdf>

Young People's Attitudes to Health and Safety at Work (Report HSL/2002/19) – this report by HSE's Health and Safety Laboratory explores why young people are more at risk at work and the impact of training and education. On the HSE website at:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2001/hsl01-03.pdf

Safety Culture A Review of the Literature (Report HSL/2002/25) – the objectives of this report were to: a) review the main features of safety culture and safety climate within the existing academic and applied literature; and b) explore the links between safety culture and safety performance. A review of the safety climate literature revealed employees' perceptions of management's attitudes and behaviours towards safety, production and issues such as planning, discipline etc. was the most useful measurement of an organisation's safety climate. The research indicated that different levels of management may influence health and safety in different ways, for example managers through communication and supervisors by how fairly they interact with workers. Thus, the key area for any intervention of an organisation's health and safety policy should be management's commitment and actions towards safety. Ultimately management's attitudes and behaviour in terms of safety influence many aspects of safety behaviour. On the HSE web site at:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2002/hsl02-25.pdf

Sources of Funding for Health and Safety Training or Creating Training Material (HSL 2002-01) - this report lists funding available for health and safety training - primarily sources of funding available for those who wish to create training materials but also sources of funding available for workers to attend training courses. In addition to reporting details of firms and trade associations, which provide funding, it also provides details of government schemes and loans, which are sources of assistance. While there are several sources available for those who wish to create training materials the report suggests there is little funding and assistance offered for people who wish to go on health and safety training courses. On the HSE website at:

http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2002/hsl02-01.pdf

A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises – HSG227
ISBN 0717623815 £12.50

The management of asbestos in non-domestic premises. Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance - L127 ISBN 0717623823 £9.50

Work with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating and asbestos insulating board (Fourth edition). Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance - L28 ISBN 071762563X £9.50

Work with asbestos which does not normally require a licence (Fourth edition). Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and guidance - L27 ISBN 0717625621 £9.50

Control of lead at work (Third edition). Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance - L132 ISBN 0717625656 £10.50

Control of substances hazardous to health (Fourth edition). The Control of Substances hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. Approved Code of Practice and Guidance –Includes a new Approved Code of Practice *Control of Substances that Cause Occupational Asthma* L5 ISBN 0717625346 £10.50.

The law on VDUs: an easy guide. Making sure your office complies with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992. (as amended in 2002) – HSG90 ISBN 0717626024 £8.50

Work with display screen equipment – Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 – Guidance on Regulations L26 ISBN 0717625826 £8.95

New and expectant mothers at work: a guide for employers - Second edition HSG122 ISBN 0717625834 £9.50

HSE – free

Fit testing of respiratory protective equipment facepieces – HSE Information Document HSE 282/28 (available on the HSE web site at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/asbestos.pdf>)

Health and Safety Targets: How are we doing? - HSC has produced a supplement to the 2001/02 Annual Report. It reports on performance against published targets and outcomes.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/reports/anrsupp.pdf>

Revitalising health and safety targets - progress reports -
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/pdf/prog2002.pdf>

Work related deaths – a protocol for liaison Misc 491
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/misc491.pdf>

Biocidal Products Directive Fact Sheet no 15 – provides supplementary information to sheets 1 –14
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/hthdir/noframes/biofct15.htm>

Pesticides Newsletter Issue 58 March 2003 – contains results of a survey of antifouling paints in fresh water
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/hthdir/noframes/pest58.htm>

VDU workstation checklist - ISBN 0717626172

Understanding ergonomics at work: reduce accidents and ill health and increase productivity by fitting the task to the worker INDG90(rev2)

Aching arms (or RSI) in small businesses - Is ill health due to upper limb disorders a problem in your workplace? INDG171

A short guide to managing asbestos in premises INDG223 (revision 3)

Fire and explosion - How safe is your workplace? A short guide to the Dangerous Substances and explosive atmospheres regulations INDG370 <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg370.pdf>

A guide for new and expectant mothers who work – INDG373

New and expectant mothers at work – A guide for health professionals – INDG373hp <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg373hp.pdf>

General access scaffolding and ladders – Construction information sheet no. 49(rev1)

Maintenance and cleaning of solvent degreasing plant – Engineering Information Sheet No 20(rev1)

Safe use of solvent degreasing plant – Engineering Information Sheet No 40