

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR SSHSCC IN 2004

SUMMARY

1. This paper sets out a series of issues for possible inclusion in a programme of work to be carried out by SSHCC and its members in the year 2004.

BACKGROUND

2. At the 47th meeting members heard of changes to the structure of HSE and that support for committees such as SSHSCC would need to be linked to programmes of work that members were committed to implementing. Programmes that include reflection of the priorities of HSC/E and include targets for reduction of accidents and ill health are particularly welcomed.

POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR PROGRAMME

3. 5 issues are considered, 2 of which are both major causes of accidents in shipyards and also are priority topics for HSC/HSE in the Revitalising Health and Safety programme. The 2 other issues are matters that members have discussed at previous meetings and are matters of concern to shipyards. The final issue relates to the HSC/E's recently agreed Chemicals Strategy.

Accidents due to falls

4. Work at Height Regulations are due to come in force in 2004. Work at height is defined as any work from where a person could fall a distance liable to cause injury. The requirements of the regulations include:

- a) work at height should only be undertaken if it cannot otherwise be avoided;
- b) any person who works at height has to be competent to do so; and
- c) equipment for use at height has to be selected according to a prescribed hierarchy, in which ladders are at the lower end.

5. Paper SSHSCC/47/C reported on an analysis of the causes of accidents in shipyards due to falls. The paper points out that 23% of reported major injury accidents in 2001/02 were due to falls and also that half of all reported fall accidents involved ladders and stepladders. 62% of the fatal and major injuries arising from falls in shipyards (where the height is specified) involved low falls. Paper 47/C makes a series of recommendations aimed at reducing accidents due to falls.

6. Possible action in 2004:

- a) members to analyse accidents occurring in their own yards as a basis for action;
- b) raise awareness of the risks from work at height including the risk from low falls and ensure all tasks involving work at height are identified and suitably assessed;

- c) audit the use and condition of ladders and consider alternative ways to gain access
- d) ensure there is a yard policy on use of ladders by employees and contractors – review any current policy
- e) train users of ladders in their safe use (introduce arrangements for periodic tool box talks on ladder safety)
- f) launch this initiative with a ladder safety week

Slips and trips

7. SSA guidance on preventing slips, trips and falls on the level in shipyards is about to be issued as a revision of the housekeeping guidance issued in 1994. The draft guidance indicates that over the period 1997 to 2001 some 25% of major injuries were due to slips and trips and that these often result in long periods of absence.

8. Possible action in 2004:

- a) members to review application of revised guidance to their yards
- b) introduce a policy including an action plan to reduce accidents due to slips and trips – review any current policy
- c) allocate duties, particularly of directors, managers and supervisors to ensure the policy is carried out
- d) set objectives and challenging targets for performance improvement
- e) introduce arrangements for auditing policies, objectives, performance targets and for carrying out any necessary amendments

Work in confined spaces

9. At the 46th meeting, members agreed that there should be a series of 3 seminars on work in confined spaces that would best be held in Scotland, northern England and the south of England.

10. Possible action in 2004:

- a) establish a working group to agree a programme, arrange venues and speakers
- b) establish 3 further working groups to then ensure that each seminar is delivered in Autumn 2004

Revision of guidance

11. After discussion at a series of meetings, members agreed a programme for revision of SSA guidance notes. This programme and an order of priorities are set out in paper 45C. It is expected that the first 2 guidance notes for revision will be approved at the 48th meeting. The 3 joint 3rd and the 4th priorities are dependant upon issue of ACOPs that support the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR). It is now expected that these ACOPs will be issued in October 2003 and this will clear the way for revision of these 4 guidance notes. As they are closely related, it is proposed that they be dealt with together. This, however, may result in a significant work item.

12. Possible action in 2004:

- a) establish a working group to consider the DSEAR ACOPs and report to the 50th meeting in April 2004 with recommendations on whether there is a need for additional guidance for shipyards and if so on the specific issues that should be addressed
- b) if a need is identified and agreed, the working group to prepare a draft(s) for discussion at the 52nd meeting in December 2004.

The HSC/E Chemicals Strategy

13. The 48th meeting will be given a presentation by a member of the HSC Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances following which members will be invited to consider the contribution that SSHSCC can make to the HSC/E Chemicals Strategy. It would be appropriate to consider inclusion of any issues identified, together with any actions arising from the discussion on chromate primers, in this draft plan.

REVIEW AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

14. At the end of 2004, members to review action taken at their yards on the work programme and the impact of this action and report to the 52nd meeting in December 2004 following which the Secretariat will produce a collated summary report.

ACTION

15. Members are asked to consider

- a) the issues discussed above
- b) to decide whether they can commit to a plan
- c) what they would wish to see included in a plan and
- d) a target for improvement for these issues

16. Members are asked to discuss this paper at the 48th meeting and:

- a) agree the need for a programme of work
- b) discuss inclusion of the issues proposed in paragraphs 3 to 13
- c) propose for discussion any alternatives or additions they feel may have more impact/value
- d) agree an order of priority for the items included
- e) agree clear objectives and targets for the plan
- f) indicate the contribution they can make to implementation of the plan
- g) agree the final contents of a plan so that arrangements for implementation can then be agreed at the 49th meeting.