

**MINUTES OF THE FORTY-EIGHT MEETING OF THE SHIPBUILDING AND
SHIP-REPAIRING HEALTH AND SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
ON 17TH SEPTEMBER 2003 AT BABCOCK LAUDER TECHNOLOGY,
ROSYTH DOCKYARD**

PRESENT

Joe Atkinson, *A&P Tyne Ltd*
Ian Worrall, *BAE Systems, Barrow*
Kay Nicholson, *BAE Systems Naval Ships*
Eddie Paton, *BAE Systems Naval Ships*
Alan Clisby, *Babcock Naval Services*
Graham Morrison, *HSE Offshore Division*
Andrew Kennedy, *Babcock Engineering Services, Rosyth*
Andy Forbes, *Babcock Engineering Services, Rosyth*
Ian Loveridge, *Babcock Naval Services*
Andy Jenkins, *Pyeroy Ltd*
John Hawley, *West Coast Trafalgar Ltd*
Geoff Johnson, *Portsmouth Naval Base*
Brad Hicks, *Fleet Support Ltd*
Barry Irvine, *Fleet Support Ltd*
Mark Lomas, *Devonport Management Ltd*
Jeffrey Arkle, *British Maritime Technology Ltd*
David Allison, *Marine Painting Forum*
Pete Harding, *Vosper Thornycroft (UK) Ltd*

James Barrett, *HSE*
Roger Sykes, *HSE*
Harris Cooper, *HSE*

APOLOGIES

Nik Parker, *British Marine Federation*
Nick Granger, *Shipbuilders and Shiprepairers Association*
Brian Hughes, *MOD Warship Support Agency*
Alan Robson, *Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions*
Bill O'Neill, *HSE (Northern Ireland)*
Simon Coote, *Richards Dry Dock*
Steve Evans, *Appledore Shipbuilders*
John Brown, *George Prior Engineering*
Jim Marshall, *GMB*
Keith Strachan, *Pyeroy*
Jim Picksley, *GMB, BAE Systems (Marine) Ltd*
Don MacDonald, *Portsmouth Naval Base*
George MacLeod, *SEMTA*
Graham Watson, *HSE*

WELCOME

Members were welcomed to the 48th meeting by Mr Eric Schwab Business Development Director. Mr Schwab gave an informative account of the current make up of the Babcock International Group, the activities of Babcock Engineering Services and recent developments at Rosyth Royal Dockyard. He also touched on likely developments, including accommodating the future aircraft carrier assembly.

1) CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

James Barrett welcomed members to the meeting, thanked them for attending and thanked Babcock for hosting the meeting. He welcomed as new members: John Hawley of West Coast Trafalgar Ltd representing Garvel Clyde Ltd., Grangemouth Ship Repairs Ltd., and Forth Estuary Engineering Ltd.; and Graham Morrison, HSE Offshore Division.

2) MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

The chairman gave details of the following changes to the SSHSCC membership: Tom Brennan has been promoted to N E Regional Secretary of the GMB. Mr Barrett thanked Mr Brennan on behalf of members for his support over many years and wished him well in his new post. Jim Marshall will replace Mr Brennan but was unable to make this meeting; Brian Hughes has taken over from Graham Morrison at MOD Warship Support Agency but was unable to make this meeting. Kay Nicholson introduced Ian Worrall from BEA Systems at Barrow and explained that the yard at Barrow had been established as a separate business to produce submarines and the yards on the Clyde were now devoted to naval ships.

3) MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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

4) MATTERS ARISING

a) Passport Schemes

Following the last meeting enquiries suggest that the best funding opportunity would be to develop a scheme through IOSH. A speaker from IOSH could be arranged but members were advised that IOSH would look for clear commitment to work with them and to adopt a final scheme before they will go ahead with assisting development.

Members were advised of relevant activity by SEMTA (formerly EMTA) who have secured finance for pilots in the North East and the Humber that are expected to be in operation by March 2004. This scheme will comprise a web based register of the skills of an individual and the health and safety training they have received. Employers will have password protected access to verify

records. Joe Atkinson and Jim Marshall are involved in the development of the NE pilot.

Members were also advised of a manufacturing module for the IOSH passport scheme that had recently been launched at Rolls Royce.

Members were further advised that HSE expects to publish its leaflet *Good Practice Guide and Core Syllabus for Health and Safety Passport Training Schemes* during the European Week for Safety and Health at Work in October.

The draft leaflet addresses:

- what schemes can and cannot do;
- benefits;
- training arrangements;
- core syllabus of an effective scheme addressing health, safety and environmental issues
- mutual recognition of passports

A draft of the leaflet is attached to the minutes.

b) Falls from a height

Members reported on steps they have taken to reduce accidents due to falls from height. Actions taken include:

- Scaffolders trained to standards of National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) SG4
- Encouraging or requiring scaffolding contractors to use employees who have had been trained to NASC SG4
- Establishing (higher) standards for design/construction of staging/scaffolding (eg setting access ladders inside the scaffold) – often using BS 5973 *Code of practice for access and working scaffolds and special scaffold structures in steel* as a basis
- Fixing signs at the top of ladders requiring descent whilst facing the ladder
- Encouraging the use of ‘hop ups’ for low access rather than ladders
- Increased use of safety harnesses
- Introducing tool box talks on safe use of ladders

Members were advised that the research report *Falls from height – Prevention and risk control effectiveness* has been published. This provides:

- a definitive baseline for measuring improvements in the incidence rate of falls from height;
- a quantified model of the influences affecting falls from height covering human, hardware and external factors; and
- a toolkit for selecting measures, setting performance targets and monitoring improvement

Some of the key issues highlighted are:

- The importance of design and designers in eliminating work at height hazards;
- Enough guidance and information is available but people need to be aware of risks and actually use guidance available;
- The importance of and large number of 'low falls' especially on stairs. The report states around 60 per cent of non-fatal accidents and injuries over the past five years have been due to low (under two metre) falls

The importance of low falls in shipyards was highlighted at the 47th meeting and in paper 47/C

5) CHROMATE PRIMERS

The chairman welcomed Dr Martin Gibson, HSE Principal Inspector (Occupational Hygiene) who has been working with Babcock and Pyeroy at Rosyth on the problems of removal of chromate primers. Dr Gibson addressed

- assessment of health risks in paint stripping refurbishment work
- appropriate controls to minimise risk and comply with COSHH Regulations
- relevance to HSE's Chemical and Asthma's strategies.

Members were advised that

- most chromates are classified as carcinogens (CHIP Regs)
- zinc chromate causes lung cancer and is a skin sensitiser
- chromium VI also causes asthma

Members were reminded that, compliance with COSHH, requires a control regime that:

- adequately controls exposure using a strict hierarchical approach
- employs effective engineering controls first
- uses PPE last
- complies with OEL (MEL)

It was observed that the work involved:

- a confined environment
- rooms of various shapes/sizes containing equipment
- demanding work
- workers in different positions - kneeling, crouching, standing, stretching
- worker in very close proximity to contact points
- worker position creates a more confined area

The method of work results in:

- physical destruction of the coating
- generation of considerable dust and debris
- deposit on all surfaces
- deposit on worker and tools

- deposit onto footwear

Sampling results showed exposures significantly above the MEL of 0.05 mg/m³

Members were advised that an effective control regime needs to take account of:

- whether chromium VI is present or assume it to be present
- the nature of the working area
- persons and equipment present
- decontamination
- maintenance and training

Recommendations made were:

- isolate the work area (with warning signs)
- keep number of people exposed to a minimum
- employ a high standard of mechanical ventilation (20 air changes per hour)
- protect items in rooms (eg sheeted) control at source for tools eg integral extraction workers to wear high performance RPE (full facepiece powered respirators with P3 filters)
- workers require face fit test for RPE
- other PPE (coveralls (type 5) and laceless footwear)
- decontaminate work areas and items thoroughly
- workers should carry out thorough personal decontamination every time they leave work area:
- workers to vacuum down in work area
- clean PPE and footwear in airlock
- remove PPE in airlock
- provide welfare facilities for workers check all extraction equipment (LEV and mechanical ventilation) frequently (daily visual check and weekly test)
- check and maintain RPE properly (pre-use checks, thorough monthly examination and test)
- full education and training

Members were advised about the requirement from November 2002 for face fit testing in the initial selection of RPE (COSHH Reg 7). This applies to tight fitting facepieces (disposable, half and full facepiece). For full facepiece equipment the test must be quantitative but for others, the test can be quantitative or semi-quantitative. The test is required because all RPE leaks and it important that tight fitting masks provide an effective face seal. Further guidance is in HSE Information Document 282/28. Face fit testing is recommended at 2 year intervals or when there are any changes that influence face fit.

Brad Hicks reminded members that FSL use an alternative method for removing chromate primers involving the use of dust collection units fitted with HEPA filters, details of which were circulated at the 47th meeting.

6) THE HSC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES (ACTS) – WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER COMMITTEES

Mr James Barrett welcomed Dr Colin Soutar an Independent member of HSC's Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS). Dr Soutar spoke about ACTS and its work plan, the aim of which is to stop people being made ill from exposure to substance at work. He also explained that as a contribution to this, ACTS was seeking to forge relations with industry health and safety committees. Dr Soutar explained the HSC/E's Chemicals Strategy and its relevance to shipyards. An essential part of communication of the Strategy is electronic COSHH Essentials that was launched in April 2002 with another phase to be launched in European Week for Safety and Health 2003 in October. Electronic COSHH Essentials is free risk assessment tool that can be found at www.coshh-essentials.org.uk .

Dr Soutar also reminded members of the HSC/E Asthma Strategy and of the main causes of asthma, including from spraying of isocyanate coatings.

Dr Soutar asked what SSHSCC can do to contribute to HSC/E's Chemicals Strategy and posed the question 'if is there anything ACTS can do to help the committee?'

Members referred to the difficulty they often encountered in obtaining reliable information on substances aboard ships entering their yards for repair – for example on chromate primers as discussed in the previous agenda item. Members thought that support from ACTS to exert pressure on vessel owners would be helpful. However, one member referred to a very useful asbestos survey report provided with a vessel they had recently refit. Members also felt that information provided with substances could be improved and that more explicit duties on manufacturers and suppliers of substances would be helpful – comparison was made to the duties of machine manufacturers.

The Chairman suggested that the work being undertaken by members on chromate primers was a contribution to the Chemicals Strategy and asked members to take account of the strategy when considering work for the SSHSCC programme for 2004.

7) SSA GUIDANCE

Members approved the final drafts of guidance on housekeeping and occupational health services. Thanks were given to Graham Watson, Eddie Paton and Jeff Arkle for their work on redrafting the slips/trips guidance notes and also Dr Mary Kinoulty from EMAS her help in redrafting the occupational health services guidance.

8) CONFINED SPACES SEMINARS

Discussion on this item was taken as part of agenda item 9 - SSHSCC programme of work.

9) SSHSCC PROGRAMME OF WORK

Roger Sykes presented Paper 48/A as a basis for a programme of work to be carried out by SSHCC and its members in the year 2004.

Members felt that the items in the paper were appropriate for inclusion in a programme but that stress and contractor control also warranted inclusion. The overall programme would then become one within which yards could set their own priorities to reflect local concerns.

It was agreed that all members consider the contribution they feel able to make to the items on the expanded programme and to let Roger Sykes know about these by the end of September 2003. He will then prepare a further paper that draws together the collective offers from members so that final proposals can be agreed at the meeting on 3 December 2003.

Action – Members and Roger Sykes

Some members also felt there was wider potential for networking between members and sharing of good practice, information on safety policies etc. Concern was also expressed about the accessibility of guidance produced by SSHSCC.

10) REVITALISING HEALTH AND SAFETY

Roger Sykes presented some recent developments on stress. Management Standards are being prepared to provide a yardstick against which organisations can measure their progress in tackling work-related stress and target action where it is most needed. The standards will be supported by an information pack that will build on the HSE guidance [Tackling work-related stress: A manager's guide](#)

As part of a pilot exercise, the draft Management Standards and supporting materials are now publicly available on HSE's website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/stresspilot/index.htm>) It is hoped that all sectors and sizes of business will get involved and provide feedback as this is a crucial time in the development of practical and innovative ways to combat stress at work.

Research has been published that identifies examples of best practice in [stress prevention](#) and [rehabilitation](#) following absence due to stress-related ill health. See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr133.htm>

11) EUROPEAN DIRECTIVE UPDATE

Roger Sykes provided an update on the following issues:

Asbestos

As a result of adoption of the Asbestos Worker Protection Directive, the Asbestos Regulations will need to be amended by 15 April 2006. Key requirements are:

- Single control limit for all types of asbestos of 0.1 fibres per cm³ as an eight-hour time weighted average.
- Proposed 'duty to manage' similar to that coming into force in the UK.
- Detailed requirements on training
- Prohibition on extraction of asbestos and the manufacture and processing of asbestos products (in line with the Asbestos Prohibition Regs)

Physical Agents (Vibration)

Publication of Consultative Documents (one each for Hand-Arm Vibration and Whole Body vibration) is expected in October.

Physical Agents (Electromagnetic Fields)

The current Italian Presidency of the EU is keen to press ahead with this proposal and negotiations are continuing. This Directive has implications for arc and resistance welding. As with other physical agents directives, the current draft:

- sets action and limit values
- requires that employer assess and, if necessary, measure and calculate the levels of electromagnetic fields to which workers are exposed
- eliminate or reduce risk to a minimum
- if action values are exceeded, devise and implement an action plan to prevent exposure exceeding the limit values
- ensure workers are not exposed above the exposure limit value
- provide information and training
- provide appropriate health surveillance

The UK is seeking to ensure that action and limit values are set at current international levels in which case the implications should not place any undue burden on industry.

Temporary Work at Heights - Use of Work Equipment Directive – 2nd amendment.

The Consultation Document on the proposed Work at Height Regulations is now expected to be published in December with comments to be in by March/April 2004. This means the Regulations will be slightly late coming into force in Autumn 2004.

Information on developments in Europe is given in Euronews, which is part of the HSC Newsletter. Euronews is now available on the HSE web site at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/europe>

12) RECENT ACCIDENTS AND ILL HEALTH

Roger Sykes presented Paper 48/B. Once again there were several falls, including a fatal. Also a classic confined spaces accident that fortunately did not result in loss of life – such work will produce oxides of nitrogen and the symptoms described are typical. Harris Cooper clarified that the main issue with the fatal accident was corrosion and lack of maintenance of the handrails.

13) HEALTH AND SAFETY NEWS UPDATE

Roger Sykes presented Paper 48/C.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

a) Olivine importation. The voluntary ban on importation of olivine arising out of asbestos contamination has been lifted following full scale dry blasting trials that were undertaken to determine the safety of Olivine under such conditions. The trials were concluded in January 2003 and an assessment of the results, carried out by HSE's toxicologists concluded that the fibres detected during dry blasting operations were of a type whereby the material was considered to be less hazardous than previously suspected. The importers are still required to continue their rigorous inspection and testing regime, based on MDHS 77, to ensure there is no increase in the concentration of asbestos and mineral fibres in future imports of asbestos.

b) NVQs David Allison requested members' contributions on the legal requirements on health and safety that should be incorporated into draft level 3 NVQs that are being drawn up by SEMTA. He agreed to send a copy of the draft to Roger Sykes for distribution to members.

Action - David Allison and Roger Sykes

c) Legal requirements for staging/scaffolding David Allison sought clarification on the requirements that apply to staging/scaffolding in shipyards and on construction sites. It was confirmed that they are currently different but there will be common requirements when the proposed Work at Height Regulations come into force.

d) Fire at Falmouth shipyard Joe Atkinson advised members that a recent fire at the Falmouth shipyard had been started due to an exothermic reaction in steel shot used for abrasive blasting.

15) DATES AND VENUES

3rd December 2003 – HSE, Newcastle upon Tyne

James Barrett closed the meeting with thanks to Babcock for hosting and to members for their attendance and participation.