

HSE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT TO THE HSC – FEBRUARY 2006

Highlights:

1. **Buncefield.** The Investigation Board has now met twice under Lord Newton's chairmanship. It is intended to issue a progress report on the course of the investigation so far by the end of February.
2. **RMT / LUL.** HMRI have met with RMT and LUL in relation to the allegations of safety breaches made by RMT following the staff strikes by their staff in December and January. The allegations have been thoroughly investigated and no breaches of safety found. Faults were however identified in LUL's documentation. These conclusions have been communicated to both parties.
3. **Workplace Health Connect** is currently subject to final readiness tests, prior to the services beginning in the third week of February. The tests are designed to make sure the Adviceline and the Pathfinders have the correct systems in place and that these work accordingly to the specifications. Quality of the service is also being tested. If all goes well, launch events will take place in London and the North West on 23 February and the West Midlands and Wales on 24 February. No formal launch is planned for the North East.
4. **Fundamental Review.** Work continues on the first phase of the review led by the consultant Mr Nick Ville. Workshops have been held in London and Bootle with staff from a variety of offices. A fundamental Review site has been established for all staff to access on the HSE Intranet.
5. **SCS Leadership Event.** This event was held on 24 January and looked at two key issues: outcomes from the HSE Staff Survey; and the Fundamental Review.
6. **Redgrave Court.** Bootle staff have continued to relocate to Redgrave Court. The full move is due to be completed by end February.
7. **Pay.** The ballots by Prospect, PCS and the FDA all resulted in majorities in favour of the three year pay offer, which has now been formally accepted the Trade Union side.

GEOFFREY PODGER
February 2006

ANNEX 1

ANNEX TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT: 14 FEBRUARY 2006

Key Developments

Management

- HSL has been awarded £778,500 by the Public Sector Research Exploitation Fund to help turn public sector research into commercial success. Five products have been identified for development.
- CE wrote to The Times on 16 January in response to an article allocating the reintroduction of danger money rather than protection; and to the Guardian on 2 February in response to suggestion that HSE had been pressurised over advice on liquid gas terminals. Both letters were printed.

Meetings with stakeholders

- HSC/E and Engineering Employers' Federation Partnership Event 27 January where HSE signed a partnership agreement with the EEF. This will focus on developing the occupational health agenda
- HSE is undertaking a review of the domestic gas regulatory framework. A stakeholder forum is meeting on 20 February as a first step towards involving interested parties.

Energy Review

DTI has asked HSE for an expert report that assesses potential health and safety risks (both to workers and the public) associated with significant energy sources and technologies. The report, which will be published, will be delivered by the end of June.

Operations

- 22 fatalities were reported to HSE in January. Brief details are given in Annex B.
- Buncefield investigation: priorities are to secure the site, support the clean up and recovery of oil and waste liquids from the fire fighting operation and secure evidence. Forensic evidence has largely been secured and is being assessed. Witness statements are being taken. It is too early to determine or even speculate on the cause of the incident but we are confident that we will be able to identify the basic facts about how the incident occurred.
- Omni-pac was fined a total of £50,000 and ordered to pay costs of £86,000, after pleading guilty to two charges relating to the duty to manage asbestos in industrial premises.

Campaigns

Watch Your Step in the construction industry – HSE inspectors are carrying out targeted inspections looking at good order issues on construction sites and how effectively these are being managed. Slips and trips cause over 1,000 major injuries on UK sites each year.

Consultations

Closed

Proposals for revised Asbestos Regulations and an Approved Code of Practice

Current

HSC/E Draft simplification plan

Closing date February 2006

Managing competence for safety-related systems – Consultation for guidance published by HSE, the IEE and BCS

Closing date 28 February 2006

Proposals for a workplace exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica

Closing date 13 March 2006

Parliamentary business

36 PQs were dealt with in January, 15 relating to asbestos.

House of Lords debate 26 January 'To call attention to health and safety at work, especially with regard to preventing deaths and accidents at the workplace'.

House of Commons debate 31 January 'Asbestos and health and safety'

ANNEX 2

FATALITIES REPORTED TO HSE DURING JANUARY

AGE	INDUSTRY SECTOR	DESCRIPTION
50s 50s	Domestic - repair	DPs died of double CO poisoning
40	Automotive Engineering	DP died of burns injuries as a result of a fire at his workstation
54	Construction security	DP died of CO poisoning
92	Services	DP fell out of the chair by his bed as he tried to get back up
58	Haulage	A paper reel weighing just over 1070kg fell onto driver while loading
63	Agriculture	DP's tractor rolled down a bank and he ejected but was run over
75	Services	DP fell whilst attempting to climb off roof to car park area
35	Public security	DP was found and taken to the hospital but pronounced dead on arrival. The only detail at present is that a shoelace was involved
62	White goods repair	DP received a fatal electrical shock while repairing a washer dryer
56	Food & drink	DP was asphyxiated by carbon dioxide while bleeding a carbon dioxide pump line
14	Leisure	DP drowned
37	Agriculture	DP died of CO poisoning
68	Electrical	DP fell while on the level and is thought to have struck his head
74	Agriculture	DP was trapped at hydraulically operated elevating deck, causing immediate fatal injury
84	Services	DP fell from a window on first floor
28	Plant hire	DP fell from scissor lift from the control on the platform
21	Tyre fitter	DP was working on tyre when he got blown away about 6 metres
39	Breaker's yard	DP was struck on the head by a collapsed crane
33	Capping landfill site	DP was drawn under the off-side footplate of his bulldozer cab by the caterpillar track
55	Refuse collection	DP was run over by a refuse collection vehicle
79	Local Government	DP was knocked down and killed by a refuse collection vehicle reversing in a narrow one-way street
66	Private	DP died of CO poisoning

FATALITIES REPORTED TO HSE DURING DECEMBER

AGE	INDUSTRY SECTOR	DESCRIPTION
34	Manufacture of animal feed	DP entangled on the power take off of a tractor.
33	New build - education	DP was using a MEWP (scissor lift) to transfer cladding when panels toppled onto the deceased resulting in a broken leg. Death due to cerebral embolism.
39, 42	Food	DPs were carrying out maintenance and cleaning operations at No 2 bulk mixer. Found dead inside the mixer.
20	Industrial roofing	DP fell approximately 7 metres.
14	Education	DP died whilst swimming
20	Residential	DP suffered 50% burns to his body due to gas explosion and fire.
54	Agriculture	DP found unconscious in an inspection chamber.
45	Services	DP was crushed by a hydraulically operated dewatering press with a large scale automated laundry facility.
40	Lift Installation	DP was trapped between the top of the ascending car and the lintel of the doorway entrance.
42	Agriculture	DP was found in cattle court below.
83	Services	Appears DP fell from the landing.
N/A	Repair- domestic	DP fell from a ladder onto the pavement while replacing a roof slate.
34	Window cleaning	DP fell while cleaning window.
30	Stonemasonry	DP was moving blocks of stone when one fell and crushed him.
64	Arboriculture	A branch of tree that was being felled fell on the back of the DP's neck.
82	Services	DP climbed out of window.
89	Transport	DP walked from concourse into path of bus leaving stand opposite concourse.