

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

Highlights

- 1. Buncefield.** The Investigation Board published a report on 21 February on progress with the investigation into the explosions and fire. It made clear that the extensive damage to the site and the need to make it safe had delayed the investigation team in gaining access and carrying out a thorough forensic examination.

HSE published precautionary advice to operators of similar sites and will follow up this advice through site visits.
- 2. Workplace Health Connect.** This was successfully launched on 23 February. Lord Hunt and I attended the London launch which was followed by regional events in Birmingham and Swansea.
- 3. Construction Design Regulations.** In response to the consultation exercise the implementation of the revised regulations has been postponed from October 2006 to Spring 2007. This will ensure that we take the time to get the changes right and industry has time to familiarise itself with the finalised package.
- 4. Review of the domestic gas safety regime.** A stakeholder forum was held at Rose Court on 20 February for parties interested in contributing to the review. The work is being taken forward through three research projects reviewing the regulations, the gas registration scheme and examining the scale of CO poisoning associated with domestic gas appliances.
- 5. Redgrave Court.** Bill Callaghan and the Board visited Redgrave Court on 1 March and were impressed by what is a very striking building. The move to the new building has gone well. We held a party for Redgrave Court staff which revealed a high level of satisfaction with the building.

GEOFFREY PODGER
March 2006

ANNEX 1

ANNEX TO CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT: 14 MARCH 2006

Key developments

Management

- On 8 March the UK Government made a submission to the European Court of Justice, seeking a preliminary ruling on a point of law about the need to justify differences in the pay of women and men that arise from differences in length of service. This arises out of an equal pay case brought by a member of staff against HSE. It will be some months before the ECJ issues its judgment. Until then the case is sub-judice.
- The HSE Board met on 1 March and discussed the monthly progress report on health and safety and managing sickness absence. It had an update on the fundamental review and then took papers on: an HSE narrative; a report back from the HSE Sub-Group on Change; proposals for a Resource Management System; HSE's public reporting; the Balanced Scorecard and Corporate Risk Register; and a review of HSE's preparedness when major incidents or civil contingencies occur.

Communications

- I wrote to Daily Telegraph on 6 and 11 February in response to an editorial and to a letter about the new regulations for railways. I also gave a telephone interview with Workplace Law magazine responding to recent criticism of HSE in regards to falling enforcement statistics.

Worker involvement

- The winners of the third round of the Workers' Safety Adviser (WSA) Challenge Fund were announced on 1 March. The aim of the fund is to increase worker involvement and consultation.
- On 28 February HSE published new 'worker involvement' web pages, including resources for employers on involving workers in health and safety management and four new case studies.

Operations

- 23 fatalities were reported to HSE in February. Brief details are given in Annex 2.
- On 1 March HSE issued a safety alert to the waste and recycling industry following nine reported fatalities in eight weeks. In seven instances, people were killed by being struck by a vehicle.

Campaigns

- Vehicles at Work: 70 people are killed and 2000 more seriously injured every year in incidents involving vehicles at work. HSE is currently running an advertising campaign on radio and press in the North West and Midlands to raise awareness among the people who can make a real difference – depot managers and those who receive or despatch goods.

Consultations

There are no current consultations.

Parliamentary business

- 33 PQs were dealt with in February, 13 relating to sun beds.
- The Constitutional Affairs Select Committee published its report into compensation culture on 1 March.

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 reels weighing just over 1070kg fell onto driver while loading
63	Agriculture	DP's tractor rolled down a bank and he ejected and but 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	Whitegoods 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 trap 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 blew 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 the 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