



# NOTES OF MEETING

Date: 11 February 2009	Location: HSE Nottingham	Taken by: S Peace
Subject: AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (AIAC) PLANNING MEETING		
Present (HSE) Marcia Davies Samantha Peace Alan Plom	AIAC Members Marcus Themans Geoff Gregory David Knowles James Brown Charlie Clutterbuck	
Item No.	Description	
1	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Apologies were received from Madge Moore and Jill Hewitt who contributed written comments.</p> <p>Marcia Davies, in the chair, opened the meeting by acknowledging AIAC as a leadership forum for dealing with the industry. Marcia suggested that it was also a forum of opportunity for those working in the industry to exchange views and perspectives and identify areas of mutual interest and enthusiasm that could be pursued between members without the need for HSE leadership or involvement.</p> <p>Marcia asked the Group to note that given the priority accorded to it by the HSE Board the Agriculture Revisited Initiative would be a key feature of any plan of work.</p>	
2	<p><b>Discussion</b></p> <p>The Group held a wide ranging discussion before beginning the more detailed process of identifying items for the plan of work. This centred initially on the views of a number of members that the wider land based industries feature adequately in any plan, on the basis that while the effort directed at farming is necessary, agriculture is a much complex sector with many overlapping and entwined interests.</p> <p>The discussion moved on to the understanding of the particular risk taking behaviours that prevail in the industry. There was a general feeling that while the pressures imposed upon farmers and others were obvious and known, albeit complex, the Group was less certain that the nature of the risk taking behaviours, and where appropriate in bigger enterprises the nature of management failures, was fully understood. The culture and type of risk taking behaviour may well have changed over the last few years and it was considered that there may be scope of a piece of work to establish behavioural issues to help shape the type of activity carried out by AIAC to combat the risk taking culture.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that those holding data on risk taking behaviour, the ones who 'get away' with it by suffering injury instead of death, may prove useful and asked the Group who they considered might hold such intelligence. In support of this Alan Plom stated that the greatest benefit would be to tease out case studies, something HSE had sought to achieve with AIAC members and other stakeholders for a number of years without success.</p>	

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3	<p><b>Plan of Work</b></p> <p>The Group identified five elements for the plan of work and suggested a number of activities they could undertake in support of that work. These would be translated into a draft plan of work for consideration and development by the full membership. This meeting note contains suggestions and potential actions that require further work or agreement before they can be added as commitments on the plan of work.</p> <p><b>1. Agriculture Revisited</b></p> <p>The general consensus was that the campaign had gone down well with farmers and had created a lot of interest. It was characterised as dispassionate, factual and brutal, which works.</p> <p><b>Promotion of campaign messages</b></p> <p>Members suggested approaches be made to other stakeholders who attend shows, such as the rural support network.</p> <p>Marcus Themans – is aware of a database of people who have been injured and who are willing to share their stories in the right context. Marcus Themans will explore how this might be used in partnership.</p> <p>Marcus Themans – NFU are present at every agricultural show and there might be the opportunity to carry products and messages – HSE to contact Liz Folkingham</p> <p>Marcus Themans pointed out that a host of organisations have the aim of networking and disseminating information. The Rural Hubs, in particular the West Midlands Rural Hub (funded by Advantage West Midlands) was suggested as a potential route. HSE to follow up with contact provided, Victoria Jones of the Walford &amp; North Shropshire College after checking whether the HSE Partnership Teams are already in contact with these organisations.</p> <p>Charlie Clutterbuck will contact the new editor of the Landworker to see what agreement can be reached regarding routing messages.</p> <p>Geoffrey Gregory agreed to identify a contact for the Land based colleges National Consortium as this may be a route to promote information to all colleges.</p> <p><b>Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADs)</b></p> <p>Marcus Themans referred to previous discussions about who these events should be aimed at – and felt that if employees are present on a farm they should attend to learn about health and safety standards as well as the owners/managers.</p> <p>James Brown endorsed this view and said that as farmers often lend employees to one another, it is important employees understand the standards to be applied in their work.</p> <p><b>Improving Competency and Training</b></p> <p>Marcus Themans – he would like to promote a system of continuous professional development for health and safety matters, tapping in to work such as that organised by the Rural Hub in Shropshire, 'Green Futures' which is all about further professional development.</p> <p>Geoffrey Gregory cited potential routes at RBAT – Rural Business Advice and Training and Sussex Enterprise, who give guidance to SMEs and mentioned that Business Link are being strongly encouraged to provide the same opportunity for free business advice to farmers as well as others as there is no longer any alternative free source for farmers to approach. He also suggested that a 'virtual academy' may be achieved in the shorter term, as students who miss lessons already access those lessons on the web – these materials could be developed and remotely accessed as an open learning package.</p>

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	<p><b>Equipment suppliers and manufacturers</b></p> <p>The Group focused on potential quick wins in the next 12 months.</p> <p>Marcus Themans considered that BAGMA could have a vehicle health check scheme up and running within months and suggested that Keith Christian, CE of BAGMA should be invited to become a member of AIAC. HSE to write to Mr Christian.</p> <p>Members also suggested promoting demand for full service histories and SHADs for dealers.</p> <p>Marcus Themans raised the issue of operator manuals. HSE suggested that as this is an issue regarding supply of information under BERR legislation, it was best pursued through BERR.</p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p>Marcia Davies posed a number of questions and asked members to consider these. Who is missing from the AIAC forum? Should meetings be themed? Should members prepare and present papers of interest for meetings to promote debate and to enable more effective exchange of expertise and views? Should meetings be held more frequently but with a shorter, more focused or themed agenda?</p> <p><b>2. Gathering Intelligence about Behaviour, Attitudes and Culture</b></p> <p>Members suggested that, when investigating an incident, inspectors could ask one or two questions regarding behaviours. HSE explained that all investigations deal with underlying factors including human factors, behaviour and risk perception.</p> <p>The Group made two specific suggestions – that the use of HSE led discussion groups after SHADs be considered, and similarly industry led discussion groups in pubs take place.</p> <p>Marcus Themans suggested that while previous attempts to include health and safety matters under the Farm Assurance Scheme have not succeeded it could be agreed that it is acknowledged as a mark of the degree of professionalism of a business. It could be used as one measure of risk, if the difference between assured and non assured businesses was tested for health and safety standards. This was part of the methodology applied to targeting by roving representatives. It was noted that LACORS use farm Assurance membership as one factor when determining priorities for inspection.</p> <p>Charlie Clutterbuck pointed out that Farm Assurance relates to product, not the way it is produced, but floated the idea of the development of a badge for health and safety competence.</p> <p>Alan Plom suggested that the insurance approach should not be discounted and that work was still underway by companies who saw a potential for true risk based underwriting.</p> <p>James Brown stated that there was potential to get some work done on this through creating a post graduate project.</p> <p>David Knowles said that IOSH had provision within its work plan for some student support and development. Geoffrey Gregory and David Knowles agreed to liaise and discuss this to see whether something specific could be set up.</p> <p>David Knowles agreed to chair a working group to explore how work to deal with this topic could be developed</p> <p><b>3. Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG)</b></p> <p>Events are already conducted in partnership and work has been underway to examine underlying causes of accidents in their field.</p> <p>Work is also underway to change the system for certification, which has remained the same for over 10 years. This will move from the current practice of immediate certification to a more gradual, continuous professional (CPD) development approach, of recruitment, early experience, testing, certification, further CPD.</p> <p>AFAG has an existing mature plan of work.</p>

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	<p><b>4. Vulnerable workers</b></p> <p>The Group considered this a cross cutting issue. There was inadequate time remaining to fully discuss the topic but suggestions included additional research into the issues connected with older workers.</p> <p><b>5. Innovative communication with the wider land based industries and stakeholders</b></p> <p>In a written submission Madge Moore expressed the view that other sub sectors of the land based footprint should not be forgotten, particularly the amenity sector. This was endorsed by Jill Hewitt who, in another written submission, explained that during previous discussions the need to include amenity within 'other industries' was turned down, but that she felt strongly that the need to do so remains. HSE felt this may be better dealt with by the Sector leading on local authorities as employers, where key influence could be applied.</p> <p>It was reported that the amenity industry are seeking to create an industry led amenity forum.</p> <p>There was insufficient time to develop this topic further.</p>
4.	<p><b>Closing remarks</b></p> <p>Marcia Davies thanked all those who attended the meeting.</p>
5.	<p><b>Summary of Actions</b></p> <p>Marcus Themans to explore how the database of potential case studies might be used in partnership.</p> <p>HSE to contact Liz Folkingham - to seek agreement on whether the NFU will carry products and messages at agricultural shows</p> <p>HSE to Victoria Jones regarding disseminating information through the Rural Hubs after checking whether the HSE Partnership Teams are already in contact with these organisations</p> <p>Charlie Clutterbuck to contact the new editor of the Landworker to see what agreement can be reached regarding routing messages</p> <p>Geoffrey Gregory to identify a contact for the Land based colleges National Consortium</p> <p>HSE to invite Keith Christian, CE of BAGMA to become a member of AIAC</p> <p>David Knowles to liaise with Geoffrey Gregory to discuss a post graduate research project could be developed</p> <p>David Knowles to chair a working group to explore how work to on intelligence gathering could be developed</p>