

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE			
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)			
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Update on recent activities of CONIAC's Working Groups

A paper by Anthony Lees, Secretary to CONIAC

Summary

1. This paper updates CONIAC on activities of its working groups for the period December 2014 to March 2015.

Background

2. CONIAC may establish Working Groups to further its aims. Currently, the following groups exist:

- Asbestos Liaison Group
- Safety Working Group
- Working Well Together Steering Group
- Health Risks Working Group

Argument

3. CONIAC's terms of reference provide as follows: "Each Working Group shall have and, subject to its endorsement by CONIAC, carry forward a Work Plan. CONIAC shall monitor the activities of the Working Groups and hold them to account for delivery of their Work Plans. Reports from Working Groups shall be a standing agenda item for CONIAC meetings."

4. Updating information for each of the Working Groups is set out in the **Annex** to this paper.

Recommendation

5. CONIAC notes the activities of the Working Groups.

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ASBESTOS LIAISON GROUP (ALG)

The last ALG meeting was held on Wednesday 14 January 2015.

Points of interest

Previous ALG minutes and meeting papers are available at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/committees/alg/index.htm>

The minutes from the meeting held on 14 January should be available by the end of February.

Changes to ALG membership

- Stephen Platkiw (pronounced Platkey) has replaced Andrew Jackson as the ATAC representative.
- Chris Gilliead has replaced Mark Winter as the IATP representative.
- A replacement Local Authority representative has been identified and is expected to attend the May meeting.

Items discussed

- ALU to contact asbestos licence holders in a phased approach to ask them for information on a voluntary basis on where they dispose of their asbestos waste. It was thought that this information would also be of value to HSE Waste and Recycling Sector colleagues and will be passed on as appropriate.
- Competency framework – General discussion led to agreement (subject to a few minor changes). The document will be published on the ARMI web site. ALG members are also welcome to publicise.
- ALG Workplan – on-going.
- ALG publications – on-going. Members appreciated that any future ALG advice and guidance must meet the strict criteria set by PGG before publication on the HSE website (ALG web pages). ALG were asked to consider publication independently through their own systems – this may include HSE endorsement (eg use of logo, foreword, etc) but this would also have to be agreed by PGG.
- Asbestos Campaign – A full evaluation of the recent campaign should be available after the campaign ends in March and Craig Bell will give a full update at the ALG meeting on 20 May.
- Analyst Guide – draft version will be available for general consultation by the end of March – final version published by the summer although timing may be affected by the General Election.
- Licensed Contractors' Guide – On-going.
- The Technical Working Group are currently discussing the issues of other trades entering live enclosures (ALG asked to comment on current draft); abrasive blasting removal systems (also circulated to ALG for comment). Any agreed guidance will be included in the Licensed Contractors' Guide.
- Leadership and Worker Involvement – Recent on-line survey conducted by UCATT which ALG agreed was very interesting and important. UCATT to send results to NFDC, UKATA, ARCA and ACAD.
- Unite asbestos campaign launched on 19 January.

The next meeting will be held on 20 May 2015.

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SAFETY WORKING GROUP (SWG)

The Working Group considered its raison d'être in general terms such that it might have a better impact. It recognises that it will work on behalf and at the behest of CONIAC, but also that it should be working independently and taking issues and suggested solutions to CONIAC. It was felt that in the past the group had perhaps had too wide a remit in terms of conducting its business, and that more focus is required. Task and finish groups are seen as useful, provided they are outcome focused and evidence based. It is important that as well as looking at deliverables the group should be looking at how it can change the way people behave. Identifying what kind of deliverable and how to promote it is therefore important for any of the task and finish groups.

A task and finish sub-group has been set up to look at current guidance and practices involving construction of tall buildings and consider production of specific guidance to address this area. Russ Timpson from the Tall Building Group was invited to give a presentation on fire issues in tall buildings and outlined his key concerns during the construction phase, as well as after it has been handed over to the client. Some of his case studies were quite alarming in terms of fire spread, and suggest that perceived wisdom in this area is not perhaps as accurate as it should be. Perception of the risk seems to be a major issue, as is a proper understanding of what constitutes hot work and how to safely manage that. Berkeley Group are still keen to lead on this and this is an important area to focus attention on given that in London alone over the next few years there are currently planned to be 234 new tall buildings (mainly residential or mixed use, rather than just office space). As well as potential guidance it was agreed that how to get the message out also need proper consideration.

Getting the message out was also discussed with respect to fragile roofs/rooflights. It is recognised that there is a plethora of guidance (HSE and other) available covering this topic, yet serious accidents continue to happen and we need to understand why if we are to properly deal with the matter. HSE construction specialists are considering research into behavioural issues in this area and the Working Group gave strong support for this suggestion. We all think we know some of the reasons why people do as they do but don't necessarily have the evidence to back that up. The Group therefore tasked Ray Cooke (SWG Chair, HSE) to take his input to the specialists to discuss what things any such research should focus on. Ray has a meeting planned to do this, and that should have taken place by the time CONIAC meets.

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WORKING WELL TOGETHER STEERING GROUP (WWT)

By 9 March, WWT had delivered 56 events. Attendance to date has been over 3800, with figures from 3 events still awaited. There are an extra 12 events scheduled before the end of 2014/2015, which means WWT is on track to exceed its yearly target of 60 events and is expected to meet its attendance target of 4500. The March meeting of the WWT Steering Group was held in Birmingham on Tuesday, March 17, 2015.

The WWT groups will be the main mechanism for rolling out CDM 2015 to small construction businesses in 2015/2016. Each of the 18 WWT groups will be urged to hold at least one CDM briefing event and to incorporate information on CDM 2015 in their other events. The early findings from on-going work to assess the longer term effectiveness of attending WWT events will be presented to CONIAC in an oral update at the March 2015 meeting.

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HEALTH RISKS WORKING GROUP (HWG)

CONIAC's Health Risks Working Group met for the thirteenth time on 26 January 2015. (Kevin Minton will provide an oral update of the meeting's proceedings at CONIAC on 18 March.)

The HWG guidance *Occupational health risk management in construction* had been further revised in the light of substantive comment received from HSE colleagues. These revisions were made following application to HSE's *Publication Governance Group* for endorsement of the guidance with HSE's logo. Consequently the document has been amended to reflect more the HSE content and style. The revised version was considered by HWG members who agreed the changes and strongly expressed their continued wish for the guidance to bear the HSE logo. Members underlined the importance of the HSE logo as it provides the appropriate credibility mark to the publication.

Gren Tipper and Kevin Fear, both members of the 'Health Task Group' formed after the CONIAC 'member challenge on health', gave an update on the group's plans for action. Chaired by Clive Johnson, the membership of the Group has expanded to include partner organisations such as IOSH, BOHS alongside client, designer, contractor, and worker representation. In the first instance participation in the next Construction industry summit in September 2015 is being taken forward. A further high level event specifically on driving forward the health agenda in construction is being planned for spring 2016.

Mike Slater, President of the *British Occupational Hygiene Society* (BOHS) and Sharon Brunt BOHS Head of Communications attended as guests to deliver a presentation on their plans for an occupational respiratory disease campaign. Launching in April 2015, Mr Slater invited CONIAC HWG members to consolidate current industry work alongside BOHS in the campaign. It was felt that BOHS could make a useful contribution to HWG business and so Mr Slater would be invited to subsequent meetings.

Updates on the work of the DoH Responsibility Deal network and the current HSE lead supply chain project on Paving, road and highway work were given. The supply chain project is coming to a conclusion and the project lead, Dr Rob Ellis, will deliver a report on the project's deliverables at the next meeting.

Further 2015 meeting dates have been set for Wednesday 17 June and Wednesday 7 October.