

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 the CONIAC Secretariat

#### Summary

1. This paper updates CONIAC on activities of its working groups for the period August 2015 to November 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)**

1. The last ALG meeting was held on Tuesday 20 October 2015. Items discussed were:

- ALG web community. Joining invitations were sent to ALG members at the end of October;
- Competency within the asbestos removal industry. The final version of the guidance was agreed and is now ready for publication subject to the inclusion of a feedback form. The document will be published on the ARMI website and a link will be available on the ALG web community. Steve Sadley will contact HSE Asbestos Policy Unit regarding potential HSE endorsement of the guidance;
- Waste disposal sites. HSE have written to all licensed contractors and created a list of sites that will accept asbestos waste. It is hoped that this can be published or a direct link to Environment Agency lists of these sites;
- Licensed Contractor's Guide. The draft document has been circulated and feedback received. It is hoped that the draft will be finalised by the end of 2016;
- Leadership and Worker Involvement Working Group Update. It was agreed that this WG should take forward the project undertaken by John Richards (RICS) to devise an asbestos apprenticeship scheme for surveyors, analysts under the government trailblazers scheme. This consists of 3 stages: expressions of interest; standard development; and an assessment plan. The scheme is employer-led but also needs to show industry support during standard development eg industry, unions and HSE;
- Technical Working Group Update. The Group last met in June and all papers and appendices will be available on the ALG web community. Issues finalised include: abrasive blasting removal systems; documentation required on site to licensed asbestos removal works; pre-4 stage clearance inspections; and other trades entering enclosures. Issues still being discussed are: gas and electrical safety on DCUs; and asbestos paper removal;
- Asbestos Policy. The asbestos campaign report is now available on HSE's website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/assets/docs/beware-asbestos-campaign-2014-15-final-evaluation-report.pdf> It is unclear if any additional resource will be made available to continue this work. The Asbestos Essentials sheets have been updated. There will be a limited consultation process prior to finalisation;
- Analysts Project – Plans of work and 4-stage clearance. This project has been delayed but a first draft is now available. It covers, amongst other things, the expectation of the personal safety of analysts and the quality of 4-stage clearance. It was noted that HSE would like to see an improvement in the quality of personal monitoring. This would be communicated with industry via email, web communities and the trade associations. It was hoped that the Analysts' Guide would be published by the end of December but could possibly be delayed until March/April 2016.
- ALU update. HSE (Rob Hirst) gave a brief description of the role of the ALPI and also highlighted asbestos prosecutions since the last meeting. Relevant press releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk/>. HSE (Annette Leppla) gave a brief update on enforcement action against licensed asbestos

removal contractors from 1 April to 30 September. She also provided the latest statistics (ie number of inspections, number of notifications, etc).

- Items under AOB. 1) A query regarding CDM - confirmation given that asbestos removal would be classed as construction work and therefore CDM Regulations would apply. 2) It was noted that ALG was represented on the Strategic Forum for Construction by Peter Wilson (UCATT). 3) It was noted that it was European Health and Safety Week and Wednesday 21 October was National Workplace Inspection Day. 4) Some members of ARCA were unhappy that they had to compete for work against surveyors with no accreditation or PI insurance. It was suggested that this was perhaps an issue for Trading Standards.

2. Previous ALG minutes, meeting papers and Working Group papers are available on the ALG web community. The minutes from the 20 October meeting should be available by mid-December. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, 11 February 2016.

### **SAFETY WORKING GROUP (SWG)**

3. The two key pieces of work continue to be the Tall Buildings Task & Finish group and working through the proposals for a fragile roof week in 2016.

4. Barry Oliver of Berkeley Group chairs the Tall Buildings Group. There are now 12 members, chosen to try and represent different facets of the industry involved in such structures (clients, designers, engineers, contractors etc) and they have had two meetings so far and intend to meet every 2 months. The aim of the group is to:

- Agree the definition of what constitutes a tall building (not as easy as might first appear as there are many definitions out there)
- Establish what material and references already exist and determine their relevance (much exists for completed buildings but less for those under construction)
- If the group believe existing material is sufficient (and readily accessible) then put a signposting document together and call it a day
- If the group perceive there to be a gap or a need for specific guidance dedicated to tall buildings and its challenges, then to create such a document.

5. The September SWG was the initial meeting to begin exploring how to undertake a fragile roof week. SWG invited Agriculture Sector, leaders of the regional Farm Safety Partnerships, and representatives from various industry bodies representing roofing. We also invited the Builders Merchants Federation but they did not feel able to attend although they may be willing to send out messages to their membership.

6. All the invitees agreed this was a sensible area to target. We are waiting for feedback from the SWG and invitees on examples/case studies that are appropriate to particular sectors. There was a strong feeling that, although there can be an overarching message, the specifics need to be tailored to industry sectors (and perhaps even regional examples) to ensure they are seen as relevant. They will also provide feedback on ideas on what stakeholder groups are most appropriate to approach. It was also agreed that a single week might not have enough impact and that there should be some kind of lead up to the week plus a follow up, to keep up momentum. The overarching message and examples need to be visual and

language kept simple as the target audience need to understand what is needed. It was also suggested that use of social media needs to be considered too.

## **WORKING WELL TOGETHER STEERING GROUP (WWT)**

7. As at 13 October 2015 there have been 40 WWT events with a total attendance of 2,495 delegates in 2015/2016. New evaluation procedures have been in place since the beginning of Q2 (July) 2015 and the results from the analysis of the 1282 feedback forms (for 15 events) received since then show that

- 10.6 % of the attendees describe themselves as self-employed – this may appear a low figure but persuading self-employed to take time out and attend is no easy feat;
- 69% of the attendees were attending a WWT event for the first time – this is a welcome figure as it shows to some degree that the local WWT groups are targeting affectively to spread the message further;
- 93.3% of the attendees rated the events good and above in terms of organisation;
- 94.2% of the attendees rated the events good and above in terms of relevance;
- 72.5% of the attendees said they intended making changes following the event. Analysis by company size shows that the percentages were greatest in in companies with 0-5 and 6–15 employees, which is particularly encouraging. 78.2 of attendees from companies with 0 -5 employees and 85.9% of attendees from companies with 6 -15 employees said they intended making changes;

8. There will be further follow up around 8 -12 weeks after the events, to find out whether the intended changes have indeed been made and get some idea of the longer term impact of attending the WWT events. We have also been in discussion with our HSE Agriculture Sector colleagues to discuss how they evaluate their Ag SHADs and see if we can learn anything for our evaluation. It is not easy to compare as we are not comparing like with like – Ag SHAD content is determined by HSE, whereas WWT event content might listen to an HSE steer but at the end of the day the content and audience is determined by the local groups using local knowledge. We are nevertheless considering slight changes to our evaluation forms to include questions about attitudes to health and safety and how these are affected by attendance.

9. Adebayo Ige is in advanced discussions with individuals in the Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire areas with respect to setting up additional WWT groups.

## **HEALTH RISKS WORKING GROUP (HWG)**

10. CONIAC Health Risks Working Group (WG) met for the fifteenth time on 7 October 2015. Due to unforeseen travel problems the Chair, Ian Strudley was not able to get to the meeting for the start so in his absence WG member Kevin Minton kindly looked after the meeting proceedings.

11. The WG guidance *Occupational Health risk management in construction* is now live and available to download as a pdf on HSE's website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/coniac/coniac-oh-guidance.pdf>. A

press notice to announce its availability is being produced and will be released alongside an announcement of the results from the recent construction refurbishment works inspection initiative.

12. Various updates of partnership groups and campaign activities were given by members. These were:- Construction Health Leadership Group (CHLG) and its design, hub and summit sub-groups; the newly-formed Workplace Health Expert Committee, Construction Dust Partnership, IOSH 's No time to lose occupational cancer campaign and BOHS's Breathe freely campaign. Of particular note is that plans for the CHLG summit event for industry CEOs is on course for Thursday January 21 at London's Royal Institution. Invites have been sent out for the event and the programme is currently being put together by a group involving Ian Strudley and led by Heather Bryant, SHE Director at Balfour Beatty. The speakers at the event will be :- Judith Hackitt HSE Chair, Justin Tomlinson HSE's minister, Sir Malcom Grant Chair NHS England, Andrew Wolstenhome CEO Crossrail, Andy Mitchell Chair Thames Tideway Tunnel and Simon Clarke a sufferer of mesothelioma.

13. A substantive discussion was held on how the WG could contribute to efforts toward improving mental health in the construction industry. To this end it was acknowledged there is much activity going on so a first step was agreed for a sub-group of members to meet and agree how best the group could provide added value to this work.

14. The date of the next meeting is Tuesday January 26, HSE Rose Court.

End of paper