

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE			
CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)			
Meeting date:	19 November 2014	FOI status:	Fully open
Type of paper:	Below-the-line	Exemptions:	None
TRIM reference:	2014/397274	Paper No:	M3/2014/1
Cleared by:	Philip White, Chair of CONIAC, on 12 November 2014		

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 August 2014 to November 2014.

Background

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

- Asbestos Liaison Group
- Safety Working Group
- CDM Industry Guidance Steering 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 Thursday 30 October 2014.

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 30 October should be available by the end of November.

Changes to ALG membership

- Jon Dry has joined ALU and is now a member of ALG
- Clive Johnson of Land Securities is now a member of ALG – representing clients – David Tucker of Land Securities also attended
- Position regarding British Institute of Facilities Management is unclear (Rob Greenfield)

Items discussed

- Competency framework – a lengthy discussion. Approval given by members but clarification on membership of the Competency and Training Working Group sought. Discussion on draft competency framework paper. The paper is to provide a possible mechanism on how asbestos licensees might manage the training needs of their businesses to meet the requirements of the regulations. Tasked as a draft for comment.
- ALG Workplan – ongoing.
- ALG publications – ongoing. Thanks given for previous input. Thanks also to ARCA for the information provided on waste disposal sites for the asbestos campaign.
- Asbestos Campaign – Some criticism received. Noted. Aimed at sole traders. 200,000 packs sent out through Tradepoint (B&Q). Suggestions for future campaign - to contact victims of asbestos-related diseases to give them the chance to tell their story. It was acknowledged that, due to the latency of asbestos related diseases it is easy to forget the hazards.
- ALU to contact licence holders (possibly as part of the licence renewal process) to enquire where they dispose of their asbestos waste to provide a web list. SEPA has an available list of disposal sites.
- Changes to ARMI qualification requirements – these have been agreed and will be published on the ARMI website.
- New asbestos notification system from 1 October – now electronic. Seems to be working well and HSE now have access to notifications sent to Local Authorities also.

Dates for meetings 2015

The dates for next year were agreed – 14 January, 20 May and 23 September. All meetings will be held in Mallard House, York.

SAFETY WORKING GROUP (SWG)

The last meeting of the safety working group was held on 29 September 2014. There have been two recent HSE personnel changes on this group. Ray Cooke has replaced Joy Jones as chair and Jacquie Brown has replaced Steve Edwards as secretariat. Thanks go to both Joy and Steve for the hard work they have put in.

The group was given a presentation by the Berkeley Group on problems and lessons learned from construction of tall buildings, including information on positioning of welfare facilities, first aid and fire matters. It was suggested that a sub group might be formed, including Berkeley Group, to look at current guidance and practices with respect to tall buildings, with a potential to produce something for industry that would help promulgate lessons learned. This still needs to be taken forward, and is seen by the group as important as it is one area in which there is currently very little guidance available, despite the obvious challenges of such work and the potential for catastrophic outcomes if not well-managed.

Following on from the last meeting when the group considered and commented on HSE's two draft fragile roof *Busy Builder* sheets for clients and contractors, an open question was posed as to how the whole issue of the continuing problem of fragile roofs might be better dealt with. Mhairi Lockwood (HSE) has recently taken on the work at height portfolio in Construction Sector safety team and will be working on this. Lee Fisk from CITB recommended its video *Fragile Roofs, Fragile Lives*, available on YouTube, in which four people share their experiences about the devastating effects falls through fragile roofs have had on themselves and their families. If any CONIAC members have a view on how to tackle fragile roofs then it would be happily received.

The Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group, chaired by the Construction Plant-hire Association (Kevin Minton), had circulated its strategic plan for its safety group and sub-groups and invited Safety Group members to its CPA Plant Conference in October (the conference was well attended and went well). The conference was used to launch important new guidance on Ground Conditions for Construction Plant. The Tower Cranes Interest Group of the CPA continues to work with HSE on matters arising from recent tower crane incidents, and a new safety alert on essential maintenance of slew brake release mechanisms on tower cranes should have been issued by the time the CONIAC meeting takes place.

Meeting dates are due to be set for next year and work will start to identify future priorities for the Safety Working Group. In the meantime, any feedback from CONIAC on suggested priorities would be welcome.

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CDM INDUSTRY GUIDANCE STEERING GROUP (IGSG)

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of paper M3/2014/2 gives information on recent work of this group.

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WORKING WELL TOGETHER STEERING GROUP (WWT)

As part of the 2014/2015 workyear, the Working Well Together (WWT) groups had, by the end of October, successfully held 36 events. There are another 31 events planned between now and March 2015, which means WWT is on target to exceed the planned number (60) of events. Construction health risk themes now feature in most WWT events.

The newest WWT (London North West) group held its inaugural event at London City Hall on 1 October 2014. The event (a Designer Awareness Day) received good feedback and there are now 18 active WWT groups across England, Scotland and Wales. The WWT National Steering group met in Birmingham on 7 October 2014. Topics discussed include the proposed new CDM regulatory package, construction health risk management and the current HSE Asbestos campaign.

During the workyear 2013/2014, there were over 4000 delegates attending the 69 WWT events held that year. Whilst previous analysis indicates that a high proportion of the delegates rated the events as good or very good, we are keen to find out more about the longer term effectiveness of WWT events in influencing and changing behaviour. To this end, a questionnaire has been developed with input from HSE statisticians. This is currently being sent out to selected attendees to previous WWT events. We hope a summary of the findings will be available in April/May 2015. A new evaluation form for construction apprentices/trainees is also being developed in consultation with a college in North Wales.

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HEALTH RISKS WORKING GROUP

This group has not met during the period covered by this paper. Its most recent meeting was in June and it will not meet again until 26 January 2015. A meeting was arranged for 29 October but this was postponed to allow for revision of the Group's occupational health guidance and then re-submission to HSE's Publications Governance Group.