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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)

Workplace Safety Advice (WSA) Challenge Fund

Issue

1. To update members on the development of the Workplace Safety Advice Challenge Fund.

Background

2. The Workers Safety Advisor (WSA) pilot was carried forward in a number of industries including construction, and ran for 6 months finishing in November 2002. York Consulting Ltd was contracted by the HSE to carry out an analysis on the WSA pilot. A report on the WSA pilot was presented to HSC in May 2003 and was presented to Ministers with accompanied advice concerning possible options for a way forward in Summer 2003.
3. At the Labour Party Conference, 2nd October 2003, Andrew Smith, Secretary of State, Work and Pensions, announced a new Challenge Fund, working with unions and employers, to extend workplace safety advice to small and medium size businesses. The Fund offers £1 million per year from the next 3 years
4. The HSC cleared the approach of the WSA Challenge Fund on 11th November 2003 and are currently putting in place a Challenge Fund manager to manage and administer the fund, a Management Board and a Challenge Fund evaluator. The agreed approach is:
 - Collaborative partnerships;
 - An aim of improving worker involvement and consultation through the intervention of a WSA and using this to drive improvements in health and safety;

- For the awards to be judged by an independent Management Board. This will be chaired by Stephen Wood, University of Sheffield, industry and trade union representatives, Janice Bentham WSA from the Pilot, Richard Jones from IOSH and an academic. All members are committed to the principles of worker involvement and health and safety.

Action

5. CONIAC members are invited to:

- Note the opportunity to be informed about the WSA Challenge Fund and go to constituent members to develop and submit bids. For information and the application form please go to:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/wsa/wsachallenge.htm>

- Applications must be back to Matthew Holder by 7th May 2004;
- Award winners will be announced on 9th June 2004 at an event hosted by Andrew Smith, Secretary of State for DWP.