

Open Government status: Fully Open

Paper Number: M2/2007/1

Meeting Date: 22 November 2007

Type of Paper: Above the line

Exempt material: None

Paper File Reference:

Intranet embargo: None

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)

CONIAC's Working Groups: Programmes of work 2007 onwards

A paper by CONIAC's Secretariat

Cleared by Louise Brearey (Head of Construction Sector)

Summary

This paper informs CONIAC of the Programmes of Work currently being undertaken by its Working Groups.

Issue

1. CONIAC's Working Groups' Programmes of Work: 2007 and beyond.

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendation

3. That CONIAC notes the current Programmes of work and raises any issues arising at its meeting on 22 November 2007 (Agenda item 5).

Background

4. At its meeting on 25 June 2007, during discussion of the item on CONIAC's Workplan 2007 – 2008 (Items 7&8), Members expressed a wish to monitor more proactively the activities of its Working Groups (WGs)¹. CONIAC also advised that: "All Working Groups should have 2-3 clear priorities which could be demonstrably delivered.
5. CONIAC is currently supported by the following WGs:
 - The Working Well Together Steering Group
 - The Occupational Health Working Group

¹ June 2007's CONIAC meeting draft minutes record that "CONIAC should support WGs by taking on the role of a Programme Board: i.e. endorsing work programmes and monitoring progress. The latter would require Chairs to report at meetings as requested".

- The Safety Working Group;
 - The SME Working Group²; and
 - The Vulnerable Workers Working Group.
6. This paper builds on the information provided in M1/2007/03 “A brief review of the activities of CONIAC sub-groups April 2006 – March 2007 (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/hsc/iacs/coniac/index.htm>).
7. Objectives and the current Programmes of Work for each Group can be found at Annex 1. The SME WG met for the first time on 9 October³ and the Vulnerable Workers Working Group⁴ is due to have its inaugural meeting on 2 November. A verbal report will be provided at the 22 November meeting if required.

Consultation

8. Chairs of WGs have contributed to and agreed the paper.

Action

9. CONIAC Members are asked to raise issues, if they wish, at its meeting on 22 November 2007. Louise Brearey will be present to answer any questions about WG activity.

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² The SME WG and the Vulnerable Workers Working Group were established following agreement at CONIAC's meeting 25 June 2007.

³ Draft minutes (including the Terms of Reference (ToR) /Key priorities at Annex 1) are to be agreed formally at the next meeting on 10 December.

⁴ The draft ToR for this Group (at Annex 1) are to be discussed at the inaugural meeting 2 November.

Objectives and Programmes of Work of CONIAC's Working Groups

Working Well Together (WWT)

The overall aim of the WWT Campaign is to provide an opportunity for all with an interest in construction health and safety to provide support to micro and small construction businesses to improve their health and safety performance.

Objectives of the WWT Steering Group are:

- To provide an opportunity for the chair's of WWT Regional Groups and key stakeholders to discuss and debate priority issues and resourcing for the WWT Campaign
- To discuss and develop more effective initiatives and ways of working to support micro and small construction businesses to improve their health and safety performance
- To ensure that WWT activities target the key causes of occupational ill-health and fatal and other causes of injuries
- To provide an opportunity for sharing good practice and knowledge.

Current Programme of Work

- The Steering Group will now meet in April and September of each year to enable it more effectively to input into HSE's communication planning and budget cycle. It has also recently agreed on a new protocol for agreeing meeting agendas and submitting meeting papers, which should help streamline meetings and free up time for strategic issues to be discussed.
- A sub-group has been formed to look at the benefits of joining the WWT Campaign and what responsibilities fall to active members. The sub-group will report back at the September 2007 meeting.
- This year was the final year of the 3-year agreement with Building Magazine to hold WWT national awards. The awards, held in June this year, included Best Site Worker and Best Small Firm Award, as well as introducing a new category of WWT Campaign Award (aimed at the individual or Group that had contributed most to the campaign). Negotiations are taking place to decide where the WWT awards should take place in the future.
- Groups are looking at new and more creative ways of reaching their target audiences and making an impact. These include drop-in evenings, evening workshops and working with Building Control to reach the domestic sector. Initiatives include a number of awareness and training days, such as for CDM clients and designers and more general "High 5" awareness days for those new to construction health and safety ("High 5" being the key topic areas of working at height, tidy sites, welfare, manual handling, workplace transport and asbestos). Events are also taking place with Constructing Excellence Regional Clubs.
- Work is in hand to redevelop the WWT website.
- ASDA and Sainsbury's will be running their own "White Van" roadshow across their sites.
- South Wales is currently taking the "High 5" presentation (as used on the White Van) to Builders Merchants.⁵
- The Programme of Risk Assessment workshops continue across the country.
- In conjunction with HSL, HSE will undertake an evaluation of elements of the WWT Campaign during 2007/08.

⁵ A 4 week White Van roadshow took place across South Wales in May where they engaged with nearly site 600 workers. Other Regions are considering doing the same next year.

The Occupational Health Working Group (OHWG)

OHWG provides a forum in which health risks common to the construction industry can be identified and ways found for removing and minimizing them. OHWG contributes to projects to increase the awareness of occupational health issues and sets an agenda for change in the industry.

Current Programme of Work

- work to promulgate and promote *Construction Occupational Health Management Essentials*; Members have agreed to speak at promotional events and to focus on COHME at events in their parts of the sector;
- work to support the development and use of Constructing Better Health (CBH); Michelle Aldous, CE of CBH has attended meetings, keeping members informed of developments. Members have informed the development of health surveillance standards and continue to inform the development of the CBH system.
- support for the Construction Sector Supply chain project; Members have worked with supply chain coordinators to take forward work on manual handling of panel products.
- review and sourcing of good practice case studies on occupational health from member organisations. The Group has provided useful feedback on draft case studies and has agreed to source further examples.
- The Group is providing excellent information and feedback to other HSE programmes e.g. on the silica and asbestos work of the Disease Reduction Programme and the noise and vibration work of the Injuries Reduction Programme, who see them as an essential first point of call for accessing the views of construction stakeholders.

Safety Working Group

The main purposes of the Group are:

- to provide support and a consultation mechanism for the safety-related projects being taken forward through the Construction Programme;
- to share good practice, and
- to explore where new initiatives are needed.

Current Programme of Work

- Terms of Reference to be agreed (the next meeting is scheduled for 28 November);
- Contributing to 2008/09 planning and priorities;
- Work to support the Construction Programme's safety projects;
- Further consideration of major accident potential;
- Support and information sharing on specific safety topics e.g. tower cranes, quick hitches on excavators;
- Support and case studies on HSE Campaign on Falls From Vehicles; and
- Feedback on Construction Division's inspection initiative on refurbishment, falls and good order.

SME Working Group

Objectives

To help HSE's Construction Division develop and deliver a strategy for improving health and safety performance in construction SMEs

To take ownership of identified problems and lead in delivering them in partnership with HSE's Construction Division

Key priorities:

- To undertake a mapping exercise of SME-related initiatives already underway or which have been tried; including feedback on their impact, i.e. what has worked and what has not;
- To identify gaps in SME coverage and consider how these might be addressed by the industry; and
- To make recommendations to CONIAC for future industry action to address construction SME health and safety issues.

Vulnerable Workers Working Group

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To help HSE's Construction Division develop and deliver a strategy for improving health and safety protection of vulnerable workers.
2. To take ownership of identified problems and lead in delivering them in partnership with HSE's Construction Division. The Group will aim to:
 - increase the extent to which vulnerable workers are aware of the protection offered by health and safety law, and
 - identify messages and specific interventions to improve vulnerable worker health and safety outcomes.
 - Support and work in a co-ordinated way with other stakeholders to improve the impact of their work.