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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)

The Behavioural Change Worker Engagement Forum

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Summary

This paper introduces a presentation to CONIAC summarising the work being carried out by the Behavioural Change Worker Engagement Forum, explaining its purpose and objectives, its achievements to date and how it intends moving forward.

Issue

1. The work of the Behavioural Change Worker Engagement (BCWE) Forum, its purpose and objectives, achievements to date and how it intends moving forward.

Background

2. The BCWE Forum evolved from the formation of and involvement with various groups such as the Worker Engagement Research Project at Caledonia University and the SHE Support Group that has representation from major construction companies operating in the UK. This support group is, in the main, a Forum for sharing best practice and looking at solutions for common safety issues. There was also a lot of discussion and debate from within industry about the benefits of a behavioural-based approach to safety and the knowledge that major flagship projects, such as Terminal 5, were developing approaches and programmes based on behavioural change and worker engagement.
3. These Groups allowed people to talk about emerging programmes and developments in behavioural change and worker engagement in an open and constructive way, increasing the awareness and appetite for what is out there across industry.
4. There is a general acceptance that there are enough procedures, rules and paperwork associated with compliance but to break through the glass ceiling we need a different approach and better involvement of the workforce.

5. Following a number of discussions in spring 2006, Gordon Crick (HSE) and Martin Worthington (SHE Director, Morgan Ashurst) formulated the idea of channelling this enthusiasm and the knowledge that had been built up, by setting up a Forum that would act as a conduit for current knowledge and best practices.
6. The first gathering of the Behavioural Change Worker Engagement (BCWE) Forum was in the autumn of 2006 where the initial contributors established the Forum's purpose and objectives and a mission statement was developed.

The Behavioural Change and Worker Engagement Mission Statement

“To work together under a common purpose by developing a cohesive and pragmatic approach to behavioural change and worker engagement that will evolve through best practice and learning across industry with a view to changing the way we lead, plan, procure and manage work activities. With the collective goal of reducing the incidents that result in harm and personal suffering”

7. As the Forum moved forward with its initial objectives it became a Group that was more organic in nature. This enabled the Forum to identify and involve those who could have a significant input into the Forum's work and provide value to the Group. A number of different organisations have been involved since the formation of the Forum and many have provided a significant input during the last 18 months¹. HSE has also provided input and support, including that from Gordon Crick and Louise Brearey. We have also recently had interest from clients such as the British Airport Authority and from an SME (small and medium-sized enterprise) – William Hare Ltd.

Developments

What have we achieved so far?

8. We have carried out a comprehensive intelligence-gathering exercise on each others' approach to behavioural change and worker engagement. This includes development strategies and techniques, delivery outputs, key facets, and measurement tools, both leading and lagging. This intelligence gathering has provided a good understanding of each others' approaches, the synergies and the common strands.
9. The Forum has provided a platform for networking that is now operating on a formal and informal basis. There has been an enthusiasm and openness to share information and ideas and it is evident that there is a high level of awareness and interest across industry, particularly with our supply chain partners.

What benefits are organisations seeing from behavioural change and worker engagement programmes?

10. Benefits include the following:

¹ Shell, British Nuclear Group, Morgan Ashurst, Laing O'Rourke, Bovis Lendlease, Kier, Carillion, Mace, Kellog, HBG, HSL, ConstructionSkills

- The use of maturity matrices and structured sets of leadership questions (at all levels of the organisation) are being used to develop business improvement plans that include behavioural and worker engagement considerations.
- There is a range of data that show some significant improvements in the increase in learning events (near misses), increase in positive interventions, reduction in accident/incident rates, reduction in the variability of performance and reduction in severity rates and days lost.
- Effective Worker Engagement programmes that involve frequent active discussions on safety matters and the use of anecdotal information to communicate learning.
- Measurement tools being used including safe observation 'cards', leadership tours, project based balanced score cards and root cause analysis that focuses on the potential of incidents as opposed to outcome.

What work have we completed so far?

11. The Forum has held 3 workshops in February, May and September this year. At each workshop a presentation (followed by discussions) was given by each organisation on their approach to:
 - *February 2007* - An overview of the respective Behavioural Change Programmes
 - *May 2007* - Compare and contrast the approach with the HSL Diagram for the 'Essential Component of Behavioural Change'.
 - *September 2007* - How the impact of Behavioural Change Programmes are measured and further update on the HSL research project.
12. From the intelligence-gathering and the understanding gained from the presentations, the Forum is now being used as the platform and research pool for the HSL research project that aims to provide an evidence-based approach to behavioural change programmes and a 'toolkit' for industry, in particular SMEs.
13. HSL has now established a programme to assess the behavioural change approaches and measurement tools away from the Forum to enable them to test thoughts and ideas as HSL progress with the research. The Forum members will have various levels of involvement and input with the research project and HSL is about to commence with a series of interviews with each organisation during the autumn, providing HSL with information packs on their approaches.

Moving forward

14. Our progress to date has been building the Forum, gathering our intelligence and gaining a common understanding of each others approaches. We have now come to a crossroads in our development as a group. We are now in the process of deciding how we move forward under a clear understanding and direction and ensuring we consider the research work being progressed by HSL. To this end:
 - A timeline is being developed to identify key milestones for the next 18 months.

- We are identifying what, if any, financial support may be required and how this could work.
- We need to consider and decide on how we are going to communicate and cascade our purpose and objectives to the wider industry, including the house building sector and what status the documentation should take regarding guidance for industry.
- We need to progress the idea of delivering a series of regional road shows to promote the work and research being done by the BCWE Forum. This will need to be considered along with the development and output timings of the HSL research project. The advantages of these road shows are seen as:
 - Ensuring the message gets into the four corners of the UK that may not have regular contact with the major construction companies.
 - Taking the message into the contractors 'back yard' and considering the feedback by face to face discussions.
 - Getting the message over in a simple and effective way and providing a network into local groups.
 - Achieving one of the BCWE's key objectives – ENGAGEMENT.

Opportunity

15. Reading through the notes and minutes of the BCWE Forum workshops, there is a feeling that a behavioural approach, if done correctly, can support the processes and achieve a real improvement in the safety performance of an organisation and the people working for it. Comments have included:-

- It's an approach where we can capture the hearts and minds of everyone and work to a common goal of not causing harm.
- BCWE can provide some real leadership and direction in developing an industry toolkit that will benefit all, especially those who may feel they have not got the immediate resources to adopt a behavioural approach.
- A behavioural approach is not based on rules and paperwork but on respect and expectations.
- Behavioural safety is not a dark science that is only known and owned by a few, but is based on the sound principles of effective communication and feeling comfortable in challenging the way we do things.

Conclusion

16. In summary, whilst a behavioural approach does need full commitment and proper planning to work effectively, the benefits are those of a more open culture, sharing knowledge and best practice and ultimately providing a safe environment for all, both at work and at home. The BCWE Forum is committed to supporting, in any way it can, the continuous improvement of safety within the industry.

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