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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CONIAC)

Review of recent activities of CONIAC's Sub-Groups

A paper by the CONIAC Secretariat

Cleared by Philip White, Chief Inspector of Construction,
on 10 March 2009

Summary

This paper is for information only.

It reviews the activities carried out by CONIAC sub-groups for the period July 2008 to March 2009.

Issue

1. Update for CONIAC of sub-group activities.

Timing

2. Routine

Recommendation

3. That CONIAC Members note the activities of the sub-groups.

Background

4. CONIAC has asked to be kept informed of the work of its sub-groups. Currently these comprise the following:

- Working Well Together Steering Group (WWT WG);
- Safety Working Group (Safety WG); and
- Occupational Health Working Group (OH WG).

5. Updating information for each of the above is set out in the **Annex** to this paper.

6. The former SME Working Group concluded its work following its report to CONIAC [Paper **M3/2008/1**] on 27 November 2008. The Vulnerable Workers Working Group will make its final report [Paper **M3/2009/2**] at the 26 March 2009 meeting of CONIAC. Consequently no material on either of these groups is included in this paper.

Consultation

7. Chairs of the Working Groups mentioned in paragraph 4 have contributed to and agreed this paper.

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CONIAC Sub-Groups: update on activities undertaken from July 2008 to March 2009

Working Well Together Steering Group (WWT WG)

Background:

The Working Well Together (WWT) Campaign aims to provide an opportunity for all with an interest in construction health and safety to work together in providing support to micro and small construction businesses to improve their health and safety performance.

The key success of the WWT Campaign remains the leadership and commitment given by a relatively small number of individuals, in particular the regional chairs and committee members. CONIAC's WWT Steering Group is chaired by HSE and the Secretariat is provided by HSE's WWT Campaign Manager. Its objectives are to:

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

Activities undertaken during 2008/2009 to date:

- The Steering Group met again on 16th October 2008 in Rose Court. The purpose of the meeting was to review last year's programme of work, share good practice and agree priority areas of work for the next financial year. A presentation was given on the new WWT website (www.wwt.uk.com) and the group agreed to its further development and release by the end of the year. The group also agreed to adopt a new mission statement and aims for the campaign:

Mission Statement - To improve the health and safety performance of the construction industry, particularly in small and micro businesses, by providing advice, education and training to the industry from the industry

Aim 1 – To provide a network of groups covering Great Britain that provide mutual support and advice to members, and co-ordinate the delivery of events for non-members.

Aim 2 – To support HSE in its programme of work by running a variety of events primarily aimed at small businesses.

Aim 3 – That 30% of attendees are small businesses (less than 15 employees) and 20% [of which] are micro businesses (less than 5 employees).

Additionally, the Steering Group reviewed its membership and agreed to limit it to the chairs of the WWT Regional Group (16 to date), IOSH, FMB, ConstructionSkills, with HSE as Chair and Secretary and with invited guests for relevant topics. It is hoped to finalise these arrangements at the April meeting of the Steering Group.

- May 2009 sees the 10th Anniversary of WWT, the most successful and long-lived Health and Safety Campaign in the Construction Industry. The group agreed to host several events around the country to mark the anniversary and to hold a conference in April, hopefully inviting Lord McKenzie as the guest speaker.
- The Regional groups have run 40 events across the country this year and we are expecting to top 5,000 attendees this year. A range of events have taken place including the tried and tested SHAD days, events at Builders Merchants, early morning events and 2 White Van Roadshows. The strength and contributing factor to the success of the campaign is that groups are always willing to try new and imaginative ways of reaching and engaging with our hard to reach audience.

Planned activities for 2009/2010:

- The network of Regional Groups continues at 16 but we are planning to expand this by a further 5 new groups next year.
- To hold the WWT Conference and Steering group meeting in April.
 - The Regional WWT groups are planning specific events during the month of May to celebrate 10 years of WWT to help further and broaden the Campaign and all events following May will be highlighting 10 years of WWT for the remaining work year.
- The WWT team continue to work with WWT Groups to trial new ways of engaging with the micro SMEs, the hard to reach.
- The WWT website will be launched in its final version in March 09, we then plan to evaluate its usage and further develop as necessary.
- Talks are continuing with Building Magazine and Constructing Excellence on how best to partner with their respective Health and Safety Awards, and incorporating a WWT Campaign Award.

Safety Working Group (SWG)

Terms of reference:

To contribute to a year on year reduction in the rate of injuries to workers in the construction industry by:

- Providing support and a consultation mechanism for the safety elements of the workplan being taken forward through the Construction Programme;
- Assisting in evaluation initiatives and providing feedback to HSE;
- Sharing best practice and identifying successful initiatives;
- Identifying areas where safety initiatives are needed or where existing initiatives have not achieved the desired outcome.

Recent work:

- Meetings were held on 17 June 2008 and 21 October 2008. The next meeting is scheduled for 22 April 2009.
- The Group fed in views to CONIAC's review of working groups held in November 2008.
- It indicated its agreement with the broad thrust of Construction Division's field operation plan, and welcomed the continuity of targeting particular parts of the industry and specific topics.
- The Group was informed of the outputs of the Strategic Forum for Construction (SFfC) Tower Cranes Working Group. Members were asked to promulgate the guidance and to advise on HSE proposals for inspection.
- The Group was advised of work to improve systems of work in scaffold erection and the use of collective protection such as advanced guard rails. Additionally, it was informed of the Scaffold protocol developed with local authorities in the North West.
- It received feedback on HSE's intensive inspection campaign on refurbishment.
- The Group had detailed discussions about the need for good data on accident causes and trends to provide an evidence base for its future work. In the meantime, Group members have been directed to the construction intelligence reports and provided with summaries of fatal accidents.
- One of the Group members has prepared guidance on rescue procedures for fall arrest equipment. However, the Chair decided not to promulgate this, pending clarification on whether it is a function of the Group to endorse/produce guidance. Will consider this again at meeting on 22 April 2009.
- The Group was kept informed of the work undertaken on semi-automatic quick hitches. It endorsed the approach and urged

additional communication activities to ensure safe use of existing equipment. This is now being taken forward by the Strategic Forum for Construction Plant Safety Group.

- It discussed HSE mechanisms for the issuance of safety alerts and were informed that this is a corporate, not construction-specific, issue and is being taken forward on that basis.
- The Group offered suggestions for work to be included in Construction Division's operational plan for 2009/2010, including supervision competence and behaviour.
- Members continued to support the Shattered Lives Campaign.

Some proposed work for 2009/2010 for consideration at the meeting on 22 April:

- Improving operation of the Group to give more weight to delivery and less to information sharing.
- Consideration of how to complement the work of the SFfC Plant Safety Group. For example, by influencing the choice of areas to be addressed and assisting in promulgating standards/messages emerging from the Plant Safety Group (particularly in relation to work on tower cranes and quick hitches).
- Improving representation on the Group.
- Critical review of package of measures for tower crane safety improvements.
- Consideration of outcome of the Secretary of State's Inquiry into Construction Fatal Accidents.
- Consideration of work which has been undertaken to examine behavioural causes of fatal accidents, and making recommendations.

Occupational Health Working Group (OH WG)

Background:

The OH WG's Terms of Reference are to provide "a forum in which health risks common to the construction industry can be identified and ways found for removing and minimizing them". The Group contributes to projects to increase the awareness of occupational health issues and sets an agenda for change in the industry.

Current programme of work:

This includes:

- work to promulgate and promote the Construction Occupational Health Management Essentials (COHME) web-based guidance. WG

Members have agreed to speak at promotional events and to focus on COHME at events in their parts of the construction sector;

- support for the Construction Sector Supply Chain project. WG Members will work with supply chain co-ordinators to take forward work on manual handling of panel products and drainage products; to develop further the work on kerb and paving handling; and to begin a further strand of work on dermatitis in tillers;
- review and sourcing of good practice case studies on occupational health from member organisations. The OH WG has provided useful feedback on draft case studies and has agreed to source further examples; and
- the OH WG 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.

There have been no meetings of the OH WG since the last report to CONIAC.