

**RUBBER INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RUBIAC)**

Minutes of the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the RUBIAC held at the HSE offices, Newcastle-under-Lyme on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup> 2003.

**Present**

Mr M Wilcock  
Mr M Smith  
Mr D Simpson  
Dr A Dost  
Dr K Straughan  
Mr J Cash  
Mr T DiGravio  
Mr B Holmes  
Mr A Harvey  
Mr J Marshall  
Mr R Taylor  
Mr C Flint  
Dr D Gaubert  
Mr G King  
Mrs M Meldrum  
Ms A Rayner

**Representing**

Chairman, HSE  
Goodyear  
British Vita  
BRMA  
BRMA  
Cooper Avon  
Pirelli  
AMICUS  
AMICUS  
GMB  
TGWU  
Secretary, HSE  
HSE, EMAS  
HSE  
HSE  
Minutes Secretary, HSE

**Apologies**

Mrs S Ikin RMA  
Mr M Potter TGWU  
Mr M Khalik GMB

**Observers**

**Summary of Action agreed:**

- 1) **(Min 1.1) Minutes secretary** to arrange for a letter of thanks to be sent to Mr Simpson in recognition of his contribution to RUBIAC's work.
- 2) **(Min 3.3) Mr Green** to keep the fatal accident investigations under review so that a special RUBIAC newsletter can be produced.
- 3) **(Min 3.3) Mr Green** would be asked to provide more details about the fatal accident at Stowe Woodward.
- 4) **(Min 3.16) Dr Straughan** to report back from the meeting in March between the Department of Health and HSE on the future of the NHS Scheme for undertaking urinary cytology for rubber workers.

- 5) **(Min 3.18) Secretary** to locate original text on calendars and send to Mr King and Dr Dost.
- 6) **(Min 3.23) Secretary** to pursue new Committee members.
- 7) **(Min 4.1) TU members** agreed to liaise with the Secretary over the information they needed to promote the Action Plan and to find effective ways of communicating this to Safety Representatives.
- 8) **(Min 4.2) TU members** agreed to liaise with the Secretary over identifying rubber companies with Safety Representatives.
- 9) **(Min 4.3) Members** to send comments on the 'sign up' document by 7 March.
- 10) **(Min 4.4) Mr Green** to prepare a report on the WCOs visits for the next meeting.
- 11) **(Min 4.5) Secretary** to find an alternate venue for the Open Meeting.
- 12) **(Min 4.6) Secretary** to send a draft agenda for the Open Meeting to members for approval.
- 13) **(Min 4.7) Members** to promote the Open Meeting to ensure a good attendance.
- 14) **(Min 4.8) Minutes Secretary** agreed to obtain a copy of the report referred to by Mr Taylor and forward to members.
- 15) **(Min 5.2) Secretary** to contact Goodyear and Michelin regarding their rehabilitation schemes when developing the recommended practice approach.
- 16) **(Min 5.3) Secretary** to look into the possibility of having an HSE ergonomist available to industry to help with manual handling solutions.
- 17) **(Min 6.4) TU members** to investigate the possibility of producing a leaflet on dermatitis for rubber workers.
- 18) **(Min 6.4) Dr Dost** and BRMA to lead on preparing dermatitis guidance for employers.
- 19) **(Min 6.4) Dr Gaubert** to examine HSE guidance on dermatitis and let TU members and Dr Dost have her views for the guidance they propose.
- 20) **(Min 6.5) Dr Gaubert and/or Mr King** to attend the HSE meeting in April/May to look into further research needs on dermatitis, raise members concerns on industry specific issues and report back to the Committee..
- 21) **(Min 6.6) Secretary** to invite Mr McAlinden to the October meeting of RUBIAC .
- 22) **(Min 7.2) Minutes Secretary** to obtain carbon black health review paper and copy of Ms Meldrum's presentation for forwarding to members..
- 23) **(Min 8.1) Members** to respond to Mr King with their comments on the

retread guidance draft within two weeks of the meeting.

- 24) **(Min 8.2) Secretary** to check that it will be possible to send the health surveillance leaflet out to industry with the next RUBIAC Newsletter.
- 25) **(Min 8.3) Secretary** to enquire as to whether an ergonomist's services can be made available to the industry funded by HSE.
- 26) **(Min 9.2) Mr King** to lead revision of RUBIAC rubber dust and fume publications and give an update to the next meeting.
- 27) **(Min 9.3) Secretary** to inform DIAS of the decision to delete the 3 RUBIAC publications (Noise control, Be on your guard and H&S training) from its current series.
- 28) **(Min 9.3) Secretary** to pursue placing the rubber industry specific noise control solutions, from the deleted publication, on HSE's website with links from members websites.
- 29) **(Min 10.1) Dr Dost** to arrange a meeting with the industry to investigate a voluntary agreement for reducing the weight of polymer bales.
- 30) **(Min 11.1) Dr Dost** to offer places to HSE staff at the BRMA supervisors workshops and send details in due course.
- 31) **(Min 12.2) Secretary** to send information to members on the 'Pedestrian slipping expert system'.
- 32) **(Min 12.4) Secretary** to provide an update on the fire and explosion incident in the US when the causes were known.
- 33) **(Min 12.5) Minutes secretary** to e-mail members with the expenses form.

## **1 Chair's introduction**

- 1.1 Mr Wilcock introduced himself as the acting Chairman. He welcomed Mr Taylor, a new member, to his first meeting and informed members that another new member, Mr Potter, had sent his apologies. He informed members that Mr Thomas had resigned from the committee and that this was Mr Simpson's last meeting due to retirement. All agreed he would be sadly missed. Mr Simpson expressed his best wishes to members for the future. His contribution to the work of the Committee would be formally recognised. The Chairman also welcomed Maureen Meldrum to the meeting.

## **2 Minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> meeting held on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2002.**

- 2.1 The minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted

## **3 Matters arising**

- 3.1 (Min 2.1)** Mr Flint to amend minutes to show correct venues for 58<sup>th</sup> and 59<sup>th</sup> meetings of RUBIAC.  
This had been done.
- 3.2 (Min 3.1)** Mr Flint to process Register of Interests forms.  
The Minutes Secretary had this in hand.
- 3.3 Min 3.6)** Mr Green to prepare text for a special edition of the RUBIAC newsletter dealing with recent fatal accidents in the industry.  
Mr Green had not been able to progress this since many of the fatalities were still under investigation and this limited the scope for a meaningful text. This would be kept under review and a special RUBIAC Newsletter will be produced in the future  
Dr Dost enquired about the fatal accident at Stowe Woodward and Mr Green would be asked to find out more details.
- 3.4 (Min 3.10)** Mr Flint to check on the progress of the HSE Specialist preparing guidance on the implications of DSEAR for the industry.  
There had been no progress to date but work was due to start soon.
- 3.5 (Min 3.12)** Mr Flint to invite a speaker to the next meeting to explain in more detail the recent review of carbon black and implications of proposed changes to OEL system.  
This is on the agenda at item 7.
- 3.6 (Min 6.1)** Dr Straughan to forward a copy of a report by Dr White to Dr Gaubert relevant to current work on skin disorders in the rubber industry.  
This had been done.
- 3.7 (Min 6.6)** Dr Gaubert to finalise questionnaire to collect information on skin disorders in the rubber industry with Dr Straughan and Mr Thomas. Distribution and collection of the questionnaire also to be agreed.  
This had not been done but is on the agenda at item 6 .
- 3.8 (Min 7.1)** Mr King to have final version of the retread guidance ready for approval by the next RUBIAC meeting.  
This is on the agenda at item 8.
- 3.9 (Min 7.3)** Mr King to speak to the Environment Agency (EA) about tyre recycling to see if there is any scope for “joined up working” in the context of tyre collection and delivery.  
Mr Flint had met with Ralph Crouch of the EA. There was limited scope for “joined up working” although we should be able to promote any messages to the tyre recyclers via EA communication channels.
- 3.10 (Min 8.1)** Mr Green to analyse the rubber industry manual handling statistics further for the next meeting.

This is on the agenda at item 5.

- 3.11 (Min 9.1)** Mr Flint to make enquiries to see how the noise solutions, in the RUBIAC publication dealing with noise, can be kept available if the publication is deleted from the publications catalogue.

This is on the agenda at Item 9.

- 3.12 (Min 9.3)** Ms Bonner to discuss with Mr Flint how to ensure the RUBIAC booklet, "Control of Rubber Fume at Extruders, Calenders & Vulcanising Operations" remains available whilst it is under review as present stocks are low.

Extra copies found had been sent to DIAS which it was hoped would suffice until any revision became available. Dr Dost asked if withdrawn publications could be scanned for future reference. The Chairman thought this might be a problem.

- 3.13 (Min 9.4)** Mr Flint to review the short RUBIAC training booklet and decide the future of the text.

This is on the agenda at item 9.

- 3.14 (Min 10.1)** Mr Flint to send the draft COSHH Control Guidance Sheets for certain rubber processes to members for comment by 8 November.

This had been done. They would be published on the HSE website later in the year.

- 3.15 (Min10.1)** Mr Flint to send members details of the HSE COSHH Essentials website.

This had been done.

- 3.16 (Min 11.1)** Drs Straughan and Gaubert to keep the Committee informed of the future of the NHS Scheme for undertaking urinary cytology for rubber workers.

This was on-going. There was a meeting on 19 March 2003 between the Department of Health and HSE to which both Drs Straughan and Gaubert were attending. Dr Straughan would report back to RUBIAC.

- 3.17 (Min 12.2)** Mr Flint to discuss with Dr Dost the possibility of Polymer Training Limited being approached to offer the BRMA supervisors workshop as part of their training programme.

Dr Dost didn't want to offer the course more widely until greater experience had been gained in its use this year.

- 3.18 (Min 13.2)** Mr King to liaise with Dr Dost on the issue of threading up at calenders and report back on progress to the next meeting.

This item was discussed at a recent BRMA meeting. It was likely that the current guidance would need to be reviewed. Mr Flint agreed to locate the original text for calenders that pre-dated RUBIAC and forward to Mr King and Dr Dost.

- 3.19** (Min 14.1) Mr Flint to circulate the BRMA "Isocyanates Survey in the Flexible Foam Industry" report to members.

This had been done.

- 3.20** (Min 5.1) Mr Holmes to talk to Mr Owen Tudor & Mr Jim Marshall and obtain formal TU support for the RUBIAC Action Plan and supporting activities 2002-2005.

This had been done and support secured.

- 3.21** (Min 5.2) Mr Flint to speak to members outside the meeting to discuss a pledge and what possibilities existed for a signing up ceremony.

This had been done. No suitable occasion had presented itself. It was being dealt with by letter to companies.

- 3.22** (Min 15.1) Mr Flint to send members details of the Home Office website where the review of Fire Safety Legislation document was posted.

This had been done.

- 3.23** (Min 15.2) Mr Flint to look into replacement members for the Committee, both CBI and TU, to get back to full complement.

Mr Flint had spoken to both TUC and employer organisations on RUBIAC. Two replacements had been nominated from TU side but another had since resigned. The committee was still short of 3 members, 2 TU and 1 employer. Also Mr Simpson was due to retire in May. Mr Flint agreed to pursue new nominations.

- 3.24** (Min 15.3) Dr Gaubert to make available to members draft copies of the Health Surveillance leaflet.

The draft leaflet had been sent out and is on the agenda at item 8.

- 3.25** (Min 15.4) Mr Flint to discuss with Dr Dost the BRMA concern about polymer bale weights.

This is on the agenda at item 10.

#### **4 RUBIAC Action Plan – progress report and discussion on open meeting**

- 4.1** Mr Flint introduced paper 59/03/01. He explained that there had been slippage in the implementation timetable. A key action for TU side was for them to write to Safety Representatives to promote the plan and get 'bottom up' pressure exerted within companies. There was some discussion about this as TU members felt it was difficult to identify Safety Representative contacts in the rubber industry. The TU members agreed to liaise with Mr Flint over the information they needed to promote the Action Plan and to find effective ways of communicating this to Safety Representatives.

- 4.2** In order to assist identify rubber companies' with safety representatives TU members asked if they could cross match their

data with HSE's. Mr Flint agreed to speak to the TU members on this.

- 4.3 Mr Flint had received the signatures and logos for the Certificate of commitment. Members were shown a draft and asked for final comment by the end of the following week.
- 4.4 The visits of the HSE Workplace Contact Officers' to rubber compaines would be completed by the end of March and Mr Green will report on this work at the next meeting.
- 4.5 The next RUBIAC meeting was planned as an Open Meeting to be held at the HSE's London offices. After discussion members felt this venue wasn't attractive for many people due to travel and cost. It was agreed that the Mr Flint would find an alternative venue either in the Midlands or North of England.
- 4.6 The agenda for the Open Meeting was discussed and Mr Flint agreed to work up a draft for members approval. The meeting would include a shortened traditional RUBIAC meeting to discuss progress with the Action Plan and urgent business and be followed by a seminar / workshop where the RUBIAC training exemplar and matrix and new recommended practices would be presented and debated to and feedback sought.
- 4.7 In order to ensure a good attendance at the Open Meeting all members agreed to promote it and encourage attendance.
- 4.8 Mr Taylor let the committee know about a study into manual handling problems in warehousing that he was involved with that had found 58% of injuries were WRULD's. The Minutes Secretary agreed to obtain a copy of the report from Mr Taylor and forward to members.

## **5 Analysis of rubber industry manual handling statistics**

- 5.1 Mr Flint introduced paper 59/03/02. He said the findings were very interesting and the information could be used by members.
- 5.2 Within the industry it was felt that the provision of rehabilitation was poor. It was suggested that the Mr Flint contact Goodyear and Michelin regarding their rehabilitation schemes when developing the recommended practice approach in support of the Action Plan. Mr Smith said Goodyear have a very good sheme in place which included occupational health nurses and welfare officers. It had been very successful in getting people back to work.
- 5.3 Members asked if it were possible to have an HSE ergonomist once again available to the industry to help with manual handling solutions. Mr Flint agreed to look into it but said finance could be a problem.
- 5.4 The Chairman said there was a need to keep manual handling under review and to promote rehabilitation as part of a holistic approach.

## **6 Dermatitis survey in the rubber industry.**

- 6.1** Drs Gaubert and Dost introduced paper (59/03/03) which was a study the BRMA commissioned in 1982. Dr Gaubert had previously presented evidence on dermatitis in the rubber industry and the paper supported that evidence.
- 6.2** It had been agreed that RUBIAC would develop a methodology to do a quick survey to determine the prevalence of dermatitis in the industry. This had stalled and members were asked to agree a way forward.
- 6.3** The Chairman said that the printing industry investigated the same problem and spent a lot of time and money on a study. In a survey a significant number of respondents in the printing industry were found to have a variety of skin problems. The industry found and accepted there was a problem, glove selection was poor and control measures were available that would solve the problem.
- He suggested that if RUBIAC could accept there was a problem in the industry then what was needed was an awareness raising strategy and as the solutions were known these needed to be both promoted to and taken up by companies. Members accepted the evidence showed a problem and that the line suggested be followed.
- 6.4** The TU members agreed to investigate the possibility of producing a leaflet on dermatitis for rubber workers. Dr Dost said the BRMA were prepared to draft a guidance note on dermatitis for employers. Dr Gaubert offered to examine the existing HSE guidance on dermatitis and let both the TU members and Dr Dost have her views for the work they proposed.
- 6.5** There was discussion about problems arising from mixed chemical exposures and the supply of chemicals containing known skin sensitisers where the levels of these were below any requirement to indicate their presence in MSDSs. This was a problem as sensitisation can occur at very low levels. The Chairman said that these issue should be pursued separately. Mr Flint said that there was a HSE meeting in April/May which would look into what further research was needed into dermatitis. Members agreed that either Dr Gaubert and/or Mr King should attend and highlight the rubber industry and find out if RUBIAC could 'piggy back' any of these specific needs onto central research.
- 6.6** Dr Gaubert said HSE's Mr John McAlinden was willing to attend a RUBAIC meeting to talk to members. Mr Flint would invite Mr McAlinden to the October meeting of RUBIAC.

## **7 Review of Carbon Black OEL and proposed changes to system for setting OEL's**

- 7.1** Mrs Meldrum gave a presentation to meeting on the recent review of the exposure limits for carbon black and the reasoning behind leaving them unchanged. She then outlined forthcoming proposals for changes to the current system for OES's/MEL's.

- 7.2 Ms Meldrum agreed to send the HSE review of the health effects of carbon black to the Minutes Secretary along with a copy of her presentation for circulation to members.

## 8 Update on RUBIAC Working Group Activity

- 8.1 Mr King introduced paper 59/03/04 which outlined the guide to health and safety in the tyre retread industry developed by the RUBIAC working group. The final steps were to add illustrations and edit during April. Members were asked to comment on the draft text to Mr King within two weeks. No response would be taken as agreement.
- 8.2 Dr Gauberts paper 59/03/05 was the draft text for the Recommended Practice Approach for the Rubber Industry leaflet on health surveillance. Members agreed that the finalised free leaflet could be sent out to industry with a future RUBIAC Newsletter. Mr Flint to check with DIAS that this would be possible.
- 8.3 An update was given on the working group looking at manual handling in tyre collection and delivery. The ergonomist was still undertaking visits. The next meeting would be in April. It was agreed that Mr Taylor be co-opted onto the working group, by Mr King, as an observer.

## 9 Review of RUBIAC publications

- 9.1 RUBIAC decided at its meeting on 10 October 2002 that HSE should take the lead in reviewing the 7 RUBIAC publications now due for review. These are -
- Control of rubber fume at extruders, calenders and vulcanising operations (1994).
  - Dust and fume control in rubber mixing and milling (1996).
  - Dust control in powder handling and weighing. A revised COSHH guide (1997).
  - Exposure monitoring and reporting for rubber fume and rubber process dust (Draft RUBIAC publication).
  - Noise control in the rubber industry (1990)
  - Be on your guard. A risk assessment approach to machinery safety in the rubber industry (1995)
  - Health and safety training in the rubber industry (1998).
- 9.2 The first four have had an initial review as it was always recognised that the review of these was a much bigger task than for the other three.
- It was agreed to retain revised text of these publications and convert into the loose-leaf/ring binder format. Mr King was asked to lead the revision process of these publications.
- 9.3 Noise control in the rubber industry: It was agreed that the publication be deleted from the HSE publications catalogue as it contained a lot of

be deleted from the HSE publications catalogue as it contained a lot of generic information available elsewhere. The information that is identified as specific to the rubber industry would be placed on HSE's website with links to partners' websites and also published in a free information sheet.

Be on your guard: It was agreed that this publication be deleted from the HSE publications catalogue. It adds no value and the information is available elsewhere.

Health and Safety training in the rubber industry: It was agreed that the publication be deleted from the HSE publications catalogue. Existing stocks would be used up by giving it away with purchases of the main training resource pack.

## **10 BRMA Survey: Manual handling of polymer bales**

### **10.1**

Dr Dost introduced the results of a BRMA survey on this issue. He spoke about the need to get industry agreement to reduce the weight of polymer bales which in some cases can exceed 35kgs and members agreed that they would like the BRMA to liaise with HSE to achieve an industry agreement. Dr Dost would liaise with HSE to arrange a meeting with the key players in the industry.

## **11 BRMA progress reports**

**11.1** The BRMA supervisors workshops should be up and running by April 2003. Dr Dost offered places to HSE staff and would send details in due course.

**11.2** The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) were reviewing ELCI and the BRMA had prepared a submission for CBI to be sent to DWP. The Chairman said that HSC had been debating the same issue.

## **12 Any other business**

**12.1** The Secretary thanked members for their comments on draft guidance on DSEAR and small laboratories. Members had also been sent the guidance "Reducing Risks Protecting People" and were asked to comment direct to the author.

**12.2** A "Pedestrian slipping expert system", developed by HSE was under utilised and could be loaned out to trade associations and trade unions and also 'competent' companies. Mr Flint agreed to send information to members.

**12.3** The Secretary reported a voluntary agreement to remove nuisance dust masks from the marketplace was going ahead following earlier

consultation with IACs.

**12.4** There had been a major incident at a US rubber firm called West Pharmaceuticals at which three people were killed and 20 hospitalised. An update would be provided by Mr Flint when further information on cause was known.

**12.5** It was agreed that the Minutes Secretary would e-mail members a copy of the expenses forms for their future use.

**13 Date and venue of next meeting**

26 June 2003 – Open Meeting – Goodyear Sports and Social Club.

16 October 2003 – Newcastle under Lyme

26 February 2004 – Newcastle under Lyme

17 June 2004 – open meeting – venue to be confirmed.

**14 Close**