

Health and Safety Executive Senior Management Team Paper SMT/08/54

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Exemptions:			

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE**Senior Management Team****Assessment of the Asbestos North West Media Pilot Campaign, and plans for a national launch**

A Paper by Charlotte Dunstan

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Cleared by Steve Coldrick on 15th August 2005

Issue

1. To inform the HSE Board of the evaluation of the North West media pilot campaign, and to advise them of the forthcoming nationwide campaign launching in October 2008, and the next steps.

Timing

2. For approval at the 3rd September SMT Meeting to enable the paper to go to the HSE Board Meeting on 24th September.

Recommendation

3. The SMT is invited to agree that the attached draft paper can be submitted to the Board.

Background

4. Trades people such as joiners, plumbers and electricians have been identified as a vulnerable group in terms of their potential for uncontrolled exposure to asbestos. Evaluation of a pilot media campaign covering North West England in February – March of this year (in parallel with other national activity) indicates that it was particularly effective in reaching the target audience. To maintain momentum, the media activity is being extended in a national campaign launching 13th October and running for 6 weeks.

Consultation

5. Policy Group, CSAG Economic Analysis Unit and PFPD have been consulted on the paper.

Costs and Benefits

6. Evaluation shows that the media campaign has been of real benefit in having an impact on this hard to reach audience. Use of the radio was particularly successful. Extension of media activity nationally should extend and increase awareness of the risks from disturbing asbestos, as demonstrated from the pilot. Changing behaviours to prevent long-latency disease will require sustained effort; however, a growing awareness is expected to lead to changes in behaviour and a corresponding reduction in the exposure of tradespeople. This should lead ultimately to a fall in the incidence of asbestos-related disease in this population in the long term.

7. We are considering how to identify lead indicators and will be discussing it with stakeholders at the next meeting.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

8. £216,479 was spent on the pilot campaign [£81,260 on the radio adverts, £107,221 on regional press and £27,998 on trade press nationally]
9. £1.4m has been allocated for the national campaign. £1m was anticipated in the agreed Communications Plan for '08-'09 and additional resource has been obtained subsequently by Communications Directorate.
10. In addition to the campaign budget, resources directed to the October campaign are estimated at £124,000, with £43,000 from DRP, £65,000 from CSD, £15,250 from CD / CDS and £650 from FOD. These cover activities such as liaisons with stakeholders, coordination of the campaign, use of CDS in publishing and CD commissioning work.
11. Total staff costs for the pilot campaign were estimated at £143,500.

Health and Safety Executive Board		Misc Paper No: HSE/08/49	
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Assessment of the Asbestos North West Media Pilot Campaign, and plans for a national launch			

Purpose of the paper

1. The Asbestos Team of the Disease Reduction Programme has initiated a nationwide media campaign to inform tradespeople of the risks and dangers of disturbing asbestos during work. This paper informs the Board of the objectives of the project, the success of the regional pilot media campaign in NW England in February / March 2008 and the approach we are taking to build on this; and provide an opportunity at this stage for any strategic steer or thoughts on carrying the work forward.

Background

2. HSE aims to reduce the risk to maintenance workers in regard to their exposure to asbestos, as part of the Disease Reduction Programme (DRP). Asbestos-related disease is the UK's biggest single cause of work related deaths, accounting for around 4,000 deaths a year, many of which reflect exposures experienced decades ago in traditional heavy industries. However the potential for continuing exposure is highest among occupational groups in building maintenance and construction industries, including electricians, joiners and plumbers. Any building built or refurbished before 2000 may contain asbestos and these workers are often unaware that they may be disturbing it as they work. If the incidence of mesothelioma in tradespeople is to fall in the future, action is needed now to ensure that exposures are reduced.

Argument

3. A pilot campaign, held in February and March this year, was designed in light of an evaluation of the September/October 2006 'Asbestos: Don't Take The Gamble' campaign, which indicated that a single message to a specific target group ought to be more effective. The pilot aimed primarily to raise awareness among maintenance workers that asbestos is still an issue and to be a call for action for them to get more information. It attempted to make them realise they are likely to come into contact with asbestos during their working day, and that they should take steps to protect themselves. The messages were designed to be immediate and relevant to tradespeople, and a multi-pronged approach was used involving stakeholders and trialling different communication methods in the NW of England.
4. The message of the pilot was disseminated via a variety of means, including the distribution of campaign materials nationally via stakeholders and through DIY and hire stores, and by web based material, including case study videos. In NW England there were also radio adverts targeted at the specific trades, as well as regional press adverts and articles. Finally, there were other press activities, including the use of 'case studies', and the direct mailing of campaign materials to tradespeople. There was additional national activity that included articles in trade press.

Key Learnings: Campaign Exposure

5. Evaluation of the media pilot was conducted independently by Continental Research. Several hundred tradespeople were contacted before and after to determine the reach of the campaign.
6. Findings were extremely encouraging: recall of asbestos advertising or publicity increased significantly from 33% to 81%. Radio by far outperformed all other channels for raising awareness
 - i. Radio 6% pre to 43% post average for all audiences [+ 37%]
 - ii. Direct Mail 13% pre to 34% post [+ 21%]
 - iii. Trade Press 34% pre to 20% post [-14%]
 - iv. Regional Press 5% pre to 7% post [+ 2%]
7. Maintenance workers clearly recognised that the advertising targeted them; they claimed it encouraged them to take more safety precautions when working, it gave them a better understanding of who is at risk, it got them thinking about their own exposure and it made them want to find out more.
8. In terms of a 'message take-out', the pilot campaign evaluation has indicated a rise in awareness of asbestos and its dangers from 33% pre to 44% post. Awareness that it can lead to death/that asbestos kills has also risen sharply, from 6% pre to 38% post.
9. The campaign has done more than raise awareness of the risks and dangers of disturbing asbestos during work. We have received feedback that more precautionary measures are now being considered.
10. In terms of the target audience's intention to instigate changes, 55% said they had taken precautionary measures and a further 20% said they planned to. 48% of those who only heard the radio said they had taken steps and 21% planned to. Of those who were exposed to both radio and print, 63% said they had made changes with a further 17% claiming they planned to.
11. Radio was clearly the most effective at delivering the asbestos message, probably due to the high frequency and immediacy to the job at hand. However, those exposed to both print and radio were more likely to say that they did/would change their practices.

Pilot Campaign Conclusions

12. Details of the evaluation can be found in the final report – a copy can be provided on request. In summary:
 - a. The campaign achieved an excellent level of overall recognition, particularly amongst the key targets, electricians and plumbers
 - b. The message of the campaign was clear in terms of raising awareness of asbestos and its dangers and that asbestos can lead to death
 - c. The campaign provided new information to a high proportion of the target audience
 - d. Prior to the campaign, there were very low levels of unprompted awareness of the risk of asbestos. There was a significant increase following the campaign, indicating that it had a positive effect

- e. There were positive shifts in several attitudes regarding asbestos with more awareness of the danger of asbestos today
- f. A large proportion of those who recognised the campaign claimed that they had taken more safety precautions to prevent their exposure to asbestos with a further group claiming that they will do so. This was particularly the case for the key targets of electricians and plumbers

National Campaign

13. Following the success of the pilot, the momentum will be maintained by launching a national awareness campaign, extending the use of the media beyond NW England. The media campaign starts on 13th October and will run until 16th November. Key points include:
- a. After the success in the pilot of targeting plumbers and electricians, we are now including carpenters & joiners as a primary target
 - i. The primary audience is compiled of 1.8m maintenance workers [inc. 280k electricians, 260k carpenters and 170k plumbers]
 - ii. The secondary audience are the wives and girlfriends of the maintenance workers [between 65-70% of workers are married / living with partners]
 - b. There will be increased focus on timber related stakeholders to better relate to the new target audience of joiners
 - c. There will be increased focus on trade outlets, DIY and hire stores as potential avenues to contact tradespeople
 - d. We are using much of the materials that were trialled in the pilot, but are presenting the information in the awareness packs in a different way to encourage re-reading
 - e. Meetings were held with key stakeholders in June to discuss the pilot campaign and in July to prepare for the national campaign. A 'post-campaign' meeting is planned for November

Presentation

14. We have enjoyed great support from a wide range of stakeholders including Trade Unions and Trade Associations. The stakeholders were involved in the development of the campaign materials for the pilot, which received positive press coverage. They have also been included in discussions of the campaign materials being used for the October launch.
15. We appreciate the support that Judith Hackitt gave to the pilot campaign, and her continuing support for the forthcoming national campaign, alongside that of the FOD Regional Directors.
16. At a late stage, concerns have been expressed by one stakeholder that the messages in the awareness pack do not advise workers to stop all work if in any doubt; and that the text may encourage untrained workers to take risks. We do not believe that this is the case. One challenge associated with our inclusive way of working is that any initiative involving a range of stakeholders is unlikely to completely reflect the positions held by each individually. What is most important is to ensure that a common message which helps to improve the protection of

workers reaches as much of the target audience as possible. Discussions with the stakeholder are ongoing.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

17. £216,479 was spent on the pilot campaign, and £1.4m has been allocated for the national campaign. In terms of staff resources, approximately 311 days are being spent on the national campaign at a cost of £123,740. Total HSE staff costs for the pilot campaign were estimated at £143,466 [excluding media handling].

18. It is important to acknowledge that this is a difficult to reach audience, and that changing behaviours to prevent long-latency disease will require sustained effort in the future.

Action

19. The Board is asked to note the contents of this paper.

Paper clearance

20. This paper was produced by Charlotte Dunstan and was *[cleared by the Senior Management Team on 3rd September 2008.]*

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