

Health and Safety Executive		Sector Information Minute	
Manufacturing Sector		SIM 03/2007/04	
Cancellation Date	14/02/2011	Open Government Status	Fully Open
Version No & Date	1 - 14/02/2007	Author Unit/Section	Disease Reduction Programme

Target Audience:

HSE Band 4 Inspectors covering Yorkshire and North East England
Health and Safety Awareness Officers in Yorkshire and North East England
Specialist Inspectors (Occupational Hygiene, Medical, Occupational Health)
Health Unit

WORK YEAR 2007/2008: PILOT INTERVENTION TO REDUCE RESPIRATORY DISEASE IN WELDERS

This SIM alerts Band 4 Inspectors and Health and Safety Awareness Officers (HSAOs) to the action that contributes to the Disease Reduction Programme (DRP) objective to reduce respiratory ill health in welders.

AIM

1. This is a regional pilot to raise awareness of good practice for controlling exposure to welding fume in YH & NE with a view to rolling out nationally in 2008.

BACKGROUND

2. Welding has been included in the DRP because there are a large number of professional welders e.g. 79,000, who are at risk of potentially severe ill health effects, including welding fume fever and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), caused by inhalation of welding fume. The DRP is conducting a mixture of awareness raising interventions that are primarily focussed on improving the control of exposure to welding fume. HSE needs to propagate the message to employers that welders should follow the good practice as published in Welding Essentials <http://www.hse.gov.uk/welding/index.htm>

ACTION REQUIRED

3. HSAOs and Band 4 Inspectors are asked to undertake a pilot exercise in the Yorkshire and North East Region (YNE). In the first instance HSAOs should use a list provided by the sector or alternatively use online directories (e.g. Yell.com, Scoot.co.uk, etc) to identify and telephone 100 welding fabrication companies in YNE. HSAOs should then use a questionnaire (currently being developed) to identify the extent and type of welding being undertaken. The answers to these questions should help HSAOs ascertain which Welding Essentials sheets can provide good practice information for the welding company. Following the interview HSAOs should send a standard letter (to be provided) to the companies which includes the specific Welding Essentials sheets identified as being appropriate to their operation. The letter will also state HSE's intention to visit them in the

future to see if the control measures are in place. [It is hoped to produce a CD of the Welding Essentials sheets and this could be sent instead of paper copies of the sheets].

4. Approx 3 months later HSAOs should visit the welding companies to see if they are applying the good practice principles identified in the welding sheets. HSAOs are requested to pass details of non-compliant companies to B4 inspectors for subsequent inspection.
5. A Topic Inspection Pack is being prepared for HSAOs and Band 4 inspectors. It will include information on selecting welding premises, completing the questionnaire, the letter to welding companies and subsequent HSAO visit. The Pack also provides information for B4 Inspectors on health and safety standards in welding premises.

TARGETING

6. Completion of the telephone questionnaire should ensure that only companies that carry out a significant amount of welding are included in the inspection intervention. HSAOs should exclude companies that are members of The Welding Institute (TWI) as they will receive their information direct from TWI.

RESOURCE

7. HSAOs will identify and contact 100 premises by telephone. HSAO follow up visits are anticipated at 100% of those companies sent the sheets, Band 4 follow up of HSAO visits is anticipated at 20-25% (some of these Band 4 follow up visits may occur in 2008/9).

START AND COMPLETION DATES

8. HSAOs should start contacting welding companies in QTR 2 of 2007 with HSAO visits starting 3 months later (i.e. QTR 3 of 2007. Band 4 visits may begin immediately following an HSAO visit at local discretion.

RECORDING PROCEDURES

9. COIN Recording details will be notified by FOD

INSPECTOR COMPETENCY AND TRAINING

10. B4 visits should be carried out by B4 staff who attended the training delivered by DRP in 2006/7. HSAOs will need to have read the Topic Pack and familiarised themselves with Welding Essentials sheets.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

11. The Health and Safety Supplements relating to general site visits are available on the Intranet under 'Your Health and Safety'.

SECTOR CONTACT

12. Further information can be obtained from Shuna Rank, Manufacturing Sector, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Tel: 0191 202 6297, E-mail: Shuna.rank@hse.gsi.gov.uk).