

Minutes of the Road Distribution Action Group 19TH September 2007 – HSE Rose Court

1. Minutes and Progress of Actions

Delegates confirmed they were content with the minutes of the last RDAG meeting.

From the action points of the last meeting, it was explained that Port Skills and Safety (PSS), and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) both expressed an interest in attending a future meeting. They will both therefore be invited to the next meeting.

2. Workplan – progress on working groups

Fatigue (workplan element 9)

A summary of the progress of this group was given by Rob Hudgell, HSE, who sits on the group. The group was originally set up to look at new shift work guidelines, however the group felt that practical information on the subject of fatigue as a whole would be more useful for industry. The group agreed that there was a lot of general background information about fatigue, but very little on the practical steps that companies and individuals could take to avoid it. The group therefore proposed to produce an industry-specific information sheet, backed-up by detailed web-based information. Next meeting on 16 October 2007.

Manual Handling (element 4)

A summary of the progress of this group was given by John Berezansky, HSE, who sits on the group. This was the initial meeting of the group, and many useful ideas were discussed. Of particular concern to the group was the issue of home delivery. The next meeting of this group will take place on 20 November 2007, where more detailed objectives will be agreed.

Load security – preventing falling loads (element 5)

A summary of the progress of this group was given by Ralph Bell from Wincanton, who sits on the group. Future objectives of this group include;

- Ensure securing equipment is available to meet DfT Code of Practice
- Improve training and competence of all operators involved in loading vehicles
- Ensure clear guidelines and tools are made available to transport operators
- Promote and share outputs from the working group with industry

Discussion points included unloading containers (and the need for measures to safely open doors), and whether all the responsibility for a safe load in transit should lie with the driver. Next meeting on 27 November 2007.

Slips and Trips (element 3)

Tony Southam (URTU) summarised the research he has done on this topic, based on analysis of 1740 injury claims recorded by the United Road Transport Union (URTU). These figures indicate that the biggest cause of slip injuries are caused from slipping from the vehicle, particularly moving in and out of the cab. Falls in the back of vehicles are mostly caused by wet or greasy floors, and tail-lifts also feature in a high number of accidents. One common matter expressed by drivers is that they often feel they have nobody to report an injury to whilst they are at another site – there may therefore be significant unawareness amongst site owners about the risks to visiting drivers.

Mark Thomas from HSE Slips and Trips Team presented some of the key work and findings of his team. Hauliers only have very limited control over clients sites, in terms of flooring and walkways being slip-resistant or well maintained, and the emphasis should therefore be on well specified vehicles and good footwear. Vehicle flooring and tail-lifts vary greatly in slip resistant qualities, so specifying the right vehicle is very important. In terms of footwear, there are some very good boots on the market. A research report detailing ones which have been tested can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/slips/research/footwear.htm> There is a clear business benefit to identifying and wearing a decent boot. Housekeeping on sites is also big issue for drivers.

The RDAG agreed that a working group should proceed to identify ways to tackle this risk. Tony Southam has agreed to chair this meeting. At present, there are five other volunteers for the group. More volunteers would be welcome. It would be up to the working group to decide precise terms for their group, although footwear and vehicle specification would likely be key features.

ACTION: ALL : To pass details of individuals who are interested in contributing to this working group to Rob Hudgell.

ACTION: ROB HUDGELL: Pass on details of interested parties to Tony Southam.

Identifying synergies between the groups

The group agreed that the work of the working groups should be coordinated to ensure that outputs are presented in a common format, and that any outputs have clear timescales for completion, so that members can plan how their organisations can promote them.

ACTION: ROB HUDGELL to pass the message to all working groups, asking for timescales for when outputs will be finished.

Industry-specific Example Risk Assessments

The Chair explained an HSE initiative to provide example risk assessments to industries where many small businesses operate. The group agreed that the working groups should be invited to participate in producing these for the

distribution industry. In addition, the following organisations said they would like to be directly involved in drawing up the example risk assessments; RHA, IOSH, Unity.

ACTION: ROB HUDGELL to pass on contact details to Geoff Brown (HSE) who is coordinating the project on example risk assessments.

Falls from tankers (element 1.3)

Accidents, including fatalities are still occurring due to drivers and other operators falling from road tankers.

RHA stated they would be happy to update their protocol on this topic, but would like to understand the current accident situation better first.

IOSH are also keen to be involved in improving this area, and supported the proposal to have some more research as a first step.

ACTION : ROBERT HUDGELL – to investigate whether we can obtain useful statistics, such as common causes of accidents over the last 6 years on falls from tankers.

3. Haulage in Ports – Key issues and the way forward

In previous meetings, RDAG members have voiced concerns about certain aspects of haulage working in Ports. Andy Masson, of Port of Tilbury Police, attended the meeting to give an insight into the work he does. Andy noted there was a very strong correlation between the issues he faces, and the ones detailed in the minutes of previous RDAG minutes. The main problems that Andy came across were; insecure loads (especially within Port roads); fatigue (many accidents occurring at 2 to 3 am); and driver behaviour (eating, drinking, using mobiles at the wheel). He believes that many visiting drivers are very poorly trained and have low awareness of the risks at Ports. Non-English speaking drivers can also be a problem, particularly with understanding site rules.

Andy Masson also explained an alternative enforcement strategy which the Police use at Tilbury, whereby drivers are invited to watch a Home Office video showing the danger of work at Ports, rather than receive a penalty notice. So far, no driver who had seen the video had been caught offending again at the Port.

The talk produced a lot of discussion, and delegates agreed that it would be useful to invite a Ports Safety representative to future meetings.

ACTION: ANDY MASSON: To send details of the Home Office video.

4. Falls from vehicles campaign

Carol Grainger, HSE Workplace Transport Programme, gave a presentation about the forthcoming falls from vehicles project.

The new webpages for this topic have now been launched, and can be found at; <http://www.hse.gov.uk/fallsfromvehicles/index.htm>
A wide media campaign has been planned, to run until the end of November. Delegates were given tables showing which publications were being used for adverts.

From September 2007 until February 2008 speakers from the HSE will be attending a number of Traffic Commissioner (TC) Seminars, Driver Vehicle Operator (DVO) Seminars and Freight Transport Association (FTA) Fleet Engineer & Transport Manager Seminars, to raise awareness on Moving Goods Safely and the Falls from Vehicles Campaign.

Delegates were thanked for their help in promoting this campaign so far, and were asked let Carol know of any other opportunities for promoting the campaign; carol.grainger@hse.gsi.gov.uk

5. Other Updates

Freight Operators Recognition Scheme

Transport for London's Freight Operators' Recognition Scheme aims to encourage road freight operators to adopt best practice in London. TFL has sponsored officers from the Metropolitan Police Commercial Vehicle Education Unit to play an active role in advising operators and in monitoring performance. The management of occupational road risk is a key component. 13 police officers have been granted powers under the Health and Safety at Work Act to inspect the management of work-related road safety. They could also take enforcement action if this was considered appropriate. An experienced HSE inspector was seconded to the Metropolitan Police to assist with their training.

The FORS team is currently working on the development of the scheme in preparation for its launch at the end of 2007. As part of this work it has asked the British Standards Institution to develop a formally recognised Publicly Available Specification (PAS) specifically for FORS. The standard will provide a sustainable benchmark for London freight operators and will be an excellent foundation for the scheme. The details of the specification are being developed with FORS partners, which include FTA, RHA and HSE, and will represent the essential compliance, safety and best practice attributes for freight companies joining the scheme.

Falls from tail-lifts – working group

A further meeting of this industry-led group will take place on 26 September 2007. The purpose and terms of reference of the group are;

- To explore practical solutions to prevent falls from height associated with tail lifts;
- To develop safe user guidance;
- To determine practicalities in use; and

- To report outcomes to the Tail Lift Working Party forming part of the MHE 12 Working Group.

Moving Goods Safely

John Berezansky gave an update of the Moving Goods Safely (MGS) project – HSE are currently in the inspection phase. The moving goods safely project has included visits to gather information in support of the falls from vehicles campaign. The project will soon be moving into the analysis phase, and John will aim to produce some early findings from the project at the next meeting.

FTA guidance on Managing visitors, visiting vehicles and deliveries

Nobody from FTA was present to give an update.

Road Haulage and Distribution Webpages

The 'haulage' webpages were revised and re-launched in April 2007. Publicity for this raised the number of monthly visitors significantly, with 8,000 visitors for the following month, subsequently dropping to about 6,000 visitors per month. Previous to April, the site typically got around 2,000 visitors per month. Rob Hudgell thanked delegates for promoting the website to their organisations, and encouraged to seek further opportunities for promoting it.

Rob Hudgell asked delegates what more they would like to see on the page dedicated to RDAG. One suggestion was to put details of the working groups on this site. Contact details for anybody interested in the groups would also be useful.

ACTION: ALL: Identify other opportunities where the webpages could be promoted, or links to the webpages added.

ACTION: ROB HUDGELL: Develop Road Distribution Action Group pages of website.

6. Route Map

Carol Grainger, HSE Workplace Transport Programme, gave a presentation about the Route Map, and a demonstration of the new website. The Route Map aims to collect and present all information relating to risks from workplace transport on one website. It will include up to date lists of relevant equipment suppliers, specialist contractors etc.

The site is due to go live in October 2007.

ACTION: CAROL GRAINGER: Provide details of website address when it goes live.

7. Future workplan items

Most of the workplan items are being worked on, and were discussed at this meeting. Two topics are due to be discussed at the next meeting, which are;

i) Workplace Transport (WPT)

Past minutes of meetings show that the RDAG has already done a lot of work on WPT issues in the past. However, new fatality statistics show that this is still the area where the majority of industry employees are being killed. Key areas where the most serious accidents occur due to moving vehicles include runaways, coupling vehicles, driveaways, reversing, and drivers being hit by fork lifts during vehicle loading.

ACTION: ALL: *The group were invited to consider this topic area, and identify which specific areas they feel the RDAG should be addressing as a priority, ready for the next RDAG meeting in February 2008.*

ii) Managing Health and Safety

This is an area which other safety forums have highlighted as making a significant impact on safety culture and a reduction in accidents within their industries.

The idea is that companies commit to their own health and safety action plans. The benefit to companies is that they can produce action plans very simply because they can be based on examples produced by RDAG members, and the actions will be much easier to carry out because the rest of industry will be pulling in the same direction.

This will also be an agenda item at the next meeting.

ACTION: ALL: *The group were invited to consider this topic area, before the next RDAG meeting in February 2008.*

8. AOB

Date of next meeting – Either Wednesday 6 February or Tuesday 19 February 2008. (Most favourable date to be decided by email).

PRESENT: LIZ GIBBY – HSE CHAIR; ROBERT HUDGELL, HSE; BRIAN BLAIR – TGWU; TOM MACARTNEY, TRAFFIC COMMISSIONER; SEAN CUSACK – IOSH; TONY SOUTHAM – URTU; DAVE GOUGH, APN; PAUL SANDERS, APN; STEVE BIDDLE, RHA; RALPH ENGLE, RHA; GEOFF GALILEE, LACORS; ANDY FREEMAN, HSE; JOHN BEREZANSKY, HSE; CAROL GRAINGER, HSE; MARK THOMAS, HSE SLIPS AND TRIPS PROGRAMME; CAROL GRAINGER, WORKPLACE TRANSPORT PROGRAMME; RALPH BELL, WINCANTON; ANDY MASSON, PORT OF TILBURY POLICE.

APOLOGIES: RUTH POTT, RHA; KATH MCGANN, APN; DAVID WILLIAMS, TGWU; USDAW – DOUG RUSSELL; WILL MURRAY, INTERACTIVE DRIVING SYSTEMS; CHRIS MACRAE, FTA.

