

MINUTES OF THE ROAD DISTRIBUTION ACTION GROUP 24TH JUNE 2008 – HSE ROSE COURT

1. Minutes and Progress of Actions

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

Most members of the group had working reciprocal web links to HSE's road haulage web pages. Other members said they would check and ensure for future.

2. Work Plan Topics

Preventing Falling Loads Group (workplan element 5)

At the February meeting, the group agreed the key messages of a flyer that was distributed at the Commercial Vehicle Show. The flyer was produced by Nina Day of HSL, who is carrying out related work on securing goods in curtain-sided vehicles. HSE had a stand at the Commercial Vehicles Show which focussed on two topics - Falls From The Vehicles and Securing Loads. The stand proved very popular at the show and HSE plan to have a more prominent position next time.

The key messages compliment DFT 'Safety of Loads on vehicles' code of practice, however HSE believe much of the good practice isn't necessarily common practice in the industry. Messages include; the curtains are only for weather protection; side straps are generally ineffective, and; that friction along won't secure a load.

At the next meeting, the aim is to :

- Encourage suppliers to manufacture vehicles to a higher minimum standard or alternatively equip buyers with a specification guide so that they can choose a vehicle appropriate to their operation
- Obtain case studies of good and bad practice on securing loads
- Generate ideas on how to communicate key messages to the industry e.g. through trade press
- Agree on how to ensure loading staff are adequately trained

Steve Clarke commented that some companies were not allowing vehicles to come on site to pull back curtains and release lashings, in the belief that this would discharge their legal duty if a load fell on a driver. HSE has clearly said that this unacceptable and this message should be sent out to the industry. Companies that routinely do this should be reported to the enforcement authority.

ACTION: Rob Hudgell to contact Geoff Galilee to communicate this message through LACORS. The message should also be communicated through the RDAG members organisations.

Fatigue Group (element 9)

There is guidance on fatigue on the RoadSafe and DFT web sites. HSE also has guidance on shift work, and this group is thinking about how it ties in with driver hours. The group want to put together practical advice on what drivers and businesses can do about managing fatigue and provide links to the guidance that is already out there. The group is also thinking of ways to communicate key messages e.g. webpages, traffic radio, or handing out fliers at common rest points

The group are gathering some useful case studies on fatigue management. The DFT already have road safety case studies on their web site and it would be beneficial for organisations, including HSE, to signpost people to it highlighting the health and safety messages.

DFT has commissioned research on Fatigue Risk Management Systems that looks at the positive and negative aspects of the law in other countries which require employers to manage the risk of fatigue in the workplace rather than prescribing the number of hours at work. The fatigue group is likely to be involved in the consultation of that report.

This research could have a significant bearing on future policy and law, and members of RDAG were invited to attend the next meeting to review recommendations of the report.

Slips and Trips Group (element 3)

The two main aims that came out of meetings was to promote improvement of better footwear, and more slip-resistant vehicle flooring and steps.

The way the group has decided to promote the messages is through a questionnaire. It was thought that this method would be effective because it would get people to think about the issue and gather more relevant information about the risk in this industry. The organisations that have agreed to circulate the questionnaire will collate the information back and feed back results.

Nobody had any case studies in there own organisation but if anybody else had case studies to share that would be useful.

ACTION: Rob Hudgell to check with slips and trips team whether we could link in our work with the Slips and trips campaign, Shattered Lives.

Manual Handling Group (element 4)

The group has produced two case studies so far but are struggling to find more. The first is on how to open curtain-side vehicles and the handling of curtain itself if it sticks. The second is on shifting pallets using more innovative pallet trucks.

The interest in the group is a lot lower than other sub groups of RDAG but there are number of key employers on the group.

Liz Gibby stated that it was important the group focussed more on manual handling injuries, which are the biggest cause of lost-time injuries. She asked the group to think about how we could get more case studies.

ACTION: Members to identify sources for other case studies on manual handling.

Commitment to Managing Health and Safety (element 10)

Liz Gibby reminded the group that this was a key piece of RDAG work. The idea behind this initiative is that we invite Chief Executives of haulage companies to sign up to a commitment statement which contains a number of individual health and safety action plan points.

HSE see this as a really important initiative, and have seconded Mike McGrath to help take this work forward.

The group agreed that FTA and RHA could have the biggest impact. Both FTA and RHA were supportive of the initiative in principle, subject to everybody agreeing the more precise content. IOSH also said they were fully support the initiative.

FTA stated that FTA are doing a lot of work internally to address the risks to FTA staff. It was important to have a positive health and safety culture internally before trying to influence those externally. How to influence members of the FTA is another process but this can be done, for example, through the FTA magazine.

RHA stated that they have a wide range of members, and this will influence the pitch of the message that needs to be put across. This range will influence the commitment statements.

ACTION: Mike McGrath to research similar schemes and come up with options for commitment statements.

ACTION: Mike McGrath to talk to FTA and RHA on how to move forward.

Coupling LGVs - trailer brakes (element 2)

IRTE published guidance on coupling and uncoupling in 2006. In a recent prosecution, TDG were fined £250,000 for failing to manage this well known risk.

Internal guidance is to be issued to inspectors that will emphasise the need for both the cab and trailer brakes to be applied. The reasons for the mechanical parking requirement are clearly explained, and the document also lists alternative measures which give an equal level of protection, such as permanent chocking, temporary chocks and wheel locking devices.

HSE inspectors are undertaking a local project about coupling vehicles, checking arrangements at workplaces, and discussing with drivers during VOSA roadside checks.

Don Armour of FTA volunteered to submit an article to FTA Freight magazine on this topic.

ACTION: Comments on the inspector guidance are welcomed from the group within 10 days. HSE will then give the guidance to its inspectors.

ACTION: Rob Hudgell to send Don Armour electronic version of document, and photos is available, with a view to Don submitting an article to FTA Freight magazine.

3. Presentation from Andrew Burr on DFT current work on occupational road risk, including THINK!

Driver sleepiness is estimated to account for around one fifth of accidents on major roads, and is responsible for around 300 deaths per year. Research has shown that people who drive for work are more likely to behave in a risky way on the road, including driving while tired.

Department for Transport 'Driving for Work' website was developed in partnership with the Transport Research Laboratory. It gives a detailed and comprehensive resource for any company wanting to create or enhance a driving for work policy. The web site is a good way of getting through to SMEs. The website contains links to the case studies on HSE's Work Related Road Safety site.

The Driving for Better Business programme, which is managed and delivered by RoadSafe, aims to develop and co-ordinate a network of employers and champions to promote good practice in order to reduce in deaths and road injuries caused by vans and cars used for business purposes.

The Driving Standards Agency has published a Consultation Paper called Learning to Drive, which sets out proposals for a major review in the way people learn to drive. The proposal includes an improved driving test, an improved learning process, better information about instructors and improved instructor training and further options for learning and qualifications.

The THINK! strategy for driving for work will focus on driver tiredness in 2010/11 which will be supported by market research and development of marketing material. It will be targeting both employers and employees.

Driver education, greater public awareness of the potential dangers of sleepiness and greater employer responsibility with regard to their employees' fitness to drive, present the best approaches for reducing sleep related crashes.

ACTION: Rob Hudgell to circulate this presentation to members

4. Presentation form VOSA on High Risk Traffic Initiative

VOSA aims to clamp down on unsafe trucks. In the last two years they have doubled enforcement against HGVs on international journeys. VOSA has attained extra funding to step up enforcement, which means more inspectors will be undertaking more checks at more sites. New measures will also enable VOSA officers and the police to issue fixed

penalties to offenders, take on-the-spot penalties from overseas hauliers and immobilise their vehicles if necessary.

The extra funding will be spent on :

- two new enforcement sites in locations with a high volume of high risk HGV traffic;
- a high increase in the number of HGV checks carried out;
- additional enforcement staff;
- a move to '24/7' enforcement checking at two sites - on the M6 and in North Wales
- the introduction of '24/7' enforcement at other sites over the three year period.

VOSA is also be utilising modern technology - such as weigh-in-motion sensors to spot overweight vehicles, and also automatic number plate recognition technology to spot those who have a poor track record of compliance.

If anybody sees or is aware of un-roadworthy vehicles on the road, please report to VOSA on 0870 6060440.

ACTION: Rob Hudgell to circulate the this presentation to members

5. Other updates:

FTA – Van crash safety research

TRL has produced a technical reference on what happens to vans and loads in accidents including how the van crumples on impact and how the straps expand in a crash situation. Out of the technical reference the FTA want to produce a best practice guide which they hope DFT and HSE will endorse. FTA also want to produce a pocket guide for drivers giving top tips and do's and don'ts – some on how to secure a load. A DVD on the importance of walk around checks and a DVD on weight distribution will also be produced.

Falls from tankers

RHA produced a document in 2001 on the hierarchy of what companies agreed to do. This is now out of date so was taken off their website. Nick Deal of RHA is now reviewing the document so that it can be put back on the web. The review will consider HSE and industry statistics and investigation findings, and is likely to include issues such as maintenance, human factors and supervision. Many companies are already doing much of what it is required, however it will be useful to have that decisive document in place.

Warehousing – the way ahead

Rob introduced the HSE guidance at a previous meeting and asked members to feedback any errors they found. No feedback was received. There is a meeting about the PM28 document in July - if members would like to attend they should get in touch with Rob.

Now that HSG76 is complete, HSE have ended the Warehousing Health and Safety Forum (WHSF). IOSH have agreed to start up a new warehousing forum, which HSE and other members of the WHSF are keen to support.

Local Authority Projects

A brief guidance document that brings together all the other documents on car parks for retail/industrial estates is being produced. The Property Risk Management forum will come up with some guidelines and two companies who run car parks for local authorities may produce some guidelines on violence.

Another piece of work is producing a training video for Local Authorities on the different sort of reversing aids.

Moving Goods Safely 2

The results of the MSG2 (an inspector project) will be shortly published on the web pages. The biggest problem identified in the inspection project were manual handling and workplace transport.

Updates on FORS

Ian Brooks has now been appointed the scheme manager. The scheme went live from the 15th April 2008. There has been a large number of applications which have had to be processed manually because of computer issues. Site visits have taken place and these have looked at the systems people have in place. FORS is also looking at a number of online measures.

Falls from tail-lifts – working group

This is an industry group, not an RDAG working group. Europe has agreed to review the standard on the manufacture of tail lifts to reflect work at height regulations and Britain will be pushing for improved fall protection, particularly guard-rails on the sides of tail-lifts. The group has produced some user guidance to help specify tail-lifts and ensure operators work safely. HSE and LA inspectors will be given guidance so that they can give appropriate advice.

Container Handballing project

HSL has done their research and have come up with some recommendations such as briefs for delivery, conveyor systems, fork lifts, job rotation and scheduling. The report has been presented to the warehousing group. RDAG agreed that the warehousing group would be better placed to tackle this, and declined an offer to have a presentation on this.

Example risk assessment for road haulage

RDAG members gave useful feedback at the February 2008 meeting. No subsequent comments were received. The example risk assessment is now available on the website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/roadhaulage.htm>

6. AOB

1. USDAW have produced a pamphlet with a set of inspection checklists for health and safety reps based on the recent HSE publication 'Warehousing and Storage – A Guide to Health and Safety' (HSG76). USDAW will be launching it at our Warehouse Sector Conference at the end of June. Any members who want printed copies can contact Doug Russell. The publication can be found at http://www.usdaw.org.uk/getactive/resource_library/1213880615_2312.html .

2. Unite the Union stated that a useful model to look at for the management and responsibility of freight supply chain is the one done in Australia.

ACTION: Rob to look at the Australian model in detail, and provide a summary to the group

3. The next meeting is booked for the **5 November 2008**.

Attendees of RDAG Meeting - 6 February 2008

Elizabeth Gibby, HSE - Chair
Don Armour, Freight Transport Association
Steve Clarke, Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
Geoff Galilee, Local Authority Coordinating Office on Regulatory Services
Ray Engley, Road Haulage Association
David Williams, T&G Section of Unite the Union
Doug Russell, Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers
Tony Southam, United Road Transport Union
Robert Hudgell, HSE - Transportation Section, RDAG Secretary
Jayn Johnson, HSE – Safety Unit
Judith Berry, HSE – Workplace Transport Programme
Dorothy Brown, HSE – Workplace Transport Programme
Dawn Blair, HSE – Workplace Transport Programme
Andy Freeman, HSE – Work related road risk
Chris Harbott, VOSA Road Worthiness
Tom McCartney, Traffic Commissioner
Brian Blair, T&G Section of Unite the Union
Andrew Burr, DFT Road Safety Unit
Dell Evans, VOSA High Risk Traffic Initiative
Paul Bayly, Institute of Road Traffic Engineers
Mike McGrath, HSE, STSU

Apologies:

Paul Sanders, Association of Pallet Network
Sean Cusack, Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
Chris Fylan, Skills for Logistics

Will Murray, Interactive Driving Systems