
EDITOR'S NOTES

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In this month's edition you will find a report on the LA/HSE Partnership Conference held in December. Organised jointly by LAU and LACoRS it ran very well. In addition to some thought provoking presentations, there was the launch of the updated version of the Councillors Handbook - see the article by Heather Swinnerton. Congratulations to the winners of the 2006 Health and Safety Innovation Awards, the seventy-four local authorities in the Midlands for 'The Builders Merchants Project.'

Working/living conditions for migrant workers is a hot topic at the moment and an article on a joint inspection initiative carried out in the South West gives food for thought. If you have any comments or want to share your experiences, please get in touch with the authors or LAU.

The Partnership Teams are saying goodbye to several Partnership Liaison Officers who are returning to their home LAs after a period of secondment. So it's farewell to Kelly Griffiths,

Lois Leonard, Andy Netherton and Richard Saunders. Thank you for your vital work in getting the Partnership up and running - you will be missed and we hope that future secondees will match the high standards you have set.

And finally, by the time the next edition of the newsletter come out the new law banning smoking in enclosed public places in Wales will have come into force. Good luck to all those involved in enforcing the law and let us hope it goes as smoothly as it did in Scotland.

Richard Wilson

Please feel free to comment on the Newsletter by writing to our dedicated e-mail address with your contributions, comments and suggestions: lau.newsletter@hse.gsi.gov.uk or Tel: 0151-951-3114

FOR INFORMATION

Law Commission

Consultation is currently underway on our Tenth Programme of Law Reform and a web discussion forum has been launched to enhance the consultation process.

The web discussion forum on the Law Commission's Tenth Programme of law reform and press release is now live at: <http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/>

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2006 LA/HSE partnership Conference – ‘The Challenge Ahead’

The annual Local Authority/HSE Partnership Conference was held at the QEII Conference Centre, Westminster, London on 12 December 2006.

Another high turnout, with nearly three hundred in attendance, saw both Councillors and Officers attending this year's event.

Geoffrey Podger, HSE Chief Executive, delivered Lord Hunts keynote address, due to his unavailability. The audience learnt of the worrying trends in health and safety, where accidents were increasing, or failing to fall, as had been anticipated. However, Local Authorities were encouraged to share their local knowledge on ‘stubborn problem areas’ in the service industry and liaise with HSE colleagues. The speech called for a more inclusive model of health and safety regulation, in which motivation and enthusiasm played as big a part as punishment and retribution.

Councillor Caroline Seymour delivered the Local Government response to the Minister's speech, calling for greater recognition of health and safety across Government as well as assistance for councils in prioritising and providing a good service to communities.

William Sargent, Executive Chair of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) addressed the Conference audience on the work of LBRO, following on with a presentation entitled ‘The Spectrum of Interventions’ which included individual presentations on Flexible Warrants, Workplace Health Connect and Worker Involvement. A lively debate followed with a question and answer session.



The morning session, chaired by Sandy Blair, Health & Safety Commission (HSC) finished with the presentation of the 2006 Health and Safety Innovation Awards. Lois Leonard, Partnership Liaison Officer for the Midlands, received an award on behalf of the seventy-four local authorities in the Midlands for ‘The Builders Merchants Project.’

Also recognized was the Yorkshire and North East Partnership Team, for the ‘Safer Working Communities’ campaign. This involved Blyth Valley Borough Council, Sunderland City Council and East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The project used the FIT3 programme to build sustainable improvements in health and safety.

Carol Archibald from South Cambridgeshire District Council was ‘Highly Commended’ for her authority's entry, which involved the innovative use of enforcement officers, improvement of inspection techniques and the development of competencies.

The bulk of the afternoon's activities, chaired by Geoffrey Theobald, Local Authority Coordinator of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) involved breakout sessions specifically and separately designed for Officers and Councillors. In their session, Councillors discussed how to mainstream health and safety into local area agreements or corporate plans. Officers received short presentations on Large Organisation Partnership Pilot (LOPP), smoke free and enforcement issues.

The annual HSE/LACoRS Partnership Report and the ‘Councillors Handbook’ (which this year was accompanied by a supporting DVD) were both launched at the Conference.

Geoffrey Podger, HSE Chief Executive and Derek Allen, Executive Director of LACoRS presented the 'future of HSC/E and Local Government.

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South West Regulator's Forum (SWeRF)

SWeRF met for the second time in February - as before, bringing together senior officers from the South West amongst those regulators in the scope of Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO). Also attending were observers from Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) and Better Regulation Executive (BRE), which was very helpful.

The group discussed how it might help those involved in drawing up Local Area Agreements to understand the contribution that regulatory services can make to the key priorities affecting communities. An initiative by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in the East Midlands provided one best practice example. We plan to create a brief 'awareness raising' document to influence decision makers in the South West (SW), and advice for colleagues summarising best practice examples of successful inclusion of regulatory contributions to LA outcome objectives.

If any Newsletter readers have good practice examples, or stories of lessons learned, then SWeRF would be very interested to hear about them.

The meeting also discussed the scope for intelligence sharing between regulators and was introduced to the approach developed by Office of Fair Trading (OFT) and Trading Standards (TS) Officers in adapting the Police National Intelligence Model. The group will be exploring further ways to support improved targeting of regulatory activity.

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South West Regulator's Forum (SWeRF) - Migrant Labour Force

How 6p becomes 99p and 43p is a living wage

Building on work done previously by Kerrier and Penwith Councils in Cornwall and the Police, a joint inspection initiative was undertaken by agencies with an interest in the working and living conditions of the South West's considerable migrant labour force. Inspection teams consisted of personnel from HSE, LAs, Fire Safety and the Gangmasters Licensing Authority

The agencies shared information about where migrant workers might be and set out to make coordinated visits. Most of the visits were to farms or food processing units. Although the main aim of the exercise was to improve understanding of migrant labour working conditions, some additional enforcement action was necessary where accommodation conditions fell far short of the legal minimum standard.

The exercise took quite some planning and evaluation is now underway to ensure lessons are learned. It might have felt a little overwhelming for businesses to host an inspection from up to four regulators at once, but it did give them an opportunity to prioritise a range of related legislation requirements. The participating officers' initial responses were positive. The migrant

workers seemed to appreciate being treated as people with a complex set of inter-related issues, not just numbers in an inspection plan.

The sum paid to the picker of a bunch of 10 daffodils in a Cornish field is 6p. The typical supermarket price for the same bunch is 99p. One migrant worker was paid 43p at the end of a month of field work after deductions for advance loans, accommodation, protective clothing, admin etc.

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Revised Councillors Handbook

The updated version of the Councillors Handbook was launched at the HSE/LA Partnership Conference, held on 12 December 2006 at the QEII Building, Westminster, London.

The Handbook demonstrates the impact health and safety regulation activity can have on local authorities' key aims and priorities. In particular, links are made to the Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' which sets a vision for local government.

The Handbook, which is illustrated with referenced examples from across the regions of health and safety initiatives, supports the key priorities in Council's delivery plans as well as providing important information for local Councillors when making resource decisions in their communities.

Those working in health and safety regulation can refer to the Handbook when explaining the effect of partnership working, and the positive impact this strategy has for local people and businesses.

Copies of the Handbook have been distributed to every local council through the regional Partnership offices, however further copies can be [downloaded here](#).

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Bad Hand Day? Let's Cut out Dermatitis



Eastbourne Borough Council's Environmental Health service held a free drop-in advice event for hairdressers and beauty salons on 26 January 2007.

Promotional letters with an event invitation were sent to all hairdressers, beauty salons and local colleges with students on relevant courses.

In addition, the event also featured in the local press/radio.

Supporting the national Health and Safety Executive campaign, 'Bad Hand Day? Let's Cut Out Dermatitis' used a pink colour theme as an attractive way to promote an important message.

Poster displays showing hairdressers how to prevent skin problems were decorated with pink balloons and streamers, campaign advice packs handed to attendees were in boutique-style pink carrier bags, as well as additional materials in Information Folders and Environmental Health staff, on hand to give advice, dressed in pink outfits.

A PowerPoint presentation showed types of dermatitis and the causes, with step-by-step pictures illustrating skin care, skin checks and correct removal of gloves.

A free prize draw to win a hamper of beauty products was sponsored by The Body Shop.

The council's website has lots of information about the campaign and resources to download at: <http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/business/safety/campaigns/dermatitis>

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NEW GUIDANCE

Updates of HSE Catering Information Sheets

HSE has recently updated two catering information sheets:

(1) 'Ventilation of kitchens in catering establishments'

Catering and Information sheet No 10 (revised).

Reprinted with updated references.

It will assist caterers in assessing whether existing ventilation is adequate and will also be useful for planning the ventilation specification for new or refurbished kitchens.

It is available to download from the catering and hospitality pages of the HSE website at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais10.pdf>

(2) 'Gas safety in catering and hospitality'

Catering and Information Sheet No 23 (revised1)

This amended guidance includes new information for installers on how to undertake an adequate test of the extraction system and interlocking the ventilation and gas supply. It gives catering and hospitality businesses advice on some aspects of safety, use and maintenance of gas-fired equipment used for cooking.

It is available to download from the catering and hospitality pages of the HSE website at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais23.pdf>

If you require further information please contact:

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New material published on the HSE website/Local Authority Unit section of the HSE website

The following material has recently been published on the HSE Website:

- Managing human performance
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/24/managing-human-performance/>
- Slips and trips in icy conditions
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/24/slips-and-trips-in-icy-conditions/>
- Ladders - three points of contact
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/01/26/ladders-clarification-on-maintaining-three-points-of-contact/>
- IOSH 2007 conference and exhibition
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/05/iosh-2007-conference-and-exhibition/>
- Forthcoming health and safety regulations in 2007
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/06/forthcoming-health-and-safety-regulations-in-2007/>
- How to become a first aid training provider
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/06/how-to-become-a-first-aid-training-provider/>
- Bring a smile to safety training
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/07/bring-a-smile-to-safety-training>
- Healthy workplace solutions workshop
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/13/healthy-workplace-solutions-workshop/>
- Managing health and safety pays
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/16/managing-health-and-safety-pays/>
- Rash decisions affect your business
<http://www.hsenews.com/2007/02/19/rash-decisions-affect-your-business/>

GOOD PRACTICE

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Forum

This forum is a place where Local Authorities (LAs) and HSE can exchange information about DSE compliance issues. In the past it has contained details of relevant LA initiatives on DSE, notifications of forthcoming events, and descriptions of revised guidance and other sources of information. It has also discussed emerging issues and even breaking news.

Although there is nothing specific to report in this issue please watch this space for future developments.

If you have any comments, questions or issues you think this forum should address please contact:

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