

Partnership on Health And Safety in Scotland

Minutes of Meeting of steering committee

18 September 2008

In attendance:

Danny Carrigan	Chair (HSE Board member)
Paul Stollard	HSE Director, Scotland
Harry Frew	STUC and UCATT
Kathy Jenkins	Scottish Hazards
Sarah Jones	HSE, Director's Office, Scotland (Secretary)
Ian Lavery	Glasgow City Council
Karen McDonnell	POOSH Scotland
Linda Shanahan	Healthy Working Lives
David Evans	SoCOEH
Rory Mackail	Federation of Small Businesses
Roddy Duncan	Scottish Government - Public Health and Well-being Division
Ian Tasker	STUC
Anne Chesney	HSE Glasgow, Partnership Officer
Jackie Woods	COI
James Hynd	Scottish Government, Corporate Facilities Management
Irene Ward	HSE Glasgow. Construction, Health and Safety Awareness officer
Alistair McGown	HSE Glasgow, LA EHO on secondment
Simon Brownlee	EHO, East Dunbarton shire Council

Apologies:

Russell Griggs	CBI Scotland
Steve Bell	Director, SCHWL
Jamie Hume	Scottish Government – Enterprise & Industry Division
Fiona Smith	UNISON

Welcome and Introductions

1. Danny welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced Irene Ward attending as an observer and Alastair McGown and Simon Brownlee who were attending to co-present agenda item 6 with David Evans.

Minutes of the meeting on 24 June 2008

2. These had been agreed and published on the Partnership section of HSE's Scottish webpages.

Matters Arising

Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety

(i) Feedback on final report to Scottish Ministers

3. Sarah thanked members for their comments on the draft report. She had sent the report to Shona Robison MSP, Minister for Public Health at the end of August. The submission had asked the Minister to note: the breadth of work done under the Action Plan; that it had strengthened partnership working across the health and safety system; the overlap between workplace health and safety and the reducing health inequalities agenda; and that on-going work should be supported through Healthy Working Lives. Roddy confirmed that the Minister had accepted the recommendations.

(ii) Management of Occupational Road Risks seminars - final report and recommendations.

4. Karen presented paper PHASS 11/02 and explained that 106 delegates were followed up by RoSPA to identify what actions have been taken since attendance.

- 45% have taken action since the seminar and are interested in being routinely updated on developments. They will be advised of progress in relation to SCoRSA
- 3% no action required as 'robust' systems in place
- 19% unable to contact
- 33% have not returned call

5. A draft action plan is being developed for SCoRSA by Karen and Robert Atkinson of SCHWL. This will be agreed at the next meeting of SCoRSA scheduled for 22nd October 2008. The Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change would be updated once the SCoRSA action plan was agreed.

6. Robert Atkinson has had a number of requested to make presentations and will use this as an opportunity to draft a pack which could be delivered by an array of professionals. RoSPA are providing SCHWL with access to all MORR guidance material currently on the RoSPA site.

7. Disappointingly, the HR profession had not been well represented at the initial series of seminars to drive the MORR message forward. RoSPA and SCHWL were working towards delivering a seminar in late November to raise awareness within this target group.

8. The Scottish Government is holding an event for its Health and Safety Liaison Officers (HSLOs) in October looking at risk, which include MORR. James explained that there was an HSLO in each SG division to support local management. The HSAO role included workplace inspection. The Scottish Government had agreed on a new policy on road risk which would now be rolled out.

10. Linda Shanahan mentioned that advice and guidance on road rage had been issued by the NHS but no Health Board had yet implemented it.

(iii) Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety – draft letter to the Minister for Public Health

11. Sarah presented paper PHASS/11/03 which attached a draft letter from PHASS to the Minister following up issues which had emerged during the implementation of the Action Plan. Members agreed the content. The letter was signed by Danny and sent.

(iv) Update on the Scottish Government's response to Dame Carol Black's report

12. Roddy advised members that key stakeholders had been asked to submit views on the report and its implications for Scotland. Roddy would then draft the Scottish Government's response to Ministers for feedback. It was hoped to submit the formal response by mid October. The UK Government's response would be likely to take a little longer.

(v) PHASS participation in the European campaign week on Risk Assessment.

13. Jackie Woods reported that COI would issue a press notice on the theme of sensible risk and would request quotes from PHASS members.

Action: Jackie

HSE Board Update.

14. Danny distributed a paper on Local Authorities and HSE Partnership: an evaluation. The evaluation found that overall the partnership is in good health and is delivering improvements in health and safety standards. Recommendations included maintaining and further developing the partnership approach. HSE Board members were due to meet with Local Authority representatives in October. This would provide an opportunity for HSE to take direct soundings prior to considering a response to the report. The full report would be made available on HSE's website following the Board's decisions on further action.

16. Danny reported that as part of the review of the Strategy for Workplace Health and Safety 2010 and Beyond it was recognised that most deaths occurred in four main industries: agriculture, construction, aggregates and utilities. Targeting these sectors and maintaining frontline inspectors would be priorities. The revised strategy would be issued for consultation following its discussion with Lord McKenzie.

17. Following robust and detailed discussion of the bids, HSE has awarded a 10 year contract to Capita Group plc to provide a new registration scheme for gas installers from 1 April 2009. The HSE website had the full details
www.hse.gov.uk/gas/domestic/newschemecontract.htm

18. The Board had also recently discussed needlestick injuries amongst healthcare workers. There was currently no unanimity on European proposals for improving prevention and control.

19. David asked whether the new strategy would be available in time for a discussion at the December meeting. This was agreed. Paul said that there was also an intention to hold a larger stakeholder event in January hosted by HSE.

Action: Sarah to invite HSE Board Chair, Judith Hackitt to December PHASS meeting to discuss the new strategy. Judith has now accepted.

HSE Scotland Director's report

20. PHASS/11/04 refers. The main topics within the report included safety in quarries, examples of partnership working, campaigns and joint working between HSE and other regulators, as well as successful prosecutions and ongoing investigations.

21. Ian commented on the recent prosecution of Scottish Coal Company Ltd following the death of two men at the Pennyvennie site in Dalmellington. Paul spoke about a quarry site visit he had made with the investigating inspector and the industry-wide action that had been taken as a result of this incident. Danny suggested a presentation about quarry safety at the next PHASS meeting.

Action: Sarah to invite HSE inspector to the next meeting

22. Concern was once again expressed about the farming industry. Danny informed members of the Safety Health Awareness Days (SHADS) which are held nationwide for the farming community. Scenarios at these events included: workplace transport safety, child safety, manual handling, animal handling, occupational health and work at height. It was acknowledged that there is significant under reporting of injuries – apart from fatal injuries - within this industry.

23. Kathy Jenkins informed members about a recent seminar held for migrant workers which had covered disability issues in the workplace for those workers whose first language is not English.

24. Sarah said that a number of HSE publications have already been translated into languages other than English and are available on HSE's website. Proposed work with the Scottish Qualifications Authority on the "ESOL (English as a Second Language) for work" course would look for opportunities to incorporate health and safety information.

Action: Sarah to copy ESOL information to members

26. Harry expressed concerns about the recent fatalities in the construction industry and commented that HSE were more reactive than proactive and whether or not this is due to the lack of inspectors. Paul advised that HSE would shortly be recruiting new inspectors including some specifically for the construction sector. He explained that the efforts were always being made to increase proactive inspection time against a backdrop of needing to react and investigate many incidents.

27. Discussion ensued about the merits of a recent proposal by a Scottish Minister to allow prisoners to work on construction sites.

Action: Ian to circulate information on the STUC position

The approach of Scottish Local Authorities to health and safety regulation

28. Presentations were made by David and Simon Brownlee, who was the current Chair of the Local Authority Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group (HASCOG).

29. David and Simon confirmed that Local Authorities were equal partners with HSE in regulating health and safety. They actually enforced in more premises than HSE covering approximately half of Scotland's working people. Health and safety was however only one of many sets of regulations covered by Environmental Health Departments with multidisciplinary teams whose core functions also included, for example, food standards, food hygiene, trading standards and planning.

30. Closer working under the HSE/LA partnership agreement (mentioned above) was proving very useful in achieving better mutual understanding. LAs saw themselves as the local service enabling proactive prevention of health and safety problems alongside other duties.

31. Issues raised in discussion included: flexible warranting and its usefulness in some remote areas of Scotland where EHOs could support HSE's efforts by being at a site or incident more quickly; the complexity of the Enforcing Authority Regulations - which governed the split between HSE and LA premises - to outsiders (they had nevertheless stood the test of time and there were no immediate plans to change them); joint working for example on dermatitis – where LAs had the primary role in the campaign to protect hairdressers; and LAs role in respect of workplace violence in betting shops. Ian reiterated concerns about the safety of employees within this industry. Alastair McGown advised of a new Violence at Work Toolkit which would be launched on HSE's website on 1st October.

32. Alastair mentioned a survey carried out by South Lanarkshire Council on the how members of the public perceived priorities for environmental health services. The results revealed that the top two priorities were dog fouling and litter, with food safety half way down the list and health and safety near the bottom.

Action: Alistair to circulate the survey report

Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives - Protecting workers who serve the Public in the Voluntary sector

34. Linda Shanahan presented paper PHASS/11/06 and explained that the work was a continuation of action under the Scottish Action Plan for Health and Safety. PHASS members were updated on feedback on some of the challenges in managing the risk of violence and abuse in this sector. Voluntary organisations tended to focus on the health and safety of clients ignoring the risks they posed to staff and volunteers. Care homes and social care settings were a particular area where the integration of care standards and health and safety standards sometimes caused friction.

Any other business

35. HSE and SCHWL had held initial discussions on joint working between the two organisations and their respective stakeholder groups - PHASS and the HWL National Advisory and Advocacy Group. Paul reported that a paper would be prepared for a future meeting.

37. Kathy advised members of her involvement in developing a new Certificate of Professional Development in Workplace Health at Strathclyde University.

Action: Kathy to circulate the leaflet to PHASS members

Next meeting

38. 12th December, HSE Glasgow, 13.00 start with lunch available from 12.30.