



EDUCATION SAFETY NEWS



October 2002

News from HSE's Education Services Advisory Committees

Welcome to the second edition of Education Safety News.

This newsletter brings you the latest information on the work of HSE's Education Advisory Committees; Higher and Further Education Advisory Committee (HIFEAC) and Schools Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) and includes items on related health and safety topics. It is for anyone in education with a role to play in health and safety.

This edition is only being sent by email to interested parties - we are relying on you distribute it further.

If you would like to receive future issues directly, please contact the Secretariat. We hope to place later editions of the newsletter on HSE's website.



SEAC/HIFEAC Open Meeting 7 March 2002

SEAC and HIFEAC held their first open meeting on 7 March 2002 at NASUWT's Conference and training centre at Rednal, Birmingham. Nearly 80 people attended.

The aim of the meeting was to enable members of the public to meet SEAC and HIFEAC members and to find out more about the work of the Committees; how they work and the type of issue they deal with.

Overall, delegates expressed the view to the Secretariat that the meeting had been useful in explaining the priorities within the sector and encouraging commitment from key players in achieving those objectives.

THE EUROPEAN WEEK FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH AT WORK, OCTOBER 2002

WORKING ON STRESS



This year's European Week for Safety and Health, commencing 14 October 2002, will focus on the prevention of psychosocial risks as well as the "hidden" costs to businesses of lost working days.

An estimated half a million UK workers report they have been made ill by work-related stress. Other sources suggest one in five workers report their work to be very or extremely stressful.

In a bid to ensure the UK is a safe and healthy place to work, this year's Safety and Health Week will concentrate on promoting organisational activities to reduce work-related stress and mental and physical abuse.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will oversee the organisation of the week in the UK. It is also being supported by various organisations including TUC and CBI, IOSH, RoSPA, British Safety Council and BackCare as well as government agencies in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

FOR A FREE ACTION PACK, POSTERS, STICKERS, FACT SHEETS CALL 0800 085 0050

HIFEAC/SEAC - INITIATIVES ON STRESS DURING HEALTH AND SAFETY WEEK

Managing Stress in Higher Education and Further Education – Where Next?

The University of Birmingham in association with the Occupational Health Service at University College London is running a one-day programme on Managing stress in Higher Education and Further Education (HE/FE).

This is the major event this year for managing stress in the HE/FE sector and is supported by Higher and Further Education Advisory Committee (HiFEAC).

Many institutions and colleges are at the stage of developing and starting to implement strategies and policies to manage stress in the workplace. Intended participants include senior managers charged with introducing stress management policies, personnel professionals, occupational health and safety practitioners, staff support professionals, trade union representatives and anyone else with an active interest in managing stress in the HE and FE sectors. The aim is to share experience, identify new developments and consider further collaborative opportunities.

The conference and workshop is being held in the Think Tank in Central Birmingham. At time of going to press about 100 delegates have signed up to the conference. We hope that the discussions will help to guide the sector response to stress in the workplace. Further details can be found by contacting Dawn Eden at d.t.eden@bham.ac.uk or Tel: 0121 414 5250.

TUC Activities for Health and Safety Week

As part of their contribution to the Week, the TUC and the UK Work Stress Network are holding a conference for union officers and activists and others. The conference “*tackle the hassle: strategies to stop stress and beat bullying*” will be held on Monday 14th October and will emphasise that, although stress is a big problem, it can be dealt with. A mix of keynote speeches and panel sessions, and the option to put questions in writing and by email, will ensure that delegates get the chance to participate fully and come away with the confidence to tackle stress and especially bullying problems in their workplace.

Further details can be found on the TUC web site at <http://www.tuc.org.uk>

UNISON's activities during Health and Safety Week 2002

UNISON is supporting the Health and Safety Week by promoting a National Inspection Day on Wednesday 16th October. The purpose is to encourage safety representatives to carry out their legal right to inspect workplaces for health, safety, and welfare problems.

Branches may choose to focus on work-related stress or one of the many causes of workplace stress such as: bullying, violence, or other poor working conditions. Safety representatives may also consider the following activities:

- distribute the UNISON Stress at Work leaflets to members and guides to safety reps, and conducting a stress survey;
- show UNISON's Workplace Safety Inspection Video at a training session for reps (each Branch has one copy);
- survey workers to establish their key health and safety concerns (they often know more about the problems and hazards than anyone else), or expand on the extent and nature of the problem that the branch has chosen to focus on;
- organise a 'spot the hazards' competition for staff - a great way of getting members and non-members involved, perhaps even active. Awarding a prize for the identified hazard, which will have the most effect if removed. The employer may support this initiative and supply the awards;

- organise workplace meetings, perhaps during lunchtime, with a different topic each day. Inviting non-members as well;
- set up a stall at work to inform members and non-members about the Week, the National Inspection Day, workplace hazards, and what UNISON and the branch can do;
- produce a health and safety newsletter to coincide with the Week.

OTHER WORK

National Agreement on Guidance on Work Related Stress

The National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE), the Association of Colleges (AoC) and the other Joint Trade Unions are arranging for a series of four 'road shows' to be held in London, Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol to launch the parties 'National Agreement on Guidance on Work Related Stress', which has recently been developed. It is hoped that the first roadshow will be held in London at the end of November 2002. Further information can be obtained from NATFHE; Telephone 020 7837 3636, Fax 020 7837 4403 , Minicom 020 7278 0470 / Email hq@natfhe.org.uk.

The agreement covers approximately 450 Further Education Colleges and sixth Form establishments and approximately 250,000 manual, clerical and academic staff.

You can download the document at <http://www.feonline.net/feonline/display?id=7230>

Preventing slips and trips accidents in the education sector



An information sheet entitled, "Preventing slips and trips accidents in the education sector" is being produced by HIFEAC/SEAC and it is hoped that this will be published shortly. The information sheet gives advice on legal requirements, storage facilities, control measures and gives practical measures for slips risk control.

Information sheets are available free of charge from HSE Books:

**HSE Books,
PO Box 1999,
Sudbury,
Suffolk, CO10 6FS
Tel: 01787 881165**



Safety Representatives in Local Education Authorities

In a number of local education authorities, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) has established what is, in effect, a “roving safety representative” system. With the agreement of the LEA concerned, NUT safety representatives represent NUT members in their own school and also in other schools. The system is similar to other examples of roving safety reps within a single multi-site employer. Usually, coverage extends only to the schools where the LEA is the employer. Schools like voluntary aided schools are not so easily covered because the governing body and not the LEA is the employer.

The following is an example of the system which is operated by NUT in cooperation with NASUWT and ATL in Bradford. The system survived the “outsourcing” of the education authority in Bradford when the HSE itself became involved in discussions and supported the merits of the system:

Bradford

In Bradford, the LEA provides a centrally funded system so that members of a team of trade union safety representatives can have paid release to carry out safety inspections in LEA schools.

The majority of the team come from the NUT but it also involves members of NASUWT and ATL. Each safety representative is provided with one day's paid time per week to carry out inspections.

In effect, each primary and secondary school within the LEA benefits from an inspection twice per term. Under Bradford's group system, the team also has access to foundation and voluntary aided schools.

Regardless of the trade union they come from, the safety reps from all three unions make representations on behalf of all the staff in the school.

The system was developed because it was believed that there was added value in having a team of skilled and experienced safety reps doing the inspections. The HSE area office has commented on the fact that fewer safety problems are raised with them concerning schools in Bradford compared to other LEAs in the area.



Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits.

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has recently launched a three-part supplement to its good practice guide entitled "Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational visits".

- 1) "Standards for Local Education Authorities (LEAs) in Overseeing Educational Visits" – Offers good practice examples to local education authorities to help them to meet their health and safety responsibilities. It discusses the roles of outdoor education adviser in LEAs, and educational visits co-ordinator and group leader in schools; and looks at a three-level model of risk assessment: generic activity risk assessments carried out at LEA level for all the main kinds of educational visit that may take place, site/visit specific risk assessments carried out by the school during the planning stage of the visit and ongoing risk assessment by the group leader while the visit is taking place.
- 2) "Standards for Adventure" – is aimed at the teacher, youth worker etc. who leads young people on adventure activities. It aims to help the leader to meet standards that are at least as high as those required of adventure activity providers by the Adventure Activities Licensing Scheme.
- 3) "A Handbook for Group Leaders" – gives advice on supervision, ongoing risk assessment and handling emergencies.

All three parts of the supplement are available free from DfES publications on 0808 100 50 60 and can be found on the internet at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/visits>



In March 2003 we will be holding our second SEAC/HIFEAC Open Meeting.

The arrangements for the next open meeting are being taken forward by a subgroup with representatives from HIFEAC and SEAC.

We are keen to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have an opportunity to attend these meetings, so if you know of an organisation that you think should be invited please send details to the Secretariat.



HSE's enforcement activity

Information about prosecutions and notices can be found on HSE's website at www.hse-databases.co.uk/prosecutions

In 2000/2001 HSE Inspectors served 57 improvement notices and 18 prohibition notices in the education sector. 8 prosecutions were also taken including the prosecution of a university after a technician fell from a ladder while undertaking planned maintenance. The investigation revealed that the accident was caused by the employer not having given adequate consideration to a safe method of access. The university were fined £1,500.

Feedback

We would appreciate your comments on the newsletter and any suggestions for improvements. We would also welcome any items for inclusion in the next issue planned for March 2003.

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HSE Infoline: 08701 545500
HSE Books: 01787 88165
Incident Contact Centre: 0845 3009923

HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk
HSE Direct: www.hsedirect.com

DfES website: www.dfes.gov.uk
DfES Publications: 0846 602260

Email dfes@prolog.uk.com

TUC website: www.tuc.org.uk
European Agency for Safety and Health at Work: <http://osha.eu.int>

CBI website: www.cbi.org.uk