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PLEDGE PHASE 4

2017 - 2021

Driving continual improvement in the health and safety performance of the UK ceramics industry.



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The Ceramic Industry Health & Safety Pledge

THE PLEDGE

In 2000 the Government published a Strategy Statement entitled 'Revitalising Health and Safety'. This statement was notable for a number of reasons. Firstly, it introduced for the first time in health and safety the challenge of targets. Secondly, it threw down a new gauntlet, 25 years after the enactment of The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and thirdly, it effectively required sectors to work collectively to meet the challenge. In response, the British Ceramic Confederation (BCC) worked with the support of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), trade unions and the industry to establish the Ceramic Industry Health and Safety Pledge.

2016 was the 15 year anniversary of the Ceramic Industry Health and Safety Pledge. Since its establishment as a pioneering sector-wide targeted health and safety initiative, significant progress has been made. This was applauded by the Chair of Health and Safety Executive at the 2015 Pledge Conference and our industry's approach has proved a template for others seeking to make health and safety improvements. Notwithstanding this progress, the Pledge has evolved and continues to challenge members to do even better.

PLEDGE PHASE 4

Pledge Phase 4 is the next step in the continual evolution of the Pledge and will continue to have the key themes of Phases 1-3 at its heart; **strong leadership, building competence, effective engagement, worker involvement, sharing best practice, supporting smaller companies, and promoting continual improvement in health and safety performance.**

Pledge Phase 4 is an opportunity to consolidate and reinforce work to improve health and safety performance in the ceramics sector and, recognising the need to reflect wider health and safety priorities, is also closely aligned with the HSE's 2016 Strategy 'Helping Great Britain Work Well', which has the following 6 key themes:

- **Acting Together.** *Promoting ownership of H&S in Britain.*
- **Tackling Ill Health.** *Tackling and highlighting the costs of work related ill health.*
- **Managing Risk Well.** *Simplifying risk management and helping business to grow.*
- **Supporting Small Employers.** *Giving SMEs simple advice so they know what they must do.*
- **Keeping Pace with Change.** *Anticipating and tackling new health and safety challenges.*
- **Sharing our Success.** *Promoting the benefits of Britain's world class health and safety system.*

The HSE Health and Work Strategy where work related stress, musculoskeletal disorders and occupational lung disease are identified as priority focus areas, together with the Manufacturing Sector Plan are also closely aligned with Pledge Phase 4.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PLEDGE

The Pledge involves the collaboration of the BCC and its members, the HSE and trade unions. This document sets out the Pledge Phase 4 strategy and recognises the benefits that a collaborative approach can bring to the effective management of health and safety.

1. Leadership and Acting Together

1.1 OVERVIEW

For effective health and safety, it must be integral to everyone's role, not just assigned to an individual or part of an organisation. There must be effective **leadership** and people need to be actively involved and **work together** to help ensure that potential health and safety benefits are realised and maintained. Pledge Phase 4 will continue to build on previous work to support companies to improve health and safety practice across the breadth of the ceramics sector¹, and to **share and celebrate success**.

1.2 AIM

To work with members and other stakeholders to demonstrate leadership, promote good health and safety practice, support companies to improve, and to share and celebrate success across the whole of the ceramics sector.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

- 1.3 (a) To improve the Pledge's sector coverage across all ceramics sub-sectors and all sizes of companies. *All members of BCC will be encouraged to be committed to Phase 4 of the Pledge.*
- 1.3 (b) To ensure BCC Health and Safety Committee structures are appropriate and have suitable sector representation. *All stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in the Pledge.*
- 1.3 (c) To promote the importance of health and safety competence and leadership. *All members of BCC are encouraged to participate in the Pledge and to demonstrate competence and leadership.*
- 1.3 (d) To refine sector health and safety data collection and analysis as this will lead to a better understanding of health and safety performance. *BCC will work with stakeholders to refine sector health and safety data collection.*
- 1.3 (e) To design and implement a programme of seminars, conferences and workshops to help engage and educate members on relevant health and safety related topics and to provide a forum for sharing best practice. *BCC will work with members to develop a suitable programme of events on relevant health and safety related topics.*
- 1.3 (f) To develop and facilitate a sector health and safety peer review programme. *BCC will work with members to develop a peer review programme and to encourage members to engage with the programme and provide / access support as appropriate.*

¹ Throughout this document, the 'ceramics sector' refers to ceramics manufacturers who are members of the British Ceramic Confederation (BCC), although resources are also freely available to others on the BCC website.

2. Work Related Ill Health

2.1 OVERVIEW

If not effectively controlled, **work related ill health** can be devastating for both individuals and organisations. This is recognised in the HSE's 2017 Health and Work Strategy and associated plans, which set out how the HSE will work in partnership to reduce the occurrence of work related ill health, particularly in the priority areas of occupational lung disease, work related stress and musculoskeletal disorders.

The importance of investigating the causes of work related ill health and preventing them has been an important part of the Pledge journey so far, but steps have not been taken at a sector level to ascertain all the work carried out. Also, many organisations are starting to consider aspects of **wellbeing**, for example, lifestyle and mental health and so it is important that we understand the work that is taking place.

Through the collection of information there will be a greater understanding of the harm, costs and preventability of work-related ill health and an increased awareness of wellbeing considerations, which will in turn help to drive collective action and ensure best practice is implemented and shared. This recognises that although the health focus of the Pledge is preventing work related illness (for which there is mandatory legislation), wellbeing is becoming increasingly important and so must be embraced.

2.2 AIM

To work with members to develop a greater understanding of work related ill health and wellbeing concerns, and to share best practice and develop suitable key performance indicators.

2.3 OBJECTIVES

- 2.3 (a) To engage with members to establish current awareness, practice and performance in relation to work related ill health. *BCC will engage with members to establish the current awareness, practice and performance with regard to work related ill health.*
- 2.3 (b) Where appropriate, to develop ceramic sector health key performance indicators (KPIs). *BCC will work with members and other stakeholders to develop ceramic sector health key performance indicators (as appropriate).*
- 2.3 (c) To collect health KPI data and monitor performance (as appropriate). *BCC will work with members to collect health KPI data (as appropriate).*
- 2.3 (d) To target support on work related ill health where it is needed. *BCC will work with members to provide support on work related ill health where needed, including guidance on appropriate health surveillance.*
- 2.3 (e) To work with members to develop greater understanding about wellbeing considerations within the sector. *BCC will work with members to understand wellbeing concerns and opportunities.*

3. Managing Risk Well

3.1 OVERVIEW

The **effective management of risk** is a cornerstone of health and safety. Proportionate **Risk Assessment** is a part of risk management and can protect people, support growth and enable innovation. Over the last 15 years, participants in the Pledge have worked together to drive improvements in health and safety performance through sharing information and collective problem solving. By continuing to work together, stakeholders will not only help ensure high standards are maintained, but that **continual improvement** is achieved.

3.2 AIM

To continue to promote sensible and proportionate health and safety risk assessment and management and to refine and develop annual ceramic sector health and safety (and where appropriate, wellbeing) reporting.

3.3 OBJECTIVES

- 3.3 (a) To promote discussion and work collectively to solve problems, develop guidance and provide support for members to enable the effective management of sector related health and safety risks. *All members and other stakeholders will be encouraged to highlight concerns and work together to support the effective management of sector related health and safety risks.*
- 3.3 (b) To develop and share best practice. *All members will be encouraged to contribute to the development and sharing of best practice.*
- 3.3 (c) To ensure that all lobbying activity reflects the need for a proportionate approach to health and safety. *All BCCs lobbying activities will reflect the need for a responsible but proportionate approach to health and safety.*

4. Supporting Small Companies

4.1 OVERVIEW

The importance of engaging with and supporting all sizes of ceramic sector companies has always been recognised within the Pledge, but **reaching small companies** can be difficult due to the limited availability of resources within companies in comparison to larger companies. Building on the work of Phases 1-3, in Phase 4 of the Pledge efforts will be made to engage with smaller companies to help ensure that their health and safety support needs are met.

4.2 AIM

Recognising that smaller ceramic sector companies are likely to have more limited resources than larger companies, build on the work of Pledge Phases 1-3 to effectively share best practice and encourage peer support to help ensure that appropriate health and safety information and advice is made available.

4.3 OBJECTIVES

- 4.3 (a) The development and delivery of meetings tailored to meet the needs of smaller companies. *Members and other stakeholders will be engaged with and encouraged to participate in the development and delivery of meetings and events tailored to meet the needs of smaller companies.*
- 4.3 (b) The development and delivery of an annual 'SME² day' focused on meeting the needs of smaller companies in the ceramic sector. *BCC will engage with members and other stakeholders to develop and deliver an annual SME day.*
- 4.3 (c) The provision of information and support for smaller companies, and encouragement to engage a Health and Safety 'Champion' who can promote the implementation of health and safety best practice. *BCC will work with all members to help ensure support mechanisms are in place for small companies who are working to improve health and safety performance, including the establishment of Health and Safety Champions.*

² SME – Small to Medium Sized Enterprise

5. Keeping Pace with Change

5.1 OVERVIEW

Since its first inception 15 years ago, the Pledge has evolved to reflect changes in the ceramics sector and the health and safety priorities of the industry, HSE and trade unions. It is vitally important that stakeholders **anticipate and tackle new health and safety challenges** that come with social, economic and technological change. The Pledge provides a forum where horizon scanning can take place and information exchanged between stakeholders, helping members to manage risk and adapt practices as necessary.

5.2 AIM

To ensure that the ceramic sector anticipates and keeps up with change and continues to maintain and improve health and safety performance and to promote the free flowing exchange of information between stakeholders so that the ceramics sector can anticipate and respond to new health and safety challenges.

5.3 OBJECTIVES

- 5.3 (a) Ensure that members can anticipate and respond to new health and safety challenges in relation to technological change (for example, new ways of working, equipment and materials). *Members will be encouraged to contribute to sector discussions / inform BCC about significant technological changes that could have an impact on health and safety.*
- 5.3 (b) Ensure that members can anticipate and respond to new health and safety challenges in relation to regulatory change (for example, respirable crystalline silica and refractory ceramic fibre). *All stakeholders (particularly the HSE) will be encouraged to inform BCC about potential / actual regulatory changes that could impact the ceramics sector. BCC will actively monitor regulatory development and change and lobby Government and other relevant stakeholders where needed to ensure the voice of the sector is heard.*
- 5.3 (c) Ensure that members can anticipate and respond to new health and safety challenges in relation to workforce change (developing and maintaining competence and ensuring effective engagement with different parts of the workforce). *Members and trade unions will be encouraged to inform other stakeholders about significant workforce changes that could have an impact on health and safety, and all stakeholders will be encouraged to contribute to sector discussions.*
- 5.3 (d) Ensure that members can anticipate and respond to new health and safety challenges in relation to communicating change (the implementation of effective communication and engagement tools and techniques, recognising the needs and preferences of different parts of the workforce). *Members will be encouraged to explore different ways of communicating and engaging with different parts of the workforce, and to support each other when considering the implementation of new communication tools.*

6. Communicating Success

6.1 OVERVIEW

The ceramics sector has worked **collaboratively** with the HSE, trade unions and others over the last 15 years to develop and improve health and safety knowledge, understanding and performance across the whole of the industry. This is something that members rightly take great pride in. The ethos of the Pledge means that this learning is available for others to use and share, and this open approach will continue. During Phase 4 of the Pledge, work will continue to encourage members to **lead** by example, **share best practice** and to learn from each other, **working together** to drive and maintain improved performance across the sector and with relevant stakeholders, including contractors.

6.2 AIM

Currently under the auspices of the Pledge there is an annual conference and awards celebration, general and specialist committees and working parties, the development and publication of toolkits, the maintenance of a website and active participation in HSE forums ([CHARGE](#) and the [Small Business Trade Association Forum](#)). In Phase 4 of the Pledge, work will continue to encourage collaborative working and to share success where this could be beneficial to the sector and also elsewhere.

6.3 OBJECTIVES

- 6.3 (a) To publish a regular health and safety newsletter - *Pledge News*. This will provide an overview of work taking place within the sector, and highlight best practice, events and key changes to policy and regulation.
- 6.3 (a) To continue with the annual Pledge Conference and Awards programme.
- 6.3 (b) To consider the provision of health and safety webinars.
- 6.3 (c) To develop a more comprehensive annual event programme.
- 6.3 (d) To improve external communication about the health and safety performance of the sector and to support the sharing of best practice

Although primarily driven by BCC, members and other stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in activities that will help to share success.

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