



Birmingham Health, Safety & Environment Association

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Newsletter

January 2007

Welcome
to Our New Members

We wish to extend a warm welcome to the following members, who have recently joined BHSEA: -

- Chris Louca, Health and Safety Co-ordinator, West Midlands Police
- Ralph Weaver, Consultant, Arrelle
- Rebecca White, Senior Buyer, Box Construction Ltd.

**BHSEA Successes in Alan Butler Awards!
Chairman Receives Best Annual Programme Award at
House of Lords**



Chairman Mark Hoare receives Winners Certificate and £300 Cheque L to R: SGUK Chairman, Kerry Ross, Mark Hoare, Health and Safety Minister,

BHSEA also receives "Highly Commended" award for
"Best Seminar/Workshop"



Representing BHSEA at the Awards Ceremony in the House of Lords
L to R: Malcolm Copson, Geopost; Mark Hoare, Birmingham University; Andy Chappell,
BHSEA Secretary; Gerry Mulholland, Crown House Technologies and
Warwick Adams, Interserve Project Services.

*Scott Poppleton, Taylor Woodrow and David Hughes, Hughes Business Services
were unable to attend because of other business commitments.*

Alan Butler represented the Sheffield Occupational Health and Safety Association on the National Health and Safety Groups Council (the predecessor to SGUK) from July 1985 and was first Vice-Chairman and then Chairman from 1991 until his untimely death in 1995. In his memory *The Alan Butler Awards for Excellence* have been made for the past 11 years by the Safety Groups UK organisation, which represents about 80 groups nationwide, like BHSEA. The awards are sponsored by the BT Group plc and are given for Best Overall Programme, Best support for HSE priority Topics, Best Seminar/Workshop and Best Communication and Best Communication.

BHSEA was particularly pleased to win the Best Programme Award and to be Highly Commended for the Best Seminar/Workshop, as these two Categories are so closely related to our primary function of providing an information and advisory service to our members. It is doubly satisfying that it is an award, too, for our BHSEA Members who help with the organisation and presentation of all our events!

BHSEA Annual General Meeting

Chairman **Mark Hoare** opened the meeting by welcoming members and our speaker for the afternoon, Nick Ratty, HSE Head of Operations, West Midlands Region, who had been to our meetings several times over the years.

The Secretary read out Apologies from Harry Jakeman, Tony Hall, Geoff Harvey, Peter Evans, Sue Chalder and David Hughes.

Members had previously been sent the minutes of the 2006 AGM and, as there were no comments on accuracy, it was proposed by **Tony Thorne**, seconded by **Chris Peck** and AGREED by the members that they were an accurate record.

There were no Matter Arising from the minutes and the chairman introduced his written report by saying he didn't want to go through the whole report, just highlight some points. It was generally a successful year; we held all of our regular meetings and our one-day event at the National Motorcycle Museum. All were generally well attended.

He went on to say that BHSEA is one of about 70 similar groups that are members of Safety Groups UK (SGUK), which is affiliated to ROSPA. SGUK judged our 2006 programme the best programme and highly commended our Motor Cycle Museum event. It was the first time for a number of years we had submitted an entry. The award will be presented by Lord Hunt, Minister of Work and Pensions, in the House of Lords later this month.

We conducted a review of our activities by sending out a questionnaire to our members. 'Steady as you go' was the general consensus. We have already introduced a couple of changes – Attendance Certificates and lunch, which have proved very popular. The number of members has increased slightly (10) and we are financially sound.

As he said in his report, BHSEA, like the church, exists for members and non-members. But BHSEA is an under-used resource and Mark added the he was sure we can be of use to many of the organisations in the area who have a dearth of health and safety knowledge. This lack was demonstrated at the Revenue and Customs Open Day we supported last March. We were overwhelmed by enquiries.

Mark then appealed to members to publicise BHSEA to organisations they come into contact with, be they contractors, sub-contractors or people you have inspected, or met. Apart from our shop window, our monthly meeting, a lot advice and help is given behind the scenes, particularly via our Quinton Information Centre. Refer them to our web site or give them one of our publicity cards. Better still; bring them along to our meetings.

A couple of items that are not in his annual report was: -.

- Harry Jakeman, one of our most senior members and twice past chairman has presented a chain of office to be worn by the Construction Section Chairman.

- After many years active participation in BHSEA, David Simkin has decided to stand down from the BHSEA council. He told Mark he will still be coming to the meetings. A big “thank-you” to David for all his work and support for BHSEA.

Talking about our BHSEA council, Warwick last year mentioned that it was vital to get newer and younger members involved. It is good to report that we have had some new blood, but there is room for more.

Finally a few “thank-yous”, some of whom are listed in my written report.

Special thanks go to: -

- All our speakers
- Our Council and Management committee members
- Everyone here for supporting BHSEA.

Finally, a special thanks must to Andy and Liz Chappell, whom I think of as “Mr and Mrs BHSEA”. Without them we would not have half-as-good an association.

Gerry Mulholland then gave the Construction Section Report and said that it had been well represented by speakers throughout the year, starting with the Carillion “Target Zero” Initiative for vigorous, pro-active safety management. The Work at Height presentation in October was specially popular, combining as it did, the twin assets of theory and available hardware to demonstrate best practice.

Referring to the working Well Together campaign, he reported that BHSEA was supporting this at the local level by being involved in the organisation of the Safety and Health Awareness Day at Wolverhampton Racecourse. Due to the departure of Ray Cooke to another appointment, Andy Chappell was asked to assume the chairmanship of the organising committee until Ray’s successor, Richard Lockwood, took up the appointment. At the National Level, Warwick Adams, Andy Chappell and Gerry served on the Campaign Steering Group, which had just announced Regional Awards in the annual competition.

Regarding HSE support, Gerry said that this continued to be good and thanked Ray Cooke for his invaluable contribution over so many years. He welcomed the appointment of Richard Lockwood, who had stepped into the breach very well, and was proving to be extremely helpful.

Gerry then mentioned the BHSEA, 75th Anniversary initiative with the Wolverhampton University, HND and HNC Health and Safety Module in construction. The BHSEA contribution had expanded in this second year and we were planning further developments in 2007, including a degree course.

Gerry continued by reporting the the Construction Membership now stood at 107 but he appealed to members for individuals to volunteer for service on the Committee. He then reminded members about the joint event with HSE to launch the new **CDM 2007 Regulations on 16th May** and concluded by thanking the Committee Members, Andy and Liz Chappell for their support.

The Secretary then gave the report on the Annual Accounts for 2005/2006. As in previous years, he had asked for written questions on specific details before the AGM and reported that he had not received any. His main comment was that the format was slightly different from previous years, in that the Statement of Financial Activities had been changed as a result of alterations in the Charity Commission requirements. He added that there had been a noticeable change in the WWT Fund, as a result of handling the finances for the Wolverhampton SHAD. The results showed that our assets had increased by £25,500 over the year. It was proposed by **George Allcock**, seconded by **Gerry Mulholland** and AGREED by the meeting that the Accounts for 2005/2006 should be approved.

HSE Progress Report and Future Plans



**Nick Ratty, Head of Operations
HSE West Midlands Region**

As there was no further business, the Chairman closed the AGM and introduced the speaker, Nick Ratty, Head of Operations for HSE West Midlands. Nick started that although he was new to the job, he had been in the West Midlands before and knew of BHSEA's activities. In fact, on his very first day, the Regional director, Marcia Davies, had given Nick a copy of our 75th Anniversary booklet as part of his briefing on what was happening in the Region! He added that he had been in the HSE for about 25 years, partly in the Policy Directorate, working on Transport and Work at Height, and for some time had been a Principal Inspector on Construction in Manchester.

Nick focussed on the HSE future strategy, as he described the "Fit for Work, Fit for Life, Fit for tomorrow" campaign, referred to as "Fit 3". This encompassed: -

- The Public Sector (stress, return to work, managing sickness absence)
- Moving goods safely and Workplace Transport (Logistics HQs, pallet networks, road haulage)
- Falls (Facilities Management Companies, Ladders Week)
- Slips (Contract Cleaning Companies)
- Backs (Campaign early 2008)

This would be paired to a Major Hazards Campaign aimed at achieving Public Service Agreement (PSAs) Targets, by harnessing partnerships with Employer, Employee and Intermediaries. There would be less emphasis on major publicity campaigns!

Nick commented that in the public sector there was concern about stress and days lost from a range of ill-health causes. In the transport sector, he said that the campaign would focus on the supply chains and added that there were many pallet networks in the West Midlands that would come under scrutiny.

Regarding the Falls/Ladders initiative, he said the emphasis would be on facilities management companies who were “hard-to-reach” and would, therefore, probably be contacted for the first time by the HSE.

The reason for the “Slips” initiative was that the reduction in accidents had plateaued but there were a great number of days lost each year! It was special in that it was a pilot scheme for the West Midlands, looking at cleaning contractors, and that it would be followed by a national rollout!

The Fit3 initiative was also going to make use of “partnerships” for certain risk areas, such as the Royal Mail and Local Authorities for Slips and Materials Handling. The Waste Recycling Sector would be examined for safety in large plants and operations like kerbside waste collections. Nick went on to say that maintenance of large process plants would also be a target area, looking at mechanical hazards and access to high work and confined spaces. Agriculture would also be the subject for a new programme of SHADs, following the successful Construction experience and the food production chain would receive similar attention!

Disease reduction was also going to be a major operational concern for the HSE in 2008, with respiratory disease being given prominence in the motor vehicle repair industry, with widely-used Isocyanates receiving special attention. The metal fabrication, joinery and brick making industries would also be involved. Asbestos would continue to high priority, whilst dermatitis amongst dental nurses and technicians from use of resins, X-ray developers, cleaners and disinfectants would also be examined.

Another special risk in the West Midlands was Legionella Disease, where a large number of recent outbreaks were causing concern to the Health Protection Agency. There would be inspections in the plastics and health services, where the focus would be on the use of risk management systems.

Other Non-project work would involve Fairgrounds, where the focus would be on Noise and Vibration, with visits to suppliers of equipment and promotional work with users. There would be interventions with large employers and migrant workers in agriculture and the food industries would receive attention. Of course, Inspections would also continue to be a large feature of the HSE Work Plan!

In the Construction Industry, the major change in 2007 is going to be the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 and BHSEA will be a major partner in the West Midlands with the full day event at the Motor Cycle Museum on 16th May 2007! HSE will be monitoring the new role of the Safety Co-ordinator, in particular, but there will be special attention paid to falls in facilities management activities and the use of

ladders and access towers. The refurbishment sector will also be an important part of HSE activities.

The Major Hazard area would also be given new priorities, particularly after the Buncefield Report and pilot reward and recognition schemes would be developed. HSE would also seek to codify advice to Local Authorities on the use of land next to COMAH sites, to improve planning procedures. Nick mentioned Ray Cooke's new project with Local authorities to align them with the HSE. He concluded by saying that HSE resources would be 'recycled' from existing deployments to other expanding industries like the Offshore Sector.

Members' Questions

Mark Hoare of Birmingham University commented on the recent TV reports of the National Coach crash, which showed a tarpaulin being placed on the wreck before removal and said that this sort of operation was still being done unsafely. Nick indicated that a solution might be provided by equipment suppliers. Mark went on to ask if the balance between Prosecutions and Advice would alter and Nick answered that there were likely to be more prosecutions.

Dennis Walley of Homeserve plc asked, if enforcement was to carry on as before, whether Insurance Companies were more influential than prosecutions because they would impose their standards in the workplace? Nick commented that he had to agree Insurance Premiums were a very persuasive motivation!

As there were no other questions, the presentation closed with a vote of thanks to Nick for a very comprehensive view of the year ahead and members gave the usual round of applause.

Secretary's Note: Roger Wilson of Envirowise was invited to give a display of his organisation's services, which have been available to BHSEA members for some years. Envirowise is a superb government funded service on a wide range of waste management measures. You can access this on <http://www.envirowise.gov.uk>

BHSEA Annual Subscriptions

At the last count, some 67 members had not paid their Subscriptions for 2006/2007, resulting in a sum of £2,310 outstanding. With ever-rising postal, and energy charges, this has a considerable effect on our budget and increases the pressure to increase annual subscriptions.

So, if you have not yet received a Membership Certificate for 2006/2007, it may be that you have not paid your subscription! If so, we should be very grateful if you could send a cheque as soon as possible, please. BACS payments can be arranged, if preferred!

Date of the next Meeting

2.00 pm on Monday 12th February 2007
at the Birmingham Medical Institute

Regulating New Nano-Technologies

Presentation by Brian Fullam, HSE Corporate Science Unit, Bootle

Nanotechnologies involve materials and structures that have at least one dimension of less than 100 nm (a human hair is about 80,000nm wide). Particles with dimensions in the nanometre region have been produced as a by-product of many long standing processes, such as fires, diesel engines and high energy manufacturing processing, such as welding or grinding. In nanotechnologies, overall dimension and/or specific structural features are specifically controlled to either exploit novel quantum-based characteristics, or to create more functionality in a smaller volume than was previously possible.

HSE is interested because these new technologies will be used in British workplaces and the health and safety implications of working with materials of this scale have yet to be fully explored. HSE wishes to interact with those developing and using these new technologies, to ensure that the knowledge of any potential health and safety implications develops at the same time as nanotechnologies are commercialised.

Don't forget, Buffet Lunch at

1.15.pm