

Raising the HSE Profile with Vulnerable Groups

Janine Tickle, HSE Diversity Officer.

Bob Cole introduced this additional topic by explaining that it was a short time-scale, pilot HSE initiative in the West Midlands, that had not been attempted anywhere else in the UK. Because of the short time scale of twelve months, BHSEA had taken the decision to invite Janine Tickle to address our members in order to enlist their help. Janine explained that HSE wanted raise its profile with vulnerable worker groups who were not aware of their rights under H & S law. It defined ‘Vulnerable Workers’ as **“those who are at risk of having their workplace entitlements denied and who lack the capacity or means to secure them”**

Janine went on to say that examples falling within this definition are: -

- Disabled
- Ethnic minorities
- Inexperienced/Untrained
- Young/Old persons
- Migrant workers

The HSE aim was to build relationships with these communities, by visiting local festivals, sponsoring stands and developing partnerships. Raising awareness of HSE resources like the website and Infoline was essential and she added that the latter had an interpreter was available, for up to 100 languages, within one minute! Janine added that they emphasised the point that the law protected migrant worker, whether they were here illegally or not and aimed to help employers with good practice and what their duties were to their workers!

The Government had also launched a recent campaign for Agency Workers in the Construction and Hospitality sectors, with posters, on-line and local media publicity. There was also a Government-funded “Employment rights helpline”, being launched on 22nd September, on **0800 917 2368**.

In addition to this, Janine concluded that there were the following workplace enforcement agencies: -

National Minimum Wage Helpline	Gangmaster’s Licensing Authority
Employment Agency standards	HSE – Working Time Regulations
ACAS	CAB
DWP	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Home Office Worker Registration Scheme	