

Birmingham Health, Safety



& Environment Association

721 Hagley Road West
Quinton, Birmingham B32 1DJ
Tel: 0121 421 3463
Mobile: 07881 290238
E-Mail: Secretary@bhsea.org.uk
Website: www.bhsea.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 255523

Secretary: *Liz Prophett BA (Hons) CMIOSH CIPD*

Newsletter

May 2015

Monthly Meeting – 11 May 2015

George Allcock opened the meeting with a warm welcome to all and then handed over to Liz Prophett for a debrief of the recent Construction Event at the Barclaycard Arena on 22 April.

Construction Event - 'Looking Back – Moving Forward', 22 April

Liz reported that the event to mark the 60th anniversary of the Construction Committee also coincided with the 40th anniversary of the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the 16th year of the Working Well Together Campaign and had been a great success. Almost three hundred people attended and more than 30 exhibitors took part. BAM, who had been involved with the refurbishment of the venue, had negotiated for us to have free use of the facility.

The event – the first one of the 2015 SHAD programme - was chaired by Dr Alex Grieve, an occupational physician, and his relaxed delivery helped to ensure the programme ran smoothly. Alex has held a number of positions and is known to George Allcock from their time working together at GKN.

There were a number of speakers but the CDM presentation delivered by Tony Mitchell of the HSE proved to be the most popular one of the day (no surprises there!). The presentations and biopics of the speakers are available on the BHSEA website <http://www.bhsea.org.uk/2015symposium.htm>. There is also an article about the event in the latest edition of the RoSPA magazine, together with photographs of some of the presenters.

Please see future BHSEA communications for details of forthcoming events.

George gave special thanks to Neil Boon, BHSEA/WWT Construction Chair, for his organisation and management of the event, to Liz for her contribution and to all those who gave up their time in planning the event and assisting on the day.

George then introduced the main speakers for the day:



Neil Jobs and Patrick Donovan
CMS Training Limited

'Personal Safety & Lone Working'

CMS Training is a company based in London and Neil Jobs has been a director there for some 11 years. They specialise in the area of Personal Safety and Lone Working. Neil has also been a training manager for the Metropolitan Police.

Neil outlined the content of his presentation:

■ Key definitions, ie

'Lone Working' – a person who works by themselves without direct supervision. This could include persons working in the community as carers or social workers, long distance drivers, or sales personnel in isolated site offices.

'Work Related Violence' – an incident of actual or threatened physical abuse in a work related situation.

'Anti-social Behaviour' – aggressive or intimidating behaviour that damages or destroys another person's quality of life.

■ Legislation & National / European Standards.

On the HSE website (www.hse.gov.uk) there is a downloadable document: Guidance on the risks of working alone (INDG73).

Other standards are:

- British Standard (BS) 8484:2009 *Code of practice for lone worker device services* and National Occupational Standards for Prevention and Management of Work-Related Violence (WRV 1–14).
- A European social partner agreement came into force in 2010 on Preventing Workplace Harassment & Violence.

■ Assessing and controlling the risks

■ Technology solutions

■ The role of training

■ Some legal case law

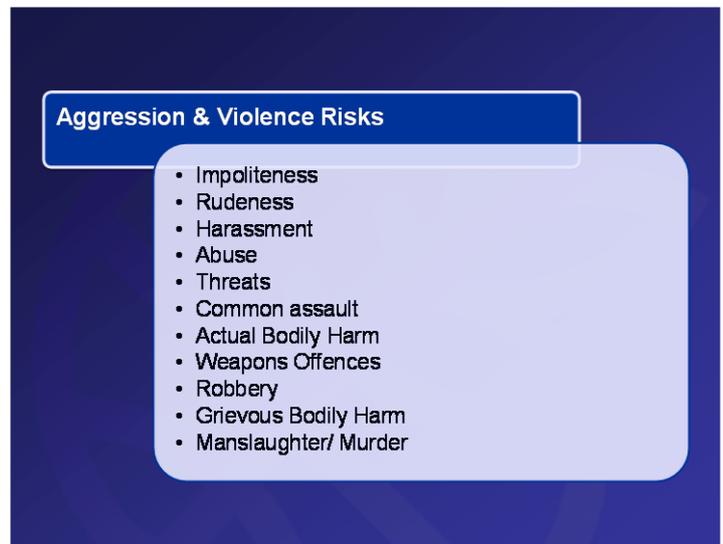
Responsibilities of the Employer

Preventing, identifying and managing harassment and violence

- Employers are responsible for identifying and managing the risk of harassment and violence at work.
- They should provide clear policies in relation to harassment and violence.

Assessing the Risks

Neil outlined a scenario where management had introduced stab proof vests for security personnel at a shopping complex. However, this had back-fired; the policy had been based on statistics which actually showed low risk and the subsequent negative impression to shoppers led to the policy being withdrawn after two years.



Statistics

There is a plethora of statistics now available, from national and local crime statistics to organisational records and those based on occupational risks.

Also there is the general public's perception of crime, which is often higher than is borne out by the statistics.

Since a peak in 2005, statistics indicate a downward trend in terms of violent crime within the UK. A crime survey conducted in 2014 indicated 31% of all crime reported was attributed to violent crime, with only arson and criminal damage being higher at 33%.

Violence at Work

Violence at work also peaked around 2005 and is also on a downward trend.

The current risk of assault or threat of violence at work is 1.1%

Crime Statistics

- 583,000 violent incidents against British workers
- 314,000 threats & 269,000 assaults
- 17% were repeat victims – 22% had 3 or more
- Strangers were offenders in 56% of cases
- 28% of assaults resulted in injury
- 1.0% of women and 1.2% of men were victims of violence at work

The chart (left) highlights crime statistics for England and Wales for the period 2013/2014.

RIDDOR Records

- In 2013/14 there were 4,936 RIDDOR reports of injuries to employees involving acts of violence in Great Britain
- one fatality
- 866 major or specified injuries
- 4,069 over-7-day injuries

Unsurprisingly a larger number of incidents affect workers in the protection industries, such as the police and prison services. Four in every one hundred occur in the health sector, which includes nurses.

People have, however, been the subject of physical assault where it has not even been documented on their personnel records. Most large organisations, such as local authorities, will have proper reporting mechanisms.

Housing Sector Survey 2012

This survey showed:

- 64% of survey respondents who do not report all assaults say incidents are 'just part of the job'
- 84% of survey respondents have been verbally assaulted
- 38% of survey respondents who have been assaulted did not report all incidents to their employer
- 51% of survey respondents believe their employer is not always doing enough to protect them from assault
- 8% of survey respondents have had a weapon used against them
- 1% of survey respondents have been sexually assaulted

New Technology



The tools to capture crime data are becoming ever more sophisticated. Neil advised that there is a police mapping website www.police.uk which captures details of crimes committed within specific locations, street by street.

Simply zooming in on an area of the map reveals such information as number and classification of crimes reported within that location.

Some Generic Control Measures

- Lone Working (LW) Policy & Procedures
- PPE
- Logging out/in procedures

- Individual record sheets
- At risk premises/persons information
- Monitoring centres
- Trackers
- Alarms & other LW devices. Do frequently check these to ensure they work.
- Awareness training
- Supervisory visits/checks

Remember that the objective is to reduce the likelihood of any violent situation occurring so it is vital to carry out appropriate and thorough Risk Assessments.

Technological Solutions

There are many sophisticated devices available today:

- tracking devices built into Smartphones
- monitoring centres
- audible panic alarms
- electronic alert systems

GPS and wi-fi can also be used to locate individuals via their mobile devices and can be useful for people whose cars break down in remote areas or in the case of a medical emergency.

Safety Awareness Training

Lee Dargue made the point that providing safety awareness training to staff helps them to realise that their employer is concerned about their welfare.

Neil went on to say that awareness training is particularly important for lone workers. It can:

- help people avoid panicking in unusual situations
help them to identify circumstances beyond their experience and seek advice from superiors, particularly when facing aggression
- highlight the need for them to be sufficiently experienced, competent to deal with new and unusual circumstances and to fully understand the risks involved and precautions they can take to ensure their safety.

Here is an example of a Checklist for a Community Worker

- Decide if a site or home visit is essential
- Check the person or premises are known!
- Review in light of information – (known risk, high crime area, contentious issue)
- Go inside or stay on doorstep?
- Do not enter if you do not feel comfortable - Full support will be given
- Have an excuse to leave ready
- Return to car & seek advice or back-up
- In the premises – check your escape route

- Check customer credentials
- Always carry and display your ID and letters of authority where appropriate
- Try to conduct visits in daylight if possible
- Limit night time and weekend working where possible
- Avoid carrying valuables
- If in doubt – seek advice

Common Issues Encountered

- Ineffective, informal or non-existent log in/out procedures
- Risk assessments that have not fully considered lone working risks
- Cutting edge IT not in use due to charging/maintenance issues. People need to be proficient at this – if the system is too difficult people will stop using it.
- Monitoring procedures not followed due to employee frustration/lack of time
- Failure to report all incidents of aggression/violence in an attempt to avoid getting others “into trouble” and seeing it as “all part of the job”.
- Limited sharing of information on people or premises of concern. An extreme example of the consequences of failure to exchange relevant information led to a community support worker being murdered. Ashleigh Ewing was sent to the home of a paranoid schizophrenic to deliver a letter telling him he was in debt. The client had a history of mental illness and violence, having previously attacked his parents with a hammer - but Ashleigh was not made aware of this and had been allowed to attend the visit unaccompanied. She was attacked within 15 minutes of entering the house, stabbed 39 times and killed. The Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust was severely criticised in a subsequent report

The report said: *“It is the view of the panel that if a robust risk assessment had been completed including a consideration of the lone working policy with (the client), such lone working would have been abandoned and joint visits implemented”.*

When it all goes wrong – Some Further Cases

St Nicholas Hospital in Gosforth

- Nurse left alone with patient who became violent
- Alarms were pressed, but failed to work
- She suffered facial scarring and hair loss
- The NHS trust admitted liability and settled out of court

Leicestershire County Council

- Kitchen worker left unsupervised serving teas at a hatch
- She received verbal assaults and threats from a service user
- She spent time off work as a result
- She argued that council had failed to assess the risk to her
- She was awarded £40,000 compensation

Roadchef Motorway Services

- Female night time forecourt attendant
- Premises were robbed by three hooded youths
- In scuffle she received injuries to her knee and subsequently retired
- She took legal action alleging failure to ensure her safety
- She won the case and received £35,000 compensation

In Summary

Five Key Points:

- Think laterally when assessing risks
- Involve lone workers in looking for solutions
- If unsure – get some advice
- Follow up and check that procedures are being followed
- Keep reviewing!

Dog Attacks

Neil handed over to Patrick to complete the presentation by giving some general advice about how to behave when confronted with an unfriendly dog, the signs of aggression to watch out for and how to gain precious minutes by distracting the dog with the simple use of a piece of paper (eg A4 size) held between yourself and the dog.

The main point he made was you must attempt to dominate the dog with your voice (controlled and authoritative, not high and shrill) and your posture (tall and upright) and, if at all possible, don't run away – the dog will think it is a game. But the best advice is to **KEEP AWAY**.

George thanked Neil and Patrick for their informative and entertaining presentations.

For Neil and Patrick's presentation slides, refer to the BHSEA website www.bhsea.org.uk.

Members' Corner



**Steve Parton,
Vice Chairman, BHSEA**

Skin Cancer Melanoma

Steve showed an excellent video called “No Time to Lose” that is available via the IOSH website. IOSH have recently had a big

campaign on cancers arising from the workplace but this video focuses on skin cancer, which is a big issue for workers who spend a large proportion of their time outdoors. This in the main would be construction workers but could also apply to landscape gardeners and postmen etc. The issue has not had a very high profile up to now but this campaign aims to raise awareness.

Steve has established that there are various free and very informative aids and leaflets available via this website <http://www.notimetolose.org.uk/Free-resources/Resource-library/Sun-safety-film.aspx>

Steve's presentation highlighted the dangers of over exposure to the sun and encouraged members to consider the implications for workers within their business and to take the necessary action to protect them.

Skin Cancer: The Facts

- Skin cancer **kills 60 workers a year** in Britain alone
- Skin exposure is linked to **65% of malignant melanoma and 99% of non-melanoma skin cancer**
- Skin cancer is the most common cancer
- **77% of workers** in large construction companies have not had any sort of training on the risks of working in the sun!
- **80% of the dangerous sun's rays get through a cloudy sky!**

Dangerous times of the day and year

The most dangerous times of the day are between 11.00am and 3.00pm during the months from April to September. The UVA rays cause damage to the DNA as they penetrate more deeply than the UVB rays, and this leads to the development of skin cancer. Those who have had cancer are nine times more at risk of skin cancer. And it's not just about bright sunlight. The sun's rays can be reflected off water, sand, even concrete.

Who is at risk?

Everyone really, but in particular those with fair or red hair who freckle and those who have suffered from sunburn in the past are most at risk.

10 sun safety measures

- Forecasts of UV levels are now available via websites, newspapers and TV and workers should, wherever possible, avoid working outside when levels are high.
- Workers should especially try to avoid working outside during the most dangerous times of the day.
- If not practicable then workers should rotate their tasks to ensure no one is over exposed.
- Sun protection with a SPF factor of 30+ should be worn on all exposed skin. Ensure that the product has been fully absorbed before going out into the sun and re-apply throughout the day, as required.
- In hotter weather there is a tendency to wear less clothing. However, it is vital to wear suitable clothing and headwear which is lightweight, made of

materials which wick away moisture, and covers the skin - especially vulnerable areas like the back of the neck,

- Remember that where clothing is provided by the employer then, by law, the employee must wear it.
- Eye protection must also be worn to prevent damage that could lead to the development of cataracts. This must have a rating of 400 and offer 100% UV protection.
- Drinking water helps keep hydration levels high.
- Check your skin regularly – at least once a month - for any changes in skin pigmentation and especially draw attention to your GP any moles which darken or change shape or develop a ragged edge. Have someone else check areas you are unable to see, like your back or back of the legs.
- Guidance is available on the web as to how to check moles and what to look for.

Final Thought

Skin cancer is on the increase, but it is preventable and early detection is vital. Remember that skin cancer is like an iceberg: what you see on the surface of the skin could hide a much larger affected area at the lower level so **DO NOT IGNORE IT.**

Other News

The Birmingham Medical Institute have advised us that they will no longer be able to provide conference facilities after our October meeting this year.

Discussions have taken place with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce (situated directly opposite the BMI) and the November and December meetings have been provisionally booked. Free parking will be available on that site as part of the arrangement.

Further information regarding the location of 2016 meetings will follow in due course. However, if any member should have any suggestions for a suitable venue with good access and on-site parking, please do let the Secretary know (Secretary@bhsea.org.uk).

Extraordinary General Meeting

There will be an Extraordinary General Meeting at the beginning of the meeting on 8 June to take a vote on the revised Articles of Association, which were circulated to Members on 20 May 2015.

SHADs: July to November 2015

Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADs) 2015 West Midlands Working Well Together Group			
Topic	Date	Venue	Time
Safe Practice in Excavations*	7 July	Broad Street Rugby Club, Coventry	8.00-12.30
CDM / Temporary Works / Work at Height etc	8/9 September (TBC)	TBC	8.00-12.30
Managing Health in Construction (BHSEA Programme Meeting)	12 October	Birmingham Medical Institute	14.00-16.00
TBC	November (TBC)	TBC	8.00-12.30

* Details to be confirmed via Flyer which will be circulated shortly. Bookings via Flyer and the HSE in the normal way.

Date of Next Meeting

2.00 pm Monday, 8 June 2015

at the Birmingham Medical Institute

Main Presentation

Risk v Sacrifice: Myths and Realities
(the concept of reasonable practicability)

Nicola Cárdenas-Blanco, Associate,
Disputes Resolution Group, SGH Martineau LLP

Members' Corner

Leadership

George Allcock, BHSEA Chair

Don't forget the buffet lunch at 1.15 pm