



**EASTWOOD  
& PARTNERS**  
INSURANCE BROKERS

# Health & Safety quarterly bulletin

Volume 2 Issue 1

February 2008

## Observations

- The HSE released the Statistics for 2006/2007 last year in Great Britain
- 2.2 million people suffered from work related illnesses.
- 241 people were killed at work.
- 30 million working days were lost due to ill-health
- The HSE issued 20% more improvement notices.
- Industry was fined a total of over £13 million for flaunting health and safety laws

## Training

Contact us to discuss your training needs.

We are able to offer courses in **Manual Handling awareness, Risk Assessment and Workplace Health Safety and Welfare**

We can also prepare bespoke courses to meet your needs.

We can assist you by guiding you in preparing your own Business Continuity Plan

## Eastwood and Partners Limited Insurance Brokers

### SAFE DRIVING

Driver safety is an ever increasing area where companies are coming into the headlines due to the driving errors of their employees.

There are a number of driver training programmes on the market, for you to choose from.

The Norwich Union have a PC CD-ROM called "Roadsense" free to Norwich Union customers.

There is also a soft ware programme called "SAFE DRIVING PLUS" which is both a risk assessment and e-learning tool. This is targeted at company drivers.

There are of course other products available and I have only mentioned these as examples and do not seek to say that they are the ones that you should consider.

The aim of any driver training system should be to improve driving behaviour with the aim being to reduce the possibility of accidents on the road.

It has been calculated that there is on average 20 deaths each week on the public road.

Many drivers of vehicles fail to undertake the most basic of checks for example water washers these are often filled up when they are empty, persons with company cars also consider that the periodic servicing is all that is needed (as the water bottle is often topped up by the garage).

If you provide a company vehicle to an employee, then you as an employer should seek to ensure that they undertake regular inspections of the vehicle that they drive.

You need to bring to the attention of ALL employees that distractions can cause serious road accidents.

Distractions such as receiving or making a call on a mobile phone while driving, should be considered as unacceptable.

Other areas of distraction should be discouraged, for example eating while driving,

Guidance on safe driving techniques covering areas of:

Concentrate, Observe, Anticipate, Space, Time. Should be given to enable drivers to drive safer.

**DO NOT LET YOUR DRIVERS  
BECOME A STATISTIC**

Seek out the most appropriate method of getting the message across to YOUR driver's

## SLIPS AND TRIPS

Slip and trip accidents are a serious problem in warehousing and storage and can happen anywhere. They are often seen as trivial and 'just one of those things', but most slip and trip accidents can be avoided.

### Slips

Slips usually happen because the floor is wet or contaminated.

Within warehouses, water, oil, cleaning products, dry powders and foodstuffs can all make the floor more slippery. Other items, like stretch wrapping, label backing and plastic bags, can also cause slips.

Try to stop the floor getting contaminated, eg by maintaining equipment properly.

When contamination does happen, deal with it immediately, by cleaning.

Most floors have good slip resistance when they are clean, dry and level. However, smooth floors that become even a bit wet or contaminated may well become slippery; in general the rougher the floor, the better it will cope with water and other contamination and the less likely someone is to slip.

The right footwear can help reduce slips in certain environments but the issuing of footwear specifically to reduce slips should only be considered as a last resort when all other options have been applied – try to eliminate the root of the problem first.

### Trips

Objects on the floor or uneven surfaces are usually the cause of trips. Trip hazards these can include items like goods, waste packaging, banded strapping loops and pallets.

Plan workflows and storage to make sure that goods, equipment and waste do not cause

obstructions or project into places where people may walk. Keep floors and traffic routes free from obstructions. Check that floor surfaces are even both inside and outside buildings and fill in any holes.

Provide good lighting.

Good housekeeping is important; if items fall onto traffic routes, clear them as soon as possible. Also inspect the workplace regularly to make sure that there are no trip hazards.

The above was taken as an extract from the HSE Publication Warehousing and Storage.

## POINTS OF INTEREST

There are many stories circulating about my jobs worth characters in health and safety banning activities which we ourselves may have done just a few years ago.

Some aspects of risk have to be managed correctly if we are to reduce the number of deaths that occur in the workplace every year, what we have to keep sight of is that we may not be able to eliminate the risk, it is then that awareness of the risk and the way it has to be worked with has to be taken seriously.

Many workers do not take risks in their work when they are provided with sufficient information on what is required of them and within agreed timescales, in fact it is often these workers which can identify good safe methods of working which allows for the work to be done safely.

Sensible risk management is about:

Good communication between management and the workforce

Ensuring that workers and the public are properly protected

Enabling innovation and learning not stifling them

Enabling people to understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility

Ensuring that those who create risks manage them and understand that failure to manage real risks responsibly is likely to lead to robust action.

It IS NOT about creating a total risk free society and generating mountains of useless paperwork

## Recent cases

Following the death of a worker in August 2005 the Crown Prosecution Service pursued a manslaughter charge against an employee of a building services company, while the HSE and Police served summonses for alleged breaches of health and safety at work legislation.

Legal proceedings were brought after the employee (a 28 year old male) was killed when a 9-tonne dumper truck that he was driving overran the edge of an embankment. In trying to jump clear he sustained extensive injuries when he was crushed by the toppled truck and was pronounced dead at the scene.

The site foreman and employee of the company was found not guilty of the CPS manslaughter charge, but guilty of a charge under the Health and safety at work Act 1974 he was fined £5,000 to be paid in 28 days of face 3 months imprisonment.

A director of the company was fined £15,000 to be paid within three months of face 9 months imprisonment. The company had already pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing and was fined £55,000

The Judge's opening remarks best summarised the case when he said: "This case shows why it is necessary to have proper rules and procedure on construction sites—this accident was wholly avoidable.

### Health and Safety Executive has reminded all EMPLOYEES not to flout the law following the death of 90 year old Leeds man

Employees are reminded to follow procedures that they have learned in training and to make proper use of equipment provided by their employers.

Two employees both from Barnsley pleaded guilty to health and safety charges at Leeds Magistrates court, one was fined £250 plus £250 costs the other £400 plus £400 costs. They both failed to erect barriers around an excavation leaving it unguarded, the 90 year old Leeds man fell 1.5 metres into the excavation and died in hospital from head injuries two weeks later. The employer was not found at fault.

### Compensation awarded for serious finger injury

An employee of a large packaging company sustained serious injury to his left ring finger when it became trapped between two rollers.

The injury left the employee with nerve damage to his finger, as well as requiring skin grafts. With support of his union the employee secured a compensation payment of £5,500.

The employee had not received any formal training and had not been shown and safe working procedures to handle the machinery correctly.

It is essential where an employee is to work with machinery that they are provided with proper training and suitable protection.

## News

### Glasgow factory blast inquiry announced

Lord Gill the lord justice clerk, has been appointed chairman of the public enquiry into the ICL Plastics explosion. The inquiry will look at circumstances that led to the incident, which left nine dead and thirty three injured in May 2004, and make recommendations as to how regulations and procedures can be improved

### Long-Hours working on the increase again

Following a slow but steady decline in people working more than 48 hours a week, the number of people in the UK who are working long hours is on the rise.

According to a TUC analysis of the Labour Force Survey published in November more than one in eight of the workforce now works more than 48hours a week.

Although the working time regulations are there to protect people from working an average of 48 hours a week the opt-out clause means that bad employers can breach the law fearing few consequences.

The TUC added that official figures underestimated long hours working. For more information about the analysis of the survey visit. [WWW.tuc.org.uk/work\\_life/tuc-14014-f0.cfm](http://WWW.tuc.org.uk/work_life/tuc-14014-f0.cfm)

Clarification of manual handling legislation is one of the aims of this year's simplification plan

The aim is to ensure safe movement of loads by employees without unnecessary or disproportionate costs on employers. In its entirety the plan covers the period May 2005 to 2010 and is part of the of the better regulations agenda, the government-imposed drive to reduce administrative burdens imposed by legislation and the HSC's own strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain to 2010.