



SCOHSG meeting

9 December 2021

Venue: Crooklands Hotel, Crooklands, Kendal

Topic: *HSE update*

Speaker: Steven Boyd, Principal Inspector of Health and Safety, HSE, Carlisle

Carol Stearne, Treasurer, *South Cumbria Occupational Health & Safety Group* said that it gave her great pleasure to welcome members, visitors and especially our speaker, Steve Boyd from *HSE*, to the group's first face-to-face meeting since January 2020. She explained that that unfortunately, Phil Sedgwick, our chairman, was unable to attend due to ill-health but that he sent everyone his best wishes. Carol also thanked attendees for complying with the group's Covid-19 precautions and expressed the hope that members would like our new meeting venue.

She then handed over to Steve who agreed that it was a pleasure to be at a face-to-face meeting again and to see such a good turnout. He started his presentation by summarising the topics that he planned to cover:

- Changes in *HSE* during 2020/2 including *HSE's* strategy and role as *Building Safety Regulator*.
- Update on key parts of *HSE's* 2021/22 workplan - Covid-19, fabricated metal, food manufacturing, waste and recycling and construction.
- Summary of notable *HSE* cases in the northwest.

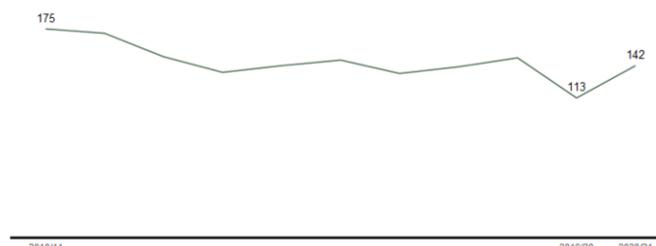
Steve said that, as always, *HSE's* main role was to protect people and places by:

- Reducing ill health caused by poor workplace risk assessments and inappropriate workplace control measures.
- Supporting workplace innovations that led to more efficient and safer workplaces.
- Ensuring that employers maintained safe working conditions through safe systems of work, good management systems and appropriate control measures, equipment maintenance systems and employee training programmes.
- Maintaining GB as one of the safest places to work.

Steve explained that *HSE's* health focus aimed to reduce work related; ill health (including mental health), stress, musculoskeletal injuries, and exposure to harmful substances. He said that in 2019/20 a labour force survey recorded 1.6 million cases of new and longstanding work-related ill health. Of these 51% were for stress, depression, and anxiety, 30% for musculoskeletal disorders and 19% for other work-related illnesses.

He then told members that the number of fatal injuries at work had generally declined between 2010 and 2019, followed by a significant decline during lockdown in 2020 and a return to previous levels during 2020/21.

Figure 1: Fatal injuries to workers: GB 2010/11 - 2020/21p.



Steve then explained *HSE's* new role as *Building Safety Regulator (BSR)* includes the following requirements:

- *HSE* is now a statutory *Local Authority* consultee for planning applications.
- *BSR* will become the building control authority for high-rise buildings.
- Decision points will be introduced during building design and construction stages that will ensure that the duty holder has statutory responsibilities when buildings are designed, built, refurbished, and occupied. This means that duty holders can be held to account when there are problems.
- It will be a legal requirement to set up, store, and update building information records throughout the building's life cycle.
- Building operators will have a mandatory requirement to report prescribed fire and structural safety occurrences to *BSR*.

Steve said that during 2022 *HSE* will continue focussing on four main industries: fabricated metal, food manufacturing, waste and recycling and construction as well as responding to workplace health and safety incidents and reported workplace safety concerns. In addition:

- During the Covid-19 pandemic, all workplace visits will include an assessment of Covid-19 measures using a triaged approach covering workplace risk assessments, ventilation policies and hygiene protocols (personal and cleaning).
- If an inspector incidentally notices any other health and safety problems these will also be addressed.

When inspecting fabricated metal and engineering facilities Steve explained that *HSE* inspectors will be looking at control measures for the handling of metal working fluids and controlling employees' exposures to welding fumes because they can cause occupational asthma, occupational hypersensitivity pneumonitis (UHP) and dermatitis. He explained the importance of managing key risks such as inhalation of noxious mists. *HSE* inspectors will expect workplace management strategies to include risk assessments using the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) hierarchy, the use of appropriate local exhaust ventilation (LEV) if necessary, safety management systems that include adequate supervision, traceable equipment maintenance and employee training.

Steve then explained that waste and recycling facilities continued to be high risk workplaces due to problems associated with sorting and recycling a wide range of waste materials that were often randomly mixed and potentially hazardous. He stressed that employers needed site management systems that ensured that their site was well organised and safe, that all vehicles and equipment (including machine guards), were regularly checked as part of a site maintenance programme and that all vehicle drivers had adequate training and were supervised to ensure that they followed site traffic rules and protocols.

Steve said that another of *HSE's* priority industries was food manufacturing where there was still an unacceptable level of musculoskeletal disorders amongst employees due to the repetitive nature of many tasks in this industry. This meant that *HSE* inspectors would be looking at manual handling risk assessments during their visits. He reminded members that *HSE's* web site provided excellent guidance with:

- Manual handling assessment charts (the MAC tool) [Manual handling assessment charts \(MAC tool\) - HSE](#) and
- Assessment of repetitive tasks of the upper limbs (the ART tool) [HSE - ART tool](#)

Steve explained that the construction also continued to be high risk industry with the management of wood dust, silica dust and asbestos continuing to be of concern.

Steve then summarised some recent workplace *HSE* prosecutions in the northwest that illustrated the reasons that underpinned *HSE's* workplace strategies:

1. Fatal forklift truck overturn:
 - Struck an overhead obstruction.
 - Failure to assess and control safe traffic routes.
 - No witnesses.
 - Inadequate safe systems of work and supervision.

2. Rice load tipping fatality:
 - Tipper driver drowned by rice being tipped from his lorry.
 - Management failure to assess risk adequately.
 - Inadequate safe systems of work and supervision - driver should not have been able to operate tipper while out of his cab.
3. Caretaker received multiple fractures as a result of falling from a roof:
 - He was collecting footballs – a fairly regular task.
 - No edge protection, or barriers were provided.
 - No risk assessment or safe system of work.
4. Welder fabricator developed hypersensitive pneumonitis:
 - He could not perform daily tasks without oxygen.
 - Employer did not ensure that there were effective controls and safe systems of work for metal working and welding.
5. Overloaded forklift truck overturned causing bystander fatality:
 - Forklift truck fell sideways due to overloading and crushed an HGV driver.
 - An untrained Director of the company was driving the forklift truck.
 - Employer did not ensure that there were effective controls and safe systems of work.
 - Company and Director fined.
6. Serious hand injury due to lack of machinery guarding used at a waste disposal site:
 - There was hand access to dangerous moving parts of waste sorting equipment.
 - The equipment's basic interlocking system did not cover all moving parts.
 - Employer did not ensure that there were effective controls and safe systems of work.
7. Unregistered gas fitter
 - An unregistered gas fitter claimed to be on the *Gas Safe* register and undertook 'at risk' gas work despite earlier warnings.
 - He was given a suspended sentence and a community order.
8. Repeated non-compliance with enforcement notices:
 - HSE inspectors had encountered repeated management health and safety failings on site that led to them issuing 10 enforcement notices over a long period of time.
 - Management problems included persistent failure to set up safe systems of work to control employees' exposure to welding fumes and aerosols from spray painting operations.
 - £90,000 fine plus prosecution costs.

Steve noted that one of the saddest aspects of these *HSE* prosecutions was that all the incidents cited were avoidable. In all cases employers had failed to ensure the safety of their employees by developing adequate risk assessment systems and safe systems of work (including appropriate supervision, equipment maintenance and training).

Steve then fielded questions from members who were delighted to have the opportunity for a constructive face-to-face discussion with an experienced *HSE* representative.

Carol thanked Steve for his helpful, informative, and worthwhile presentation and encouraged members to network with one another and Steve over tea or coffee and cake. She also wished members a Happy Christmas and asked them to give committee members feedback about our new venue.

Everyone agreed that it was a pleasure to attend a face-to-face meeting after so long and was looking forward to the planned joint *SCOHSG* and *South Cumbria and North Lancashire*

IOSH Branch a face-to-face meeting on 17 February 2022, at the Crooklands Hotel, Crooklands when Sam Duxbury, SHE Manager, *Walter Carefoot & Sons (Construction) Ltd* will be giving SCOHSG members a presentation on: *Competence: how can workplace competence be assessed? A common sense approach.*

Carol explained that registration for this meeting would be via the *Eventbrite* website and that registration details will be published in early January.

Related HSE information:

HSE strategy plans: [Health and Safety at work - Strategy \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy/)

HSE health priority plans: [HSE - Health priority plans](https://www.hse.gov.uk/health-priority-plans/)

HSE sector plans: [HSE: Sector plans](https://www.hse.gov.uk/sector-plans/)

HSE management system guidance: [Management systems for addressing health and safety - HSE](https://www.hse.gov.uk/management-systems-for-addressing-health-and-safety/)

HSE guidance for employers and managers with health and safety responsibilities: [Managing for health and safety at work overview - HSE](https://www.hse.gov.uk/managing-for-health-and-safety-at-work-overview/)

HSE guidance on their new role as *Building Safety Regulator (BSR)*: [Building safety - HSE](https://www.hse.gov.uk/building-safety/)

Sources of other relevant information:

UK Government building safety management systems fact sheet: [Safety management systems: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/safety-management-systems)

UK Government *Building Safety Regulator (BSR)* fact sheet: [Building Safety Regulator: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/factsheets/building-safety-regulator)