The HSE is planning a new strategy that could shake up the way the construction industry is regulated.

The regulator told a meeting of the Construction Industry Advisory Committee (CONIAC) that it intends to re-examine the evidence base for interventions in construction. The aim is to examine HSE and industry data against a list of 29 risk categories to create a risk map for the construction industry that will allow it to prioritise its work, scaling back interventions in some areas and focusing on others.

The Industry Risk Profiles identified are: asbestos; confined spaces; contact with electricity crushed by excavation; fall from ladder; fall from open edge; fall from scaffold; fall through fragile material; fire/explosion; good order (tidy sites); lead machinery guarding; manual handling; mechanical lifting operations; MEWP operations; noise; other hazardous substances; overturning plant; public protection; silica dust; stress; struck by falling objects; struck by flying objects; struck by moving vehicle; unintended collapse; using hand/power tools; vibration; welfare and wood dust.

The Construction Sector Strategy will use sources such as RIDDOR reports, concerns reported to the HSE, Notices of Contravention, Improvement Notices, Prohibition Notices and prosecutions. “We will also consider any available sources of health data such as the Labour Force Survey,” said the executive.

The strategy “will allow more informed consideration of priorities, where action might be needed and who is best placed to bring about change: the industry, the regulator or both working together,” it added.

IIRSM welcomes this development. Technical Committee member Anne Mallory believes there are many issues in the construction industry that have historically gone unrecognised, particularly around mental health. “Anything that serves to make us think outside the box and identify boundaries beyond safety – to health and wellbeing – can only be regarded as a positive,” she says.

“There are very real operational hazards that need to be addressed, but also the wider health remit as longer term effects are a significant legacy and will continue to be so in the construction industry.”

Do you believe this strategy will help make the construction industry safer and healthier? Join the debate on LinkedIn.
Distillery pays £295,000 after blaze burns down warehouse

A chemical and alcohol producer has been prosecuted after a 21-year-old worker was seriously burned in a fire that gutted its West Midlands warehouse.

The worker was transferring the highly-flammable ethyl acetate from a bulk storage tank into an intermediate bulk container at Alcohol’s distillery in Oldbury. As the liquid caught fire, engulfing him in flames, the worker sustained 20% burns to his head, neck and hands. The fire also gutted its West Midlands warehouse.

It also found there was poor maintenance of pipework and associated valves, and there was a failure to competently inspect the equipment or monitor the systems of work. Alcohol’s pleaded guilty to breaching Sections 2(1) and 3(1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and was fined £270,000 plus costs of £25,099.

The fire at the Alcohol’s distillery destroyed the warehouse and caused damage to nearby cars and houses.

HSE urged to review guidance for pregnant workers

Following a study by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) earlier this year that thousands of expectant mothers are forced out of work each year because their employers do not take safety risks, a cross party committee of MPs is urging the HSE to force employers to carry out individual risk assessments for all new and expectant mothers.

The report revealed that one in 25 pregnant women have to leave their jobs due to risk factors at work not being addressed. Scalped up to the general population, this suggests that as many as 21,000 expectant mothers are forced to leave their jobs each year due to unmanaged risks.

The survey also portrayed a worrying situation on maternity-related harassment and discrimination, with 11% of mothers reported that they were either dismissed or made compulsorily redundant where others in their workplace were not, or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job.

Women working in hotels, restaurants and health and social care are most likely to be affected.

According to the survey, 38% of women said their employer did not initiate a conversation about risk when they informed them of their pregnancy and 19% said they identified risks their employer had not.

Number of expectant mothers forced out of their jobs each year

LEGIONELLA

G4S fined £1.8m for substandard water systems

Security giant G4S Cash Solutions has been fined £1.8 million after Harlow Council prosecuted the company for failing to protect its workers from the risk of Legionnaires’ disease.

In October 2013 the council received a report that a local resident had contracted Legionnaires’ disease. Environmental health officers inspected G4S’s site for all potential sources of infection. The resident worked at the site and though it was never confirmed that the disease was contracted from the site, investigators revealed a serious lack of compliance in maintaining water systems at the site.

Chelmsford Crown Court heard that the monitoring and testing of systems was erratic, staff had received inadequate training, and there were no date policies or suitable and sufficient risk assessments in place to safely operate or manage the building’s water systems.

CONSTRUCTION

New mental health programme launched

Mates in Mind will help improve and promote positive mental health across the UK’s construction industry

An initiative to help raise awareness and understanding of poor mental health in the construction sector has been announced.

It is estimated that the number of deaths from suicide in the construction industry could be ten times higher than those from fatal accidents at work, according to IRSM Council Member Clive Johnson.

Mates in Mind, led by the Health in Construction Leadership Group (HCLG) and supported by the British Safety Council, has been set up to help employers address the issue of mental health in the industry.

Clive Johnson, Chair of the Health in Construction Leadership Group, said: “The mission of HCLG is to unite the construction industry in order to eradicate the ill health and disease caused by work-related activities, and this includes addressing mental health. We believe we can make a significant difference.

According to the British Journal of Psychiatry, certain occupational groups are at elevated risk of suicide compared with the general employed population, or compared with other occupational groups. A study in December 2013 revealed that at greatest risk were labourers, cleaners and domestic occupations.

It is estimated that there are 2.5 million people employed in the construction sector in the UK, which accounts for just over 6% of the population’s jobs.

InBrief

A quarter of mental health patients are advised not to quit smoking

New research has revealed that a third of those in the UK are told not to take up smoking, putting their health further at risk. According to new data collated by VapourLites.com, 80% of mental health patients attempt to quit smoking, but alarmingly 23% are advised not to quit and 37% are offered no support to give up cigarettes.

Improvements were made eventually, it had taken G4S almost three years from the date of a risk assessment in 2012 to reach minimum standards to protect its staff and visitors from exposure to Legionella bacteria.

“Million-pound-plus fine should send a serious and important message to other companies. Legionnaires’ disease is a real risk and companies need to take their health and safety duties to their employees and others very seriously.”
**CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER**

**Director jailed over second worker death**

A company director has been sentenced to 12 months in prison after an employee was crushed to death when a mobile work platform fell onto him.

Manchester Crown Court heard that Paul Williamson, who had not received adequate training on how to use ramps, lorries or mobile elevated working platforms, was the second worker to die while working for Kenneth Thelwall.

The 51-year-old was killed when a remote controlled MEWP he was loading on to a truck fell from the ramps and crushed him.

The court heard that the gradient of the ramps was above the manufacturer’s specification and they were not secured to the truck.

There was no risk assessment in place and no safe system of work for the equipment, which had only been in operation for eight days.

Williamson’s fatal accident followed another workplace death under the direct management of Thelwall.

In 2010, employee Bernard Rowson was crushed to death by a metal gate at an industrial estate in Winsford, Cheshire that was owned and operated by Thelwall’s company, Thelwall Developments. Thelwall himself had designed the gate system, but it jammed in the wrong position and then fell forward, killing Rowson.

In March 2012 the court was acquitted of a corporate manslaughter charge in a two-week trial at Chester Crown Court. However, he admitted separate safety charges, including failing to ensure the safety of the work he was doing.

Thelwall was also disqualified from being a company director for seven years.

Number of months Kenneth Thelwall was jailed for: 12

**WORK AT HEIGHT**

Adventure park builder fined £500,000 for risking 11m fall

A Bulgarian-based construction company specialising in climbing walls and adventure parks that allowed staff to work at height without any fall protection has been made to pay a penalty of £500,000.

In March 2012, Thelwall Developments, a member of the public reported concerns about work at height being carried out from a remote control MEWP he was using and crushed him.

The court heard that the gradient of the ramps was above the manufacturer’s specification and they were not secured to the truck.

There was no risk assessment in place and no safe system of work for the equipment, which had only been in operation for eight days.

Williamson’s fatal accident followed another workplace death under the direct management of Thelwall.

In 2010, employee Bernard Rowson was crushed to death by a metal gate at an industrial estate in Winsford, Cheshire that was owned and operated by Thelwall’s company, Thelwall Developments. Thelwall himself had designed the gate system, but it jammed in the wrong position and then fell forward, killing Rowson.

In March 2012 the court was acquitted of a corporate manslaughter charge in a two-week trial at Chester Crown Court. However, he admitted separate safety charges, including failing to ensure the safety of the work he was doing.

Thelwall was also disqualified from being a company director for seven years.

Number of months Kenneth Thelwall was jailed for: 12

**WORKER REPRESENTATION**

TUC attacks government’s ‘blatant abuse of rules’

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) has condemned the government after it emerged a former employer and business leader was appointed to the HSE Board that was reserved for a representative of ‘employees’ interests’.

Work and Pensions Secretary Damian Green named Susan Johnson — who has “no background representing workers” — to one of the employee representative seats on the board.

The TUC said the minister’s selection of Johnson, who holds several other paid board-level appointments, upset the statutory balance of representation between workers and employers on the regulator’s board.

The TUC also said the vacancy wasn’t advertised and organisations representing workers were not consulted and told the TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady said: “The government cannot appoint an employer to represent workers. It’s a blatant abuse of rules that are there to ensure a fair balance between workers and bosses.”

She added: “The HSE works best when employers and unions work together as equal partners, as intended by the Health and Safety at Work Act. By rejecting the consensus approach, the government is sending out a dangerous signal to bad bosses who put staff at risk by cutting corners. Along with the Trade Union Act, it’s a blatant attack on the ability of trade unions to protect the health and safety of working people.”

Five more non-executive director Board appointments were also made. The seats were given to Janice Crawford, Kevin Rowan and Ken Robertson. Existing Board members George Brechin and Jonathan Baume, have also been appointed for a second term.

**REGULATION**

HSE continues deregulation drive by reviewing more four sets of regs

- New phase of programme aimed at making work equipment regs more “proportionate”

The HSE is reviewing the requirements in health and safety legislation for the inspection or thorough examination of work equipment contained in four sets of regulations.

The review forms part of the HSE’s broader deregulation programme, which has been prompted by the government’s commitment to cut £1bn of regulatory costs by the end of the current parliamentary term in 2020 – a goal overseen by the government’s Better Regulation Executive.

- The HSE is reviewing the requirements in health and safety legislation for the inspection or thorough examination of work equipment contained in four sets of regulations.

- Launching an online survey for businesses to share their experiences of complying with the legislation.

- The HSE hopes to find out what constitutes proportionate equipment inspection with a view to making improvements that will make compliance easier, the executive said.

- It hopes to find out what constitutes proportionate equipment inspection with a view to making improvements that will make compliance easier, the executive said.

The survey, which is open until at least the end of September, asks 11 questions about: who undertakes equipment inspections; the annual cost of inspections and whether it is a reasonable expense; sources of information; the benefits of inspections; and suggestions for improvements.

Institute News

Opportunities to learn and network

The Internet has gradually filtered into almost every aspect of our lives. Many of us routinely bank, shop and socialise online and the Internet is now the life-blood of commercial and non-commercial organisations alike. This offers plenty of scope for cyber attackers. The threat includes random, speculative attacks – designed to steal data from anyone unlucky enough to get infected, as well as the growing number of targeted attacks on organisations. Such attacks can be highly complex and may make use of very sophisticated techniques to infiltrate an organisation and steal sensitive data.

Typically, attacks start by ‘hacking the human’, for example by tricking people into divulging information that can be used to gain access to corporate resources. This presentation will outline the types of attack we see and the methods used to spread malware, who is behind them and what they want. The seminar will also look at how these threats are likely to evolve in the future.

www.iirsm.org/iirsm-free-webinars

Email overload survey results

Earlier this year we sent out a survey to all our members asking you to participate in a research project. The questionnaire was intended to investigate the main source of email overload and whether or not using instant messaging (IM) reduces it. With more than 190 responses, the survey was a great success – so thank you for taking part.

After thorough analysis, researcher Lida Tumanyan, a graduate from the University of Derby, concluded that almost half of respondents suffer from email overload. Other key findings are illustrated in the diagram above.

Tumanyan’s study revealed that diagonal communication contributes most to internal overload compared to vertical communication. Industries including communications and energy and utilities have the highest percentage of IM users and respondents with email overload. This indicates the potential link between industry, email overload and IM use.

IIRSM agrees to support third party events that we feel would be of interest to our members and often negotiate preferential delegate rates. We are adding new events regularly so stay updated by visiting our website or look out for our monthly Events eNewsletter.

Enhance your CPD by joining your local Branch today

IIRSM’s network of branches extends from many across the UK to as far as Central and South East Asia, Nigeria, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. It is the perfect platform for risk, safety and health professionals to network with their peers and share their knowledge and expertise.

Our branches are run by our members and offer you the opportunity to take part in training, hear a varied range of guest speakers and discuss the issues which may impact your profession. Did you know that our branches are open to non-members too? We welcome everyone who would like to join our branches so please bring along your friends and colleagues.

Branch committees

Being part of a Branch committee provides a rewarding opportunity for members to get involved and promote the work of IIRSM. It’s the perfect way to volunteer while you demonstrate your commitment to CPD while supporting your local risk management community. We have various roles available from Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer to Co-ordinators in existing and new Branches. For more information regarding our roles, vacancies available and how to apply please visit our Branch Committee Vacancies webpage.

In addition, we’ve created several new branches to better serve our local members. Volunteers have been elected to run our new West Midlands Branch, with the first meeting scheduled for 12 January 2017. Our Northern England Branch meeting is scheduled for 27 October 2016. Philip Pearson, IIRSM’s Chief Executive or Clare Fleming, Director of Membership and Communications, will be in attendance.

If you’re interested in joining any of our Branch committees please submit your applications via our website.

Branch update

It’s been a successful year so far for our Nigeria Branch, all thanks to the committee and Eugene Itua (Branch Chair), who has recently been awarded with an outstanding advocate and ambassador of environmental and safety management in Nigeria. Our hearty congratulations go to Eugene on receiving this accolade.

One of the Branch’s recent events was a technical session on the risks of eWaste, hosted at Cadbury Headquarters, Nigeria. The day was a great success with more than 60 attendees.

Our UAE branch has been very active this year with back to back monthly meetings. Branch Chair Matt Cox and his committee members have worked extremely hard to deliver a variety of presentations including waste management on construction sites, defining and designing HSE lead indicators, heat and stress management, fatal accidents and many more.

Our branches look forward to welcoming you. To book a place at one of our Branch meetings please visit the IIRSM’s website or branch sites. We will also provide lots of information about when and where next Branch meetings are taking place via our social media channels – simply follow us on LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook for the latest news.

WORKPLACE STRESS

43% of email overload comes from outside the organisation

57% of email overload comes from inside the organisation

48% of respondents have email overload

UPCOMING BRANCH MEETINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates for your diary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yorkshire</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September 2016, York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Risk management in a low REHAB environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaker:</strong> Dominic Headley, NACRO Re-settlement Advice Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:roger.rustom@nacro.org.uk">roger.rustom@nacro.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nigeria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 October 2016, Lagos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:nigeriabranch@iirsm.org">nigeriabranch@iirsm.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>London</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 October 2016, Hammersmith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Fire risk assessment in low risk buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="http://www.iirsm.org/events">www.iirsm.org/events</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United Arab Emirates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 October 2016, Abu Dhabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:uaebranch@iirsm.org">uaebranch@iirsm.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Central England</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 October 2016, Northamptonshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:branches@iirsm.org">branches@iirsm.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northern England</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 October 2016, Newcastle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> Establishing a safety improvement programme for a high-risk, international business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:branches@iirsm.org">branches@iirsm.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yorkshire</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 November 2016, York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:roger.rustom@nacro.org.uk">roger.rustom@nacro.org.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Midlands</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 January 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic:</strong> TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Register:</strong> <a href="mailto:branches@iirsm.org">branches@iirsm.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Register by emailing the Branch or looking at iirsm.org/events
International News

UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Programme to align chemical regulation

The United States: OSHA and Health and safety have compiled a 2016–2017 Workplace Chemicals Work Plan to reduce regulatory barriers between the two countries in classifying and communicating chemical hazards. Developed through the Regulatory Cooperation Council, the approach is to ensure that current and future requirements for classifying and communicating the hazards of workplace chemicals will be acceptable in the United States and Canada without reducing worker safety. The work plan involves activities that support the development of materials to assist stakeholders in implementing the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling (GHS) and understanding the interpretation of technical issues and requirements in Canada and the US. Opinions on issues that arise from international discussions on the GHS will be taken into account, and when revisions are made, the plan aims to maintain alignment between requirements for implementation for both countries.

“This plan is part of ongoing efforts between OSHA and Health Canada to reduce regulatory barriers between US and Canadian systems responsible for chemical safety and provide concise information to protect workers exposed to hazardous chemicals,” said Dr David Michaels, assistant secretary of labour for OSHA.

HONG KONG

Welfare call for migrant workers

Advocates of migrant workers’ welfare are urging the Hong Kong government to set up mental wellness services and job safety guidelines for domestic helpers following at least the fifth reported death of a domestic helper in the city this year.

Little improvement has been seen in the livelihood of more than 300,000 women, mostly from the Philippines and Indonesia, that rewards agents for terminating workers who are new, said Professor Gregor Coster, Chair of Health and Safety before leading the Global Harmony Association.

New WorkSafe boss announced

Nicole Rosie has been appointed Chief Executive of WorkSafe New Zealand. Currently a senior manager at dairy firm Fonterra, Rosie has a background in health and safety management at some of New Zealand’s largest companies.

At Fonterra, she was Director for Health and Safety before leading the development and delivery of a new farmer shareholder-focused brand and relationship management programme, and most recently she has lead transformation projects designed to deliver over $120 million value over two years.

Trained as a lawyer, Rosie also has direct health and safety experience in the transport infrastructure and forestry sectors at Kiwirail and Fletcher Challenge Forests.

“Nicole’s experience in health and safety and management will bring a new dimension to WorkSafe’s ability to meet its commitments to lead the cultural and operational change required to bring down New Zealand’s unacceptably high levels of workplace deaths and injuries,” said Prof Gregor Coster, Chair of WorkSafe New Zealand.

“Nicole has a unique mix of talents and we are privileged to be able to appoint a Chief Executive of this calibre to lead WorkSafe.”

System failing injured workers, report finds

Australia’s workers’ compensation system is failing vulnerable and injured people, an investigation has found.

Victoria Ombudsman Deborah Glass said complex cases were being mishandled, deliberately delayed, or cancelled with minimal medical reasoning.

The report was also critical of WorkSafe’s use of financial incentives that rewards agents for terminating compensation, saying it distorted the system. Some agents were found to have been cherry picking evidence to reject claims, using as little as one line in a medical report.

Glass made 17 recommendations, including a review of the dispute resolution process, and improvements in the oversight of complex cases by WorkSafe.

WorkSafe Victoria said it would do “everything it could” to improve.

Metro collapse in Tehran leaves 4 dead and seven injured

Four people have been killed and seven others seriously injured after two metro tunnels collapsed in Tehran, according to local reports.

The head of Iran’s Emergency Medical Services Pir Hossein Kolivand told news agency Tasnim that four people lost their lives and six others were wounded after a metro tunnel that was under construction collapsed in Konarshahr, south of Tehran, on 7 September. Just a few days before, a similar incident in Koohsar also left a worker injured.

Tehran’s underground metro has five operating lines which are 112 miles long, and there are plans to add two more by 2018. The line passing through the collapsed tunnel has been taken out of service.

OSHA cites steel giant

Steel manufacturer TimkenSteel has been ordered to pay $113,131 for two repeated and four serious safety violations following investigations at its Canton plant.

In March 2016 a worker was found dead in the elevator control room while performing monthly fire extinguisher checks. An investigation determined nitrogen leaked into the control room resulting in the use of oxygen to power tools and removed all the connections from the ventilation systems.

Just days before the incident, a complaint alleging safety concerns at the facility lead to the US Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue citations for exposing workers to fall hazards of up to 20 feet while performing maintenance in the rolling mill.

OSHA said TimkenSteel’s Canton facility failed to provide workers with a safe working environment, and that the company failed to provide specific job safety and health training to workers. The company claimed it had already paid the fine.

Compensation agreement for Ali Enterprises victims

An agreement in excess of US$5 million has been reached to provide compensation for loss of income, medical and allied care as well as rehabilitation, to the victims of one of the worst industrial accidents in Pakistan.

The fire at the Ali Enterprises garment factory in Baldia, Karachi, on 11 September 2012, is reported to have taken the lives of more than 255 workers and left 57 workers injured at the time of the accident.

Victims of the blaze have been receiving some payments from public social security schemes in Pakistan to compensate for loss of earnings and medical care as per the Sindh Province Employees’ Social Security Act. German textiles group KIK, which was Ali Enterprises’ main customer, had already paid US$1 million in emergency compensation in December 2012.

As a result of the recent discussions with the International Labour Organization, KIK voluntarily agreed to pay an additional US$5.5 million to fund the gap to top up the statutory payments. The funds will be paid to the Sindh Province Employees’ Social Security Institution.

UNITED STATES

Increase in demand for safety practitioners

There is an increasing demand for health and safety practitioners in Qatar as the country witnesses a huge boom in the construction sector, according to an expert. Leo S. Doce, President of the Philippine Association of Safety Engineers (PHASE) – Qatar, said with the huge demand in the field which promises higher pay, some decide to shift their career paths towards a job in health and safety.

“There is an increase in demand for safety practitioners and at the same time the recognition and value for Filipinos in the field has increased,” said Doce ahead of the organisation’s Construction Occupational Safety and Health Summit. PHASE recently was recently accepted as a corporate member of IRSM.

At the time of writing, several workers were still trapped under the rubble.

At least three people have been killed and about 20 others injured after a four story, underground parking garage under construction gave way. According to local reports, the upper three floors of the Tel Aviv site imploded, and the lowest floor is believed to be about 50 feet underground.

Police have questioned several senior officials of the company that operate the site, namely the construction firm Danya Cebus. About two months ago, a concrete beam collapsed at the same site, injuring two workers, said Israeli news outlet Haaretz. Police believe that the state failed to send a supervisor to examine the site after the beam collapse, and work at the site continued.

The Economy Ministry, which oversees construction sites, said it has received no report of the previous collapse.

Construction for the 17,000 square meter, four-level lot began in November 2014, and the project was slated for completion by the beginning of 2017.
**The bigger picture**

**Why is male health so poor in some industries and what can be done about it? Jim Pollard asks.**

*Though the recent news that deaths at work are continuing on their downward trend is encouraging, those members who take a broader view of risk and safety management will know the news is less good the more males you have in your workforce. Men are 50% more likely to die before the age of 65 than women, with one in five dying before they reach this age. In other words, about 20% of your male workforce will probably die before retirement. The impact of this on workers’ families, friends and work colleagues is obvious – with a significant knock-on effect on your organisation’s bottom line. And it’s worse in the UK than elsewhere. True, life expectancy has increased in Britain, but compared to other European countries the gap has widened in terms of years of premature life lost and life expectancy.

*The bigger picture*

The TUC believes workers in the UK work the longest hours in Europe, take the shortest lunch breaks and enjoy the fewest public holidays. Certainly, in 2014, Great Britain was 24th in the OECD average hours per week per worker table. True, the UK was behind the US but the only western European neighbours devastated by the financial crisis: Greece, Portugal, Ireland, Italy and Spain. Clearly, it’s impossible for businesses to ignore.*
LIVER DISEASE

LIVER DISEASE

Liver disease is the only major cause of death that is still increasing – men are twice as likely to die from it as women."

Activity is key

Men tend to be more attracted to weight-loss programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. 2. Promoting exercise for its wider health benefits should be considered too. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work.

Liver disease is the only major cause of death that is still increasing – men are twice as likely to die from it as women."

Activity is key

Men tend to be more attracted to weight-loss programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. 2. Promoting exercise for its wider health benefits should be considered too. It’s not just about providing facilities or classes or even cheap gym membership, it’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work.

Liver disease is the only major cause of death that is still increasing – men are twice as likely to die from it as women."

Activity is key

Men tend to be more attracted to weight-loss programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. 2. Promoting exercise for its wider health benefits should be considered too. It’s not just about providing facilities or classes or even cheap gym membership, it’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work.

Liver disease is the only major cause of death that is still increasing – men are twice as likely to die from it as women."

Activity is key

Men tend to be more attracted to weight-loss programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. 2. Promoting exercise for its wider health benefits should be considered too. It’s not just about providing facilities or classes or even cheap gym membership, it’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work.

Liver disease is the only major cause of death that is still increasing – men are twice as likely to die from it as women."

Activity is key

Men tend to be more attracted to weight-loss programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. 2. Promoting exercise for its wider health benefits should be considered too. It’s not just about providing facilities or classes or even cheap gym membership, it’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work. It’s not just about providing facilities or exercise programmes that include an activity element, as well as a diet component. It’s also about creating a culture in which it is OK to be active and that there are plenty of opportunities for doing so. Men should be encouraged to exercise in their leisure time, whether this is at work or outside work.
If you are looking for advice, feel free to contact us at +44 (0)1296 678 465 or email us at irism.helpline@alcusmgroup.com for information on any health and safety related topic. Here are just a few of your recent queries.

Q&As

REFRIGERATION PLANTS & PRESSURE SYSTEMS

I am looking for the standards regulating the installation and safe use of an NH3 (Ammonia) refrigeration plant. Do you have guidelines for emergency procedures in the event of a leakage or fire/explosion of NH3? What would be the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to be used in such circumstances? Are there any guidelines for an NH3 detection system?

N.H. refrigeration plants come under the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2009 (PSSR), which cover the design and use of pressure systems. The aim of PSSR is to prevent serious injury from the hazard of stored energy (pressure) as a result of the failure of a pressure system or one of its component parts. The Approved Code of Practice accompanying these regulations is available at www.hse.gov.uk/pubs/priced/1122.pdf.

With regard to emergency procedures you would need to carry out a COSHH assessment using the safety data sheets for the specific form of ammonia that you would be using. This assessment would supply you with the relevant PPE required while working with the material.

In terms of a detection system, there are no specific regulations that reference ammonia. However, the HSE has published a document detailing the selection and use of flammable gas detectors (see www.hse.gov.uk/pubs/gasdetector.pdf).

ASBESTOS IN NON-DOMESTIC PREMISES

My understanding is the Asbestos Regulations 2012 do not apply to non-domestic properties. However, can you advise on the position of a builder/contractor working in a domestic property where there are potential asbestos containing materials such as repairing an artex ceiling following water damage by a burst pipe?

Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos Regulations covers the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises. It requires those in possession of the premises, whether they own or rent the property, to provide safe access to the property and to manage the risk to prevent harm to anyone who works on the building or to building occupants. It also explains what is required of people who have a duty to co-operate with the main duty holder to enable them to comply with the regulation. Non-domestic premises can include the common parts of domestic premises. As a domestic property owner or the property owner who would not have a duty to manage the asbestos as per regulation 4, in order to be covered out by the builder/contractor for the project or the principal designer. Under the CDM regulations it is their duty to manage health and safety.


STORAGE OF LITHIUM BATTERIES

We have to store small quantities of used (waste) lithium power tool batteries in our warehouse. We’ve been told these should be stored outside in a fire-proof cabinet. They are currently stored inside in an approved chemical cabinet. What is the correct way to store these items?

There is no specific health and safety legislation that would provide a full checklist of the specific regulations of the cabinet. These should be derived from the fire risk assessment in compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and in compliance with the DSEAR Regulations to ensure that it is remote from identified hazard zones. There is additional information concerning the storage and handling of batteries in general by the Fire Protection Association (FPA) which states, in premises to which the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 applies, the fire safety management strategy should consider practical, passive, active and managerial control measures. These should be applied as part of the fire risk assessment for the premises when selecting, training and maintaining the charging batteries and providing charging points for large capacity batteries or multiple small units. All fire risk assessments should also consider the provision of deliberate fire setting: further information regarding the protection of premises from deliberate fire setting is set out in the RISC Authority Recommendations RC48.

Recommendations for the protection of premises from deliberate fire raising.

Storage areas should provide at least 60 minutes fire resistance between the stored batteries and any other part of the premises. Where there is a door allowing access to the store, the door set should provide the same degree of fire resistance. Batteries should be stored in a dry environment at about 15°C, under no circumstances should the temperature be lower than –40°C or above 40°C. Extremes of temperature should be avoided as low temperatures may lead to freezing of the electrolyte and high temperatures to rupture of cells. Freezing of batteries occurs more easily when they are discharged.

Care should be taken to ensure that large batteries are stored in areas where they will not be exposed to water or other liquids. They should be kept in good condition and damaged batteries should be removed and isolated in an area away from buildings and combustible materials. Batteries should be protected from the environment while awaiting collection for safe disposal. Large batteries should not be stored on metal shelving because of the risk of short circuits if terminals are exposed. More information is available at http://bit.ly/1meQ06C.

Further information about the requirements of the Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002 can be found on the HSE website at www.hse.gov.uk/fireexplosion/dsear.htm.

TRACTORS AND SPECIALIST VEHICLES

My client employs a worker from Spain and requires him to drive a tractor. Does he need a certain qualification or can they train him in-house?

The employee won’t need a licence to drive or operate a tractor or specialist vehicle off the public road, though there are age limits. To drive on the public road any person, whether the operator or any other person, must hold a valid tractor or specialist vehicle driving test. The type of test you will need to do depends on the type of vehicle.

For category F, G, H or K vehicles, the examiner will give you instructions at the side of the road and watch how you:

● drive as you go around left and right bends
● turn round using forward and reverse gears.

For very slow vehicles such as pedestrian-controlled vehicles, your examiner may walk near you where they can watch your driving. You’ll also have an eyesight test and at the end of the category F, G or K test, you’ll be asked 5 questions on the Highway Code and other motoring matters. You’ll also have to identify 6 different traffic signs.

In category H driving tests you need to drive the vehicle backwards and turn it around, using its tracks, so it’s facing the opposite direction. Your examiner will tell you how you should make this manoeuvre.

For more information, visit www.gov.uk/driving-licence-categories.

BANKSMEN COMPETENCE

I need to use banksmen to ensure that vehicles manoeuvre correctly around the site I’m working on. I have been told I need to demonstrate the competence that I need to use banksmen and if they are absolutely necessary that they are competent to do the task. The CAFI have used this doing this for years but is there a course you can attend to demonstrate this?

The job of banksmen (or signalers) is to guide drivers and make sure reversing areas are free of pedestrians. However, in some industries, such as quarrying, banksmen are rarely used due to the size of the vehicles involved. If you are using banksmen, make sure:

● they are trained and used
● they are clearly visible to drivers at all times
● a clear, recognised system is adopted
● they stand in a safe position throughout the reversing operation.


Competency can be a combination of experience, training and qualifications – they are not necessary and they do not have to be evidenced. The National Accidents (RoSPA) runs a course aimed at raising awareness of the dangers caused by poor reversing practice. The test you need to pass is designed to highlight the level of competency you should possess if you are to drive the vehicles safely.

The HSE’s Workplace transport safety is available at www.hse.gov.uk/jobs/ind/99.pdf. The competence for driving these vehicles is assessed in the form of a test and the competent person will tell you how you should make this manoeuvre. Delegates are also trained in the necessary skills to assist other drivers and banksmen.

By the end of the course, delegates should be able to:

● ensure the safe passage of reversing vehicles in confined spaces
● identify areas of danger within the site
● demonstrate HSE’s recommended code of signals

The RoSPA website at www.rospa.com/safety-training/ on-road/driver-training/banksman/1/day/ for more information.

FIRE RETARDANT LABELS

My client is refurbishing its staff canteen and would like to purchase some chairs from eBay. The chairs are only three years old but they don’t have ‘fire retardant’ labels. Are there any regulations that state they must have the labels on or are they for a staff canteen?

The HSE publication Seating at work that an employer must ensure upholstered do not provide guidance on the presence of flame-retardant materials. For different environments at www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/atex/standards.htm.

The type of ATEX generally covers explosive atmospheres and will not cover all chemicals, so you may be required to do additional COSHH risk assessment to identify the dangers that the chemicals in use are causing. It would also be advisable to speak to the supplier of your electrical equipment to discuss any additional protection that may be required.

I'm aware some electrical cabinets should be waterproof and some need to be ATEX certified, but what about cabinets in an environment where there are chemical fumes/vapours, like in a CPI room (cleaning in place)? Is there such a standard?

What would constitute as sufficient level of safety for the cabinet will depend on the chemicals that the cabinet may be exposed to. An ATEX cabinet would need to be sufficient to protect the cabinet.

A list from the European Commission Enterprise and Industry for the Harmonised ATEX standards deals specifically with explosive atmospheres.

The HSE lists all the relevant ATEX standards that can apply to various different environments at www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/atex/standards.htm.
Interview

Moira Gelman MIIRSM

Shortly before leaving school, Moira’s family relocated to South Africa. Over the years she worked for various catering firms, and on returning to the UK she joined a food packaging manufacturer. She attended night school and gained qualifications in food safety and training. Soon afterwards she began a NEBOSH General Certificate to enable her to deliver health and safety training but the studying bug took hold and she enrolled at Salford University to complete a Masters in health, safety and environmental law, and she hasn’t looked back since.

How did your career start?
With no choice. We had only been in South Africa for a short period of time before I left school, and there was no money for university, so I followed in my father’s footsteps and went into catering.

How did you become involved in health and safety?
I sort of fell into it by accident (excuse the puns!) A colleague suggested if I had my NEBOSH General Certificate, he could give me some training work, delivering the CCNSG (Client Contractor National Safety Group) Safety Passport.

What do you get out of your job?
Meeting people from all walks of life and spending time with them, with the added bonus of seeing the results of my work. Very often it’s witnessing a change from negative attitudes about health and safety to the ‘lightbulb’ moment.

What issues can you see coming up in your sector?
The increase in the numbers of health and safety consultants who are not competent, who issue unrealistic advice. They do not understand the basics of “reasonably practicable” and the legal requirements. Health and safety has to be balanced with other business objectives such as quality and, dare I say it, making money. But the key word is ‘balance’.

I most enjoy meeting people from all walks of life and spending time with them with the added bonus of seeing the results of my work. Very often it’s witnessing a change from negative attitudes about health and safety to the ‘lightbulb’ moment.”

What’s the most challenging problem you’ve overcome?
Delivering the NEBOSH International General Certificate in China to Chinese delegates. Their command of the English language was the biggest challenge. It became apparent that their written skills were far superior to their oral skills so we set written assessments every day to check their understanding of such a technical course. The delegates embraced this with a tremendous sense of humour.

“If something doesn’t work out, move on and learn from it without dwelling on it.”

What’s the most memorable experience you’ve had in your career?
Graduating with a Masters in Law as a (very) mature student with two of my grown up children by my side. I do not have an undergraduate degree so this is an achievement that I am very proud of.

What’s the biggest challenge facing the health and safety profession?
Very small businesses and the self employed who are not investing in health and safety resources (in terms of time as well as money) as it’s seen as a non recuperable cost. Schemes such as the Local Enterprise Network, where SMEs can apply for 50% funding towards certain health and safety training as long as the organisation can put forward a business case for growth rather than compliance, are trying to combat this.

Do you think Brexit will affect UK health and safety legislation?
Hopefully not. The UK health and safety legislative framework is very robust and successful and it would be a mistake to change the standards that the UK has set. All countries, not only in the EU, look to the UK as a shining example of what can be achieved with our risk based system.

What issues can you see coming up in your sector?
The increase in the numbers of health and safety consultants who are not competent, who issue unrealistic advice. They do not understand the basics of “reasonably practicable” and the legal requirements. Health and safety has to be balanced with other business objectives such as quality and, dare I say it, making money. But the key word is ‘balance’.

I most enjoy meeting people from all walks of life and spending time with them with the added bonus of seeing the results of my work. Very often it’s witnessing a change from negative attitudes about health and safety to the ‘lightbulb’ moment.”

What’s the best piece of advice you’ve been given?
If something doesn’t work out, move on and learn from it without dwelling on it.

Where do you see yourself in five years’ time?
Hopefully still fit and healthy and globetrotting. I particularly love the international aspects of my work, meeting people from different cultures and backgrounds, and being able to connect with them. I am also hoping to be able to spend more time with my grandchildren by then.