



BSG AWARDED UKATA MEMBERSHIP

THE CONTROL OF ASBESTOS REGULATIONS 2006 (CAR) AND THE ASSOCIATED APPROVED CODE OF PRACTICE (ACOP) IDENTIFY THREE LEVELS OF TRAINING FOR OPERATIVES AND THEIR SUPERVISORS. THE ACOP STATES THAT THIS TRAINING SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY SOMEONE WHO IS COMPETENT TO PROVIDE IT AND HAS HAD ADEQUATE PERSONAL AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has passed responsibility for managing the list of training providers for licensed asbestos work to the *United Kingdom Asbestos Training Association (UKATA)*. UKATA works alongside the HSE's Asbestos Licensing Unit, working towards establishing the highest possible industry training standards for members.

In addition, UKATA have extended their membership base to include category 2 members who are those registered to provide training for Non-Licensable Asbestos Work, (work where it is known that personnel will cause asbestos to be disturbed such as maintenance workers, their supervisors and persons carrying out asbestos sampling and analysis), and Category 3 members who are registered to provide training to personnel who could reasonably be expected to come into contact with asbestos during their normal work activities such as painters, electricians, plumbers, demolition workers and construction workers.

For each category, UKATA together with the HSE has developed an asbestos industry competence assessment process, which will ensure that the best working practices and training are available for all individuals and companies who are working in the asbestos management and removal industry. In addition UKATA has set standards and a stringent auditing process which must be satisfied before training providers become a registered member and therefore able to provide the appropriate training under the UKATA banner. Members are re-audited each year to ensure that the set

standards continue to be met.

Where legislation such as the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007 demand competence, that competence must not only be demonstrated but also backed up by further proof and membership of UKATA is a sure way of demonstrating that proof to prospective clients requiring asbestos training. In addition many clients and major contractors are insisting that training for each individual category is provided by training organisations who are registered members of UKATA.

The Building Safety Group is currently a category-3 registered member and will be seeking category-2 membership in 2010.



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'HIDDEN KILLER' ASBESTOS CAMPAIGN WINS AWARD

A campaign warning tradespeople about the dangers of asbestos has won a prestigious international award.

The Health and Safety Executive's 'hidden killer' campaign came top in the health category of the European Excellence Awards, held in Vienna, which honour outstanding achievements in public relations.

Around 20 tradesmen a week die in the UK from asbestos-related diseases and the aim of the campaign, launched in autumn 2008, was to help prevent further generations of tradesmen and other workers having their lives cut short.

HSE worked with communications agency MS&L to devise the PR campaign which used a football analogy to raise awareness of the numbers of people still dying from asbestos exposure, with ex-England player and former plasterer, Ian Wright, brought on board to spearhead it..

The launch was covered by broadcast, print and online media, including the flagship BBC Radio 4 Today programme and GMTV. By the end of the campaign, HSE had seen a 100 per cent increase in calls to Infoline line and a six-fold increase in page requests on the campaign microsite.

Steve Coldrick, HSE's asbestos programme director said:

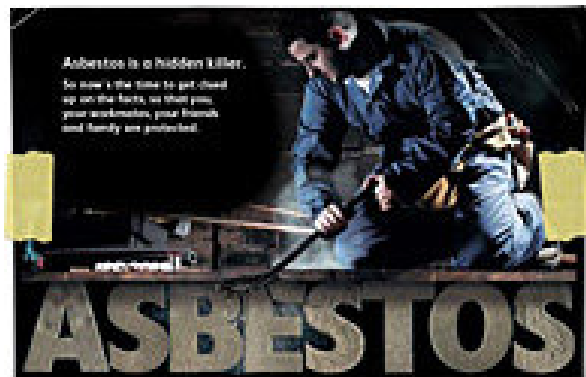
"Asbestos remains Britain's biggest workplace killer, but with the perception that it is largely a risk of the past we needed a hard-hitting PR campaign that would capture the imagination of tradesmen, particularly young ones. Using Ian Wright, a former tradesman, ticked all the boxes for us and delivered great results.

"We're pleased that our approach has been recognised and commended by experts in the communications industry. The award is a testament to the good working relationship between HSE's communications and asbestos programme teams and MSL".

The European Excellence Award is one of a number of accolades for HSE's 'Hidden Killer' campaign. It was highly commended at the PR Week Awards in October and shortlisted for a PRCA Award in November. The print advertisements won an ANNA 'ad of the week' award (Awards for National Newspaper Advertising) and were nominated for 'ad of the year' under the same scheme.

The second phase of the campaign has just come to an end with early indications of success. More than 4000 calls were made to Infoline during November and there were around 200 items of regional coverage.

For more information visit:
www.hse.gov.uk/hiddenkiller



UNION WANTS ENQUIRY INTO BUILDING WORKER DEATH

The construction union UCATT has called for an urgent inquiry following the death of a worker in Hull last month.

Raymond Jessop died after falling from a ladder while engaged in painting a council property. He was employed, by Kier Building Maintenance, which is responsible for the repair and maintenance of 10,000 council properties in the city.

According to the union, Mr Jessop was working on a major project repainting 170 properties. A UCATT official has visited the site and noted that there was sufficient room for scaffolding to be erected or a mobile platform to have been used, rather than having to rely on a possibly unstable ladder.

The use of ladders for this project is, UCATT points out, at odds with the advice on ladder use provided by the Health and Safety Executive, which states that ladders should only be used "for low risk, short duration work".

UCATT officials have also obtained health and safety steering group minutes, where a health and safety representative from Kier originally recommended that the painting was performed using scaffolding. It was, however, eventually decided to use ladders because the workers were not trained in using tower scaffolding units and "cost was an issue".

UCATT also intends to raise concerns that workers were being pressurised to finish the project in the belief that delays would lead to a loss of pay.

Regional Secretary Derek Johnson said: "Kier, Hull City council and all contractors must change their policies to ensure that ladders are not relied on when undertaking such large scale painting projects".

Employers in Wales asked to make New Year safety resolution

EMPLOYERS ACROSS WALES ARE BEING ASKED TO ENSURE THEIR WORKERS ARE KEPT SAFE IN 2010 AS BRITAIN'S SAFETY WATCHDOG URGES IMPROVEMENT ON LAST YEAR.

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), last year almost 140 work related incidents occurred across Wales each week, an annual a total of 7,153 people being killed or injured.

HSE hope this figure will act a stark reminder to employers and staff to make their workplaces safer this New Year and drive down casualty rates.

The 2008/09 statistics show five people were killed at work across the region while 1678 sustained major injuries and 5,470 more suffered injuries requiring more than three days off work.

Including other absences due to ill health caused by work activities, this equates to 1.5million working days lost at a massive cost to the economy and individual businesses, which is why HSE says it makes perfect sense to make working environments safe.

The organisation warns that if employers insist on compromising the health of their employees then it will not hesitate in taking enforcement action.

Last year HSE prosecuted 44 firms for breaching health and safety and took action against hundreds more in the form of issuing prohibition and enforcement notices.

Terry Rose, the HSE's Director, Wales, said:

"Behind these statistics are the real life stories of hundreds and thousands of people and families dealing with real hardship, pain and suffering.

"The New Year is an opportune time to reflect on the number of incidents in the past 12 months, and try and stop the same patterns being repeated.

"Slips, trips and falls from height [check per region] are consistently the chief causes of death and serious injury.

"Many of these injuries are entirely preventable. We implore businesses to take practical action to manage the risks people face in their day-to-day work."

Britain boast one of the best health and safety records in Europe but with 180 workplace deaths nationally last year, HSE say there is still much to be done.

Terry Rose added: "Simple assessments of risk, ease of tasks, accessibility, protection from harmful substances and training can and do prevent many incidents.

"HSE works with a number of partners to provide free advice and education to those both carrying out and managing work. We want businesses and the self-employed to work with us to help reduce injuries and make the Wales a safer place to work.

"Every employee has the right to return home from work safely each day and I hope employers across Wales share that view and take steps to ensure that is the

case."

	Fatal Injuries	Major non-fatal Injuries	Over 3-day Injuries
Anglesey	-	29	114
Blaenau Gwent	-	33	112
Bridgend	-	75	259
Caerphilly	1	65	275
Cardiff	-	230	729
Carmarthenshire	-	76	239
Ceredigion	1	21	77
Conwy	-	45	117
Denbighshire	-	59	147
Flintshire	-	114	425
Gwynedd	1	81	227
Merthyr Tydfil	-	34	138
Monmouthshire	-	44	150
Neath Port Talbot	-	84	251
Newport	1	119	349
Pembrokeshire	-	91	164
Powys	-	58	186
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	1	116	423
Swansea	-	138	457
Torfaen	-	43	185
Vale of Glamorgan	-	51	214
Wrexham	-	72	232

New figures show extent of workplace safety failings in local area

COST OF CONSTRUCTION PRE-QUALIFICATION

The most extensive survey to date of the cost of pre-qualification in the construction industry has revealed that waste of effort and resource associated with this process amounts to almost £40 million a year — and that is just in the specialist engineering sector.

This huge waste is the result of firms being required to join multiple pre-qualification schemes in order to be eligible to bid for work. Larger firms may have to belong to as many as 20 schemes run mainly by commercial operators but, the Specialist Engineering Contractors' (SEC) Group said last week, there is no evidence of any added value to clients of all this activity.

On average, each firm belonging to SEC Group's member bodies spent nine days a year on paperwork relating to the different schemes, totalling 60,000 days a year. Announcing the results of the survey of 600 firms, the Chairman of SEC Group, Trevor Hursthouse, said that the overriding message to come out of the survey was that the process of pre-qualification must be rationalised.

"The waste associated with the duplication of effort is unacceptable," he went on. "If we can eradicate this waste it will help to promote a more sustainable industry whilst in the longer-run the industry's clients can benefit from having annual savings of £40 billion."

Given that the public sector is a major culprit, he called for firm Government action to resolve the problem.

COURT CASES

COMPANIES FINED AFTER WORKERS EXPOSED TO ASBESTOS

Two businesses and a company director have been fined after workers in Manchester were exposed to potentially deadly asbestos fibres.

The prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) comes just days before the launch of a national £1.2 million campaign to increase awareness about asbestos among tradespeople.

Recon Packaging Ltd, of Stamford Square, Ashton-under-Lyne, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 4(3) of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 at Trafford Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 27 October. It was fined £3,000 and ordered to pay costs of £5,000.

Industrial & Commercial Building Services Ltd (ICBS) of Greek Street, Stockport and its Managing Director, Kevin Bennett, of The Ridge, Marple, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and Regulation 3(1) of the Asbestos Licensing Regulations 1983. They were each fined £2,000.

The court heard that ICBS employees came into contact with asbestos while demolishing part of the Recon Packaging recycling plant on Bower Street in Miles Platting in early 2006.

Recon Packaging hired ICBS to carry out the work after the plant was severely damaged by fire in May 2005. The building included substantial amounts of asbestos but no site assessment was carried out, and ICBS was not licensed to remove it.

HSE decided to prosecute after Inspector Stuart Kitchingman visited the site on 13 April 2006. He said:

"We took immediate action to stop the demolition, and were shocked that workers had been allowed to remove asbestos without the proper precautions being taken.

"Recon did not carry out any assessment to find out whether asbestos was, or was likely to be, present in its premises. If the company had, it would have found asbestos in large sections of insulation boards and some in coating sprayed on the building's steelwork.

"ICBS and Kevin Bennett should have made sure that the premises were free from asbestos before starting work. But they allowed workers to break up materials using hammers, crowbars and power tools, without wearing suitable protective equipment and without a licence.

"Asbestos is the single biggest industrial killer in Britain, and the control measures on this site were totally inadequate. The demolition workers were exposed to unacceptable levels of asbestos fibres, and have been put at risk of becoming seriously ill in the future."

Around 4,000 people die every year from diseases linked to asbestos, making it the biggest single cause of work-related deaths in Great Britain. More people die as a result of being exposed to asbestos than in road accidents.

Asbestos was regularly used as a building material in the UK from the 1950s onwards, and any building constructed before 2000 may contain it. Asbestos materials left undisturbed are safe but can release dangerous fibres when they are disturbed, causing serious diseases if breathed in.

More information on handling asbestos safely is available at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos

WHILST EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO PROVIDE RELIABLE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION, WE WOULD WELCOME ANY CORRECTIONS TO INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE WRITER WHICH MAY NOT BE ENTIRELY ACCURATE, THEREFORE AND FOR THIS REASON, THE BSG OR INDEED THE WRITER CANNOT ACCEPT

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