



Guernsey  
Occupational  
Safety & Health  
Association

# GOSHA NEWSLETTER

Health & Safety Newsletter

January 2010



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## From the GOSHA Chairman's Pen....

Happy new year to all readers of the GOSHA newsletter. I hope you like the new format of our publication, which is edited by Beckie Gabriel. Beckie works as a Risk Support Officer in the Health & Safety Department of Guernsey's Health and Social Services Department. If you have any interesting information and articles for the newsletter, do send them to Beckie via email at [rgabriel@hssd.gov.gg](mailto:rgabriel@hssd.gov.gg)

Our newsletter is an important means of communicating sensible health and safety related messages. As this is a new format, Beckie would particularly welcome your feedback. In this edition, we have examples of accidents which have occurred around the world and it would be tempting to think that some are unlikely to occur in Guernsey but they are included because they highlight the consequences of ignoring sensible risk assessment, management and training.

The simple process of risk assessment is too often overlooked in busy businesses. If people were to cross roads without looking first, people would think they were asking for trouble - and, of course, they would be. And yet a quick walk around a business premises to look for obvious hazards or organising training for DSE users or those handling heavy (and not so heavy) objects are similarly simple assessments and management tools that, if not undertaken,

## GOSHA NEWS

Open Event: An interesting health & safety presentation:

**Cranes Safety**, a talk by Michael Moore GradIOSH, DipNEBOSH, MIIRSM, MInstLM, MaPS. Director/ Company Secretary of Veritas Safety Management Ltd

## GOSHA AWARDS

Following the great success of last year's event, GOSHA is again holding its annual awards for excellence in health & safety. In addition to the categories relating to the size of the organisation, nominations will be available for individuals who have performed highly in health & safety along with recognition for particular sectors of commerce of industry. Watch this space on how to make a nomination for awards.

## From the GOSHA Chairman's Pen....

*"Our newsletter is an important means of communicating sensible health and safety"*

are likely to result in trouble for the business at some stage in the future. Too many businesses choose to ignore these sensible "looking first" measures which can easily prevent injuries at work.

The HSE produces easy to use guides to help businesses to implement the requirements of health and safety law and their 5 steps approach to risk assessment, targeted at small businesses, is a good example of the welcome support available.

We will be highlighting more useful tools during 2010 and will be running our popular Managing Safely Course - it is designed for those who would like to have a basic introduction to occupational safety and health in a friendly, supportive environment. If you would like to take part, please contact our secretary, Jon Coyde.

Paul Adamson's work on our website continues to impress me greatly. The site is continuing to evolve, it has lots of useful material and some industry specific guidance. There is also a getting started section to

complement our Managing Safely Course. Please take a few minutes to see what may be useful for you..... and please let Paul have your feedback too.

Beckie has included special features on young workers, lone workers (many people experience lone working at various stages in their careers) and one of our sector specific features : health and safety in the retail sector. All well worth reading and perhaps you could pass a copy to someone you know who may benefit.

Our aim is to help businesses in Guernsey to be safe and healthy places in which to work. We hope your business will achieve that aim in 2010 and, as a result, secure all the benefits which result from such an achievement, perhaps including entry to our prestigious health and safety awards which will be presented in November.

Andrew Mills

Chairman, Guernsey Occupational Safety & Health Association



## Health & Safety News

### HSE

Risk Assessment - Small business questionnaire

Small business? We're always looking for ways to improve our guidance on risk assessment. You can help us by filling in our short, confidential questionnaire, let us know what you think.

<http://webcommunities.hse.gov.uk/inovem/inovem.ti/policyrisktemplate/answerQuestionnaire?qid=83523>

### HSE

Agriculture - make the promise- Campaign

Together we can make 2010 a safer year for every farm and farmer, so if you do one thing in 2010 please make or reaffirm your promise "come home safe" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/makethepromise/index.htm>

### Scotland

Snow collapses farm buildings

A farmer had to be pulled from underneath a collapsed farm building by colleagues after snow on its roof brought it down. The incident occurred at the farm near Glass, Aberdeenshire. The injured man is recovering in hospital, several cows died. Other farm buildings in Scotland are believed to have collapsed under snow loading.

### China

Workers killed during sulphuric acid experiment

A hydrogen sulphide overflow has killed 2 workers and injured 6 others at Nikeguoran New Materials Co Ltd in Pengshan County, Sichuan, when an introduction of excessive sulphuric acid during an experiment led to the overflow.

## Myth of the Month

**Myth: It's ok to get a general handyman to work on gas appliances**



The reality

Gas and cowboys don't mix! Anyone who is employed to work on gas appliances must be listed on the Gas Safe Register. If the person you're using isn't registered then they might not be safe and they are also breaking the law.

Incorrectly fitted or badly repaired gas appliances can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning, gas leaks, fires and explosions. By using a Gas Safe engineer, you can make sure that they're qualified to do the work safely - just check the back of their ID card!



## In Court.

### 3 companies fined £283K over paralyzing accident

Three companies have been recently fined for their failures that led to an industrial accident in which a worker was paralysed after he was struck by falling waste materials weighting half a ton – which were suspended above a walkway. The incident, described by HSE as totally avoidable, occurred in February 2007 at the Stanlow Manufacturing Complex near Ellesmere Port during a refurbishment project.

Shell UK Oil Products and Dalprop, the accident victim's employer, both breached r.8(1)(c) of the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998, Shell was fined £116,666 with costs of £16,204, Dalprop was fined £83,333 with costs of £11,115. Hertel UK installed the scaffolding and platforms, this included the boards around the lifting equipment which became dislodged, causing the container carrying waste materials to fall. It was fined £83,333 with costs of £16,204.

### Reckless breaches permitted 5m fall

ECH Ltd, also known as Maple Timber Frames of Preston, Lancashire, has been fined £16,000 with £5,000 costs in connection with an incident on 18th November 2008 in which a self-employed timber frame erector subcontracted to the company fell 5 metres on a self-build project at Warwick Park, Tunbridge Wells. He fell down an inadequately covered stairwell, sustaining multiple fractures.

### Aerosol storage risk too high

A.M Widdowson & Son Ltd of Mill Lane Industrial Estate, Leicester, has been fined a total of £5,000 with costs of £4,900 having admitted breaching r.6 (2) of the Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 (COMAH) and S.2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

The company stored large amounts of LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) for around 7 months without notifying the authorities and did not complete a risk assessment. It also failed to implement many good industry practices. HSE said that there

was a real risk of a major fire and wanted the prosecution to serve as a reminder to all operators of sites warehousing aerosol products.

### Construction company's training was inadequate

A 23-year old construction worker died when his head was crushed as he leaned out of the mini-digger he was operating on a site in Abbeymead, Gloucester, in February 2005. He had inadvertently operated a lever when he leaned forward.

The deceased was not qualified by training to operate the digger, vehicle keys were routinely left in the machines, rendering the vehicles accessible to anyone on site, regardless of their qualifications.

Macob Administration Ltd admitted breaches under r.9(1) and 28(a) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 for which it was fined £40,000 for each charge with costs of £29,798.

### Yorks builder fined over unsafe scaffolding

At Bridlington Magistrates Court a partner of builders Wm Naylor & Son pleaded guilty to a breach of r.6(3) of the Work at Height Regulations 2005 at the Sylvan Lea housing development in Driffeld and was fined £8K plus £2,244 costs. The court heard that on 29th April last year during a routine inspection by HSE internal and external scaffolding was found to have been poorly erected and lacked edge protection.

### Fine doesn't bring back 20-year old surveyor electrocuted

W A Fairhurst and Ptns. of Glasgow has been fined £25,200 at Stonehaven Sheriff Court for failures that led to the death of a trainee surveyor who was holding a levelling staff which contacted overhead power cables. The incident occurred in February 2007 at a site near Echt, Aberdeenshire.

## Health & Safety News

### Institution of Occupational Safety & Health

#### Snow clearing – the facts

The internationally respected health & safety organisation, IOSH, reacted strongly to media reports about the dangers of property owners being sued in the vent of them clearing snow and ice from paths and roads outside their premises. It is thought that many businesses failed to make any attempt to clear the slip hazards because they were worried after the newspaper report suggested that they could be sued if a person still fell. Encouraging businesses to undertake a risk assessment on what is the best action to take, IOSH Communications Director, Ruth Doyle, highlighted "The IOSH position is most definitely to encourage people to be good employers and neighbours by gritting icy areas and to show health and safety wants to help protect life and limb, not endanger it."

#### Gaza

##### Electrical fire at ice cream factory

An electrical malfunction is speculated as the cause of an explosion on Tuesday which killed a worker in an ice cream factory in the Al-Amal district of Khan Yunis, south Gaza.

#### Ukraine

##### 3 killed in hospital oxygen explosion

It is speculated that inappropriate handling of oxygen cylinders in the cardiac ward on the 4th floor of Luhansk Hospital led to an explosion on Monday in which at least 3 people died. At that time there were 14 staff and 8 patients and it was unclear if people were unaccounted for as the explosion caused damage on other floors of the 5-storey building.



## Health & Safety for Young Workers.

“It’s not about wrapping young people up in cotton wool, it’s about equipping them with the skills to assess risks and make informed decisions about safety throughout their lives.” - Cassius Francis, RoSPA youth liaison worker

One of the first questions we should ask ourselves is “why are young people (aged between 15 and 24) are more at risk of harm at work?” Due to their age they are at more risk because of a lack of experience, maturity, skills and awareness of risks. Young people have an eagerness to please maybe even impress. They maybe lack awareness of their rights and employers’ duties regarding health and safety as well as a reluctance to speak out about health and safety problems.

The British Safety Council have highlighted that a “LACK OF TRAINING IS BLAMED FOR YOUNG WORKER DEATH TOLL”

An article written in April 2008 states

- A young person is seriously injured in a UK workplace every 40 minutes
- In the last decade, 66 under 19s have been killed at work in the UK
- The British Safety Council calls for work safety training to start at school.

Thousands of young workers do not have the training needed to keep them safe in their first job or on work experience, from the British Safety Council (BSC) warns. The report, ‘Get Skilled For Work’ shows that a staggering three in five (58%) 3 young workers are accidents waiting to happen as they have no idea about workplace safety. And the statistics are shocking: a young person is seriously injured in a UK workplace every 40 minutes and in the UK in the last decade, 66 under-19s have been killed at work. According to the report, around three quarters of workers (73%) and nearly two thirds of employers (62%) think that there is a real benefit to children being taught about work safety while they are still at school.

Children on work experience are at just as much risk as young people starting first jobs – of the 500,000 school pupils currently in Year 10 (14-15 year olds), 350,000 could be going out on work experience. With the lack of safety training in UK businesses uncovered by the BSC these work experience placements could be putting children’s lives at risk. Combined with young people starting their first jobs, the lack of training could be putting hundreds of thousands of young people’s lives at risk in the workplace.

HSE guidelines for a young person’s risk assessment are very comprehensive as can be seen below

### The risk assessment

Before employing a young person, your health and safety risk assessment must take these specific factors into account:

- the fitting-out and layout of the workplace and the particular site where they will work;
- the nature of any physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to, for how long and to what extent;
- what types of work equipment will be used and how this will be handled;
- how the work and processes involved are organised;
- the need to assess and provide health and safety training; and
- risks from the particular agents, processes and work.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require that young people are protected at work from risks to their health and safety which are a consequence of the following

factors: physical or psychological capacity, pace of work ,temperature extremes, noise or vibration, radiation, compressed air and diving, hazardous substances and lack of training and experience

There are also risks to young people associated with specific industries or processes: Agriculture, Carriage of dangerous explosives and goods, Ship-building and Ship-repairing Regulations, Provision and use of work equipment, Power presses, Woodworking machines and Mechanical lifting operations (including lift trucks)

There is no need for you to carry out a new risk assessment each time you employ a young person, as long as your current risk assessment takes account of the characteristics of young people and activities which present significant risks to their health and safety. You may wish to consider developing generic risk assessments for young people. These could be useful when they are likely to be doing temporary or transient work or on works experience, and when the risk assessments could be modified to deal with particular work situations and any unacceptable risks. In all cases, you will need to review the risk assessment if the nature of the work changes or you have reason to believe that it is no longer valid.

### Outcome of the risk assessment

In carrying out the risk assessment you should identify the measures you need to take to control or eliminate health and safety risks. In many cases you will find that the risks to young people are adequately controlled if you are complying with other specific health and safety law, e.g. the Manual Handling Operations Regulations, or the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH).

If in doubt, you may wish to get professional advice on identifying and controlling the risks. If a significant risk remains in spite of your best efforts to do what is reasonably practicable to control it, you must not employ the young person to do this work.

### What happens in Guernsey?

The Guernsey Careers Service, a Department of within the Education Department runs the GWEx work experi-



## Health & Safety for Young Workers.

ence programme as part of the Trident from Edexcel Work Experience Programme.

Michele Clark GWEx Manager and Nadine Gallichan her assistant arrange to meet with employers before businesses take on the responsibility of work experience placements within their premises. At these meeting they discuss full details of the work experience programme and how it could benefit Island employers and businesses, as well as what students might do on work experience along with any other issues necessary to ensure a useful, interesting and safe environment for the work experience to take place.

The Guernsey Careers Service webpage for GUERNSEY WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME has a useful link to Trident UK have a Health and Safety website [www.placementsurvivalguide.com](http://www.placementsurvivalguide.com) allowing Students to find out how much they know about health and safety by completing the quiz. .

Michele or Nadine can be contacted on 733043/44 or e-mail them on [mclark@education.gov.gg](mailto:mclark@education.gov.gg) or [ngallichan@education.gov.gg](mailto:ngallichan@education.gov.gg)

Here is a twelve point checklist for employers with responsibilities for young workers.

1. Has someone been appointed to be in overall charge of young workers, including those on work experience placements?
2. Where students are on a work experience placement, has effective liaison been established with the placement organisers, including arrangements for regular monitoring and reporting of accidents/ incidents/ill health?
3. Have 'suitable and sufficient' risk assessments been carried out?
4. Have any additional control measures required for young people been clearly identified?

5. Have risk assessments taken account of any special health and safety needs which young workers may have as a result, for example, of any physical and learning disabilities, or health issues such as allergies, asthma and respiratory problems, heart disease, diabetes, colour blindness or use of prescription medicines?
6. Have work activities which young people should be prohibited from undertaking been clearly identified?
7. Have necessary steps been taken to isolate or make safe dangerous tools, plant, equipment or substances?
8. Have any necessary arrangements for personal safety and freedom from sexual harassment and bullying been considered?
9. Have parents or guardians been informed of risks and control measures?
10. Have arrangements been made for appropriate supervision and induction training?
11. Have work tasks for young people been properly defined and explained? Do young people understand what is required of them in order to protect their own safety and health and that of others?
12. Have young workers been provided with appropriate information about hazards, risks and precautions

## Lone Working

When considering how to manage the health & safety of lone workers, legislation and guidance emphasises that staff (including volunteers) lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. How then can an organisation

go about ensuring the safety of personnel while avoiding excessive paperwork and costs?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone working as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”. It is recognised that an increasing number of people are working alone for more of their job - for either some or all of the time. Examples range from night workers, security guards and office cleaners to people who work from home. Also included are those that travel, sales reps and consultants, also bus drivers, postal workers, community nurses and not forgetting the self employed, such as painters and decorator, plumbers, electricians. Small businesses frequently employ lone workers, shop assistants, delivery drivers, warehouse assistants etc.

Employers have the same responsibilities for the Health and Safety of lone workers as the do for any other employees even though extra Health and Safety risks can arise from working alone. These risks need to be managed by those employers employing lone workers and the self employed who work alone. If you are self employed you have a duty to protect yourself and other people affected by your work, you must identify and minimise the risks encountered whilst working alone.

Hazards which lone workers may face include:

- Accidents or emergencies and the lack of first aid equipment to deal with them.
- Fire.
- Inadequate provision of rest, hygiene, and welfare facilities
- Violence from members of the public
- Manual handling

Risk Assessments are important tools used to highlight areas that have the potential to cause harm to your employee/s and business, accidents and work related illness ruin lives and damage businesses. Actions taken as a result of a risk assessment may need to be different for lone workers than those doing the same or similar job working on site. If the risk assessment shows that it



## Lone Working

is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker then other arrangements should be put in place. Procedures that are already in place for emergencies may not be sufficient for the Health and Safety of lone workers. It is also crucial that contact procedures are put in place, the security of lone workers is an issue not to be looked over whilst carrying out risk assessments. The HSE has produced guidance on lone working including a useful checklist for carrying out a lone working risk assessment [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf)

When members of staff are required to work on other business premises their own employers risk assessment should identify the risks of their work at that property as well as any special risks arising from the fact that they work alone. The risk assessment should also identify whether any aspect of their job could be hazardous to the health of other employees. Co-operation and co-ordination is the key wherever work activities interact. This could be achieved by having contracts with health and safety clauses in them, setting out clearly who is responsible for what, including the provision and maintenance of equipment, the provision and maintenance of protective clothing, training, first aid provision, the procedure for reporting accidents and incidents (including violence and abuse), and ill-health, and a named competent person to contact if there is a problem. Employers should also ensure that visiting staff are informed of other relevant health and safety policies e.g. violence to staff that are in operation on the site/premises. When employees visit other employers premises there should be proper procedures for signing in and out and for ensuring that relevant staff knows that there are visitors on site.

It is extremely important that lone workers have comprehensive training and are given enough information to allow them to react positively to unusually situation avoiding panic. They should understand the risks associated with the work they are doing, the precautions that are needed to carry out their tasks and what they need to do in the case of an emergency. They should also be competent enough to know when it is unsafe to work or to stop working and seek advice from a supervisor.

The nature of lone working means that employees are not under constant supervision but there still needs to be some method of monitoring lone workers to ensure that they remain safe. The employers risk assessments should identify the level of supervision required and the means of providing it. The risk assessment should also set out the procedures under which the lone worker reports back to the employer.

Do you have appropriate methods in place for your lone workers? Are you as protected as you could be if you often work alone?

## About GOSHA

GOSHA is a voluntary, non-profit making organisation, set up in November 2004 to support businesses and other organisations in Guernsey by:

- Encouraging best practice in occupational safety and health
- Helping members develop professional standards within their sphere of work.
- Providing a forum for discussion and sharing information
- Developing a network for those with responsibilities for occupational health and safety
- Organising presentations by experts in relevant subjects or topics of interest
- Providing workshops on topical issues
- working closely with the Health and Safety Inspectorate, professional consultancies and other occupational safety and health associations.

### GOSHA Newsletter January 2010

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