



**Health & Safety News**

**Swine Flu**

Current pandemic level from the WHO is 5. Information is available from various sources. Although not such a high profile in the media since the initial period, the WHO is maintaining level 5, they have concerns over how the virus may spread or change over the coming months. Best advice is to keep up to date with current information, communicate with staff, and have continuity plans in place.

Health and Safety Executive  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/news/2009/swineflu.htm>

World Health Organisation  
<http://www.who.int/en/>

Health Protection Agency  
<http://www.hpa.org.uk/>

**GOSHA reminders**

**Website**

We hope you continue to find [www.gosha.org.uk](http://www.gosha.org.uk) helpful.

**GOSHA window stickers**

These are a great way to make others aware of our association and highlight your concern for workplace health and safety in Guernsey. Please ask any member of the committee for yours.

**Committee Meeting Minutes**

These are displayed on [www.gosha.org.uk](http://www.gosha.org.uk), so you can keep up to date with all we are doing.

**Some thoughts from Paul Craig of Guernsey Electricity**

**Making Choices**

Health and Safety comes down to personal responsibility. Although the employers have responsibilities to provide equipment, training, a safe workplace and good supervision, the choice to wear or not wear a hard hat is ultimately yours. The old cliché “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink” comes to mind. So why is it that so often the safe choice is not taken?

Is it a sign of the times that the tendency for people to break rules seems to be increasing? We watch as others consistently break the speed limit. Even worse than breaking the rules is the fact that a lot of people accept the behaviour as just a part of life.

Generally we overlook the fact that people break the rules so why is it then that when we go to work most of us think things should be different. The fact is if people break the rules outside of work, it is most likely they will break them inside of work as well.

Why bother to have rules? A rule is an attempt to make things consistent. It identifies a set of criteria on which to base decisions. In Health & Safety, rules are in place for our protection and failure to follow the rules can lead to very dire consequences such as injury or even death so the cost associated with breaking of rules should be very high. The punishment should be greater than the benefit derived from breaking the rules.

With a lack of enforcement and a driving force behind it, safety does not always happen consistently. In the everyday rush to keep facilities running, safety and “getting the job done” are often in conflict with each other.

One problem lies in the different ideas about the relevance of safety rules. This includes both employees and managers. Jobs are seen as easier, simpler and more expedient without rules - that is, until an accident happens.

All of us make decisions about things we do which have risk attached to them. We might choose to dive, go kayaking, ride a motorcycle, or smoke. Even although we are aware that there are risks attached to all of these activities. If we were rational beings we would go through a risk assessment process, but usually we don’t. People show a consistent tendency to claim they are less likely than others to suffer harm, which is why apparently sensible people still smoke! Unrealistic optimism is a major contributor to why people do not follow safety rules – “it won’t happen to me”

When making decisions there is an element of individualism, which is shaped by our own values and

beliefs.

- We tend to accept the first alternative that looks like it might work.
- Unwillingness to change thought patterns that we have used in the past in the face of new circumstances.
- We actively screen-out information that we do not think is important.
- We tend to want to see things in a positive light and this can distort our perception and thinking.
- Peer pressure to conform to the opinions held by the group.
- We reject something if we have a bias against the person, or group to which the person belongs: We are inclined to accept a statement by someone we like.
- We tend to attribute our success to our abilities and talents, but we attribute our failures to bad luck and external factors. We attribute other’s success to good luck, and their failures to their mistakes.
- We tend to believe we have more control over events than we really do.

So we are bad at making decisions. Our decisions are based on oversimplification, laziness and bias. And that’s assuming that we haven’t already been affected by our surroundings or led astray by our subconscious.

Don’t trust your brain to do the right thing. In an experiment, children were given a test that was in fact, a distraction. They had to move from one room to another, some having to remember a long number and some a short number. On the way they were offered snacks — chocolate cake or fruit. Those remembering the long number tended to take cake; those with the short, fruit. The cake eaters would under normal circumstances have gone for the healthy option, but, preoccupied, they took decisions against their own interests. Often when we are making choices under stress we can be distracted from the correct or safe behavior.

Some things in life are black or white, and so are easy to make decisions about. A bus is speeding towards you. You want to live. You jump out of the way and you know most definitely you have

made the right decision. But should you wear a hard hat or not? So much of life is ambiguous.

Making a decision can be a tricky business. The outcome depends upon what we do (the action) and when we do it (the time). If we don't get the right combination, things might not work out as we expect.

Wrong action Wrong time	Right action Wrong time
<b>Disaster!</b>	<b>Resistance</b>
<b>Mistake</b>	<b>Success</b>
Wrong action Right time	Right action Right time

But most people come to work wanting to do a good job, so perhaps people break the rules because they see little value in adhering to them and they know that there is limited ability or desire to enforce them anyway. There are also times where rules seem to be created for no reason other than making sure that everyone does not make the same mistake that a very small percentage of the workforce has just made.

Things can be done to help reduce the percentage of time that people choose to break the rules. Relying too heavily on meetings, e-mails, notice board postings, and training sessions to explain why rules exist, and why they need to be followed has limited effective. It is assumed that if we tell people what we need to have done, and tell them why it needs to be done, everyone will choose to do the right thing.

One key reason this approach fails is that people fail to walk the talk. They say one thing in the meetings or in notices, and then they act differently on a day to day basis. They say that safety is the number one priority, but invest most of time, energy, and emotion in stressing the need to "get the job done".

Sports rely heavily on referees or umpires to help make sure that most rules of the game are consistently followed. Penalty flags make it clear when rules are broken, and there are clearly defined consequences that vary in severity based on the rule that is broken. The approach to enforcement in the workplace is less clear. In most cases, we simply ask or tell people what they should and should not do, and hope that they do what we say. By comparing sports enforcement systems to work enforcement systems,

we may find some possible clues for reducing the frequency with which people break the rules. If "most people do come to work wanting to do a good job", and if what really constitutes a good job is clearly defined and people are recognised in a positive manner when they do meet these expectations, then things could improve. Involving people in searching for ways to explain the rules and why they are needed or identifying ways of ensuring that the rules that are truly important and can be consistently followed are likely to bring a better outcome.

Most importantly, everybody, regardless of their position in the company, should follow the same rules. Making decisions that are consistent with what we expect of others. Which rules do you follow and which rules do you break? Why do you break the rules? What choice do you make?

**GOSHA news**

**Membership Packs**

These packs have been produced with lots of valuable information and resources. They will be available for all GOSHA members. If you have not received your pack please contact a member of the committee

**Next Open Meeting**

1st July 2009 - the speaker will be Dick Bush, Managing Director of MSD International based in Guernsey on the topical subject of Resilience in a Recession. A separate invitation will follow for what promises to be a very interesting talk.

**Occupational Health Talk (21st May)**

Clare McArdell gave a very good talk on this important topic – our thanks to Clare for some helpful information and useful reminders.

**Design an Ad**

GOSHA is once again taking part in the Design an Ad contest in conjunction with the Guernsey Press. Look out for the awards in June.

**Raising issues/training needs etc**

our next committee meeting takes place on 4th June 2009 – if you would like to raise any matter, please contact a member of the committee (details at [www.gosha.org.uk](http://www.gosha.org.uk)).

**5th Anniversary Dinner**

GOSHA reaches the grand age of 5 this year and we are planning a dinner on 26 November 2009, which will include health & safety awards. Presenting at the awards will be the President of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. Details will be sent later in the year but please put the date in your diary.

**Health & Safety Information Service**

we only had a limited response to our circular and not enough members replied with a positive response for us to take advantage of the reduced rate service offered by Croner. Many thanks to those who replied, we won't proceed at present.



Secretary:- Jonathan Coyde, Normandie House, Rue a Chien, St Sampsons, GY2 4AE

**Guernsey Accident Statistics**

The preliminary accident figures from Guernsey HSE are presented on the following pages.

<b>Kind of Accident</b>								2.4.09
<b>Taken from Civica - 1.5.2008</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	
Contact with moving machinery or material being machined	14	12	15	11	13	17	10	
Struck by moving, including flying or falling object	29	21	22	28	18	17	16	
Struck by moving vehicle	9	9	2	7	9	3	3	
Struck against something fixed or stationary	19	15	26	17	13	17	9	
Injured whilst, handling, lifting or carrying	219	260	286	195	266	224	178	
Slip, trip or fall on same level	91	73	86	70	66	87	78	
Fall from height	33	37	32	32	32	17	39	
Trapped by something collapsing or overturning	2	3	0	1	4	2	0	
Drowning or asphyxiation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Exposure to, or contact with, harmful substance	5	4	8	2	9	3	2	
Exposure to fire	1	3	0	4	1	0	0	
Exposure to an explosion	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	
Contact with electricity or an electrical discharge	7	4	1	4	2	5	0	
Injured by an animal	1	0	1	1	0	1	4	
Other kind of accident	40	47	49	36	38	42	54	
Unspecified	9	5	5	3	2	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>394</b>	

<b>Agent (s) Involved</b>								2.4.09
<b>Taken from Civica - 1.5.2008</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	
Machinery / equipment for lifting and conveying	31	23	26	27	27	12	18	
Portable power or hand tools	35	29	37	39	40	31	19	
Any vehicle or associated equipment / machinery	38	35	50	25	31	31	29	
Other machinery	16	18	17	14	13	13	6	
Process plant, pipework or bulk storage	10	7	3	3	2	2	6	
Any material, substance or product being handled used or stored	121	118	144	94	98	96	68	
Gas, vapor, dust, fume or oxygen deficient atmosphere	2	5	5	1	3	1	2	
Pathogen or infected material	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	
Live animal	1	0	5	1	2	1	5	
Moveable container or package of any kind	51	56	63	59	70	60	58	
Floor, ground, stairs or any working surface	81	71	86	70	85	84	88	
Building, engineering structure, excavation / underground working	11	17	6	3	6	7	4	
Ladder or scaffolding	21	26	22	20	26	18	21	
Construction formwork, shuttering and falsework	3	5	2	4	3	5	3	
Electricity supply cable, wiring apparatus or equipment	5	7	3	2	3	12	3	
Entertainment or sporting facilities or equipment	0	2	2	0	0	3	2	
Any other agent	45	68	60	46	64	59	62	
Unspecified	8	6	3	4	1	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>394</b>	

**Injuries by nature of trade, business or undertaking - standard industrial classification**

2.4.09

**Taken from Civica - 1.5.2008**

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
0 Agriculture, horticulture, arboriculture and fishing	14	16	21	11	15	9	6
1 Energy and water supply industries	22	20	22	10	8	7	17
2 Extraction of minerals, manufacture of metals, mineral products and chemicals	9	12	15	4	13	8	4
3 Metal goods and engineering industries	15	13	26	18	20	25	14
4 Other manufacturing industries	17	21	21	16	21	10	22
5 Construction	96	104	108	75	90	88	90
6 Wholesale and retail distribution, hotels and catering repairs (vehicles and consumer goods)	119	85	107	106	103	95	74
7 Transport and communication	43	48	50	31	39	39	45
8 Banking, finance, insurance, business (and other services and States administration)	27	23	15	16	12	27	15
9 Other services and States Administration	115	151	141	125	152	126	103
10 Miscellaneous	2	0	8	0	1	2	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>394</b>

