



South Cumbria &  
North Lancashire Branch

## Joint works visit 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019



South Cumbria Occupational  
Health & Safety Group

**Topic:** *HSE update*

**Speaker:** Steven Boyd, Acting Principal Inspector of Health & Safety (Cumbria & Lancashire), HSE, Carlisle.

**Venue:** *The Netherwood Hotel*, Lindale Road, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria LA11 6ET.

Jim Tongue, Chairman, *South Cumbria & North Lancashire IOSH Branch* welcomed *IOSH* and *SCOHS* members to the meeting. He then introduced Steve Boyd, Acting Principal Inspector of Health & Safety (Cumbria & Lancashire), to members.

Steve began his presentation by explaining that he planned to cover three main topics:

1. *HSE* Strategy for 2020 to 2030 – currently being formulated.
2. *HSE*'s Workplan for 2019/2020 and
3. Matters of interest and recent notable safety cases Cumbria and North Lancashire

### **Development of *HSE*'s Strategy for 2020 to 2030**

Steve explained that *HSE*'s strategy for 2020 to 2030 was a 'work in progress' that aimed to produce a strategic document encompassing *HSE*'s holistic aims and objectives for the next ten years. Inevitably this process has been hampered by the current political and financial uncertainty. He said that *HSE*'s future strategies will take account of changes in working practices that are already evident such as: multi-employment in the gig economy, the introduction of workplace technology controlled by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the impact of changes in workplace dynamics such as an aging work force who may be more prone to musculoskeletal injuries.

He also explained that, at the strategic level, *HSE* was required to take account of wider national *Civil Service* goals for example: health, productivity, good work practices, global aims, environment and energy policies, mobility policies, innovation etc... where their regulatory responsibilities overlap with other *Civil Service* Departments' responsibilities. He said that *HSE*'s strategic policies and *HSE* Inspectors' work plan priorities are based on evidence-based scientific studies that continue to be an important data source underpinning *HSE*'s decisions.

Steve said that it is likely that *HSE*'s current mission to

*"...Prevent death, injury and ill health in GB's workplaces..."*

will continue to be the main driver of *HSE* policies for the next ten years.

### ***HSE*'s workplan for 2019 to 2020**

Steve explained that *HSE*'s workplan for 2019/20 focuses on workplaces that are known to include high risk processes with targeted inspections. These include:

- *Woodworking*: wood dust controls, extraction, cleaning, RPE, face fit testing, applying COSHH hierarchy.
- *Food*: musculoskeletal injuries - linking enforcement with MAC tool, flour dust - COSHH hierarchy.
- *Duty to Manage Asbestos*: assessment, management, staff training, monitoring. Often in hospitals and schools (politically sensitive).
- *Healthcare*: violence and aggression, musculoskeletal injuries.

- *Waste & Recycling*: transport, machinery and falling objects.
- *Metal Fabrication*: welding fumes (potentially carcinogenic), suitable RPE, extraction systems, hand protection.
- *Agriculture*: cattle handling, slurry pits, transport, work at height, training.
- *Car Washes*: electrical safety, COSHH, labour abuse.
- *Manufacturing*: molten metals, silica dust, rubber fume.
- *Fairgrounds*: maintenance and inspection programmes.
- *Legionella*: adequate water tank system maintenance, inspection programmes, competence of specialist water treatment companies.
- *Construction*: wood dust, asbestos, silica, appropriate PPE, refurbishment projects, welfare provision eg toilet/washing facilities.

### **Matters of interest and recent notable safety cases in Cumbria and North Lancashire**

Steve then explained that *HSE* Inspectors in the north west had identified significant health and safety problems on forestry sites including poor management of high-risk chainsaw use, lack of welfare provision etc...

He also highlighted potential problems with the emerging industries such as vaping cigarette manufacturers where unusual hazards were introduced into the workplace. For instance, there was a need to have adequate controls on processes that involved the use of COSHH substances such as 100% nicotine used to impregnate electronic vaping cigarettes.

Steve said that *HSE* Inspectors in Cumbria and north Lancashire had overseen eight prosecutions and issued 203 enforcement notices during the last year.

He then used three generalised case studies to highlight common health and safety management failings. For instance, an incident at a brick manufacturing facility had led to an employee suffering amputation and paralysis. On paper, the firm had a sophisticated safety management system in place. In reality, the firm had a poor safety culture and an inadequate training programme. This meant that basic 'lock-off' procedures, that would have prevented this accident, had not been followed.

In another incident a *Local Authority* was found to have an inadequate safe system of work for their waste bin wagons. This resulted in an accident where a bin operative had to have a leg amputation. Contributory causes of this accident included: the use of agency drivers who had not been adequately assessed for competence, inadequate risk assessments, inadequate systems of work and inadequate training programmes.

Steve said that there had also been three falls from height that led to serious injuries and prosecutions. All of these accidents could have been prevented if the task had been adequately risk assessed and appropriate control measures and supervision had been put in place before the work at height was undertaken.

Throughout his presentation Steve fielded members' questions. This led to some useful discussions and exchanges of ideas.

Jim Tongue, Chairman, *South Cumbria & North Lancashire IOSH Branch* then thanked Steve for giving members such a helpful and informative overview of *HSE*'s current objectives and presented him with a small token of members appreciation. He then encouraged members to network with one another and the speaker over tea and coffee.

Related *HSE* web site links:

*HSE* strategies and plans: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/strategiesandplans/index.htm>

*HSE* sector plans: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/strategiesandplans/sector-plans/index.htm>

*HSE* health priority plans: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/strategiesandplans/health-and-work-strategy/index.htm>