



Alan says 'Au Revoir' to IOSH HQ/RIG Committee, Jan 2020. L to r: Adam Meredith, Alison Nicholson, Tina Morgan, Alan Plom, Tina Lee and Luke Messenger.



Rural Industries Group

“2020 Vision”

LET'S MEET THE TEAM

A Fond Farewell

by Tina Morgan

Welcome to the IOSH Rural Industries Group (RIG). We are proud to have our outgoing Chair – Alan Plom write the majority of this, our first newsletter of 2020.

Alan joined RIG’s Committee officially in 2011 having previously been co-opted for some years. He was Vice Chair for 6 years and served as a fantastic Chair over the past 13 months.

Everyone who meets Alan talks of his passion and enthusiasm which rubs off on those he interacts with. I was fortunate enough to meet Alan back in 2014 at a Cattle Safety event and he is as passionate and enthusiastic today as he was back then.

Extremely humble and on occasion embarrassed by the praise which is heaped upon him, Alan will be a big loss to the Rural Industries Group Committee, and we are sad to see him go.

Don’t be fooled however, this is definitely not the end of his work, it just means that he will have more time to work on his own projects.

Alan will continue to tirelessly support the aims of RIG and the Farm Safety Partnerships to reduce the number of fatalities in Agriculture and Rural Industries.

All that remains is for me to thank Alan for his work and dedication and to hand over the reins for this edition of our Newsletter.

All Change

by Alan Plom

“2020 Vision” seems an apt title for this newsletter as we look forward to the next decade and have a clear vision of RIG’s future. Following our Committee recruitment exercise in 2018, we welcomed a new and enthusiastic group, each bringing their own experience, expertise and contacts. They are already beginning to work as ‘Team RIG’.

As ever, we are grateful for the continued input to our Committee from HSE, currently represented by Luke Messenger, co-opted from HSE’s national Agriculture Safety Team. Also for the support of IOSH HQ Staff and we welcome Tina Lee as our new Relationship Manager.

- Tina Morgan – Chair
- Elizabeth Creed – Vice Chair
- Tina Lee – RIG Relationship Manager
- Adam Meredith - Committee Member
- Andy Sloss - Committee Member
- Carl Powell - Committee Member
- Craig Long - Committee Member
- John Kennedy - Committee Member
- Ken Law - Committee Member
- Luke Messenger – Co-opted HSE Rep.

You can contact us via networks@iosh.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>A Fond Farewell</i>	Page 1
<i>All Change</i>	Page 1
<i>Communications</i>	Page 2
<i>Looking Back to the Future</i>	Page 2
<i>RIG Committee Refurb</i>	Page 3
<i>Rural and Urban Interests</i>	Page 3
<i>RIG International</i>	Page 3
<i>ISSA Vision Zero and Golden Rules</i>	Page 4
<i>Increasing our Impact</i>	Page 4
<i>RIG Events and Resources</i>	Page 4
<i>Working Together</i>	Page 4
<i>More Than Awards</i>	Page 5
<i>What Next</i>	Page 5
<i>Normalising Good Practice</i>	Page 5
<i>Why Volunteer?</i>	Page 6

Communications

We have not been able to update and communicate easily with our members for some time, whilst IOSH has been revamping its website. Posting our regular news items covering recent incidents, analysing prosecutions and highlighting relevant guidance also requires a lot of volunteer's time so we need to make sure it is used by members. However, we have been busy, and made more use of social media, mainly **Twitter** (nearly 500 following @iosh_rural) and also our expanding **Linked In** group. If you do not already follow us, then please sign up.

We will now be producing a regular e-Newsletter to provide an update on current and upcoming issues - at least quarterly, following RIG Committee's meetings. This introductory edition is probably longer than future issues, as it features Alan's many interesting memories of the past decade.

Looking Back to the Future

by Alan Plom

So, this is my first and last Newsletter, as I stood down as RIG's Chair on 16 January, after 12+ years on the Committee. I was initially co-opted on to RIG in the 'noughties' to represent HSE's Agriculture Sector, until I 'retired' from HSE in 2011, when I joined IOSH (and RIG Committee) officially - as a keen (but not so young) Graduate Member. When previous Chair Kevin Bywater became 'time-expired' in December 2018, I stayed on as Chair for a year, to help our new Committee members settle in.

I am grateful for this opportunity to give a 'state of the nation' address, reflecting on my involvement with IOSH and RIG over the past decade or so. I have represented IOSH at many events and able to contribute to developing Policy via several influential Committees - as a member of the Board of the (FSP) in England since its inception in 2012 and chairing the FSP's Transport and Machinery Working Group, which devised the *Safe Stop* Campaign.

More recently I sat on HSE's Agricultural Industry Advisory Committee (AIAC), taking over from David Knowles who served us (and HSE) well for many years. It was an interesting experience being on the opposite side of the

table, but we have a common objective and having a co-opted HSE rep on RIG Committee too has been mutually beneficial.

I had 6 enjoyable years as Vice Chair, working alongside Chairman Kevin Bywater and several long-standing Committee members. During this period I met and worked with some very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and resourceful individuals and together we organised some novel and very successful Networking events. *[We even won a few IOSH Awards for 'Excellence in Communications', you know!]*.

Many thanks to Ben Pollard and his predecessors and colleagues in IOSH Events Team, for their patience, support and good company over the years'. Likewise, our various 'Networks Officers', most recently Leanne Lowther and Alison Nicolson, Julie Littlejohns and others for looking after us too.



RIG 'OLD AND NEW'

Above: Some of RIG's new Committee members were available to say 'Farewell' to Kevin Bywater, Dec 2018.

L to r: HSE's Luke Messenger, Lizzie Creed, Carl Powell, Alan Plom, Kevin Bywater, Tina Morgan and RIG's (then new) Relationship Manager Alison Nicolson + Adam Meredith can be seen in profile, looming large on the tv screen behind!

RIG Committee 'Refurb'

by Alan Plom

RIG's Committee has undergone a substantial revamp over the past 18 months, as all of our original members had to stand down after serving way beyond their maximum permitted 6 years of office, or for other reasons. Not least, our previous Chair **Kevin Bywater**, and **David Knowles** [a founder member of RIG and our long-standing representative on HSE's Agriculture Industry Advisory Committee (AIAC)]. We also had to say goodbye to two 'Irelands': **John Ireland**, who perversely was our rep from Scotland and represented us ably on HSE's Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG), and the Republic of Ireland's **John McNamara** (who is closely involved with the Health and Safety Authority's Farm Safety Advisory Group).

Our 'Welsh rep' **Brian Rees** (a farmer and Lead Instructor for Lantra and ex-Chair of Wales Farm Safety Partnership) is also now 'time-expired' and has left the Committee. However, Wales is now well-represented with 3 members from that side of Offa's Dyke. Ireland's Rural Industries Section is also now represented by its Chair John Kennedy.

Other long-serving Committee members who dropped off our Committee over the past few years were **David Leavesley**, **Mark Smith** and **Nigel Davy**. Not forgetting **Graham Munford** either, the Chair when I joined. My apologies to other members not mentioned, but thanks to all for laying the foundations for the success and expansion we are currently enjoying. Every member of Committee brings their own experience, expertise and contacts, and they are already beginning to work as 'Team RIG'. I am very pleased that women are now playing an active part in RIG, as **Tina Morgan** (above on the right) and **Elizabeth Creed** (left) have taken on the role of Chair and Vice-Chair, following in the footsteps of **Gillian Littlewood** who was on the Committee a few years ago.



Rural and Urban interests

RIG represents around 20 different land (and water) based industries - not just traditional farming, forestry and fish-farming but extends from A to Z, encompassing amenity ground care and arboriculture, relating to maintenance of estates, public spaces, sports facilities - so of particular relevance to local authorities and those involved in construction and maintenance of railways, transport and utility networks - through to vets and even zoos!

Our cross-sector Networking Events have helped to increase our 'footprint' as other IOSH members now realise that we overlap with every other IOSH Industry Group in some way. In fact, anywhere where there are trees, grass, and caterpillars..... which coincidentally was the title of one of our 'Award Winning' [Did I mention that?] series of 'workshop' events. Our events have traditionally attracted a high proportion of non-members of IOSH too.

As a result, our membership has also expanded steadily over the past couple of years from just under 300 (mainly

based in UK and Ireland) to well over 1,500. Many are now based in other countries, as IOSH increases its influence and involvement. Agriculture is the most dangerous industry in countries throughout the World and we all face the same causes of deaths, injuries and ill health. 'Risk-acceptance' is a cultural problem, worldwide.

'RIG International'

RIG has been active and influential on the International front for some years, supporting IOSH initiatives. For example, I had the pleasure to travel to Turkey in 2013, along with 2 other long-standing RIG Committee members (David Knowles and John McNamara). We all spoke at Turkey's National Annual Health and Safety Conference, which for the first time in 26 years focussed on agriculture. We subsequently provided training for their new Government Inspectors, both in UK and in Turkey. David and John also attended other International Conferences and made international visits.

We shared research findings and good (communications) practice at another

major international event in Spain (see page 4). In particular, HSE research on segregating farmers based on their attitude to risk, to enable better targeting of their resources. Also the innovative work at Aberdeen University on 'Non-Technical Skills in Agriculture' (check out @NTSAg on Twitter). I also reviewed the influential activities of the Farm Safety Foundation's 'Yellow Wellies' (targeting young people in particular and coordinating Farm Safety Week and the Mind Your Head Campaign) and the role of the national Farm Safety Partnerships in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Colloquium was an opportunity to hear about the potentially useful research being carried out in other countries too, which included use of virtual reality in training and developments to improve design of tractors and machinery, improving chemical usage, behaviours and well-being. It also focussed on the **ISSA's 'Vision Zero'** initiative, which was developed with input from IOSH. The Proceedings of the Colloquium have recently been published and you can read more about 'Vision Zero, the international research and my full paper (on pages 39-44) at:

<http://www.uco.es/issacordoba/en/conclusions/>



Last year I was proud to represent IOSH (and the UK) at the ISSA (International Social Security Section Agriculture) 39th **International Colloquium on Prevention in Agriculture**.

Held in Cordoba, Spain in mid-May, I was the only attendee from UK and the 120 other delegates from many nations were very interested to hear about the research carried out in GB.

'ISSA' Vision Zero and Golden Rules

The ISSA has developed a range of resources to support their **Vision Zero** international initiative, including guidance on assessing OHS management for farmers, based on the ISSA's **7 Golden Rules**, viz:

1. Take leadership – demonstrate commitment
2. Identify hazards – control risks
3. Define targets – develop programmes
4. Ensure a safe and healthy system – be well-organized

5. Ensure safety and health in machines, equipment and workplaces
6. Improve qualifications – develop competence
7. Invest in people – motivate by participation

These guides provide a useful framework of 'audit' type questions and two versions have been published, one for individual farmers the other for farming companies. The booklets can be downloaded free from:

<http://visionzero.global/sites/default/files/2019-07/Vision%20Zero%20-%20KRUS%20for%20Individual%20Farmers.pdf>

<http://visionzero.global/sites/default/files/2019-07/Vision%20Zero%20-%20KRUS%20for%20Agriculture%20Company.pdf>

Increasing our Impact

The information I presented at the 'ISSA' Colloquium was collated from RIG's well-received and well-attended **'Effective Communications (to Influence Farmers)'** Workshop, held at Leamington Spa on 1 May 2019. This was organised on behalf of the FSP England and I fervently hope that we will be able to adapt and develop some of the findings of the research shared at that event and since, to enable us all to improve our communications and become more effective 'influencers'.

This is essential if we are to help achieve not just national targets (eg FSP England's aspiration to achieve a 50% reduction in farm deaths by 2023) but more widely, the ISSA's Vision Zero. [See the RIG-FSP Communications Workshop presentations on RIG's 'Recent Events' page:

<https://www.iosh.com/membership/our-membership-network/our-groups/rural-industries-group/recent-events/> .

RIG Events and Resources

Reports and presentations from some of RIG's other successful [*and Award-winning!*] events are also available on RIG's Recent Events webpage, including *'Trees, Grass and Caterpillars'*, *'Shake Rattle and Roll'* (on noise and vibration) and *"Driving Safety Forwards"* (on farm transport and deliveries). Although still relevant, presentations from other events organised for the FSP England (on *Machinery Safety* and *Cattle Handling*) have been archived, along with another cross-sector practical event *"Working on or near Water"*, and our film on *"Safe use of User-Worked Rail Crossings"*. The link to the *"Introduction to Forest Safety Video"* is still available on our new Home Page and we hope that the new IOSH website (when fully operational) will provide quick links to these and other 'hidden' resources.

Working Together

RIG's events usually feature working demonstrations with input from industry and these would not have been delivered - or been so informative and successful - without the enthusiasm, support and active participation of RIG Committee members and colleagues in their companies over the years. [*You know who you are!*] These collaborations were recognised in Network News May 2019 - which I was invited to edit. I chose the theme *"Collaboration"*, because that is what we do well. It was also an opportunity to share our experiences, recognise the input of our active partners and to get their perspective on working with us. Testimonials were received from the National Farmers Union, 'Yellow Wellies' and major national contractor Ground Control Ltd. See: <https://issuu.com/ioshnetworks/docs/iosh-networks-news-summer-2019> .

More than Awards

The difficulty with a widely-dispersed Industry Group is enabling members in remote locations to get to meetings. To overcome this, some of our events have been devised as models, suitable for IOSH Branches to deliver in the regions. This has resulted in a few being delivered around the country in collaboration with IOSH Branches and other industry organisations.

As a result, we have been 'mentioned in dispatches' at the IOSH Awards each year since their inception in 2014. Until last year, that is.... despite two entries for our far-reaching Networking Events on 'Effective Communications' and the unique 'Shake, Rattle and Roll' event. The latter was also relevant to a wide range of other (non-rural) industries, as practical measurement and control of noise and vibration were demonstrated. It was delivered in collaboration with IOSH Chiltern Branch and HSE's National Specialist Team.

We have to accept that the water isn't always smooth though. I never got over missing the deadline (by a few hours) to submit an entry for our *Water Safety* event in the 2015-16 Awards for Excellence Competition either. This event had great personal significance to me as I dedicated it to a deceased friend and ex-HSE Inspector who inspired it.

However, the blow was softened somewhat by receiving the one-off *Rob Strange Award*, devised by the then IOSH CEO to recognise 'services to IOSH Networks'. Being nominated and voted on by IOSH HQ staff really meant a lot, and I thank you all. What made this even more special was being presented this Award together with Neil Catton (for his work with the Food and Drinks Industry Group, at the 2016 IOSH Networks Conference. I have known and worked with Neil for many years, from way back in my HSE days, and coincidentally Neil was Kevin's boss

at the time, so closely linked with RIG too.

Whilst it has been a pleasure and very rewarding to be involved in organising our events and meetings over the years (as RIG's 'Events Coordinator') - and long may this approach continue - far from patting ourselves on the back, we must not forget that farming continues to have the worst rate of death and serious injury per head of working population of any industry in the UK. Treework is even worse.

Already this year, a farm worker died in Lancashire after falling backwards from a forklift truck and striking his head on a concrete floor, and on the same day in Devon another worker died after being crushed by cattle. Deaths have also been reported on farms in Ireland.

What Next

Until recently RIG Committee member **Brian Rees** chaired the FSP in Wales and a number of other IOSH/RIG members have played an active part in other national FSPs, HSE, HSENI, HSA and industry-led Committees.

But there is so much more that IOSH and individual members of RIG can do....



RIG's members are in the front-line and have much to contribute. Another practical Workshop-type event is proposed on behalf of FSP England later in the year. This will focus on means to avoid contact with overhead power lines (including using new technology) and safe working at height.

However, a lot of our time (and IOSH resources) over the past few years have gone into supporting the FSP in England and RIG Committee is keen to find ways to actively support all 5 national FSPs - along with the 3 national Regulators in UK and the Republic of Ireland - all aiming to help the agricultural industry improve safety and drive down the appalling fatal incident rate and reduce the pain and suffering of farmers, their families, employees, contractors and members of the public, as well as injuries and ill health.

In addition to our involvement with FSP England and HSE's Advisory Committee, several RIG members were involved in FSP England's working groups that devised the key messages on the 4 Priority Themes, ie transport and machinery, working at height, livestock and child safety. All Partners (and their Members) are expected to continue to promote these themes over the coming year. [Detailed guidance on these to follow.]

Normalising Good Practice

All RIG members can easily play their part in raising awareness and drawing attention to poor practice, which is still regularly shown on TV programmes and in social media, on-line or in print. The FSP Board (and RIG Committee) have agreed to support anyone who receives adverse criticism through challenging poor practice. A recent example widely publicised in social media was the *Our Yorkshire Farm* programme. Some of our tweets were included in this article:

<https://www.fwi.co.uk/business/business-management/health-and-safety/child-safety-fears-raised-over-family-farm-tv-show> . So please do your bit and support your colleagues.

Why Volunteer?

It is often said that “*The more you put into it, the more you get out*”? Well, not only have I had the satisfaction of representing IOSH and the FSP at many events in UK and abroad, I have been able to use my contacts (and enthusiasm?) to organise and deliver many well-received events and contribute to national Policy via several Committees. I have written countless articles, some appearing in specialist OHS publications and on websites, spoken at conferences, been interviewed by radio and media, even contributed to a story line in the Archers...

I even managed to appear in two places at the same time, sending a ‘welcome’ and ‘farewell’ video message to our joint ‘Shake, Rattle and Roll’ Networking event with Chiltern Branch being held in mid-Bedfordshire from the ISSA Conference in Spain – a case of ‘double vision’ rather than ‘Vision Zero’. I was gutted to miss it though, having proposed and set it up.....Honest!

Now it’s my turn to step back. I have left a few loose ends to tie up in relation to events, but RIG is in safe hands and your new Committee have some great ideas. I am sure they will continue to find ways to work with our like-minded colleagues throughout UK and internationally, in support of the IOSH Strategy ‘Work 2022’. I hope you will all continue to support RIG, wherever you are and whatever industry you work in. Don’t leave it to others and just grumble if you think more should be done to support you or your particular sector. Offer to help in some way and you will soon find that volunteering is very rewarding, and that by working together, you can help

to **#MakeADifference**. It is good for your CPD too. Remember also, it is not necessarily what you know, but who you know who knows what you need to know.

You will be able to have your say on what you want from RIG, in our Members survey. I hope to see some of you at future events and keeping in touch through Linked In or Twitter **@AlanPlom**.

AND FINALLY,..... I’d like to thank the Committee for my farewell gifts related to another of my passions, playing drums. Also, for letting this Old Man *ramble on*.... which coincidentally is the title of one of my favourite Led Zeppelin tracks featuring John Bonham’s innovative and inspirational drumming! Rock On RIG!

Good Luck

ALAN PLOM
February 2020



OUT AND ABOUT

RIG Committee occasionally holds meetings at interesting venues. Left: our visit to G’s Mushroom Farm and AD Plant in Cambs. This was built without significant incidents under the watchful eye of ex-RIG Chair Kevin Bywater and demonstrates the range of responsibilities of our members. [And that’s no B.S.!].

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Why not join us on Social Media? We have active Social Media accounts on Twitter and LinkedIn.



@IOSH_Rural



<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8773372>

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