

Environmental and Waste Management Group



November 2020 Newsletter

MEMBER SURVEYS

Support your local committee member...

Do you deal with research waste? Imperial College London and our own committee member Olga Kuzmina is looking to create a valuable resource for professionals involved in research waste management.

Olga would like to understand what would help you to manage research waste better. For example, what problems do you face during waste management? Would you be interested in joining a distribution list focused on waste management only, or would you find it useful instead to have access to a repository of good practices for management of research waste? Also, if you have any better ideas, please let Olga know what would be helpful!

Please complete this [simple anonymised survey](#) (5 questions in total) if you are involved in any kind of waste management at your organisation.

HS&E... A tight fit?

Can the environment be brought under the same umbrella as health and safety? In the following article, reproduced from the IOSH Magazine, Duncan Spencer CFIOSH, head of advice and practice at IOSH, reflects on dialogue received from IOSH's EWMG.

Why is the word 'environment' tagged on to 'health and safety' and is the amalgam relevant today? It's a concept that the EWMG has been looking at. Since 2018, the EWMG, one of the largest IOSH groups, has been challenged by supporting two distinct interest groups with limited crossover: environmental management professionals, and those who work in the waste management sector providing health and safety advice. As part of the general conversation about the scope of each IOSH group, EWMG has been thinking about the meaning of E.

The meaning of e

Many people identify the 'E' in the initialism HSE as standing for 'Executive', as in the Health and Safety Executive. But in job titles using the same three letters it represents 'environment' – health, safety and environment (HSE) or environment, safety and health (ESH) – often followed by manager or adviser. Ad hoc surveys and the IOSH jobs website indicate that up to 40% of roles incorporate an 'E'; many tagging on a 'Q' for quality, as in QESH. This leads to a question: are these roles about operational management with operational responsibility, or are they audit or compliance roles? The other interesting 'E' is that in EHO – environmental health officer – a professional required to have working knowledge of noise, chemicals, occupational hygiene, environmental impact and public health. So perhaps the E here is too narrow in its implications.

Broader scope

In the academic sector, we see a number of HSE degrees, which often include an environmental management module. Yet a review of the EWMG points out that there are many areas of professional interest spanning all sectors, including –

- Members whose roles include environmental management practice advice – in all sectors – who may also be members of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and/or are chartered environmentalists
- Members who provide OSH advice in waste management companies, who may be members of the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management
- Members involved in extraction and manufacturing, industries with a high environmental impact, who may be members of professional bodies such as the Institute of Quarrying

This leads to a question of where 'environment' sits within our profession. As professionals move into management roles, they become responsible for other areas of business. Many of us have worn more than one hat, with environment joined by wellbeing, business continuity, emergency management, risk management and audit, so should IOSH support members in all of these disciplines?

As part of the drive to improve the employability of its members and the profile of the profession, IOSH's EWMG continues to explore the 'E' question. (See *defining your role*, below, for some more questions to consider.)

What it says on the tin

OSH professionals need to learn about equipment and processes: without this knowledge it is difficult to offer safe advice. Risks must be understood and controlled. But does adding quality, business continuity, fire safety, environment, waste and others extend the boundary expectations of safety too far?

It depends on whether we are talking about technical know-how or the power to influence. OSH has moved into the territory of leadership and management long ago. It reinforces the importance of the competency framework to drive better integration, influence and inclusion.

I have concerns about employers and managers who don't understand what professional roles entail and the vast skill-sets available – and maybe that is caused by umbrella terms underselling what's really in the tin. Could it be time for change?

Your call: defining your role

- Should acknowledging the environmental professional organisations and skills such as business continuity be core to IOSH and the profession?
- With whole degrees in environmental engineering and sustainable environmental management, what technical knowledge should be contained in a health and safety-focused degree and what should be left out?
- Are ESH and QESH roles primarily compliance, management or leadership roles?
- If the role is an audit or compliance one, what are the routes available to reach a head of audit role?
- If you work in an audit role, what non-health and safety qualifications/professional memberships do you have to complement your own professional portfolio?
- What does 'industry' want?
- Are employers confused about the myriad of technical competencies?

To support this, the IOSH EWMG need to have a better understanding of the professional profile and expectations of you, our members. We would ask each of you to spend 5-10 minutes giving thought to this and completing [this survey](#) by 12 December.

We will report back the findings to you in January 2021.

LEGISLATION, REGULATORS, GUIDANCE & CONSULTATIONS

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) updates and guidance

See [here](#) for the latest information and guidance from the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).

Cost of workplace injuries and ill health: user engagement survey

HSE would like to learn more about the use of data on the costs of workplace injuries and work-related ill health. HSE analysts produce estimates of these costs (excluding long-latency illness, such as cancer) in its annual publication [Costs to Britain](#); total costs were estimated to be [£16.2 billion in 2018/19](#).

HSE is now seeking responses from experienced users of its publication who apply the product as part of their job or to research. To take part in its survey follow [this link](#).

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson outlines his Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution

The Prime Minister set out his ambitious ten point plan for a green industrial revolution on 18 November, proposed to create and support up to 250,000 British jobs.

Covering clean energy, transport, nature and innovative technologies, the Prime Minister's blueprint is proposed to allow the UK to forge ahead with eradicating its contribution to climate change by 2050, particularly crucial in the run up to the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow next year. (Read more: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

[David Symons](#), Future Ready Innovation leader at WSP, SocEnv's Environmental Professional of The Year 2020, provided the following personal thoughts on the plan –

- “Accelerating the ban on sale of new petrol and diesel cars to 2030 is the real standout. Costs of electric vehicles are dropping fast so EVs will be the norm in ten years. But the scale of the investment needed to install charging networks as well as production of EVs will bring huge opportunities for business and a drive for action by local authorities”
- “A consultation on the phase out of new diesel HGVs While all the focus is on EVs, there's still a huge challenge to decarbonise HGVs and buses in 30 years. While the technology is less clear others are getting ahead. Sweden has just committed to installing up to 2000km of e-roads by 2030 and Germany is trialling the technology. So there's huge opportunities for the UK to be a technology leader here before the rest of the world gets too far ahead. We'll look forward to the consultation and the government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, due in early 2021”
- “600,000 heatpumps a year in homes by 2028, compared to the 220 a week which are currently installed in the UK. Around 1/3 of these will be in new homes on current figures, so that sees a necessary and huge step change in home retrofit. The heat and buildings strategy due later this year will hopefully set out how this will be achieved. Ambitious, well funded and well designed were the three watchwords from the Committee on Climate Change in their summer progress report”
- “A town entirely heated and cooking on hydrogen by 2030? With most hydrogen innovation being in clusters in the NW and NE this could be a northern town. Liverpool and Manchester could be the two frontrunners for the NW together with Leeds building on the city's leadership in hydrogen gas trials in the NE”
- “Nature alongside technical solutions to the climate emergency. Politicians love a number on trees. But ambitions to plant 30,000 ha of trees every year, or around 50m trees a year will create habitats, places for communities as well as potentially a larger UK timber industry. Today the UK plants around 13,000 ha of trees, mostly in Scotland, and 30,000 ha will see a return to 1980 levels – though these were in more industrial monoculture stands”

“Critics will always say that plans are not enough. There is still a huge amount to do to deliver a clean, fossil free economy. But today's plans are welcome and should be celebrated.”

Meanwhile campaigners argue that Net Zero will be 'impossible' without waste sector overhaul...

Extinction Rebellion's Zero Waste group has written to the prime Minister arguing that carbon emissions from waste disposal are 'growing rapidly' due to the 'unfettered expansion of carbon-intensive energy-from-waste (EfW) incineration plants'.

The letter is supported by signatories such as Biofuelwatch, Friends of the Earth, Green House Think Tank, Greenpeace, Resource Recovery from Waste, ShareAction, The Climate Coalition, the UK Without Incineration Network (UKWIN), the UK Youth Climate Coalition, the Zero Carbon Campaign,

and Zero Waste Europe, as well as Jon Cruddas MP, Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb, London Assembly Member Caroline Russell, and author and activist George Monbiot.

The groups say that large-scale EfW ‘impairs the transition to a circular economy’, saying that once EfW infrastructure is in place, a local authority is ‘contractually obligated to continue burning materials’ so that the EfW facility can operate at capacity, typically for at least 10 years. (Read more: circularonline.co.uk)

Environmental & Waste Management Group Webinars

The Environmental & Waste Management Group continues to host fortnightly webinars. These will be promoted in advance by email to all group members –

- 25 November, 12:30 Joint Event with CIWM and IOSH Public Services Network - Partnership working in improving environmental sustainability – case study of best practice in engagement / partnership working

Want to find out what a successful local authority partnership looks like? This webinar includes a brief presentation from Mr Paldeep Bhatti who heads up the Kent Resource Partnership (KRP). The KRP consists of the 13 local authorities in Kent and looks deliver outcomes from its Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS). The brief presentation will touch upon why there is a partnership, how its funded, past achievements along with the upcoming opportunities. ([Register here](#))

- 9 December, 13:00 Sleepers in Waste Bins – plus Presidential Brief

A discussion and communication of the issues around people sleeping in and around waste containers. This is a significant risk, not just to vulnerable members of the public, but also our employees particularly if involved in a serious incident. Preceded by a Presidential Brief from Jimmy Quinn