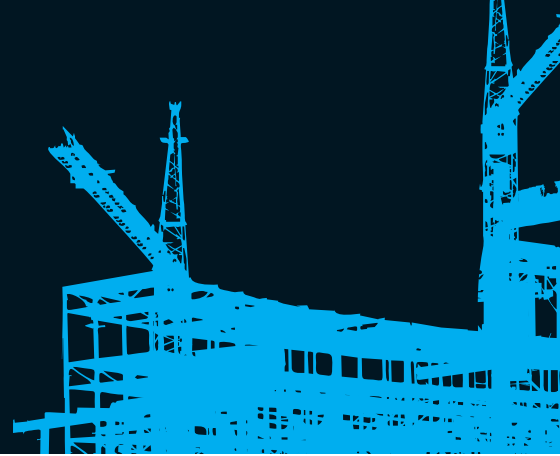




Construction update

June 2010 Newsletter



Welcome.

In past editions we have been discussing the findings of the Donaghy report into fatal accidents. The former Government officially responded at end of March and their response is detailed here.

Of the 28 recommendations, 23 were accepted but recommendations associated with Directors' duties, application of Gangmasters Act, extension of building regulations, non accident prosecutions and a full time construction minister have been dismissed or would need further consideration.

We have since seen a change of government and action on taking forward these recommendations is awaited. In the meantime David Cameron has appointed Lord Young to review the application of health and safety law and a perceived

compensation culture with the aim of introducing a 'common sense' approach to health and safety.

This comes at a time when provisional figures for fatalities in construction are at an all time low of 35 for the year ending 31 March 2010. Final statistics will be available in summer 2010.

In the meantime the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have published their 2010/2011 plan of work for the Construction sector. In this edition we also highlight the outcome of an HSE



inspection initiative into roofing and refurbishment sites, the importance of windows in telehandlers, the hazards of ultra high pressure water jetting and new HSE construction leaflets.

HSE Plan of Work 2010/2011

The plan is available here but in summary the priority sectors will be small sites, refurbishment, homebuild, major projects and licensed asbestos work.

Five issues will be considered at all construction site visits namely:

- welfare facilities
- site transport
- work at height
- asbestos risks
- good order.

Key interventions by HSE inspectors will involve:

- Leadership, CDM dutyholders, Local Authority as client, contractor competence, temporary works, fire, domestic and minor commercial roofwork, fragile roofs, tower cranes, mobile cranes, respiratory risks, manual handling and worker involvement.



1 in 4 construction sites failed safety inspection

During an HSE inspection blitz on Roofing and Refurbishment contracts in March, the HSE issued 691 enforcement notices at 470 sites, with inspectors giving orders for work to be stopped immediately in 359 instances. The majority of notices issued related to unsafe work being carried out at height or where sites lacked good order.

Good working at height practice is available by clicking here.

Telehandler warning

Following a recent fatal accident in Scotland, HSE is warning all users of telescopic variable reach trucks, commonly known as telehandlers, of the danger of not replacing broken windows on these machines.

The side window on telehandlers is designed as a guard to prevent operator access to the boom. If the glass screen is broken or missing, operators may lean out of the window aperture and inadvertently lower the boom onto themselves. They may not realise the danger they face, and if the boom does lower onto them, that they may not be able to stop it.

Action required:

- If the side glass screen is broken or missing the machine should be removed from use until it has been replaced. Machine owners, users and operators should be warned of the dangers of operating their machines with the side screen broken or missing, and the importance of reporting such damage as soon as it occurs
- Users are also reminded of the importance of carrying out daily checks of the condition of their trucks, and that the condition of the cab windows is part of these inspections.

More information is available here.



Ultra high pressure water jetting

QBE has observed a number of major injuries from this technology, which is often used for demolition purposes where ultra high pressure water jetting is capable of cutting through concrete.

Accidents arising from poor use or from defective equipment can lead to catastrophic injury with the water penetrating the skin, damaging internal organs or amputating limbs.

Safety guidance is in review but users should be aware of this HSE sector information minute and code of practice from the Water Jetting Association.

Best practice will include but is not limited to:

- Risk assessment and method statement for each task
- Consideration of safer alternatives for work or operating at lower water pressures
- Defining team leader, individual jobs, job rotation, communication signals, equipment checks etc
- Isolating equipment before making any adjustments or correcting faults
- No lone working with operators trained and competent

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as per sector information minute above
- Emergency procedures defined
- Suitable health surveillance as determined by risk assessment.

New HSE Construction leaflets

A range of new leaflets aimed at the smaller contractor provide straight forward guidance with photographic examples of good and poor practice associated with Roofwork, Manual Handling, and Welfare. These are available by clicking here.

QBE Risk Management

This bulletin is produced by the Risk Management team within QBE's UK & Ireland Casualty department. We are a team of dedicated professionals who work closely with our clients to actively assist with accident prevention, employee rehabilitation and claims mitigation.

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