



November 2012

GOSHA News

GOSHA 2012 Health & Safety Awards – our 2012 awards have been launched and a nomination form is now available (from our secretary or via our website). We are keen to seek nominations for small (under 25 employees) and larger sized enterprises (over 25 employees). There are individual and access for disabled people categories too. If you know of a deserving organisation or individual, please nominate them. We are not seeking perfection, just people who try to do the right thing and achieve good results. We are again very grateful to Roy Featherstone of IOSH for providing independent adjudication and judging of our nominees.

2013 Annual Dinner (24 January 2013) – our awards will be presented at our annual dinner, which will be sponsored by Insurance Corporation. Invitations will be issued in November and we hope you will be able to attend.

Site Visit – Guernsey Dairy – the visit was both interesting and informative and we would like to sincerely thank Andrew Tabel, General Manager, and his team for making the visit possible.

Evening Talk & AGM – our next talk is on 22 November when John Webb will speak about the safety at Silverstone. Our AGM will take place on the same evening following dinner. New members of the committee are always welcome. If you can help GOSHA in any way, please let us know.

Website – our website has been re-designed and relaunched. We hope you find it useful. Please let us know if we can add to its usefulness.

Themes – we continue to highlight the need for businesses and other organisations in Guernsey to address the risks of asbestos and development of the legionella bacterium in water systems (eg air conditioning and office showers).

As ever, views, ideas and involvement of members are very welcome.

Health and safety news from the HSE

- ① Guernsey HSE sets out its enforcement policy – the Guernsey HSE has set out its enforcement policy in a statement which can be read at www.hse.guernsey.gg/PDFs/Enforcement_Policy_Statement.pdf
“The purpose of enforcement is to: ensure that duty holders take action to deal immediately with serious risks; promote and achieve sustained compliance with the law; ensure that duty holders who breach health and safety requirements (including directors or managers, who fail in their responsibilities) may be held to account, which may include recommending prosecution, in the circumstances set out later in this policy.”
- ① Health and Safety in the Workplace – Guernsey’s General Guide – this is a useful reference and information booklet, relevant to all businesses, charities and other organisations in Guernsey. Please be familiar with it. The guide can be downloaded www.hse.guernsey.gg/PDFs/Guides_Information/HSE_General_Guide.pdf
- ① Accidents at Work in Guernsey – a fall in 2011 – we were delighted to note a fall in the number of reported accidents in 2011 to a total of 334. Whilst the reduction is great to note, there were still many injuries arising from poor workplace practices, poor training and inadequate risk management. Manual handling and slips and trips remained top of the list of causes of serious injury. The number of serious injuries in banking and finance increased from 12 to 18.

You can read the full summary at www.hse.guernsey.gg/PDFs/Acc_Stats_2011.pdf

- 🕒 Health & Safety Toolbox – easy to use and follow – worth a try at www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/index.htm
- 🕒 Working with chemicals and other hazardous substances – check out the guide at www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg136.pdf and frequently asked questions at www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/further/faq.htm
- 🕒 Asbestos – still too many ignoring our approved code of practice – please read it and know about the dangers of ignorance in Guernsey and the consequence. Know where it is in your premises, train yourself and your colleagues. It's the law. www.hse.guernsey.gg/PDFs/ACOP_Asbestos_Revised_12052010.pdf
- 🕒 Cleaning industry health & safety – updated 2012 guidance at www.hse.gov.uk/cleaning/index.htm
- 🕒 How safe is safe enough?" From the blog of Judith Hackett, HSE Chair
It's a question that was posed to me at a conference I was speaking at recently. It struck me as an odd question at the time. The man asking wanted to know how unlikely a serious accident had to be before he could stop worrying about ending up in court. One in a hundred? A thousand? A million? He wanted some form of numerical answer - a bit like 42 if you're a Douglas Adams fan.

"If the answer's 1 in 10,000," he was in effect asking, "am I safe from prosecution?" I completely understand the desire to be safe from prosecution but this can't be the right way to approach it. Successful risk management is not about ticking boxes or calculating numbers. And it is not about doing things to avoid sanctions. The primary goal is not to avoid a fine or a criminal record, but to stop people being made unwell or being hurt or killed by their work. The reason our regulations are backed by a criminal enforcement regime is because Parliament and successive governments have been clear that it is not acceptable for lives to be put at risk or damaged because of a failure to manage workplace risk.

In the most serious cases, it's true that you may face an unlimited fine or go to prison if you are found guilty of failing to manage the risks, which resulted in someone being seriously hurt. But, worse still, you can't undo the suffering of those injured or the grief of the bereaved. Some people may have to live with that for the rest of their lives.

Managing risk means managing people and every one of them is different. They live their lives and bring their experiences and attitudes with them to work. Human factors, in the jargon. That's not easy to factor into the numerical systems driven approach to risk management.

For managers and leaders especially this numerical approach to risk is dangerous - it makes it easy to distance yourself from the reality of what is really happening and the risks that people may be taking in your business.

Systems and procedures are important, but they're not enough. For me the acid test of safe enough gets measured on a different scale. Would I let my son or daughter do that? Would I be happy to see someone I cared about putting themselves at risk in that way? If the answer is no, then why should you feel comfortable asking someone in your business to do it?

[Office Safety Myth: All office equipment must be tested by a qualified electrician every year](#)



The reality - No. The law requires employers to assess risks and take appropriate action. HSE's advice is that for most office electrical equipment, visual checks for obvious signs of damage and perhaps simple tests by a competent member of staff are quite sufficient.

GOSHA Committee