

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE HAULAGE INDUSTRY

An average of 66 people are killed each year in the UK in workplace transport accidents. This is about 30% of all workplace fatalities, and the numbers seem to be going up each year. Per employee, accident rates are higher in the haulage industry than either construction or agriculture, both usually considered to be the most hazardous industries.

It is alarming to hear that the same types of accident keep killing people time and again. They include people being struck by vehicles and falling loads; people falling from vehicles and vehicles collapsing or overturning. The fact that these keep happening is a clear sign that the industry has not got a good grasp on how to manage its health and safety risks.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are not impressed and are currently developing plans to address the issue. These will include a series of audits and structured inspections to be carried out during 2007/8. These will focus on arrangements in place to ensure risks are properly managed through systems to ensure site, vehicle and driver safety.

If the HSE do visit they will want to see that you have safe systems of work in place. They will be interested in your paperwork, but even more interested in how you put your system into practice. So it is not enough to have a file full of risk assessments, and you will need to demonstrate that you control all the hazards on your site, your employees are competent and properly supervised, and you have provided necessary equipment and maintained it properly. Whilst the HSE has identified the focus for this program, inspectors will certainly have a good look around and will not hesitate to act on any unsafe conditions or behaviours they see.

John Dyne, Secretary HTA



ABNORMAL LOADS HIGHWAY AGENCY/INDUSTRY LIAISON MEETING - 17th January 2007

The meeting covered a wide range of topics including road works, water policy, ESDAL, and weighing etc. I would like to say that all of the issues have now been resolved, but sadly, perhaps unsurprisingly, they have not. The most relevant points concerned the water policy and self escorting where we (HTA) again pushed for powers to stop traffic as we do on a daily basis. I believe that the HA may now have finally realised the implication for industry where an employee is injured whilst stopping traffic.

A scenario was tabled where an escort driver was injured or worse whilst stopping traffic, and his employer had known that the escort driver would have to stop traffic, an action for which there is no legal power. The employer is effectively in breach of the Health & Safety at Work Act amongst other things and the HA / Police would be implicated by virtue of the fact that they had knowingly forced industry to take this action. I believe

that the HA may now realise the implication for industry and hopefully we can move forward with this issue. As far as the water preferred policy is concerned there have been communications between the HA and DFT, copies of which have been requested. Nothing has really changed, but the HA have assured us that they will push for clarification.

David M. Purslow

DATES TO REMEMBER:

HTA GENERAL MEETINGS

Thursday 15th February 2007, 6 pm.

Old Golf House Hotel, Huddersfield

Thursday 17th May, 2007, 6 pm.

Old Golf House Hotel, Huddersfield

SAFETY PROTECTS PROFITS

Safety is not an option, it's a legal imperative in the UK, with big fines for non-compliance. As in October 2005, when London's Central Criminal Court imposed a record £13.5 million pound fine on the companies involved in the Hatfield train crash, October 2000, when a GNER train left the cracked rails at 185 km/h, killing four passengers. Both were found guilty of negligence, arising from the deaths of the train's passengers. This confirms that if you want to protect your company's profits improving safety is the most cost-effective way to do it.



Chernobyl is a good example, on 25th April 1986 an unsafe procedure on this nuclear plant 80 miles north of Kiev, led to a man-made disaster. Safety procedures were disregarded whilst testing reactor number 4. At 01:23am a chain reaction started in the reactor, which then became uncontrollable, creating explosions and a fireball, which exploded and blew off the reactor's heavy steel and concrete lid. This negligent act imperiled the lives of Ukraine's entire population and if it occurred in the West, could have led to claims costing hundreds of millions of pounds. For although the initial death toll was 30 brave men of the Fire Service, the bigger picture was cataclysmic, as 326,000 needed relocation away from the radioactive area.

Furthermore, long-term mortality rates since 1986 have witnessed the deaths of another 2500 Ukrainians. Moreover, thyroid cancer incidence has leapt from 6 per million to 45 per million - a 750 % increase! So the true cost of this appallingly dangerous incident in the real world, vastly exceeds the official £8 Billion (21 Billion Euro/ \$20 Billion USD.) for this disaster. But one thing is for sure; the cost of operating the reactor safely would have been only a fraction of the astronomical cost of rectification? The Oxford Dictionary defines the word '**Accident**' as '**An Unforeseen Event**' but we can now see that the Chernobyl Nuclear Incident of 1986 was entirely foreseeable,

because if safe working procedures are by-passed, with steam used as coolant, then it doesn't take a rocket scientist to foresee that a meltdown is inevitable if safety is ignored.

This so-called **Accident**, was not accidental at all, it was a criminally negligent act on a flawed reactor design, which any boilermaker could have realised would have been much more effectively cooled by water, than by steam.

For this was a disaster in the making with enormous humanitarian and financial consequences. If it had occurred in the West, a Test Case would establish liability, with astronomical claims arising from the employer's vicarious liability for his employee's negligent acts!

For many years, shortsighted employers have seen Risk-Assessments and Method Statements as nothing more than red tape, something to be fought against. But they have now been enlightened, as Insurers recognise that judicial scrutiny inevitably means more costs and damages in more courts. Therefore, better enforcement is the most cost effective way to manage safety.

Meanwhile the killing continues, Bhopal, Chernobyl, Zeebrugge, the list is endless, with insurers left to pick up the tab. However, the old saying '**He who pays the piper calls the tune**' may yet come to pass, for with the insurance industry now asserting itself, we are seeing these gentle giants encourage, exhort and expressly instruct clients to perform risk assessments **before** undertaking tasks. Then if assessed correctly, method statements should be drafted to identify control measures necessary to minimize the risks involved.

For construction, cranes and transport does not have to be destructive. Moreover, it's actually cost-effective to **Manage Risk** and as such can be financially quantified in terms of reduced premiums, with less disruption and less chance of manslaughter charges for Directors.

Finally, if all else fails, then try explaining to **your** stockholders why the company has to pay a £15 million fine (23 Million Euro/\$25 Million USD.) for poor safety standards, as **Transco plc** did in August 2005, when found guilty by an Edinburgh Court for the deaths of the entire Findlay family, killed in their beds by gas exploding from porous cast iron pipes. For Safety is not only a statutory obligation, it's also cost effective and particularly so when protecting your corporate profits.

Sources:

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.; www. chernobyl.co.uk; All England Law Reports.

Mike Ponsonby

NOTICE OF RESURFACING WORKS

M6 Penkridge to Junction 13 Phase C - Northbound and Southbound Carriageway Resurfacing

Resurfacing works on the M6 in Staffordshire affecting both the north and southbound carriageways (starting at MP 213/4 to MP 221/3 for the northbound carriage-way and MP 221/9 to MP 215/2 for the southbound carriageway) commenced on 8th January and are expected to be complete by Monday 22 April 2007 (this date is provisional and may be subject to change depending on weather conditions etc.)

To allow these works to be carried out safely, phased traffic management including contraflows, road closures and lane closures are utilised. A 40 mph speed limit will operate during the period of the main works and will be enforced by the SPECS average speed camera system. Nighttime works commence at 2100hrs depending on traffic flow counts and finish no later than 0600hrs the following morning. For further details please see HTA website.

Area 8 MAC Contract A1 (M) Junction 8 to Junction 9 Resurfacing

Resurfacing of the A1 (M) between Junctions 8 and 9, including the south facing slip roads at Junction 9 and the north facing slip roads at Junction 8, commenced on 26th January and works are expected to last for 8 weeks, but there may be some delays due to weather. The resurfacing has started with the northbound carriageway and the carriageway where work is in progress is reduced to a single lane, either the hard shoulder or the outside lane. When a carriageway is reduced to a single lane the slip roads between the affected junctions may be closed in which case a diversion route to the next

junction on the motorway will be indicated. The hours of working when carriageways are reduced to a single lane are:

Monday to Thursday	20.00 to 06.00
Friday	21.00 to 09.00
Saturday	19.00 to 11.00
Sunday	21.00 to 06.00

The traffic on the carriageway that is reduced to a single lane will have a width restriction of 2.6 metres. The traffic approaching the Works where the carriageway is not being worked on will not have a width restriction.

Outside the above hours there will not be a width restriction on either carriageway. Whilst work is in progress there will be a 40mph speed limit. The length of the speed limit will vary according to the requirements of the works, but it will be clearly signed and monitored.

For information regarding conditions at the site whilst the works is in progress please call 07725 100 858.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

The HTA has been recently joined by:

PS THORP HAULAGE OF ROTHERHAM, SOUTH YORKSHIRE
(contact: Paul Thorp)



Photograph courtesy of GCS Johnson

ESDAL AND THE *** ABHAULIER *** PROGRAM

At Cascade Software we have been in the abnormal loads business for more than 10 years, providing our *** **Abloads** *** Abnormal Loads Management and checking software package to Highways Agency Agents and Bridge Authorities to manage and check hauliers' and plant operators' abnormal load notifications. We launched *** **AbHaulier** *** to bring the same benefits of simplicity, security and uniformity of operation to the hauliers and plant operators who submit those notifications.

You have probably heard talk of ESDAL, the new Highways Agency's internet website for helping abnormal load hauliers and plant operators to direct their abnormal load applications to the correct bridge and police authorities. In Stage 1, which became operational in spring/summer of 2006, abnormal load operators who register with the site can trace out their proposed route on the ESDAL web site. They can view and print out the contact details of all the bridge and police authorities that should be notified for their movement.



Amongst other things, *** **AbHaulier** *** enhances the use of ESDAL by providing browser access to the website within the program, and reading the ESDAL list of authorities into the program automatically as the list of authorities that the program should notify. You can use the program without reference to ESDAL as your own management and notification system to contact bridge and police authorities directly, or you can use it in conjunction with the ESDAL website - you decide.

In its later Stages of development, the Highways Agency intend that ESDAL will send the notification to the correct bridge and police authorities for you, and even make a preliminary check of the bridges on your route.

*** **AbHaulier** *** will be further upgraded then to integrate with the ESDAL site and to take care of the vital return messages from bridge and police authorities, which will be channelled direct to you and not through ESDAL.

Sally Waterfall
www.cascadesoft.co.uk

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