



Construction Division

Plan of Work

2014/2015

For public information

Foreword

Welcome to this summary of HSE Construction Division's Plan of Work for 2014/15. This is the second year that I will be Chief Inspector of Construction; in my first year, I have had the opportunity to see at first hand much of the good work that the industry is undertaking to improve its health and safety performance but I've also seen many areas where further improvement is needed. Everyone has a role to play in being part of the solution.

The construction industry remains one of the largest in Great Britain, bringing employment to around two million people; it also remains hazardous and a cause for significant concern. The characteristics of the industry and the challenges they create for health and safety are well documented.

The economic picture for construction is encouraging, with signs of sustained growth; however, this brings with it challenges. Research tells us that with market upturns, particularly in construction, we see increases in fatal and other accidents. We want to make sure history does not repeat itself so we are challenging the industry to be ahead of the game. Health and safety risks need to be recognised and acted upon as work pressures pick up and less experienced workers are hired, engaging with the workforce and ensuring good training and supervision as new recruits build skills and experience is vital.

In 2012/13 39^(p) construction workers and 5^(p) members of the public lost their lives. Despite a welcome reduction in construction related deaths from the 50 in 2011/12, these figures remain unacceptable. Over the same period, we estimate that there were over 100 times as many deaths from work related ill health and disease. We must continue to reduce these burdens as well as the associated injuries and incidences of ill health.

Last year we achieved our aim of increasing our inspection effort on small sites; small sites are where approx 70% of fatal accidents occur and there are often poor standards. Refurbishment also remains high risk. This year we will again aim to deliver over 70% of our inspection effort across small sites and refurbishment activities.

In 2014/15 and beyond occupational disease and ill health is a key priority. We will be significantly increasing our focus on preventing occupational ill health; including respiratory risks, hand-arm vibration and occupational cancers, across all sectors of the industry.

The home build sector is showing encouraging strong signs of emerging from recession. We will be inspecting larger home building projects and one-off developments to ensure effective management of both health and safety risks on site.

We will also be looking 'beyond the site gate', examining how other duty holders such as designers and clients have, and can, influence health and safety standards on site.

In the coming year we will continue with our proposals for a revised regulatory package for the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007. We encourage participation in the public consultation that runs until 6 June 2014.

We will continue to look at ways we can reduce bureaucracy and make information easier to understand and more accessible, especially for smaller businesses and we will build on the health and safety legacy from the London 2012 Games and use the lessons learned in our interventions with major projects.

The Fee for Intervention (FFI) cost recovery scheme introduced by HSE marked its first full year of operation in October 2013. Costs have been recovered from businesses and individuals where material breaches have been identified by HSE Inspectors. Those that have complied with the law have not been charged. This scheme has been implemented without change to the priorities in our Plan of Work, which remain risk based.

Heather Bryant
Chief Inspector of Construction

(p) – provisional figures

The Construction Division Plan of Work 2014/2015

The Plan of Work sets out the Construction Division's work for the 2014/2015 work year. Building on previous work, it continues our mission to deliver sustainable and, where possible, accelerate long-term improvements in the industry's health and safety performance while making best use of our resources.

Securing Justice

We will continue to hold to account those who put others at risk, particularly through deliberate flouting of the law; where appropriate we will do this through prosecution through the courts. We will also continue to investigate serious work related incidents and ill health, and take appropriate enforcement action, in accordance with our published policies, to secure justice in cases where people choose to ignore their responsibilities or have failed to comply with them. Fee for Intervention will continue to ensure that people who are not complying with the law and not the taxpayer bear the cost of the time spent putting things right.

Construction Operational Activities

Our main operational activities will target the following:

- Licensed asbestos removal work.
- Small sites/projects.
- Refurbishment.
- Home building.
- Major projects/large contractors.
- Local priorities.

Any matters of evident concern or with the potential to cause a catastrophic event identified during a site visit will be appropriately addressed. The following generic issues will also be considered during site visits:

- Work at height.
- Occupational health risks.
- Asbestos risks.
- Provision of welfare facilities.
- Site conditions (Good order).

In addition, we will also consider:

- **Management of health risks** – raising awareness, promoting knowledge and ensuring control of health risks in construction.
- **Leadership** – how effective directors and senior management are at leading health and safety, and how work is supervised from the top of the organisation to the workforce.
- **Worker involvement** – encouraging effective worker involvement, so that every worker plays an active role.
- **CDM duty holders** – we will examine the roles of duty holders such as designers and clients to determine their influence on the standards found on sites.
- **Contractor competence** - placing particular emphasis on the competence of organisations and individuals.
- **Temporary works** – raising awareness of managing temporary works effectively and ensuring that adequate management arrangements are in place.

Specific projects will include:

- **Concentrated health initiatives** - to raise awareness and ensure compliance. This will include this year's refurbishment initiative in September/October.

- **Fragile roofs** – we will work to ensure that the risks associated with working on or near fragile materials are properly planned and controlled – we will be looking closely at the client's role in such work.
- **Home building** – we will inspect home build sites, ensuring that risks to health and safety are being effectively managed.
- **Loft conversion** – we will inspect loft conversion work focussing on work at height and asbestos risks and provide information events for those undertaking this work – we also plan to produce a Busy Builder Sheet to help small businesses understand the standards they should be achieving.
- **Solar panel installation on commercial premises** – we will inspect this work and again examine the client's role and we will also provide information events on this subject so that those undertaking this work know the standards expected.
- **Temporary demountable structures** – we will continue our work to examine the standard of safety management during the erection and dismantling of temporary demountable structures in the events and entertainments industry.
- **Fire (timber frame structures)** – we will continue our work to ensure that due regard is paid to the Structural Timber Association (formerly UKTFA) guidance on separation distances during the development of timber frame structures where proximity to other structures is a factor.
- **Improving Leadership Performance** – our inspection teams will run a number of briefing events for local construction businesses to demonstrate the benefits of using the Leadership and Worker Involvement Toolkit (available on the HSE website) and encourage them to use it.
- **Large contractors** – we will engage with a number of large contractor businesses at board level to encourage improved performance in the areas of; Leadership and Supervision, Occupational Health Management, Avoiding Catastrophe, Emerging from Recession, and Worker Involvement.
- **Major projects** – we will continue to engage with clients of major projects to provide a proportionate intervention plans on projects of significant interest.

Enabling Activities

We will continue our work in partnership with key stakeholders and intermediaries. Key areas of collaboration include:

- Supporting the Working Well Together (WWT) programme in raising awareness of health and safety issues within micro and small construction businesses. We will support and part fund WWT Groups to deliver at least 60 events during 2014/15 and create new groups when the opportunity arises.
- The development of a simpler and more easily understood revised regulatory package to replace the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007.
- Working with industry partners to develop guidance to support the CDM regulatory package.
- Finalising a review of the agreement for collaboration between HSE and the Building Control Alliance.
- Work with industry stakeholders to identify channels through which guidance and key messages can be delivered to small sites.

Summary

This plan re-affirms the Construction Division's commitment to improving health and safety in the construction industry by targeting high risk sectors and activities. We will continue to work with industry partners to deliver initiatives and products to assist businesses to understand and comply with their legal duties. We recognise that we cannot achieve the improvements alone and look to all those in the construction industry to be part of the solution to bring about change and improvements in health and safety performance.

April 2014.