



### Welcome.

**Leadership and worker engagement are currently key themes for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in relation to the Construction sector. These themes take centre stage in the newly published HSE report ‘Safety Culture at the Olympic Park’. The report states that the project demonstrates that a high standard of health and safety and a culture to support those standards is feasible within the Construction sector.**

In this issue we take a look at worker engagement initiatives in the Construction sector as well as:

- Winter Working
- Site Security and metal theft
- Recent court cases.

The Construction industry Leadership and Worker Engagement Forum has developed a toolkit to help contractors make health and safety improvements in their business. The HSE has worked with a wide range of Construction industry trade bodies to start the forum. The forum states that leadership and worker involvement can be improved by following 10 key principles, these are:

1. Don't walk by – talk to the person involved if you see an unsafe situation
2. Stop working if you feel unsafe and tell your manager
3. Ensure the environment is safe to work in
4. Don't blame the worker until you have established the cause of the accident
5. Ask your workers for ideas on how to improve risk management
6. Expect improvements to develop slowly over time
7. Give employees a reason when risk management rules are put in place

8. Lead by example
9. Promote co operation with sub contractors
10. Look after employee health as well as safety.

The forum has developed a diagnostic toolkit, which is designed to help in developing leadership and worker engagement, and is available at [www.hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/index.htm)

The HSE worker engagement initiative supports the premise that worker engagement in the risk management process has a positive influence on the worker and the business. The result is improved health and safety, reduced sickness absence, improved quality, more productivity and less staff turnover. It is noted that union safety representatives can support his process. It requires targets and expectations to be set and training to be provided. Site based consultation methods need to be effective and clearly evidenced. Further information can be found at [www.hse.gov.uk/construction/engagement/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/engagement/index.htm)

### Winter Working

Now that the clocks have gone back, construction workers will be facing darker and colder conditions. A little planning can go along way to preventing unwanted incidents and actions to take include;



checking and cleaning lights on plant, regularly cleaning plant windscreens and mirrors and ensuring depots are well lit. Gas heaters in temporary accommodation should have adequate ventilation and be well maintained and hot water should be provided for hand washing. If a drying room is to be provided, ensure that workers cannot leave clothing to dry directly on heaters.

The potential for stronger winds should mean that walls are braced if necessary and ensure that roofing materials are stored securely to prevent them blowing off buildings. Be aware also of any overhanging tree branches that may fall and cause damage.



## Site Security

This year the British Security Industry Association has published Construction Site Security – a guide. The guidelines are designed to provide information on security risk assessment and protective measures for site managers. The guidance recommends that a risk register is created. The register should contain a list of all the perceived threats and hazards. The actions needed to mitigate the threats should then be listed. The guide also discusses the importance of understanding the risk appetite of the business. A range of mitigation strategies is also outlined. The guide can be found at [www.bsia.co.uk/publications](http://www.bsia.co.uk/publications).

## Metal Theft

The Association of British Insurers has stated that insurers are now paying out £1 million a week to the victims of metal theft. Metal theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in the UK and there are 1000 reported incidents a week relating to 300 tonnes of metal being stolen weekly. This crime is being driven by rising metal prices and it is particularly significant for the Construction sector. Ask your local

neighborhood policing team for security advice if you have high value metal materials on your site.

## In the Courts

A principal contractor has been ordered to pay £210,000 in fines and costs after an employee died due to an explosion on a central London construction site. The damage occurred when an 11,000 Volt live cable in an excavation was damaged. Operatives had not been told that live cables were present as they used a shovel and breakers to dig in the excavation. This incident highlights the need to ensure that the presence of cables is confirmed before digging takes place.

In another incident, a roofing contractor fell through an unguarded roof opening on a shopping centre roof in Bangor, North Wales. He fell six metres to the floor and died from head injuries. Poor coordination between the roofing contractor and the principal contractor saw the edge protection being removed from the opening in the roof. No other means of fall prevention were put in place. The contractor was ordered to pay £548,000 by Mold Crown Court.

## QBE Risk Management

This newsletter is produced by QBE's Risk Management service team part of QBE European Operations, Property Casualty and Motor division. 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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