

# **ROSPA NOSHC INQUIRY INTO OSH ASSISTANCE TO SMEs**

## **Third report: Sector initiatives**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report is the third to be commissioned by the National Occupational Safety and Health Committee (NOSHC) of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to assist its Inquiry into occupational safety and health (OSH) assistance to SMEs. The terms of reference for the inquiry are:

- to identify and evaluate good practice, barriers and missed opportunities associated with current work by intermediaries aimed at promoting, developing and sustaining effective OSH management in small firms (less than 50 employees); and
- to make recommendations for action.

The first stage and report (April 2007) looked at mapping sources of advice and help to SMEs<sup>1</sup>. The second (November 2007) focused on assessment, compliance and pre-qualification schemes that SMEs face in their bids to secure work, along with the use of “core criteria”, and concluded that there was a plethora of schemes that was resulting in duplication of effort, confusion and frustration among SMEs, but that it was a situation that could be ameliorated and even avoided<sup>2</sup>.

RoSPA considers the first two stages of its inquiry to have been successful. In particular, the committee’s work on core criteria and pre-qualification was extensively and positively cited in a 2008 report from the Better Regulation Executive (BRE) on improving OSH outcomes for so-called “low-risk” and small firms<sup>3</sup>; since publication of the BRE’s report, there have been several initiatives and recommendations around simplifying the situation.

### 1.1 The third stage of the inquiry

This third report reflects NOSHC’s wish to use the third stage of its inquiry to examine a range of sector-specific initiatives that have – to a greater or lesser extent – tried to help small employers improve their OSH management.

The 13 initiatives include a sector-wide strategy, a sector forum, trade association schemes, and trade association services that are not part of a scheme. All of these cover general and sector-specific OSH issues, although the report also looks at one single-issue initiative. The initiatives are:

- *WISH Charter*, Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum.
- *Accident reduction charter*, Environmental Services Association (ESA).
- *ZAP (Zero accident potential)*, Electrical Contractors’ Association (ECA).
- *AIMS (Aluminium industry made safer)*, Aluminium Federation.
- British Metals Recycling Association (BMRA) initiatives.
- *GLASS Charter*, British Glass Manufacturers’ Confederation, Glass and Glazing Federation.
- *Live wire*, UK Steel (EEF).
- *BEST (BEhaviour Slips and Trips)*, Engineering Construction Industry Association

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<sup>1</sup> Fidderman H (April 2007), “RoSPA NOSHC Inquiry into OSH assistance to SMEs: a map” [www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/sme/map.pdf](http://www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/sme/map.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Fidderman H (November 2007), “RoSPA NOSHC Inquiry into OSH assistance to SMEs. Second report: Core criteria in pre-qualification schemes”, [www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/sme/smes\\_final.pdf](http://www.rospa.com/occupational-safety/sme/smes_final.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> BERR (August 2008), “Improving outcomes from health and safety”, [www.berr.gov.uk](http://www.berr.gov.uk)  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

(ECIA).

- *Making a difference*, Paper and Board Industry Advisory Committee (PABIAC).
- *Cementing good practice*, Mineral Products Association (MPA) (although this is in practice restricted to four large companies and so is included only in appendice 1).
- *Concrete targets 2010*, British Precast Concrete Federation (BPCF).
- *Health and safety healthcheck*, British Printing Industry Federation (BPIF).
- *Health and safety pledge*, British Ceramics Confederation (BCC).
- *MPA hard target 2009*, Mineral Products Association (MPA).

## **1.2 Report methodology and structure**

The information in this report was compiled through:

- internet, email and telephone work to identify sectors that had initiatives that might prove relevant and individuals who would be willing to participate;
- emailed questionnaire to study participants;
- online information on the initiatives; and
- where necessary, follow-up questions.

The second section of the report looks at the main findings and themes that emerge from the initiatives in terms of:

- general issues;
- instigation of the initiative;
- core criteria and pre-qualification;
- priorities and targets;
- insurance;
- training;
- auditing or assessment;
- potential for SME uptake;
- features that have helped to reach small firms and to help them manage OSH;
- challenges; and
- lessons for sharing.

The third section of the report draws conclusions and recommendations.

Appendice 1 summarises the main findings as a matrix.

Appendice 2 looks at each of the 13 initiatives in detail.

Appendice 3 reproduces the questionnaire and letter that was sent to all participants.

## 2. THE MAIN FINDINGS

All of the schemes, strategies and services are dedicated OSH initiatives, although a couple also form part of a wider sector initiative. Aside from the ECIA's *BEST* programme, which is limited to a single issue, the initiatives cover OSH issues specific to their sector as well as those that are more general. Most began in the early years of this century; of those that appear to have a later start date, most are, in fact, in their second or third incarnation.

Features common to all, or nearly all, initiatives are:

- the setting of objectives and targets;
- the drawing up of action plans;
- the provision of information and guidance online and through paper publications and bulletins and “events” such as seminars, workshops and conferences (which can be regular, several times a year, annual or as and when needed);
- an emphasis on OSH management – often along the principles of HSG65 – and outcomes that are not restricted to injury reductions targets; and
- an emphasis on engaging directors and their equivalents.

Few initiatives offer individualised help, preferring instead to supply guidance or point members to training. One, the ECIA's *BEST* scheme, offers advice to rectify problems identified in an audit; in a second – the BPIF's *Healthcheck* – an adviser offers practical advice on non-compliance issues.

Some schemes are explicit about the involvement of unions; in some, the role is implicit and in others, it is not referred to.

One scheme – *AIMS* – claims that a company's participation “influences HSE policy on site inspection frequency”, and a second – the BPCF's *Concrete targets 2010* cites “less visits from the HSE” as an outcome of participation.

Nine of the initiatives are “free” to members (ie the costs are included in the membership subscriptions), and one scheme is free to the highest-level category of membership (with payment required at lower levels). Only one scheme charges everyone (*WIRE*) and two (*AIMS* and *Healthcheck*) offer non-members a paying option.

### 2.1 Instigation of initiatives

Most of the schemes had been instigated by a trade association (variously through the initiative of CEOs, senior managers, OSH committee or OSH manager). The HSE plays a role in most schemes.

Only one scheme – the BPIF's *Healthcheck* – was set up specifically and explicitly to address the problems of small companies: the main reason behind the instigation, advises the BPIF, was that it had identified that while health and safety was a core discipline for any successful organisation, small to medium companies within the industry did not have the resources to manage this requirement.

The most common reasons for instigating a scheme are to improve accident rates – even where they are comparatively good – and OSH standards. Several relate instigation to a response to the government and the then HSC's *Revitalising health and safety* strategy. Other reasons include:

- EU law changed the activities of the sector, which had a knock-on impact on working practices and OSH;

- to access support on complex environmental, safety and financial issues, networking, and lobbying opportunities;
- to retain the support of the HSE for an industry committee; and
- the success of previous initiatives in the sector.

## 2.2 Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria

The SME core criteria comprise: policy and responsibilities; arrangements for ensuring OSH measures; ready access to competent advice; training and information arrangements; individual qualifications and experience; monitoring, audit and review; workforce and involvement; accident reporting, enforcement and investigation; arrangements for sub-contractors and consultants; risk assessment; cooperation and coordination; and welfare provision.

With the exception of the *MPA Hard Target 2009* – where membership requires submission of “a wide range of OSH data” – none of the initiatives require such criteria as “core criteria” for participation or membership – indeed, some point out that this could be counter-productive to helping companies – but most will implicitly or explicitly expect standards from their members that would cover some or most of the criteria.

There is little evidence as to whether an initiative has proved useful for pre-qualification purposes when tendering for contracts:

- The ECA believes *ZAP* has been useful, and the BMRA states that membership is “possibly” useful.
- The BCC believes the *Ceramic Industry Health and Safety Pledge* is useful “to a limited extent” for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts, although it is not something that it has as yet “made a virtue of”.
- The ESA and WISH do not have information to say one way or another, although ESA’s members are concerned that non-ESA members undercut them by not investing in OSH.
- The *GLASS Charter* is not currently used for pre-qualification, but its operators are looking into the possibility.
- The ECIA is “not sure” whether *BEST* is useful, but believes award winners find it beneficial when competing for work.
- The BPCF does not know whether *Concrete Targets 2010* is used.
- The BPIF advises there is no formal recognition of *Healthcheck*, although a printer can show the report at tender stage (interestingly, it cautions that the assessment “may not look attractive to the client” because the report focuses on the “way forward for the company”).
- UK Steel’s *Live wire* is not specifically used for pre-qualification.
- ALFED believes that *AIMS* is not useful for pre-qualification.

## 2.3 Targets and priorities

The priorities for the initiatives are wide-ranging, but usually distil into improvements in incident rates and various aspects of OSH management and culture.

Nine of the initiatives contain statistical targets, although they are essentially restricted to injuries or days lost. There is a dearth of occupational health targets, with two respondents highlighting the difficulties of obtaining such information and then being able to use it in any meaningful way. The most common target is a 10% year-on-year reduction.

- The ESA and WISH targets are a 10% year-on-year reduction in the rate of all injuries reportable under RIDDOR. Although “committed” to the *Revitalising* targets on ill health and days lost, WISH emphasises that this is highly problematic due to the absence of a workable metric. WISH is trying to produce a format for days lost.
- ZAP similarly sets detailed targets on accident reduction (a 75% reduction in major accidents and 50% reduction in over-three-day injuries on 2001 levels), but no targets for ill health and work-related absence. The ECA too points out that it is not aware of “a workable metric for ill health” (the main problem being latency).
- PABIAC sets a 10% year-on-year reduction in the non-fatal injury rate, but is in the process of setting occupational health targets.
- UK Steel set a target of a reduction of 10% a year in all accidents.
- The BCC requires a 30% reduction in accident incidence over the three years to 2010 (the *Revitalising* targets were realised in 2007).
- ALFED sets a target for the lost-time incident rate only (10% reduction against a 2006 baseline over three years).
- The *GLASS Charter* sets a 30% reduction in working days lost.
- The BPCF requires 50% reductions in RIDDOR reportable accidents and time lost over the five years to 2010.

The *MPA Hard Target 2009* requires a 50% reduction in RIDDOR injuries over five years.

- The BMRA does not set targets, pointing out that it is difficult to come up with meaningful targets for small firms because a single accident would badly skew the rate.
- The BPIF does not set targets.
- The ECIA does not set specific targets, although its priority is to reduce the incidence of slips and trips injuries.

## 2.4 Insurance

Only four of the initiatives offer clear insurance benefits (ie either they are linked to insurance premia or employers are able to negotiate discounts because of their participation in an initiative or membership of a scheme). Several more, however, believe membership may be helpful in securing or negotiating insurance and that there might be some indirect benefit from the improved OSH management and standards that should arise from scheme membership. Most initiatives, however, report no benefits or do not have any evidence of benefits beyond anecdotes. A couple of scheme operators report that they intend looking at the question of insurance.

- BMRA membership affords access to tailored insurance schemes that offer “particular benefits to [those] with exemplary health and safety practices”.
- The ESA will shortly provide a service whereby all members can have their health and safety procedures and management systems audited free of charge by an insurance company. Insurers have, advises ESA, “recognised that through membership of ESA’s scheme, companies take their health and safety responsibilities seriously, and this can be reflected in insurance rates”.
- The *GLASS Charter* does not offer defined insurance benefits, although this is “under negotiation”. Nevertheless, the scheme contact advises that membership, awards and merit certificates have resulted in “significant reductions” in members’ premia.
- The BPIF’s *Healthcheck* is recognised by an insurance broker, which runs an insurance scheme with the federation and provides for “competitive insurance quotes”.
- The BPCF advises that while membership of *Concrete targets 2010* does not, of itself, confer any specific savings, it “has been used by some members as evidence to insurers that they are responsibly handling OSH issues and some members have reported significant savings in insurance premiums as a result of this. (One member reported a £1m saving).”
- The BCC advises members have used their commitment to its *Pledge* to negotiate Employers Liability Insurance with insurance companies “with some success”, although it is not aware of members having secured reductions in other insurance premia.
- ALFED advises that *AIMS* offers no insurance benefits directly, although membership may be a “factor” in negotiating insurance premia.
- The ECIA states that while *BEST* affiliation does not offer explicit insurance benefits, “signed up companies may point out their *BEST* commitment to their insurance providers and that may be taken into account”.
- The MPA advises that while affiliation to *Hard Target 2009* does not offer insurance benefits at the moment, it will be pursuing this issue.
- PABIAC advises that while there are no direct insurance benefits from participation in the strategy, paper industry companies that have signed up to the *Health and Safety Performance Indicator (HSPI)* “will, no doubt, be seeing benefits in terms of reduced insurance premiums if they can demonstrate improving scores to their insurers”.

## 2.5 Training

Eight of the initiatives offer training – to a greater or lesser extent – usually at an additional cost. But even where a scheme operator does not offer training, this tends to be because it would be inappropriate or not possible to do so, with organisations nevertheless expecting their members to partake of training.

- *ZAP* offers a suite of commercial OSH training to members.
- *AIMS* includes training workshop and seminars, which aim to cover their costs.
- BMRA membership offers tailored training (at a cost).
- *GLASS Charter* arranges training at discounted rates.
- *Live Wire* offers three levels of training (at a cost).
- The BCC has developed a training package for middle management (charged to cover costs), and also advises on availability and appropriateness of training.



- *MPA Hard Target 2009* offers free regional seminars on topical OSH issues.
- The BPCF does not provide any training itself, although it works with Proskills to help identify any training that is needed.
- WISH has training expectations, but leaves the provision to partners.
- The ESA does not offer training, although it has worked with a training provider to develop DVDs.
- *BEST* does not include training, although the ECIA points out that training expectations in the sector “are fairly well developed”.
- PABIAC’s *Making a difference*, as a strategy, cannot offer training, but PABIAC sees training as an essential component in the realisation of the strategy.
- *Healthcheck* does not offer training, but the BPIF advisor carrying out the check may advise on training.

## 2.6 Auditing and assessment

Most of the initiatives require participants to submit some information, usually performance statistics and, sometimes, action plans or OSH arrangements. Few of the schemes, however, involve significant amounts of auditing or assessment, and none require on-site visits.

- The ECIA is the most emphatic in its use of assessment, auditing a selection of reports submitted by organisations under the *BEST* scheme and advising it will remove organisations that do not cooperate; even this, however, is restricted to what participants submit.
- WISH uses agreed metrics for measuring progress against targets.
- All ESA companies are audited and assessed as a condition of ESA membership, although this relies upon self-assessment with the results reported to ESA.
- The BPIF’s *Healthcheck* involves an on-site visit, which offers “some assurance”, but no attempt is made to verify the answers given during the visit and no assessment is made of the quality of the material.
- British Glass performs some site visits (on request and resources allowing). Although audit tools are available to members, auditing and assessment are not required for scheme membership.
- The ECA has mandatory elements for electrical safety, but no other areas, and the BPIF audits “essential items” where the *Healthcheck* is part of a government-funded training contract.
- PABIAC monitors and challenges stakeholders’ progress towards implementing the strategy.
- The BPCF monitors, but does not audit, performance.
- While membership of *MPA Hard Target 2009* does not require auditing or assessment, peer involvement alerts the MPA to any potential anomalies in the information that is reported to the MPA, while the person who collates the statistics has sufficient experience to spot and redress such anomalies.

## 2.7 Permeation and potential for reaching small firms

The number of companies covered by the sector initiatives ranges from a dozen to several thousand. SMEs usually represent a large proportion of the companies in membership but often a minority of the employees. Many of the participants do not appear to have proper breakdowns by size of company, and several appear to have a hazy idea of what their potential client base might be – due largely to the number of micro and small employers.

- The ECA believes that well over 80% of its 3,000 members are small or micro companies, of which at least 600 are signed up to ZAP.
- The ESA reports small companies comprise 75% of scheme members, but is not certain what permeation of the potential base this represents.
- The *GLASS Charter* encompasses 300 of the 1,000 organisations in the sector; at least 70% of the scheme's membership has fewer than 250 employees.
- ALFED estimates half of the 45 *AIMS* members are small firms, and that there are around 120 organisations in the sector that could benefit from the scheme.
- PABIAC has 30 companies signed to its *Making a difference* pledge out of approximately 210 organisations; although most are not small firms, PABIAC adds that most of the large businesses in the scheme have sites that effectively operate as SMEs (70 manufacturing sites have signed the pledge).
- The BMRA has around 300 members but advises there are a great number of very small businesses not in membership.
- UK Steel has 12 affiliates, and believes there may be a further four to six small companies that are not affiliated.
- *BEST* has 32 members, but only limited scope with small firms.
- The BPCF has 27 companies signed up to *Concrete targets 2010* (less than half of which are small), with a further 20 members that could join the scheme and an unknown number of small companies that are not federation members but which would benefit from joining.
- The BPIF reports 976 members are covered by *Healthcheck* as part of the highest level of membership, but that there are 1,567 members in total, 65% of which have fewer than 25 employees. It adds that the majority of SMEs in the sector could benefit from the scheme as they do not have the resources to employ an individual with the relevant health and safety and print knowledge.
- The BCC has 150 scheme members, 15% of which are small firms. The BCC believes that it has reached the companies that can benefit from the scheme. The BCC covers 98% of all ceramic employees and advises that although there are “a significant number of small companies not in membership ... they don't account for many employees”.
- The MPA has 80 producers and/or processors of mineral products – around 40% of British surface quarrying companies. Approximately 62% of member companies have fewer than 100 direct employees, while 7.5% have more than 1,000 employees (six multi-nationals, which account for approximately 85% of GB quarrying output).

## 2.8 Features that have helped reach and assist small firms

The responses of the participants in this report indicate they are clearer about features that they believe have helped reach small firm compared with features that have helped small firms manage OSH. Many do not distinguish between the two, however, and many of the views are indeed equally applicable in both categories, which is why this part of the report presents them together, whereas appendice 2 distinguishes between reaching and helping small firms. One of the most striking aspects of the responses is how many different suggestions there were as to “what works”.

The features that the participants believe have helped reach and/or assist small firms are set out below, grouped into broad themes.

### Recognising “smallness”:

- associations should produce guides specifically for smaller projects;
- an emphasis on good practice for small firms, and best practice for larger firms (although at least one scheme is explicit that best practice should be demanded of all members regardless of size);
- aiming all advice at a typical small contractor;
- development of a generic template to provide members with a format for preparing their own OSH action plan;
- an assessment that ranks in priority order the issues that need to be addressed; and
- allowing companies to commit to what they think is appropriate for them rather than prescribing a common action plan for all.

### The role of larger companies:

- workshops that allow smaller companies to hear of best practice in larger companies;
- ideas, support, advice and information from larger companies;
- using an active core of (often larger) companies as an example to encourage smaller companies; and
- a requirement to use HSG65 supported by a scheme whereby smaller companies could seek assistance from larger companies on its implementation.

### Benchmarking and competition:

- allowing each organisation to ascertain its current position in relation to compliance with legislation relevant to its specific environment;
- product-by-product league tables;
- benchmarking against industry practice;
- encouragement to use, and links to, Business Link’s Health and Safety Performance Indicator (HSPI); and
- merit schemes and awards, with particular categories for small firms.

### Access to information:

- open access to work outputs through web sites and free publications;
- the presence of the industry’s guidance on the HSE website;

- a comprehensive range of information;
- responding to members' common queries by producing practical guidance;
- safety alerts highlighting solutions to problems;
- succinct guidance;
- sharing of best practice;
- sector-specific tools;
- annual OSH seminars; and
- regional road shows.

#### Advice and training:

- the provision of access to training and consultancy services from people who understand the industry;
- free ad-hoc advice/consultancy;
- one-on-one coaching; and
- the provision of basic advice.

#### Member and other organisational support:

- activities undertaken by member organisations that represent SMEs to pass back/alert them to the sector scheme and guidance;
- proactive visits by trade association or scheme officers to raise awareness of the existence of the scheme and what it offers;
- communicating equally and regularly with all trade association members, regardless of whether they are part of the association's OSH scheme;
- securing coverage of a scheme so that non-members are aware of its benefits;
- communicating with small firms via an association's regional structure; and
- the use of committees and networking.

#### Partnership

- HSE working partnership;
- union participation;
- involving employees;
- awareness raising by insurance companies and the HSE; and
- the industry's own companies promoting the scheme.

#### Other factors

- familiarity with other organisations in the sector before the scheme commences;
- minimal costs;
- events and informal contacts that "mix up shop floor people to chat with each other"; and
- visiting other companies "and feeling they are not alone with their problems" and picking up tips on better ways to do things.

## 2.9 Evidence of success

Some schemes and scheme members have not yet measured the impact of the initiative; some state that it is simply too early to do so. Of those that advance evidence of benefits, few are able to distinguish an impact on small companies from all members, and some of the claims are subjective or anecdotal rather than objective. Nevertheless, there is an encouraging range of “evidence” – albeit involving a wide interpretation of that term – particularly in the areas that may contribute to longer-term and sustainable improvements: The “evidence” of success quoted by respondents included:

- nine organisations cited reductions in accident rate and surpassing of targets (although they did not distinguish the performance of small firms). A smaller number also report decreases in working days lost;
- positive feedback from members;
- significant broadening of the scope of OSH management;
- changes in enquiries show many companies are considering “how to” rather than “whether to” manage OSH;
- raised awareness of OSH in the sector;
- financial benefits (two schemes only);
- attendance levels at events;
- increased training;
- increased cooperation levels;
- increased employee involvement;
- anecdotal evidence;
- feedback during scrutiny for awards;
- increased site visits by senior managers “beating the safety drum”;
- increased take-up of safety management systems;
- increased use of rehabilitation and occupational health services;
- reduced visits by HSE inspectors;
- reduced disruption of, and more efficient, production; and
- “companies are too busy to participate if it is not useful”.

## 2.10 Future challenges

The main challenge foreseen by respondents (four) involved the recession – both coping with its effects and how to increase membership in the face of recessionary pressures.

Three respondents foresaw challenges in keeping the initiative fresh, in particular:

- how to keep finding new ideas;
- “revivifying those who originally signed up but have been less enthusiastic in seeking delivery of action”; and
- “preventing a scheme that sought to provoke change and new ideas becoming routine and mundane”.

Three also mentioned regulatory pressures:

- the volume of legislation and client/major contractor requirements, along with the proliferation of pre-qualification schemes, can result in the perception of safety as a burden, which can inhibit a positive cultural approach, notably in small businesses;
- ensuring that regulation and legislation are developed in a way that recognises the practical issues affecting particular industries; and
- “provision of business support and advice in the face of massive regulation and bureaucracy”.

Three also mentioned the problems of continually reducing the incidence of accidents once the easy, initial progress has been secured (the “picking of the low-hanging fruit” argument).

Other challenges include:

- engaging and communicating with the diversity of the organisations that work in a sector;
- broadening the scope of the scheme to include provisions on occupational health;
- the need to shift the focus to lost time incidents as RIDDOR-reportable injuries decrease;
- measuring and reducing ill-health and sickness absence rates;
- achieving targets;
- “making health and safety instinctive and part and parcel of people’s thinking”;
- the need to focus on gaining and maintaining competence;
- ensuring participants do not see a scheme as an audit tool; and
- getting senior executive commitment, buy-in and delivery.

## 2.11 Sharing lessons

Most of the respondents had clear lessons that they would share:

- starting a scheme is a “slow and painful process”;
- an incremental approach can work well, starting with awareness-raising, then incorporating advice and then assessment and lead indicators;
- always maintain sight of the overall objective and do not deviate because of objections;
- be ambitious when setting the scheme’s goals and do not let the fear of failure result in easily achievable targets;
- data is key to success and the submission of data should be a mandatory requirement of a scheme;
- publish a league table of accident statistics;
- competition and awards ceremonies work;
- effective running of the scheme is time-consuming and staff time resources can be a constraint;
- thinking up “new things” and engendering enthusiasm to help keep OSH going, which is “hard work”;
- mixing up large and small companies to discuss problems and solutions can bring large dividends;

- running training courses at company premises and hazard spotting each other's shop floors;
- involve and listen to different people, not just managers;
- getting senior management and board level support is vital (three respondents);
- SMEs prefer clear instructions on "what they have to do";
- a scheme that is flexible, non-prescriptive and voluntary will prove positive for the willing, but operators must also accept that there will be less enthusiastic participation among others;
- properly managed schemes "can generate a real collective impetus within a sector and a pride in company and sector achievements";
- the importance of obtaining the correct material needed to devise the tool;
- broker assistance from other scheme members;
- use industry bodies to share lessons;
- "having someone to drive it all forward and nag nag nag"; and
- "steal unashamedly for safety" from other schemes' ideas.

### **3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Analysis of the above sector schemes, strategies and other initiatives shows they are making significant efforts to help small employers manage OSH, although this is typically – but not exclusively – more a by-product of services for all employers, rather than initiatives aimed at small firms. The analysis also found a paucity of objective information that can distinguish the actual performance of small from larger companies.

The analysis shows that the approaches can vary markedly from sector to sector, in style, content, and method. Nevertheless, they share many aspects, including the desire to improve the management of OSH and accident rates, the drawing up of action plans, the setting of targets and objectives, the provision of information, the need to engage directors, and zero or low costs. They also share a desire to be flexible and avoid too much prescription – most do not require compliance with core SME criteria, for example. Most of these schemes appear to operate within tight budgets, offering generic rather than personalised solutions, and information rather than advice.

But there is also a question mark as to whether the schemes maximise the potential benefits that might accrue: there are few formal insurance benefits, for example, and their role in formal or informal pre-qualification tendering procedures ranges, for the most part, from non-existent to hazy. The securing of such benefits will, however, always be problematic when the auditing of companies' performance reports is, to put it charitably, conducted with a light touch in many cases, and not at all in some others.

#### **3.1 Possible next steps**

1. While the organisations reviewed in this report have established impressive schemes and other initiatives, they might benefit from sharing in the information contained in section 2.8 on features of schemes that operators believe have helped reach and assist small firms, and section 2.10 on sharing lessons. Both sections offer highly practical and often innovative ideas on how the running of the schemes might be improved; all are optional, and none will apply everywhere, but there are useful tips here. There could be benefits in pulling these together and disseminating them through a website or to trade associations directly or through the HSE. This initiative could also build in a template of more traditional advice on what a scheme might include.
2. While the activities of initiatives reviewed in this report are impressive, the initial internet searches that determined their selection also indicated that there may be many sectors and trade associations (of which there are over 300) that are not as far down the road in assisting small firms. It might be worth considering the production of an introductory document for such trade associations, explaining how they could establish or develop their OSH capacity and services.
3. There might also be benefits in the hosting of an online forum or developing a series of seminars or even more bespoke advice for trade associations on points one and two above.



## APPENDICE 1: THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE INITIATIVES

The two-part matrix below compares the occurrence and extent of 18 “features” within the initiatives reviewed in the report. It should be noted that the judgments are based on information that was submitted by the initiative contacts or available online, and are indicative rather than definitive.

	WISH	ESA	ZAP	AIMS	BMRA	GLASS	WIRE
Initiative has other partners, including:	yes	yes	yes	yes	n/k	yes	yes
– the HSE	yes	yes	no	yes	n/k	yes	yes
– trade unions	yes	n/k	yes	n/k	n/k	yes	yes
Year initiative started	2001	2004	2001	2007	n/k	2001	2006
Core criteria required for membership	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Core criteria covered by initiative	some	many	many	some	some	many	some
Initiative is used for prequalification	no	n/k	yes	no	possibly	Under consideration	no
Initiative offers clear insurance benefits	n/r	yes	no	no	yes	yes	no
Initiative sets injury reduction targets	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Initiative offers training	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Initiative involves auditing/assessment	yes	yes	no	no	no	no	no
Issue offers on-site audits	n/r	no	no	no	no	no	no
Initiative requires director support	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Participation is: free as part of membership (mem), or fee, or free for all	n/r	mem	mem	(mem £95 non-mem)	mem	mem	£150 (£250 non-mem)
Initiative has reached small firms	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Potential exists to reach more small firms	yes	n/k	yes	yes	yes	yes	a few
Initiative has helped small firms	n/k	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Evidence that initiative has helped small firms	not yet	some	yes	no	limited	yes	yes

### KEY

- n/r –not relevant.
- n/k – not known.
- WISH: *WISH Charter*, Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum.
- ESA: *Accident reduction charter*, Environmental Services Association.
- ZAP: *Zero accident potential*, Electrical Contractors’ Association.
- AIMS: *Aluminium industry made safer*, Aluminium Federation.
- BMRA: British Metals Recycling Association initiatives.
- GLASS: *Goal: lower accidents, safe sites charter*, British Glass Manufacturers’ Confederation, Glass and Glazing Federation.
- WIRE: *Live wire*, UK Steel (EEF).

## APPENDICE 1 (cont...): THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE INITIATIVES

	ECIA	PABIAC	CT2010	BPIF	BCC	MPA
Initiative has other partners, including:	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
– the HSE	n/k	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
– trade unions	n/k	yes	n/k	n/k	yes	n/k
Year initiative started	2004/5	2008	2005	2003	2001	1999
Core criteria required for membership	no	no	no	no	no	some
Core criteria covered by initiative	many	no	some	many	many	some
Initiative is used for prequalification	possibly	no	n/k	limited	limited	n/k
Initiative offers clear insurance benefits	no	no	yes	yes	yes	no
Initiative sets injury reduction targets	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes
Initiative offers training	no	no	some	no	some	some
Initiative involves auditing/assessment	yes	n/r	no	partial	limited	no
Issue offers on-site audits	no	n/r	no	visit	no	no
Initiative requires director support	yes	yes	n/k	yes	n/k	n/k
Participation is: free as part of membership (mem), or fee, or free for all	mem	free	mem	mem (£720 non-mem)	mem	mem
Initiative has reached small firms	yes	limited	yes	yes	yes	yes
Potential exists to reach more small firms	a few	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Initiative has helped small firms	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Evidence that initiative has helped small firms	some	yes	yes	some	yes	yes

### KEY

- n/r –not relevant.
- n/k – not known.
- ECIA: *Behaviour slips and trips*, Engineering Construction Industry Association.
- PABIAC: *Making a difference*, Paper and Board Industry Advisory Committee.
- CT2010: *Concrete Targets 2010*, British Precast Concrete Federation.
- BPIF: *Health and safety healthcheck*, British Printing Industry Federation.
- BCC: *Ceramic industry health and safety pledge*, British Ceramic Confederation.
- MPA: *MPA Hard target 2009*, Mineral Products Association.

## **APPENDICE 2: SECTOR INITIATIVES**

### **1. WASTE INDUSTRY SAFETY AND HEALTH (WISH) FORUM**

The purpose of the Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) forum<sup>4</sup> is to provide information, identify solutions and stimulate action to ensure the health, safety and well-being of those working in the waste management and recycling industry and those affected by its activities. The forum draws up solutions and guidance that are then published on the HSE website. All members must commit to supporting the WISH strategic objectives and to promoting them through their organisations.

WISH was set up by the HSE. Its instigation reflected the need to improve accident rates and OSH in the waste industry (which became especially apparent following an analysis of RIDDOR data in 2003/04). The WISH forum first met in July 2001 and meets at least twice a year. WISH is a free, dedicated OSH forum for the industry. There is no scheme operator as such; the forum is a committee of representatives that have a stake in the waste industry so that they can cooperate and develop a common approach to tackling OSH and welfare issues. Member organisations – and not WISH – operate their own schemes.

There are 15 partners that are actively involved in supporting the scheme. They include government departments and agencies, employers, trade associations and unions: Association for Organics Recycling; British Metals Recycling Association; Chartered Institute of Wastes Management; Community Recycling Network; Container Handling Equipment Manufacturers Association; Department for the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs; Energy and Utility Skills; Environment Agency; Environmental Services Association; HSE; Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee; Local Government Employers Organisation; Trades Union Congress; Waste and Resources Action Programme; and the Waste Management Industry Training and Advisory Board.

Each partner:

- prepares its own OSH delivery plan that contributes to WISH's strategic goals;
- encourages employers and others to draw up and implement their own OSH plan in support of the WISH strategy and members' own delivery plans;
- routinely report to the forum the progress of their delivery plan; and
- share responsibility for delivering the WISH forum's objectives.

A document, *Strategic objectives for the Waste Industry Safety and Health forum*, notes: "No single scheme or programme is likely to be suitable for all; it is expected that the range of activities practiced by individuals, representative organisations and individual employers will vary greatly."

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

Some of the schemes set up by WISH member organisations in pursuance of the strategic objectives of WISH do feature core criteria of the type specified (see ESA below in particular). The forum's response states, however, that WISH is not relevant in terms of the question of whether or not it is useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts.

#### **Priorities and targets**

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<sup>4</sup> Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) forum, [www.hse.gov.uk/waste/wish.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/waste/wish.htm). Scheme contact: Christopher Jones (chair): [cjones@coryenvironmental.co.uk](mailto:cjones@coryenvironmental.co.uk), 01375 654202 or Toni Gladding (secretary), [t.l.gladding@open.ac.uk](mailto:t.l.gladding@open.ac.uk), 01908 653767  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

The forum's objectives are to:

- agree national targets for improved OSH performance;
- prepare and implement an OSH strategy to assist the delivery of the WISH forum's targets;
- monitor industry performance and identify key issues for the drafting of standards and good practice guidance; and
- encourage employers and others, including those who are not WISH members, to draw up and implement their own action plans, in support of the WISH OSH strategy.

The five strategic objectives comprise:

- **Accident performance:** to reduce the overall RIDDOR reported injury rate by 10% year on year (2005/06 baseline) by December 2013. The *Update to mapping health and safety standards in the UK waste industry* (BOMEL2) put the RIDDOR incidence rate in 2005/06 at 2,525 per 100,000 workers per year. Reducing the rate by 10% year on year to the end of 2013 will produce a RIDDOR rate of 1,493 per 100,000 workers per year. (In answer to a follow-up question, the forum notes: "The WISH targets are in their infancy having only been formally adopted by all of the WISH members in January (2009). ESA on the other hand has been running an accident reduction commitment, independently since 2003 (and is indeed now in its second five year cycle) ... all of the membership are committed to doing their part toward the achievement of the objective; however, what must be borne in mind is that different organisations can do different things toward achieving the target, which can only be measured across the industry as a whole. ESA has working members and so it can meaningfully pass through the objective to them; DEFRA, WAMITAB and EU Skills do not have people working directly in the industry and have to act through their influence over practices that the industry adopts.
- **Working days lost:** WISH will produce a standard format for measuring the number of working days lost due to occupational health and safety incidents, This will be used to analyse and sample performance to promote engagement at company and organisation level. WISH will establish and task a working group to identify metrics and agree a strategy to reduce the number of working days lost within 24 months. The HSE and ESA are working on this. It is proposed that sampling will measure performance of the industry and enable individual organisations to benchmark their performance and identify areas for further action. (In a follow-up, the forum states that while WISH is committed to the *Revitalising* targets on ill health and working days lost: "The problem with both is that we need a metric by which to measure ourselves and currently none is available for either. The working group on occupational health's first job has been to develop a data collection methodology, which will feed into a metric by which we can set a starting point and then measure our progress toward the *Revitalising* improvement objectives. In respect of the days lost measure, although the industry bodies record days lost, they do not do so in a consistent manner, and the data is contaminated by non-work-related health absence. Our experience at ESA [see below] is that you are unlikely to achieve an improvement objective if you don't where you are starting and are unable to measure your progress from the starting point to the objective. Get the metric right, comprehensible and transparent and progress is certain.")
- **Management of health and safety:** to gain widespread adoption of safety management systems such as those that are consistent with HSG65 principles or compliant with OHSAS 18001. Publication of a simple online self assessment checklist could be used to help organisations identify whether they are meet these standards and provide information to help monitor progress with this objective. Large organisations may choose

to benchmark themselves on the CHASPI (Corporate Health and Safety Performance Index).

- Health and safety climate and attitudes: to improve attitudes within the workforce to health and safety. This involves developing and promoting a climate survey tool that enables SMEs to measure the attitudes to health and safety within their workforce and identify areas where improvements can be made.

- Competence: to increase the level of competence within the industry, in line with the WISH “Commitment to competence” statement<sup>5</sup>. This advises that: “Competent employees are an essential component to the safe and health operation of an organisation. Training – in all its forms – should be an integral part of an organisation’s strategy, closely tied to the business plan, and regularly assessed, reviewed and revised. We actively encourage the ongoing training and continuing development of all who work in our industry, particularly those in control of work, and a clear demonstration of individual competence against appropriate standards.” The statement lists a series of actions that WISH expects to see or will encourage. WISH will establish and task a working group to identify metrics for measuring progress with the commitment to competence and agree a competence strategy within 24 months.

### **Insurance**

The questionnaire advises that the nature of the forum means “the issue of insurance benefits is not relevant”.

### **Training**

WISH has clear expectation around the need for training (see “competence” above), even though WISH as a body neither offers training nor endorses any training courses. One of the WISH members (EU Skills), in collaboration with several other members, has produced and distributed for free, three modular training DVDs, with more planned.

### **Auditing or assessment**

WISH’s strategic objectives statement advises: “WISH will use a range of agreed metrics for measuring progress against the targets. Hard data such as accident numbers will be measured using the same methodology as in BOMEL 1 and 2 or other suitable data source. WISH will devise protocols to measure progress against other targets; this may include sampling and/or survey.”

### **Permeation and potential**

The forum does not know how many organisations are involved in total because each partner runs its own schemes, some of which will represent significant numbers of organisations.

The forum is uncertain as to the number of SMEs that could benefit from WISH, but puts it at well over 5,000: “We believe that all of the organisations that work in the waste sector or are affected by the work of the waste sector (which includes the general public) could benefit from the work of WISH. It is difficult to know how many small enterprises might be encompassed by the broad definition of “waste industry” that we have chosen to take (it includes for example small scrap metal merchants and skip operators) but it will certainly exceed 5,000 and could be an order or magnitude higher still.”

Some of the partners represent small firms, for example CRN, BMRA, CHEM and ESA. In some cases (CRN, for example) small firms will represent 100% of the membership; in others it is probably a lesser, but still high, percentage (70% plus for ESA for example).

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<sup>5</sup> [www.hse.gov.uk/waste/wishcommitment.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/waste/wishcommitment.htm)  
RoSPA NOSH SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

The scheme operator cautions, however, that of the 180,000 persons estimated to be employed in the waste industry, more than 90% are employed by the six largest private operators plus local government.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The forum identifies the following features as those that have helped schemes reach small firms:

- open access to the output of the work of WISH through the web site and free publications;
- the presence of the WISH guidance on the HSE website; and
- activities undertaken by member organisations that represent SMEs to pass back/alert those organisations about the WISH guidance and work.

As part of the work aimed at achieving strategy objectives three, four and five, three working groups have been set up, the outputs of which will be aimed wholly or partly at SMEs.

The forum states that: “It is not possible to identify the features that have been successful in helping small firms manage OSH issues ...The impact of the WISH guidance on SMEs’ safety performance has not been measured, and much of the work that is being undertaken aimed specifically at SMEs has not yet been brought to the position where it is fully effective.” It is possible that there is “indirect evidence that the guidance on the HSE website has helped in that it has generated questions and queries either directly or to WISH Committee members attending conferences etc”, but there is at the moment no meaningful way of measuring any positive impact WISH might have had and therefore cannot say whether it has helped or merely been read.

### **Challenges**

Engaging and communicating with the diversity of the organisations that work in the waste sector.

### **Sharing lessons**

The forum suggest the following as lesson it would share with other sector initiatives:

- “Getting any scheme (or new body) started is a slow and painful process. It is important to maintain sight of the overall objective and not be deviated by objections.”
- “In setting the goals for schemes the greatest enemy is a dearth of ambition. There is tendency to seek to set targets at safely achievable levels (for fear of being seen to fail) instead of accepting the challenge of what might be achieved.”

## **2. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION (ESA)**

### **– ACCIDENT REDUCTION CHARTER<sup>6</sup>**

The Environmental Services Association (ESA) is the trade body for the waste management and secondary resources industry. The Accident Reduction Charter began in 2004 and is a dedicated health and safety scheme that aims to reduce the incidence of reportable accidents, promote the use of HSG65 and to share best practice. The charter provides proactive advice and is underpinned by a health and safety strategy that sets out a programme of activities, guidance etc to achieve the objectives of the charter. ESA also strongly contributes to the development of WISH guidance (see above). Participation in the scheme is a mandatory requirement of ESA's terms of membership.

The charter scheme was instigated by ESA's board – comprising mainly the CEOs of the sector's leading companies – and represents a commitment by the board to improving health and safety. The main reason behind the instigation was that EU law was driving the sector from reliance on disposal in landfill to far higher levels of recycling and recovery. This requires different working practices and infrastructure and ESA's board decided that this required a focus on health and safety.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

ESA does not hold information on whether its scheme has proved useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts. The scheme operator notes, however, that "there is on-going concern that non-ESA members – who do not invest in the same stringent health and safety procedures – are able to undercut ESA members in bidding for contracts".

Members are not explicitly required to conform to any core criteria. They are, however, required to comply with commitments that would, in effect, satisfy many of the core criteria, including:

- injury targets (see below);
- reduce the incidence rate of work-related ill health by 20% by 2013;
- complete an annual accident reporting form that provides information on RIDDOR incidents;
- develop, implement and review a health and safety plan;
- have in place an OSH management system that follows the principles set out in HSG65; and
- share experiences and good practice across the sector.

#### **Priorities and targets**

The charter commits signatories to:

- reduce the incidence of RIDDOR reportable injuries by 10% each year until 2013;
- promote the implementation of OSH management systems that incorporate the principles of HSG65;
- share best practice to help achieve the industry's 10% reduction;
- annually collect and analyse accident statistics to measure progress and identify areas in which to focus resources to secure further improvement; and

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<sup>6</sup> "Accident reduction charter", Environmental Services Association, [www.esauk.org](http://www.esauk.org). Scheme contact: Stephen Freeland (police executive, ESA), [s-freeland@esauk.org](mailto:s-freeland@esauk.org), 0131 229 1000  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fiddeman

- work collaboratively with the HSE through the Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum (WISH) to develop good practice.

### **Insurance**

ESA will shortly provide a service whereby all members can have their health and safety procedures and management systems audited free of charge by an insurance company. Insurers have, the scheme operator advises, “recognised that through membership of ESA’s scheme, companies take their health and safety responsibilities seriously, and this can be reflected in insurance rates”.

### **Training**

The scheme does not offer training, although ESA has worked with EU Skills in the development of DVD training modules.

### **Auditing or assessment**

All companies are audited and assessed as a condition of ESA membership. All members are committed to support the objectives of the charter. The scheme relies upon self-assessment with the results reported to ESA.

### **Permeation and potential**

There are currently more than 50 organisations that are members of the scheme, of which small firms comprise 75%. All ESA members who operate a waste management service are required to participate in the scheme.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The scheme contact identifies the following as features that have helped reach small firms and also has helped them manage health and safety:

- ESA’s code of conduct requires all members to have in place a health and safety management system that conforms to the principles of HSG65. To assist smaller companies to achieve this aim, ESA devised a scheme whereby smaller companies could seek assistance from larger companies on how the principles of HSG65 should be incorporated into health and safety management systems;
- ESA developed a generic template to provide members with a useful format for preparing their own health and safety action plan;
- ESA holds annual health and safety seminars; and
- ESA, in consultation with the WISH Forum, has published best practice guidance to assist managers to provide training to the workforce on key target areas.

In addition, the OSH section of ESA’s membership website contains relevant information and good practice.

The scheme operator cites as evidence that the scheme has helped small firms manage OSH:

- all ESA’s OSH initiatives have received positive feedback; and
- ESA’s accident rate has decreased by more than 40% since the launch of the Accident Reduction Charter in 2004.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge that ESA foresees lies in broadening the scope of the scheme to include provisions on occupational health. ESA also intends to measure and reduce sickness absence rates.



## **Sharing lessons**

In terms of sharing lessons with other schemes, the scheme operator advises:

- “the success of the scheme relies upon a strong commitment to improve health and safety at the board level”; and
- data is key to success and the submission of relevant data should be a mandatory requirement of the scheme.

### **3. ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS' ASSOCIATION (ECA)**

#### **– ZERO ACCIDENT POTENTIAL (ZAP)<sup>7</sup>**

Zero Accident Potential is operated by the Electrical Contractors' Association and covers all safety issues (and key health issues such as asbestos), not just electrical safety issues. ZAP is a dedicated OSH initiative that is restricted to ECA members; the main partners are ECA, Amicus Unite, and the SEC Group.

The scheme started in 2001 and is now in its second incarnation (ZAP 2), which runs until 2010. It was instigated by ECA senior management and followed on from the HSE and government's *Revitalising health and safety* initiative and the Construction Industry Summit. Participation in the scheme is included as part of ECA membership. For the first five years of ZAP, the ECA provided the ZAP OAH information free to anyone who requested it.

ZAP offers: conferences and regional events; good practice exchanges; members' branch briefings; a free OSH enquiry "hotline"; BUPA health assessment; access to free CHAS assessment; advice sheets on complying with construction (CDM) core criteria; and information on specific OSH topics. It also provides, with Unite, a biannual newsletter for ECA members' employees on asbestos safety.

ZAP invites members to commit to enhancing OSH practice in the areas of: creating a positive OSH culture; involving employees; risk assessment; and monitoring and improving performance. The issue of employee involvement is central to the scheme, which was developed with Amicus. The programme underlines the importance of demonstrating health and safety "know how" to clients and major contractors, and the opportunity for doing things cost effectively. It encourages participants to develop their safety culture by ensuring: high profile involvement in OSH leadership by the company chief executive; an organisational structure that involves all employees in OSH improvements through consultation and information; establishing improvement targets; and the reporting and monitoring of performance targeting key areas for risk control.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme operator believes that ZAP is useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts in that it provides free CHAS assessments and explain how to meet the core criteria.

In terms of core criteria, ZAP covers some, but not all, of the criteria, but the ECA is providing practical data sheets on each of the core criteria. In terms of specifics, the ZAP certificate shows that the company has committed to: a statement of OSH policy; a continuous risk assessment procedure; recording, monitoring and reviewing work-related illness and accidents; targeting risks for asbestos and working at heights; and planning continual health and safety improvements.

#### **Priorities and targets**

The scheme's priorities are practical risk reduction through cost-effective OSH management. The ECA highlights one specific risk area at a time – currently asbestos, previously work at height, with slips and trips as the next target.

ECA members sign up to company improvement targets and to essential management principles. Progress under ZAP is measured by accidents statistics provided by a Joint industry Board (representing ECA and Amicus). The targets for 2002 to 2006 were: no

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<sup>7</sup> "Zero Accident Potential", Electrical Contractors' Association, [www.eca.co.uk/](http://www.eca.co.uk/). Scheme contact: Paul Reeve, paul.reeve@eca.co.uk  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

fatalities; a 40% reduction in major RIDDOR-reportable accidents; and a 30% reduction on over-three-day injuries. The reductions in injuries – by the end of 2008 – were 49% (all) and 70% (major).

The ZAP 2 targets are: no fatalities; a 75% reduction in major accidents; and 50% in over-three-day injuries on 2001 levels.

There are no targets for reductions in ill health and work-related absence. The scheme contact advises that the ECA is not aware of “a workable metric for ill health”; and stresses that while the ECA wants to engage in this area for contractors, the main problem is latency. One suggestion is the development of a lead indicator.

### **Insurance**

Affiliation to the scheme provides no direct insurance benefits, although the scheme contact notes that “there may be spins offs from improved risk management”.

### **Training**

ECA offers a suite of commercial OSH training to members.

### **Auditing or assessment**

ZAP does not generally require auditing or assessment, although it does offer voluntary CHAS assessments. Electrical safety aspects, however, are mandatory and there is checking of ECA applicant members who use the ‘deemed-to-satisfy’ route.

### **Permeation and potential**

There are some 3,000 ECA members, of which well over 80% are small or micro companies. ECA companies employ over 30,000 operatives and support 8,000 apprentices. The scheme operator reports that the “vast bulk of the big members are signed up”. The JIB ZAP accident return “gives a good indication of engagement. This covers between 18,000 and 24,000 operatives annually”, ie between half and two-thirds of those employed by members. In terms of numbers of firms signed up, the scheme contact advises: “The SME numbers vary but a conservative figure is 600 SMEs, with another 200 larger companies on top of this. This suggests, quite accurately, that only part of our membership is *actively engaged* with ZAP, although many more members will be able to benefit from it, without signing up to actions or providing ZAP input via accident returns.

The scheme operator believes that all members could benefit from the scheme.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The features that have helped the scheme to reach small firms are:

- a guide to CDM specifically for smaller projects;
- the ECA emphasises good practice for small firms, and best practice for larger firms; and
- all advice is aimed at a typical small contractor.

The features that have been successful in helping small firms to manage health and safety issues are:

- the ECA responds to members’ common queries with practical guidance; and
- all advice is aimed at a typical small contractor.

The ECA cites evidence as to how the scheme has helped small firms as:

- ZAP has significantly broadened the scope of health and safety management;

- ZAP has raised awareness of OSH in the sector;
- incident targets have been met – “We have reliable annual accident statistics, which show a significant reduction in accidents”; and
- “the general nature of enquiries has changed to show that many companies are considering ‘how to’ not ‘whether to’”.

### **Challenges**

The scheme operator reports: “There is actually a lot to do if one is to follow all the legislation and client/major contractor requirements. This becomes more apparent the more we explain it and have more contact with members. This and the proliferation of pre-qualification schemes mean that safety can be seen as a burden, which does not help to achieve a positive cultural approach, notably in small businesses.”

### **Sharing lessons**

SMEs prefer clear instructions on “what do they have to do”.

ZAP started off as an awareness programme, it was developed into an advice programme and is gradually introducing assessment and lead indicators. Each step has been supported by good accident stats showing rates and basic causation.

#### **4. ALUMINIUM FEDERATION (ALFED)**

##### **– ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY MADE SAFER (AIMS)**

The Aluminium Federation (ALFED) is a trade association that represents the UK aluminium industry. The Aluminium Industry Made Safer (AIMS)<sup>8</sup> initiative is a dedicated OSH scheme that is open to all those producing, manufacturing, finishing and distributing aluminium products, and also to others directly allied with the industry.

AIMS offers a ‘broad path’ for companies to improve their OSH record, backed up by bi-annual workshops, demand-led seminars, “bulletin” items and six-monthly newsletters, notice of HSE initiatives and areas of concern, networking and best practice discussion opportunities etc. Members of the scheme are required to report accident statistics and have a written OSH policy. The website claims: “A company’s participation in such a scheme influences HSE policy on site inspection frequency.”

AIMS asks each company to produce an action plan to target areas of their activities that need improvement. The web pages advise: “Commitment involves senior management undertaking to follow the scheme by producing a safety improvement plan, monitoring its progress, and reporting on performance.”

ALFED advises companies: “By signing up to this scheme your company will be demonstrating to its employees, shareholders and customers that it is serious about looking after its workforce, its profitability and its reputation. AIMS will provide you with recognition of this commitment, with a route to achieve your goals and a means of measuring performance.”

Participation is free to ALFED members; there is a “small charge” of £95+VAT to non-members to cover costs. The HSE is actively involved in supporting the scheme.

The AIMS web pages state: “Experience with similar schemes in other industries suggests that companies use membership as a vehicle to introduce a whole range of health and safety initiatives within their business. The packaging of company initiatives under a collective industry ‘badge’ can create a shared purpose between management and workers and hence a greater commitment.”

The scheme was instigated in 2007 by ALFED’s occupational health and safety committee in order to promote safety and best practice in the industry.

##### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme contact states that the scheme is not useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts. Of the SME core criteria, the operator lists only a written safety policy. But the website also advises: “The commitment to the AIMS scheme must come from a director or senior manager who will take responsibility for compliance,” and there are other elements in the scheme that would satisfy a reasonable number of the core criteria.

##### **Priorities and targets**

The scheme’s priorities are reduced accident rates, increased reporting and improved safety communication. The scheme specifies a 10% reduction in the lost-time incident rate against a 2006 baseline over three years (20 per 1,000 employees). There is no penalty attached to failing to meet the target, but OSH data must be submitted to ALFED using an annual return form. Individual company data remains confidential to the administrator.

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<sup>8</sup> “Aluminium Industry Made Safer”, Aluminium Federation, [www.alfed.org.uk/page.asp?node=72&sec=AIMS](http://www.alfed.org.uk/page.asp?node=72&sec=AIMS).  
Scheme contact: Tom Siddle, [t\\_siddle@alfed.org.uk](mailto:t_siddle@alfed.org.uk), 0121 601 6746  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

## **Insurance**

Scheme affiliation offers no insurance benefits directly, but the operator believes it “may be a factor in a company’s negotiation” of insurance.

## **Training**

The scheme offers workshop and seminars, which aim to cover their costs.

## **Auditing or assessment**

The scheme does not require auditing or assessment.

## **Permeation and potential**

There are 45 organisations that are members of the scheme, approximately half of which are small firms. The scheme organiser believes that there are around 120 organisations in the sector that could benefit from the scheme.

## **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The AIMS web pages advise: “The aluminium industry already has a large core of companies actively engaged in managing their OSH performance, and reporting their statistics. We plan to use this initiative to encourage many more and smaller companies to use similar techniques to improve their safety management and to benefit from the experience of others in the industry.”

The scheme operator highlights the following features as helping reach small firms:

- ALFED communicates “equally” with all ALFED members, regardless of whether or not they are in AIMS; and
- workshops and the like enable smaller companies to learn of best practice initiatives in large companies and elsewhere to hear “top quality presentations”.

The scheme operator believes that these two features have also been successful in helping small firms to manage OSH, although it is “early days” in terms of ability to present supporting evidence; ALFED is still collating 2008 safety statistics.

## **Challenges**

The main challenge that the scheme operator foresees is continuing to increase membership in the face of recessionary pressures.

## **Sharing lessons**

It is time-consuming to run the scheme effectively; staff time resource can be a constraint.

## **5. BRITISH METALS RECYCLING ASSOCIATION (BMRA)**

The British Metals Recycling Association formed in 2001 following amalgamation of the British Metals Federation and the British Secondary Metals Association. The entry below concerns its OSH services for members rather than any single initiative<sup>9</sup>.

The association has 300 members, including 27 providing equipment or supporting services to the industry, that are actively involved in its OSH initiatives, which are part of a wider programme.

BMRA membership provides:

- access to dedicated OSH training for members;
- access to OSH consultancy provided by association service members;
- availability of tailored insurance packages through association service members;
- a requirement for new members to enrol appropriate employees on relevant BMRA OSH training programme(s) within their first year of membership;
- a code of conduct that includes a commitment by members to "observe the need for good practice in health and safety and meet all relevant regulations"; and
- oversight of OSH issues and activities by an OSH committee drawn from the association's membership.

The association provides proactive information and advice through routine and special bulletins, and on issues arising from OSH committee activities. This is included in the membership fee, but support provided by service members (for example insurance and training) is at an additional cost.

### **Instigation**

Information on the instigation is "lost in the mists of time" as the association and its predecessors have been in existence for many years. "In today's parlance", adds the BMRA contact, the reasons for instigation "would be to access support on complex environmental, safety and financial issues, networking, and lobbying opportunities".

### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The association believes that membership is "possibly" useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts, although "membership does indicate commitment to a defined code of practice". The association advises that it does include some SME core criteria.

### **Priorities and targets**

The association does not set targets although it is "developing a health and safety pledge that may include some measures and targets. With such a large number of very small operators in membership it is difficult to come up with meaningful targets that would not be badly skewed for individual members by a single accident."

### **Insurance**

Association membership offers tailored insurance schemes provided by its service members. The website notes: "BMRA has long-standing arrangements with two insurance brokers, Peter Hoare and Co and Ingram Hawkins and Nock, which offer bespoke insurance services to members that reflect the needs of the industry. Both

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<sup>9</sup> British Metals Recycling Association, [www.recyclemetals.org](http://www.recyclemetals.org). Contact: Ken Mackenzie, [ken@recyclemetals.org](mailto:ken@recyclemetals.org), 01480 455 249  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

companies offer particular benefits to members with exemplary health and safety practices, such as ensuring employee attendance at BMRA health and safety training.”

### **Training**

Association membership offers tailored training schemes provided by its service members (at a cost). The website lists training in areas such as the BMRA health and safety passport for employees, “plus” passport for managers, and radiation safety.

### **Auditing or assessment**

The association does not require auditing or assessment.

### **Permeation and potential**

The association currently has around 300 members, operating on 600 sites. While it already “captures operators delivering the overwhelming majority of metal recycling in the UK ... there are a great number of very small businesses not in membership. Small businesses comprise a “very large proportion” of the membership: 73% of the total tonnage of metal recycled by members is handled by just 3% of member companies.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The features that have helped the association reach small firms are “provision of business support and advice in the face of massive regulation and bureaucracy”.

The features that have helped the association help small firms to manage OSH issues are the provision of access to training and consultancy services from people who understand the industry”. Anecdotally, the scheme contact advises, members – and particularly small firms – value the support provided by the association and consider the subscription to be a worthwhile investment.

### **Challenges**

The association reports the main challenges as “not known, apart from a need to ensure that regulation and legislation is developed in a way that recognizes the practical issues affecting our industry”.

### **Sharing lessons**

The BMRA advises that it has opportunities to exchange knowledge on issues affecting allied industries through its membership of the (UK) Recycling Industries Alliance and other international recycling and metals associations.



## **6. BRITISH GLASS MANUFACTURERS' CONFEDERATION, GLASS AND GLAZING FEDERATION**

### **– GLASS CHARTER**

The GLASS Charter (Goal: Lower Accidents, Safe Sites) is operated by the British Glass Manufacturers' Confederation (British Glass) and the Glass and Glazing Federation<sup>10</sup>. The scheme started in 2001 and is supported by the HSE, trade unions and industry. GLASS Charter is a dedicated OSH scheme and its operators are part of the HSE C3HARGE Forum (formerly the Ceramics Industry Advisory Committee).

British Glass instigated the scheme in 2000 in response to the government's *Revitalising health and safety* initiative, launching it in 2001 to help all organisations within the glass industry remain focused on the importance of OSH within the workplace and meet the *Revitalising* targets.

The scheme booklet advises the “initiative aims to improve health and safety performance in all sectors of the glass industry by providing best practice guidelines, advice and actively encourages members of industry to exchange ideas with each other to continually improve their health and safety practices.”

The scheme provides proactive advice, including charter guidelines, regular e-bulletins, quarterly legislative update, codes of practice, various committees and working groups, an annual conference, newsletters, industry audit tools and toolkits. A key element is “senior level management commitment to continuous health and safety improvement”, and this is explicitly tied in with the Institute of Directors/HSE guidance for directors.

The scheme is free to members of British Glass and the Glass and Glazing Federation.

### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme is not currently used for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts, although, according to the scheme operators, it “is an area we have been looking into”. In terms of the core criteria, the operators list three that the scheme requires:

- appointment of a director responsible for OSH performance at board/senior level;
- twice yearly accident statistics submission – together with incident causes; and
- an annual safety action plan identifying at least three areas for improvement.

The information, states the charter booklet, allows “central monitoring and analysis of industry performance and also provid[es] members with benchmarking of their own figures against sector and industry.”

### **Priorities and targets**

The scheme's priority is a target of a 30% reduction in working days lost though accidents and ill health by 2010; the current key accident causes include slips and trips, cuts and manual handling.

### **Insurance**

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<sup>10</sup> “GLASS Charter”, British Glass Manufacturers' Confederation, Glass and Glazing Federation, [www.glasscharter.co.uk/index.htm](http://www.glasscharter.co.uk/index.htm), scheme booklet: [www.glasscharter.co.uk/public\\_files/An\\_Introduction\\_to\\_the\\_Glass\\_Charter.pdf](http://www.glasscharter.co.uk/public_files/An_Introduction_to_the_Glass_Charter.pdf). Scheme contacts: Philip Marsh, [p.marsh@britglass.co.uk](mailto:p.marsh@britglass.co.uk), 0114 290 1809 and Declan Moore, [dmoore@ggf.org.uk](mailto:dmoore@ggf.org.uk), 07823 335380. See also: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/revitalising/casestudyglass.pdf> RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

The scheme does not offer “defined’ insurance benefits at this time, but the issue is “under negotiation”. The scheme operators add, however, that: “Members have used membership, awards and merit scheme certificates (together with appropriate evidence/paperwork) to achieve significant reductions in premiums.”

### **Training**

The scheme offers guidance documents, codes of practice and toolkits to members. Training is arranged on the behalf of members – including NEBOSH general certificate at reduced rates – and regular committees and the annual conference allow members to access expert speakers.

### **Auditing or assessment**

The scheme does not require auditing or assessment, but members submit accident statistics and action plans, and audit tools allow self-assessment. In addition, audit tools are available to members and the scheme operator performs some site visits (on request and resources allowing).

### **Permeation and potential**

There are more than 300 organisations in the scheme; the scheme organisers believe there are around 1,000 organisations in the sector that could use the scheme. At least 70% of the scheme’s membership has fewer than 250 employees.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The scheme contact lists the following as features that have helped the scheme reach small firms:

- regional road shows;
- HSE working partnership;
- union participation;
- industry’s own members promoting the scheme;
- free ad-hoc advice/consultancy; and
- the range of information available.

The organisers list the following as features that have helped small firms manage OSH issues:

- basic advice;
- sharing of best practice;
- committees and networking;
- GLASS Charter Merit Scheme – three grades, each with six levels, in order to encourage continuous improvement; and
- GLASS Charter Awards – recognising achievements and performance in 14 categories, including director.

The scheme booklet states as one of the key objectives of the merit scheme: “To assist smaller companies to identify areas where improvement can be made and to encourage them to join the GLASS Charter.”

The scheme organisers point to accident statistics and members’ feedback as evidence that the scheme has helped small firms. The scheme booklets notes: “As well as benefiting employees within the industry, there has also been a significant financial

benefit for the industry as a whole. Using HSE figures, the estimated benefit to industry could be £1.5 million each year.”

### **Challenges**

The main challenge the scheme organisers foresee for its members is the recession: “The financial climate has hit members hard – especially those manufacturing-for or supplying-into the construction and automotive sectors.”

## **7. UK STEEL (EEF)**

### **– LIVE WIRE**

Live Wire is operated by UK Steel, a division of EEF<sup>11</sup>, and is a dedicated accident reduction scheme for the wire industry that is run under the auspices of a long established wire health and safety committee. The other partners that are actively involved in supporting are Community, Unite and the HSE. The scheme was instigated in 2006 by UK Steel, with prompting from the HSE. The main reasons for its instigation, advises UK Steel, were “to retain HSE’s support for the wire health and safety committee” and to support members’ efforts to reduce accidents.

The scheme comprises 12 companies in the wire industry. Its objectives are to reduce accidents and improve health and safety awareness. This is being achieved through training workshops, which are run at members’ premises and include shop floor hazard spotting. This, advises UK Steel, “requires trust and cooperation between competitors”. The scheme offers pro-active advice and also other events and workshops on issues such as behavioural safety, regular publication of a league table of all accidents, a newsletter, an annual accident reduction competition for companies and a competition for the shopfloor (on good ideas), sharing of best practice etc. UK Steel advises its has “tried to involve both top management and shopfloor people”.

The costs are £150 a year for members, and £250 for non-members. One-day training is £60 per person, with events at £35. There is also some sponsorship from the main wire rod supplier and the unions. “All”, says UK Steel, is “done on a shoestring”.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

UK Steel advises that the scheme is “not specifically” useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts although, if companies are involved, they are more likely to have policies and safe working procedures in place, carry out risk assessments and “do the basics”.

UK Steel states that the scheme does not include any SME core criteria that members need to satisfy.

#### **Priorities and targets**

UK Steel says that the scheme’s priorities “change as time goes on”. Recently, the “priority has been to keep people involved during difficult times when people are more concerned about redundancy”.

The scheme’s priorities overall are the same as its targets to:

- reduce all accidents by 10% a year.
- get people to work towards having cohesive OSH management systems.
- improve OSH awareness/culture

#### **Insurance**

The scheme offers no insurance benefits.

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<sup>11</sup> “Live Wire”, UK Steel. Scheme contact: Sue Harris, sharris@eef.org.uk, tel: 0207654 1550. There is no website  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

## **Training**

The scheme offers three levels of training: basic; intermediate; and for supervisors and managers. All courses last one day, cost £60 a head and are hosted at member premises at no cost. Small companies send along a couple of people to joint courses, larger companies can run them in house.

## **Auditing or assessment**

Scheme membership does not require auditing or assessment.

## **Permeation and potential**

There are 12 organisations affiliated to the scheme. The larger companies in the sector are all members, so most employees are included. UK steel believes there may be another four to six small companies. Some affiliates are small sites but part of a larger group (which may or may not help with OSH). Around 30% “probably fit the strict definition of SME”.

In terms of non-members, UK Steel advises: “We do keep them informed from time to time, but do not spend a lot of time chasing them to join the scheme it is not particularly in our interests to do so from a financial point of view unless they join UK Steel.

## **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

In terms of reaching small firms, UK Steel advises that they are the ones that “have benefitted most so there has not been an issue getting them involved. They were all meeting each other at the wire health and safety committee when it was launched.” Additionally the “minimal” cost has helped.

The features of the scheme that have been successful in helping small firms to manage OSH are: ideas, support, advice and information from the larger companies. Keeping OSH “going is hard work and the more new things you can think up, the more enthusiasm you can engender, the better. Helpful ideas include:

- visiting other companies “and feeling they are not alone with their problems” and picking up tips on better ways to do things;
- the competition;
- events that “mix up shop floor people to chat with each other”; and
- even a manager spending a few hours in a car with three employees (coming to an event) has unexpected spin-offs”.

UK Steel advises that the evidence it has of how the scheme has helped small firms includes accident reduction, improvement in OSH awareness (it has administered a questionnaire three times), attendance levels at events, cooperation levels and anecdotal evidence. In short: “Companies are too busy to participate if it is not useful”.

## **Challenges**

The main challenges that UK Steel foresees for the scheme are:

- to keep finding new ideas; and
- the recession.

## **Sharing lessons**

UK Steel would share the following lessons with other scheme operators:

- “• Mixing up large and small companies to exchange ideas (and problems!).
- Running training courses at company premises and hazard spotting each other’s shop floors.
- Publishing a league table of accident statistics.
- Running the competition and awards ceremony.
- Really trying to involve and listen to different people, not just the managers.
- Getting top management support.
- Having someone to drive it all forward and nag nag nag.”

UK Steel adds two further pieces of advice:

- “• steal unashamedly for safety. We have contacts with many of the schemes mentioned and have used their ideas; and
- the fact that the wire group had a long tradition of working together should not be underestimated.”

## **8. ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (ECIA)**

### **– BEST (BEHAVIOUR SLIPS AND TRIPS)**

BEST (BEhaviour Slips and Trips) is operated by the Engineering Construction Industry Association (ECIA). The dedicated OSH scheme<sup>12</sup> was instigated in 2004/05 by the ECIA's safety health and environment (SHE) manager, SHE committee and management board. The main reason behind the instigation, according to the ECIA scheme contact, was that while the safety performance of its members was better than construction as whole, "performance had plateaued. BEST was an attempt to generate some sort of 'step change'."

The ECIA also has extensive OSH provision for all members, including its own 2000-page *Safety health and environment manual* (£160, but free on the internet), and a four-volume incident library in which members share information about their experiences and lessons learnt.

The ECIA advises that the partners who are actively involved in supporting BEST are ECIA member companies that have signed up to it. The scheme is voluntary; signing up is not a condition of ECIA membership, and there is no financial charge of any kind.

BEST is a voluntary scheme intended to promote use of behavioural safety techniques/approaches to focus on reducing the most common injury causes in the engineering construction sector (slips and trips). The ECIA adds this "will have an equally beneficial impact on other types of hazard as well".

Signing up indicates a formal commitment from the most senior management to:

- create a clearly defined action plan;
- report annually to the ECIA "with real evidence" on the implementation of the plan; and
- "accept the right of the ECIA to audit the company's activities". (The ECIA emphasises that the purpose of the audit is not to act as a "safety police force", but rather to verify the annual reporting: "There is no intention to look at everyone. We will select a random sample.")

The ECIA does not specify the plan's contents, which can be as simple or complex as the member wishes. Those who sign up should then submit an annual report to the ECIA, the SHE committee of which gives an annual BEST award and highly commended runners up in two categories.

The ECIA BEST webpages list the following benefits for participants:

- a powerful platform to generate a "great leap forward" in safety performance;
- recognition of commitment in the public register of BEST companies
- the right to use the BEST brand to advertise commitment to clients; and
- the opportunity to gain recognition of excellence in the annual BEST awards.

In terms of proactive advice, material on the website offers suggestions as to what could be included in action plans, but the aim is to let companies decide what they think will be most effective in their circumstances. The ECIA emphasises that OSH standards in engineering construction are generally higher than construction as whole and knowledge/understanding of effective OSH policies is more widespread. The aim of the

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<sup>12</sup> "BEST", ECIA, [http://209.41.179.93/pages/index.cfm?page\\_id=85](http://209.41.179.93/pages/index.cfm?page_id=85). Scheme contact: Richard Ash, richardash@ecia.co.uk, 020 7799 2000  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

scheme is not so much to prescribe approaches, but more to increase the reliable application of ones that are already known.

### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The ECIA is “not sure” whether or not the scheme is useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts”, bud adds: “Those who have won annual BEST awards almost certainly find it beneficial when competing for work in an industry sector where safety performance is taken very seriously by client owners of high value and potentially volatile sites such as oil refineries.”

The scheme does not include any SME “core criteria” that members need to satisfy: “The whole point is to leave organisations free to decide what they think can work best for their circumstances. The ECIA does not seek to dictate SHE management practice to its member companies. We do not act as a ‘police force’ checking member compliance with such prescriptive requirements.”

Nevertheless, “appendix papers” describe key elements that are expected of participating companies, covering the roles of employer management, employees and supervisors, and consultation with employees. The employer management elements are the most detailed and include: ensuring employees receive an appropriate induction package on BEST; setting explicit standards; setting targets for action and results to be achieved; instituting procedures for monitoring and measuring performance; and actively reviewing performance.

The ECIA offers a non-mandatory guide on the types of information that it might want to see, which lists, among other things, copies of the OSH policy, senior management papers, sample risk assessments, accident investigation reports, site management meeting minutes, performance data on slips and trips, as well as evidence of positive employee involvement.

### **Priorities and targets**

There are no specific targets. The scheme’s priority is: “Reducing incidence of the most common accident types (slips and trips) by provoking greater use of behavioural techniques with the visible leadership of senior managers.”

### **Insurance**

Although scheme affiliation does not offer explicit insurance benefits, the ECIA states that “signed up companies may point out their BEST commitment to their insurance providers and that may be taken into account”.

### **Training**

BEST does not offer training. The ECIA is not a training provider and advises that: “Engineering construction is a sector where training expectations are fairly well developed. Adding another training/competence framework in addition to those that already exist would merely complicate the landscape for little significant benefit. This does not mean to say that individual companies’ action plans do not include their own training elements. Many do and some of them are quite novel.”

### **Auditing or assessment**

In terms of auditing and assessment, members must send the ECIA an annual report. “Some”, reports the ECIA, “are more thorough in this than others.” The ECIA reiterates, however, that it “does not see itself as a police force” for OSH standards and there is therefore no formal auditing/assessment procedure. Nevertheless, organisations proposed for the annual award are visited in order “to ensure that what they provided in their submissions matches reality”. A refusal to present an annual report on the



implementation of BEST will result in removal from the BEST register; if the information in the report fails to reach a standard acceptable, the ECIA may also remove the company from the register. A refusal to permit auditing will result in removal from the register. Where an audit reveals significant concerns, the ECIA offers advice to rectify the situation and expects the company to take the appropriate action and reflect this in the ensuing report to the ECIA: "Failure to do so would bring the quality of information into question and could result in removal from the register."

### **Permeation and potential**

The ECIA advises that the "typical company signed up to BEST is in the range of 50+" employees; there are no micro-employers. Members range in size from small companies (around 20 employees) providing specialised services to multinational organisations operating on a global scale.

There are 32 companies that have signed up to BEST of which 22 have published action plans. The signatories account for a significant portion of the UK engineering construction workforce.

The ECIA believes that most member companies could draw some benefit from BEST, but those with most to gain "would probably be accrued amongst middle range companies who do not have the resources of major firms, but seek a vehicle for injecting new life and 'oomph' into ensuring good practice standards they already understand are reliably delivered in practice rather than merely sought."

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The ECIA believes that the feature that has helped the scheme reach, and help, small firms is: "Allowing companies to commit to what they think is appropriate for them rather than prescribing a common action plan for all."

In terms of evidence of how the scheme has helped small firms, the ECIA points to feedback during scrutiny for the BEST award: "Some have proved more genuinely committed to real action than others, but those who really are appear to report improved figures. In addition, a common thread has been BEST providing a framework for senior managers to become more closely engaged in practical delivery of aspirations rather than merely setting them. For instance many have used BEST as a reason to visit real sites to 'beat the safety drum' much more than they did in the past. Leadership is an important ingredient of the BEST mix."

### **Challenges**

The ECIA foresees two main challenges for the scheme:

- "revivifying those who originally signed up but have been less enthusiastic in seeking delivery of action"; and
- "preventing a scheme that sought to provoke change and new ideas becoming routine and mundane.

### **Sharing lessons**

The ECIA would share the following with other scheme operators in other sectors: "If you want a scheme that is flexible and voluntary, do not expect all those who sign up to it to be as thorough and enthusiastic as others. On the other hand, if a scheme allows room for companies to decide for themselves what they are going to do rather than prescribing it, those who do respond more positively do so very ... positively indeed.

The ECIA adds that it would be cautious when considering the application of a BEST model beyond engineering construction. Irrespective of company size, ECIA members

“tend to work in large-scale high-value projects for power, petrochem, nuclear etc clients who have sophisticated OSH expectations of their contractors. Thus all companies are typically more accustomed to providing an active OSH response than those, say, working in shop refurbishment.”

## **9. PAPER AND BOARD INDUSTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PABIAC)**

### **– MAKING A DIFFERENCE 2008–11**

#### **Scheme summary**

The HSE's Paper and Board Industry Advisory Committee's (PABIAC's) Making a Difference 2008–11 initiative is a dedicated OSH strategy, not a scheme<sup>13</sup>. It was instigated by PABIAC in July 2008 and followed earlier successful three-year action plans and strategies. The partners actively involved in supporting the strategy are the HSE, Unite, GMB, Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) and the Independent Waste Paper Processors Association (IWPPA).

The strategy targets the whole of the paper chain, with participation free. There is no proactive advice because it is a strategy, not a scheme, but it does provide OSH tools that employers can use (see below). Chief executives and managing directors of companies in the paper industry are invited to sign a formal pledge committing their businesses to working towards the industry achieving PABIAC's strategic targets and objectives.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

PABIAC has no evidence that the strategy is useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts. It does not include any pre-qualification criteria.

#### **Priorities and targets**

The strategy sets strategic objectives, with industry sectors then setting their own, dovetailing OSH action plans, the outcomes of which contribute to achievement of the strategic objectives. In turn individual employers set their own dovetailing action plans.

There are five objectives:

- by March 2011, a reduction in the non-fatal injury rate to 850 per 100,000 employees (a 10% year-on-year reduction);
- over the three years, employers should demonstrate a continuously improving OSH management performance when benchmarked;
- over the three years, employers should demonstrate a continuously improving OSH climate;
- in 2008, employers should provide PABIAC with information that will allow it to establish good practice in occupational health (OH) management, set industry targets for 2009–11 and beyond, and share best practice in OH management to help employers meet improvement targets; and
- by 31 March 2011, employers should have appropriate management systems for loads on vehicles.

Signatories to a strategy “pledge” send brief progress summaries to their trade association every six months. The key issues are machinery safety, workplace transport, manual handling, and slips and trips.

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<sup>13</sup> “Making a difference”, PABIAC [www.hse.gov.uk/paper/programme.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/paper/programme.htm) and [www.paper.org.uk/services/health\\_safety/pabioc/pabiocbrochure900kb.pdf](http://www.paper.org.uk/services/health_safety/pabioc/pabiocbrochure900kb.pdf). Strategy contact: Graham King, [graham.king@hse.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:graham.king@hse.gsi.gov.uk), 0114 291 2353  
RoSPA NOSH SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

## **Insurance**

Although there are no insurance benefits (it is a strategy, not a scheme), the PABIAC contact advises that paper industry companies that have signed up to Business Link's Health and Safety Performance Indicator (HSPI) "will, no doubt, be seeing benefits in terms of reduced insurance premiums if they can demonstrate improving scores to their insurers". (This is an indirect benefit that arises from PABIAC directing paper companies to, and encouraging them to use, HSPI, rather than directly from signing a pledge committing themselves to the PABIAC strategy.)

## **Training**

The scheme does not offer training (again because it is a strategy), although the partners provide training to meet needs identified by the partner organisations.

## **Auditing or assessment**

As a strategy, it cannot require auditing or assessment. Partner organisations, however, survey their members to obtain information in order to assemble performance progress reports and present them to PABIAC, which in turn monitors and challenges the progress of stakeholders in driving implementation of the strategy.

## **Permeation and potential**

There are currently 30 companies that have signed the PABIAC "pledge", although some of these have additional signatures from multiple locations; as a result, there are pledges covering 70 manufacturing sites. The HSE believes that there are approximately 210 organisations in the sector that could benefit from the strategy.

PABIAC advises that the IWPPA represents mainly small independent firms; otherwise, penetration to small firms is limited. Of the businesses pledge to the strategy, it estimates that "strictly speaking only about 5%–10% are small firms" but "most of the large pledge businesses are multi-site employers with each site effectively operating as an SME".

## **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The features that PABIAC believes are helpful in helping small firms to manage OSH are PABIAC tools (including a simple safety management self-assessment tool and a tool for benchmarking safety climate) and links to, and promotion of, HSPI.

The HSE has no evidence yet to show that the new strategy has helped small firms (it has not been running long enough). Previous strategies, however, have "certainly done so", advises PABIAC, and seen marked reductions in non-fatal injuries and working days lost across the whole industry that have exceeded targets. And although the target of a safety management system to a recognised standard being in place at all sites was not met by March 2008, an encouraging 75% of employers had achieved it. The same proportion was using an OSH climate tool (some for the first time), had some form of active rehabilitation scheme and was using an OH service. In addition, 35 paper industry (Paper and paper stationery manufacturing, and Paper container and packaging manufacturing) companies with fewer than 250 employees had completed their HSPI entry: 10 companies (less than 10 employees); eight (10-49); eight (50-99); and nine (100-250). PABIAC points out that the total is likely to be higher because some paper companies will fall under different sector categories.

## **Challenges**

The main challenges that PABIAC foresees for the strategy are:

- achieving the strategic targets;
- getting senior executive commitment and buy in, ie getting them to deliver on their pledges.

## **Sharing lessons**

PABIAC advises that the main lesson it would share with other sectors is the importance of getting CEO buy-in and sign-up: “Without it you may not succeed.”

## **10. MINERAL PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (MPA)**

### **– CEMENTING GOOD PRACTICE**

Cementing Good Practice<sup>14</sup> was instigated by the British Cement Association, which subsequently merged with the Quarry Products Association to form the Mineral Products Association (MPA)<sup>15</sup>.

The scheme is operated by the four large cement companies, namely Lafarge, CEMEX, Hanson and Tarmac BLC. The scheme operator advises that the materials produced by the industry's working groups are publicly available through the safe quarry website<sup>16</sup>, along with a large range of materials produced for the aggregates, asphalt, concrete, lime, mortar and silica sand industries. This includes incident alerts, toolbox talks, hot topics, guidance, good practice and safer by design (the new initiative that identifies key safety features for mobile plant).

The British Cement Association guidance is primarily aimed at large cement manufacturing sites, although the guidance on reversing and on slips, trips and falls, and the customer site safety information, "could be of interest to non-cement sites". The customer site safety scheme is operated by three of the cement companies and identifies issues that will be of concern to smaller customer sites, including those associated with silo over-pressurisation.

Guidance includes: hot meal burns; reversing and visibility; slips, trips and falls; kiln maintenance; and the customer site safety (bagged and bulk deliveries) scheme. MPA Cement is currently working with contractors with the aim of reducing contractor LTIs, although no guidance has been produced yet.

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<sup>14</sup> "Cementing Best Practice", Mineral Products Association, [www.cementindustry.co.uk/health\\_and\\_safety/cementing\\_good\\_practice\\_semina.aspx](http://www.cementindustry.co.uk/health_and_safety/cementing_good_practice_semina.aspx). Contact: Ian Gibson, [Ian.Gibson@mineralproducts.org](mailto:Ian.Gibson@mineralproducts.org), 01276 608719

<sup>15</sup> Mineral Products Association: [www.mineralproducts.org/](http://www.mineralproducts.org/)

<sup>16</sup> Safe quarry website: [www.safequarry.com](http://www.safequarry.com)

RoSPA NOSH SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

## **11. BRITISH PRECAST CONCRETE FEDERATION**

### **– CONCRETE TARGETS 2010<sup>17</sup>**

Concrete Targets 2010 (CT2010) is operated by the British Precast Concrete Federation (BPCF), which is affiliated to the Mineral Products Association. The partners that are actively involved in supporting the scheme are the HSE, Proskills (the industry sector skills council) and signed up members.

The scheme is a dedicated OSH initiative, but its results also contribute towards the BPCF's Industry Sustainability Strategy, which comprises a range of social issues. CT2010 is an industry-wide programme to reduce reportable accidents and to improve health and safety within the participating companies by following a coordinated plan of initiatives.

The scheme is restricted to members of the BPCF and no charge is made for participation.

In terms of proactive advice, the scheme contact advises it encourages sharing of best practice and offers safety alerts advice to all BPCF members of potential problems relating to their industry. Members also have access to Croners' advice service

The scheme started in 2005, taking over from the previous original five-year scheme, "Four Star", which began in 2000/01. BPCF instigated the original and current schemes – the former in response to the government and HSC's Revitalising health and safety initiative, although the scheme contact advises "this was felt to be too weak in its targets and so more onerous targets were created. The CT2010 scheme has been designed to continue the success of the original."

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme contact advises that it is "not known" whether the scheme has proved useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts". In relation to core criteria, the scheme does not allow SMEs any different requirements to the larger members.

#### **Priorities and targets**

The scheme's targets are:

- 50% reduction in RIDDOR reportable accidents by 2010 (2005 base year);
- 50% reduction in time lost in five years (2005 base year);
- biannual submission of statistics to BPCF at the end of July and December;
- development and implementation of a strategy for OSH initiatives and relating training;
- Implementing structured OSH meetings in the company; and
- annual initiatives from members in the areas of physical safety, human factors and occupational health.

To help determine progress against targets, the BPCF collects statistics on: all RIDDOR reportable injuries; RIDDOR major injuries; chronic injury (ie injuries that are not associated with a particular event, for example repetitive strain and musculo-skeletal injuries); time lost due to RIDDOR reportable accidents; sub-contractor RIDDOR

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<sup>17</sup> "Concrete Targets CT2010", British Precast Concrete Federation, [www.concretetargets2010.org](http://www.concretetargets2010.org). Scheme contact: Colin Nessfield, [colin.nessfield@britishprecast.org](mailto:colin.nessfield@britishprecast.org), 0116 2536161  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

reportable accidents (whether reported by sub-contractor or not); and prosecutions and prohibition and improvement notices.

The scheme's objectives are zero accidents, zero injuries and zero lost time.

### **Insurance**

While membership of the scheme does not, of itself, confer any specific savings, the scheme contact notes that it "has been used by some members as evidence to insurers that they are responsibly handling OSH issues and some members have reported significant savings in insurance premiums as a result of this. (One member reported a £1m saving)."

### **Training**

BPCF does not provide any training itself, although it works with Proskills to help identify any training that is needed). It is also organising an Industry Safety day, probably in April 2010.

### **Auditing or assessment**

Scheme membership does not require auditing or assessment. Instead, "members sign a commitment and their performance is monitored, but members are not individually audited".

### **Permeation and potential**

Currently, there are 27 companies signed up to the scheme. The scheme contact believes that up to 20 more member companies could join the scheme, and there are an unknown number of small producers that are not BPCF members who could benefit from such a scheme. Of the current scheme membership, less than half are small, depending on "the definition of small, and what percentage of medium companies would be defined as small during the current downturn".

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The scheme contact reports that factors that have helped the scheme reach small firms are that it "is regularly reported to all member companies and has been widely reported throughout the industry".

Factors that have helped small firms to manage health and safety are best practice among all members, thereby helping small firms to assess different approaches to OSH problems. Safety alerts report problems that other members have encountered, with solutions reported to help other members develop. An OSH newsletter reports current issues, developments in standards, legislation etc. Members of BPCF receive free access to the Croners' service as part of their membership, allowing access to advice etc. Accident statistics, released every six months, allow members to benchmark their OSH performance against companies of various sizes, and to analyse the frequencies of accidents within similar production facilities, which allows them to target those areas most likely to produce accidents.

As evidence that the scheme has helped small firms, the scheme contact states that "all companies in the scheme have reduced accidents during the course of the scheme to date". (The first incarnation saw a combined reduction of 45% in accidents and lost time in four years to 2004.) According to the HSE: "The evidence is now unequivocal. Amongst the targeted schemes supported by HSE across the UK manufacturing sector, Concrete Targets scheme adherents are showing individually and collectively some of the best accident reduction figures and consequent savings in terms of less accidents, less visits from HSE, more opportunity to cut insurance costs, less production disruption,



more efficient production, less lost time days and improved employee engagement in business needs.”

### **Challenges**

With the current scheme almost reaching the end of its lifespan, the BPCF is developing its next five-year plan. Although the target of continually reducing accidents year on year been achieved, the BPCF advises “it is increasingly difficult to reduce accidents once all the ‘low hanging fruit’ has been tackled”. An ongoing challenge, it adds, is “a change in the attitudes” of people to OSH issues.

### **Sharing lessons**

The scheme contact states: “Other scheme operators are welcome to contact us to discuss the various benefits of the scheme. We already have close ties with the various schemes run by the organisations now covered by the Mineral Products Association and we are actively involved with the HSE revitalising network and C3harge.”

## **12. BRITISH PRINTING INDUSTRY FEDERATION**

### **– HEALTH AND SAFETY HEALTHCHECK**

The British Printing Industry Federation (BPIF) operates Health and Safety Healthcheck<sup>18</sup>, a dedicated OSH scheme that was instigated in 2002 by the federation's head of health and safety, and that began in 2003. It lists as active partners RK Harrison (an insurance broker) and the HSE. The scheme offers a "gap analysis" and was the first trade association scheme to be approved under the ABI's Making the Market Work initiative.

The main reason behind the instigation of the scheme was that the BPIF identified that while health and safety was a core discipline for any successful organisation, small to medium companies within the industry did not have the resources to manage this requirement.

The healthcheck is free to BPIF platinum members, £595 to gold and silver members, and £720 for non-members.

The annual Healthcheck covers 22 areas comprising a total of 146 questions on legislation, approved codes of practice (ACoPs) and best practice for the industry. The 22 areas are: general arrangements; management and communications; general training; fire; electricity; control of machinery and equipment hazards; mandatory equipment testing; transport/traffic routes; COSHH, solvents and flammable materials; skin care; personal protective equipment; noise; upper limb disorders; lifting and handling; working at height; signs and signals; first aid; health surveillance; offices/studios; storage; control of contractors and visitors; and special risk assessments. The answers to these questions generate a report that benchmarks the company against legislative requirements, ACoPs and industry good practice, and makes recommendations for action, with issues ranked for importance. Companies can score up to full marks for best practice and legal compliance, 75% for legal compliance only, and 50% for best practice only.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

In relation to pre-qualification when bidding for contracts, a printer can show the report at tender stage, but there is no formal recognition of the scheme by clients. The scheme contact also advises "the results of the assessment may not look attractive to the client, as the report is the way forward for the company".

The scheme covers seven of the SME "core criteria", although not as explicit core criteria. Healthcheck does not cover – either fully or partly: the need for the policy to be signed by a senior director; access to competent advice; individual qualifications and experience; accident reporting or enforcement issues; cooperation and coordination; and welfare provision.

#### **Priorities and targets**

Healthcheck's priorities are to raise awareness of the legislation that a company should be complying with and how to comply if there are any shortcomings. Healthcheck does not set targets.

#### **Insurance**

Healthcheck is recognised by RK Harrison, a broker, which is running an insurance scheme in partnership with the BPIF (underwritten by AXA insurance). Organisations

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<sup>18</sup> "Health and Safety Healthcheck", British Printing Industry Federation, no website details. Scheme contact: Simon Lunken, [simon.lunken@bpif.org.uk](mailto:simon.lunken@bpif.org.uk), 07957 564979  
RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

that obtain a score of 75% and above have obtained competitive insurance quotes from RK Harrison, with a view to “further reductions if the organisation can ‘tick the boxes’ on the insurer’s ‘trigger card’ that may be issued to the prospective client”. The Healthcheck contact advises that the annual check should allow companies to approach insurers with year-on-year improvements. Despite this, the BPIF believes few companies have secured reductions in premia.

### **Training**

Although the scheme does not offer any training, the BPIF adviser carrying out the healthcheck offers practical advice on non-compliance issues and may then discuss consultancy support, training and guidance with the employer in order to meet compliance.

### **Auditing or assessment**

The healthcheck is based purely on the answers given during the BPIF visit; no attempt is made to verify the answers given, and no assessment is made of the quality of the material. Nevertheless, the scheme contact carries out the workplace tour with the member prior to the formal assessment, which always offers some assurance on topic areas, for example, floor surfaces in good repair, walkways and fire exit routes free from obstruction. The only exception is where the healthcheck is part of a government-funded training contract, when essential items are audited. The training contract aspects include a risk banding that comprises scores for eight items. Approval requires a full score on item one (general arrangements – OSH policy; biennial review of the policy; identification of main risks; and arrangements for controlling main risks).

### **Permeation and potential**

The scheme currently has 976 platinum members. In all, the BPIF has 1,567 members, 65% of whom have fewer than 25 employees; the average company has 32 employees. The scheme contact believes that the majority of SMEs in the sector could benefit from the scheme, as they do not have the financial ability to employ an individual – whether part or full time – to manage their health and safety and who has print specific knowledge.

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

The scheme contact lists factors that have helped reach small firms as: awareness of the BPIF support (through proactive visits by the HSE advisers); undertaking health checks; the BPIF health and safety forums, which run biannually in each region; the employer’s insurer; and “at times driven by issues with the HSE”.

Features that the scheme contact believes have helped small firms manage OSH are: the healthcheck has allowed each organisation to ascertain its current position in relation to compliance with legislation appertaining to its working environment; and the back of the report ranks the outlying issues in priority order, allowing the organisation to prioritise and focus on its significant risk.

As evidence that Healthcheck has helped small firms, the BPIF cites testimonies from organisations that have used the service.

### **Challenges**

The scheme contact foresees no major challenges for the scheme, which works well as a “gap analysis” tool in relation to an organisation’s compliance and awareness, although he cautions that “it must not be confused with an audit process, as has happened occasionally”.

### **Sharing lessons**

In relation to sharing lessons, the scheme contact emphasises: the need to obtain the correct material needed to devise the tool, and the approach to successfully delivering the healthcheck.

## **13. BRITISH CERAMIC CONFEDERATION**

### **– CERAMIC INDUSTRY HEALTH AND SAFETY PLEDGE**

The Ceramic Industry Health and Safety Pledge is a dedicated OSH scheme run by the British Ceramic Confederation (BCC)<sup>19</sup>. The BCC instigated the scheme in response to the government and then HSC's *Revitalising health and safety initiative*; the pledge started in 2001. The partners that actively support the scheme are the BCC, HSE and the UNITE, GMB and UNITY trade unions.

The scheme contact advises that the pledge represents a major, sector-based OSH programme of work dedicated to continuous improvement in OSH involving the entire industry, ie the stakeholders above.

Participation in the scheme is included within the price of BCC membership, although seminars etc are charged separately.

#### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme contact advises that the scheme is useful “to a limited extent” for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts, although it “is not something we have made a virtue of, yet”. The scheme contact believes the pledge covers “virtually all” of the core criteria: “The scheme places demands on member companies and although the scheme is voluntary, compliance depends on those commitments and demands being fulfilled.”

#### **Priorities and targets**

The scheme's priority is “continuous improvement”. The targets are those set out in *Revitalising health and safety* (which the confederation advises were achieved in 2007), and, using 2007 as a base year reducing accident incidence by a further 30% by 2010.

#### **Insurance**

Members have used their commitment to the pledge to negotiate Employers Liability Insurance with insurance companies “with some success”. The scheme contact is not aware of members having secured reductions in other insurance premia.

#### **Training**

The BCC has developed a dedicated training package for middle management that is charged to cover costs. The BCC also provides advice on what existing courses are available and which are appropriate to different levels of responsibility.

#### **Auditing or assessment**

Members self-report on management actions and accident statistics.

#### **Permeation and Potential**

There are 150 scheme members. The scheme contact believes that this represents all of the companies that can benefit from the scheme. Of the scheme's membership, 15% are small firms. The BCC covers 98% of all people employed in the ceramic industry in the UK, and advises that although there are “a significant number of small companies not in membership ... they don't account for many employees”.

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<sup>19</sup> “Ceramic Industry Health and Safety Pledge”, British Ceramic Confederation, [www.ceramfed.co.uk](http://www.ceramfed.co.uk). Scheme contact: Francis Morrall, [francism@ceramfed.co.uk](mailto:francism@ceramfed.co.uk), 01782 572846. RoSPA NOSHC SME inquiry: 3<sup>rd</sup> report, sector initiatives, Howard Fidderman

### **Features that have helped reach, and assisted, small firms**

In terms of features that have helped the scheme reach small firms, the scheme contact states that all small companies in membership receive all the help that comes with the pledge, including newsletters, guidance, invitations to seminars and conferences.

Features that have helped small firms manage OSH are the development of tool kits on various aspects of OSH and one-on-one coaching. The pledge web pages offer toolkits for slips and trips, sprains and strains, and workplace transport.

The scheme contact cites “vast improvement in accident incidence reduction” as evidence that the scheme has helped small firms.

### **Challenges**

The main challenge that the scheme contact foresees is “Making health and safety instinctive and part and parcel of people’s thinking”.

### **Sharing lessons**

The main lesson is that, “managed properly, schemes such as the pledge can generate a real collective impetus within a sector and a pride in company and sector achievements. The pledge is a rallying call that companies can relate to.”

## **14. MINERAL PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (MPA)**

### **– MPA HARD TARGET 2009**

The MPA Hard Target 2009 is a dedicated OSH scheme that is operated by the Mineral Products Association (MPA)<sup>20</sup>. The scheme was instigated by the Quarry Products Association (one of the forerunners of the MPA) and started in 1999, with a second phase in 2004 and a third phase to start on 1 January 2010. The scheme contact advises that the first scheme was instigated because “historically, in OSH terms, ‘quarrying’ was a very poor performer”. MPA Hard Target 2009 (and previous incarnations) is the MPA’s response to the HSE’s Hard Target initiative; they are separate but linked initiatives. The third phase – MPA Hard Target 2014 will exist in parallel to the HSE Quarries Joint National Advisory Committee’s Target Zero initiative.

The partners actively supporting the scheme are all MPA members with operations in Britain.

Participation in the scheme is included within the price of membership.

In terms of proactive advice, the scheme contact cites “reporting and steerage by the MPA health and safety committee, which canvasses opinions and periodically issues guidance proactively and reactively.”

The MPA also operates Safequarry.com, which is open to all, provides advice on best practice, incident alerts, hot topics and guidance, toolbox talks and continuing professional development. Also included is a major new “Safer by Design” section that encourages users of mobile plant voluntarily to include “best practice” aspects of OSH when specifying new or re-engineered mobile plant. (The MPA emphasises that, in parallel to “Safety by Design”, it supports, actively, the further development of technical OSH standards.)

### **Core criteria and pre-qualification criteria**

The scheme contact advises that it is “not known” whether the scheme is useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts.

In terms of core criteria, the MPA OSH scheme is mandatory and is equally applicable to all members with operations in Britain. The scheme contact advises that extent of the mandatory scheme “is limited to the submission of a wide range of corporate OSH ‘raw’ data’, [which] is supplemented, from time to time, by additional mandatory requirements, for example a recent MPA board approved request for SHE NVQ data at levels 3,4 and 5.”

### **Priorities and targets**

In addition to the specific injury reduction target below, the scheme’s priorities are: an “overarching expectation of zero injuries; to highlight best performing companies and product sectors as exemplars; and to broker assistance to poor performing companies from within the MPA membership.

The first scheme required a 50% reduction in RIDDOR-reportable injuries within five years from a 1999 calendar year baseline; the 2004 scheme required a similar reduction by 31 December 2009 against a 2004 baseline of 288 injuries recorded by all MPA members. The MPA advises that it is currently on target for a 55% reduction.

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<sup>20</sup> “MPA Hard Target 2009”, Mineral Products Association, [www.mineralproducts.org/article01.htm](http://www.mineralproducts.org/article01.htm); MPA-led website: [www.Safequarry.com](http://www.Safequarry.com). Scheme contact: Martin Isles, [martin.isles@mineralproducts.org](mailto:martin.isles@mineralproducts.org), 020 7963 8000.

There was a 52% decrease in incidence between 2000 and 2005 for the surface extractive industry as a whole, and the MPA's annual health and safety awards on 6 October 2009 noted an 80% reduction in the previous 10 years among MPA members.

HSE data shows that, in 1997, the sector had a reportable injury rate that was four times that of the construction sector; by 2001, the QPA Quarrying scheme had reduced the gap to twice the rate and, by the end of 2004 to an equivalent level, since when its year-on-year performance has bettered that of construction. The scheme contact adds that the MPA's own statistics prove that the average MPA OSH performance in "quarrying" is "significantly better than the average performance for the whole HSE Quarries sector".

The scheme contact believes that, "morally and professionally, 'zero' is the only target that can be acceptable, though for some, the mindset still regards 'zero' as merely aspirational." He adds that "only *interim* targets should have a 'year' attached to them; overarching 'zero' targets are 'now'", although interim annual targets can be more acceptable to some SME companies than absolute zero.

The MPA adds that the "combined effect of so many companies applying themselves to safety improvements has yielded a wealth of innovation from changes to the physical working environment to the development of a health and safety culture. Best practice is shared between members and non-members and the ongoing challenges are discussed at the MPA health and safety committee."

### **Insurance**

Scheme affiliation does not offer insurance benefits at the moment, but the MPA will be pursuing this issue.

### **Training**

The scheme offers free MPA regional seminars on topical OSH issues.

### **Auditing or assessment**

Scheme membership does not require auditing or assessment. "Scheme reporting," advises the scheme contact, "is based on trust. Peer involvement alerts the MPA to any potential 'anomalies'. The expert individual who collects, collates and charts the data has eight years' experience of this work for QPA/MPA and has a highly developed ability to spot and redress anomalies."

### **Permeation and potential**

MPA Hard Target 2009 has 80 producers and/or processors of mineral products; the HSE estimates these account for approximately 40% of the number of companies in the "quarrying" sector (ie surface mineral extraction in the UK). Not all of the remaining 60% would benefit from the scheme, however, as some fall outside the scope of the MPA, for example those involved in coal, clay and slate. (The MPA also accounts for 100% of UK cement producers; 95% of asphalt and ready-mixed concrete producers, and also has in membership producers of slag, lime, mortar, industrial sands and silica sands; recycling and contract surfacing activities are also within the scope of MPA activities.) Approximately 62% of member companies have fewer than 100 direct employees, while 7.5% have more than 1,000 employees (six multi-nationals, which account for approximately 85% of GB quarrying output.)

### **Features that have helped reach small firms**

The scheme contact advises that the features that have helped reach small firms are communications via MPA's regional structure (five English regions, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland). It is not feasible, however, to produce MPA regional OSH statistics as



each multinational member company has differing reporting boundaries, none of which are coincident with MPA regional boundaries.

Scheme features that been successful in helping small firms to manage OSH issues are: product-by-product OSH statistical “league tables”; succinct, illustrated brief guidance that is professionally produced; the distribution of annual hard copies of “Sharing good practice” OSH guides, with contact details for every item of OSH good and best practice (all content is also on [www.Safequarry.com](http://www.Safequarry.com)); and annual MPA OSH awards scheme, which includes one trophy restricted to SME entrants.

The MPA cites “improved OSH statistical performance in specific product areas” as evidence of how the scheme has helped small firms.

### **Challenges**

The main challenges that the scheme contact foresees are: the “low hanging fruit” has been picked; the need to focus on lost time incidents, as RIDDOR-related numbers are dwindling; the need to focus on long-latency illnesses; the need to focus on gaining and maintaining competence via NVQs/QCFs, plus accredited CPD schemes; and the need to convince CEOs of all companies that “zero harm is achievable”.

### **Sharing lessons**

The scheme contact would share the following lessons with scheme operators in other sectors: collect OSH statistics on a mandatory basis; produce “league tables” from OSH data; and broker assistance from other members.

### APPENDICE 3: QUESTIONNAIRE AND ACCOMPANYING LETTER

Name of scheme or other initiative
Scheme operator
Scheme website:
Scheme contact:
Email contact:
Tel contact:
When did the scheme start?
What partners are actively involved in supporting the scheme?
Is the scheme a dedicated health and safety scheme, or part of a wider initiative?
Summary of scheme:
Is participation in the scheme free, priced or included in the price of organisation membership?
Does the scheme provide proactive advice?
How many organisations are members of, or are affiliated to, your scheme?
What is the number of organisations in your sector that you believe could benefit from your scheme?
What percentage of the scheme's membership are small firms?
What features have helped the scheme to reach small firms?
What features of your scheme have been successful in helping small firms to manage health and safety issues?
What evidence do you have of how the scheme has helped small firms?
Which person or organisation instigated the scheme?
Why was the scheme instigated?
What are the scheme's priorities?
What are the main challenges you foresee for the scheme?
Is the scheme useful for pre-qualification purposes when bidding for contracts?"?
Does the scheme include any SME "core criteria" that members need to satisfy? (These cover: policy and responsibilities; arrangements for ensuring health and safety measures; ready access to competent advice; training and information arrangements; individual qualifications and experience; monitoring, audit and review; workforce and involvement; accident reporting, enforcement and investigation; arrangements for sub-contractors and consultants; risk assessment; cooperation and coordination; and welfare provision.)
What insurance benefits does scheme affiliation offer?
What training does the scheme offer? Please indicate if any of this training is free or discounted?
Does scheme membership require auditing or assessment? If so, does this take place on site?
What lessons would you share from your scheme with scheme operators in other sectors?
Does the scheme include any targets? Please specify.
Are there any other comments you would like to make?