

National Occupational Safety and Health Committee (NOSHC)

Thursday 23rd June 2016

ENA update

Electricity industry Powering Improvement (PI) strategy

** Working with Contractors 2015*

The new five year phase of the Powering Improvement initiative was launched in 2015. The strategy brings industry, trade unions and the HSE together to improve health and safety performance in the electricity sector. Work progressed last year with the theme of working in partnership with contractors and culminated in the publication of an Annual Review and a SHE Review outlining a number of contractor case studies and industry partnerships and alliances; this was issued at the annual ENA SHE Management Conference in May 2016.

** Powering Improvement 2016*

A Delivery Plan for the 2016 theme on 'Managing Occupational Health Risks' has been published following input from all three major occupational health forums within the industry; the ENA Occupational Health Committee, the Energy UK Occupational Health Forum and the Occupational Health Advisory Group, to establish the key health issues to be addressed. Work will be carried out in support of the Outcomes and Outputs, which will focus on core occupational health activities including health surveillance and fitness to work, and mental health and stress related issues. This will build on the good work initially carried out in this area in 2011 and help ensure that the vital matter of the health of workers remains high on the agenda within the industry.

As champion for PI 2016, Geoff Earl (Director Health and Safety, Northern Powergrid) and the ENA Occupational Health Committee have produced a leaflet for 2016 PI that outlines the aims of this year's theme and highlights the individual company initiatives that align with the principles of PI. The publication also pays compliment to the sponsors of PI's annual theme from members of the Occupational Health Committee; this is to ensure that as the leaflets are disseminated within the

companies it will not only aid employees' engagement and understanding of PI but will also help the workforce understand who the sponsors are within the companies and their company initiatives that are aligned with PI.

** Asset Management*

A number of asset management and corporate memory workshops also continue to be held within member companies as this remains a core risk for the industry. Recent events have been held at Scottish Power and ESB Networks (Ireland). The workshops are based around incidents and case studies from within the industry to help ensure lessons from past incidents are reinforced and not forgotten.

** Contractor project*

A joint collaboration project with the International Social Security Association (ISSA) Electricity Section is looking at developing guidance on the challenges of company/contractor relationships and joint working arrangements. The aim is to provide advice from both a client and contractor perspective on issues that are common across all businesses, supported by principles of good practice drawn from successful projects in various sectors.

Working with HSE

Powering Improvement supports the new GB for the Health & Safety System, 'Helping Great Britain Work Well'. The PI initiative has been included as a case study within the strategy as an example of the 'Acting Together' theme, and the full article is available on the PI web site. Following the launch of the new strategy it is now expected that an Occupational Health Strategy will be published and that the individual Sector Strategies (including electricity) will be revisited and refreshed.

SHE Management Conference

The 2016 ENA SHE Management Conference was hosted by Northern Ireland Electricity in Belfast on 11-13th May 2016. The programme featured sessions on health, environment, road risk and leadership/culture, including a presentation from Karen McDonnell on the IOSH Competency Management System.

All of the conference presentations are available via the ENA web site:

<http://www.energynetworks.org/events/she-conference/she-conference-2016/she-management-conference-2016.html>

Electromagnetic Fields (EMF)

In June 2013 the European Commission published Directive 2013/35/EU on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from electromagnetic fields.

When the EU Directive is brought into force in the UK (1st July 2016) via the Control of Electromagnetic Field at Work Regulations 2016, employers will be obliged to demonstrate compliance via Risk Assessment. In the case of the UK's transmission and distribution companies the EMF Strategy Committee are in the process of developing a generic National Risk Assessment to be used by all businesses, and this will be made available via the EMF web site. This document will also address any particular issues arising from generation companies via liaison with Energy UK. The Risk Assessment essentially details how to assess exposure levels for both employees and members of the public and the control measures required if the action levels are exceeded. There will also be a need to raise awareness of the new requirements and carry out induction and refresher training of staff where necessary.

Working at Height (WaH)

An ENA Work at Height Task Force continues to review existing industry WaH working practices following advice from HSE and in light of reported incidents in the industry over the last few years. The group is developing a new high level guidance document on various different assets within electricity networks (i.e. towers, wood poles, substations, plant and other structures). The group envisage that this new proposed document will supersede an existing ENA guidance.

Public Safety

The industry has agreed priorities and commitments for 2016 via the ENA Public Safety Committee and also aims to review the public safety online content of the ENA website. This will include promotion of the use of the new Single Emergency Number (105) for public safety issues and concerns when it is officially launched later in the year.

The Committee is seeking the release by HSE of ESQCR public safety data and trends to help shape the work and priorities of the Committee going forward.

The group also continues to support events and organisations around the UK with electricity safety message campaigns, particularly in the agricultural and education sectors.

Utility strikes

ENA continues to facilitate the Steering Group which oversees the work of the Utility Strike Avoidance Group (USAG) through a number of Working Groups. The Steering Group now benefits from further telecoms and asset owner representation. USAG is considering alternative governance arrangements including funding from its members.

In the meantime USAG will continue to pursue opportunities to raise awareness of safe working practices. This includes the development and publication of a 2014 Strike Data Report to build on the inaugural 2013 Report, and alignment of company training programmes with the EU Skills module. Greater use of communication tools including the dedicated web site (<http://www.utilitystrikeavoidancegroup.org>) and publications is also planned.