

July 2007

- Insurance and insurers have made the news recently in connection with the floods in the UK. Insurance can be vital in helping our society to recover from a catastrophe. Catastrophes can be large or relatively small in scale and good risk management and preparedness can be the difference between the success and the failure of a business should disaster strike. Insurers are increasingly proactive in helping policyholders to assess and manage workplace risks. Much of the advice is now on-line can be accessed free of charge. Ask your insurer, broker or adviser what they can do to help you.
- The HSE provides lots of helpful guidance too. Have you looked at their industry or issue specific pages? Some topical areas include: construction, workplace transport, noise and falls from vehicles (too often a needless cause of injury or fatality) - see www.hse.gov.uk/fallsfromvehicles
- Signs and symbols – are vital in helping people to be aware of dangers. Are your signs up-to-date and in the right places, have you forgotten signs or symbols which would help visitors or employees using your premises or equipment to remain safe? Some helpful vehicle related signage information is available from www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport
- Overseas travel – increasingly holiday companies and airlines are providing guidance for travellers but many employers neglect to give appropriate guidance or support to their employees who travel on business. As a minimum, always ensure that your employees are properly prepared, that insurance is in place and a 24 hours emergency contact is given to the traveller (one is usually supplied by the insurer). The website www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo provides lots of helpful advice. Specialist advice should be sought if your employees travel to an area of unrest or where personal safety is a particular issue.
- Useful publications – another publication some of our members have found helpful in assessing and managing workplace risks is Strategic Risk magazine – see www.strategicrisk.co.uk. Don't forget that the HSE produces many free leaflets – see www.hse.gov.uk/pubns
- GOSHA site visit – one of the great ways to learn about the practical implementation of good health and safety practices is to visit a large construction site. We were very fortunate to be invited by Ian Whattam of R G Falla to visit the Les Nicolles School development. Around 20 members had an induction briefing followed by a tour of the site. We saw the value of good preparation, of having the correct equipment for the job and using it correctly, the value of all staff being involved, the benefit of detailed planning and accountability and the positive effect of making sure every person on site takes responsibility for themselves and others, from initial induction to the compilation of written safety assessments by all site workers. We saw lots of potential dangers and it was reassuring to see how these are professionally identified, managed and audited. You could readily see that much additional time and expenditure had been spent by site management to ensure the safety of site workers and visitors – they emphasised that the effort and cost had been worthwhile, especially when measured against the potential cost, in its widest sense, associated with a site accident.

Platform stepladders are just one of many examples on this site of how additional initial cost spent on the right equipment can ultimately make the job quicker, easier and safer to complete – an example which many others could follow.



Before we could enter the site there was a full classroom induction



Our thanks to Ian and the R G Falla team for giving up their evening for the benefit of GOSHA members.

If you would like more information on any of these topics, please contact us via www.gosha.org.uk or telephone the Guernsey HSE Team on 234567.

Our next meetings:

- 10 September – GOSHA committee meeting
- 20 September – Open meeting at La Trelade Hotel on slips, trips and falls (one of the most common causes of reportable accidents in Guernsey)

GOSHA Committee