

Partnership on Health And Safety in Scotland

WIDER ENGAGEMENT - COMMUNICATIONS

Issue

1 It was agreed at the last meeting to seek support from Scottish Ministers, and heads of PHASS members' organisations, and to raise the Partnership's profile within Trade Unions.

Recommendations

- 2 That the committee:
- notes the letter to Jim Mather MSP, Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism which asks for his sponsorship of a health and safety event at the Scottish Parliament (Annex 1)
 - comments on the draft letter to heads of PHASS organisations and suggests additional names for the list of recipients (Annex 2)
 - notes the article intended for Trade Union publications produced by Linda Shanahan (Annex 3)

Action

- 3 To discuss and agree, as above.

August 2007

ANNEX 1

Jim Mather MSP
Minister for Enterprise, Energy and Tourism
Meridian Court
5 Cadogan Street
GLASGOW
G2 6AT
2007

August

Dear Mr Mather

PARTNERSHIP ON HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SCOTLAND

I am writing to introduce myself as Chair of the Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland. I have been appointed by the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) to replace Margaret Burns whose term of office as Commissioner and Chair recently came to an end.

HSC would very much welcome the continued support of the Scottish Government in promoting its work to deliver HSC's strategy in Scotland and the Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety. HSC sees sensible workplace risk management as a prerequisite for economic success and the workplace as an important setting for improving the health of the nation overall. I would therefore be interested to know if it is intended to designate Ministerial responsibility for co-ordinating health and safety in Scotland and who we might regard as the lead contact for matters connected to HSC/E's work.

The Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland was set up by HSC in 2005 with the support of Scottish and UK Ministers.

Current representation, which includes the Scottish Executive, is at Annex 1. In essence, the Partnership co-ordinates devolved and reserved interests to deliver higher standards of workplace health and safety in Scotland. We also promote the contribution that good health and safety management makes to broader societal benefit and economic success. Indeed, the proposed National Economic Forum might benefit from an input on health and safety and risk management at the appropriate time.

Devolved matters such as public health policy, support for enterprise, and the administration of justice are clearly related to reserved workplace health and safety policy. The need to manage related policies in a more integrated way was recognised earlier this year by the development of the Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety. Its implementation will require action by reserved and devolved public services as well as business organisations, trade unions and health and safety professionals. The Partnership remains committed to overseeing work on the Action Plan as well as taking on specific action points itself.

Joint working is not new, however. The Scottish Executive and the Health and Safety Executive have collaborated on a range of initiatives as described by health and safety Minister Lord McKenzie in his recent letter to Shona Robison copied to you. He has emphasised the mutual interest we have in taking forward the Health, Work and Well-being agenda, for example. Scotland is well placed to do this having

set up the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives some time ago; Steve Bell, the Director is also represented on the Partnership.

Considering the scope of this work, HSE and the Scottish Executive officials have agreed to strengthen co-ordination of policy and delivery. Initially, this will take the form of a secondment from HSE in Scotland into the Scottish Executive Enterprise and Industry Division.

I believe that all this demonstrates we are now moving into a new phase of engagement between all stakeholders who can help both governments exert a positive influence on Scotland's future. HSC/E together with the Partnership would very much like to meet new Scottish Parliamentarians about the action being taken to improve health and safety. We would also want to involve key stakeholders in that process. To meet this aim, I would be very grateful if you or the appropriate Minister would consider sponsoring a reception at the Scottish Parliament later this year.

If you agree, I would be very pleased to meet you to discuss how you would like to be involved in the Partnership's work and in taking forward the Scottish Action Plan.

I am copying this letter to Shona Robison for the link with health policy, and to Lord McKenzie.

Yours sincerely

Danny Carrigan

HSC member and Chair, Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland

cc Shona Robinson MSP, Minister for Public Health
Lord McKenzie of Luton, Parliamentary under Secretary of State

ANNEX 2

Draft letter to:

**CBI SCOTLAND CHIEF EXEC
FSB SCOTLAND CHIEF EXEC
LA CHIEF EXECUTIVES
POOSH SCOTLAND ORGANISATIONS' PRESIDENTS
TRADE UNION SCOTTISH SECRETARIES
SCOTTISH CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE**

From Danny Carrigan

Dear

PARTNERSHIP ON HEALTH AND SAFETY IN SCOTLAND

I am writing to raise awareness of developments to co-ordinate action on workplace health and safety in Scotland and to ask for your organisation's support in participating and promoting this work.

First, let me introduce myself as Chair of the Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland. I have been appointed by the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) of which I am also a member.

Scotland saw 31 workers lose their lives last year, and a further five members of the public die in incidents arising from work activity. Overall, 3.5 million working days were lost as a result of work-related injury and disease.

HSC believes that sensible management of health and safety risks is the way to reduce this toll. But more than that, we see good health and safety performance as a prerequisite for economic success, and the workplace as an important setting for improving Scotland's health overall. Although health and safety legislation is reserved to Westminster, devolved matters such as public health policy, support for enterprise, local authority resources and the administration of justice are clearly related to reserved workplace health and safety policy.

The Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland was set up by HSC in 2005 with the support of Scottish and UK Ministers. Current representation is at Annex 1. I am very grateful for the [organisation's] continuing support through [name].

In essence, the Partnership co-ordinates devolved and reserved interests to deliver higher standards of workplace health and safety in Scotland. We also promote the contribution that good health and safety management makes to broader societal benefit and economic success. Indeed, the National Economic Forum recently announced by Scottish Ministers might benefit from input on health and safety and risk management at the appropriate time.

The need to manage related policies in a more integrated way was recognised earlier this year by the publication of a Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety. Its implementation will require action by reserved and devolved public services as well as business organisations, trade unions and health and safety professionals. The Partnership remains committed to overseeing work on the Action Plan as well as taking on specific action points itself.

I believe that all this demonstrates we are now moving into a new phase of engagement between all stakeholders who can help the Health and Safety Commission deliver its strategy in the context of Scotland's needs. HSC together

with the Partnership would very much like to engage a broader range of interests in finding new routes and mechanisms for delivering action on health and safety.

I attach the Partnership's forward action plan for your interest (Annex 2). I would be very grateful for your consideration of support on specific initiatives, as well as more generally on bringing health and safety on to Scotland's mainstream agenda.

Yours sincerely

ANNEX 3

Article for trade union publications

New Health and Safety plans for Scotland

Scotland is not generally regarded as a dangerous place to work. Yet, the rate of fatal injury in Scotland in 2006/07 was 0.9 per 100,000 employees compared to 0.7 for the UK as a whole and in 2005/06 (the latest available) rate of combined fatal and major injuries in Scotland were also higher than for the rest of the UK.

There is evidence to show that country and regional rates are strongly influenced by differences in the composition of employment, for example, the mix of industries and occupations,

Nevertheless, the most recent figures published by HSE show that between April 2006 and March 2007, 31 workers lost their lives in work related incidents. By industry, 10 were in construction, seven in the agricultural sector, seven in services, four in the extraction and utility supply sector and three in manufacturing. A further five members of the public died in accidents reported to HSE or local authorities.

In recent years Scotland has witnessed two horrific tragedies that resulted in multiple fatalities, the Rosepark Nursing Home in January 2004 that claimed 14 lives and, less than four months later, an explosion at the ICL Stockline plastics factors resulted in a further nine deaths.

The STUC and affiliated organisations called for the last Scottish Executive to implement a number of initiatives aimed at addressing the serious concerns of Scottish workers, building on the work of services such as Safe and Healthy Working.

Although health and safety law is reserved to Westminster the Partnership on Health and Safety in Scotland (PHASS) was formed with the explicit aim of giving "a clear focus for health and safety in Scotland, to enhance delivery through better integrated intelligence, and offer a mechanism to co-ordinate partnership action and improve communication in line with HSC/E's strategy."

The STUC which has three trade union delegates to PHASS has been key in taking forward its aims, Ian Tasker, Health and Safety Officer at the STUC, Harry Frew from UCATT and Linda Shanahan from the FBU. Other representatives include CBI, FSB, local authorities, the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives, POOSH Scotland (professional organisations in occupational safety and health) HSC, HSE and the Scottish Executive.

In March of this year the Scottish Executive published The Scottish Action Plan on Health and Safety along with £1.2 million to support its implementation. PHASS partners were heavily involved in the development of the Action Plan and gave a commitment to play a leading role in co-ordinating implementation of specific action relevant to its remit. This includes:

- Improving the evidence base in Scotland to better inform future action
- Improving advice, support and training
- Business to business support
- Worker involvement through STUC Worker Safety Advisers' scheme
- Removing barriers to equal protection for migrant workers

- Children and young workers
- Public sector role
- Health and sickness absence management in the Health Service
- Procurement activity
- Better Regulation
- Protecting workers who serve the public

The trade union movement has long been actively involved in promoting good health and safety and it is particularly pleasing that the plan will build on the work that has already been done to promote worker involvement in health and safety decision-making in the workplace. Evidence supports the positive impact of trade union representation on health and safety performance.

Trade unions, their members and their representatives value the health, safety and welfare of Scottish workers. Through our role on the Partnership and in delivering the Scottish Action Plan it is now time to bring real change to prevailing attitudes in the workplace towards health and safety.

More information on the Action Plan and PHASS can be found on:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/173320/0048375.pdf

www.hse.gov.uk/scotland/