

Issues for an ageing workforce



Forum Development Worker, Jane Howie, recently attended a workshop about Older Workers and has written this article to coincide with Older People's Week, which is 26th Sept – 1st October.

Many older workers participated in the workshop, one major concern that was discussed was about regarding older workers as not being physically able to undertake the demands that are made upon them by employers, especially employers who have ever increasing 'lean' practices who are putting all workers under a lot of pressure. Indeed people discussed colleagues, who had been sacked on grounds of capabilities.

Discussion turned to good practices and the advantages employers receive from older workers. Any decline in strength (although strength is more dependent on an individual's capacity than on their age) is offset by better judgment of the older worker. There was a strong feeling that a workability approach should be taken by employers and that they should make work fit the worker not the worker fit the work and that such interventions are beneficial to all workers.

Some of the myths around employing older workers included the inability to adapt to change, they find it harder to learn, they take more time off work through sickness and they have more accidents. The facts tell another story: older workers can adapt to change, they can learn new skills, they don't tend to take as many short sickness absences from work and in general younger workers often have more accidents due to lack of experience.

The employer has a number of duties under health and safety legislation to comply with including; a general duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of ALL employees and a duty to carry out a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, evaluating the risks which might arise due to ageing. There may also be a need to review the Health and Safety policy to make sure that there are no ageist assumptions within it. Outside of Health and Safety legislation, the Equality Act 2010 needs to be considered.

While it can be seen that older workers may need consideration on their health, safety and welfare in the workplace, where the safety culture is inclusive to all the workplace, there should be very little need to increase resources towards them in particular. Those employers who are already not complying with basic health and safety provision have the greatest potential to cause harm in an ageing workforce.

It is estimated that people aged 50 or over will represent 30% of the workforce by 2020.

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European Health and Safety Week event in Bradford

27th October 2011

Healthy Workplaces

Enterprise Europe Network in Yorkshire are organising an event together with the Bradford Area Occupational Health & Safety Forum (BAOHSF) for European Health and Safety week that will take place on Thursday 27th October (a.m) in the Council Chambers at Bradford City Hall.

It will be just one of hundreds of events taking place across the EU, as part of a 2-year campaign coordinated by the European Agency for Health & Safety at Work and will follow a similar event which we

The Forum is looking for sponsors for its seminars, Please let us know if your company is interested.

organised in the city last year, which was attended by nearly 80 delegates.

The theme of the European campaign is “Healthy Workplaces”, with a particular emphasis on safe maintenance.

Having looked at various aspects of maintenance last year, we’ve decided in Bradford to focus this year on the areas of transport / logistics and manual handling.

As well as a speaker from the HSE, we have some speakers from locally-based companies and have asked Morrisons to take part.

We also have Julian Franklin as a key note speaker from the HSE to introduce the Healthy Workplaces theme and cover the work related road safety.

Jane Senn from Bradford Social Services is to cover manual handling in nursing homes, and Mark Martin from UCATT will be speaking about Construction Industry and transport issues.

We are aiming for an audience of a similar size as last year, which will probably be made up of managers, health & safety representatives and business support organisations.

Other speakers are being invited from the NHS and the construction industry.

Full details can be found on our website. See <http://baohsf.org.uk/events.html>



Agency Workers Directive

The Agency Workers Directive will be implemented in the UK on 1 October 2011 through the Agency Workers Regulations 2010. The purpose of the Directive is to provide temporary agency workers with equal treatment in terms of basic working and employment conditions as if they had been employed directly to do the same job. The implementation of the Directive will have major implications on the costs and use of agency workers for local authorities.

Implementation and main provisions

The Agency Workers Regulations that will implement the Directive were published on 20 January 2010 and are due to come into force on 1 October 2011. A report on the Regulations is in Advisory Bulletin 561.

Equal treatment under the Directive as reflected in the Regulations relates to basic working and employment conditions, those being: pay; working hours; overtime; breaks; rest periods; holidays; and access to training and collective facilities, such as childcare. Equal treatment does not include pension provision and occupational sick pay, nor will the Regulations change the employment status of temporary agency workers.

An important feature of the Directive is that it allows for implementation in accordance with the agreement reached on 20 May 2008 between the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress, which provides that equal treatment for the majority of the rights will not be required until the agency worker has worked in the relevant role for 12 weeks.



The Agency Workers Regulations will give equal treatment on:

- Pay
- Overtime rates
- Premiums
- Holidays
- Access to facilities etc





Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum

Sponsorship, Speaker and Exhibition

Please let us know if your organisation is willing to sponsor one of the Forum's exhibitions.

Sponsorship Benefits

1. BAOHSF has over 1000 local employers on its database and these represent the occupational health and safety of tens of thousands of workers in the Bradford area and beyond.
2. Sponsors will have exposure to these members and will be able to help raise awareness about good occupational health and safety practices in the workplace.
3. Sponsors will have the opportunity to make a presentation at the seminar on a relevant theme of approximately 20 – 30 minutes (please note guideline 1 below).
4. Sponsors will have the provision of free exhibition space at the seminar (up to 3

x 1m) and be able to provide literature to each participant.

5. Sponsors will have their logo attached to the publicity for the seminar and will be highlighted in the Well @ Work newsletter either before or after the seminar.
6. The Chair of the Forum will formally acknowledge and thank sponsors at the seminar.
7. Electronic copies of the presentations given and the newsletters will be posted on the Forum website www.baohsf.org.uk

A sponsorship fee of £500 is paid to BAOHSF per seminar event (if two companies wish to joint sponsor a seminar £350 each – only applicable if there are two willing sponsors).

Contact Jane at jane@baohsf.org.uk or ring 01274 393949 if you wish to sponsor, exhibit or speak at a future seminar.



Health, Work and Wellbeing

Bradford Area Occupational Health and Safety Forum:

- Has a membership of 1000 local employers and influences the occupational health and safety of tens of thousands of workers in the Bradford District through our seminars and newsletter.
- Has a local health and safety strategy 2011-2014 with 5 programmes to reduce occupational ill health in the Bradford district. Including early intervention, reasonable adjustments, rehabilitation, the Fit for Work agenda and promoting a healthy work environment as a source of better health.
- BAOHSF has been recognised nationally and has received seven national awards for its work. These include an award for having the best membership and recruitment, best communications strategy and holding the best seminar out of all Safety Groups in the UK.
- BAOHSF works closely with the Health and Safety Executive and Bradford Environmental Protection, representatives of which sit on the Working Group. Targeted Inspections in Bradford in 2010 in many ways confirmed our hopes that most of the larger organizations had good standards of Health and



Safety management. However issues arose with smaller businesses with little resources to invest in Health and Safety reinforcing the fact that these are the businesses requiring help, guidance and further input from us.

- The estimated economic cost of occupational health and safety incidents to Bradford is between £86 and £132 million. (HSE 2009)
- The estimated costs for work related accidents in Bradford is between £2million and £3.6 million a year. (HSE 2009).

- The economic crisis will impact on occupational health and safety in the District. In the next few years we will see employers and employees facing increasing financial pressures and a 35% reduction in the budget of the Health and Safety Executive will not go unnoticed.

BAOHSF has received modest (less than £25,000 p/a 2010) funding variously from the NHS or Local Authority since its inception in 1994.

This year the PCT Board in the face of extremely tight public funding settlements decided that BAOHSF would not be commissioned by the NHS after the end of March 2011.

The forum working group is a district wide partnership bringing together employers, trades unions, enforcement agencies, health professionals and the voluntary sector which may prove difficult to rebuild if it were to cease to exist.

BAOHSF

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WHAT

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