

LEADING ISSUES

1. Behavioural change and worker engagement

Improvements in working conditions have come about through step changes in approach, first by addressing technical issues (eg SWL indicators for cranes), and then through management systems (eg risk assessment, etc). Leading organisations are increasingly realising that the next step change can be made through behavioural change in how, as an organisation, it works internally and with others.

Behavioural and cultural change programmes are normally tailored to the needs of particular organisations but some advice has general application.

Sources of advice include:

Constructing Excellence: <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/>

Investors in People (IiP): <http://www.iipuk.co.uk>

Office of Government Commerce (OGC) – Achieving Excellence in Procurement Guide 10: Health and Safety www.ogc.gsi.gov.uk/sdtoolkit/reference/achieving/ae10.pdf

Examples of behavioural change programmes include:

- Bovis Lend Lease: http://www.bovis.com/llweb/bl/main.nsf/all/au_healthcommitment/opendocument
- The Engineering Construction Industry Association's 'BEST' programme: <http://www.ecia.co.uk/hse/BEST+pages/BEST+pages.htm>
- The Electrical Contractors Association's ZAP initiative: <http://www.eca.co.uk/>

Worker engagement

A key step in bringing about behavioural and cultural change turns on the way employers and others engage and consult with the people they manage. The means will vary according to the nature of the business. In small businesses, opportunities for direct engagement between managers and workers are greater than in larger organisations where more formal systems are usually required.

The Health and Safety Commission's Construction Industry Advisory Committee (CONIAC) has published a statement of principle on worker engagement and examples of good practice. Go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/index.htm>

General information on good working practices can also be found at the Trades Union Congress website (TUC). Go to <http://www.tuc.org.uk>

Information aimed at specific sectors can be found at:

The Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) site: go to <http://www.ucatt.org.uk>

Amicus (manufacturing): go to <http://www.amicustheunion.org>

The Transport and General Workers Union (T&G): go to <http://tgwu.org.uk> and

Britain's General Union (GMB) <http://www.gmb.org.uk>

Trade unions and employers' organisations have jointly made successful bids to the Worker Safety Adviser (WSA) Challenge Fund to promote health and safety awareness initiatives. For more information on WSA go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/involvement/wsachallenge.htm>

2. Occupational health and rehabilitation

Safety issues have been the focus of attention over an extended period; the focus should now also be turned to health issues. The occupational health (OH) record of the industry is poor with many suffering from musculo-skeletal, dermatological and respiratory injuries as well as hearing loss and the extended legacy of poor health and death, due to exposure to asbestos. The rehabilitation cost to UK is currently running at £7.1bn (per annum).

The industry is currently trialling an OH support scheme for the construction industry, 'Constructing Better Health'. There is a website, helpline and newsletter. The pilot provides free and confidential advice to owners, employees (as well as self-employed workers), designers and clients of small and medium building companies based in Leicestershire. The pilot scheme will run until 2007, after which it is hoped the scheme will be adopted nationally. For more information go to <http://www.fitbuilder.com>

Some businesses have put in place their own successful OH strategies. These include:

- Carillion: http://www.carillionplc.com/sustain/pol_6.htm
- Stanhope: <http://www.stanhopeplc.com>

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation can significantly reduce the consequences of injuries and ill health by returning people more quickly to the workplace, so directly benefiting the injured and the industry. Information about rehabilitation can be found at <http://www.dfwp.gov.uk/publications/vrframework/>

3. Design

Many designers readily acknowledge the positive contributions they can make towards improving working conditions by reducing the risks to which people are exposed throughout the lifetime of the built environments they design. This is a fast developing area of interest and there is much more that can be done.

Steps to support designers include:

- The Safety in Design (SiD) initiative endorsed by the Construction Industry Council (CIC) and HSE. Go to: <http://www.safetyindesign.org/about.html>
- The Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) produces several H&S publications aimed at designers. Go to: <http://www.ciria.org.uk/bookshopenrance.htm>
- The CITB-ConstructionSkills training package for designers. Go to: <http://www.citb.org.uk>
- Design Quality Indicator (DQI) online tool – Its use is being promoted by the Strategic Forum. Targets by the end of 2007: 60% of all publicly-funded/PFI £1m+ projects use DQIs and 20% of all £1m+ projects use DQIs. Go to: <http://www.dqi.org.uk>
- The Construction Confederation and Construction Industry Council have worked together to develop a designer H&S pre-qualification requirement. Go to: http://www.chas.gov.uk/Downloads/Designer_Prequalification.doc
- Accelerating Change in Built Environment Education (ACBEE) is working with academics, designers and other sectors of industry to develop courses that promote an awareness of health and safety. Go to: <http://cebe.cf.ac.uk/learning/acbee/index.php>
- The Specialist Engineering Alliance has developed health and safety gateways for specialist engineering design. Go to: <http://www.secgroup.org.uk>
- CIC hosts a Health and Safety Panel. Members include the professional institutions including RIBA and BIAT. For links to CIC members' web sites, Go to: <http://www.cic.org.uk>
- CDM Regulations Review – in consultation with designers and others. Go To: <http://www.hse.gov.uk>
Constructing Excellence will host regional road shows as part of the public consultation.

4. Corporate competence

Corporate competence is at the core of achieving excellent business improvement and performance. Competence in RfP issues is one strand in the wider development of competence. There are a number of initiatives that support the development and measurement of competence. For example, the industry-wide Working Well Together Campaign (WWT) aims through its activities to influence the supply chain by working with large companies to raise the performance of SMEs and micro businesses. Go To: <http://wwt.uk.com>

The Federation of Master Builders (FMB) works in partnership with WWT to hold Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADS) aimed at SMEs. For more information about FMB initiatives aimed at SMEs in their sector go to: <http://fmb.org.uk>

Some other competency schemes are:

- Contractors' Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) <http://www.chas.gov.uk/>
- Construction Confederation and Construction Industry Council H&S Designer Pre-qualification initiative. Go to: http://www.chas.gov.uk/Downloads/Designer_Prequalification.doc
- Specialist Engineering Contractors' Group contractor competence initiative – for more information e-mail SEC Group at contact@secgroup.org.uk
- Federation of Piling Specialists are audited by an independent auditor to ensure that they meet required standards in technical expertise, quality management, safety, training, and environmental policies.

- FPSs and SEC Group both support the 'site safety commencement handover certificate scheme' that secures a common understanding of shared outcomes. Go to: <http://www.fps.org.uk>
- The National House Builders' Council (NHBC)/CITB Site Management Safety Training scheme provides competency training for site managers, contract managers and assistant site managers. Go to NHBC Services at: <http://www.nhbc.co.uk>

5. Individual competence through skills training

Skills

The industry has committed to a fully competent workforce by 2010. The construction industry's Sector Skills Council is jointly led by CITB-ConstructionSkills and CIC. Go to: <http://www.citb.org.uk>

Worker skills can be demonstrated through sitting the CITB-ConstructionSkills' health and safety test as part of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and affiliated schemes. The initial touch-screen health and safety test has made a significant contribution to raising the profile of the industry. Go to: <http://www.citb.org.uk>

The TUC has in place a learning initiative through local learning representatives to address literacy and other 'base' skills. Go to: <http://www.learningservices.org.uk/>

There are various construction related National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) schemes in existence. Workers who have obtained an NVQ are qualified to a recognised, national occupational standard. Industry bodies and employers are engaged in the creation of NVQs.

Some examples of trade associations involved in the development of NVQs for manufacturers and suppliers are the Association of Specialist Fire Protection (ASFP), the British Precast Concrete Federation (BPCF) and the Door and Hardware Federation (formerly the Door and Shutter Manufacturers' Association). More information about these and other trade associations in this sector can be found via the Construction Products Association. Go to: <http://www.constprod.org.uk>

The UK wide network of Sector Skills Councils SSCs' focus is to improve learning supply including apprenticeships, higher education and national occupational standards. They bring together employers, trade unions, and professional bodies to develop the skills that businesses need. The key SSCs for Construction related activities are:

- CITB-ConstructionSkills for construction. Go to: <http://www.citb.org.uk>
- Summit Skills for building services engineering (electro-technical, heating, ventilating, air-conditioning, refrigeration and plumbing industries). Go to: <http://www.summitskills.org.uk>
- Asset Skills for facilities management, property, housing, cleaning. Go to <http://www.assetskills.org>

Professions

Professional institutions have a major part to play in setting learning and entry criteria for membership and in promoting CPD that addresses the RfP and behavioural agenda so that their members remain at the forefront in the professional teams of which they are a part. For the web pages of the institutions. Go to: <http://www.cic.org.uk>

Migrant workers

Those newly arrived in the UK workforce should be treated fairly and with respect. They need to know their rights and their responsibilities in the workplace. Language skills may also need to be addressed. Go to:

- CITB-ConstructionSkills <http://www.citb.org.uk>
- Trades Union Congress (TUC) <http://www.tuc.org.uk/>
- The Construction Confederation <http://www.thecc.org.uk>

Induction

On site, induction can set a benchmark for behaviour and attitudes. The Major Contractors Group has set out the core issues that can usefully be addressed. For details, Go to: <http://www.thecc.org.uk>

6. Working together/Integrated working

A key element to behavioural change in the industry is recognition of the need to work more closely together in projects and in supply chains. For further advice, Go to:

- The Strategic Forum's Integrated Teams toolkit: <http://www.strategicforum.org.uk/>
- The Building Services Research and Information Service (BSRIA) Partnering Toolkit: <http://www.bsria.co.uk>
- The Advisory Committee for Roofwork (ACR): <http://www.roofworkadvice.info>

7. Verifying performance through benchmarking and third party assurance.

There are a number of schemes in place to help in benchmarking and verify performance. These include:

- The Considerate Constructor scheme that is available to assist clients, contractors and projects. Go to: <http://www.considerateconstructorsscheme.org.uk>
- Constructing Excellence's RfP toolkit. Go to: <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/>
- The NHBC benchmarking scheme for house builders. Go to: <http://www.nhbc.co.uk>
- Contractors' Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS) see <http://www.chas.gov.uk>
- HSE's Health and Safety Management Index. Go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr217.htm>
- HSE's Climate Survey Tool that addresses behavioural and attitudinal issues. Go to: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/misc097.pdf>

8. Sharing best practice

Best practice needs to be shared so that the industry can move forward using proven change initiators. National industry bodies are best placed to establish key sites for such purposes. Currently, these include:

- The Strategic Forum for Construction <http://www.strategicforum.org.uk/>
- Constructing Excellence <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/>
- Health and Safety Executive <http://www.hse.gov.uk>
- Office of Government Commerce – Achieving Excellence in Procurement Guide 10: Health and Safety <http://www.ogc.gsi.gov.uk/sdtoolkit/reference/achieving/ae10.pdf>
- Construction Industry Council <http://www.cic.org.uk/home/index.shtml>
- Building Research Establishment http://www.bre.co.uk/services/Benchmarking_-_construction.html
- Rethinking Construction/Constructing Excellence 'Respect for People' toolkits - <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resourcecentre>
- Precast Flooring Federation (PFF) guide to the safe erection of precast flooring <http://www.pff.org.uk/home.htm>
- National Access and Scaffolding Confederation (NASC) for the erection of scaffolding 'SG4' and other best practice guides. <http://nasc.org.uk>
- British Construction Steel Association guidance on steel erection <http://www.steelconstruction.org/steelconstruction>
- Construction Plant Hire Association best practice guides on hoists and mobile cranes, etc <http://www.cpa.uk.net/pages>
- The National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) worker safety cards and other guidance <http://www.nfrc.co.uk>

'Near miss' and failures reporting

Complementary to sharing best practice is the need to learn the lessons from past failures, especially where behavioural issues are to the fore. Current sites include:

- The Standing Committee on Structural Safety (SCOSS) Go to: <http://www.scoss.org.uk>
- Constructing Excellence - Go to: <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk>

***OTHER ISSUES IN THE RfP AGENDA**

Advice and guidance on other RfP topics can be found in the 'Peoplezone' of the Constructing Excellence web site. Go to: <http://www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resourcecentre/peoplezone>

- Workplace Diversity;
- Site Facilities and the site working environment;
- Health;
- Safety;
- Career development and lifelong learning;
- The off-site working environment;
- Behavioural issues;
- Education – vocational and graduate entry;
- Investors in People.