



Minutes of the Safety Group Fife Meeting

Held on Monday 9th March 2009 at

**Dunfermline Building Society, Caledonia House,
Carnegie Avenue, Dunfermline.**

Present

Tom Canning	Babcock Marine
Martin Brown	ARCO
Peter Ager	Fife Council
Ian Norton	North British Distillery
John Greenhalgh	Exxonmobil
William Miller	Strath Safety
David Jones	Velux
Andy Martin	Fife H&S Consultants
Mark Russell	Dunfermline BS
John Johnston	FMC
Colin Hailing	Fujitsu
John Auld	Quaker Oats
Margaret Blyth	Clackmannanshire Council
Eddie Imrie	Carnegie College
Stephen Kerr	Marks and Spencer
Colin Sparling	Carnegie College

Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Davy Cant, Cathy Welsh, Sally Eddington, Alan Harwood, Steve Blythe and Annemarie Smith.

In Davy's absence, Peter Ager took on the role of chairman for the evening, Peter opened the meeting by welcoming everyone along, and commented that it was pleasing to see three new members present – Ed Imrie from RAF Leuchars, Stephen Kerr from Marks and Spencer and Colin Hailing from Fujitsu Telecommunications.

Peter introduced Margaret Blyth, Principal EHO with Clackmannanshire Council and thanked her for stepping in at extremely short notice to speak to the group.

Margaret opened by talking about the history of environmental health officers, it was linked back to the 1854 cholera epidemic in London. A man called John Snow identified that it was coming from the contaminated water supply.

Edinburgh was one of the first regions to adopt the role of the EHO in its region, their role was to monitor housing standards and water supply etc.

Margaret explained that the Clackmannanshire EHO's were split up into two teams who look after water issues and S.H.E.

The S.H.E team is also responsible for housing, it looks at houses of multiple occupation (HMO) and ensures tolerable standards are maintained, this remit also covers mixed tenure housing.

The fire brigade have taken over responsibility for assessment of HMO's.

The S.H.E Team also has an animal welfare officer. The Team has responsibility for Noise complaints – car alarms, commercial noise, construction noise. For anti-social behaviour, noisy neighbours etc, fixed penalty notices can be issued.

The team also has responsibility for looking after atmospheric pollution and contaminated land issues.

Margaret explained that with the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, HSE and Local Authority inspectors received powers that were in some instances greater than those of the Police. Any contravention of the Act will result in a report being issued to the Procurator Fiscal.

All complaints of noise pollution must be investigated even if, for example a business has operated the same process in the same area for 50/60 years.

Margaret explained that she had been working with the Noise at Work Legislation which affects pubs and clubs, exposure to employees must be minimised.

The floor was opened to a general discussion.

One question was asked about light spilling from third party houses, Margaret commented that this would be classed as a nuisance and dealt with accordingly.

Peter Ager mentioned that the Anderson Report was issued recently, 759 businesses in England and Wales were surveyed about their views on the amount of paperwork required to comply with Legislation. The Government will be reviewing the report and looking at how the HSE and EHO's operate and enforce within businesses.

Part of the report suggests easier access to guidance, free help lines for H7S and employment legislation, also the ACOPs may have to be re-introduced.

Margaret mentioned that the EHO's make use of an enforcement management tool to ensure that prosecutions stay within the realms of the law.

Peter thanked Margaret for presenting to the group.

Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of 12th January 2009 (short as they were) were approved.

AOB

MR raised the issue of the Rapid Response Cards that are being developed by SCOS, RoSPA, HSE, SCHWL and IIRSM. The cards and evaluation forms were issued earlier in the week, feedback from the group was asked for via MR.

General comment was that the information was already readily available and that the language used on the cards was not very clear, nor did the questions make sense.

PA closed the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **20th April 2009**, speaker for the evening will be Shaun McCarthy, Chairman of the Commission for a Sustainable London 2012 Olympics.

Mark Russell
Secretary
Safety Group Fife.