

Minutes of Safety Group Fife Meeting

Held 10th January 2011 at

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

Present

Colin Sparling	FMC Technologies
John Johnston	FMC Technologies
William Millar	Strath Safety
Mark Russell	Dunfermline B. S.
Peter Ager	Fife Council
Mick Graham	Babcock Marine
David Cant	Carnegie College
Alan Adair	Tullis Russell
Kenny Grieve	Tullis Russell
Eddie Allan	Tullis Russell
Andy Martin	Fife H&S Consultants
Ian Norton	North British Distillers
Derek Armitage	CDMi LTD
Chris White	Firebreak
Andy Nairn	My Safety
David Jones	Velux Co Ltd
Dot Smith	Broxburn Bottlers
Richard Wilson	QMU

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cathy Welsh.

Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting dated 13th December have still to be issued and therefore were unavailable for adoption.

Chairman's Opening Remarks

PA welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending what was the first meeting of 2011. Peter went on to introduce Colin Smith from Central Weighing Limited, who was going to give a presentation on the dangers of vehicle overloading.

Presentation

Chris opened by introducing himself and his company, Central Weighing Limited, the company was established in 1984 and was a worldwide distributor and manufacturer to over forty countries.

Chris explained that all of the figures he would present were taken from official UK Enforcement - VOSA Stats. In 2004 30.5% of LGV's stopped were served with an enforcement order, for HGV's the 2004 figure was 9.7%. Alarmingly the 2010 figures show that 72.7% of LGV's stopped were served with an enforcement order, that means that three out of four light goods vehicles stopped were overloaded.

The figure for HGV's enforcements for 2010 rose to 37.5%, again, that implies that one in three stopped was overloaded.

Further review of the statistics show that Vosa had stopped less vehicles in recent years but had in fact issued more enforcement notices.

Colin highlighted that the Health and Safety at Work Act, The Road Traffic Act and the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations were the pertinent pieces of Legislation.

Responsibility for ensuring a vehicle is not overloaded lies with the driver and their employer, it also sits with any person who causes or permits an overloaded vehicle.

The Government is imposing tougher legislation, greater enforcement and penalties on UK roads. Technology has moved on as well, High Speed Weigh in Motion (HSWIM) units are now set up on the M6, M20 and M25 along with a few other major link roads.

Random checks by the Police, VOSA and Trading Standards, leading to prohibition notices, prosecution and or caution, fines or prison.

Fines can amount to £15,000 per axle plus a gross overload leading to a £45,000 fine.

Colin went on to discuss why Vehicle overloading occurs?

- Ignorance – no awareness of legislation or dangers.
- Negligence – aware, but no policy
- Profit – Creates unfair competition

Purposely overloading vehicles;

- Its illegal under UK Law
- Causes damage to roads, underground services and the vehicle itself.
- Puts the driver and other road users at risk.
- Affects tyres, brakes, stability, steering and stopping distances.
- Could void any insurance if involved in an accident.
- Creates unfair competition
- Increases operators costs – maintenance, wear and tear, fuel etc.

In UK Law it is an offence to be overloaded on axles, every vehicle has a maximum permissible gross weight. All vehicles must display a plate with this information displayed.

The plate shows four sets of figures

- 2030kg – (car + contents + passengers)
- 3530kg – (Towing a trailer)
- 1070kg – (Axle 1)
- 1010kg – (Axle 2)

The driver has responsibilities to check the load is evenly distributed and secured appropriately and to check the axle and gross weights before setting out.

Don't take some ones estimation on a weight – they say it's a Tonne when it could be a Tonne and a Half!

Colin closed off his presentation at this point and opened the floor to questions and discussion, a general discussion ensued.

Peter thanked Colin for his presentation and presented him with a Safety Group Fife folder as a token of our appreciation.

AOB

Finances

Colin Sparling highlighted the Groups finances, a number of subscriptions had been paid in leaving the group with a balance of £3159.76 as at 14th December 2010.

Lord Young Report

The group discussed the implications of the Lord Young report, it was considered that the attempt to simplify things had actually made things worse. Examples of the HSE generic risk assessment for Charity Shops were discussed. It doesn't cover everything, especially fire.

The HSE is looking for feedback on its proposed changed to RIDDOR, moving out from the 3day absence to a 5day period. General consensus was that a lot of SME's are not even aware of the legislation or choose to ignore it anyway.

There being no further business PA thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting.

MR to set up Committee Meeting prior to 14th February.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 7.00pm on Monday 14th February.

Mark Russell
Secretary
Safety Group Fife.

