

ALAN BUTLER AWARDS 2008

SUBMISSION BY



**Northern Ireland
Safety Group**

CATEGORY:

'BEST OVERALL PROGRAMME'

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2008

January Annual General Meeting and Presentation on:-
Work Life Balance – Jim Pow, Health, Safety and Business Improvement Officer with Clanmil Housing. Clanmil Housing is at the forefront of work- life balance initiatives in Northern Ireland and has won two prestigious awards as a result – the Working Families and IOD Award for Work Life Balance and the Irish News Business Awards

February **Active Tags** – by Kevin Howlette BHB – Kevin's presentation outlined how state of the art technology is achieving effective health and safety monitoring in some of the world's largest building sites – up to 10,000 employees on one site! Kevin's company is currently providing this technology at sites in Saudi Arabia and Dubai.

Two Executive Committee members also presented details on the **2008 NISG Safety Awards**

March Half day seminar on **REACH** – background and what organisations need to carry out to be compliant

The Groups **Annual Safety Quiz** took part in the evening on 7th March 2008



Participants at the Safety Quiz

April **Health Surveillance** (with a difference) Jane Confrey, Deputy HSE Manager, Clancydocwra

Jane was invited from England to talk to members about her experiences (positive and negative) about the introduction of a health surveillance programme, the difficulties encountered, how and where they can be overcome and the effects/results post implementation.

May **HSE Spring Conference** –

June 'Out Meeting' – A visit to the **Northern Ireland Specialist Rescue Team** of the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service

The visit, hosted by the Specialist Rescue Team gave members a unique insight into the role of this specialist organisation with an emphasis on how members of the team manage risk – both planned and dynamic.



Specialist Rescue Team in action

Jul/Aug Summer Holidays

September **Employment Law Update** by Julie McGrath, Pyramid Employment Law Services.

There is clearly a close relationship between employment law and health and safety legislation. Julie updated members on recent developments which will assist health and safety professionals.

October **Seminar on Occupational Road Safety**

The topic of the NISG's 2008 seminar was 'Drive Alive from 9-5' and focussed on various aspects of Occupational Road Safety. The seminar was aimed at organisations large and small and was relevant to those who managed one or 100 vehicles. Due to the variety of speakers there was certainly something for everyone and was not directed at the H&S professional.

As you will see from the flyer, topics included the human cost, police strategies and legal perspectives, the insurance angle, best practice in different sectors and the development of an effective transport policy

The timing of the event was deliberate by the Executive Committee and was meant as a reminder and a prompt to those attending organisations to take part in the national campaign 'Annual Road Safety Week' organised by the charity Brake in November.



The Police Service stand at the Exhibition

November **The Build Health Initiative – Jim Leitch, Northstone (NI) Ltd**

Buildsafe is a joint venture between the construction industry in NI and the HSE Northern Ireland. Jim, a founding member of the initiative will update members on the objectives, difficulties experienced by the Group, how these have been overcome and successes to date.

December **Legionella** – details are still being finalised

1. **Topics.** Topics for the annual programme included:-

- Work-life balance
- Technology for Health and Safety monitoring
- REACH
- Annual Safety Quiz – for non health and safety professionals
- Health Surveillance – speaker from GB
- HSE Annual Conference
- Out Meeting – Specialist Rescue Unit, NI Fire
- Update on Employment Law
- Seminar on Occupational Road Safety
- Build Health – the story so far
- Legionella

- 1.1 Flyers, leaflets and presentations for all of the above are attached to this submission.
- 1.2 As you can see the programme is diverse, relevant and includes something for everyone. This is reflected in the attendance for all monthly meetings which normally ranges between 50 and 60 members. Feedback on some meetings was good but overall has been extremely positive and reassuring to the Executive Committee in that they are providing members with what they want.

Highlights during the year included the work-life balance presentation which attracted a very large audience and included many HR professionals who attended along with their H&S colleagues.

Jane Confrey's presentation on Health Surveillance was fascinating and many of the Group's members were in discussions with Jane following her visit. Jane who is based in the Midlands, was invited to Northern Ireland when one of the Executive Committee attended Jane's presentation at the IOSH Conference in London.

The 'out visit' to the Specialist Rescue Unit of the NI Fire Service gave members a unique insight into how the unit manages planned and dynamic risk.

The Occupational Road Seminar, attended by 140 delegates was a huge success and the variety and standard of speaker was excellent.

2. **Speakers.** Details on each of the speakers were included in the programme and where seminars were held, in the programme notes which are all attached.
3. **Handouts.** Handouts and flyers for the events are all attached. Powerpoint presentations are available on the Group's web site for members to download if they need to following meetings.
4. **Success of Programme.** The success of the programme is evidenced by the continued good attendance figures at all monthly meetings. Feedback from members continues to be extremely positive – written comments on the recent Road Safety seminar include:-

"Good range of topics. First speaker's emotive and passionate speech was attention grabbing and effectively brought home the personal cost of road traffic deaths."

"Very informative and challenging presentations. Good opportunity to participate and network."

"Overall – absolutely excellent seminar."

- 4.1 Feedback received verbally is also extremely encouraging.
- 4.2 The Group has a Patron (Ulster Bank) and a sponsor for its monthly magazine. Ulster Bank pay an annual amount of £3,000 to the Group and Arco, sponsors of the Newsletter pay £1,000. A condition of their continued support is dependent on the success of the Groups work and they remain extremely satisfied in their continued support of its work.
5. **Lessons Learned.** The main lessons learned from previous programmes were that subjects need to be researched thoroughly and ensure that speakers are knowledgeable in their chosen subject, have the relevant experience and most importantly have excellent presentation skills. Too often interesting subjects can be a 'turn off' for the audience due to the presenter simply reading from a slide on the

screen. The presenters this year, in excess of 16 have, with the exception of two, been extremely good and have been able to attract and maintain an interest by their audiences.

- 5.1 Subjects too have to be interesting to attract members to group meetings. The diversity of the subjects this year, together with the creativity of the publicity material, did much to ensure that the meetings were extremely well attended – probably the Group's best overall attendance in a single year.
- 5.2 We have a range of ways in which to publicise events and some, or all, are all used to maximise attendance – these include:-
 - NISG Website – all meetings are uploaded to the Group's website;
 - Websites of NISG members to publicise events such as seminars;
 - HSE literature/web site;
 - Databases of NISG members e.g. one of the members is a member of a large Housing Association and his Federation included the flyer in their e-newsletter which promoted the Occupational Road Safety Seminar – this reached all Housing Associations in NI. This is a strategy being used more often by the Group to generate maximum attendance by those who are not necessarily members of the Group.
- 5.3 A draft programme for 2009 has recently⁹ been prepared and will not include any of the subjects that have been held in 2009. The Group feels that by sourcing new and interesting areas of work, the Group will retain the interest of its members and not become 'stale'. That said, in a couple of years time, we will probably look to re-visit some of the subject areas that have been covered this year.
6. **Events.** As well as the annual out meeting to the Specialist Rescue Unit of the Northern Ireland Fire Service, which was extremely positive, the Chair of the Executive Committee was on the Planning Committee of the Annual HSE/NISG Conference which was attended by over 150 delegates and was extremely successful
7. **Schedule.** As you can see from the programme, there was a Group meeting held every month (excluding July/August). Following each Group meeting a presentation was held. The meetings are held at 2.15 pm which is the preferred time of members – this information was obtained through preparation of the last Strategic Review by the Group. These meetings also follow Executive Committee Meetings which take place at 12.15 pm
8. **Target Audience.** The Group, as you would expect, provides publicity material to all of its members on a monthly basis. It acknowledges that some of its presentations/seminars can be attended by others who are not necessarily H&S professionals and this is particularly true of the Work-life balance presentation which was attended by HR professionals and others.
- 8.1 The success of the Group's work is evidenced by the continued support of its current members and they are very complimentary on the work that is carried out by the Group. It is also pleasing to note that a further 16 organisations joined the Group this year.