Is Poor Occupational Hygiene Practice and Advice In the UK an Issue, and If So How Do We Improve It?

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FOH Registrar
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Skanska
HSE Science Division (SD)
AGENDA

• Introductions
• Background
• FOH Board role
• Three perspectives
• Workshop questions
• Feedback
INTRODUCTIONS

• Neil Pickering  BOHS Registrar
• Kelvin Williams  Kelvin Williams Ltd
• Chris Keen  HSL
• Mark Sarton  Skanska
BACKGROUND

• Recent Masters dissertation discussed at BOHS Council
• Questioned quality of Occupational Hygiene Practice
  • Focused on consultants’ reports (so we will today)
• Findings worrying but further exploration needed

• Today’s workshop (re)starts a wider conversation
FOH BOARD ROLE – CONTEXT

• FOH Purpose
  • To pursue excellence for all those who practise the science of occupational hygiene
  • To establish, develop and maintain standards of competence in occupational hygiene practice for those who are FOH members
  • To act as the guardian of professional standards and ethics in occupational hygiene
FOH BOARD ROLE – TODAY

• Seeking insights from this workshop
• As facilitator of the workshop
  • Deliberately taking neutral stance
  • Posing questions to inform FOH Board discussion
  • Limited time so one short feedback
  • Main input from your notes (so keep legible!)
• Happy to receive additional input after the workshop
  • Approach me during the conference
  • Via Head office, or to registrar@bohs.org
THREE PERSPECTIVES

• To get discussion going
  • Asked 3 people to give their perspective
  • Different viewpoints
    • Business
    • Consultant
    • Regulator
  • Independent – no FOH editorial on the presentations
  • 5 minutes each leading to workshop
Mark Sarton

Occupational Hygienist – Skanska UK
Who we are, what we do

- Commission ~ £50,000 - £200,000 worth of OH work p.a.
- Mix of Occ Hygiene, OH service provision and statutory work (e.g. LEV, asbestos survey & clearance testing)
The Bad

Welding fume survey in fabrication workshop
We ONLY work with mild steel – Fe, Mn
Sampled for Co, Nb, Cr, Mo, Ni, Zn, Sb and KS

Were the results representative?

No reference to:
- Duration of welding
- Numbers of welders
- Use of RPE / LEV system
The Worse

4 Day Survey for DEEE from diesel locomotives in London
Elemental carbon, Respirable NOx, SO2 & Carbon
~ 120 data points. Pumped & direct reading

NO REFERENCE TO THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF THE DEEE SOURCE
(diesel locomotives)
The Ugly

- RCS survey commissioned by contractor
- Report states compliance with WEL
- One personal data point, exposure is 90% of WEL
- Programme of monitoring carried out by consultancy for major infrastructure project (dozens of reports)
- PC had to commission a new Occupational Hygienist to make sense of all the previous data!
- Asbestos survey commissioned by client
- Company fabricated background amosite contamination
- Have we exposed people to amosite for 18 months?
Summary

− The construction industry NEEDS hygiene support
− The construction industry can’t afford to pay for rubbish

− Know your client. Know your brief.
− The number is worthless without the context
  − The basis of science is observation
− Recommendations need to be clear, specific, written for the audience.
OH Consultancy
Raising the Bar

April 2018
Is there a problem with delivery of quality OH consultancy in UK?

In my view – yes
Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics - developed to ensure that hygienists act in such a way that
the protection and preservation of worker health remains their paramount responsibility at all times and to

guide those who may be subject to contradictory pressures and enable them to act with integrity and objectivity.
After three years of visits from a hygienist (Directory listed large firm)
Have consultancies lost the “ethical plot”? for example

• “They can have recommendations if they pay for them”
• “I don’t put detailed recommendations in the report – they only come back to haunt you”
• Supplying technician level, or non OH staff to provide a professional occupational hygiene service
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
OH Consultancy – raising the bar

April 2018

Chris Keen CMFOH
a person who provides expert advice professionally......

.....engaged to fulfil a brief in terms of helping to find solutions to specific issues but the ways in which that is to be done generally falls to the consultant to decide
a person who provides expert advice professionally......

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generally falls to the consultant to decide
Some of the issues – a personal view

- Doing what the client requests
- Excessive focus on exposure monitoring and compliance with limits
- Inadequate advice on control
- No follow up
Being competent to perform monitoring is not the same as being competent to design a monitoring program, interpret results or design and implement effective exposure control strategy.
The intelligent customer
## Getting it right

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QUESTION 1

• Are your experiences of Occupational Hygiene consultancy quality good, poor or mixed and in what proportions?

5 Minutes
QUESTION 2

For Occupational Hygiene consultancy

• In your experience which types of consultants are most frequently better or worse?
  • Consider FOH membership grades and other consultants (please identify)
  • And where you find an occupational hygiene consultant from?

10 Minutes
QUESTION 3

• What could a) the FOH and b) other stakeholders do to address your concerns?
QUESTION 4

• From these options, which 2 or 3 will be most effective at making an improvement to the outcomes from consultants?
• .......and why?

5 Minutes
FEEDBACK

• Each group please provide top two actions

5 Minutes
THANK YOU