



# **NORTHERN IRELAND SAFETY GROUP**

Secretary: Ernie Spence  
13 De Courcy Avenue  
Carrickfergus  
BT38 7LJ

**Meeting held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2008  
at the King's Hall Conference Centre, Balmoral**

**Tel/Fax:** 028 9336 8928  
**E-mail:** info@nisg.org.uk  
**Website:** www.nisg.org.uk

**Chair:** Tom Stephenson

**Present:** As listed in the attendance book.

Apologies	Geoff Martin	H & J Martin
	Des Campbell	Forestry Service
	Karen Cunningham	Belfast H & SST
	Mandy Nelson	FK Piling
	Gary Bolton	AFBI
	David Norwood	AFBI

Chairman Tom Stephenson welcomed everyone to the meeting and commented that he was delighted to see such a large turnout.

The Chairman outlined the emergency procedures.

The Chairman then introduced Joe Hilder for the Alzheimer's Society. He explained that the ballot raised £432.50 for the organisation at the recent Safety Quiz. A photo was taken of the Chair presenting the cheque to Mr Hilder.

Mr Hilder then went on to explain that Alzheimer's Society was a leading care and research charity for dementia. He explained that the condition affected 700,000 people across the UK and some 16,000 people were affected in Northern Ireland. This figure was estimated to grow to 20,000 by 2017 and 47,000 by 2051. He went on to explain that although predominantly affecting the elderly, in NI 370 people below the age of 65 had been diagnosed.

The money raised would specifically be used to fund the NI helpline. This was set up to assist those who come into contact with dementia to access information and enable them to make informed decisions in relation to care plans.

Mr Hilder ended his presentation by thanking the group for the donation.

Minutes & matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting and there were no matters arising. They were proposed by Liam Kelly and seconded by Hugo McClenaghan.

The Chair then introduced Jane Confrey from Clancydowra.

Jane began her presentation by explaining the background to the company, the type of work they do and for whom they do it. She then went on to give the background to how OHS was introduced to the company. It is an integral part of the HS&E business plan which in turn feeds into the overall company business plan.

The mechanics of how it operates were then outlined. Employees attend a 1 hour appointment and all staff members are screened every two years. Staff that are transferred into the business are screened within 4-6 weeks. The employees are tested for hand conditions (dermatitis), vision and hearing loss, skin conditions, blood pressure, stress and the effects of smoking/drinking.

Jane explained that the outcomes from the screening are roughly 90% all clear, with the remaining 10% being a mixture of minor conditions (early stages) and severe (chronic conditions). There is a management

system in place for the 10%.

Clancydowra see major benefits in the scheme. It allows them to defend claims through an audit trail. It also is good for staff moral and employee retention. Clancydowra has a retention rate 30% higher than the average. Employee care is also evident as a culture in the organisation. But the scheme has gone further than that; it acts as a good recruitment tool in that it helps recruit good people who are attracted by it as a staff benefit. Jane then went on to say that as business gets ever more competitive the scheme is helping them win contracts as it is being asked for as part of the bid process when tendering for contracts. The final benefit for Clancydowra is that it assists compliance by satisfying the relevant legislation, measures the health of individuals and creates management and documentation systems to monitor the system.

At the end of her presentation Jane invited the audience to ask questions. These were plentiful.

AoB

During this session Jim Leitch talked about a near miss which happened in a CRH business involving a curtain sided lorry reversing in a yard on a windy day. He also outlined the learning points and what changes were made to prevent this happening again.

This led to a discussion about the assessments and advice given by Spillards in relation to all round visibility for vehicles.

The Chair closed the meeting by reminding the audience that the Spring Conference was on 21<sup>st</sup> May and the Group's 'out' meeting was on 23<sup>rd</sup> June when a visit had been arranged to the specialist rescue section of the fire and rescue service.