



NORTHERN IRELAND SAFETY GROUP

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Meeting held on Monday 18th February January 2008 at the King's Hall Conference Centre, Balmoral

- Chair:** Nicky Bell
- Present:** As listed in the attendance book.
- Apols:**
- | | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| Hugo McClenaghan | Retired member |
| Barry Magee | Safety Lift |
| Mike Keating | Belfast City Council |
| Geoff Gillan | University of Ulster |
| Geoff Martin | H & J Martin |

1. Chair's welcome

Nicky Bell occupying the chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. She explained that it would be in two parts. The first presentation would be by Kevin Howlette of BHB on electronic tagging and the second would be by David Cooke and Heather McKinstry giving an update on this year's Safety Awards.

The Chair asked for mobile phones to be switched off and went through the emergency procedures.

When asked, two visitors made themselves known as Simon Webber from Translink and Jonathan Lancaster from Guardian 24 and the Chair welcomed them to the meeting.

2. Minutes and matters arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes and these were proposed by Ken Blair and seconded by Kevin Howlette.

3. Up and coming events

There were two dates for diaries. March 7th sees the Annual Safety Quiz and the Chair asked any member who had not entered a team but wished to do so to see the Secretary or a committee member. Secondly 10th March is the REACH seminar and the audience was reminded that this was geared towards outlining organisations' obligations under REACH, namely that if they used chemicals they had an obligation and she recommended members who had not already booked to do so.

4. Presentation

The Chairman introduced Kevin Howlette from BHB.

Kevin began his presentation by outlining who BHB were. He explained that they were heavily involved in IT in both the Middle East and now India. In the Middle East their technology partner was Lockheed and he went on to say that he was proud of a small NI company of 15 people being partnered with such a world wide multi national corporation.

The technology that BHB work with put simply is Radio Frequency Identification Tagging. The issue which began the company's journey into this market was how do you track and monitor people. BHB were asked to provide a training solution. This in itself would seem a simple enough task until you throw into the mix that it is for 83,000 people at one time. These huge scales were common in the Middle East with major construction projects going on. Kevin gave an example to illustrate this by showing the scale of downtime on an operation of this size.

The solution to these types of problems is in RFIT. Kevin explained the technology had been around for some 50 years. It began with such programmes as tracking for movements in nature. Nowadays it is so common manufacturers make tracking devices as throwaway items.

As the technology developed so did its uses and it is now quite common in a diverse range of spheres from the Olympic Triathlon through to companies using it for logistics, where packages are tagged.

Kevin then showed some samples and following this gave the audience an indication of the size of the issues in the Middle East with, as stated, 83,000 people turning up on site per day and also 33,000 vehicles.

Bar coding although similar isn't the solution as it involves a physical swipe. Active tags can be used but they require a power source, whereas passive tags don't and can last for years.

Kevin then demonstrated how the tags developed by BHB are read in milliseconds and why they are suited to large numbers. On a site, the system works through antennas and the encoder will read the data. This alleviates the need for a physical check. The system was demonstrated in pictures and he showed how a bus containing workers could be checked going onto site without the need for a physical count of workers.

Having shown the system working in practice Kevin outlined the potential future uses. These included training, managing people at height, managing people in buildings, asset tracking and goods in transit/storage.

At the end of his presentation Kevin took questions from the floor and following this the audience showed their appreciation in the normal manner.

The Chair then introduced Heather McKinstry and David Cooke and indicated they were going to talk about the up and coming Safety Awards. She also welcomed Pierce Martin, CEO of NISO and Tom Costello from National Standards Authority of Ireland.

Heather McKinstry began by welcoming the guests in the audience and indicated that she hoped they were possible new entrants. Both Heather and David had been involved

in the Awards for over 5 years and she indicated that their talk would be on how to improve award entries. As with previous years the most important thing in entering is not to give the judges what an organisation has but to give the judges what they are asking for.

David Cooke then went on to list the benefits of winning an award.

The bulk of the presentation centred on the submission headings, what was asked for and the best way to fulfil these. This was followed by hints on how to complete a submission, points to take into consideration when preparing and common omissions.

David then touched on the new Gold Standard assessment, what it entailed and how a organisation gets the opportunity to enter this. To further clarify this he outlined the Award entries eligible for NI companies and showed how this linked into the gold standard. At the end there was a lively question and answer session. Pierce Martin led by indicating how he was pleased that the insurance industry in the South backed the way the Awards were going. Heather McKinstry said that although not as far advanced she hoped NISG could open links with the insurance industry in the North. Nicola Ward expressed her concern that the Awards do not take recognition of ISO 18001 and Pierce Martin responded to this by saying that as part of an evolving process this should be investigated.

Nicola Ward then offered new entrants the opportunity to let them see last year's entry.

To conclude the meeting Nicky Bell thanked Heather and David and as there was no other business she announced the next meeting being 10th March – the REACH seminar.