

# A REPORT TO INFORM THE RELAUNCH OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUPS MOVEMENT

**Safety Groups UK**  
PROMOTING SAFETY & HEALTH NATIONWIDE





# Safety Groups UK: final report

David Bryant

[handsacademy@aol.com](mailto:handsacademy@aol.com)

22<sup>nd</sup> August 2006

## Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SPECIFICATION
  - BACKGROUND
  - SPECIFICATION
  - CONFIDENTIALITY
  - PARTNERSHP AGREEMENT WITH HSE
  - CONSTITUTION
  - MISSION, VISION AND OBJECTIVES
  - BUSINESS PLAN
  - COMMENT
3. SAFETY GROUPS
  - GENERAL PROFILE OF GROUPS
  - GEOGRAPHY
  - MEMBERSHIP
  - THE SAFETY GROUP OFFER
  - FUNDING AND FINANCIAL MATTERS
  - SUCCESS OF GROUPS
  - MEETINGS
  - ROLE OF ROSPA
  - ALAN BUTLER AWARDS
  - THE LIMITATIONS OF GROUPS
4. THE ABILITY OF GROUPS TO INFLUENCE AND PROMOTE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIVITIES WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES AND 'HARD TO REACH' EMPLOYEES
  - MARKETING AND ADVERTISING
  - OUTREACH
  - USE OF THE INTERNET
  - OTHER MATTERS
5. THE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE IN LEAD PROJECTS, CAMPAIGNS AND PRIORITY TOPICS
6. THE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF SGUK TO PARTICIPATE ON LEAD PROJECTS AND INPUT INTO CONSULTATIVE EXERCISES

7. SUPPORT AND PROMOTION OF GROUPS BY OTHERS
8. CONCLUSIONS
9. RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX 1: FRAMEWORK FOR SAFETY GROUP DISCUSSIONS

APPENDIX 2: SAFETY GROUPS IN THE UK

APPENDIX 3: CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX 4: MODEL FOR A SAFETY GROUPS UK ORGANISATION

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research project required an assessment of Safety Groups (Groups) as part of the re-launch of the Group's movement under the banner of Safety Groups UK. In particular to:

- Assess the ability of Groups to influence and promote health and safety activities within small and medium enterprises (SME's) and hard to reach employees;
- Assess the willingness and capacity of Groups to participate in a number of 'lead' projects in the context of the Partnership Agreement between Safety Groups UK and HSE;
- Establish the willingness of Groups to input to HSC/E consultative exercises; and
- Identify measures that might be taken with key players to promote support for the Group's movement

An assessment of Groups was undertaken between April 2006 and July 2006 through a mixture of visits, meetings, e-mail and telephone discussions with Safety Groups, their committees, members and others. Not all Groups were included but a representative sample of large, medium and small Groups including those from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England were included. Discussions were based around a number of question areas to satisfy the key requirements of the research project (see Appendix 1).

Groups do play a part in occupational health and safety in the UK. Members appear to be pleased and proud to be a member of a Group and recognise it as a valuable resource. There are over 70 Groups in the UK (Appendix 2) and each is independent while being affiliated to Safety Groups UK and many have links with others (e.g. IOSH, BSC, BOHS). Groups do vary considerably in terms of their size and activity and a few Groups are struggling to maintain their position and in more cases Groups are having some difficulty in growing their number. Some Groups are strong and active with increasing membership. Membership fees vary considerably from being free to costing over £100 per year and Groups, while a majority have some common features, do offer and provide different things (e.g. training and conferences) to their members. Typical activities for Groups include:

- Meetings with presentations / speakers;
- Visits / trips;
- Seminars, conferences and workshops; and
- Information, sharing of good practice and updating

The voluntary work of those involved in Groups and in particular Committee members and their dedication to their particular Group has to be applauded. Without those people many Groups would disappear or at the very least struggle to survive.

It is clear from my research that Groups are valuable to the health and safety of the UK and should be further supported and developed so that they can achieve their potential and the vision and mission of Safety Groups UK. Much is needed to ensure and maximise this potential, particularly in respect to impacting on SME's, and to ensure consistency with HSE priorities. A number of recommendations and options are suggested to take the Group's movement forward.

The voluntary nature of Groups around the UK is a strength as it produces a characteristic feel to Group meetings and produces a conducive environment to meet and exchange good practice. However, in taking Groups forward the voluntary nature is also a weakness as it can be a limiting factor in terms of member numbers and activity (because of time and resources placed on those who organise them). This is not an insurmountable problem and can be overcome.

The assessment of Groups suggests the following:

1. Groups at present have a limited ability to influence and promote health and safety activities within small medium enterprises and 'hard to reach' employees';
2. Groups are willing to participate in 'lead' projects within the context of the Partnership Agreement between Safety Groups UK and HSE. Groups capacity at present to do so is limited; and
3. Groups are willing to participate on HSE lead projects and input into HSC/E consultative exercises, however the translating willingness into reality needs to be improved.

There are a number of key players who could contribute to Safety Groups UK and Groups, however, the reality is that there are only a few that are in a good position to do so and be actively involved in Groups. This is particularly true in respect to making an impact with SME's and hard to reach employers and employees.

While Groups collectively have over 5,000 members, less than 50% are active and attend some meetings and most are people working in health and safety (a good proportion are professionals and members of IOSH). This is due at least in part to the historic nature of Groups in industrial safety. A small proportion of SME's are represented but mostly medium sized enterprises. Few non-health and safety people e.g. owners / managers of small companies attend meetings or are members of Groups. There are many reasons for SME's not being members but important factors include the relevance / appropriateness of meetings to them and the timing of meetings. Cost does not appear to be a factor.

The use of electronic communication in Groups is patchy and only 50% have a website. Marketing of Groups generally is poor particularly to SME's although there are pockets of good practice to be found.

While over 20 recommendations are made and options provided to take Groups forward to fulfil the vision and mission, I would highlight some key recommendations:

1. While Groups can be expanded to a certain point it is recommended that more Groups need to be established that cater for SME's and that these should be more locally based and with an 'offer' that meet their needs. This will probably be best achieved by establishing sector or specialist Groups which would attract and serve SME's;
2. Safety Groups UK should appoint someone with the necessary skills on a part time basis to lead / drive forward the Safety Group's movement. Full-time administrative support is also needed. Some paid work developing Groups in geographical areas (Regions) should also be considered as part of a Regional development / liaison adviser type role;
3. Existing Groups should remain as they are but offered support to develop further where this is needed and wanted. This should ensure a thriving membership but within a Groups natural limit;
4. The support of RoSPA is essential to Safety Groups UK as is that of the HSE and both need to continue to support the movement;
5. While there are many stakeholders and organisations that can potentially help, Safety Groups UK and Groups should concentrate on working with a small number who can make a real impact in terms of SME's, health and safety and promoting and work of Groups. I would recommend Workplace Health Connect (and the Scottish and Northern Ireland equivalent) and the Learning and Skills Council as being two key organisations;
6. Groups need to align meetings / presentations more closely to HSE priorities and campaigns and have more flexibility in the make up of meetings to accommodate or have separate events in addition to normal meetings so as to concentrate on these priorities;
7. A marketing and communication strategy is needed for Safety Groups UK and Groups and this should include better use of electronic communication and ensuring all Groups have a website which is kept up to date and that provides useful and relevant information to their members; and
8. Funding for the above, where cost is involved, should be provided either through sponsorship, Government funding or / and by a levy on Groups members or through setting up an appeal fund that Groups and others can donate to.

The above recommendations and the others are intended for Safety Groups UK Management Committee to consider alongside Groups, members and others. I would recommend to the HSE that Safety Groups provide one of the best opportunities to make an impact in health and safety in the UK. It is one of the few situations where a little input can reap a huge return and there are examples to demonstrate this. The HSE should seek to continue and strengthen its support for Safety Groups UK and Groups.

## Safety Groups UK final report, David Bryant

The Safety Groups UK Management Committee need to be bold and brave to take decisions that can take the movement forward, otherwise we or people like us will be having the same debate in 10 years time. That would be a shame.

While I recommend Groups maintain their independence and autonomy and how they manage their Group, Groups need to appreciate the 'bigger picture' and how sharing good practice, communication and contributing where they can play a vital role in contributing to the health and safety system of the UK.

This report should be considered as a consultation paper and feedback sort from all interested parties.

**David Bryant**  
**22<sup>nd</sup> August 2006**

## **2. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SPECIFICATION**

### **Background**

The HSE agreed in December 2005 to fund RoSPA (on behalf of Safety Groups UK) for the provision of a report to inform the re-launch of the Health and Safety Group's movement. The work is intended to support the Health and Safety Commission's (HSC's) strategy to 2010 and beyond and take forward the Partnership Agreement between HSE and Safety Groups UK.

The first Safety Groups were originally formed in the late 1930's and continued through the 1940's and 1950's and promoted by the then equivalent of the HSE. Groups have grown, changed, some have disbanded and new ones have formed over the years but their survival to the present day is a testimony to their strength and success. As an informal but structured network, Safety Groups are unique in the health and safety field and have over the years built good and strong relationships with many other organisations including IOSH.

Re-launch of Safety Groups UK took place in London on the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2006 and forms the new co-ordinating body (formerly The National Health & Safety Groups Council) for the network of local Occupational Health and Safety Groups (Groups) located throughout the UK.

### **Specification**

The specific priority tasks of this project were to:

1. Undertake liaison visits to Groups for an initial assessment of the following:
  - The ability of Groups to influence and promote health and safety activities within small and medium enterprises and 'hard to reach' employers / employees
  - The willingness and capacity of Groups to participate in a number of 'lead' projects in the context of the Partnership Agreement (between SG UK and HSE);
  - The willingness and capacity of SGUK to participate on HSE lead projects and input to HSC/E consultative exercises.
2. To initiate some contact with key players to promote support for the Group's movement
3. To produce a report

The research was carried out through a number of visits to Groups, meetings with Groups and others, and e-mail and telephone interviews / discussions. Such visits etc. has provided a sufficient sample size to get a 'feel' of Groups and to be able to report back in this report with recommendations of how the Group's movement can be taken forward. Although interviews were not formally structured a questionnaire was produced to form a framework for

discussions and this is reproduced at Appendix 1. In total, the research covered around 30% of Groups.

The research was not intended to identify the best Groups nor the worst but to gain sufficient information on the current general state of Groups to be able to form a view and to make recommendations. Those on the Safety Groups UK Management Committee representing Groups were not generally used in the research sample for reasons of propriety and to stop any accusations of bias in making recommendations.

While contact was made with a number of potential stakeholders time and project resources did not allow for all to be included in the research.

A review of the Alan Butler awards has already been undertaken and some additional comment is made to assist with the consultation in this area. The issue of 'Regionalisation' has not been addressed as part of this report and is subject to another report.

## **Confidentiality**

The meetings and discussions with Groups, members and others have been kept confidential to reflect both the nature of the research and also the wishes of many who contributed openly and honestly to the report findings. As a result no individual Group or person is named within the report.

## **Partnership Agreement with HSE**

There are 6 specific objectives to the partnership:

1. To support the HSC's "Strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond";
2. To develop effective communication and align the priorities of SGUK Groups with those of HSE/C;
3. To jointly develop and deliver an agreed programme of work to make a significant and timely contribution to specific projects which support the HSC strategy;
4. To ensure that key messages which are essential for delivering the Government's "Revitalising Health and Safety" targets are promoted to all Groups and as widely as possible beyond their immediate membership;
5. To support the SGUK management committee in its efforts to improve the performance and effectiveness of the Groups, especially with regard to promoting their activities and health and safety priorities amongst SME's and other hard to reach employers and employees; and
6. To provide resources where appropriate to support SGUK in achieving the partnership objectives

The roles and responsibilities of HSE and Safety Groups UK are set out in the Partnership Agreement along with implementation and evaluation. Of particular note in the Agreement is that it describes the programme of work and specific projects.

- A joint initiative to support the HSE programmes and campaigns – to include the programme and timetable for development of local Group based activities and promotional work. Specific features to include group based seminars / workshops both for existing members and SME's and publicity efforts.
- Devise criteria for the development of Groups – to assist individual Groups by providing a vision of a vibrant and proactive Group. Features include:
  - Size of membership
  - Number of active members
  - Record of attracting and retaining new members
  - Involvement of wider membership in activities etc.
  - Quality of annual programme (e.g. external speakers, initiatives, workshops, feedback from delegates)
  - Work with SME's
- Development of simple evaluation arrangements – to assess the effectiveness of the partnership

## **Constitution**

The constitution of Safety Groups UK is available from the Safety Groups UK website <http://www.rospa.com/safetygroupsuk/aboutus.htm>, hosted by RoSPA and reproduced at Appendix 3.

Individual Groups under the constitution are known as “Nationally Affiliated Health and Safety Groups” with the abbreviation of “Safety Groups” (Groups). In this context Groups include non-profit making, local or regional associations of companies or organisations whose purpose is to promote, maintain and improve standards of health and safety, locally or nationally.

The constitution sets out the objectives of the organisation as follows:

‘To advance education in all aspects of health and safety at work and to promote the provision of safety and healthy working environment's for the public benefit.

In furtherance of the above objective but not further or otherwise, the organisation may discharge the following powers:

- a. To provide assistance to and help co-ordinate the work of the Groups in the United Kingdom and support the formation of new groups both local and regional;
- b. To disseminate information to all Groups and to publicise the work and policies of the Groups; and
- c. To advise key players in the UK Health and Safety system on any matter which the organisation consider justifies national consideration.’

## **Mission, vision and objectives**

The mission and vision of Safety Groups UK is considered throughout the report in association with the Partnership Agreement. The mission of Safety Groups UK is to ensure that Health and Safety Groups are key players in the UK health and safety system and in the delivery of UK health and safety strategy. The slogan of Safety Groups UK is *'Promoting safety and health nationwide'*.

The vision of safety groups is set out below:

1. A powerful and thriving network of health and safety groups in every part of the UK, working to disseminate vital information to grass roots.
2. Groups reaching out to and working in partnership with all those in their local communities who have a role to play in ensuring that workplaces are healthy and safe.
3. An effective channel for the feeding back of views and experiences of health and safety authorities and other key national stakeholders.
4. A positive partnership between groups movement, and all other key players in occupational health and safety including the HSE, RoSPA, IOSH, IIRSM, the BSC, BOHS and NEBOSH.
5. New pathfinding projects undertaken by Groups to raise awareness of problems and demonstrate solutions and to establish good practice.
6. Recognition of and support for the key role which Groups play by key intermediaries such as employer associations, trade unions, training bodies and all other organisations which can help to promote and advance their work.

The organisation will be structured and organised on a regional basis. The mission, vision and forward plan also describes the objectives of Safety Groups UK:

1. To provide a forum and a platform for Groups to debate key issues and to influence key stakeholders in the formulation of health and safety strategy and policy;
2. To advance and promote education in all aspects of health and safety;
3. To disseminate information to member health and safety groups on all health and safety matters of potential interest and best practice;
4. To enter into partnerships with other health and safety agencies and organisations having similar objectives, including their role in outreach and raising awareness; and
5. To promote the membership and work of UK Health and Safety Groups, especially among small and medium enterprises

The mission and vision paper state that funding of Safety Groups UK will be by agreed contributions by Groups and by sponsorship.

## **Business Plan**

Safety Groups UK have produced a Business Plan which is an annual plan of work for Safety Groups UK and includes:

- Regular meetings;
- Organisational work;
- Recognition of good practice;
- Promotional and liaison activities;
- Fund raising and sponsorship;
- Special projects;
- Input to policy making; and
- Training and development

The plan is broken down into activity, projected outcome, value added for Groups, resources required and costs. No comment is made on the plan itself but is considered to be a sensible and appropriate document to start to take forward the Safety Group movement.

## **Comment**

Groups and others have not commented adversely on the mission, vision and objectives of Safety Groups UK, although some discussion around funding was raised. I consider that the mission, vision and objectives are appropriate, at least at present and for the immediate future and no recommendations are made to alter what already exists.

I would comment on the name 'Safety Groups UK' although this comment is diluted by the fact that this is itself is an abbreviation for 'Health and Safety Groups UK'. For most things in life there is a clue in the title and 'Safety Groups (UK)' provides a big clue in that it is about safety and it is about a number of people who come together.

Some Groups do not title themselves as a Group and Association, Forum or Chamber might be used. Groups around the country also have titles normally that reflect a geographical area so there is some belonging locally, some include a sector where it is sector specific (construction and charities) and other Group's include a number of other descriptors in their title including:

- Health
- Environmental
- IOSH, where it is a joint meeting / group
- Occupational safety (often with 'and health')

It is probably a fair reflection to comment that those that have traditionally been attracted to be a member of a Safety Group (whatever their title) are people in safety. Historically it is those from industry who commonly were members of Groups. Many Groups now include 'health' within their title and this is an important area in 'health and safety', health now being of greater significance than safety.

Local Groups can call themselves what they want as part of their own identify, this is important and I make no recommendation to change that. As for Safety Groups UK, I would recommend consideration be given to changing the name to 'Health and Safety Groups UK' or even 'Occupational Health and Safety Groups UK' and the suitable acronym used to shorten. At one level the name is not so important but more what is achieved. However, as anyone selling a product or service knows, for reasons of marketing and brand a name is important at least until it is established.

The 3 green arches as part of the logo is sufficiently distinctive to be recognisable and no recommendation is made to change the logo or the strap line which includes 'health'.

### **3. SAFETY GROUPS**

#### **General Profile of Groups**

There are over 70 Groups in the UK and details are at Appendix 2. It is quite difficult to generalise about Groups as each is different although there are some common threads / features to most Groups. A small number of Groups are unique, do not fit the normal profile of Groups, what they offer is different and are not generally considered as part of this research report.

It is true to reflect from the research that there is a wide variation to Groups in terms of their size and activity. While the largest Group may number 600 members, many Groups have less than 60 members and importantly, many have less than 30 active members i.e. attend meetings regularly.

It is mostly health and safety people who are members of Groups but with a few HR and a few non-health and safety people being members although this varies a little from Group to Group. Very few, if any are owners or managers of for example, small engineering companies, shops, nurseries, hairdressers etc. and it is mostly medium and larger sized companies who are represented. It is also noted that there is good representation in the public sector (Local Authorities, Government Departments and Government Agencies).

What sets Safety Groups as being unique is that they are open to anybody and everybody, not just those involved in health and safety. While IOSH, the professional body for safety practitioners has Group meetings it is attended by health and safety professionals for health and safety professionals. Safety Groups are different and meetings have a different atmosphere and culture and cater for non-professionals to mix and learn from professionals. Groups form a structured informal network while working together with many others who can help their cause and in turn health and safety.

Some Groups are active, work with others and communicate their meetings and events to adjacent Groups or every Group in the Region. Some Groups work in isolation and have no or very little communication with other Groups. Joint meetings also takes place in some areas or Groups come together for special events such as conferences / seminars and there is strength in such an approach.

#### **Geography**

While Groups cover most of the UK there are some gaps that exist e.g. central Wales. In addition by the nature of Group's development the boundaries can be vague and members can come from outside of a Group area. Formal boundaries as such do not exist although the description of the Group name gives a clue to the general location of them. While some are named after cities (e.g. Sunderland) or towns (e.g. Norwich), others are named as Counties (e.g. Leicestershire) and some are neither but describe a geographical area (e.g. Lea and Ouse Valley). While this is only important to a

certain extent individuals and members do like to belong somewhere and linked to something or a place / area that they can associate with.

It is difficult therefore to say absolutely which areas are covered and which aren't, particularly in areas where a Group is not very active. In addition some areas are particularly large (e.g. Devon and Cornwall) and the travel distance to meetings can be prohibitive for some and in particular those where time and money is important and many SME's would associate with this.

One of the possible solutions to coverage and increasing membership is to develop more local and sector specific Groups. It is suggested the best way forward to do this is by working in association with Workplace Health Connect (WHC). While WHC offers free, confidential, impartial and confidential advice and guidance through visits to SME's there is no signposting or membership to any support Group. Enquiries with WHC Pathfinders and SME's indicate that SME's would like to be part of a health and safety support group but they would prefer that they were like-minded or sector specific and less meetings would be necessary during any year, typically 2 – 4 meetings. SME's have also requested that meetings have a slightly different agenda, although all feel short presentations and updating would essential features.

## **Membership**

It is estimated that there are over 5,000 members of Groups in the UK. While some Groups have databases of their members many do not. Most membership is a Company one and therefore more than one person can attend meetings and benefit from the Company membership. The way a person or their Company joins a Group is typically through a membership form although not every Group has a form. Most people appear to join through word of mouth and are invited to a meeting by another member to see if they like it and it suits them.

Data collection on membership forms varies so that it is difficult to profile membership in a way that would assist Safety Groups UK and HSE make decisions. A small number of Groups make it possible to join online but it has to be remembered that only 50% of Groups have a website and not many have the facility for a form be completed online. While not wanting to interfere with Groups it is recommended that there is a common template for membership that captures certain membership data. It is also recommended that all membership forms can be completed electronically and available to complete on a website and sent electronically. Data to include:

- Name of person completing form
- Address
- Company name
- Company size (no. of workers)
- Company type / sector (what it does)
- E-mail address(es) for contact(s)
- Telephone contact number(s)

- Individuals and their designation who are to use the Group and contact details (telephone and e-mail)
- How you became aware of the Safety Group
- Membership of other professional bodies or Groups
- Specialist interest areas
- Reason for joining Group

It would be additionally useful if there was a national database of all members in the UK broken down into Regions and by individual Group. This would both help Safety Groups UK, individual Groups and HSE, particularly for reasons of better communication / consultation. Consideration should be given to having memberships administered centrally.

While membership is currently over 5,000 and while this is a good number, it is relatively small given membership for example of IOSH is at over 20,000. Also, given there are 4 million companies or so in the UK, Group representation is small. Membership numbers while not the sole measure of success is an important one. It is recommended that membership is actively increased through an agreed marketing strategy to attract more members. This should be delivered as a priority by whoever is appointed to take Safety Groups UK and Groups forward. It would be hoped that membership could be doubled to over 10,000 in 5 years and the profile of membership shifts a little so that non-health and safety representation and that of SME's is over 50%.

To make a significant impact with SME's and 'hard to reach' employers / employees it will be necessary to have an outreach plan as part of the marketing strategy which includes working with others (see Section 7. Support and promotion of Groups by others).

Finally in the area of membership it is necessary to note (and not uncommon to health and safety) that there is a high percentage of male representation, although no actual figures are available. It also has been commented by a number of Groups and members, of a concern of a lack of younger members. While this research did not examine the age profile of members it is apparent that some Groups average age would be older than that of the working population and this is also true of Committee and Executive members. One of the reasons for this is due to the time necessary to manage / administer a Group. It is often the retired and semi-retired who have more time than the employed to dedicate to Groups. This is compounded at least in part by the fact that employers appear to be demanding more of employees including health and safety staff. As a result many employers are more reluctant to give time off or to allow the use of facilities for voluntary activities such as helping with Safety Groups.

To address the above I would recommend that the marketing and promotion of Groups seeks to address the need to attract female and younger members and in turn to try to reflect this in the make up of Group committees. It may help if the offer of membership was more attractive to those groups of people.

### **The Safety Groups Offer (why members are members and what they get for the cost of membership)**

Safety Groups generally offer a number of meetings with speakers each year for their members to attend and this is seen by the majority of Groups as their main function. There are a number of benefits to these Group meetings due to their informality and friendliness even though presentations themselves may be formal. There is much networking at meetings and those not in health and safety feel free to ask questions of others and to share good practice.

The main benefits of belonging to a Group (as described in the Safety Groups UK leaflet) include:

- Regular contact with people in other companies dealing with health and safety, local education establishments, Business Links, Local Authority staff and representatives from the Enforcing Authorities – HSE inspectors, EHO's, the emergency services, safety product suppliers etc.;
- Maintaining current awareness of health and safety issues through a regular programme of invited speakers, occasional seminars and conferences, newsletters, company visits etc.;
- Access to lively discussion, debate and new ideas and the ability to share problems and expertise with others in similar situations;
- Enjoyable social opportunities; and
- Enhancing company image both with other local businesses and the wider community.

It is apparent that members value their Group and the meetings and my research would bear out the importance and the benefit of such meetings, although there is a variation in the quality of meetings due to a number of factors. While such meetings serve existing members well there is some evidence that some Groups may have become satisfied in just serving their present membership, particularly in smaller Groups. To keep Groups manageable there is no or little incentive or perceived need to do anything more or to encourage any other than a small number of members. This position is understandable and a number of Groups may feel uncomfortable with any imposed need to do otherwise.

In asking why SME's are not well represented it is necessary to look at not only the offer but also the barriers to attending meetings when not a health and safety person.

What might SME's want from a Safety Group?

- Meetings relevant to their business and preferably with those from the same sector;
- At a time when they can attend meetings and this may mean breakfast meetings or lunch-time meetings;
- At a place which is local / short travel distance;
- Shorter and fewer meetings;
- To be kept up to date with current legislation and to know about services that can help them with their health and safety;

- Help and information (sources of advice);
- Subsidised training; and
- Free or little cost involved

Some Safety Groups do provide other things to their members such as social events, visits (in place of a meeting), seminars, workshops and conferences. Seminars and workshops I feel should be included in all Safety Group programme of events to deal with priority and lead issues as they are a way of not only dealing with the issues but also are a good marketing tool and can raise much needed money for a Group.

### **Funding and Financial Matters**

Nearly all Groups have a membership fee and this varies from £10 to over £100, only a few Groups have free membership. Most Groups and particularly the smaller Groups typically charge £10 - £40. The cost of membership is a matter for each individual Group who manage their own affairs including their finances.

While some Groups do struggle financially and many suffer from chasing late payers, most Groups appear to manage their finances very well and some have a good bank balance. Certainly one AGM I attended there was a healthy £15,344.32 in the bank and most seem to run with at least £3,000 plus in the bank. At least one Group, due to a good financial management, has made membership free for 2 years (normally £25) and another is free as funding is provided from elsewhere.

While this report is not intended to look at funding and financial matters it is an important factor in taking Groups forward, for the majority of Groups who want to. If on average and it is only an estimate, each Group had £4,000 in the bank, there would be over £300,000 sitting in bank accounts across the UK. This financial management should be congratulated but wonder if the money could be put to better use other than sitting in banks?

The attractiveness of joining a Group depend on a number of factors and certainly cost is one of them. Members and importantly potential (SME) members may ask "What do I get for me £30 membership fee?" and this can at least inform the decision whether it is 'worth it' (to join). Generally speaking membership normally applies to a Company and a number of people could attend from the Company should they wish. In addition membership is extremely cheap given what members can get and compared to other memberships or what a half-day health and safety seminar may cost.

Most Groups could probably increase their fees for Company members by £10 - £20 and not loose any members. There is also a perception rightly or wrongly that anything which is free, or extremely cheap mustn't be very good and it is considered that higher membership in some cases would be an attraction at a number of levels. Individuals and retired individual membership may be different but not significantly so.

A small number of Groups have been successful in attracting funding and some sponsorship. Other Groups have been clever in using 'in kind' offers from employers willing to provide rooms (sometimes including a buffet and refreshments) for meetings and other events.

Those Groups that are struggling should be assisted with a strategy to put their finances on a firm footing and I would recommend that all Groups are asked if they are in such a position for the Safety Groups UK Management Committee to consider. It is thought less than 10 and maybe less than 5 Groups would be in such a position.

Given other recommendations do impact on funding I am recommending that one option would be to ask Groups to apply a small levy (maybe £10) to membership so that the support that is necessary to take Groups forward can be funded if not by other means. Alternatively it could be possible to ask Groups for a donation for an appeal fund.

For Groups that organise conferences / seminars these generally take the position of being self-funding and may add to the bank balance depending on the number attending. Such events which can be open to members and non-members can be a good source of outreach and promote work of the Groups.

## **Success**

At present there is little evidence that there is any measure of the success of Safety Groups as a whole. There is the Alan Butler awards (see below) and these recognise Groups who enter (about 25% of Groups) in 4 categories but this is not a measure of success as such.

The Safety Groups UK Management Committee need to consider the issue of success of Groups, as do individual Safety Groups. A small basket of success measures should be agreed.

It would be useful if Safety Groups provided an annual return to Safety Groups UK Management Committee covering a small number of key success areas. Measures that should be considered to gain an overall national picture (but not to compare) might include:

- Total number of members;
- Number of members by employer size (self-employed, 1 - 4, 5 – 50, 51 – 250 and 250+ ) and in particular SME's;
- Number of active members (average attendance at meetings);
- Number of meetings and other activities during the year;
- Number of new members;
- Number of consultative exercises responded to; and
- Member feedback questionnaire results.

Safety Groups UK need to consider others measures of success as appropriate for example how many Groups are represented or turn up to meetings.

It is important to record that while a number of Safety Groups were until fairly recently relatively inactive the injection of one or two enthusiastic people into the Groups have transformed them into successful and thriving Groups providing a great service to their members. This is particularly important as it demonstrates even for those relatively inactive Groups a little support, leadership and drive can turn them quite quickly into thriving Groups and one of the reasons for recommending the appointment of a National Safety Groups Development Adviser to lead Safety Groups UK and to help Groups, particularly inactive ones.

As part of the National role it would be beneficial to monitor Groups for reasons of support using a traffic light system (red, amber and green) as indicators of a Group's status in relation to their activity and membership. Those in red and amber could then be provided with appropriate support.

### **Group Meetings**

The main 'offer' for being part of a Group are the Group meetings where members get together and listen to presentations, receive updates on legislation and initiatives, and have the opportunity to network, share and ask questions of others.

Most active Groups aim to have 10 meetings a year, some have less and there are one or two exceptions to this. Information and feedback from Groups have raised a number of issues in relation to meetings and these include:

- Venue – in terms of the cost, size of room to accommodate members, parking and whether a static or rotating venue is preferred;
- Speakers – availability, cost and quality of presentation; and
- Cost of providing meetings

One of the important purposes of Groups should be to raise and discuss HSE priority areas (these reflect the UK's priorities for health, safety and well-being) and link in with campaigns. A good example would be the upcoming 'Back Campaign'.

The deciding of what topics to present and discuss at meetings are generally decided by the Group's Committee at an AGM or other meeting. This normally entails planning the whole year so that dates, venues and speakers can be organised and the programme published.

While priority areas are in the main considered by Groups, the decision as to what topics are covered in the next 12 months by Groups is subject to a number of practical considerations. In some cases it is a matter of not having

covered a topic for a while or asking a good speaker (who doesn't charge) to return.

The quality of speakers does vary but this is true more generally. However, it is a prime consideration that the speaker is free and does not charge for travel or other expenses. This may reduce the pool of good quality speakers many of which do charge. In some cases Groups fall back to their own and either Committee members or other members will often offer or be persuaded to give a presentation. It is recommended that Groups provide details of good speakers so that a database 'pool' of speakers is developed and made available to all Groups. The database should record the speaker and contact details, subject area(s), cost, where they are available to speak

A number of Groups have also mentioned when planning a year in advance it is not possible to know what the HSE's priority areas might be and can not therefore cover the topic at the appropriate time. Examination of Groups programmes over the next 6 months indicate that few (if any) have 'backs' in their programmes and given the HSE Partnership Agreement with Safety Groups UK this situation needs to be addressed.

It is considered while a year programme can and should be produced, meetings should build in sufficient flexibility so that a second topic or other presentation can be catered for. Most Groups should be able to accommodate this and there is evidence that this has been done.

### **Role of RoSPA**

RoSPA have been critical to the existence and continuance of Groups and provide under the constitution of Safety Groups UK the secretariat support. It is generally considered by Groups and members that RoSPA have been and should continue to be central to Safety Groups UK at least in the short and medium-term and until there is central support provided from elsewhere if this ever occurs.

In addition to providing central support Safety Groups UK and Groups have the benefit of some of Roger Bibbings time, a key and respected figure in UK health and safety and a great enthusiast and supporter of the Group's movement.

The benefits and added value of RoSPA's involvement include amongst other things:

- The provision and maintenance of the Safety Groups UK website;
- Good practice guides;
- Membership package to Groups;
- Info alerts;
- Assistance with providing or identifying speakers; and
- Central point of contact

RoSPA have also been instrumental in setting up the 'How to guides' on the Safety Groups website and in time will including how to:

- Recruit and maintain members;
- Develop an effective annual programme;
- Work with local intermediaries;
- Work with the local press and media;
- Raise and maintain finance;
- Secure sponsorship and support;
- Organise a seminar;
- Respond to consultation exercises;
- Develop and run a website; and
- Develop outreach to SME's

RoSPA's role in sharing good practice and promoting the work of the Groups in their magazine is vital to the Group's movement.

RoSPA provide the above 'in kind' and is the home of Safety Groups support. It is recommended that this position is maintained until such times that Safety Groups UK is a thriving self-sufficient organisation.

### **Alan Butler Awards**

A review of the annual awards scheme has recently been undertaken and the report has made a number of recommendations. I would only add a little to that report.

My research suggests that Groups who do not enter the awards do so for a small number of reasons:

- Time to complete the forms and attend any presentations (because of voluntary nature);
- Cost in terms of the above, particularly when at a distance from London; and
- Value of the award to balance against the above.

It appears that there is a core 25% or so of Groups who continue to participate in the awards on a regular basis. Those that do enter tend to be the better and more active Groups.

Consideration should be given by Safety Groups UK (and without losing the reason for the awards in the first place) to include additional categories for:

- The Group who has increased membership the most (by % or number);
- The Group showing the most effort and innovation in engaging with SME's (this would develop case studies of good practice which could then be shared);
- The Group with the best website;
- The Group best promoting the HSE priorities areas by means other than as part of regular meetings; and

- An individual member Company or individual making a significant impact on health and safety or demonstrating innovation in particular in relation to an HSE priority

It is and will continue to be difficult to promote the awards without someone either nationally or regionally to 'sell' the awards and the benefits of being involved. Out of the 4 objectives of the award scheme it is considered that only one is fully achieved and that is to recognise the high standards of work achieved by some Groups. It is considered that the other 3 objectives are not, or at least only partly met / true:

- To encourage all Groups to achieve high standards - although there is no definition as to what high standards are and this links to success of Groups or what makes a Group successful;
- The winning entries being used as examples of good standards - most Groups who do not enter pay much attention to the examples; and
- Increase awareness of Safety Group's work – those that attend the ceremony and a few others will have their awareness increased but not those outside of Safety Groups (at least to any extent).

I feel the suggested way forward described in the review paper are the right ones with maybe a few additions as indicated above.

### **The limitations of Groups**

While nearly all Groups would welcome more members and in particular active members who attend meetings, most have reported that there are practical limits to expansion. A number of factors and situations suggest that while active members could double in size over time in some Groups, others could only manage a moderate or small increase in numbers.

### Meetings

Many meetings are hosted free of charge by a Company who is a member of the Group. That is why many have a static location and this helps that everyone knows the location along with the day and time (also being set say every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month apart from the Summer). Room size is therefore a limiting factor and many have responded that if too many attended meetings they could not cater for them as the room would simply be too small.

While an alternative might be able to be found it is very difficult to find good venues of a certain size which companies are willing to provide free of charge. Groups who do have this arrangement further report a reluctance and cost constraint in going to a hotel or similar. This is particularly true of the smaller Groups who charge very little for membership (£10 - £20).

In addition one of the huge positives and attractions to present Group meetings is their intimate and friendly nature. A small Group meeting of 20 or so where members can easily interact, share good practice and be comfortable asking questions has a certain feel to it. I have experienced these

now on several occasions during my field visits. If such a meeting was to expand to 40 – 60+ the nature and dynamics of the Group meeting would change. This is why large conferences have breakout workshops to try to achieve a more personal feel.

### Time

Everyone seems to be busier than ever or maybe just health and safety people! However, it is true to say those who act as Chairs, Secretaries, Treasurers and committee members all (with only a few exceptions) give up their free time (or take some out of their employment time as they have understanding employers) to do so. Particularly those who are employed and have other commitments have limited time and in part why a good number of Groups have retired and semi-retired people acting in those capacities. The oldest one I have spoken to was 78 years old! (and doing a good job).

An increase in membership increases the time necessary to deal with them from processing membership to communicating with them. Some have reported they could not cope with a doubling of member numbers even though it would increase the amount of money.

### Administration

To run any Group it is necessary to have access to certain things: telephone, computer, Internet, photocopier, printer etc. While some Groups rely on one or 2 committee members who have understanding employers who don't mind or know about photocopying, paper, envelopes, telephones etc. being used, more and more employers are becoming less amenable.

In addition some who are retired and operate from home do not have access to the common support that they used to so that basic things such as photocopying becomes a problem.

It is recommended that Groups do look to some paid administration to take away some of the burden which falls on a few. A small number do this already and appears to work successfully.

### Cost

Groups seem to be very prudent and manage their finances very well. Some have a very small turnover (less than £1,000). While the small number make everything manageable an increase in meeting attendance can, if not provided free, increase costs disproportionately to membership fees.

I am therefore recommending that while Groups are supported and encouraged to increase their number, particularly struggling Groups, this is not necessarily the best way forward for Safety Groups UK and in particular to make an impact on SME's. In fact, too many new members joining existing Groups could destabilise what has been maintained in some cases for over 50 years.

#### **4. THE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF GROUPS TO INFLUENCE AND PROMOTE HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIVITIES WITHIN SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES AND 'HARD TO REACH' EMPLOYEES**

Groups are willing to promote health and safety activities within small and medium sized employers (SME's), however capacity to do so is limited and in some cases very limited. This is in the main due to the poor representation of SME's in Groups and influencing factors in this respect are covered throughout this report.

Tackling SME's is notoriously difficult and the HSE and others have tried (and often failed) over many years to penetrate SME's and engage with them on health and safety matters. RoSPA themselves have recently embarked on an investigation into initiatives designed to promote better health and safety in small firms. At present the HSE is resting its hopes on Workplace Health Connect (WHC) and the WHC pathfinder organisations who are 6 months into their operation. Early signs indicate that WHC will be successful with over 1,000 visits in the first 6 months.

It has been stated earlier that the present characteristics of Groups and how they operate do not make Group meetings particularly attractive to SME's and it is considered that simple expansion of Groups is not necessarily the best way forward. However, some expansion of SME membership, particularly medium sized enterprises is possible and there is some capacity to do this.

It is considered that there are 3 main areas that I consider will increase Groups potential to be able to influence and promote health and safety activities in SME's and these are included below.

##### **Marketing and advertising**

While there is some marketing of Safety Groups such as the stand at the Safety Expo at the Birmingham NEC, the leaflet on Safety Groups and the RoSPA website, the present marketing and advertising is unlikely to make an impact on SME's or at best a very small one. Some Groups do promote themselves but such activity is limited because it tends to be very time consuming and there is a cost implication to most marketing.

It is recommended both here and elsewhere that there needs to be a marketing strategy and someone to take the strategy forward with Groups. The strategy and the cost involved needs to be balanced with the limited capacity to increase the size of Groups.

## **Outreach**

It is clear that successful outreach is essential to make an impact into SME's and particularly hard to reach SME's. It is considered that while looking for those best placed to assist in outreach that probably the Learning and Skills Council is in the best position to do so as it indirectly impacts on 100,000's of SME's. The organisations (training providers, colleges and education business link organisations) that the LSC funds, visit in the region of 1 million workplaces a year to assess and discuss health and safety. It is at this point of contact when Safety Groups and the benefits of Safety Groups could be raised and details provided given that there is a leaflet or 'tip card' to provide the details to employers. This is one of the main forms of outreach used by WHC pathfinders who themselves have an outreach plan for engaging with SME's.

It is considered that Groups work with WHC to 'piggy back' onto their outreach plans rather than re-inventing a well-worn wheel.

## **Use of the Internet**

The HSE and others have seen the impact that the Internet has had on communicating and education in matters of health and safety. Safety Groups at present do not use the Internet particularly well and only 50% of Groups have a website. More and more SME's are using the Internet for more and more of its activities and Groups need to have a good and up to date website. Evidence from WHC demonstrates that outside of telemarketing and mailshots that the Internet is the best way to penetrate SME's.

It is recommended that Safety Groups UK develop a strategy for use of the Internet both in terms of marketing and outreach but also to cover communication.

The present Safety Group's website maintained by RoSPA is very good and continues to be improved and this should provide a good springboard for Groups.

## **Other matters**

Elsewhere within this report are suggestions to improve capacity and influence SME's in particular through the use of seminars and workshops but also through the establishments of new local sector specific Groups to cater for SME's. It is also important that Safety Groups UK and Groups work with others who can support and promote Groups (see section 7. Support and Promotion of Groups by Others).

The good practice guides to be hosted on the Safety Groups UK website will assist Groups and such good practice should be promoted by whoever is appointed to take the Safety Groups movement forward.

## **5. THE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE IN LEAD PROJECTS, CAMPAIGNS AND PRIORITY AREAS**

Groups are willing to participate in lead projects, campaigns and priority areas and most Groups report trying to reflect such in their meeting programme. However, the programme of meetings is often arranged well in advance with a year programme advertised with topics and speakers. A review of the current programmes reveals for example that the forthcoming HSE 'Backs' campaign as mentioned earlier, is not reflected well in Group programmes.

There are a number of reasons for this and while they may be valid Groups need to be sufficiently flexible to accommodate such lead projects and initiatives. In addition, it maybe that Groups have to be more open to providing one off events, conferences, workshops or seminars to get the lead project messages to a greater number of the local business community than just a relatively small number of members who turn up at meetings.

While there is a great willingness to participate in HSE lead projects and initiatives the limitations of Groups as described elsewhere may prove a limiting factor into turning willingness into an effective reality. The time and resources at the disposal of some Groups and their Committees is limited and this in turn can limit capacity to participate in lead projects.

Capacity is a recurring theme in that Groups impact on a relatively small number of members and even less if one considers active members. This raises again the need to increase membership and in particular in respect to SME's.

I would recommend that Safety Groups UK encourage through the National Safety Groups Development Adviser if appointed and other representatives that at least one Regional event per year is held that focuses on HSE priority areas. Such events need to be well marketed so that each event reaches the maximum number of employers / employees. In addition such events that currently are run tend to make a profit including through the delegate fees, sponsorship, advertising and exhibitors.

### **The DERM Project**

Safety Groups UK have been successful in leading a project aimed at reducing the risk of dermatitis. The project, what has been done so far and what is planned is at <http://www.rosipa.com/safetygroupsuk/derm.htm>.

What this does show is that Safety Groups UK and Groups do have the willingness and people with the skills to take forward lead projects that can support the HSE / C objectives. However, it has to be said that the success has relied on the great efforts of a few and those involved should be congratulated on the work to date which has been of an excellent quality.

## **6. THE WILLINGNESS AND CAPACITY OF SAFETY GROUPS UK TO PARTICIPATE ON LEAD PROJECTS AND INPUT INTO CONSULTATIVE EXERCISES**

There is willingness for Safety Groups UK and for Groups to participate in consultation and consultative documents with the HSE and others. One of the few obstacles to this and not a very big one is the timing of consultation exercise and the match with Group meetings. However, better communication with members and member communication with Safety Groups UK should overcome this.

The Safety Group website already contains a consultation link and this can be viewed at [http://www.rospa.com/safetygroupsuk/how\\_to\\_consultations.htm](http://www.rospa.com/safetygroupsuk/how_to_consultations.htm). The link provides a guide and 9 suggestions for Groups as to how they can be involved and what they might want to do with consultations. Present consultative documents on the web site include:

- Worker involvement;
- Workplace transport; and
- Sensible health and safety

Given that consultative documents and exercises are promoted by Safety Groups UK and by the HSE, members have plenty opportunity either individually, on behalf of their companies or as part of Groups to respond and make their views known.

To be successful Groups do need to encourage members to respond and be supported in doing so and again it would be suggested that the National Safety Groups Development Adviser and Area / Regional Safety Groups Liaison Adviser include consultations in their role.

The issue of capacity has already been dealt with and is reflected here in relation to consultations.

## **7. SUPPORT AND PROMOTION OF GROUPS BY OTHERS**

For Groups to thrive and be successful they need to be supported both within Safety Group movement but also from others. These 'others' include partners (current and potential) and stakeholders who have an interest in either occupational health and safety or small medium enterprises. In addition there are those that can be classed as intermediaries that could have a positive impact on promoting Groups.

The HSE and others have looked over many years at the problem of SME engagement and it continues to exercise their minds. While there are potentially dozens of possible organisations that can help Safety Groups UK and Groups, HSE research and other evidence suggests that few are in reality good at engaging SME's about health and safety and referring them on to others.

A number of organisations have been contacted as part of this research and all are supportive and sympathetic to the Groups and their objectives. That said, few have a good chance of assisting Safety Groups UK but it is considered that each should be contacted nationally (by Safety Groups UK) and locally where appropriate to raise the issue of support and promotion for the Group's movement.

Those that may be able to help include:

- Business Links
- Small Business Service
- British Chambers of Commerce and Local Chambers
- Business Clubs
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Regional Development Agencies
- Trade Associations
- Health and Safety Organisations (RoSPA, IOSH, NEBOSH, BOHS, BSC, IIRSM etc.)
- PPE suppliers
- Accountants
- Banks
- Institute of Directors
- CBI
- Health and Safety Lawyers
- TUC and unions
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
- Major employers – contractual / supply chains
- Local Authorities
- CHAS (contractors tendering / approval scheme)
- Government initiatives
- Workplace Health Connect
- Investors in People Ltd

## Safety Groups UK final report, David Bryant

- Insurance associations, brokers and insurers
- The HSE
- Government departments in particular for procurement
- Sector Skills Councils
- Connexions / schools and Education Business Partnerships
- Colleges
- Training Providers
- Fire Authorities
- Consultants and consultancies
- Other professional bodies – CIPD
- First aid providers
- Small Firms Enterprise Development Initiative (SFEDI)
- PPE / C suppliers

It has been mentioned elsewhere that in the first instance the LSC and WHC should be the focus of Safety Groups UK and to develop a relationship and agree some positive actions that can be taken forward.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

Safety Groups UK and Groups should continue and be encouraged to prosper as they do play a role in the health and safety system in the UK. The mission, vision and aims of Safety Groups UK is clear and Groups have an opportunity to play an important role in improving health and safety standards in the UK.

While there are many aspects of Safety Groups UK and Groups to applaud, it has to be accepted that the Groups movement is reliant on volunteers and the ability of Groups to move forward varies considerably. Some Groups appear to be stagnant and some struggling and this contrasts with others that are active and increasing their membership and activity.

While all Groups appear to be willing to be involved in anything which contributes positively to health and safety, there are a number of factors which limit the capacity of Groups to, as a body, reach out to as many employers and employees as they could and membership in relative terms is small.

One of the main goals that must be realised is the number of members and in particular members representing SME's. Safety Groups in many cases need to be modernised in terms of the offer and the use of technology.

However, Groups are situated all around the UK and there are within Groups willing and able members and those on Committees with the skills to transform Groups into pro-active thriving organisations. To be able to do this there needs to be clear focussed leadership and support for Groups.

While there are many potential suitors to work with Safety Groups UK and Groups around the UK it is clear that only a few are really in a position to do so, particularly in relation to making an impact on engaging SME's.

RoSPA play an important support role in the movement of Group's and many have mentioned this and the support that is provided. Some would however like clarity over the role of RoSPA and that of Safety Groups UK. Locally at Group level there is sometimes a feeling that the Safety Group is an extension of RoSPA or in fact a RoSPA Group. This confusion while understandable needs to be addressed and Safety Groups UK needs to develop its own identity.

The appointment of a 'leader' to take forward the Safety Group's movement should help with the Safety Groups UK identity and clarify the relationship with RoSPA and others.

HSE support is equally important to Group's movement and in particular their External Relations Managers.

A proposed organisational model is included at Appendix 4.

## 9. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consideration be given to changing the name of Safety Groups UK to 'Health and Safety Groups UK' (H&SG(UK)) or 'Occupational Health and Safety Groups UK (OH&SG(UK))'.
2. There is a common membership template form that captures core data / information. It is also recommended that all membership forms can be completed electronically and available on a central and linked website.
3. A national part time (National Safety Groups Development Adviser) post should be created and funded to lead and drive forward the Safety Groups movement.
4. Regional part-time posts be created to promote and liaise with Groups in each Region.
5. National administrative support should be provided by Safety Groups UK and Groups should give consideration to part-time paid administrators where this is not already the case;
6. The 'offer' or benefits of being a Group member should be made more attractive, particularly for SME's
7. Groups should consider providing a seminar / workshop each year and form a more important role in their planning. This is a good way to deal with priority and lead issues, is a good marketing tool and has potential to make money for Groups.
8. To maintain and improve the quality of speakers and presentations Groups should consider, if funds are available, paying speakers and their travel costs. This will of course affect funds but is recommended that membership fees are increased to cover this and other costs.
9. Safety Groups UK and local Groups need to decide on a number of measures of success as this is important both to manage Groups but also when seeking funding. Groups should be asked to provide an annual data report so that success can be measured and promoted.
10. The role of RoSPA is maintained and enhanced with RoSPA continuing to provide the secretarial support to Safety Groups UK and central point of contact to Groups.
11. A strong link with WHC be established nationally and regionally as a key stakeholder and for purposes of outreach and increasing membership.
12. A database of speakers available to all Groups is developed over time so as to assist Groups who struggle to find good speakers.
13. A national marketing and promotional strategy be developed and this incorporates an outreach plan and a way to attract younger members and female members
14. Present Safety Groups should remain as they are but greater support be provided to those who require it so as to further the Groups and to maximise their potential and increase membership
15. Smaller local sector groups should be developed with 2 – 4 meetings a year and these should be developed through working in partnership with WHC Pathfinders.
16. All Safety Groups should have a web site and websites for all Safety Groups should be linked and supported where needed. Safety

Groups UK and Groups should maximise the use of the Internet and electronic communication including the use of good practice guides being developed.

17. The 'offer' of what a Safety Group provides / does is made clear and enhanced to make it more attractive in particular to younger persons, females and SME's.
18. Those organisations that are thought able to support and promote Safety Groups be contacted to seek their support and invited to participate however they can.
19. Safety Groups UK and HSE work together to devise a plan to ensure the best possible involvement in lead and priority areas.
20. A levy of around £10 should be considered for all members of Groups to be able to take forward these recommendations where there is a cost implication. An alternative could be to set up an appeal fund and ask for donations from Groups (and others) and this may be more appealing.
21. Sponsorship and other forms of funding be sought.
22. The Alan Butler awards offer a few additional categories including for; the Group who have the most increased membership; innovative SME outreach; best priority area event other than a meeting; best website; individual member contribution.

## **Safety Groups UK: Framework for research / discussion**

### **Name of Group:**

**Chair:**

**Secretary:**

**Treasurer:**

**Executive / Committee members:**

### **Regional Safety Groups UK Representative:**

#### **Constitution/composition of the Group**

- Geographical area / coverage?
- Links with other agencies
- HSE involvement
- Links with IOSH local structure? (crossover, competition, position?)
- Registered charity?
- Mission statement?
- Aims / objectives of the Group?
- Business plan

#### **Membership:**

- How to join – form? How do you become a member (card or certificate to say you are?)?
- How known / advertised (how members are attracted)?
- Cost to join?
- How many?
- Composition? Size, activity sector, Local Authority etc
- Consultants?
- Trade union / safety reps represented?
- SME's
- Non- health and safety, full-time health and safety, part-time
- Members of RoSPA? Or other affiliations?
- How meetings are advertised and membership interest maintained?

#### **Communication:**

- E-mail
- Letter
- Newsletter
- Telephone
- Database
- Website
- Links to Safety Groups UK
- Links with other Groups in region? (Visit each other's meetings etc, co-operation on events, planning etc?)
- Minutes of meetings?
- Other events / activities?
- Media?
- Informal networking / social?

**Operation:**

(How does the Group work / operate?)

- Committee, how elected, how many meetings, business cycle etc.
- Key figures, secretary etc? How long in post? Bringing in new blood?
- How many meetings? Fixed or variable location?
- Costs?
- How funded?
- Topics chosen for discussion?
- How many attend (make up)
- HSE attend?
- Speakers e.g. (how sourced?)
- Topic areas over last 12 months – planned 12 months?
- Other activities?
- Any local sponsorship (local companies, help in kind etc)?
- Printed programme of events?
- Links with IOSH?
- Sharing good practice?

**Outreach:**

- Business community (links with?)
- SME's (direct and via contracting, supply chains etc?)
- Chambers?
- FSB etc.?
- Business Links?
- LSC?
- Outreach through local media (newspapers, local radio etc);
- Any key allies, networks or other groups?

**Future of the Groups**

- How do you see it?
- More successful / thriving?
- What is needed?
- What are the opportunities?
- What are the main barriers?
- What if anything would you want from SGUK?
- What can you do for SGUK?

**Support (How would they like Groups supported)**

- Need any?
- What support would you find helpful?
- WHC
- Web enablement (barriers, help needed)

**3 priorities:**

- SME's and H&S promotion?
- HSE priority areas?
- Consultation?

**Safety Groups UK**

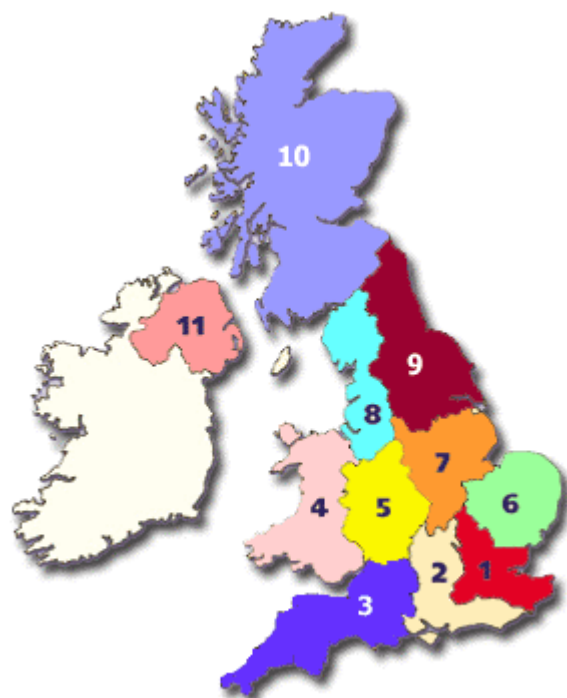
- Knowledge of re-launch?
- Communications
- Concerns?
- Expectations?
- Alan Butler Awards (useful or not?)
- Regional representation on MC? Views to and from?
- Value?
- Funding support (levy per member to SGUK?)
- Engagement with national agenda?
- Reasons to contribute / not to contribute?

**Topic Groups?**

- Construction
- Charities Safety Group
- Other



## SAFETY GROUPS



### Areas

1. London & South East
2. South
3. South West
4. Wales
5. West Midlands
6. East Anglia
7. East Midlands
8. North West
9. North East
10. Scotland
11. Northern Ireland

### Area 1: London and South East

1. Charities
2. Kent
3. Lea and Ouse Valley
4. London
5. Milton Keynes
6. South East Construction

### Area 2: South

1. Hampshire
2. Isle of Wight
3. Jersey
4. Oxford
5. Reading
6. Southampton
7. Thames Valley

### Area 3: South West

1. Avon
2. Devon & Cornwall
3. Somerset
4. Wessex
5. Wiltshire

**Area 4: Wales**

1. Cardiff & South East Wales
2. Swansea & West Wales
3. Wales (North East)
4. Wales (North West)
5. Wales (South Construction)

**Area 5: West Midlands**

1. Birmingham
2. Coventry & Warwickshire
3. Gloucestershire
4. Herefordshire
5. The Marches
6. Staff (North)
7. CHASE
8. Worcestershire

**Area 6: East Anglia**

1. Mid Anglia
2. East Anglia Construction
3. Cambridge
4. Norfolk West
5. Norwich
6. Peterborough & District
7. Suffolk and North Essex
8. Waveney

**Area 7: East Midlands**

1. Burton
2. Leicestershire
3. Midland Construction
4. Northampton
5. Nottinghamshire

**Area 8: North West**

1. Cumbria South
2. Lancashire
3. Lancashire East
4. Manchester
5. Manchester (North)
6. Merseyside
7. Merseyside & Cheshire Construction
8. North West Construction

**Area 9: North East**

1. Bradford
2. Durham & North Yorkshire
3. Humberside
4. Humberside South
5. Kirklees

6. Newcastle Construction
7. North Lincs.
8. Northumbria
9. Sheffield
10. Sunderland
11. Teesside
12. Teesside SHE Partnership
13. West & North Yorkshire
14. Yorkshire (South)

**Area 10: Scotland**

1. Ayrshire
2. Central Scotland
3. Fife
4. Grampian
5. Inverclyde and Renfrew
6. Scottish Chamber of Safety
7. SHEF Scotland
8. Tayside

**Area 11: Northern Ireland**

1. Northern Ireland



## **SAFETY GROUPS UK**

### **Constitution**

#### **1. Titles**

The organisation shall be known as "Safety Groups UK", hereinafter referred to as "the organisation". Individual groups shall be known as "Nationally Affiliated Health and Safety Groups" with the abbreviation "Safety Groups", hereinafter referred to as "Groups".

In this context Groups include non-profit-making, local or regional associations of companies or organisations whose purpose is to promote, maintain and improve standards of health and safety, locally regionally or nationally.

#### **2. Objective**

The objective of the organisation shall be to advance education in all aspects of health and safety at work and to promote the provision of safe and healthy working environments for the public benefit.

In furtherance of the above objective but not further or otherwise, the organisation may exercise the following powers:

- a) To provide assistance to and help co-ordinate the work of the Groups in the United Kingdom and support the formation of new groups both local and regional.
- b) To disseminate information to all Groups and to publicise the work and policies of the Groups.
- c) To advise key players in the UK Health and Safety system on any matter which the organisation consider justifies national consideration.

#### **3. Membership of the Organisation**

a) Full Voting Membership of the organisation shall be restricted to one representative from each member Group. Groups which terminate their activities, merge with other Groups or whose membership falls below ten shall automatically have their membership revoked and shall cease to have the right to be independently represented in the organisation.

b) All existing member groups as at the June 2005 AGM will have automatic registration as members of the organisation.

Subsequently, Groups wishing to register as members of the organisation must submit a written application to the organisation's Secretary, to be received no later than twenty-eight days before the meeting of the organisation at which the application is to be considered. Associate membership of the organisation shall be available at the discretion of the

organisation to a representative of each sponsor and the co-opted members of the management committee. The Director of Safety Policy Division, RoSPA and his nominees (normally two) shall be entitled to attend the organisation as nonvoting members. The organisation may co-opt any other persons it feels may contribute to its deliberations as nonvoting members.

c) Application for registration must be approved at an ordinary meeting of the organisation by a simple majority vote of those present and entitled to vote.

d) The organisation may revoke the membership of any Group or remove from office any member of the Management Committee subject to a two-thirds majority of those present at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose provided that:

- i) at least one month's notice of the proposal to revoke membership or remove from office has been given to the Group (or person) by letter to the last known Group Secretary (or contact address) and that the reasons for such revocation (or removal from office) are clearly stated and
- ii) the item has been circulated to members as an agenda item for the meeting and
- iii) subject to the right of appeal to an independent panel of three persons who shall not be voting members and who shall be nominated by the President.

e) The United Kingdom shall be divided into regions as decided periodically at AGM.

#### **4. Voting**

a) Each Member Group represented at meetings of the organisation shall have one vote.

b) In absence of a representative, a Group may delegate a deputy with full voting rights to represent the Group at a meeting of the organisation.

c) Groups unable to attend may vote by Proxy directly to the Secretary in writing.

d) The Chairman shall have a casting vote.

#### **5. Election of Honorary Officers**

- a) The honorary post of President shall be filled by a person of standing who shall be recommended by the Management Committee and elected by the organisation.

b) The President will continue in office until such time as the organisation considers it appropriate to appoint a successor.

- c) One or more Vice-presidents of suitable standing may be appointed on a similar basis if the organisation considers it appropriate.
- d) Honorary officers shall not be entitled to vote.

## **6. Election of Officers**

- a) The election of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer shall take place at the AGM, or, in the event of any vacancy occurring during the year, at an ordinary meeting of the organisation. Officers elected at an AGM or during the year shall serve until the next AGM.
- b) One or more independent examiner(s) of the accounts shall also be appointed at the AGM.
- c) To be eligible to stand for Chairman or Vice-Chairman nominees must have attended a minimum of four organisational meetings in the two years prior to election. All elected officers and other elected Management Committee members shall be members of affiliated Safety Groups.
- d) Nominations for Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and two other Management Committee Members shall be invited at the previous meeting of the organisation. Nomination forms will be sent out eight weeks prior to the AGM and will be available at the meeting. The nominations must be signed by the Nominee and by a Proposer and Secunder who must be voting members of the organisation. A candidate who seeks election must ensure that a valid nomination form reaches the organisation Secretary no less than twenty-eight days before the AGM. An election shall be held if there is more than one valid nomination for each office. The returning officer, who will normally be the Secretary, shall validate nominations.
- e) The Nominee may include with the nomination form a typed and signed personal statement which shall be no greater than 250 words and one side of A4 in length. No other electoral publicity literature may be sent on behalf of a Nominee either directly or indirectly to members or Groups.
- f) Where there is no valid nomination for an office then the Management Committee shall appoint someone to that office on an interim basis until either that appointment is confirmed at an ordinary meeting of the organisation or until another election can be held.
- g) Ballot papers will be sent with the papers for the AGM (or ordinary meeting as applicable) to all Group Secretaries together with proxy forms. If proxy forms are to be used they must be deposited with the organisation Secretary before the start of the meeting. Voting can take place:
  - i) personally by the Group representative at the AGM or meeting called for the purpose.

- ii) by the organisation Chairman on behalf of the Safety Group provided that a valid proxy has been received on the requisite proxy form.

h) Only one vote may be cast by each Group for each office and then only for a candidate who has followed the nomination procedure. Votes must be cast on the ballot paper provided. A simple majority shall be sufficient to elect and in the event of a tie, the outgoing Chairman (or in his absence the Vice-Chairman) shall have the casting vote.

## **6. Secretarial Services**

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents shall provide the Secretary to the organisation (via the Director, Safety Policy Division) and secretarial services. In the event that RoSPA are unable to provide a Secretary then the Management Committee shall have the power to appoint a suitable person.

## **8. Agenda**

- a) The Agenda for meetings shall be sent out to all Groups not less than fourteen days before the meeting date.
- b) The Chairman may exercise discretion and invite any person(s) whom it is felt can contribute to any specific meeting or subject.
- c) Groups wishing to raise an item on the agenda shall give twenty-eight days notice of such an item in writing to the Secretary.

## **9. Meetings and Time**

- a) Meetings of the organisation shall normally be held three times a year, one of which will be the AGM.
- b) The financial year of the organisation shall coincide with the Government's tax year and a financial statement for the previous year shall be presented at the AGM
- c) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called:
  - i) By the Chairman (or Vice Chairman if the Chairman is incapacitated) or
  - ii) On petition to the Secretary by no less than 20% of the registered membership

**10. Quorum** A quorum of meetings of the organisation shall consist of eight Group representatives or 10% of the membership whichever is the lesser provided that this includes at least four members of the Management Committee.

## **11. Organisational Committees and Representatives**

a) The planning, organisation and day-to-day management of organisational activities shall be carried out by a Management Committee, which shall consist of:

The Chairman

The Vice-Chairman

The Treasurer

The Immediate Past Chairman

The Secretary

One Representative from each Region if so appointed.

b) The Management Committee may co-opt any persons to assist them in fulfilling their tasks and form sub-committees

c) The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the Treasurer shall act as Trustees to the charitable assets of the organisation.

## **12. Alterations to the Constitution**

a) Alterations to this Constitution shall receive the assent of two-thirds of the membership, subject to voting rules set out in Section 4, at an Annual or an Extraordinary General Meeting.

b) A resolution for the alteration of the Constitution must be received by the Secretary of the organisation at least twenty-eight days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward.

d) At least fourteen days notice of such a meeting must be given by the Secretary to the membership and must include notice of the alteration proposed: provided that

i) no alteration to clause 2 (Objective), clause 13 (Dissolution) or this clause, shall take effect until the approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction shall have been obtained; and

ii) no alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Safety Groups UK to cease to be a charity in law.

## **13. Dissolution**

a) Safety Groups UK may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by two-thirds majority of the membership, subject to voting rules set out in section 4, at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened for the purpose, of which twenty eight days notice shall have been given to the members.

b) Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of Safety Groups UK, provided that:

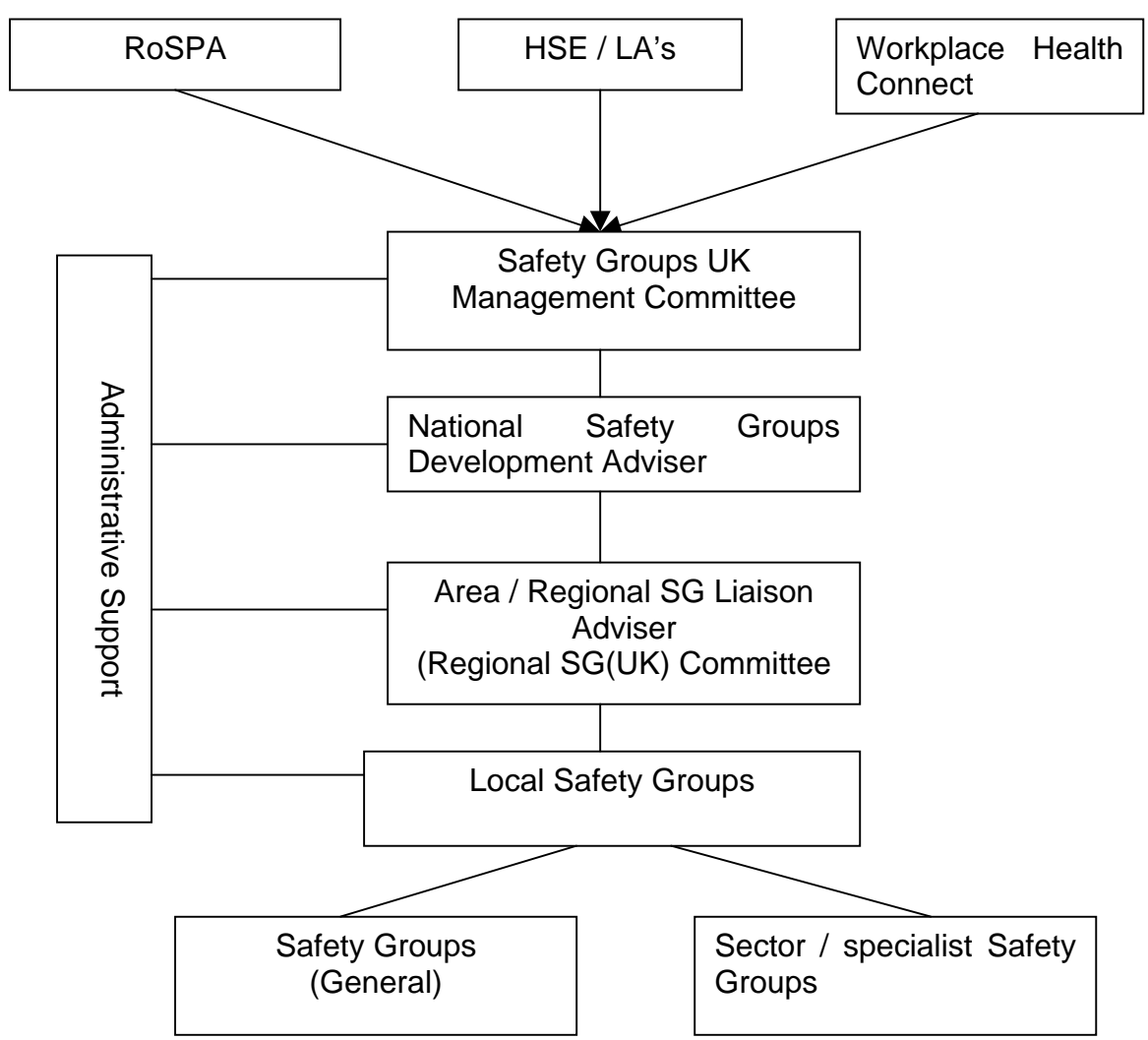
i) if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities such property shall not be paid to or distributed among

the members of Safety Groups UK but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to some or all of the objects of Safety Groups UK as the organisation may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision, then to some other charitable purpose.

**National link / stakeholder and intermediary outreach organisations**

National Outreach / Liaison

---



Outreach

---

**Local link / stakeholder and intermediary outreach organisations**

