

BWEA Health & Safety 2010



26 January 2010 Manchester

Maria McCaffery, Chief Executive, BWEA

Welcome address

Good morning and welcome to BWEA's last ever annual health and safety conference. Don't worry we haven't changed our mind – health & safety remains one of our top priorities – it is we that are changing, because next year will be the first ever Health & Safety conference under our new name – RenewableUK.

The truth is that Health & Safety is an increasingly important part of our industry's agenda – and the size of this year's conference reinforces the message that it must be at the heart of everything that we do.

This year we have over 350 delegates attending what promises to be an extremely busy and informative day. I'm delighted that PMSS are sponsoring today's events and pleased to be able to welcome PMSS Chief Executive, Alan Chivers to the platform – I look forward to hearing from him shortly.

I'm also delighted that later this morning we will hear from Taf Powel, the Director of Emerging Energy Technologies at the Health & Safety Executive. The work of Taf and his new team will be vital over the next few years in setting the legal and regulatory framework for the growth of our industry and I know you are all anxious to hear what he has to say.

I think his presence helps to demonstrate how we work in partnership with HSE & also their recognition that we are the leading & only trade association driving the H&S agenda in our sector. That is why I am so pleased that BWEA has signed the HSE's Pledge *“to play our part in reducing the numbers of work-related deaths, injuries and ill-health in Great Britain – and - to work with the Health and Safety Executive and its partners to Be Part of the Solution.”*

While I am saying thanks it would be remiss of me if I did not express my gratitude for all the hard work and commitment of our members, who serve of the Health & Safety Strategy Group, and its sub groups and in particular the efforts of Dave Farrier, who even before we had a strategy group was a strong voice for these issues on the BWEA Board as well as Chris Streatfeild who joined us as Director of Health & Safety and who has had such a dramatic impact on our work in this field.

We are rightly proud of our safety record – because we understand that successful project delivery and safety go hand in hand with one another. None the less there is never any room for complacency as the two tragic industry deaths last year showed. Those deaths are a salutary reminder of the importance of the work of the men and women in this hall today – the entire sector looks to your work as health & safety professionals for day to day leadership.

Over the past year we have been working to raise the profile of health & safety throughout the sector:

- Now over 80% of our industry's operational assets are covered by the *Lessons Learnt* Health & Safety database - allowing us to identify the safety trends that are affecting the industry by giving participants relevant and reliable benchmark data.
- Building on the database for large scale assets at the end of last year we also launched *Lessons Learnt* for small systems – and by Easter this year hope to have the first report based on the information collected under the scheme.
- 39 experts (and many more consultees) directly contributed to producing the well received good practice guide for jack-up rigs deployed in the marine renewable energy industry.

If last year was busy so then will be 2010 – with our twin priorities of health & safety training and safety performance indicators.

The recent Round 3 announcement has firmly put health & safety at sea on our agenda. Offshore issues are likely to dominate much of our work in the coming months – but we will also ensure that onshore wind, small systems and wave & tidal power are not ignored.

That is why we are in the process of appointing a Health and Safety Manager, who will give advice and guidance for members looking to give the own teams training - helping to provide greater clarity,

leadership and co-ordination of the health and safety training standards in the industry.

The Lesson Learnt database has been widely hailed as a success – helping the industry share knowledge and experience and raising standards for all. But we are not resting on our laurels – building on this success we are now seeking to survey the whole industry in the first of an annual initiative to compile reliable and objective safety data, provide valuable industry benchmarking and demonstrate trends in performance, dispelling myths and increasing the credibility and reputation of the industry as a whole.

As BWEA, and in the future as RenewableUK, health and safety issues are at the forefront of our work and we will always provide the resources necessary to enable you to do your job.