

Asbestos Network - Meeting Notes – 12 January 2022

Meeting held via Teams, hosted by HSE

Attendees

Andy Lewis-Thomas	ALT	FDEM
Archie Mitchell, Chair	AM	HSE, Head of ALU
Ben Angell-James	BAJ	FAAM, NORAC
Chris Bishop	CB	UKATA, representing CE
David King	DK	HSE ALU
David Tucker	DT	Land Securities
Deborah Walker	DW	HSE ALU
Graham Warren	GW	TICA-ACAD
Gren Tipper	GT	CCLG
Helen Ratcliffe	HR	HSE Asbestos Policy
John Richards	JR	RICS, Thames Labs
Jonathan Grant	JG	NORAC
Louise Wainwright	LW	UKAS
Paul Beaumont	PB	IATP
Peter Crosland	PC	CECA, CONIAC Tackling Ill Health Working Group
Rosie Bricis	RB	HSE ALU
Ryan Noon	RN	NFDC - National Federation of Demolition Contractors
Sam Lord	SL	HSE SG Occ Hyg
Steve Sadley	SS	ARCA
Tariq Khan	TK	HSE ALU
Tony Vozniak	TV	APS

Apologies

Alan Willoughby	AW	NORAC, BOHS
Colette Willoughby	CW	BOHS, FAAM
Joe Mitchell	JM	HSE CD

Agenda

- 1 Welcome, introductions, domestics, apologies
- 2 Minutes of previous meeting
 - agreement/amendments of 13 Oct 21 meeting minutes
 - update on actions
- 3 Working Group updates
 - Deliverables/SSE (PB)
 - Management (AW)
 - Technical (SL)
 - Licensing (DW)
 - Analysts and Surveyors (JG)
 - Asbestos equipment suppliers/FDEM (ALT)
- 4 CONIAC and CLC activity (PB, GT)
 - AsbNet role update
 - Future work by AsbNet for CLC
- 5 HSE update (AM)
 - Post implementation review (PIR)
 - Work and Pensions Committee – HSE's approach to asbestos management
 - Update on asbestos licence assessment (DK)
- 6 Any other business
- 7 Dates for future meetings
- 8 Summary of actions from this meeting

1 Welcome, introductions, domestics, apologies and updates

Future meeting attendance and business practices – will be covered under revised terms of reference.

2 Minutes of meeting held 7 Jul 21 and 13 Oct 21 – amendments, actions etc

2a Agreement and amendments

Minutes from meetings held 7 Jul 21 and 13 Oct 21 still to be agreed.

2b Actions from meeting 13 Oct 21

- (1) **ALL** to work on closing out the outstanding actions from meeting 7 Jul 21.
- (2) **DT** to link with the Management WG.
- (3) **AM** and **BAJ** to discuss how HSG264 could be translated into simple steps/actions.
- (4) **BAJ** and **A&S WG** to liaise with GT re attending the Construction Working Group monthly best practice meetings.
- (5) **AM** and **SL** to explore with FDEM its proposals as a working group within AsbNet.
- (6) **ALL** to consider how AsbNet can provide guidance on DTM management plans and forward ideas to RB.
- (7) **JM** to resend DTM flowchart for everyone to share with their contacts.

NB the meeting focused mostly on the topics below and there wasn't enough time to follow up progress on these actions.

3 Updates from Working Groups

Deliverables – it was agreed that the Deliverables Working Group would cease, as its function was a general one that was already covered by AsbNet as a whole.

Technical (SL) – the December meeting had been cancelled but mini meetings had taken place since and the next meeting was planned for February. The DCU services guide was nearly ready; there should be some appendices ready for the next AsbNet meeting.

Licensing (GW) – the non-asbestos risks assessment guidance will be circulated shortly.

Post meeting note – document emailed to members 28 Jan 22 for comment, responses to go to GW at gwarren@acad.uk.com by 11 Feb 22.

Analysts and Surveyors (BAJ) – A&S WG hasn't been able to meet but a lot of work is going on in relation to HSG148. Both ATAC and NORAC are taking comments forward; there are several issues, eg NAD 2 samples, raising costs, 2015 consultation etc. Also, negative samples need to score 2 points but clients are requesting surveys for "easy" things, like timber board. Overall, there are some significant issues, which are to be discussed at the next meeting. LW and HR advised that discussions within UKAS Technical Advisory Committees are confidential until the minutes are released.

Asbestos Equipment Suppliers/FDEM (ALT) – new working group proposed. FDEM aimed to be a united voice within the industry; had started as a collaboration between Beacon International and SMH; involved only UK companies at present. ALT will put together a plan of work describing the membership and work of the proposed WG and will share with AsbNet.

The following points were made in relation to the AsbNet Working Groups in general:

- There is a lot of crossover between the WGs (eg the A&S WG is linked to the Technical WG in relation to UKAS), as they are open to anyone who can contribute; effective cross-group working needs some thought, however, otherwise there is a danger of discussions being repeated.
- RPE and face-fit testing are not areas represented currently.

4 CONIAC and CLC activity (PB and GT)

AsbNet role update and future work by AsbNet for CLC – see agenda item #6.

5 HSE update (AM)

CAR 12 post implementation review (PIR) – document being drafted currently.

Work and Pensions Committee – HSE’s approach to asbestos management - presentation can be viewed at <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/b93a9a0e-333d-43a2-a2c3-bdb5a3a19c14>.

Post-meeting note Details of the published report can be found at <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/164/work-and-pensions-committee/news/165978/set-40-year-deadline-for-nondomestic-building-asbestos-removal-mps-say/>.

Update on asbestos licence assessment - DK gave an update on changes to the licensing process.

6 Any other business

- *Future direction of AsbNet* – there was a lengthy discussion on this subject. It was agreed that there should be a meeting to discuss the way forward with AsbNet; however, this meeting should take place without HSE being present. Initially, HSE offered to host the meeting via Teams; however, it was decided that the meeting should be arranged by and with the non-HSE members. The following points were made:
 - For the time being, the action in relation to the AsbNet terms of reference is on hold.
 - It was felt that AsbNet was restricted/limited by what HSE and CONIAC were allowed to do; the group was still dealing with decisions made many years ago; members needed to review and rethink the group’s approach/direction re management of asbestos in buildings, especially the perception of risk post-Grenfell and post-Covid.
 - It was recognised that the working groups were key to AsbNet, particularly the Technical WG, also the Licensing and Management WGs.
 - AsbNet members were committed to Net Zero, the new Building Safety Regulator, removing cladding etc – but now seemed to be stuck, eg focusing solely on DTM; there was a lack of objectives; priorities had gone a bit awry. AsbNet needed to consider the Net Zero objective and what it could do to help achieve this, eg was licensed asbestos removal still needed?
 - Members needed to consider if the group was structured in the best way; also its aims, objectives and work plans. Did members want to change anything and how would they do this?
 - There are about 27 million properties in Britain that could be affected by the Net Zero target; there may be better information in the next year or so about, for example, the number of private homes. AM will follow up with HSE’s head of construction.
 - There was a conflict with Net Zero: for example, pushing for airtight homes had consequences, eg problems with increased mould/damp.
 - The Government’s plans for EPCs are that they must be done by someone who is accredited - but this is not the case with asbestos.

- There needed to be some consideration of asbestos training, none of the accreditation schemes had any requirement for training re reviews of NHS and school estates, for example; asbestos hadn't been factored into any of these; people who managed schools and universities weren't focusing on the right issues.
- *Advice line for contractors* - with the demise of HSE's web communities, there is nowhere for contractors to raise queries and to get legally-compliant answers to questions; it was felt that there should be something that pointed people to webpages with details of what they needed to do. Would AsbNet be interested in setting up a forum/advice line for questions? When queries are raised, they could be brought to this forum and discussed. To be explored further at the next AsbNet meeting.
- *Visibility of AsbNet/publication of guidance* - there is no visibility for AsbNet online, it is not even mentioned on the HSE website. In the past, a lot of work had gone into planning a website for publishing AsbNet guidance; the group had looked at the process for publishing - but then there were issues with getting HSE approval, use of the HSE logo etc. CONIAC, via HSE's Alistair Mitchell, is currently investigating a website hosted by a third party, where information could be posted by HSE and other bodies. Could AsbNet publish via the CLC website, possibly? PC has a connection with someone at CLC and will follow up with them.
- *AsbNet meetings reduced from four to three per year* – three meetings per year had been the set-up for AsbNet originally but the frequency was changed when it was thought that it might be beneficial for AsbNet meetings to follow those of CONIAC/CLC. However, as AsbNet has links to the work of CONIAC/CLC anyway within the group, four meetings are now no longer considered necessary, especially as updates can be provided via email in between.
- *Helen Ratcliffe retiring* - this was HR's final meeting before she retired. She had made a huge contribution to AsbNet and HSE's work and would be missed very much.

7 Future meetings

Post-meeting note – the next AsbNet meeting will be held via Teams on Thu 30 Jun 22 from 1030-1230. Teams link to be forwarded to members.

The two meetings following this one will also be held via Teams:

Thu 3 Nov 22 1030-1230
Thu 9 Mar 23 1030-1230

8 Summary of actions from this meeting

- (1) **ALL** to work on closing out the outstanding actions from meetings held 7 Jul 21 and 13 Oct 21.
- (2) **ALL** to feed back to GW at gwarren@acad.uk.com by 11 Feb 22 with comments on the non-asbestos risk assessment, a copy of which had been emailed to members 28 Jan 22.
- (3) **ALT** to put together a plan of work describing the membership and work of the proposed Asbestos Equipment Suppliers/FDEM Working Group and forward to members.
- (4) **JR** to arrange meeting with non-HSE members to discuss the way forward for AsbNet.
- (5) **AM** to find out from Chris Lucas the issues that might need to be dealt with if setting up a website for AsbNet documents etc.
- (6) **PC** to find out from CLC contact if AsbNet could publish guidance via the CLC website.
- (7) Advice line/web page for contractors – for discussion at next meeting.
- (8) **AM** to contact HSE's head of construction for useful statistics, eg confirm number of properties that could be affected by Net Zero carbon, how many were private homes etc.