

Every employee and contractor working for Northern Powergrid, should go home at the end of each shift uninjured and in good health after a productive days work.

Notice of HSE's targeted inspection initiative (Autumn 2014)

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are a government body responsible for, amongst other things promotion, regulation and **enforcement** of workplace health, safety and welfare in the United Kingdom.

The HSE has announced that from now until 17 October, HSE Inspectors will carry out unannounced visits to sites where refurbishment projects or repair works are underway. This activity is a targeted month long inspection programme focusing on 'health' and forms part of a wider nationwide initiative being delivered by the HSE this year, to reduce ill health, death and injury in the construction industry. HSE Inspectors will ensure high-risk activities particularly those affecting the 'health' of workers, are being properly managed. The main aims of the visits are:

- to achieve an improvement in industry standards, in particular at small sites;
- to increase awareness of HSE's expectations of the industry; and
- to demonstrate that HSE will use the enforcement tools at its disposal to prevent immediate risk and bring about sustained improvements

During inspections, HSE inspectors will specifically consider whether:

- risks to health from exposure to dust such as **silica** are being controlled;
- workers are aware of where they may find **asbestos**, and what to do if they find it;
- other health risks, such as exposure to **noise** and **vibration**, manual handling, hazardous substances are being properly managed;
- jobs that involve **working at height** have been identified and properly planned to ensure that appropriate precautions are in place;
- **equipment** is correctly installed / assembled, inspected and maintained and used properly; and
- sites are **well organised**, to avoid trips and falls, walkways and stairs are free from obstructions and **welfare** facilities are adequate.



HSE intends to use these inspection initiatives to reinforce its message to the construction industry that poor standards are unacceptable and liable to result in HSE taking enforcement action. Whilst the prime focus will be as outlined above, HSE will respond to what they find on site. If something attracts their attention they are very likely to investigate it further even if that aspect is beyond the range of topics listed above.

The potential for the HSE to turn up on site and ask questions may be worrying for some, however it is important to remember that the HSE are undertaking this work to ensure that people are not endangered by construction work, and those working safely have nothing to fear. If you are approached by an HSE inspector and asked questions about your work, don't assume that you are doing something wrong. The HSE will be interested in discussing good practice with safe workers too. Cooperate and answer their questions truthfully and accurately.

Due to the nature of the work that we undertake, our work activities involve us working with a wide range of hazards including those on which the HSE will focus. Our methods of work have been developed to either eliminate or significantly minimise the risks associated with exposure to these hazards. If you follow your training and adhere to approved work procedures you will not endanger yourself or others. As always, if you are unsure about any aspects of your work, then discuss this with your supervisor in the first instance.



Inspection visits by the HSE to UK workplaces are nothing new and should not be of concern to our company like ours that has skilled and trained people, working to tried and tested procedures and safe systems of work. The HSE's aim after all, is the same as ours in that "Every employee and contractor working for Northern Powergrid, should go home at the end of each shift uninjured and in good health after a productive days work".