

British Drilling Association

Founded 1976

NEWSLETTER

Committed to Excellence in Health & Safety, Quality of Workmanship and Technical Standards for the Benefit of the Drilling Industry and its Clients

October, 2009

Secretary's Column

Markets may be quiet in this period of economic downturn and it's hard to find much optimism about what the future holds as we prepare to go into 2010. It's without doubt the toughest conditions that the industry has faced in most of our lifetimes. Political parties of any persuasion are all talking about cuts in the public sector after the next election so it appears that we have to rely on private sector growth to fuel any uplift.

Whatever forecasts are available, whether dire or more encouraging, are still guessing games. Everyone has an opinion but the general consensus and mood is that there'll be no return to previous business levels and profitability, experienced in this decade, for some considerable time.

Can we do anything about it? I believe we can if we use the power of legislation and Eurocode Standards to make clients aware of their responsibilities. For example Eurocode lays down what constitutes a minimum level of ground investigation which overall is some 30% more than done in the UK at present. Clients should be doing more otherwise they're effectively breaking the "law". When that tender arrives for 6 boreholes on a site that Eurocode says must have 9, the industry collectively should point this out. It means that we have to be smarter and more unified rather than individually thinking that we're impotent to influence and direct the market.

**All thoughts are welcome, call:
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Rig Guarding

A decade on from when the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) first started speaking to the drilling and piling industries about compliance to "guarding" legislation, there still appears to be a lack of knowledge about the subject despite much information published by the BDA and available from HSE itself. Admittedly HSE has not always been clear as to exactly its position on protection devices such as trip wires but this has been increasingly clarified this year and in recent months.

HSE has demonstrated during 2009 through enforcement; published words; exhibitions; conferences; dialogue with BDA & individual contractors, and on enquiry as to what its policy is. For drilling rigs in unrestricted space and drilling vertically, an all enclosing interlocked guard must be fitted. Information on the design and construction of guards is well documented - HSE points towards the BDA 2000 publication "Guidance Notes for the Protection of Persons from Rotating Parts and Ejected or Falling Material" as a first step and then onwards to British and European Standards that cover the subject in great detail e.g. EN ISO 12100, BS EN 294, BS EN 811, BS EN 953 etc. These Standards must be consulted and complied with.

Examples of non compliant interlocked guards keep cropping up where the Standards have not been sufficiently consulted or implemented. Typically a common failure is that persons can reach the rotating parts either through, around, under or over the guard itself. Common sense is that if anyone can touch or come into contact with the rotating part from any direction while a guard is closed then it's not doing its job. On the subject of interlocks HSE has been more specific of late. Not only should they be tamper proof but the rotation "speed should be no more than 15rpm with the gate open".

An HSE letter received by BDA in early October and being circulated to BDA members gives further information. The 2-page letter addresses the issue of restricted space where it has been argued that a guard can't be fitted due to the location of the holes near to structure or obstacles. HSE is now making it clear through CDM that "anyone allowing the removal of a guard from a machine opens themselves up to potential enforcement action" - this includes "all parties from client to site manager". HSE is therefore extending its reach beyond the drilling contractor which is what the BDA has been suggesting for some time. Clients and designers should allow "sufficient working space for the rig to be operated safely" and HSE's definition of "safely" is apparent that it should be with an interlocked guard. BDA welcomes this latest approach because it's one of the first examples whereby clients and designers will have to consider themselves directly liable to enforcement action if not making provision for contractors to work safely. The principle adds teeth to CDM and is a precedent for other safety matters.

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BDA SERVICES**BDA EVENTS****BDA REPORTS****BDA AUDIT INFORMATION**

BDA Audit is the successor to BDA Drilling Accreditation and differs from the former scheme in that all audited operatives possess an NVQ, level 2, in Land Drilling and valid CSCS card in Land Drilling. It's open to Lead Drillers / Drillers and any drilling discipline.

It's becoming a necessity. Clients will be specifying it in order to conform to Eurocode & British Standards (BS EN ISO 22475-3 which is being published shortly and Amendment 2 of BS 5930 which is being prepared) and also the revised SISG (Site Investigation Steering Group) documents.

Don't get left behind in not being able to satisfy tender requirements. Apply for details now to the BDA office and get ahead of the crowd.

BDA PUBLICATIONS

New and existing members may not be aware that the BDA publishes a range of documents that may be of assistance to them. Primarily covering safety aspects they also contain other useful information.

There are documents on:

- Dynamic Sampling (covering window and windowless)
- Cable Percussion
- Rotary "guarding"
- Contaminated Land (see page 4 for details)

Also there is the BDA's Health & Safety Manual last issued in 2002 and currently under revision.

Contact the office for further details.

BDA Golf Day

Held on Friday 4th September at the traditional venue of Woodsome Hall Golf Club near Huddersfield, this year's event was blessed by good weather unlike the washout in the previous year. There were 48 players which illustrates the popularity of the event.

A new trophy was introduced following the tragic death of Les Nichol in early August. Les was a great supporter of this golf day and his absence was particularly missed. All present stood for a minute's silence prior to going to the 1st tee. During the dinner our Captain for the day, Paul Sherwood, said many fine words about Les and we raised our glasses to his memory.

Results:

Rockbit Trophy

- 1st Paul Jacobs & Tony Pierson
- 2nd Nick Bisby & Matt Dolby
- 3rd Paul Caldwell & Eric Williams

Eddie Burke Trophy

- 1st Matt Dolby
- 2nd Nick Bisby
- 3rd Paul Jacobs

Les Nichol Trophy

The winner was: David Cameron

Longest Drive

Richard Buckley

Many thanks go to those who donated prizes - M & J Drilling Services, Rockbit, Strata Surveys, Wardell.

We said goodbye to the very popular Gordon Long, an ex-Captain of the event who is moving to Australia. He's threatened to return one day and say grace again. After such a memorable one this time we wish him a long stay in Aussie !!

BDA ACCIDENT STATISTICS to 31st March 2009

For the fourth year running the BDA has obtained a 100% return of Members' accident statistics. Many thanks to everyone for their co-operation.

(Last year's figures in brackets)

Companies reported 108 (108)

Direct Employees 9446 (10024)

Sub contract operatives 605 (899)

Total Employees 10051 (10923)

Fatalities	None (0)
Major Injuries	30 (32)
3 Day Injuries	111 (119)
Dangerous Occurences	21 (18)
Non Reportables	1175 (1221)

The first thing to observe is that the total number of employees is some 8% lower than 12 months ago. It is known that some companies have further reduced their workforce since sending us their returns so the effects of the recession are clear.

While the number of accidents apart from dangerous occurences all show a reduction, the figures have to be taken into the context that there have been fewer employees.

Incident rate for Fatality, Major and 3-day combined was:-

1403 per 100,000

Last year the above figure was 1382 so there has been a minor increase in this. In other words the industry has experienced a slight deterioration in its safety record. This however could be that more reporting is going on. Whatever, we should all work towards improving safety as each of the figures represents personal tragedies - they're not just numbers.

BDA on the WEB

Our new fully updated website will be re-launched very shortly. It's been a long time coming but we hope you like it.

www.britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

Rig Guarding continued from page 1

With regard to inclined drilling we reported in our August Newsletter that the BDA Working Party met with HSE on 30th July. Since then a further meeting without HSE was held on 15th September at which it was decided to reconvene on November 23rd with each contractor having thought about types of movable guarding for rigs in their fleet. Two typical rig scenarios which form a large majority of applications were to be looked at - cross track, level ground, open site, 35 degree drilling, 1 metre high hole entry, multiple rod/auger changing - one scenario with head side on and the other with head on top. It is expected to meet again with HSE either mid December or early January.

BDA has decided that the BDA AUDIT where it involves vertical rotary drilling in unrestricted space will not take place or will be curtailed unless the rig is fitted with a fully functioning, all enclosing, interlocked guard. For other situations, there will have to be a viewable risk assessment, site specific, that incorporates risk of entanglement and mentions why guards have been taken off. Other protective devices or measures must be in position and if these include trip wires then there must be 2, one either side, and they should be within 150mm of the rotating part.

This subject of guarding is not new as regular readers can testify to. There have twists and turns along the way but at each stage the BDA has kept its members informed, stayed close to HSE and urged compliance. It continues to do that. It must be emphasised that there are still ongoing discussions with HSE, so on matters of detail or interpretation it is essential that the latest information is obtained. For example the European Machinery Directive of 1998 is from 29 December 2009 replaced by a revised Directive 2006/42/EC. This has been transposed into UK legislation as The Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008. While the Directive contains the same basic principles, some of the underlying detail has changed. As they say, the devil lies in the detail. It should be no surprise that HSE has been more active in the past 12 months - after all its duty is to enforce the law, and the law and Standards moves on. It's the BDA's duty to keep abreast of developments and be the source of up to date information to its members, and externally where it affects members' interests.

Coal Authority Safety Alerts

In September the Coal Authority (CA) issued details of two recent incidents where action should be taken, where necessary, to avoid a recurrence. Both incidents resulted from drilling operations in coal measure strata. In the second incident, a drill rig fell into a shaft and has been totally lost with thankfully no injury or death to the drilling operatives.

"Incident 1 - Spontaneous combustion of coal"

During rotary drilling operations in the Fife area, spontaneous combustion occurred in the Dysart Main seam. You are reminded that such drilling works require permission from the Coal Authority and that a Gas Risk Assessment must be completed prior to commencing any drilling works likely to intercept coal measure strata."

BDA Comment - further details of this incident were published in our August Newsletter. CA permission was not obtained prior to drilling works commencing.

"Incident 2 - Loss of a drilling rig"

During works to treat two disused coal mine shafts on a development site in Flintshire, a ground collapse occurred which resulted in the loss of a drilling rig.

The first shaft was being drilled and had reached a depth of 60 metres when the drilling crew around the drilling platform noticed that the ground around the drilling platform had begun to subside. Fortunately, the supervising engineer on site instructed the crew to evacuate before the entire drilling rig including the platform sank into the resultant collapse.

This highlights the risks involved in drilling over unstable ground especially where disused coal mine shafts are involved. These risks are far greater when there is a significant depth of superficial deposits, which was the case on this site."

CA notification then quoted from BDA Health & Safety Manual, Section 5.1.6, regarding platform, anchorages for this and safety harness anchorages for the personnel. It continued:

"In assessing the potential area for collapse, it is imperative that calculations are completed by an appropriately qualified engineer to ensure that the size of the platform is sufficient".

BDA Comment :

This is a very serious incident that could have involved loss of life in other circumstances. CA has subsequently made it plain that its permission was obtained prior to drilling works commencing. The HSE visited the site the day after the incident (in early September) and did not register it as a dangerous occurrence or near miss.

The rig was a Klemm 802, track mounted and approximately 9.5 tonne weight. It was located over a T configuration, 8 metre long steel platform with the drill mast bearing down on the platform itself.

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The purpose of the drilling was to examine the condition and depth of the shaft capping and infill prior to subsequent development on the site. Rock head was believed to be around 14 metres. The cone of depression following the collapse was approximately 10 metres at its widest point. It has been estimated that when the shaft collapsed the "pulldown force" on the drill string may have been in the order of several hundred tonnes equating to the weight of material in the shaft. The platform is said to have given suitable and sufficient support to enable the drill crew to move away from the collapse in a calm manner. The rig and platform performed a duck dipping motion within a reported 30 minutes as they disappeared into the open void followed by material surrounding the shaft circumference. Both platform and rig are no longer visible and lie at an indeterminate depth.

We have to be thankful that the platform, safety procedures and response of those involved has only resulted in the loss of equipment. It may be a rare occurrence but details are coming to light of similar incidents, previously not shared with the industry, that warrant an overall review and further guidance. BDA has decided that its Safety Committee should issue an advisory note when it has reviewed the issue.

Supervisor Training Requirement

From 1 January 2010, UKCG (UK Contractors Group) require that all supervisors working on their members' sites can demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise their workers effectively. Other bodies such as the Environment Agency and Thames Water also have the same requirement.

UKCG define a supervisor as "those persons directly supervising work activities. They are the front line supervisors with direct responsibility for putting people to work and who will typically brief their workers on how to carry out their work and ensure that they are carrying out their work safely". By this definition it is not just persons who have a supervisor job title but extends to anyone carrying out supervisory tasks e.g. engineers.

Further UKCG say that "The policy requires all sizes of work gangs to have a nominated supervisor". All sizes could include anything over a lone worker e.g a 2-man drill crew. NSCC to which the BDA belongs is discussing with UKCG that a gang should be more than 2 people - the outcome of this is awaited.

What do UKCG expect as proof that a supervisor has the necessary supervisory skills? In essence UKCG expect evidence of supervisory training i.e. a certificate that shows that the person has attended a "construction specific course of at least 2 days duration". The content of the course has to match the criteria laid down by UKCG. Full details are available on www.ukcg.org.uk

What training courses are available? There are 2 BDA members that can be contacted - Equipe Training tel: 01295 670990 and RTD (Training & Accreditation) tel: 01942 819557. The NSCC, of which BDA is a member, publishes on its website (www.nsc.org.uk/documents/13August2009.pdf) details of 4 course providers that offer SMSTS and SSSTS training - a discount can be claimed by BDA members for their courses and if the member is registered with CITB then a grant is available from the latter. The Federation of Piling Specialists also offers a course to FPS members.

NEW PUBLICATION Contaminated Land

Guidance for Safe Intrusive Activities on Contaminated or Potentially Contaminated Land

This new document is a complete revision of the BDA "Guidance Notes for the Safe Drilling of Landfills & Contaminated Land" published in 1992. The original document became famous for introducing site categorisation - green, yellow and red - and went on to being republished by Thomas Telford as SISG Part 4.

The new document comprises 52 pages and is in A4 booklet format.

It is essential reading for all who have to specify or carry out intrusive activity on contaminated land and features much on CDM 2007 and how to decide as to the site categorisation.

The document is available from the BDA Office @ £20 + £1.50 post & packing for BDA members. Telephone 01327 264622, fax 01327 264623, email office@britishdrillingassociation.co.uk

You may also like to order the Guidance for the Safe Operation of Cable Percussion Rigs and Equipment at the same price which was published in 2005 or its sister document on Dynamic Sampling published in 2007.

AND FINALLY

I seem to have created a debate with a member when I mentioned Cecil Rhodes in August Newsletter. Some members read the Newsletter and are prepared to let me know what they think.

I've been writing this Newsletter for 10 years during which I've perhaps had 3 or 4 people directly comment. Out of over 60 issues with many articles to each one, this means that most of what I write is accepted or not read. Until you tell me differently of course !!

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