



# Greenkeepers Training Committee

In a new series, the GTC has invited representatives from its Quality Assured Centres and Training Providers to discuss their particular specialism within the sports turf sector

In this latest article from a GTC Quality Assured Training Provider, Jon Allbutt, Britrisk Safety's Technical Director reminds us of our responsibilities for Health & Safety whether you are an employer or employee.

**There is no doubt that we have moved forward in golf course safety management in the last twenty years or so. The GTC rescued HS (G) 79 "Health and Safety in Golf Course Management and Maintenance" and produced an updated and expanded edition as a joint industry funded project, fully endorsed by HSE and The R&A.**

We have also seen a whole series of workshops and roadshows involving BIGGA, the British Home Unions with support from industry experts, and HSE that drove home the message that practical safety management is essential and achievable with quality information, training and support.

Yet there are still accidents, dangerous incidents, investigations and some prosecutions that continue to cause concern.

A further problem is the low level of reporting, particularly of incidents and near misses. The lack of a positive safety culture dulls an awareness of the importance of consistent reporting and investigating and the role this plays in managing the safety of a site for all.

Where any group of greenkeepers gather it won't be long before someone tells a story of slipping into the lake, pond, bunker or down a bank, smiles and nods confirming the



truth – yes we have all been there! Such unreported incidents / near misses will quickly come to light when an individual is being interviewed – under a Caution – by the H&S investigating officer! Apart from the negative non-compliance aspects, it's worth remembering that there are vital lessons to be learnt from accident and particularly near miss incidents.

If something could have happened and didn't, next time there could be serious injury – or worse – so an investigation is called for to determine the root cause. How detailed this is will depend on the nature of the event. What can we do to change our thinking on this?

The route to good safety management and the achievement of continuous development and improvement of standards is set out in HSE Guide HSG65 "A Guide to Measuring Health and Safety Performance".

As part of the review of health and safety by Professor Löfstedt this document is changing to a new approach based on PLAN – DO – CHECK – ACT (see right page).



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A new guidance document is currently in draft form and publication is expected soon. This is a fresh approach that greatly simplifies and streamlines the evidence an employer needs to have of his health and safety management of the workplace. The burden falls to the management team to make sure that the employer's policies are put into an action plan based on this new approach.

David Golding, GTC's Education Director, invited Britrisk Safety to write this H&S update. He added:

"Jon Allbutt has for many years assisted the sector with his advice and guidance to make the workplace a safe environment. In many cases Health & Safety responsibilities have been taken seriously and great strides have been made.

"Jon's business 'Jon Allbutt Associates' has been absorbed within the umbrella Britrisk Safety which now brings a new, innovative and in many ways altogether simpler approach to safety management and training within the golfing industry and wider land-based sector."

## PLAN – DO – CHECK – ACT

### Plan

- Prepare your safety policy
- Set out the detailed arrangements for managing safety
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of duty holders
- Prepare the organisation's H&S flowchart – the family tree of H&S duty holders
- Plan the implementation strategy – a programme of actions for all

### Do

- Present the safety policy and arrangements for approval, and signing, by the employer (the owner, committee or board of directors)
- Provide information and training, raise awareness, improve skills, develop positive attitudes by changing the negative H&S culture
- Identify and record the main hazards making sure to take account of seasonal factors
- Assess the risks to staff and others – be site and task specific – avoid trivia
- If the actions to be taken in a risk assessment do not effectively reduce the risk, prepare a method statement that sets out exactly how a task is to be carried out safely
- Implement your plan within an agreed timeframe

### Check

- Measure your progress and performance with regular safety audits
- Record, investigate and review accidents and incidents/near misses
- Review the effectiveness of risk assessments and method statements

### Act

- Review performance against the implementation strategy and programme
- Be prepared to learn the lessons, make changes, be active not passive about health and safety management



Tom Searle, MD at Britrisk, added: "I sometimes think that Health and Safety Consultants make compliance issues more difficult for their clients rather than easier.

Getting bogged down in paperwork and red tape doesn't help to prevent accidents; in fact it can make them more likely to occur as people simply will not read long-winded policy statements and risk assessments, let alone apply the contents!"

### About the author

Jon as co-author of The GTC's H&S in Golf Course Management and Maintenance guidance booklet has assisted many golf club managers and owners as has the Ransomes Jacobsen – Cutting Edge sponsored Wall Chart which is now seen in many maintenance facilities. Both of these H&S products are available from the GTC and will feature in a half-day workshop to be held during the Continue to Learn programme at BTME 2014. The workshop on Tuesday 21 January will involve Britrisk Safety and Swan Golf Designs, please see the Continue to Learn programme or visit the GTC website: [www.the-gtc.co.uk](http://www.the-gtc.co.uk)

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