

# Focusing on solutions

**In general, health and safety regulations and legislation rarely change, however codes of practice and guidance notes often do, which is why the GGF is regularly consulted to make sure that any forthcoming changes are integrated into its publications and guidance, writes GGF health and safety director Phil Pinnington**

Previously the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) was the pivotal source of guidance. It produced codes of practice and minimum standards but, with the Löfstedt review of 2011 the HSE focus moved towards being more of a regulator and less resources were available to guide businesses without risking a fee for intervention.

The HSE recognised that, because of the reduction in resources they couldn't keep up with what was developing in the industry, whereas business and customer demand, as we all know, often drives innovation.

In recent conversations with HSE inspectors who have prosecuted cases they will always submit GGF codes of practice to the court as evidence of standards expected in the industry. For those prosecuted this has been used as evidence against them, to show whether they are following best practice.

So, how can the glass and glazing industry show continuous improvement in the safety arena? We, as health and safety professionals, are in an envied position in that we are able to be the conduit of new ideas. Safety as a moral concept has no boundaries and when a solution comes around, we are obliged to make sure this is shared across as wide a network as possible. The GGF is therefore in a very unique position as a trade organisation, to have this network and to be in a position to allow our members to benefit from these innovations.

From visiting and speaking to GGF members UK-wide, I witness many examples of innovation. Many solutions are regarded as routine and I often hear comments such as, 'it's just what we do around here' but I believe they don't give themselves credit for what they've truly achieved.

In my everyday dealings with other associations very few have a dedicated person who solely drives improvement in the health and safety standards across their industries. Many have dual roles of safety and quality but their members have their own health and safety systems and people in place so the demand is different.

This month I am delighted that we are about to present our first gold award under the GGF Glass Charter merit scheme. Not only is this the first member to attain this level, but just as importantly their achievement has successfully addressed a safety issue that has challenged our industry for many years.

The Window Company (Contracts) based in Chelmsford, a family owned business, displayed the essential passion and commitment to health and safety. It worked with the company that fits out its vans, to design a system which means that installers have no need to access the vehicle's roof for materials. It proved a simple, well thought through solution and shows that you don't need to be a large company with huge resources to invest in safety. □



**Phil Pinnington, health and safety director for the GGF**

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*The GGF's health and safety committee meets quarterly to discuss key issues affecting the industry. If you are interested in finding out more about the GGF and its health and safety function, please email [info@ggf.org.uk](mailto:info@ggf.org.uk)*