Foreword

Despite the economic downturn, the construction industry remains one of the largest in Great Britain, bringing employment to around 2 million people; it also remains extremely hazardous and a cause for significant concern. The characteristics of the industry and the challenges it creates for health and safety are well documented.

The provisional figures for 2011/2012 record the deaths of 49 construction workers and 1 member of the public. While these figures are a slight improvement on the recorded deaths of 50 construction workers and 2 members of the public in the previous year (2010/2011), they remain unacceptable and we must continue to reduce this burden of death as well as the associated injuries and incidences of ill health.

The Construction Division’s three year Plan of Work has now been extended by a further year (to 2014/2015) to more closely align it to the overall HSE Strategic plan. Our key priorities remain unchanged and we shall continue to focus on these in 2013/2014 with some new elements of work in specific projects.

During the first two years of our Plan we achieved our aim of directing 30% of our inspection effort on small sites and 20% on asbestos removal work. In 2013/2014, we will increase our inspection effort on small sites to 35%, where 70% of fatal accidents occur and standards are often poor.

In 2012/2013, the work towards the revocation of the Construction (Head Protection) Regulations 1989 and the Notification of Conventional Tower Cranes Regulations 2010 was completed. These Statutory Instruments were revoked on 6 April 2013; however, the requirement to wear a hard hat on site remains under the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992. In 2013/2014, we will carry forward work on developing a revised regulatory package for the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007.

In 2012/2013 we successfully completed our four year programme of work to help deliver a safe and secure Olympic Games with no work-related fatalities during the preparation and building of any of the Olympic venues. And in 2013/2014 we will continue our work on securing the health and safety legacy for the construction industry from the Olympics.

We will also continue to look at ways we can make information easier to understand and more accessible, especially for smaller businesses. As part of this process, we will be revising the Construction Occupational Health Management Essentials (COHME) web pages.

In October 2012, HSE introduced the cost recovery scheme known as Fee for Intervention. Costs will be recovered from businesses and individuals where material breaches of the law are identified by HSE Inspectors. However, those that comply with the law will not be charged a fee. Although this has been a significant change for HSE, the priorities in our Plan of Work are unchanged.

Heather Bryant
Chief Inspector of Construction
The Construction Plan of Work 2013/2014

Our Plan of Work sets out the Construction Division’s work for the 2013/14 year. Building on previous work, it continues our mission to deliver and where possible accelerate long-term improvements in the industry’s health and safety performance while making best use of our resources.

Securing Justice

We will continue to hold to account those who put others at risk, particularly those who are deliberately flouting the law. We will investigate serious work related incidents and ill health, and take appropriate enforcement action, in accordance with our policies. We will do this to secure justice in cases where people choose to ignore their responsibilities or have failed to comply with them. Fee for Intervention will also help ensure that people who are not complying with the law bear the cost of the time spent in putting things right.

Construction Operational Activities

Our main operational activities will target the following:

- Asbestos removal work.
- Small sites/projects.
- Refurbishment.
- Major projects/large contractors and clients.
- Local Priorities.

Any matters of evident concern or with the potential to cause a catastrophic event identified during a site visit will be appropriately addressed. The following five generic issues will also be considered where appropriate during site visits:

- Work at height.
- Asbestos risks.
- Provision of welfare facilities.
- Site conditions (Good order).
- Respiratory risks and adequacy of PPE use.

In addition, we will also consider:

- Leadership - how effective directors & other senior managers are at leading health and safety.
- Management of health risks - raising awareness and promoting knowledge of health risks in construction.
- Worker Involvement - encouraging effective worker involvement, so every worker plays an active role.
- Contractor Competence - placing particular emphasis on the competence of organisations and individuals.
- Temporary Works - raising awareness of managing temporary works effectively and ensuring that adequate management arrangements are in place.
Specific projects include:

- **Fragile roofs** - we will work to ensure that the risks associated with working on, or near, fragile materials are adequately planned and controlled.
- **Fireplaces** - we will raise awareness of the causes of failure of modular fireplace surrounds and promote the Stone Federation of Great Britain’s guidance on this issue.
- **Roof tile cutting (roof-valley)** - we will continue our efforts to ensure that dust suppression methods are employed when carrying out this activity.
- **Health risks in paving and block work** - we will ensure that the risks, particularly from Noise, Hand Arm Vibration (HAVs) and silica associated with this activity are adequately controlled.
- **Lifts in buildings - safety during installation, maintenance and removal, etc.** – we will assess the management of, and precautions taken, during lift engineering work on construction sites.
- **Temporary Demountable Structures** - we will continue our work to examine the standard of safety management during the erection and dismantling of temporary demountable structures in the events and entertainments industry.
- **Fire (timber frame structures)** - we will continue our work to ensure due regard is being paid to the UK Timber Frame Association (UKTFA) guidance during the development of timber frame structures where proximity to other structures is a factor.

### Enabling Activities

We will continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders and intermediaries. Key areas of collaboration include:

- Supporting the Working Well Together (WWT) Campaign in raising awareness of health and safety issues within micro and small construction businesses. We will support WWT Groups to deliver at least 60 events during 2013/2014 and create new groups when the opportunity arises.
- Work with the retail sector on the management of asbestos risk during refurbishment work.

## Summary

Our Plan of Work for 2013/14 re-affirms the Construction Division’s commitment to improving health and safety in the construction industry by targeting high risk sectors and activities. We will continue to work with industry partners to deliver a variety of initiatives and products to help businesses understand and meet their legal duties. We recognise that we cannot achieve the improvements alone and look to all those in the construction industry to be part of the solution to bring about change and improvements in health and safety performance.