**THE SHOWMEN’S GUILD OF**

**GREAT BRITAIN**

**CENTRAL OFFICE**

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**Wednesday 9th May 2018**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Inflatables at Funfairs**

As the main trade association for the travelling fairground industry, we are active in putting the safety of the travelling public at the centre of our Members’ operations and are keen to learn all lessons from any incident however rarely it may occur.

We regularly communicate the safety advice and any updates to the safety procedures that are already in place, to our 2144 operating Members, who control 652 of the inflatable amusement devices in the UK, among the 4067 fairground attractions overall, operated by Showmen’s Guild members. (*There are also others with inflatables in smaller associations and further non-aligned individual operators).*

Safety is the number one priority for the Showmen’s Guild and it is central to the operation of our Members within the industry.

While we are not complacent, we acknowledge that although the Fairground Industry gives approximately 305 million passenger rides annually, the H&SE calculate that the risk of being injured on a fairground ride is 0.0000278%.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires that fairground equipment be designed, manufactured, supplied, constructed, operated, maintained and inspected so that it is safe, so far as reasonably practicable.

The Showmen’s Guild does all it can to maintain this record by proper staff training and ride maintenance and inspection.

All rides have – as a matter of practice and agreement within the HSE guidelines – an ADIPS certificate. With rigorous annual testing and certification by specialist independent engineers according to strict procedures approved by HSE and in accordance with the latest HSE Guidance HSG 175 ‘Fairgrounds and amusement parks: Guidance on safe practice’ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg175.htm>

The Showmen’s Guild will continue to work closely with the HSE in conjunction with the recognised ADIPS scheme, with its certification and training programmes, as well as updates on best practice; to ensure that the highest standards of safety are maintained right across the country; so that everyone can feel confident that when they visit one of our members’ fairs or attractions that they will have fun and not come to any harm.

**ENDS**

**Notes for Editors:**

**The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain**

is the leading Trade Association for the Travelling Fairground Industry, with 2144 operating members in charge of 1277 Adult Rides; 2138 Children’s (*‘Juvenile’*) Rides & Attractions and 652 Inflatable Devices (‘*bouncy castles’* & the like).

It operates from its Central Office in Staines upon Thames with 10 regional Section offices across the UK.

Its members operate at funfairs throughout the year from historical Charter Fairs; to Holiday Fairs and at most public outdoor events such as Festivals; Melas; Winter Wonderlands and Carnivals.

**The Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks Joint Advisory Committee** (FJAC)

has worked for over 35 years to improve standards and exchange information relating to safety on fairgrounds, amusement parks and fairground equipment.

*Fairgrounds and amusement parks have been shown to be relatively safe compared to such activities as driving a car or riding a bicycle.*

Risk is part of everyday life and cannot be completely eliminated but it should be managed effectively and proportionately.

The third edition of HSG175 replacing the 2007 edition and incorporates lessons learned and improvements developed since then.

***The Showmen’s Guild impresses on its Members the importance of following this HSE Guidance and in keeping a copy to hand for continuous reference whilst operating at fairs across the UK.***

The Showmen’s Guild acknowledges that *“Safety doesn’t just happen. It requires everybody’s commitment and willingness to work in an organised way to achieve good standards”*. The most important steps to take in managing health and safety are to “Plan, Do, Check and Act.”

Additionally it is impressed by the Showmen’s Guild to all operating Members to carry out all periodical maintenance to the highest standard and this is reinforced

* Daily check sheets are to be filled in by all operators and kept with each ride / attraction for inspection.
* Only competent trained staff can operate the rides and with agreed additional identifiable staff
* All safety devices must be used as directed and all devices ridden in accordance with their stated use.
* No mobile phones can be used by operators in charge of rides except for an emergency.
* The Showmen’s Guild do all they can to maintain the statistics set out above by proper staff training and ride maintenance and inspection.

**Fairgrounds Safety & Health Awareness seminars hosted by ADIPS**

(Amusement Device Inspection Procedure http://www.adips.co.uk/) are held periodically for Showmen’s Guild Members (and colleagues in the industry) for Members to gain detailed advice in a practical setting from industry experts

**Operation of Inflatable equipment takes place under the 2006 European Standard**

(BS EN 14960:2006): BSEN 14960: 2013 (the revised version) which came into force on March 1st 2014 with some alteration and clarifications.

*Statistically, most accidents with inflatables are the result of poor management and that it is very rare to have equipment failure with technological improvements.*

*It is acknowledged however that there are other operators of inflatables that are not Members of The Showmen’s Guild of Great Britain or of an equivalent Trade Association.*

**Detailed safety advice available to Showmen’s Guild Members with inflatables includes:**

* The correct use of Blowers (that inflate the device);
* the distance apart inflatable must be from each other and static or moving objects;
* Anchorage, to avoid ‘blow aways’, especially when the water table is very high the ground becomes more unstable with greater anchorage needed; along with details of a variety of anchorage options to suit ground and weather conditions.
* Additionally there should be anchorage of top parts of an inflatable, with bungee-style attachments to take up the possible movement while still providing anchorage, especially with gusting wind. This is not law but a good precautionary measure

**There are also details on Users (‘passengers’) of inflatables;**

* such that all users of inflatables should be the same size;
* Adults must not ride with children and that there should be a maximum number of participants related to the size of the inflatable to allow space for them to bounce unpredictably in any direction without colliding with each other.

**Risk Assessments for Inflatables:**

These must take into account The natural effect of high wind and 'gusting' wind on users of the equipment; operators of the equipment; as well as passers-by

Risk Management Controls: should include

* Listening to detailed local weather forecasts and acting upon them
* Adequate staking down of equipment with strong Ratchet Straps
* Ensuring that there are no loose "flapping" parts especially canopies
* Ceasing operations above 24 MPH winds
* Parking vehicles as wind breaks and used as ballast against gusting winds
* Roping-off closed attractions in high winds to keep straying visitors away
* Use of signage to supplement this.
* Daily inspections are vital

*This advice is not exhaustive and all local advice from Health & Safety professionals should be both actively sought and followed.*