

HELA

23 March 2009

Local Government House

**Attendees**

**HSE:**

Kevin Myers (co Chair)  
Giles Denham  
Max Walker  
Marcia Davies  
Tony Hetherington  
Gerry Kasprzak  
Andy Gay  
Paul Kloss  
Sean Edwards Playne  
Ian Andrews  
Tim Galloway

**Local Authorities:**

Paul Unsworth (Chair)  
David Evans  
Kim Pugh  
Darran West  
Jane Bride

**LACORS:**

Charlotte Meller  
Karen Ashdown  
Richard Garnett  
David Humphreys (consultant)

**CIEH** - Andrew Griffiths

**REHIS** - Graham Robertson

**LBRO:**

Phil Preece

**Item 1 - Welcome and Apologies**

1.1 No apologies were received.

**Item 2 - Correction to minutes of last meeting**

2.1 In paragraph 4.7 of the previous minutes (HELA20) it was questioned whether work by LBRO on Rogers priorities would impact on the Section 18 guidance. In fact LBRO have looked into this issue and an interim report has been produced with the full report due shortly.

**ACTON: Secretariat to amend minutes accordingly**

2.2 All matters arising are covered by items on the agenda.

**Item 3 – The New Section 18 Standard - Implementation**

3.1 HELA welcomed the update on the current activities surround the Section 18 standard and the work done to date.

- 3.2 The quality assurance system was discussed and mirrors the methodology developed by LACORS and the LBRO and would be specific to FOD and LAs.
- 3.3 There will eventually be five toolkits on the HSE website and these are on target to be completed by July and available for use by September. The outline plan was presented as Annex 1 to the paper.

**ACTION: The paper was noted**

#### **Item 4 – Revised Governance Arrangements**

- 4.1 A draft leaflet was circulated setting out the governance structures and bodies, and a proposed new statement of commitment between HSE and local government representative bodies.
- 4.2 It was noted that the front page text attributed to Judith Hackitt and Geoffrey Theobald hasn't been finalised and may be modified to emphasise the value of Health and Safety to community economic and social wellbeing in particular.
- 4.3 It is proposed that as well as the leaflet the document will be web based thereby allowing it to link into other documents and sources of further information.
- 4.4 The intended audience is to be not only front line inspectors but also elected members and Chief Executives but it was discussed that some terms may not be understood by elected members and whether in fact they needed all the information. It was suggested that Elected Members might receive a shortened version containing only the first and last pages.
- 4.5 It was pointed out that the CIEH's acronym on page 2 of the leaflet was incorrect and should read 'Chartered Institute of Environmental Health'.
- 4.6 The completed leaflet is to go to the LGP in April and the HSE Board in spring.
- 4.7 The publicity and communication strategy is to be devised, to include both national and local signings, with the aim being to launch the document at the LGA Conference in July.

**ACTION: Leaflet to be further developed.  
An abbreviated document for Elected Members to be developed.  
Publicity strategy to be produced**

## **Item 5 – Incident Selection Criteria and Priority Planning**

### Incident Selection Criteria

- 5.1 In order to achieve consistency through Local Authorities in terms of the accidents investigated the selection criteria has been drafted to form part of the Section 18 guidance. This mirrors the FOD Selection criteria template.
- 5.2 The standard has been trialled successfully by a number of local authorities covering all types of authority. The feedback from this consultation was a reduction in the number of accidents that needed to be investigated which led to more officer time being allocated to health and safety project work.
- 5.3 There was a discussion around whether HELA had the authority to sign up to the new standard but it was agreed that the Health and Safety Board set the general directive but it was not necessary for them to approve the mechanism by which that directive was followed.
- 5.4 There was concern that the standard was not mandatory and therefore Local Authorities could still investigate every accident or none at all. However, Local Authorities are required to adhere to the Section 18 guidance and through peer review exercises these Authorities should be brought into line. It was noted that the standard does allow for a degree of local flexibility in incident selection.

### Priority Planning

- 5.5 A new structure for the way LAs undertake priority planning has been developed to replace LAC67/1. The consultation period ended in March 2009 and received 74 responses.
- 5.6 Although the responses were diverse there was a general acceptance of the new format but with a call for more guidance and worked examples, that Category B premises be split into categories B<sub>1</sub> and B<sub>2</sub>.
- 5.7 It was identified that the HELA T&F group had some work to do to around the areas of guidance and providing worked examples to aid the implementation. It was also apparent that the Software Houses would need to be brought on board as soon as possible in order that systems could be altered to accept the new scoring methods.
- 5.8 In paragraphs 19 and 20 of the paper it was stated that any premises under a Primary Authority Scheme would automatically be placed in Category C and receive no routine inspection. LBRO stated that it was not their intention to override the Risk Rating Scheme and that premises should be scored, and inspected, as per the Scheme, and the paper would be changed accordingly.

- 5.9 The protection of resources was again raised especially as some authorities wanted to keep inspecting C Category premises. However, it was stated that resources would be better employed in work surrounding projects like FIT3 and that there was perhaps a requirement for some Local Authorities to change their approach and be innovative with their staff and resources

**ACTION: Both documents be given to HELA and LACORS task and finish group look with a brief to produce further guidance but that the standard be approved and endorsed by HELA and be introduced by means of a Chair's letter to all local authorities**

### **Item 6 – Regulators Development Needs Analysis Implementation**

- 6.1 The RDNA systems and arrangements were made available to LAs throughout January via a number of regional launches and briefing events that received positive feedback from those attending. Andy Gay (AG) is now in post with HSE leading a team to help support LAs and HSE with this tool.
- 6.2 Linked to the RDNA tool is GRIP (Guidance for Regulators Information Point). This web based application was demonstrated by AG and provided a toolkit of methods by which the RDNA learning objectives may be fulfilled. This included the ability to feedback to HSE on missing links or suggestions for extra information. It is expected to go live sometime after Easter.
- 6.3 A new RDNA board will be set up and will meet quarterly in London and it was requested that a HELA member be invited.

**ACTION: HELA to endorse the RDNA tool and nominate a HELA member to sit on the RDNA board.**

### **Item 7 – HELA Communication Plan**

- 7.1 HELA concluded that the presentation and style of the communication plan was suitable and that in future it would be produced as a Below the Line Paper for information only.

**ACTION: Secretariat to ensure plan is kept up to date and added as a Below the Line paper for future meetings**

### **Item 8 – 2009 Partnerships Conferences and Regional Events – Proposals**

- 8.1 This item requested HELA to note the feedback on the 2008 National Partnership Conference and to agree conference arrangements for 2009 / 2010 and to consider the viability of Regional HELA Partnership Awards.

- 8.2 The 2008 Conference was held in Manchester attended by 119 LA personnel including 18 councillors. The feedback on the venue and the content was favourable although there was criticism of some of the audio/visual aspects.
- 8.3 Thirty four entries were received for the HELA Partnership Award with the final six each giving a presentation at the Conference. The main award was won by a Greater Manchester project on work related violence.
- 8.4 For 2009 it is proposed that a series of nine regional events be held between October and November, 1 in Wales, 1 in Scotland, and 1 in each of the English regions.
- 8.5 The awards were felt to be a useful tool to capture enthusiasm and as a way of recognising good practice. It was felt that with the HELA conference being a bi-annual event the Regional Events could bestow their own Partnership awards in years when HELA did not. However whilst it was agreed that the HELA criteria be used in the judging of these awards it was not thought practical for HELA to be involved in the judging, or to sponsor the awards.
- 8.6 There was then discussion about the HELA Conference appearing to be London centric. Whilst there was agreement that moving the national conference around the regions was in theory a good idea, any location had to be a central transport hub as any location would be likely to disadvantage some group.

**ACTION: The Regions to go ahead with their own Regional Partnership Awards using the HELA judging criteria without HELA sponsorship.**

#### **Item 9 – HSE Strategy Consultation**

- 9.1 In the absence of Phil Kimball a verbal report was provided by Kevin Myers and Giles Denham
- 9.2 The consultation period on the new strategy has been completed and over 100 responses were received including all those seen as the key stakeholders. Those responses were generally supportive of the strategy and this was reflective of the excellent attendance at the regional workshops held to promote the consultation.
- 9.3 As a result some minor modifications will be made to the strategy but nothing major and this will be recommended to the HSE Board in March.
- 9.4 Whilst most broadly agreed with the strategy the four main points that came out of the consultation exercise were
- To broaden the concept of Competence, which it was thought was too tuned to the professional Health and Safety Inspectorate and not to the wider industry

- To look at getting Health and Safety built into the education system
  - There was no overwhelming response to the question of what third parties could bring to the health and safety agenda
  - The question of consistency between Regulators was raised alongside the call for more flexibility in the way Regulators treated situations.
- 9.5 In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of May the final strategy will be published with a wish that key stakeholders be present to endorse it. This is envisaged to be a media focussed launch.
- 9.6 The HSE will not be drawing up a strategy delivery document; instead the annual HSE business plan will pull the HSE into line with the strategy over the next few years, and is expected to reflect its work with co-regulators and other key stakeholders

**Item 10 – AOB/Date of Next Meeting**

- 10.1 The next meeting is to be 4 September 2009 at HSE, Rose Court