

ANNEX 4 to HSC Paper HSC/03/107

HSC/E EU Negotiating Strategy

The main principles are as follows:

- To ensure that EU health and safety legislation is as similar as possible to UK domestic legislation, in order to minimise the number of changes to which both sides of industry have to adjust;
- To incorporate, wherever appropriate, a 'goal-setting' rather than a prescriptive approach;
- To press for a period of consolidation and consistent implementation of existing legislation, rather than for new proposals;

Where new proposals are developed, to promote:

- The use of risk assessment for prioritising new measures;
- Proper attention to subsidiarity, i.e. that what should be left to national law must be reserved for national action;
- Regulatory Impact Assessment as a means of challenging unnecessary or over-elaborate requirements;
- The challenge of red tape, particularly unnecessary recording, licensing or reporting measures.

The Strategy actively supports measures:

- that will achieve real improvements in health and safety standards across Europe, as long as consequences for the UK are not unacceptable;
- where standards in the UK are already acceptable, that will raise standards elsewhere in Europe, thus to achieve a level playing field for UK business.