

Health and Safety Commission Paper		MISC/05/13	
Meeting Date:		Open Government Status:	Fully Open
Type of Paper:	Miscellaneous	Paper File Ref:	
Exemptions:	None		

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

RAILWAY SAFETY PUBLICATION OF ANNUAL REPORT ON RAILWAY SAFETY

**A Paper by Maurice Littlewood
Cleared by ALLAN SEFTON on 28 June 2005**

Issue

1. This paper introduces the HSE annual report on railway safety 2004.

Timing

2. It is planned to publish the annual report on 19 July 2005.

Recommendation

3. The Commission is asked to note:
 - the contents of the report; and
 - the proposed publication date.

Background

4. Annual reports on railway safety have been produced for over 150 years. Most recently, the HSE's annual report on railway safety has been produced under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the then Secretaries of State for the Environment and Transport (dated 10 October 1996). This includes an undertaking that HSE will provide an annual report by the Chief Inspector of Railways to the HSC and Secretary of State for Transport.
5. The Report is principally a source of statistical data derived from the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), including information on key findings and trends. However, it also provides a mechanism for disseminating information about the work of HMRI and an opportunity for cascading messages on emerging issues and findings from incident investigations, which would not necessarily justify separate publication.
6. The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union requires HSE to produce an annual report on railway safety, based on a calendar year. The 2004 report is a transitional one covering the 9-month period between 1 April 2004 and 31 December 2004 only. It is structured around the statistical data (ie fatalities, injuries, train incidents, train defects and enforcement) and is supported by: a summary of the period in brief including enforcements/ incidents; good trends/bad trends; key facts; and main messages that HSE wants to get across.

Argument

7. Good and bad indicators, identified from the statistics, are highlighted in Annex 1.
8. There was one major incident involving multiple fatalities during the period.
9. Overall, the message is one of improvements, with a reduction in the numbers of collisions, derailments, train incidents, SPADs, broken rails, track buckles, rolling stock failures, and cases of vandalism. This is especially encouraging as all these took place during a time of further change and transition for the industry.
10. There is little change in the number of injuries to railway employees, level crossing incidents and the number of assaults on railway staff.
11. Some statistical returns are provisional, and may need slight adjustment prior to release.
12. The key messages, identified in the Foreword, are:
 - there was one major rail incident during the reporting year, at Ufton level crossing, near Ufton Nerve;
 - Network Rail's decision to bring maintenance work 'in-house' is an opportunity to improve track risk management;
 - the risk from SPADs has continued to fall;
 - HSE's Rail Delivery Programme (RDP) finished on schedule at the end of March 2005;
13. The Foreword to the Report has been agreed by Allan Sefton in his capacity as the Director for Rail Safety.
14. The next annual report is expected to be produced after HMRI and Rail Policy have moved to ORR. Its precise structure and contents will be discussed and agreed, but will need to meet the requirement of the European Parliament.

Consultation

15. Internally in HMRI, RPC, and Press Office. A copy of the draft is also being sent, for information, to:
 - the Office of Rail Regulation;
 - the Strategic Railway Authority;
 - the Rail Accident Investigation Branch;
 - Network Rail;
 - the Rail Safety and Standards Board (RSSB); and
 - Railways International and General Branch DfT.
16. We are continuing to make minor changes before the report goes live on the HSE Internet. The Internet is the sole means of publication.

Presentation

17. Publication and a press briefing are scheduled for 19 July 2005. The briefing will be led by Allan Sefton as the Director for Railway Safety and will major on:
 - train incidents;

trackworker safety; and
level crossings.

Costs and Benefits

18. Not quantified.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

19. Catered for in existing budgets.

Environmental Implications

20. Not applicable.

Other Implications

21. None.

Action

22. The Commission is asked to note:

- the contents of the report; and
- the proposed publication date.

Good Indicators

- broken rails on Network Rail infrastructure fell from 334 in the 12-month 2003/04 to 207 in the nine-month period 1 April 2004 to 31 December 2004
- TPWS continues to prove effective in reducing the consequences of SPADs
- track buckles totalled 32 in the nine-month period, compared with 137 in 2003/04

Bad indicators

- seven people died in the high-speed train derailment at Ufton level crossing
- incidents at level crossings show no sign of a down-turn
- no sign of any significant reduction in employee injuries