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Exemptions:	None		

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

HSE Board

Minutes of a meeting of the HSE Board held on Wednesday 1 May 2002 at 9.30 am in the Fortune Room, Rose Court

Present

Sandra Caldwell
 Richard Clifton
 Paul Davies
 Adrian Ellis
 Peter Graham
 Richard Hillier
 Nick Starling
 Kate Timms
 Laurence Williams
 Timothy Walker
 Justin McCracken
 Sian Lewis

Also attending

Gordon Macdonald Item 3
 Steve Woolley “
 Sarah Jones “
 Murray Devine Item 4
 Colleen Bowen Item 5
 Pat Williams “
 Jane Willis “ & 6
 Tony Mulhall Item 6
 Steve Pointer Item 8
 Linda Buxton “
 Moira Jones “

Alastair Cannon - Secretariat
 Apologies: Robert Humm

1 Draft minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on Wednesday 10 April (B/02/M04).

1.1 The minutes, including open government status, were agreed.

2 Health and Safety: Oral report by Justin McCracken. A written statistical report was issued at the meeting.

2.1 Justin McCracken's presentation highlighted a number of points. The number of near misses recorded was low in relation to the number of injuries which raised concerns that not all were recorded. Incidents of verbal abuse suffered by staff were recorded separately; these too seemed low raising similar doubts about reporting.

There was concern too at the level and quality of investigations and concern that there was a failure to determine root causes and implement change to prevent recurrence.

Again most incidents this month were work station related. Refit are to examine the usability of HSE's current system, for example the number of 'clicks' required to perform a function.

The H&S Committee had discussed current investigation arrangements. All had agreed these needed a higher priority. The stress working group have come up with an action plan to bring to the June Board. Proposals for site based occupational health support are being considered along with the current level of provision supplied through BMI.

2.2 A number of points were raised in discussion:

- a Board members were asked what arrangements they have in place to ensure adequate investigations are being conducted into incidents; some required to see all investigation reports, others selected a sample
- b There was uncertainty expressed as to what constituted a 'near miss' and that this might lead to under-reporting.

Action: Justin McCracken to ensure clear guidance on near misses is promulgated.

3 HSE's Change Message: Presentation by Gordon Macdonald, Steve Woolley & Sarah Jones.

3.1 The team presented a draft 'case for change' message and presented proposals for communicating the message. The team also reported that they were on track to present an outline project plan to the Board on 8 May as previously agreed but stressed that this would not be a highly polished document.

3.2 The following points were made in discussion:

- a Amendments to the message were suggested. The redraft of the message was brought back to the Board later in the meeting and agreed.

Action: The message to be published to the Change in HSE page on the intranet as soon as possible.

- b It was agreed that a core brief should be made available to Board members by 8 May. This brief would assist them and their line managers in cascading the change message to staff
- c Arrangements for evaluating the effectiveness of the communication were discussed. A balance had to be struck between giving sufficient time to commence cascading the message through team meetings and early evaluation to check effectiveness.
- d Members were encouraged to use all opportunities to cascade and explain the message to staff.

Action Board members to ensure the message is delivered to their respective staff in face to face meeting between 8 May and 5 June.

- e It was agreed that evaluation, by questionnaire from a random

sample of staff both during and after the 8 May- 5 June period and the results brought back before the formal Board.

- 4 Civil Contingencies:** Oral Report by Nick Starling. Murray Devine attending
- 4.1 The report outlined HSE's involvement with government civil contingency planning since 11 September. It was noted that initially HSE was not fully brought into government arrangements but was not fully engaged. This raised key issues about how well HSE was geared up to deal with the Government's increased focus on contingency planning and how to manage others' expectations of what we could and could not deliver in an emergency.
- 4.2 The following points were made in discussion:
- a Members drawing on experience inside and outside HSE noted some of the difficulties faced during the fuel crisis and the foot & mouth epidemic when the importance of effective prior planning, access to and mobility of resources, and robust communication networks became apparent.
 - b The duration of any crisis would be a significant factor as this would test both HSE's capacity and resilience.
 - c It was noted that nuclear safety directorate and offshore division had emergency arrangements in place although these may not be entirely appropriate models for HSE as a whole.
 - d A key issue was to distinguish between HSE's response in an emergency relating to its core business (eg a rail accident), and civil contingencies where HSE did not have a central role but where H&S issues arose.
 - e There were two aspects to this issue; the planning for an emergency and the reaction to one. The role for HSE in each had to be considered.
 - f It was agreed that further work was required on this topic.

Action: Justin McCracken to draw up terms of reference for a project to examine HSE's role, what it should be, how to manage expectations and what preparations are necessary. This work will map how HSE currently responds to our 'own', health and safety, emergencies. Justin will also identify someone to take this work forward.

- 5 2002/03 Budget Allocations & Forward Look. B/02/025** Paper by Colleen Bowen. Pat Williams & Jane Willis attending.
- 5.1 The paper confirmed the budget allocations for 2002/03, detailed the foreseeable pressures and financial risks and asked the Board to agree that reduced payroll budgets be notified to DDS and amended formally at the mid year review stage to take account of the revised ready reckoner for salaries.
- 5.2 The following points were made in discussion;
- a The revised ready-reckoner revealed that members had been given

an over allocation of £1.4M on payroll and that the over-allocation have to be returned at the midyear stage.

- b The Board was reminded that 2002/03 allocations had been discussed February on the basis that major revision may be needed following the June meeting dependent upon DTLR's decisions in respect of a) End Year Flexibility and b) extra resource for necessary work flowing from implementing the Cullen reports. This should be clear soon when DTLR's own end year position was established.
- c The Board agreed that budget holders may vire from payroll to staff substitutes only to maintain agreed outputs. It was also agreed to extend the existing control, requiring PEFD agreement on virement between budget heads, to the transfer of funds between DDS. It was confirmed that the arrangement requiring PEFD approval prior to any viring of allocated payroll was the same as that in place last year. It was emphasized that this need not be a bureaucratic arrangement and requests would be treated pragmatically.

Action PEFD to circulate a note explaining the revised payroll allocations and viring requirements in detail.

- d The end year outturn looked to be okay on the cash position but the resource position was still being established. This reflects the difficulty in applying the complex rules in the current transition period in moving from cash to resource accounting.

Action: Colleen Bowen to confirm the date of the June finance paper (now confirmed as 19 June).

6 Business Performance B/02/024. Paper by Tony Mulhall. Jane Willis advising

6.1 The paper outlined potential benefits from using the balanced scorecard approach, particularly in covering the full gamut of business activity not captured by other indicators. This would help secure better planning, selection of priorities and management. The Board was asked to agree to its use in principle and to further work to develop appropriate outcome based performance indicators.

6.2 The following points were raised in discussion;

- a Whilst popular in the private sector the use of the scorecard may well be more difficult for public sector bodies, nevertheless it could act as a powerful lever to drive strategic change.
- b It was critical to select the correct measures and consideration should be given to involving the Commission in this. At the same time the development of the scorecard would need to mesh closely with the current organisational change programme.
- c There was uncertainty about the likelihood and the desirability that the use of the scorecard would free HSE from all Treasury numerical targets.
- d Some directorates used alternative management tools, for example NSD used EFQM. There was concern expressed at possible duplication of effort. However the worth of having one pan HSE

measure, such as the scorecard, was emphasized. It was noted that the balanced scorecard and EFQM are complimentary and therefore the use of the former would not prevent the continued use of the later.

- e The Board agreed the four headings in paragraph 12 of the paper subject to making explicit reference in the 'resource perspective' to staff, and not just finance,.
- f It was agreed that one-to-one interviews be conducted with Board members to harvest views on what the scorecard should comprise and achieve. Following this the issue should come back to the Board for further discussion.

Action: Tony Mulhall to arrange interviews.

- g Members would welcome a presentation from someone who has gone through the process to understand some of the possible pitfalls, and to see what a successful scorecard process would look like.

Action: Tony Mulhall to help arrange a presentation to the Board and circulate a more detailed note on the how the scorecard could work.

7 Recruitment & Retention in HSE: B/02/027 Paper by Kate Timms

7.1 This paper presented to the Board the findings of a senior management lunch with eight recent recruits. Issues were raised by the recruits regarding the recruitment process, pay, development & training and promotion prospects.

7.2 The following points were raised in discussion;

- a The recruitment process into the inspectorates appeared more structured than that into policy posts.
- b A general publication to describe and thereby advertise the range of jobs across HSE would be helpful.
- c Many recruits are attracted by the image of HSE but find the recruitment process lengthy and something of an obstacle.
- d Recent policy recruits had been disappointed by the quality of work given to them and wished for a more structured approach to their training and development. It was noted that this might require lower expectations of output during training and development.
- e Recent recruits, and others generally, report that the current promotion system which places a heavy emphasis upon past achievement rather than potential militates against younger staff and recent recruits.
- f Effort must be made to seek to reduce the current 5-6 week average to obtain references. If this could not be reduced then the balance of risk of taking someone unsuitable against losing good applicants would need reexamining.

Action: Richard Hillier to investigate reducing the period of time taken for obtaining references

Action: Kate Timms to arrange for the creation of a recruitment pack for

policy jobs along the lines of the current recruitment packs for the inspectorates.

Action: Richard Hillier to examine how to ensure that suitable weight is given to 'potential' in promotion interviews and whether the current system requires change.

Action: Richard Hillier to explore what might be done to indicate and advertise the variety of jobs available at different bands across HSE

8 HSC/E Race Equality Scheme. B/02/026 Paper by Steve Pointer. Advisers Linda Buxton & Moira Jones

8.1 This paper outlined the requirements of the Race Relations Act 2000, in particular the positive duty now to demonstrate compliance with the law. The paper asked the Board to agree the wording of the scheme, proposals for publication and continued provision for a support function, prior to the issue coming before the Commission in the near future.

8.2 The following points were made in discussion;

- a The exercise in evaluating diversity in practice had proved to be useful. Having criteria against which to make judgments had helped the policy process and had not been a burden.
- b The reporting requirements were established as six monthly internally and an annual public report.
- c Some drafting changes were discussed and agreed.
- d As there was continuing demand it was agreed to maintain a post as a support function for Directorates and Divisions.

Action Kate Timms to secure resources for this from the current provision.

9 Any other business

9.1 There was no other business.