

Health and Safety  
Executive



# Health and Safety in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

‘A Balancing Act’

**Judith Hackitt CBE**

**Chair, Health and Safety Executive**



## Health and Safety before 1974

- Multiple outdated regulations
- Worker/employee involvement not mandated/regulated
- ~ 1000 people being killed at work every year



## 1974 – The turning point

- The Robens Report
- The Health and Safety Commission and Executive



## The key principles of HSWA 1974

- Recognise the pace of change
- Do away with prescriptive solutions
- Replace with a more generic goal setting approach

*“Those who create the risk are best placed to manage it”*

**The approach and the Act is as relevant today as it was >30 years ago**

## So, what has changed?

- Safety Performance improved by more than 70%
- World of work and the consequent risks to be managed
- Public expectation and tendency to look for “something must be done”
- Devaluation of the Health and Safety brand
- Confusion over roles and responsibilities



## The 21<sup>st</sup> century H&S Challenge

- Current performance on a plateau
  - > 200 deaths a year at work
  - >28000 major injuries
  - Over 2 million people suffering from an illness caused or made worse by work
  - A great deal still to do

## The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenge

- 4 sectors account for ~ 50% of work related deaths
- Health requires a different management approach to safety
- Diverse and remote workforces present new challenges
- Large and small businesses perceive different needs from the regulatory system



## A new governance model

- On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 HSC and HSE merged to become the new Health and Safety Executive
- Former Commissioners have now become the (non-Exec) Board of HSE
- Time to revisit Robens



## **A new strategy for Health and Safety in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

- Led by the new Board of HSE
- Strategy for workplace H&S in GB and HSE's role
- Takes account of evidence from stakeholders to W&PSC and other recent consultations/reports
- Calls on others to consider their role in helping deliver the strategy