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To: Local authority Chief Executives and Government Office Directors

Improving the Health, Work and Well-being of Local Communities

How Health and Safety Contributes to Local and Multi Area Agreements

At this stage in the process of finalising the details of your Local Area Agreements (LAA) targets, I am writing to encourage you to ensure that the contribution that workplace health and safety plays in promoting healthier, safer and more economically sustainable communities is integrated into the process – and to offer the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) help in doing this. Health and safety at work involves all of us whether we are employers, employees or members of the public visiting workplaces like pubs, restaurants, hospitals and shops. It affects all our lives as the estimated 6000 annual work-related cancer deaths, over 200 worker fatal injuries each year and 36 million days lost in 2006/07 due to work-related ill health and workplace injury testify. HSE estimated that in 2001/02, the costs to Britain of workplace accidents and work-related ill health were between £13.1 billion and £22.2 billion to the economy and between £22 billion and £31.8 billion to society.

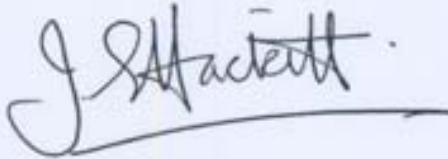
Improving the health and well-being of the working population is set out in the Government's strategy, *Health, work and well-being: Caring for our future*. The strategy aims to help reduce health inequalities and social exclusion by demonstrating clearly that work helps maintain and improve people's overall health and well-being. When people are exposed to unacceptable work-related risks, their physical and mental health is likely to suffer. This places additional demands on the local economy, services (e.g. healthcare, social care and other support services) and the community. Local authorities through their regulatory activity and their power to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local areas are critical to the delivery of this strategy.

HSE as a statutory 'Named Partner' in the new arrangements is keen to help you secure the delivery of your LAA targets. The Health and Safety Commission sees LAAs and multi-area agreements (MAAs) as excellent opportunities for HSE and local authorities to work together and, with a range of other partners, to contribute to both the economic and health and wellbeing aspirations of your local area. Improvements in health, safety and welfare have already contributed to a number of LAAs and the guide highlights examples of two of these – in Kirklees and Leicestershire.

The attached guide highlights how workplace health and safety contributes to many of the National Indicators that you may have adopted as part of your LAA targets. We very much hope that we can work with you to contribute to the achievement of these targets and to the delivery of sustainable improvements to your communities. We both have much to gain from working together to shape your local areas.

I urge you to copy this letter and guide to your senior colleagues with responsibility for LAA and MAA coordination.

If you require any further information, please contact Nick O'Donnell on tel. 020 7717 6432 or nick.o'donnell@hse.gsi.gov.uk.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hackitt', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the bottom of the signature.

Judith Hackitt
Chair, Health and Safety Commission