

Open Government status: Open	Paper Number:
	Meeting Date: 11 October 2006
Exempt Material: None	Type of Paper: Above the Line

HELA

Local Authority Circular 67/1 (Revision 3)

A paper by Allan Davies

Advisors: Gareth Broughton and Jerry Stout

Issue

1. The continued use of LAC 67/1 (revision 3) by Local Authorities (LAs) and its relevance to Partnership working.

Timing

2. Immediate. The LAC has been reviewed in accordance with its preset review date of September 2006. The Strategic Partnership with LAs has moved on rapidly since the LACs last revision in 2002. LAs require time to adapt their service plans and work reporting software to take account of any changes HELA require before the next financial year.

Recommendation

3. That HELA support the preferred option for minor change and ask LAs to align their health & safety interventions to accord with a LAC 67/1 rev 4 in due course. LAU also recommend that this be achieved by creating a HELA Task & Finish Group to do the necessary work. The timeline and likely tasks are contained in a short appendix to this document.

Background

4. Local Authority Circular 67/1 sets down quite specific guidance to LAs on setting up health & safety inspection arrangements. It includes a risk based rating system that indicates frequency of inspection/re-inspection. Whilst not mandatory, it is used as a key benchmark by the majority of LA's when deciding on resource allocation. LAC 67/1 has been revised 3 times previously to accommodate changes in health & safety inspection and enforcement practice. Revision 3 was introduced in 2003 to incorporate the focus on topic-based inspections.
5. Since the last review there has been a significant change in the way HSE and LAs work together. Partnership working is well on the way to becoming the way that LAs engage with HSE; it has led to new ways of jointly targeting business to achieve improvements in compliance.

6. LAs are required to report back to their elected members and HSC on their achievements during the previous year. Some have expressed concern that FIT3 related work is not specifically included in the current guidance and as a result are finding it difficult to allocate resources to it.
7. There are three options for change. No change, a major overhaul and radical change or relatively minor changes to help LAs overcome the issue identified at 6 above by incorporating references to FIT3..

Argument

8. During August all LA's were contacted via the partnership managers and asked to comment on the LAC and potential changes to it. LAU received 23 responses from individual LAs. All regarded the LAC as still being useful, all said change was needed.
9. There was little support for complete replacement of, or major changes to, the circular at this time although it was conceded it is becoming dated.
10. Major changes or replacement would have to be made in time to allow LA work recording software suppliers up to 8-9 months or longer before implementation, crucially, missing the beginning of the 07/08 operational year. It would also be wise to wait and see what strategic direction LBRO intend to take as far as performance measurement is concerned, so that major change only needs to be made once.
11. The majority of LAs who responded wanted minor changes to update 67/1 that would make it relevant to the partnership approach and more FIT3 friendly. Accepting that change is needed this is the most cost effective solution given present constraints. It should also mean few (if any) and only minor changes to LA software.
12. Respondants suggest that changes are wanted to clarify when to carry out medium risk visits, when to re-rate premises, the level of public risk and alterations that will that will allow them to easily add FIT3 interventions into their service plans.
13. Importantly, minor change now should allow a more accurate re-alignment with LBRO's work when their strategic direction is known.
14. There will be benefits in terms of continued relationship building with LAs, the inclusion of Fit3 in to 67/1 will greatly assist LAs ability to be able to maximise the potential for Fit3 work and delivery of the FIT3 strategic programme. It may encourage wavering LAs to sign up to FIT3.

Costs & Benefits

14 There are no significant costs associated with this paper and the minor changes to 67/1 as set out in the appendix except those arising from establishing the HELA Task & Finish group.

Financial Implications

15 These should be minimal or none arising from this paper

Environmental Implications

16 None.

Action

17 HELA is asked to support the establishment of a HELA Task & Finish Group to action the proposal to make minor but important alterations to the LAC 67/1 (Revision3) and to encourage LAs to align their health and safety interventions in accordance with the revised LAC.

Contact

18 Gareth Broughton, LAU Communications Manager, LAU, Rose Court.
Tel. 0207-717-6828, (VPN 522 6828). Mobile: 07747 461658, e-mail: -
<mailto:gareth.broughton@hse.gsi.gov.uk>