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HELA

**Science Planning and Process for Clearing Products from the Initiative**

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**Issue**

1. To agree and enable commitment to the proposed process for mainstreaming local authority science and technology needs within a combined HSE and LA long term science plan.
2. To agree and enable commitment to the proposed process for clearing outputs of science and technology initiative projects.

**Summary**

The Science and Technology Initiative is due to finish March 2009. In order to ensure that support for LAs is continued beyond this date, there is a need to ensure LA requirements are considered within the 2009-2011 long term science planning process which will inform the next HSC Science Strategy. A new methodology for production of science plans was trialled earlier in the year. It was felt that better science planning would help to ensure that priority projects and programmes were identified, and for the plans to set out more coherently how HSE will work more efficiently and effectively in the identification and delivery of science with key partners including local authorities and HSL. It is the content of these science plans that local authorities will need to influence.

LACORS and LAU have also been considering the approach on the way outputs and products from the Science and Technology Initiative are approved prior to release.

**1. Science planning process**

**LA Science and Technology Initiative**

The initiative was established in May 2005 and allocated £5million over four years to improving LA access to science and technology. Given that the initiative runs out in March 2009, LAU and LACORS are working to ensure that support for LA science and technology will continue to be met, but that this will occur through the mainstreaming of science needs with those of HSE.

Science Planning for 2009 – 2011

HSE commissioned work to assist in the production of the science plan for 2008-2011. This work will contribute to more efficient and effective implementation of the HSC 'strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond'.

It was felt that better science planning would help to ensure that priority projects and programmes are identified that make the most effective contribution to HSE objectives, and that these priorities give value for money. Better plans will provide a basis for allocating financial and human resources to priority areas, managing risks, monitoring and evaluating performance, and learning lessons for future science.

The HSE science sub group recently reviewed the new science planning methodologies as trialled in the pilot process in April – June 2007. Whilst agreeing with many of the aspects of the approach the HSE Board felt that it was over complicated and that the timescale for implementing the new process in time for 2008 was not feasible. The paper to the Board can be found in Annex1.

Therefore HSL are currently reviewing the process for undertaking the science planning, this will be overseen by a project management team which will include a LACORS representative. The process will be streamlined but will still include elements of the original process, especially including a consultation workshop with external stakeholders. It was felt that this provided useful input in terms of what information was already out there and challenged the HSE views on approach.

It is currently believed that the plans will be focused around the four HSE business plan areas (these titles may change):

- Conventional health and safety outcomes
- Corporate
- Enabling Justice
- Major Hazards (including nuclear)

LACORS believes that local authority requirement will have to be incorporated in all plans. However specifically:

- Plans for Fit3 type topics. Here it is envisaged these would come under Conventional health and safety outcomes. As such LACORS expect that within those Fit3 topics LAs will be consulted on the types of issues that they believe need to be addressed. This will ensure no duplication and ensuring that research is applicable to both HSE and LAs needs. However the engagement of LAs at all stages will be imperative. LAU/LACORS will ensure that this is built into the user guide for the science planning process and will be raised at the Project management meetings.
- LACORS /LAU recognise that there will be issues that LAs need to address that will not be captured by the Fit3 topic science plans, for example issues relating to public safety. As such LAU/LACORS will be submitting an LA plan to build into the process. It is hoped that this contribution will be captured under the conventional health and safety outcomes theme. Once the process is clearer LAU/ LACORS will be asking for contributions from local authorities about the types of issues that will need to be addressed. It is anticipated that this process will begin Oct/Nov 2007. It is not possible to identify the potential number of areas this new plan will cover given that many areas have already or will be addressed by the initiative. However public safety is an issue for local authorities and this is currently not recognised a priority of HSE thereby causing difficulties for HSE to support work in many areas that LAs regularly have to deal with in relation to health and safety.

- The provision for reactive support is proposed to be included in the Enabling Justice Theme. The use of reactive support by local authorities through the Science and Technology Initiative has shown how important this can be and LACORS recognise concerns from local authorities about the potential for HSE requests to take precedence. Routes for raising issues and requests will also be through the partnership teams and ELOs.

## Science planning for 2008/09

As the new method of science planning will not be introduced in its entirety until 2009, it is necessary for HSE to have something in place for 2008/09. As the Science and Technology Initiative runs to 2009 it can be argued that there is already a plan in place and that LACORS and LAU have a reasonable idea of what it will contain e.g.;

- Funding that has been allocated to reactive work,
- A number of planned projects already approved that run into this time frame
- Commissioning of a number of potential projects currently in the pipe line.
- Plus anything new that is submitted

However given the current spending profile, there might be some spend in 2009-10. This must be defended in the 2008-09 LA plan. In accordance with the emerging science planning process, LAU and LACORS have agreed to work on a specific plan for 2008-09. This will identify work that, though commissioned during 2008-09 cannot be completed until 2009-10.

Work will commence shortly on this plan. It is proposed to consult the LACORS Health and Safety Policy Forum in Feb 2008 and HELA in March 2008.

## 2. Process for clearing products

The deliverables from the Science and Technology Initiative Planned Projects fall into four broad categories. These are set out below, together with the emerging proposals for both clearing them and their subsequent ownership. LAU and LACORS are developing a process to resolve any disagreements on ownership and distribution of project deliverables.

### 1. The organisation of an event to address a specific issue

It is not possible to run such events for further groups of LAs. Consequently, where the material would be of use to other LAs it is proposed that the material be converted into an electronic format so that it can be utilised as eg an 'e-learning' tool. It is proposed that both the relevant specialist(s) and programme directors clear the material and that the relevant programme subsequently owns the material. If no programme wishes to own the material, then it will be owned by LAU.

### 2. An investigation/review that results in the production of a report with recommendations for taking the matter forward

It is proposed that the relevant programme director clears the report and recommendations. If the issue is not an issue for HSE (eg relating to public safety), then it is proposed that the report and recommendations are cleared by the SCS for LAU and LACORS.

### 3. The production of guidance material for Enforcing Authorities to use

It is proposed that this guidance material is, wherever possible, produced as a Local Authority Circular (LAC) – depending on the progress of the project looking at developing enforcement guidance for all enforcers. It should be cleared by the SCS responsible for LAU and by LACORS and be owned by LAU. In those cases where a LAC is not appropriate, then LACORS will issue it as advice to LAs and LACORS would subsequently own it.

#### 4. The production of guidance material for dutyholders

Guidance for dutyholders, hosted on the HSE Website, must be cleared via HSE's 'Publications Clearance Process', which requires clearance by the relevant programme director. The relevant programme would subsequently own it.

## Note for the HSE Science Sub Group of the Board: Draft 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2007

### Background

In April 2007, the HSE commissioned a piece of work to assist in the production of the Science Plan for 2008-2011. New methodologies have been piloted for the production of strengthened science plans for the areas of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, musculoskeletal disorders, and slips and trips. The science plans covers the full range of natural, technical, engineering, statistical, economic and social science.

The work has been supported by three consultants from Delta Partnership who have recent experience of strengthening science planning at Defra and working with a wide range of other public sector organisations. The Delta consultants have transferred skills to three counterpart consultants from the HSL.

Better science planning will help to ensure that priority projects and programmes are identified that make the most effective contribution to HSE objectives, and that these priorities give value for money. Better plans will provide a basis for allocating financial and human resources to priority areas, managing risks, monitoring and evaluating performance, and learning lessons for future science. There is also the opportunity to set out more coherently how HSE will work more efficiently and effectively in the identification and delivery of science with key partners, including local authorities and the HSL.

A major challenge is to ensure that new science complements existing knowledge and provides evidence that informs and improves the delivery of health and safety programmes. A diagrammatic overview of the need for scientific evidence is presented in Annex 1.

### Overview of progress made

A four stage methodology has been developed and piloted.

#### (a) Production of 'statements of need' for scientific evidence

A 'statement of need' (SoN) for each pilot area was completed by a programme officer with support from the consultants. The SoN sets out an overview of the programme area and its strategic and policy context, an analysis of where we are now in terms of scientific evidence, a forecast of what the future might hold, an assessment of where we want to be in the future in terms our scientific knowledge, and an overview of how we intend to get there. The format for the SoN was slightly revised in light of the piloting exercise. The final version is presented in Annex 2.

#### (b) An initial consultative workshop to further explore scientific evidence needs

A range of around 45 key internal HSE and external stakeholders were invited to a one-day workshop in early May to further explore scientific evidence needs for each of the three pilot areas. A technique called 'back-casting' was used to translate a desired future state of health and safety into what will need to have happened and what science will need to have been done. Initial work was also done on how scientific evidence needs might be clustered and prioritised.

#### (c) Population of scientific evidence needs onto a 'matrix'

The outputs of the first workshop were translated onto a matrix of evidence needs, based on the adaptation of a tool used at Defra. The matrix is a powerful tool for summarising science needs, identifying gaps, and assessing whether there is scope for clustering science needs into packages. The SoNs and the matrices were circulated to workshop attendees for comments over a two week period in late May / early June.

#### (d) A second consultative workshop to revise evidence needs

At a second workshop with around 40 participants held in early June, the evidence matrices were revised in light of the results of the consultation and further exercises. Science needs were then clustered and an initial prioritisation exercise was conducted. An example of a revised matrix is shown in Annex 3.

#### Summary of lessons learned

- The statement of need can be simplified, but forms the basis for a very useful initial assessment of science needs; feedback indicated that it was a well-structured document which was easy to read.
- The involvement of external stakeholders and a good mix of internal programme staff, economists, social researchers, statisticians etc. in the workshop process is essential to get sufficient challenge into the science planning process
- There needs to be continuity of engagement in both workshops with the same people present at each so as to maximise the benefits from the methodology
- The period for external consultation on the SoN and initial matrix should be considerably longer than two weeks – a period of 90 days is suggested
- Much current research is done in very small chunks: future work needs to be more strategic, in bigger, more cross-cutting blocks, which could give more effective results and provide better value for money
- The pilot exercise was very useful in refining the methodology for the development of science plans but the roll-out needs to focus on larger programmatic areas
- The link between business objectives and science objectives needs to be more specifically addressed in the roll-out
- The science needs should identify all evidence needs, including those which can best be provided and / or funded by bodies other than the HSE; the science plans should focus on science needs that the HSE will fund but should also refer to strategies for encourage funding from other sources
- The science plan needs to clearly state how the HSE can work more efficiently and effectively with local authorities in the identification and delivery of science needs
- The improved assessment of scientific needs will help HSL to understand more effectively and to deliver more responsive services to HSE

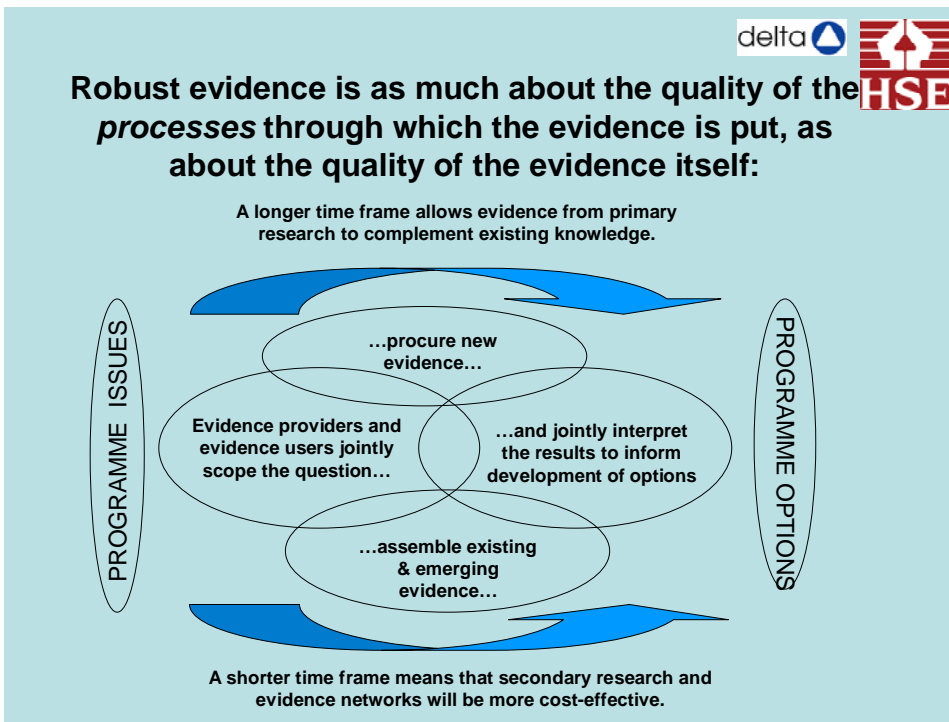
#### Proposed next steps

- Finalisation of the 'user guide' by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007 – the first version of this has been produced
- Agreement of programmatic areas for the full science plan by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2007
- First set of workshops in each programmatic area to be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007
- First draft of scheduled and costed science packages by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007
- 90 day consultation on the science plans to be completed by 15<sup>th</sup> January 2008
- Second set of workshops in each programmatic area (including a review of cross programme science) to be completed by 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008
- Holding a 'science conference' by 15<sup>th</sup> March 2008
- Finalisation of the 2008-2011 science plan by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008

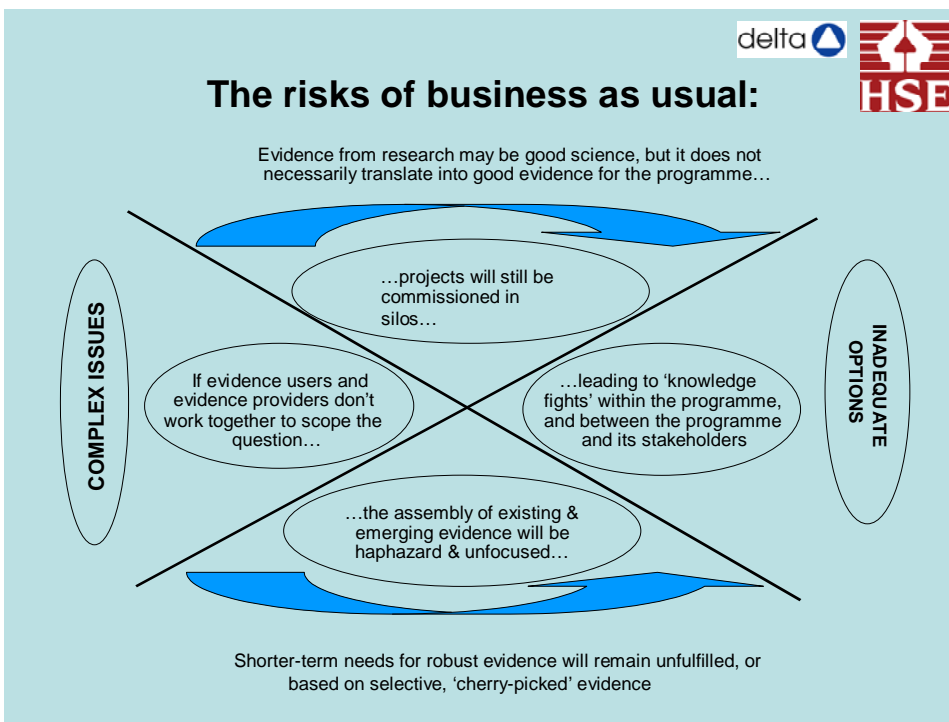
#### Decisions required from the Board

- Approval of the broad methodology for the development of the HSE Science Plan for 2008-2011, and associated budget and timings (this is all set out in version 1 of the user guide)
- Agreement of the programmatic areas to be reflected in the Science Plan
- Approval for the funding of a series of workshops and the science conference

## Annex 1: The need for scientific evidence



Source – Defra (2007) *Our Approach to Evidence & Innovation*



Source – Defra (2007) *Our Approach to Evidence & Innovation*

## Annex 2: Format for the statement of need

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Title of programme:

Name of programme co-ordinator:

#### Background

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is in the process of producing its Science Plan for 2008-2011. This work will contribute to more efficient and effective implementation of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) 'strategy for workplace health and safety in Great Britain to 2010 and beyond'. Better science planning will help to ensure that priority projects and programmes are identified that make the most effective contribution to HSE objectives, and that these priorities give value for money. Better plans will provide a basis for allocating financial and human resources to priority areas, managing risks, monitoring and evaluating performance, and learning lessons for future science.

This Statement of Need (SoN) is a first step in the development of an improved science plan for the programme. It helps to assess how well we are currently doing in reaching our objectives, reviews the risks and opportunities that might lie ahead in the future, analyses where we want to be in terms of scientific evidence and begin to set out how we will get to this position. The SoN will be used as a basis for consultation and will be used to develop a stronger science plan.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this exercise, 'scientific evidence' covers the full range of natural, technical, engineering, statistical, economic and social science.

### 2. STRATEGIC AND POLICY CONTEXT

This section outlines the strategic and policy context in which the HSE and its partners need scientific evidence for the effective delivery of the programme.

*2.1. What is the overarching goal or main objective of the programme?*

Please also state how this is measured.

2.2. What are the specific objectives of the programme?

Please try to list between 4 and 8 of these and include targets if possible.

2.3. What are the key overall drivers behind what the programme is aiming to achieve?

This might be HSE, wider UK or European Commission related.

2.4. What are the specific drivers that contribute to the development of the objectives of the programme?

Try to think about these in terms of the following five categories.

- (a) Employer related
  - (b) Employee related
  - (c) Local authority related
  - (d) Regulation related (both UK and European Commission)
  - (e) Other

2.5. What are the key linkages within the HSE?

What are the links to other HSE objectives and / or other HSE programmes?

2.6. What are the key linkages outside of the HSE?

What are the links between the programme and other Government Departments / other bodies?

### 3. WHERE ARE WE NOW?

This section outlines what we currently know and do not know about the scientific evidence base for the programme.

*3.1 What is the current annual budget for the gathering, analysis and use of scientific evidence?*

Please summarise the research, communications and other budgets that are available to the programme.

*3.2. What do we know?*

What evidence do we have to help us understand where we are now, in relation to our objectives?

*3.3. What do others know?*

Who else has evidence and what sort of evidence is this? How do we currently access this evidence, e.g. through networks or partnerships?

*3.4. What do we know well?*

In what areas of science do we have a very good understanding and knowledge?

*3.5 Where are the knowledge gaps?*

Where are there gaps in scientific evidence or uncertainties in our understanding of science?

#### 4. WHAT MIGHT THE FUTURE HOLD?

This section outlines how the future might influence the type of scientific evidence we will need and how we might use it.

*4.1. What are the opportunities and trends that might affect the types of evidence we will need in the future?*

Refer to any horizon scanning exercises, other studies, trend analysis etc.

*4.2. What are the likely future barriers and constraints that could affect the gathering of evidence?*

Refer to any horizon scanning exercises, other studies, trend analysis etc.

## 5. WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

This section outlines how we will focus what we plan to achieve in the future..

### 5.1. Do we need to reassess our objectives and targets for the programme?

Please specify more realistic targets for existing objectives or specify improved objectives for the programme.

### 5.2. What areas of innovation are needed to support the achievement of our objectives and targets?

Innovation includes both technological advances and new ways of working. Please describe where there is a key need for innovation (e.g. because we are a long way off from meeting our objectives/targets) and where we can benefit from innovations happening elsewhere.

### 5.3. What are the main types of scientific evidence that will be most important in the future?

Please state why each type of evidence will be important and link to existing or proposed objectives.

### 5.4 What are the main types of scientific evidence that will be less important in the future?

What areas of research and other evidence gathering can we leave alone or leave to others to conduct? Why is this?

## 6. HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

This section begins to outline how we plan to prioritise and manage the collection, interpretation and use of scientific evidence in the future. This will be expanded upon as we develop a full science plan at a later stage.

### *6.1 How will we prioritise our scientific evidence needs?*

Think about linking needs to existing or proposed programme objectives. Set out the criteria that you think are important for prioritisation with a brief explanation for each.

### *6.2 How can we cluster the work we do into more effective groupings?*

Clustering can lead to synergies and better value for money.

### *6.3. How will we work more effectively with others, both inside and outside of the HSE?*

Think about conducting joint research and studies with other programmes, and accessing the outputs from other organisations more effectively.

# Annex 3: Example science matrix

