

## **PAPER H106 (Below the line)**

**HELA – 21 March 2006**

### **HSC/E's draft Simplification Plan A paper by Helen Smart, HSE Better Regulation Team**

1. The Health and Safety Commission and Executive (HSC/E) have been developing a Simplification Plan as part of the Government's better regulation agenda. Both the Commission and Executive welcome regulatory simplification and see this as an opportunity to develop legislation that:
  - is easy to understand and comply with,
  - maintains and improves levels of worker protection, and
  - helps to secure stronger commitment and compliance from businesses.
2. The Plan has been developed in the context of the HSC Strategy, a long tradition of consultation, leadership in risk-based regulation, and a progressive approach to enforcement policies. It is divided into two sections:
  - simplifying the legislation and regulatory initiatives,
  - wider better regulation initiatives.
3. The draft presented here is a development of the initial Plan that was published on the HSE website in November 2005. HSE invited comments from stakeholders and received 14, generally positive, responses mainly from industry associations and trade unions.
4. An amended version of the draft Plan was submitted to the Hampton Implementation Project Board, which has a LACORS rep, in December and approved by them. In January it was submitted to HSC for discussion and agreement. HSE's Better Regulation Team (BRT) made a number of changes to the plan as a result of comments received, including those from Health and Safety Commissioners and stakeholders. It was then cleared and has now been forwarded to the Cabinet Office Better Regulation Executive (BRE) officials for their views and suggestions.
5. When BRE's comments are received, BRT will make amendments and the final version of the Plan will be drawn up and submitted to the Better Regulation Commission (BRC, which has replaced the Better Regulation Task Force). BRC has a challenge function to ensure departments have developed initiatives that will deliver real, significant simplification for business. The Cabinet Office intends to publish HSE's Simplification Plan, together with the Plans of all Government Departments, in Autumn 2006.
6. There is still more work to do in building the Plan and we will continue to amend and add to it. In a number of areas, burden reduction estimates are yet to be completed. The outcome of the current administrative burdens measurement exercise, which is taking place across government, will provide some of this information.
7. Other areas that needs further input are

- Ensuring that the initiatives within the Plan are properly quantified, to clearly show what benefits are planned. HSE's policy teams and the Economists' unit are working to provide some of the detailed information and quantification needed.
  - More proposals for simplification from businesses and other stakeholders need to be included. **Any such suggestions for regulatory simplification from HELA members would be very welcome.**
8. In addition to the plan itself, a system for maintaining momentum and monitoring the initiatives that have been included in the plan will be set up over the coming months. We will also begin developing the Plan for the following year, building on the legislative review mentioned previously.
  9. I am therefore enclosing a copy of the HSC/E agreed draft Simplification Plan at this juncture, for your information. However, if you have any comments on the Plan as a whole I would be happy to receive them.

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