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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

Delivering HSC/E's PSA Targets: Performance report: 2003-04

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Agreed by Kate Timms on 6 May 2004

Issue

1. Report to the Minister on HSC/E's performance in 2003-04.

Timing

2. Urgent: the next performance review meeting is planned for 20 May 2004.

Recommendation

3. That the Commission
 - notes the report and advises the Chair on any issues it wishes to be drawn to the Minister's attention;
 - notes the position with the development of the two Strategic Programme Plans – Better Health at Work Partnership and Local Authorities.

Background

4. The current HSC/E Public Service Agreement targets were agreed as part of the Spending Review 2000 and are based on the midpoint of the Revitalising Health and Safety (RHS) targets. HSE has also developed a shadow target to reflect its work to prevent catastrophic accidents in major hazard industries.
5. Performance on delivery is discussed with the Minister at quarterly performance review meetings. The next meeting is planned for 20 May.
6. The HSC reviewed the performance report at the nine-month stage above the line at its February meeting.

Argument

7. Broadly, the positions of the strategic programmes are as follows:

Sector Strategic Programme

Overall delivery against planned activities for these programmes are assessed as **green** with the exception of “Government setting an example” which is a **red**.

Construction: The programme for this year has broadly been achieved with some significant achievements. A robust enforcement line has been taken throughout the year using the full range of sanctions including substantial Improvement Notices to address underlying issues. All surrogate targets exceeded. A **green** light is indicative of overall achievement.

Agriculture: Plans well achieved, with numerous activities undertaken. The number of Safety Awareness Days undertaken exceeded plans, as well as the number of those attending. Fewer Improvement Notices issued compared with 2002/03 and work continues on the pilot of the predicted in-year worker fatal injury tool. Programme currently assessed as **green**.

Health services: A good year for delivery of plans. Surrogate indicators: it has not been possible to develop “in year” trend data, but latest figures (2002/03) show manual handling accidents have reduced by nearly 11% and the Health Services major injury incidence rate reduced from the 1999/2000 baseline of 84.1 to 70.4. Stakeholder engagement and operational activity achieved. A **green** assigned.

Government setting an example (GSE): After moving forward in the 3rd quarter, the Programme has slowed somewhat – e.g. the Ministerial task force (a key feature) has not yet met. Not enough real progress has been made in the fourth quarter to warrant an amber or a green and a **red** is therefore assigned. However, there is renewed Ministerial interest to reduce sickness absence and completion of the HSE GSE team with the Programme Co-ordinator should help drive this Priority forward in the next quarter (a more detailed report is attached at Annex 1).

Health and Safety Hazards Strategic Programme

Overall delivery is shown as **green** for topic programmes, with the exception of MSD which is assigned **amber**.

Falls from Height: All 2003/04 plans have been met and operational activity has exceeded targets. Surrogate indicator progress very good, although Risk Control Indicator information is mixed: falls from height discussed more often and for longer, scores in the categories indicating little or no compliance have decreased, but scores in the categories indicating broad or full compliance have decreased and fewer Improvement Notices were issued. Nevertheless, overall, performance warrants a **green**.

Workplace Transport: Following a red in the third quarter for a variety of reasons (e.g. staff post not filled, postponement of a key HSC paper, original timetable too ambitious), positive progress has now been made. Overall the business plan is now on track; and extra resources have been made available. Good surrogate indicator activity, in particular on “safe driver” where the numbers attending lift truck training has increased and failing minimum standards decreased, indicators for “raising awareness” continue to show improved figures and operational activity targets have been exceeded. A **green** is assigned.

MSD: Overall, the MSD Business Plan came in on track on track with almost all milestones met. However there is a mixed picture on surrogate indicators; after a statistically significant increase in the proportion of duty holders with an aggregate score of 6 or less (good performance) and a statistically significant fall in the proportion of duty holders with an aggregate score of 9 or more (poor) in the third quarter, for the first time, 4th quarter data comparison shows a reverse in the trend (a statistically significant fall of 62.15% to 60.05% in the proportion of duty holders with an aggregate score of 6 or less; and a statistically significant rise of 12.67% to 13.20%, in the proportion of duty holders with an aggregate score of 9 or more.). Also, the number of Notices issued continue to show a downward trend and MSD inspection contacts are down.

The operational outturn described does raise the question about the effectiveness of the Programme on the “shop floor” and an **amber** is judged appropriate at this stage. This, despite good progress in other areas (e.g. 194,209 hits for the quarter on the web site, 1.3% of the total hits of HSE and an increase from 33k in January to 92k in March).

Stress: Planned activity has been well achieved overall, with extra activities also undertaken. The pilot management standards (a key feature of the Programme) evaluation indicates the standards integrate well with existing policies and are simple to use. Standards were rated 7-8 out of 10 by most pilot organisations. Operational activity exceeded targets. A **green** assigned.

Slips and Trips: All planned work streams have ended the year on track (but see HSE inspector awareness). However, information for surrogate indicators (in particular the Risk Control Indicators (RCIs)) do raise some questions. In the last ‘quarter’ 9.7% of RCI aggregate scores were in the worst four categories indicating little or limited compliance compared to 6.2% for the equivalent period in 2002/3. This could suggest either that conditions are being assessed more critically or a deterioration in management of the risks. Also, the low number of Notices issued continued from the third quarter into the fourth quarter: 7 notices were served out of 4001 occasions when Slips and Trips were discussed, a rate of 1.8 per 1000 contacts. This contrasts with the RCI data where 7 per 1000 scores were category 4, indicating little or no compliance in areas that matter. Also 18.5% of scores were placed into category 3, “some compliance in areas that matter”. Greater awareness and confidence would be expected to raise the number of Notices closer to the number of category 4s, ie about 28 notices. On a more positive note, the percentage of occasions when slips and trips were discussed with contacts was higher (74.6%) than for the same period last year (63.1%). A study identified the need for additional training for inspectors and the pilot training course run in February will be followed by one training event per region. However, because reasons for the operational outturn are not yet clear, and positive action is being taken (inspector training) performance is assigned a **Green**.

Major Hazard Industries Programme

Performance for the 3rd quarter was an amber because of the four targets (rail, nuclear, onshore and offshore) two had been assigned amber (rail (the Rail Safety Risk Index) and offshore) and two green.

This quarter, the rail index has improved (through some further refinement of the data by the Rail Safety and Standards Board) and the long-term trend is looking far more positive.

It is therefore reasonable to now assign a green for rail. However, the offshore index (a reduction in major and significant hydrocarbon releases) is clearly a red: figures are back to 2002 levels and outturn exceeds the confidence limits assigned to the target trajectory. Action is being taken: see Annex 2. Possible reasons for the apparent decline in performance for this year include a degree of complacency by industry because the trend has been so good in recent years (some industry support teams have been disbanded).

The position of “three greens and a red” is judged as an **amber** overall.

Better Health at Work Partnership/Local Authorities Strategic Programmes

Better Health at Work Partnership Strategic Programme:

The Programme came on stream at beginning of the 2004/05 work year. Much progress has been made in developing the immediate and longer-term plans. The longer-term plan will be presented to the Delivery Board on 24 May. Significant progress has been made in developing partnerships with individual local authorities, Primary Care Trusts, industry, trade unions and Jobcentre Plus, to deliver pilots.

Local Authorities Strategic Programme:

The Local Authorities Strategic Programme came on stream at the beginning of the 2004/05 work-year. Much progress has been made in developing the immediate and longer-term plans. The longer-term plan will be presented to the Delivery Board on 24 May. There has been significant progress in developing partnerships with and between Local Authority bodies, individual local authorities and HSE's Field Operations Directorate.

Presentation

- 8 The report is in the format agreed with DWP. It is important that these reports give the Minister and DWP confidence that HSC/E are able to deliver on their commitments. Without this confidence HSC/E will have difficulty in achieving a satisfactory outcome to Spending Review 2004.

Action

- 9 The Commission is invited to
- consider the performance report and advise the Chair of any points it wishes to put to the Minister;
 - note the developments with the Better Health at Work Partnership and Local Authorities Strategic Programmes.

GSE Programme: Developments

- Early work to establish the programme (for example lining up key officials across Whitehall) has been completed. However, the 'Red Light' was requested by GSE team to highlight the recent slow progress due to outside influences.
- Progress has been slow mainly due to the departure of Des Browne - who has been a champion of the GSE programme – and due to the intervention of the Chancellor who has changed the shape and remit of the Task Force.
- The Chancellor has asked Andrew Smith to Chair the early meetings of the Task Force and make an initial report pre SR 2004 announcement on the steps Departments will take to ensure efficiency savings.
- Though these developments have resulted in an initial slow down we are now in much stronger position to make rapid progress.
- We are in the process of arranging two GSE Task Force meetings to be held in May/June. As a result we expect to have departmental plans in place to addressing sickness absence and health and safety issues within their departments by the summer.
- Additional work is now being undertaken to review the programme management arrangements to get clearer definitions of measurable outputs to assist the Task Force.

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN ON OFFSHORE (HYDROCARBON RELEASES) TARGET

Actions to be taken include:

- meeting with industry in mid-February to discuss the situation. Analysis of the data has identified those companies where performance has deteriorated most since last year. They will be appraised of the situation and requested to put in place remedial measures including reinstating support teams where necessary
- detailed analysis is underway to identify the major problem areas. For ones previously identified, a re-emphasise on existing inspection measures will be instigated whilst for any new ones urgent work with industry will be undertaken to put new good practice guidance in place.
- continuation of work on new initiatives already planned under Key Programme 3 to bring new aspects to the campaign e.g. linkage of maintenance back-logs against release performance