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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

Update on European Occupational Safety and Health Issues and the UK Presidency

A paper by Malcolm Darvill, International Unit

Cleared by: Jonathan Rees on 12 August 2005

Issue

1. To update Commissioners on:
 - HSE's plans for the UK Presidency of the European Union (EU);
 - the progress being made, and further plans to influence the shape and content of the next EU Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) strategy (2007- 2012);
 - the Council business and legislative dossiers impacting on OSH which are likely to progress and appear during the UK presidency;
 - the future work programme of the European Agency for Safety and Health

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendation

3. That the Commission:
 - note the update and the Presidency events to which they have been invited; and
 - agree to use the lobbying briefing (at annex 6) on the future direction of OSH in the EU, as and when appropriate.

Background

4. The Prime Minister spelt out the wider objectives and priorities of the UK Presidency in his speech to the European Parliament on 23 June. It was very well received and was widely covered in the media. Key points in relation to health and safety were:-

- that there was no division between the Europe necessary to succeed economically and social Europe;
- the importance of having a social model and the need to revise it – not one which imposes an extreme Anglo-Saxon market philosophy but one which will enhance our ability to compete, to help our people cope with globalisation, to let them embrace its opportunities and avoid its dangers;

- the failure to make adequate progress and the need to do more to achieve the Lisbon targets on jobs, labour market participation, school leavers, and lifelong learning; and
- the need to resolve the hard dossiers on Services and Working Time.

The speech can be accessed at:

<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page7714.asp>

5. HSE outlined its own Presidency plans earlier this year (HSC/05/23), setting out its intention to use the opportunity presented by the Presidency to influence the future shape, content and direction of the next EU OSH strategy, due to run from 2007 until 2012. It argued that HSE should increase its efforts to influence the strategic direction of the EU OSH and strengthen its relationships with key stakeholders and like-minded Member States.

Events

6. That paper also outlined HSE's plans for 3 Presidency events: a conference incorporating a meeting of EU OSH DGs; a meeting and conference of the (Seveso) Committee of Competent Authorities and the 49th meeting of the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee (SLIC). Commissioners have been invited to attend all or parts of these events. An update on the plans and programmes for them is given in Annex 1.

The next EU OSH Strategy

7. The paper flagged up the risks if the next EU OSH strategy does not chime well with our own e.g. on better regulation. If it is badly misaligned then we risk having an inflexible legislative based system, both at National and EU levels, which serves neither the interest of business nor workers.

8. HSE has now embarked on a programme to influence the next EU OSH strategy. Following the steer given when HSC considered this in February, we have:

- presented our ideas to the Government Interest Group of the European Commission's Advisory Committee on Safety and Health at Work (ACSHW);
- participated in the ACSHW's seminar to review the EU's current OSH strategy;
- held a bilateral with the Republic of Ireland.

Further bilaterals are being arranged with the Netherlands, Germany and Poland, and a meeting with senior officials from DG Employment and Social Affairs has been arranged for 8 September. A summary of these activities and a paper setting out our ideas, which have been informed by them, is given in Annex 2.

9. However, the main thrust to influence the strategy will be made at our presidency Conference in Liverpool. The first day of this event, to which we have invited a wide range of EU and domestic OSH stakeholders, including the social partners, will debate three of the key areas which will need to be addressed in the strategy:

- achieving more on occupational health;

- the drivers for better partnership working; and
- the benefits of setting targets to deliver positive outcomes.

10. On the second day, we are planning to get the EU OSH DGs to consider the conclusions from the first day and, in the light of them, champion and debate the key elements of the next EU strategy:

- its context within EU's Social Agenda (see COM(2005) 33 final) and Lisbon strategy, including the need to mainstream OSH into wider EC policy areas;
- legislation and better regulation;
- building an evidence base;
- targeting interventions (not solely enforcement) and promoting good practice;
- target setting and delivering outcomes.

11. From the outcomes of the event as a whole, we hope to produce a communiqué, which commands wide agreement and which can be sent to the EC under the signatures of the UK and the next two presidencies (Austria and Finland).

Council business and OSH dossiers

12. There is likely to be little health and safety business going before the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council during the Presidency. The key item is likely to be the adoption of the Optical Radiation proposal. Other legislative dossiers impacting on health and safety that are likely to progress or appear are:

- proposals for simplification of directive implementation reports and an amendment to the Carcinogens Directive, on which HSE will have the lead;
- the working time and the services directives (DTI) and REACH (DEFRA).

Further details on all these dossiers are set out Annex 3.

The European Agency

13. The closing event of the European Week for Safety and Health at Work, which will take place in Bilbao in December 2005, will be co-hosted by the UK presidency. These events are usually well attended by key stakeholders, such as MEPs on the EP Employment and Social Affairs Committee and it will provide a further opportunity to lobby on the next EU OSH strategy. Further details of this event and the Agency's future plans are given in Annex 4.

Financial implications

14. The total cost of running the three Presidency events, including HSE staff costs, is in the order of £ 420k. About 70% of this will be funded by grants from the EC and the DWP, with the remainder coming from HSE/HSL's current budgets.

Consultation

15. Following HSC's last discussion on the Presidency, a Presidency Steering Group was formed. Its members include Judith Donovan, Hugh Robertson and Janet Asherson (CBI),

as well as senior officials for the DWP and DTI. In addition to those detailed in paragraph 7 above, HSE has also consulted RoSPA, IOSH, BSC and the EEF on our ideas for the next EU OSH Strategy. HSE Communications Directorate, which is also represented on the Steering Group, has been consulted on and has contributed to the Communications plan.

Presentation

16. An HSE communications plan for the Presidency has been prepared and can be found at Annex 5. Given limited resources, it aims to focus on areas where we can have maximum impact.

Action

17. The Commission is asked to note the progress with the plans for the Presidency and HSE's efforts to influence the next EU OSH strategy; and to note and use the attached briefing note (Annex 6) to support this work.

Plans and agendas for HSE's Presidency Events

1. The Future of Occupational safety and Health in the EU, 18/19th October – Crowne Plaza, Liverpool

This event will discuss health and safety as a key element of the EU Social Agenda and a component to ensuring the success of the Lisbon agenda. Themes for the event will include doing more on occupational health, partnership working and delivering outcomes, in the context of developing the next community strategy on health and safety at work. Lord Hunt will attend as a keynote speaker to open the event and set the scene for the day.

Over 300 key European stakeholders, including the DGs from the EU member states and candidate countries have been invited, and over 200 are expected to attend. The second day will be a closed event for MS DGs, most of whom have accepted.

The programme for first day is as follows:

- Welcome and opening remarks from the conference Chair, Bill Callaghan.
- Address from Lord Hunt of Kings Heath OBE, Minister for Health and Safety.
- Plenary presentations:

Theme 1 – Achieving more on Occupational Health. A Manager and TU official from East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust will talk about their use of the HSE stress management standards – the initial challenges, why they adopted the standards, issues with implementation, current progress and future plans.

Theme 2 – The drivers for better partnership working. Dr Harald Wachsmuth, Head of health, safety and environment at E.ON Energie AG and Mr. Martin Hocke, member of the E.ON Energie AG workers council Health, safety and environment committee will talk about partnership working – how business Excellence/Leadership and worker involvement can raise standards of OSH.

Theme 3 – The benefits of setting targets to deliver positive outcomes. Eric Teasdale, Director, Global SHE Strategy and Chief Medical Officer at AstraZeneca and a colleague will reveal the challenges and benefits from successful use of target setting in delivering better OSH.

- Introduction to afternoon concurrent thematic sessions.
- Concurrent thematic sessions
 - i. Achieving more on occupational health – chaired by Jonathan Rees, (HSE Deputy Director General), rapporteur Eusebio Rial Gonzalez, (European Health & Safety Agency)
 - ii. The drivers for better partnership working – chaired by Hans-Horst Konkolewsky, (Head of European Health & Safety Agency), rapporteur Theoni Koukoulaki (Head

of Occupational Health, The Hellenic Institute for Occupational Health and Safety, Greece)

- iii. The benefits of setting targets to deliver positive outcomes – chaired by Dr. Eva-Elisabeth Szymanski, (Director General, Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Labour, Austria), rapporteur Jesper Olsen (Danish National Working Environment Council)

- Presentation of Thematic sessions by rapporteurs, followed by discussions.
- Reflections and comments by representatives from ETUC, UNICE, an EU Government and the European Commission.
- Closing remarks and conclusion to the day by Chair.

The event should conclude at 16.00 and be followed by cultural visits in Liverpool, European City of Culture 2008, and then by an evening reception and dinner in Liverpool's historic Town Hall, hosted by the Lord Mayor.

The second day will be used for a meeting of Member States OSH Directors General and relevant staff from EC DG Employment, and will focus on key aspects of the next Community Strategy on health and safety at work. The programme has yet to be finalised with Health and Safety & Hygiene at Work division in EC DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, but is likely to be along the following lines.

- Report back from day 1
- Report from EC DG Employment on Conclusions from the ACSH Seminar 'Evaluating 2002-2006 Community Strategy on OSH: Key questions for the future'.
- Plenary session to cover Mainstreaming and the place of OSH in the Lisbon agenda; opened and championed by UK and France (TBC).
- Concurrent Working Groups (WG):
 - WG 1 – Building an evidence base - Opened and championed by Czech Republic and Finland (TBC);
 - WG 2 – Setting targets to deliver positive outcomes - Opened and championed by Austria and Denmark (TBC);
 - WG 3 – Interventions and Good Practice - Opened and championed by Ireland and Poland (TBC).
- Feedback to Plenary from WG sessions.
- Plenary session: Better Regulation - Opened and championed by Germany and The Netherlands (TBC).
- Reflections from the Commission and closing

2. Committee of Competent Authorities (CCA) meeting, Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) Buxton, Derbyshire, 12-13 October 2005.

This meeting and conference will review the implementation of the Seveso (control of major-accident hazards) Directive and future strategies to ensure consistent compliance. It will be followed by a site visit and demonstration at HSL, and a formal dinner at Chatsworth House.

3. Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) Meeting, 9-10th November 2005 – Lancaster House, London

The 49th meeting of SLIC will enable senior EU MS inspectors to discuss enforcement good practice. The thematic day will focus on the broad topic of 'Health at Work'. On the evening of the first day there will be a Ministerial Reception and formal dinner, hosted by Lord Hunt.

Successor EU Health and Safety Strategy to run from 2007

Introduction

1. This paper is being prepared for the meeting of EU Directors General of Health and Safety on 19th October 2007 being held as part of the UK Presidency's health and safety event in Liverpool. It is being discussed with a number of interested stakeholders in the run up to the October meeting in order to ensure a well rounded paper that will stimulate a focussed discussion on the shape and content of the next EU OSH Strategy. This draft should not be considered the final version of the paper.

Initial thinking on 2007 OSH Strategy

2. The new strategy was trailed in the Communication from the Commission on the Social Agenda (COM(2005) 33 final issued in February 2005. It said:-

“As regards health and safety at work, the Commission will put forward a new strategy for the period 2007-2012. Prevention pays off: less work-related accidents and diseases push up productivity, contain costs, strengthen quality in work and hence valorise Europe's human capital. The new strategy should focus on new and emerging risks and safeguarding minimum levels of protection in workplace situations and to workers not adequately covered. The evaluation of the current programme should help to define these new situations. Specific attention should also be given to the quality of prevention services, health and safety training, as well as other tools to ensure a better application of health and safety standards. Since the quality of implementation is of vital importance, the Commission will pursue its efforts to monitor the transposition and implementation of legislation. Moreover, in order to ensure effective implementation, all the players concerned must have the capacity to take on their responsibilities. The ESF will play a key role in strengthening the capacity of administrations and social partners.”

UK Presidency role

3. The Commission will now be considering the content and shape of the next strategy against the background of an enlarged Union, different Member State priorities and a European-wide Better Regulation agenda that is steadily gaining momentum. Formulating the next strategy will be a major challenge and the UK Presidency is keen to do all it can to assist the Commission's reflections in laying the foundations for a strategy that enhances worker safety. Driving up standards of health and safety will contribute substantially to the Lisbon goals of quality in work and economic success.

4. To support and facilitate the development of the new strategy the UK Presidency is devoting a two-day event in Liverpool to consideration of the strategy, that will engage many of the major actors in looking strategically at the future of OSH in the EU. A broad framework of headings and issues is set out below to stimulate discussion.

Mainstreaming health and safety into the Lisbon agenda

5. Formulation of the next OSH strategy gives us a vital opportunity to both raise the profile of health and safety and to embed it as key contributor towards meeting the Lisbon goals in terms of supporting economic success, achieving quality in work and social inclusion. Priorities might include:-

- highlighting the contribution that good health and safety can make to the employability agenda in terms of assisting people back into work and keeping them fit and healthy in the workplace.
- communicating the message that good health and safety is a key contributor to the Lisbon agenda both in terms of supporting economic success, achieving quality in work and social inclusion.
- focusing much more on the work and wellbeing agenda, especially how good health can enable individuals to fulfil their potential at work and thus contribute to high performance organisations.

6. Are these the best areas for pushing the mainstreaming agenda or are there better/additional ones on which to focus effort?

Better Regulation

7. Better regulation does not mean deregulation. At its heart are regulations which are evidence based, easily understood, enforceable and which achieve reductions in ill health and accidents. There is wide acceptance that the EU now has a detailed and comprehensive body of worker protection legislation. The priorities now seem to be identifying what has worked well and what needs to go into the new strategy, to ensure that this law is implemented properly and consistently across the Union. New legislation should be considered only if there is clear evidence that it is needed – e.g. if there is evidence of a newly emerging risk or a case for simplification that increases transparency without loss of standards. In any such cases it should then be subject to thorough impact assessment/cost benefit analysis in line with the developing Better EU Regulation agenda.

8. Our priorities here should be:-

- better implementation of Community legislation;
- simplification where it increases transparency, does not reduce standards and does not add to the business burden;
- considering the case for legislation to deal with emerging risks against the evidence, thorough impact assessment and cost/benefit analysis.

9. Are these the appropriate routes for action or should others be added?

Targeting interventions for maximum results

10. Securing compliance through enforcement and other measures will continue to form an important element of Member States' health and safety systems. SLIC will continue to play a key role in maintaining and improving standards.

11. Priorities should include:-

- Promotion of good practice, which is vital to assist newer Member States and those wishing to join the Union. Transnational companies provide opportunities for spreading good practice across the Union and opportunities for partnership should be explored. Other opportunities for influence via the supply chain might also be explored;
- Identifying the best levers for influencing people and organisations; for example reward and recognition;
- examining how best to deal with global management in transnational companies and increasingly the multi-cultural workforce;
- new ways of effectively engaging, influencing and working with small and micro enterprises including provision of simple accessible advice.

12. Are these examples for action the most appropriate? Should they be changed or added to?

Target setting/Delivering Outcomes

13. Some Member States, including the UK, have developed health and safety strategies according to the principles that (1) available resource should be directed at particular health and safety challenges identified as priorities and (2) that targets should be set for improvement. Voluntary comparative initiatives have also been undertaken: for example, work on a scoreboard was undertaken by the Nordic Council countries as a means of bench marking their performance against each other and the EU Strategy.

14. Member States may wish to consider setting their own domestic targets directed at national health and safety problem areas. These would form useful measures for Member States to assess their performance in tackling key domestic health and safety challenges and identifying areas for improvement. Such targets would need to reflect the state of OSH in individual Member States – some still have considerable OSH challenges whereas in others, OSH improvements are tending to plateau

15. Would the strategy benefit from Member States setting domestic Health and safety targets and identifying key areas for improvement? Would peer review be helpful in such a system? Could an aggregate of Member State targets be used to set EU targets? What part might the Nordic Scoreboard play here?

Building an evidence base

16. A key element in delivering solid improvement in health and safety performance will be a reliable, relevant evidence base for action, against which Member States can gauge progress.

17. Priorities here might include:

- involving the Bilbao Agency and Dublin Foundation in assisting Member States develop evidence bases/baselines against which reasonable but challenging targets might be set;
- examining the range of tools/data sources currently available

18. Would work on evidence bases be useful? If so, how might this be best taken forward? What new demands for information might be placed on Member States?

UK Presidency – update on legislative dossiers

1. HSE lead

- **Physical Agents (Optical Radiation)** – It was not possible to reach a second reading deal with the European Parliament (the EP wanted to introduce a range of amendments to the Common Position text relating to sunlight, health surveillance and a Commission produced guide on the eventual Directive). Work in Social Questions Working Group and CORPER continues to try and identify a base for negotiation with the Parliament. The Presidency has proposed responses to the remaining contentious EP amendments and asked COREPER for a mandate to negotiate with the EP before the Plenary vote on 7 September. The Presidency intends to meet rapporteur Ory in late August.
- **Simplification of directive reporting arrangements** – The Framework and its daughter Directives require Member States to report to the commission at four or five year intervals on the practical implementation of the directives. This practice is resource intensive for MSs and the Social Partners and after the initial report unless there have been substantial legislative or other changes in the interim there is often little of substance to report. It is also unclear that the Commission is able to make good practical use of the reports. The intention to simply/rationalise the reporting arrangements is a modest but a welcome first step and contribution towards better regulation in OSH issues. Social Partner consultation is presently underway and any proposal is unlikely to emerge until the final weeks of the Presidency
- **Possible amendment to the Carcinogens Directive** – Possible extension of present Directive to include reprotoxic substances, to establish new exposure limits for carcinogens and mutagens, and to perhaps introduce restrictions on environmental tobacco smoke. First stage consultation with Social Partners conducted in 2004. Second stage consultation yet to start, therefore it is unlikely that a formal proposal for an amendment to the Directive would be made until late on in our Presidency.

2. Other Government departments lead

- **Working Time (DTI)** - The 2nd June Employment Council was unable to reach agreement on the Commission's revised proposals on Working Time. The Prime Minister made clear in his speech to the European Parliament that Working Time remains a top priority. The UK will be seeking views and consulting EU colleagues over the next few months, in a series of bilaterals. A workable solution to the SiMAP/Jaeger problems (i.e. issues relating to doctors' on call-time), as well as retention of the opt-out, is a key priority for UK and many other MS.
- **The Services Directive (DTI)** - The Commission, is resisting pressure from some other MSs to excise the country of origin principle from the proposal, and replace it with some kind mutual recognition based on maximum harmonisation. The Liberal and Conservative groups in the EP, as well as a majority of MSs - including the UK - however, think it can be made to work, by ensuring that Country of Origin will not undermine controls in key areas of public interest, such as Health and Safety Law; Consumer and Worker Protection; protection of the Environment and Animals, and criminal law. With these and perhaps some other areas derogated (the UK is also

seeking a total exclusion for matters relating to taxation) it is believed that many of the risks the Directive's opponents fear will be mitigated.

- **REACH (DEFRA)- (Registration, Evaluation, and Authorisation of Chemicals) -** The Chemicals Regulation has been under negotiation in Council working group for 2 years. The final stages of negotiation at first reading are now approaching and the start of the more political bargaining. Getting Chemical Regulation (REACH) right is a priority for the UK Presidency. The UK Presidency will take forward work on REACH and aims to achieve political agreement by the end of the year and a Regulation, which balances benefits to human health and the environment with the demands of industry competitiveness.

Current and future workplans of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

1. European Week for Safety and Health at Work 2005 (EW2005) has the key theme: noise at work. EW2005 was launched across Europe in April 2005 and culminates in the week: 24 to 28 October 2005. For the UK campaign, HSE is working in partnership with IOSH to run the “Sound Off” conference. This will be held in the run up to the Week, on 11-12 October at Earls Court. Lord Hunt will be making a keynote speech. HSE is using EW2005 as an opportunity to promote the new Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, which come as a result of EU Directive 2003/10/EC on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (noise). These Regulations come into force in 2006.

2. European Week 2005 Closing Event – the “European Noise Summit”: This is to be held on Monday 12 December 2005. The EU Presidency co-hosts and co-organises the Summit with the Agency. Lord Hunt and EU Employment and Social Affairs Commissioner Vladimír Špidla are due to attend, along with John Monks (General Secretary of the ETUC) and Philippe de Buick (General Secretary of UNICE). The programme will feature a conference, expert workshops, and political discussions. An evening dinner will be held in the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum at which the European Good Practice Awards will be presented. The UK has submitted two entries for these Awards. The judging panel included Sayeed Khan and Hugh Robertson. Commissioners are invited to attend this event, further details are obtainable from HSE International Unit.

3. Future European Week campaigns:

- EW2006 will promote OSH among young people.
- EW2007 will revisit MSDs having, the theme for EW2000. MSDs have been chosen again because of the continued need to address MSDs, because the 10 new EU Member States did not participate in the 2000 campaign and to align EW with SLIC’s MSD enforcement campaign.

4. Another major Agency project is the establishment of The European Risk Observatory, which aims to identify newly emerging risks and hazards at work and to provide early notification of trends and knowledge of these. The function of the Observatory will be to collect, analyse and interpret information, then disseminate this and stimulate debate. The first version of a dedicated web site for the information collected and analysed was set up in 2004. The Agency will be producing a yearly OSH outlook, with the consolidated main findings of the Observatory, and give a picture of the European OSH situation. Further details of the Agency’s current and future work plans are given on its website.

HSE AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE EU: Communications Plan

Objectives

- To influence the strategic development of health and safety in Europe over the next 10 years among European and domestic stakeholders;
- To influence the next EU health and safety strategy from 2007 to align it with the UK position;
- to run effective and efficient events that reflect well on HSE and the UK and that deliver useful business outputs.

Strategy and overall approach

- The UK position: it is generally accepted that the EU now has a comprehensive body of worker protection legislation and apart from emerging risks, no major additions are needed. More important is the need to make the current body of law work properly and consistently across the Union. New legislation should be considered only if there is a clear evidence based need and should be subject to impact assessment/cost benefit analysis in line with the developing Better Regulation agenda.
- A number of Member States share the UK's views on the development of health and safety strategy over the next 10 years. We will exploit formal and informal opportunities to build on this support.
- We also need to explain our strategy to domestic stakeholders, including staff. This will require careful communication to ensure our commitment to protecting people at work is clear.

Key Messages

- Good health and safety is an enabler for high performing business and the economy in general;
- The EU has a comprehensive body of worker protection legislation and, apart from emerging risks, no major additions are needed.
- The EU and member states need to focus on making the current body of law work properly and consistently.

Key targets to influence

- European Commission (Spidla, Quintin, Jansen and Biosca)
- ETUC/UNICE
- CBI/TUC
- UK MEPs (particularly Liz Lynne, Stephen Hughes and Philip Bushill-Matthews – UK members of the EP Employment and Social Affairs Committee)
- Like minded Member States
- Other key domestic stakeholders (ie IOSH, RoSPA, BSC, EEF)
- Health and Safety Commissioners
- Member States unlikely to favour the UK approach

Given that there are a multitude of stakeholders and the limitation we have in resources it is important that we focus them on areas where we can have maximum impact.

The following table summarises influencing efforts to date and proposed further work:-

| Target Group/Individual to influence | Influencing Action required | Action taken |
|--|--|--|
| European Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spidla • Quintin/Jansen • Biosca | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on GB Strategy? • Elizabeth Hodgkinson & Malcolm Darvill to meet Biosca on 8 September 05. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jansen handed UK wish list on 1.2.05. Rees/Darvill visit • Biosca sent full version of strategy note for abortive 15.7 meeting. |
| Social Partners <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. UNICE 2. ETUC 3. CBI 4. TUC | <p>Send UNICE & ETUC the revised Biosca paper.</p> <p>Arrange bilaterals with the CBI & TUC outside the Steering Group.</p> | <p>UNICE and ETUC handed UK wish list on 1.2.05 Rees/Darvill visit.</p> <p>CBI & TUC actively involved in Presidency Steering Group.</p> |
| European Parliament <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bushill-Matthews 2. Lynne 3. Hughes | <p>Prepare and send a briefing note to UK MEPs detailing UK priorities for the new strategy, post Presidency</p> | <p>Bushill-Matthews & Lyne handed UK wish list on 1.2.05 Rees/Darvill visit.</p> <p>All 3 MEPs invited to Liverpool event.</p> |
| Like minded Member States: The Netherlands; Ireland; Germany; Poland. | <p>Bilaterals agreed, dates to be confirmed (next two months).</p> | <p>All four countries were present at the March and July LAC GIG meetings & saw the UK presentations. Bilateral with Ireland held on 10 August 05.</p> |
| Circulate paper for meeting with Biosca to interested stakeholders | | <p>Paper has been sent to IOSH, RoSPA and BSC (all responded to the 2001/02 consultation exercise. Additionally, sent to the EEF.</p> |
| Health and Safety Commission | <p>Paper on EU developments for HSC in Sept., to contain lobbying briefing on the content/shape of the next strategy, for use by Commissioners as appropriate.</p> | <p>HSC paper in Feb. 2005 'The way forward in Europe and plans for the UK Presidency' (HSC/05/23) included an annex outlining early thoughts on the next EU OSH strategy.</p> |
| Member States unlikely to favour the UK approach | <p>Arrange bilaterals after the Liverpool conference with France, and possibly Belgium & Luxembourg.</p> | <p>Were present at the March and July LAC GIG meetings & saw the UK presentations.</p> |

The appendix to this paper cover:-

- Risks
- Activities and channels for communication
- Key internal contacts.

International Unit
Health and Safety Executive
August 2005

Risks

- Adverse media coverage on the SFAIRP infraction case – A media handling strategy was developed some time before the Presidency. The DWP Press Office will lead as the infraction action is directed at the UK Government. HSE Press Office will supply the HSC perspective if approached.
- Adverse media coverage that UK position on strategy is 1) too business friendly or 2) not sufficiently Better regulation. Briefing will be supplied to HSE Press Office emphasising that protection of the health and safety of workers and the public is still the key driver. We aim to secure regulatory reform that maintains or improves standards but that is business efficient too.
- Euro-myth stories (in the hard hats for tight rope walkers vein). The risk debate has already been opened and will offer the opportunity to continue to spread the sensible health and safety message. David Blunkett's recent remarks to the European Parliament's Employment and Social Affairs Committee have also helped set the tone here.
- Adverse media coverage on cost of events & social aspects. Press Office briefing will stress that HSE is running a very modest Presidency programme. Holding the Presidency brings with it certain responsibilities when entertaining Ministers and senior European officials. We aim to run events that reflect the standards common to other Presidencies while keeping a tight cap on unnecessary expenditure. For example, the UK has cut the SLIC meeting from its normal three days to two.
- Delegate walkout for whatever reason (eg translation arrangements). Invitees have been notified of translation arrangements and there have been no objections.
- Demonstrations (the Dutch conference attracted TU demonstrations as Dutch policy on H&S was regarded as too business friendly). We will liaise with the Merseyside Police force on security arrangements. At present we have no reason to believe the event should attract any demonstrations.

Activities and channels

The influencing table in the main body of the document above covers action taken and planned with the range of stakeholders.

- Three Presidency events:-
 - Meeting of COMAH Competent Authorities, 12/13 October, Buxton – There is no planned Ministerial involvement - the event should only attract interest from the specialist H&S and environmental media plus the local press. Low-key reactive media handling should be all that is required.
 - OSH Conference, 18-19 October, Liverpool. This is the key Presidency event at which Lord Hunt will speak.
 - Senior Labour Inspectors Committee meeting, London 9-10 November. Like the Buxton event hosting the SLIC meeting is a responsibility that attaches to the Presidency.

- There may be opportunities for broadcast media interviews with Bill Callaghan/Jonathan Rees to flag up the importance of the new strategy for workers and business and what the UK sees as the priorities. Post the event we might offer specialist journals articles on the importance of getting the strategy right and flagging up UK priorities.
- The Presidency will require robust, clear handling by press office based on lines to take and Q&A. The EU presidency is a chance for HSE to pro-actively engage with the media as well as defending our position’;
- The UK has one of the best Health and Safety records in Europe and we will seek to exploit this position by showing that the UK Health and Safety system works and other member states should look at the UK and in particular HSE as an exemplar.
- Website – An interim page on the Presidency has been placed on the Intranet. Fuller pages for both the Inter and Intranets will follow shortly. Information on the HSE events is available on the DWP Presidency website;
- HSC Commissioners have an important role to play in spreading messages about the UK position on the next strategy via their network of contacts. Briefing can be developed to assist with this.
- Bid for an article in the December issue of the ‘The Health and Safety Practitioner’ that summarises the proceedings of the Liverpool event. We will look for an article to be placed prior to the event in Liverpool as well, to trail the event and maximise our media potential.

Internal communications

- The May issue of Express carried an interview with Malcolm Darvill on the UK Presidency;
- HSE’s International Team held a Presidency event in Rose Court on 1 July to mark the start of the Presidency and tell staff how the organisation’s work will be influenced by this role. This was well attended and included a lively question and answer session;
- Intranet pages to inform staff about the Presidency; publicised through e-express.

Other departments’ events

There are links between HSE’s Presidency contribution and events in the area of social policy being organised by other Government departments such as the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Work and Pensions. In particular:-

- DWP are mounting an ‘Economic Inactivity and Ill Health: Challenges and Solutions’ conference in Cardiff on 23/24 November;
- DTI are mounting an event on high performance workplaces on 15 September in London. Bill Callaghan will chair this event;
- DTI are mounting a Corporate Social Responsibility conference in London on 8/9 November.

Delegate pack material for the Liverpool event

We will keep this low key with internally produced Word/Powerpoint documents i.e.

- the final version of the programmes for Days 1 and 2
- the delegate list
- Powerpoint presentations
- any material for the breakout sessions etc.

International Unit will supply the text of documents and CDS will arrange reproduction. Delegates to the first day of the conference will receive this material plus purchased Presidency gifts from the catalogue in a Presidency shoulder bag. Those attending the day 2 DGs meeting will receive material in a box folder. This approach has been agreed with CDS3, Bootle. To brighten up the packs we will include a leaflet on Historic Liverpool Town Hall. The materials might bear some of the standard HSE key messages.

Post the event, as mentioned elsewhere in the Communications Plan we aim to pitch an article to the 'Health and Safety Practitioner' offering to summarise the proceedings of the Liverpool event. The full proceedings will be available for download on the HSE website.
HSE Key Contacts

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| Malcolm Darvill Head of International Team 9 th Floor, South Wing, Rose Court ☎020-7717-6182 FAX: 020-7717-6570 E-Mail: Malcolm.darvill@hse.gsi.gov.uk | Andy Fisher, Communications Account Manager Ext 6071 Ray Allger, Press Officer Ext 6179 |
| Rob Olsen Planning and Organisation of the Liverpool OSH Conference and the London SLIC meeting International Team ☎020-7717-6491 FAX: 020-7717-6570 E-Mail: Rob.Olsen@hse.gsi.gov.uk | Richard Church HSE Presidency overview International Team ☎020-7717-6392 FAX: 020-7717-6570 E-Mail: Richard.Church@hse.gsi.gov.uk |
| The Buxton CCA event Anton Wilson Major Hazards Control (SI 12) ☎0151-951-5772 FAX: 0151-951-3418 E-Mail: Anton.Wilson@ hse.gsi.gov.uk | |

LOBBYING BRIEFING - NEW EU OSH STRATEGY TO APPLY FROM 2007

Commissioners will be aware that the key aim of HSE's UK Presidency is to influence the shape and content of the next EU OSH Strategy, 2007- 2012

HSE has already commenced a range of influencing activities - summarised in Annex 5. These efforts will culminate in the Liverpool Presidency event in October 2005. To supplement this work it would be helpful if Commissioners could lend support by helping to spread the message on what we see as the key themes that should underpin the next strategy. These are:-

- Good health and safety improves quality in work for employees, is a key business enabler and is good for the economy; OSH should therefore be mainstreamed into the Lisbon agenda and form a key part of the European social agenda.
- Better regulation does not mean deregulation. But legislation that is not evidence based, is poorly understood and not enforced will not stop workers being made ill or having accidents. The new strategy should recognise that the EU now has a sound core of OSH law but this now needs to work properly.
- Interventions at EU, Member State and Enterprise levels, need to be effective and secure maximum improvements. Promotion of best practice is vital. Better partnership working with large trans-national companies may be a way of achieving this. On the other hand there is a need to look at new ways of effectively encouraging, influencing and working with small and micro enterprises.
- Outcomes not outputs should be the focus for attention: there is a need to assess performance at EU, MS and enterprise levels.