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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

Performance Report for November 2006 - approach and positioning

A Paper by: Colin Douglas

Name of Board Member lead: Colin Douglas

Cleared by DCE (Policy) & Chief Executive: on 4 August 2006

Issue

1. To consider the approach and positioning of the first annual performance report (which will be published in November 2006).

Timing

2. To agree the approach and positioning at the September Commission meeting, so that work can start on drafting the content.

Recommendation

3. That the Commission:
 - note the format for the November performance report (which it has already agreed in paper HSC/06/39 on Public Reporting)
 - agree the general approach and positioning of this document as set out in sections 7-8 below.

Background

4. The first 'performance report' will be published in late November. It will be a 24-page HSC publication, providing a brief overview of performance over the past period, and views on the key themes and challenges facing HSC and the wider health and safety system for the future. It will fill a gap in our publications portfolio, providing an accessible account of what HSC/E and our partners in the health and safety system are achieving, and the benefits this brings workers and the public.

5. As a publication, this will be very light on text. Of its 24 pages, half will be taken up with engaging visual images, leaving 12 pages of text. And those 12 pages of text will be relatively light on text – ensuring that, through substantial use of white space, they feel readable even to busy senior people.

Argument

6. It is proposed that the report should briefly cover:
 - Major Hazards work
 - Occupational health & safety
 - Partnership working
 - How we are giving a clearer voice to health and safety
 - Enforcement role of HSE and LAs
 - Update on recent performance statistics
7. This publication will be aimed at a wide range of HSC stakeholders and, in particular, will be designed to be read by busy, senior people with little knowledge of the health and safety system.
8. It will have a short, catchy title. The style and language of the document will be accessible, but authoritative. The content will be outward looking – focusing not simply on what HSC/E and LAs are doing, but on how industry and the wider health and safety system is working with us and LAs to improve health and safety. We want to position ourselves as protecting people and saving lives, not stopping living. We want to emphasise our contribution to key objectives in society, and our excellent track record as a modern regulator.
9. If approved by the Commission, HSE will use professional copywriting skills to develop the content, working with the relevant policy and operational experts.

Consultation

10. The HSE Board discussed and agreed the outline content. Prior to this, a cross-HSE Public Reporting Co-ordinating Group was set up, led by Communications Directorate, to take forward the recommendations in Commission paper HSC/06/39 on Public Reporting. This Group was also consulted in producing the tone and approach for the document.

Presentation

11. This publication will be aimed at a wide range of HSC stakeholders and, in particular, will be designed to be read by busy, senior people with little knowledge of the health and safety system. Nearer to the publication date, a detailed communications plan will be produced for communicating the performance report.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

12. Printing and distribution costs for the performance report would be approximately £11,000. It will also involve approximately 90 hours of Communications staff time (at Band 4 level) in copywriting and design – this includes time already expended in developing the design concepts.

Environmental Implications

13. The new performance report will be produced on environmentally friendly paper. This is part of a wider package of changes to our annual reporting that will see a reduction in the print run on the Annual Report, transferring of some information onto the web and stopping some altogether. The overall impact on printing volumes, when the new performance report is factored in, is likely to be neutral or negligible.

Action

14. Once approved, a copywriter will be used to develop the text, working closely with the design team. The final report will be published in late November so that it can include the statistical details from the November Statistical Highlight document (scheduled to be published at the beginning of November).