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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

Managing Workplace Transport Risk - A Route Map

A Paper by Colin Chatten

Advisors: Carol Grainger, Patricia Anderson, Andrew Dunkley and Tim Harris

Cleared by Jane Willis on 12 April 2006

Issue

1. Development of a route map to help manage workplace transport risk.

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendation

3. That the Health & Safety Commission (HSC) agrees publication of the draft consultation document (**Annex 1**).

Background

4. Workplace Transport remains a principal cause of fatal and major injuries in the workplace. Since 1998/99 there has been an average of 66 fatalities, over 2100 major injuries and over 4200 injuries requiring the injured person to be off work for more than 3 days each year. Our ten year target is a 10% reduction of our baseline year (1999/2000) figures by 2010, i.e. 5 fewer fatalities and 264 fewer major injuries. The current workplace transport programme aims to deliver a reduction of 5% of workplace transport incidents in the PSA period of 2004/05 to 2007/8.
5. "Workplace transport" covers any vehicle that is used in a work setting. It specifically excludes transport on the public highway; air, rail or water transport, and specialised transport used in underground mining.
6. In paper HSC/05/07, HSC noted that while training is essential to provide individuals with the necessary skills to use workplace transport safely, research suggests that the way in which individuals subsequently choose to perform a task is more heavily influenced by attitudes and beliefs. In the March 2005 paper, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) proposed a strategy to influence this behaviour by developing and implementing a set of Management Standards for Workplace Transport. The Commission supported this proposal in principle.

7. Our early consultation process has revealed that the term 'Management Standards' may be misleading to some stakeholders because of existing understanding of the word 'standards' in a machinery and engineering context. It has never been our intention to extend current legal requirements or set new British, European or industry standards with this piece of work. We have therefore decided to clarify the situation by using the term, 'route map' to describe this work in future.
8. The strategy is to introduce a route map that provides information on, and links to, good management practice for workplace transport safety. Stakeholders and duty holders have said that they need clear benchmarks of this kind to help them with the management of risk.

Argument

9. Workplace transport is used in all sectors and a great variety of situations. The control of risk in these circumstances is covered by several sets of regulations, including the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996, Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Duty holders find this confusing. Various guidance publications have been developed, some generic, some for specific procedures in certain sectors, but there is no clear cross cutting guidance on driver skill and management.
10. The route map will provide an easy to understand and readily accessible framework of current legislation, guidance and agreed good practice. It will set out alternative ways to comply where these exist, which should be particularly useful for SMEs who have many demands on limited time and resources.
11. While the initial focus of this work was to address shortcomings regarding the term 'adequate training', at the request of stakeholders it has been extended to encompass all aspects of workplace transport, including drivers, premises and vehicles. Benchmark safety standards which represent the minimum standards inspectors will expect to see in each of these areas are being tested by inspectors in the course of the workplace transport programme directed inspections for 2006/07. They will be ready for publication with the route map following this consultation.
12. Information from research was taken into account in developing the route map and is available on request from the Workplace Transport Team.

Consultation

13. In line with HSC's strategy of involving stakeholders, we have held regional workshops (Birmingham, Cardiff, Falkirk, Langley Park, Co Durham, London, Newcastle, Nottingham and Warrington) with external stakeholders to develop the route map for further consultation. These were based on a pilot exercise in the Midlands facilitated by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL). Although the anonymity of the participants has been maintained we know that we reached

stakeholders from all sectors, and that the people who attended covered the whole spectrum of GB industry: workers; drivers; trade unionists; local authority (LA) officials; trainers; safety managers; employers and academics. Inclusion of colleagues in local authorities was particularly important given that enforcement responsibilities for workplaces with workplace transport risks are spread between HSE and LAs. In addition, five focus groups were held with HSE field inspectors to explore their views of workplace transport and to collect their comments on the route map being proposed. Analysis of responses is available from the Workplace Transport Team.

14. The stakeholder workshops generated the vision that the route map should be:
- a. practical and easy to use;
 - b. geared towards identifying problems and providing guidance on how to put them right;
 - c. flexible and adaptable to business needs;
 - d. generic (applicable to businesses across all sectors).

and that is the basis upon which we have developed the work.

14. Full reports from the workshops will be made available on the workplace transport website in due course. Hard copies are available on request. Publication of a consultation document on 01 June 2006 will widen and deepen input from stakeholders and duty holders.

Presentation

15. If the Commission agrees we propose to launch the consultation document at 3 major events, one each in England, Scotland and Wales. We will use these events primarily to raise awareness of, and interest in, the consultation process, but also to raise awareness of:
- a. revised guidance documents
 - b. an HSE multimedia application
 - c. a revised topic inspection pack
 - d. new web based topic guidance material, which will link from the post consultation route map

Commissioners who wish to be involved in these events will be most welcome. Please contact the Workplace Transport Team to make arrangements.

16. Given that consultation will run over the summer holiday period we are proposing a longer than usual consultation period and are asking for responses by 22 September.

Costs and Benefits

17. Workplace transport remains the second biggest cause of fatal injury in the GB workplace. HSE's Economic Advisors Unit has advised that workplace transport accidents cost £203.2 million in 2004/05 (provisional accident data). Information from research suggests that in the same period, accidents where human factor

issues were implicated as part of the cause accounted for 21% - 25%¹, i.e. 1170 - 1393 of the total (5573) although this percentage could be greater due to the multi factorial causes of workplace transport accidents. If our detailed proposals start to take effect in 2007/08 there could be some impact upon accident figures during the current 3-year period for the PSA target and before 2010 when the revitalising targets need to be met. Furthermore the development work over the next two years should raise awareness of workplace transport related risks which could impact on the statistics earlier.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

18. The costs of the project to date include staff costs amounting to £100,877 and costs of research and consultancy work specifically undertaken for this project, including the workshops. amounting to £230, 315.
19. Costs of analysing responses to the consultation are estimated at £ 13,784.
20. Workplace transport is a strategic priority and 12 inspector staff years have been allocated to workplace transport inspections in 2006/7 at a cost of £753,972. Where appropriate they will introduce the Route Map to stakeholders.
21. Communications Directorate has provisionally agreed an indicative budget of £30,000 for the launch of the consultation document and reporting back of results.

Other Implications

22. The route map will fit with other areas of HSE's work such as the construction programme without difficulty
23. We have approached DfT with an outline of these proposals and they have agreed to links with appropriate areas of their website where these would be helpful.

Action / Next Steps

24. The Commission is asked to approve publication of the draft consultative document.

Contact

25. Colin Chatten, Workplace transport Programme Team, Tel: 020 7717 6840 (email: colin.chatten@hse.gsi.gov.uk).

¹ Causal Information on Workplace Transport Accidents: Dr Dave Smith 2001