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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION
ENERGY REVIEW - SCOPE OF HSE REPORT

A Paper by Graham Collins

Advisor(s):

Cleared by Giles Denham on 8 March 2006

Issue

1 At the Energy Review seminar on 14 February the Commission asked for a note setting out what will and what will not be included in the HSE report to DTI on the health and safety risks of energy developments.

Timing

2 Routine

Recommendation

3 For information

Background

4 Malcolm Wicks has asked HSE for an *expert* report on health and safety risks arising from recent and potential energy developments and on HSE's approach to ensuring that these risks are sensibly managed by industry. The developments include –

- An increased need for gas storage in the UK;
- New demonstration projects for carbon capture and storage and its potential in the UK;
- Increasing penetration of renewables and distributed generation in the UK;
- In the event of the building of new nuclear power stations, the potential role of pre-licensing assessments of candidate designs.

Argument

5 HSE is interpreting this request in a focused way, given the short time available to respond (ie by end June). This applies both to what constitutes an expert report and to what developments it covers.

Expert report

6 This will cover –

- HSE's expert view on the health and safety risks to workers and the public in those areas where HSE is the health and safety regulator, based on available evidence including discussions with selected stakeholders; and
- HSE's expert view (as a regulator) on the effectiveness of current regulatory approaches to ensuring these risks are sensibly managed and on any areas where there might be a need to change the current approach.

7 It will *not* cover –

- A *consensus* view of the risks and regulatory approaches. HSE is engaging with stakeholders to inform its conclusions, not to agree them. Interested stakeholders are free to submit their own views direct to DTI in response to the consultation document;
- Views on what changes might be needed to the legislative framework, if any gaps are identified. This will be for the Commission to consider in the normal way; or
- Environmental risks or risks to people in areas outside HSE's regulatory remit (eg the home or overseas), though these may be flagged up as matters for the appropriate authority. Nor will it touch on economic viability.

Developments

8 The report will concentrate on the developments identified by Malcolm Wicks, which are the most significant in health and safety terms. Renewables include a wide range of technologies of varying significance. Again, HSE's report will concentrate on those of most health and safety significance (eg wind, wave, tidal, biomass), but will make passing reference to others (eg solar). The report will also cover two areas not specifically mentioned by Malcolm Wicks, namely hydrogen (fuel cells) and clean coal technology. The amount of text devoted to developments will vary according to the state of current knowledge.

9 The report will *not* –

- Say much about mature or contracting domestic sectors (coal, oil and gas) beyond pointing out that there are health and safety implications in how these are managed. The role of energy conservation may also be mentioned, but not in depth; or

- Compare the risks arising from different developments or declare any kind of preference.

Consultation

N/A

Presentation

N/A

Costs and Benefits

N/A

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

N/A

Environmental Implications

N/A

Other Implications

N/A

Action

10 To note paras 5-9.

Contact

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