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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

CHANGE PROGRAMME: COMMUNICATIONS

A Paper by Kate Timms

Issue

1. Taking forward work on strengthening our communications effort in support of the change programme.

Timing

2. Board to consider and endorse the work done so far, the work in progress and the planned further work at its 4 December meeting in tandem with consideration of progress on the change programme.

Issue

3. Annex 8 to paper [B/02/050] which was considered by the Board on 6 November identified issues concerning the strategic direction of HSC/E, its reputation and positioning, and the effectiveness of its communications both internal and external. From this emerged agreement to a project designed to
 - clarify strategic goals;
 - develop a communications strategy from that; and
 - integrate this work into the change programme outcome, in particular in relation to culture and behaviours.

Since 6 November work has gone forward on all these issues. This paper reports progress, and identifies next steps.

Argument

4. The key message to us from the work done by the consultants Radical was that without clarity about the strategic direction of HSC/E, the building of an effective communications strategy aimed at better positioning ourselves and our work and securing the buy-in we need from our stakeholders would be very difficult to achieve. A first task has therefore been to try to give expression to the high level vision and strategic goals of HSC/E, and to link this work coherently with work such as that on "Health and Safety in the 21st Century" initiated by Timothy Walker. [Annexed](#) to this

paper is the result of our work so far in respect of defining a [vision](#) and [strategic goals](#) for the organisation, and identifying [strategic choices](#).

5. The work shown in the annex is at a preliminary stage only. It does not claim to offer definitive statements of HSC/E's purpose and goals, but identifies points of departure for further work and for a fuller debate. The use to which this work is put will be:
 - to develop further the thinking reflected in the annex;
 - to draw others, in particular Board members, into discussion of how best to define, capture and communicate our strategic goals;
 - to use consultants to work on and test emerging ideas on Commissioners, HSE staff and on key external stakeholders;
 - in the light of that work, to learn how our preliminary ideas have stood up under scrutiny, and how they might be re-shaped and re-presented (not necessarily on paper and in words alone) to help set our future direction.

Next Steps

6. Next steps and a possible timetable are as follows:
 - consultants to work with the team to help develop the “strategic goals” material further (by mid December);
 - short, concentrated external stakeholders/focus group interviews (consultants, by mid January);
 - internal group discussion involving staff from across HSE (by mid January);
 - product of this work for discussion at Board awayday (21-22 January);
 - in light of the January Board discussion, conversion of ideas emerging from the project into (a) proposals on future structure and handling of communications work for HSC/E and (b) “handing over” of work on vision and goals to SID to integrate into substantive work on strategy (January – March 2003).

Recommendation

7. Board to endorse work in progress and agree to timetable and next steps (paragraph 6 above).

POSSIBLE VISIONS

Top level

Better, safer, healthier work for all.

Healthy, safe and working

Confident that work will not damage our health or well being

Work: where accidents won't happen. Nor will health be harmed.

Work: prolonging active life

A safe and healthy workforce

Major hazards

No catastrophes

High hazard technologies under total control

High hazard processes in safe hands

Priority programmes

Improving the experience of work

Everyone leaves work in as good shape as [better shape than] they arrive.

Work: a better place to be

A safer, healthier workforce

Or if we want to put HSC/E in the frame:

Championing better, safer healthier work

Making work a better place to be

Working for safer work etc

DWP'S MISSION

'WORK FOR THOSE WHO CAN AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T'

STRATEGIC GOALS

HSE'S VISION - LINKS TO SUGGESTIONS ABOVE

Changing the business:

It is more than two years since the launch of Revitalising Health and Safety, and HSC/E has a new sponsor department, the Department of Work and Pensions. So now is a good time to set out our vision for H&S in the twentyfirst century.

Our mission is 'reducing risks, protecting people'. In fulfilling this we have always had two main aims:

- Improving occupational health and safety.
- Preventing catastrophic accidents in major hazard industries.

Big improvements have been made in the last 25 years and the UK is recognised as one of the best performers in the world. But the issues are changing and we need to respond.

We intend to:

Achieve a progressive raising of standards of health and safety over the coming [ten] years, affording continued protection for the public from major risks and creating safer, healthier workplaces for those employed.

Work with and through others to bring this about. Our effectiveness depends on other people's commitment; together we will make a difference.

We will achieve this with our external partners by:

- Positioning HSE/C as the acknowledged and trusted centre of excellence on health and safety issues.
- Working along the prevention spectrum: advising, influencing, investigating, enforcing and prosecuting where we have to.
- Identifying trends in the new economy, working to resolve new health and safety problems whilst controlling known risks.
- Supporting workers in their legitimate goal of safe workplaces; protecting the public where harm is caused by industry.
- Applying a risk based approach, and being goal setting rather than prescriptive.
- Regulating only when necessary, not as a first resort. But regulating where necessary to raise public confidence.
- Reinforcing and maintaining our visible independence, safeguarding the trust placed in us by the public, and working with openness and transparency.

Our work on major hazards is a large part of our work to protect the public from the effects of work related activities. Elsewhere our involvement will be limited, especially where other inspectorates are active.

Overall we will have an increased programme of evaluation to make sure we do more of what works, and communicate our strategy externally as well as internally.

Everyone needs to be sure that what they do reinforces priorities set out here. The Commission and the Executive will work together to provide a lead and ensure that this is so.

STRATEGIC BALANCES

- Health – safety
- Old – economy – new economy
- Central government – local authorities
- Hands on – influencing others
- Advice – enforcement
- Guarantors/assessors of safety – experts on safety procedures
- Prevention – punishment
- Workers – public
- Advancing safety – facilitating technological progress
- Independence – Government agency
- Technical experts – deliverers of change