

Health and Safety Executive Board Minutes

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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

HSE Board

Minutes of meeting of HSE Board held on Wednesday 3 September 2003, in the Fortune Room, Rose Court

Present

Sandra Caldwell
Paul Davies
Vivienne Dews
Adrian Ellis
Peter Graham
Robert Humm
Sian Lewis
Justin McCracken
Alan Osborne
Nick Starling
Kate Timms
Timothy Walker
Chris Willby
Laurence Williams

Also attending

Item 3:
Kevin Allars
Marion Evans

Item 4:
Brian Etheridge
Ian Greenwood
Tony Mulhall
Steve Pointer

Item 5:
Brian Etheridge

Shahmeen Sheikh - Secretariat

1 Draft minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on 2 July 2003; and matters arising (B/03/M12)

- 1.1 The minutes of the previous Board meetings were agreed.
- 1.2 Action logs were reviewed and updated.

2 Health and Safety in HSE Annual Report 2002/03. Presented by Justin McCracken (B/03/055)

- 2.1 The Annual Report is to be published soon, this is in line with HSE's health and safety policy and part of HSE's drive to be an exemplar in health and safety. There has been an increase in reporting on slips, trips & falls, manual handling and stress.
- 2.2 The following points were made in discussion:
 - i Long term contractors who are not HSE staff or members of the public should be included

public should be included

- ii A health and safety index is being produced in October for general use and the HSE report will be scored against the index
- iii It was agreed that references to safety representatives would be made more explicit

1.2 The Board cleared the report for publication.

Action Justin McCracken to action points i – iii above.

1.3 From 1 October, the health and safety committee structure will be simplified and streamlined. The new arrangements, which will reduce the number of committees, have been achieved by working with the corporate health and safety committee. There is broad support for the new site based arrangements from the Trade Unions. The new arrangements will be reviewed after a year.

The Board welcomed the new arrangements.

1.4 The European week of Health and Safety runs from 13-18 October with theme of 'Dangerous Substances'.

All Divisions/Directorates were asked to look for opportunities to highlight health and safety matters within HSE.

3 Update on Corporate Support Review. Presented by Kevin Allars/Marion Evans (B/03/054)

Vivienne Dews introduced the paper, which was an update of progress with implementing the CSR.

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- i The flexible working pilot will report back to the Finance Board on 17 September
- ii There is some unhappiness amongst staff regarding the Rose Court review, which is creating a high degree of uncertainty
- iii A wider understanding of why the Rose Court review is being undertaken needs to be communicated to staff, including links to the Lyons review
- iv The review is primarily about the location of posts rather than people

Marion Evans gave a brief presentation on the review of the Corporate Support Group including the process and lessons learned during the work.

The following points were made in discussion:

- i This project has been about delivering a better service with fewer resources
- ii RPD are planning a similar review and are trying to create a strong finance community
- iii Corporate support activities are an important part of HSE's functions and should be viewed as a part of career development

4 HSC Strategy 2004+ - Strategic Direction Options. Presented by Brian Etheridge, Ian Greenwood and Steve Pointer. (B/03/053)

Kate Timms introduced the paper. Brian Etheridge started the presentation with a recap of the work so far starting with the Manifesto to the recent work, which included consultation with key stakeholders, as well as making contact with traditionally hard to reach groups. The work now requires a sufficiently clear steer from the Board to enable development. It was also felt that it is important to be able to demonstrate the rationale behind any direction agreed and to be able to present the options considered and explain the rationale behind the chosen option.

There was an extensive and wide ranging discussion, a summary of the discussion was produced and is attached as annex 1.

5 Programme Working, Resource Allocation and the Planning Process. Presented by Brian Etheridge (B/03/052)

Kate Timms gave feedback from the first meeting of the Delivery Board. Simplicity is a key driver with simple Terms of Reference being produced along with a statement of the role of the Delivery Board, Strategic Managers and functional/line managers.

- i There was a lack of clarity as to core activities and accountabilities and these still need to be defined
- ii 'New levers' needs to be examined to determine whether they fit together or should be integrated into other programmes
- iii Programmes for sectors should be reviewing all sector work and identify PSA relevant work. Any remaining activity that is neither PSA based nor core should be examined to determine its value
- iv The current information systems are not robust enough to track and deliver information to programme managers. However, details need developing to clarify the information required
- v Policy Co-Directors have been trying out being Programme Managers and Policy Directors and are willing to share their experiences

Action Kate Timms and Sandra Caldwell to examine 'New Levers'

Action Nick Starling and Sandra Caldwell to summarise their experiences as both Programme Managers and Policy Directors

6 Management of Business Improvement and Change: the 'Big Picture' Presented by Peter Graham (B/03/058)

This paper was introduced by Peter Graham. The paper requested that the Board considered the level of commitment required for business improvement. A new Programme Board was proposed with the remit of having a strategic overview that the full programme is delivering.

The following points were made in discussion:

- i This work could overload the new Delivery Board which is still being set up
- ii This Board will subsume the Business Improvement Board
- iii Board Members who wish to input to the development of this work should send comments to Vivienne Dews or Steve Dennis
- iv Once Terms of Reference for this work are established, Timothy Walker will review them to determine whether it would be appropriate for him to chair the Board

Action Vivienne Dews to produce Terms of Reference.

7 Regulation, Enforcement, Inspection, and What We Will Do. Presented by Justin McCracken

This paper was introduced by Justin McCracken. The intention was to identify and gain agreement on key definitions of common terms and activities within HSE.

The following points were made in discussion:

- i Valid to have information on intervention strategies
- ii Strategies should be linked to the 'cycle of risk'
- iii Timescales are of relevance to this work as it should feed in to the strategy

The Board requested that David Ashton takes this work forward and develops it in the context of his work. The Board also asked that the results be fed into the development of the Strategy.

Action David Ashton to develop this work in line with Board steer.

8 AOB

8.1 October Awayday

Kate Timms raised the point that attendance at the Awayday was looking low. A substantive contribution will be required from SCS members.

8.2 Corporate Governance

There was a short presentation from Timothy Walker on Corporate Governance issues. A model of a unitary board was presented. This would include current Board members acting in the role of executive directors and commissioners in the role of non-executive directors.

The following points were made during the discussion:

This was a standard model common in many commercial companies

Much of the reorganisation could be achieved without recourse to primary legislation

This would require the support of the Commission

The Board agreed that this would be presented to the Commission at the next Strategy meeting.

8.3 Peter Graham's Retirement

This was Peter Graham's last Board meeting before his retirement after long service to HSE. He held a variety of roles during his career, including 3 different Board positions. He was a valued member of the HSE community as well as a loyal servant, advocate and friend. The Board extended strong thanks to Peter Graham and wished him well in his retirement.

STRATEGY: SUMMING UP OF BOARD DISCUSSION

- 1 Background
 - UK successful at H&S
 - but performance has plateaued
 - industry structure changing, economy changing
 - emphasis moving from safety to health
 - firms/employees not reached through traditional institutional routes
 - build on HSC/E's success and changes already made, or underway
 - opportunities from links with DWP

- 2 Start with vision h&s a cornerstone of society, UK world leader in performance

- 3 Role of HSC/E own the vision, promote it, make sure it happens. communicating, influencing, educating key to achieve:
 - clearer understanding of h&s system
 - business and societal benefits of h&s understood
 - employers take responsibility/workforce fully involved
 - risk assessment/management widely understood/used
 - clear and accepted evidence base
 taking appropriate action when things go wrong

- 4 How
 - communicate passion for h&s. Everything we do and say must reinforce outcome in 3
 - look at system as whole, identify actors and levers and get to work to best effect: i.e. not just about HSC/E
 - identify important gaps and intervention strategies to deal with them

- 5 Our skills
 - expertise, technical and risk assessment
 - experience
 - respect
 - objectivity
 - contacts
 - inspection/enforcement/regulatory powers

- 6 Boundaries on HSE's work
 - concentrate on where we have relative skills or can have greater effect than others
 - concentrate on activities directly related to work
 - accept law of diminishing returns, not put effort into well understood, low risk or less significant issues/sectors

- for choice intervene at highest level in supply/design chain

7 Advice

- at present often too complicated or does not reach those who need it particularly small firms. HSE not always seen as source of help but potential threat
- need new channels for preparation and distribution of simple, specific advice, some of which must be clearly independent of enforcement and need not always involve HSE directly
- use others in health and safety system to communicate and reinforce messages

8 Consequences

- relative roles of HSC/E understood and reputation of h&s enhanced
- duty holders needs are met
- sharing of roles between HSE and local authorities refined. LA emphasis on regional/local activity and on small firms, HSE on national issues and larger employers
- improvements in how we deal with health
- better support for rehabilitation and getting people back to work
- underpinned by occupational health advice available nationally
- major hazards reviewed to check fit for purpose for developing industrial conditions
- seek changes to law/practice where needed to reflect above but otherwise presumption against new legislation, whether UK or EU
- working closely with other regulators/parts of government