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## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

### The HSE Board

#### Career Development in HSE: Update and Issues Arising

A Paper by Laurence Williams

Adviser(s): John Gould

Cleared by Laurence Williams on 28 November 2003

#### Issue

1. To advise the Board of progress against the agreed proposals for improving career development in HSE. To draw attention to the emerging issues.

#### Timing

2. Routine.

#### Recommendation

3. The Board are invited to:
- Note progress;
  - Provide a view on the:
    - timing of the introduction of HSE wide D/D and local career review groups (**paras. 10 and 11**); and
    - the length of time in post for which it should be mandatory for a job move to be considered (**para. 12**).

#### Background

4. The Career Development project was one of a number of streams of work commissioned by the HSE Board in November 2002 to take forward the aims of the Change Programme.

5. The first stage of the project identified four priority areas for action:
- the need for better staff planning at Directorate/HSE level;
  - access to clearer, more up to date guidance and information;
  - slicker, more efficient mechanisms for facilitating level moves; and
  - better training to give line managers the skills they need for dealing with development issues.

6. The Board endorsed a package of broad recommendations and associated timescales to address these (**B/03/39**). Priority was given to the establishment of career review groups and the facilitation of level transfers.

7. Recommendations have been developed based on a second round of consultation with nominated D/D contacts, a sample of staff involved in the existing Local Career Review Groups (LCRGs) and have drawn upon existing arrangements.

### **Summary of progress**

8. A detailed update of progress against agreed recommendations is at **Annex 1** with progress against the primary recommendations summarised below:

- The underlying principles, process and architecture of career review groups has been developed and discussed with D/D representatives. We are currently awaiting comment from HSE TUs. Opportunities for further consultation were provided at a joint workshop on workforce strategy and career development. The architecture of the proposed new arrangements is provided in **Annex 2**.
- A new vacancy and career development intranet site is on schedule to be rolled out by March 04. This new system will allow provision of more timely information on career development opportunities. Key features include direct on-line access for D/D's to advertise existing vacancies; the facility to add known future vacancies and potential future vacancies; real time updates (overall shaving up to two weeks off the time to fill posts); and the facility for staff to be automatically alerted to newly posted vacancies of their choice.
- A draft template for pen pictures has been issued to D/Ds for comment. Identification of the main job types and associated skills/competencies to be included in the pen pictures has begun. These will be added to the new vacancy and career development intranet site from April 2004.
- Consultation is underway with Bray Leino to identify training needs and course content to equip managers with the skills to develop the career of their staff. To be incorporated into the appropriate Essential Training for Managers module from April 2004.
- Revised procedures streamlining level moves allowing verbal or e-mailed expression of interest have been drafted and are with HSE TUs for comment. The aim is for an implementation date of January 2004.

### **Argument**

9. During individual and group consultation the main issues arising have related to the timing of the introduction of career review groups, and the length of time in post at which a job move should be considered. Both of these issues are central to the implementation of career review groups. In each case the plea has been for a more flexible approach.

10. **Timing of introduction of career review groups and co-ordination:** The target timescale is for the establishment of HSE wide D/D and local career review groups by March 2004 – extending the current structure of LCRGs established by operating D/Ds. The major issue for D/Ds is the establishment of additional local

career review groups within this timescale, possibly before finance and planning decisions are in place to inform the career review groups. The general consensus is that the uncertainty surrounding these areas will make it difficult for career review groups to be implemented within the timescale.

11. Practical considerations were also raised to the expansion of the Local career review network to include a wider range of disciplines for example administrators. The general view was for a phased approach here. One option might be to give priority to the establishment of D/D groups from January 2004 with implementation of HSE wide local career review groups delayed until later in the year or even early 2005, to follow the natural cycle of development reviews and planning process. This would enable arrangements to be set in place based on meaningful information, more synchronised planning and ensure credibility and staff buy in. A further option might be to pilot a local career review group for administrative staff at an appropriate location e.g. Rose Court. **Does the Board agree (a) to a phased approach to the establishment of an HSE wide network of career review groups; and (b) that a local career review group for administrative staff be piloted at an appropriate location.**

12. **Review of length of time in post:** The consensus is that the proposed 3-year review point for all posts is too low and would bring too many people into its scope initially. It was accepted that it may be applicable in some cases but the overall feeling was a need for the initial review to take place at a later stage to take account of the needs of the business, rate of changes to job content and return on learning investment. An option might be to set a mandatory review at 5 years in post with the flexibility to review earlier or later if the business or individual needs demanded. **Does the Board agree to a mandatory review point at 5 years with the flexibility to review earlier or later to meet needs.**

### **Consultation**

13. Consultation with nominated D/D contacts, and HSE Trade Unions throughout. Initial indications are that there may be some concern from HSE TUs about some of the proposals set out in the workforce strategy and career development projects. The project team are awaiting their specific comments.

### **Presentation**

14. N/a

### **Costs and benefits**

15. The post filling arrangements will deliver some tangible business efficiencies in streamlining procedures and allowing for better succession planning.

### **Financial/Resource Implications for HSE**

16. There will be resource implications for both PD and D/D's. The level of resource involved in the establishing and operation of career review groups will be dependent upon how D/Ds set up and operate these arrangements.

### **Environmental Impact**

17. N/a

**Other Implications**

18. None

**Action**

19. The Board is asked to provide a view on the timing of the introduction of career review groups and the length of time in post.  
Project Team to continue with the development and implementation of the proposals.