

Health and Safety Executive Board Paper

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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

The role of the Strategy and Intelligence Division

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Issue

1. To establish the ways of working in, and an early work programme for, the newly formed Strategy and Intelligence Division (SID).

Timing

2. Immediate.

Recommendation

3. The Board is asked to:

- give a steer to help formulate SID's early activities and a work plan for 2003/04;
- agree to the principle of SID being a small, flexible and project led team which is supported in its tasks by short-term, funded attachments from other divisions and directorates;
- accept responsibility for deciding on and implementing recommendations arising from SID's work .

Background

4. At its meeting on 18 September 2002, the Board agreed proposals for a new strategic and intelligence capability to provide a sense of purpose, direction and cohesiveness to the organisation based on sound and credible information. In December 2002, the Head of SID was appointed with the remit to establish a new Division to improve HSE's strategic decision making and to ensure that the information available to the organisation was used to inform strategy, policy and operations.

5. A clear understanding of SID's role and purpose is an important precursor to its interaction with all parts of the organisation - a key factor in its success. This paper draws

out the key threads of future activity, draws boundaries, makes clear proposed ways of working and acknowledges the need to develop the role in the light of experience. In the short term, SID will want to give some attention to delivering early, quality projects of value and to build its reputation.

The principal objectives

6. SID's principal objectives were set out by the Change Programme working groups and are reproduced for reference at Annex 1. They can be summarised as three key tasks:

- strategy development;
- intelligence;
- organisational catalyst and leader.

7. SID will not be able to maintain a constant strategic overview of every aspect of HSE's and LAs' work nor provide a constant stream of synthesis of data and intelligence - and it would not be sensible to try to do so. Strategic thinking and policy making remains an important function for everyone in the organisation. It will operate instead through time bound projects within a programme to be agreed by the Board. Priority will be established according, where practicable, to business risks but initial priorities should be to:

- **develop the strategic plan** – failure to deliver and implement an appropriate strategic plan is listed in the business risk model as a high and increasing risk with high consequences. Working closely with PEFD, and using where possible the Office for Government Commerce methodologies, SID will look to lead work on vision, purpose, positioning, identifying strategic issues and themes and options for actions through programmes. Emphasis will be given to strategic linkages with other external and government agendas;
- **use intelligence** - working closely with CoSAS, SID will develop ways of identifying emerging issues and informing strategic decision-making. Work will be led in the first instance by the Statistics Review Programme;
- **undertake strategic reviews** – by developing, testing and modelling a process for looking at key activities and reviewing their purpose, direction and contribution to objectives;
- **plan for reactive work** – SID will be a resource for first-pass analysis of new issues, events etc.

8. The principal products of SID's work can, therefore, be summarised as:

- reports which identify possible threats and opportunities to the achievement of HSE's objectives and their implications;
- a new strategic plan and agreed strategic direction;
- published strategic reviews and audits of major policy and operational policies and activities;

- ad-hoc strategy papers which act as think pieces for future policy development or which respond to immediate issues or events;
- collation of intelligence from existing and non-traditional sources by involvement in stakeholder networks;
- interpretation of data and trends.

9. Further detail on the purpose and outcomes of each of these products is attached for information at Annex 2. In respect of each, SID's approach will be framed by three sets of overarching strategic questions and the business risk model. First, is the policy, activity or approach relevant to the organisation and its key objectives and targets, and to the outside world. And, will it remain relevant in the future? Second, in the light of the information, knowledge or data that we now possess, how would we have expected the organisation to adapt and change to respond to it? Has that change been made and, if not, why not? Third, do we have the evidence to support some of our underlying assertions and precursors for change and, if not, what information is needed and in what form? And, in the light of that information, what further action do we need to take to address future challenges.

Work in progress

10. Some work is already underway and further information on the use of this to develop the detail of a work plan is included in Annex 1.

Success criteria

11. SID recognises that it needs to develop success criteria so that its contribution and value can be measured. Subjectively, SID wants the Board to have the confidence to accept and act on its advice.

Consultation

12. Early ideas have been formulated in discussion with Board members and the Chair of the Commission.

Presentation

13. SID will have to devote some time to explaining its role and purpose to internal and external stakeholders

Costs and Benefits

14. The case for a strategy and intelligence unit was set out in earlier Board papers.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

15. SID is expecting to have a contingent of no more than 15 staff and for the immediate future will be working on a cadre of 10 staff.

Environmental Implications

16. None

Other Implications

17. None at present

Action

18. The Board is invited to give a steer.

OBJECTIVES, WORK IN PROGRESS AND STYLE OF WORKING

Objectives

1. SID's principal objectives as follows:

- to identify and advise on emerging issues of strategic importance, their priority and their implications;
- to make sure that HSC/E's strategic decision making is properly informed by intelligence, analysis and judgement based on a wide range of sources including political, social, economic, statistical, scientific, technical and international;
- working with PEFD, to develop a strategic plan for HSC/E;
- to map strategies which exist in HSC/E which apply across the organisation, identify inconsistencies, overlaps any critical gaps and propose ways of plugging them;
- to act as a catalyst for innovative approaches;
- subject to the outcome of current work on communications, SID may have a role to help to develop key strategic messages for internal and external audiences;
- to identify opportunities for the organisation's proactive engagement of key stakeholders;
- to identify risks to HSE's strategic capability and propose mitigation measures;
- to lead reviews of the impact of strategies and to advise on continuous improvement.

Progress with developing a work plan

2. The process of collating work on horizon scanning has already begun as the foundation for the development of the strategic plan 2004+. This work will be presented to the Board and the Commission as part of the work on positioning HSE and developing a Communications strategy.

Strategic reviews

3. It is difficult to predict at this stage the amount of work involved in strategic reviews and further advice is being sought from the Cabinet Office. The working group made some recommendations for early work (included in earlier Board papers) but these represented a list of good ideas rather than a systematic or themed approach. A commitment was also given in the review of core policy that SID would develop a more coherent set of programmes to ease the organisation's passage into more programme working. Once established, and having been given a period in which to operate, these programmes would be candidates for proposed strategic reviews.

4. Much work needs to be done to devise an appropriate family of programmes. There are various ways of compartmentalising the work that we do and various approaches to articulating these as programmes of work with supporting projects. It is not the time, therefore, to use these programmes as the basis for strategic reviews. It might be more

useful at this juncture to think of the principal tools we use to secure improvements in health and safety as set out in the paragraph below. These neatly categorise the effort we expend and provide the building blocks for our current priority programmes. We are proposing that we begin reviews of these broad areas and applying the strategic questions outlined above. The Board is invited to give a steer on the areas for consideration.

5. In essence, the work of HSE is developed from the following basic building blocks:

- advice, guidance, education and promotion;
- inspection;
- regulating major hazards;
- legislative change;
- enforcement;
- science, technology and research;
- policy development;
- new levers;
- local authorities.

Strategic papers

6. SID will be expected to respond rapidly to emerging issues at the discretion of the Board and to complete first-pass analyses of issues or events with a view to making recommendations for further policy or operational work. The exact form of strategic papers is also difficult to describe at this stage but planning some capacity to do this will give SID some headroom to respond flexibly, quickly and intelligently to issues as they arise in the course of the year. The Board should think of SID as a facility to be used to address emerging and priority strategic issues and to make recommendations for taking them forward.

7. Whereas strategic reviews might concentrate on major work streams in the first instance, strategic papers might concentrate on issues such as our approach to vulnerable groups, or developing an agenda for HSE as a source of competitive advantage. It will be an early task of SID to identify and prioritise a list of projects.

Intelligence

8. In respect of intelligence, SID will be meeting with the newly formed Chief Scientist's Unit to develop an appropriate work plan. This will be facilitated by the development of a steering group as recommended by the original change programme project and by taking forward the review of statistics already underway.

The size and shape of SID

9. SID wants to establish itself as a small, flexible, non-hierarchical project led team which is responsive to the needs of the organisation and to changes in the external environment. There are good reasons for SID being established and working in this way. First, SID's size is a way of clearly defining the limits of its role. It will identify and advise HSC/E on emerging issues of potential strategic importance, their priority and their implications, act as a catalyst for new policy or operational development, and review and challenge existing policy positions. It will aim to lead and steer HSE and local authorities (LAs) into new ways of working and new work. Its role will not be to implement and deliver and decisions for adopting any recommendations and further work will remain with the Board.

10. SID should not mimic the rest of the organisation by maintaining policy or subject responsibilities. If it does, it will lose its ability to question objectively, to act across divisional and directorate boundaries and to deliver for consideration robust, honest and hard to hear messages. Other Departments where units such as this have been created, describe being sucked into mainline policy delivery as a major threat to success.

11. Second, SID has to be very conscious of the gearing between it and the rest of the organisation. There is no value in a central function which is out of pace with the ability of the organisation to accommodate its proposals or to make changes – this leads to reports being shelved rather than actioned. It has to produce considered and credible work which can be implemented.

12. Third, it has become accepted management orthodoxy that to remain innovative and flexible, teams such as this should be small and be refreshed as appropriate by short-term contracts and support from inward secondees and short attachments. SID will aim to encourage churn within its cadre.

Working in SID

13. Staff at all levels will be expected to lead or contribute to projects according to their capacity, skills and experience. Where any, or all of these are lacking, SID will look to the rest of the organisation, or outside for the necessary support. This may be facilitated through fixed-term secondees, the contribution of other divisions to projects or through consultancy and research. Staff may, at any one time, be working on a number of projects or be shadowing projects carried on elsewhere in the organisation or outside. The contribution of individuals will reflect their grade and current workload and project plans will be designed around these parameters.

Task	What's involved	By whom	Outputs	Outcomes
Defining the future operating environment	Horizon scanning collation Forward look Positioning Technological, environmental, political, economic etc. foresight Scenarios Mapping strategies and identifying conflicts and anomalies	SID CoSAS Other HSE Cabinet office Research/consultancy	Reports to Board as appropriate Knowledge shared with rest of organisation Challenges and trends identified and suggestions for how they might be addressed	Possibilities and threats identified, course of action proposed HSE properly positioned and effective Strategies amended Risks to organisation identified and controlled Work flows commissioned
Strategic plan	Determining shape and direction, vision, purpose, issues and options Formulate strategic programmes Work with PEFD to develop Review and monitor direction	SID RPD All	Simplified and relevant Strategic plan to include only those things that will really make a difference Agreed suite of programmes Internal and external sign up	D/D work plans driven by strategic plan Reductions in accidents and ill health through targeting of resources to those things which are important to us and will make a difference
Strategic Reviews/Audits	Review of major policy projects as per Cabinet Office practice Based on risk Question policy direction/purpose and whether approach is delivering a contribution to outcomes	SID Other HSE Consultants	Reports to Board Where does HSE stand in relation to its major objectives? Identify non-profitable work streams Stock-take of current performance	Strategic direction confirmed/amended Reputation strengthened Priorities realigned Gaps identified

Strategy papers	Short think pieces on issues and events.	SID Other HSE	Reports to Board	Further work by core policy or operations Strategic direction confirmed/amended
Intelligence collation (soft and hard)	Engagement in strategic forums and networks within and outside HSE Establish non-traditional networks Map intelligence sources	SID Other HSE (particularly, front line) HSC	Synthesised information to organisation	Possible strategic reviews or strategy papers New work flows commissioned
Intelligence coordination and interpretation	Making use of wide range of information Map data sources Identify data gaps Challenge data sets	SID CoSAS	Contributions to knowledge network Advice to all	Contribution to Strategy and all other work streams above New work flows commissioned