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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

Succession Planning Identifying those with SCS Potential at Bands 1 and 2

A Paper by Ann Peatfield

Advisor(s): Vivienne Dews, Julie McDougall

Cleared by Vivienne Dews on 29 September 2004

Issue

1. How to identify staff at Bands 1 and 2 who are likely to make the transition to SCS within 5 years and support them in developing and implementing a personal performance development plan. In addition, to encourage all staff in these bands to fulfil their potential.

Timing

2. We would like to complete the identification exercise in November.

Recommendation

3. The Board agrees
 - the approach described in this paper
 - to participate personally in the exercise

Background

4. The Cabinet Office conduct an annual succession planning exercise for the most senior staff. This year, as part of the Civil Service Reform Agenda they have extended this and asked departments to identify staff at Bands 1 and 2, who have potential for the SCS in the short and medium term. It is clearly important for HSE's staff, and for our own business interests that we help our people fulfil their potential and we develop future leaders. However, a previous attempt to identify staff with SCS potential proved very sensitive and was abandoned.

Proposal

5. We need to find a process which is as open as possible and is perceived to be fair, while not creating an undue burden.
6. PD should establish a simple process with proforma records of the outcome. They should prepare guidance for the SCS about recognising potential, and should define the threshold – which we suggest should be that with development the individual could be ready for SCS in 5 years.
7. Members of the SCS should be commissioned to have career reviews with each of their Band 1 and 2s. This should not be delegated to Band 1s – who will not necessarily have the experience to recognise SCS potential. However, in the larger commands SCS members may want to take account of Band 1 views on their Band 2 reports. In view of the numbers of Band 2s, particularly in parts of Ops Groups, it may be necessary to keep these career review discussions quite short.
8. The objective should be for the SCS review to make a provisional assessment of the individual's potential against the SCS competencies (although the current competence framework is so generic that considerable judgement will be required). The PD material will support them in making that assessment.
9. These provisional assessments should be further reviewed. We would not want to prescribe the process but it should involve both a Board member, and someone from outside the immediate line. A discussion by the Directorate senior management team might be the answer for smaller Directorates, the larger battalions might need several such discussions.
10. PD will support those staff who are identified as having SCS potential to develop and implement a personal development plan. To do this PD may establish an assessment and development centre. However, further thinking needs to be done on this, and on the funding of development activities such as executive coaching.

Communication

11. This is intended to be an open exercise. We suggest it is publicised in e-Express, and the documents placed on the intranet. In line with central practice (eg on the HPDS) we would not regard the list of those identified as a secret, but neither should we go out of our way to publicise it.

Review & Evaluation

12. At the end of the exercise, PD will review the extent the outcomes have been met, the total costs, what has worked well and what has not, identify the lessons and recommend the approach for next year.

Consultation

13. PD has looked at practice and proposals elsewhere. DWP and Highways are developing an Assessment and Development Centre approach. Dept for Transport use SCS Career Review Panels to identify talent. We aim to learn from OGDs experience as well as our own.

Costs and Benefits

14. The exercise will create a significant burden on senior managers conducting the exercise (although we hope that most will see this as part of their normal management responsibilities). There will also be costs of assessment and development centre. In the longer term the most significant costs will be in taking forward individual development objectives.
15. The benefits are in improving HSE's future leadership capacity, and in making staff feeling more valued. We hope even those not identified as having SCS potential will appreciate and benefit from a career review.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

16. RPD will meet the cost of the assessment and development centre for those identified with the potential to reach SCS level within 5 years from the central training budgets. It is at this stage difficult to predict the training and development costs for taking forward the individual development plans. These costs will need to be met by reprioritising some of our total training spend.