

Health and Safety Executive Board Minutes

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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

HSE Board

Minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on Wednesday 7th July 2004 in the Fortune Room, Rose Court.

<p><u>Present</u></p> <p>Timothy Walker Kate Timms Paul Davies Jenni Terry Nick Starling Sandra Caldwell Vivienne Dews Chris Willby Laurence Williams Colin Douglas Jane Willis</p>	<p><u>Also attending</u></p> <p>Item 3: Elizabeth Gyngell Item 4: Simon Virley, David Arculus, Observers: Peter Brown, Malcolm Darvill, Jacqui Chachan, Julian Cooper Item 6: Brian Fullam Item 7: Kathy Donnelly Item 8: Heather Bolton, Karen Clayton</p> <p>Minutes – Rupert Lown</p>
Apologies:	Justin McCracken, Allan Sefton
1	Minutes of HSE Board held on 2 June
1.1	The minutes were agreed.
2	Health and Safety – oral presentation by Timothy Walker
2.1	<p>Incident numbers appear to be going up. No key reasons for this have been identified.</p> <p>Divisions and Directorates were asked to continue to raise awareness of key health and safety objectives especially regarding slips and trips and DSE.</p>
2.2	<p>The Central Health and Safety Committee had discussed the health-screening programme. They had been unable to decide upon whether this was of value for money to staff. Evidence shows that on average only 50% of employees take up the offer from such schemes. It was also perceived that those who would really benefit from the scheme did not wish to take it up. The committee had discussed the idea of whether the resource devoted to the scheme would offer greater value for money if devoted to a number of health promotion schemes.</p>

2.3	Board members wished to hear of organisations of who had undertaken successful Health Promotion schemes, and the benefits that they gained versus organisations who had operated health-screening programmes.
Action	Board members to reinforce key health and safety issues within their Divisions
Action	Justin McCracken to request a Board paper from the Central Health and Safety Committee regarding best value for money, Health Screening or Health Promotion. It was requested that this link to the Government white papers from the Department of Health
3	B\04\031 Tackling work related stress in HSE: Rolling out the stress management standards – Oral presentation by Elizabeth Gyngell
3.1	<p>The Presentation outlined that: HSE had followed its own guidance, producing risk assessments and action plans to target reductions in staff stress levels. There was a real business need now to assess whether the action plans were working by measuring success against the stress management standards and to address the central government pressure to manage sickness absence. The first level of questions to measure progress across HSE were included in the staff survey.</p> <p>Policy Group have successfully piloted the proposed stress management standards. The Board was asked to agree to roll out checking performance across HSE with the standards.</p>
3.2	The Corporate Health and Safety Committee has reviewed possible stress targets for HSE. The Board considered their proposals presented at the meeting.
3.3	<p>Discussion raised the following points;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much work had already been done in various parts of HSE to reduce stress and this needed to be built on, rather than allowing people to think that proposals were another isolated initiative • Although there were difficulties in measurement, setting targets was important
3.4	<p>The Board agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of Stress management standards through a common questionnaire • Aim to half the Gap between where we are now and where we want to be to meet the standards by 2006 • Monitor the numbers of cases of stress and depressive disorders and days lost through this during 2004/05 so a target for reduction could be set
Action	Personnel Department Employee Support Unit to roll out stress management standards questionnaire during Autumn 2004 and ensure necessary information is collected for monitoring

4	Better Regulation presentation by David Arculus, Simon Virley and Jane Willis
4.1	Jane Willis introduced the session as the HSE Better Regulation Board Champion. She welcomed David and Simon.
4.2	Simon updated the Board on Better Regulation: The Cabinet Office agenda is for better regulation not simply de-regulation. They were supportive of HSE's approach to risk control, the direction the HSC Strategy was taking the organisation and the Country and our stance of defending 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. They have a programme of simplification of regulation, summarised in the Regulatory Reform Action Plan.
4.3	New developments included: 1. A quarterly Panel for Regulatory Accountability, chaired by the Prime Minister. The first session would focus discussion on DEFRA matters. It was thought that some HSE issues such as working at heights would reach the panel 2. Departments are to report on their better regulation performance in their annual reports. HSE was included in DWP's report 3. New commencement dates for employment changes. Small Business Service are consulting on which other areas of legislation this principle could be applied to. This allows Industry, Trade Unions etc to clearly see incoming regulation 4. The Cabinet Office is also refining the various impact assessment tools
4.4	David informed the Board that the Better Regulation Task Force (BRTF) would like to see: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better use of de-regulation, with a Government policy of removing a piece of old legislation for every new set created. • Simplification and reduction of paper work would benefit the small business. • Europe adopts robust Impact Assessments. • The UK to retain its flexible labour market. • Where possible, the utilisation of alternative mechanisms to regulation • Measures that help improve business productivity. BRTF were supportive of HSEs action on targeting reductions to ill health injury. Regulators with appropriate Governance mechanisms.

	<p>He congratulated HSE for having Jane Willis as the HSE Better Regulation Champion.</p> <p>He challenged HSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on their use of naming and shaming poor health and safety performers, an approach which he felt could conflict with their advisory and educational role; and • to deliver a consistent approach to enforcement.
4.5	<p>Jane Willis informed the Board that: HSE had undertaken a comprehensive legislative review. The intent was to remove outdated legislation and propose legislation with definite health and safety benefit. The review had removed 25% of HSE proposed legislative work and was actively exploring routes to achieve health and safety improvement without utilizing regulation. HSE was comfortable with common commencement dates for legislation, proposing to implement this from 6th April 2005</p>
4.6	<p>Discussion from the two presentations raised the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE requested BRTF 's assistance with the simplification agenda. • HSE supports much of Europe's activity at a technical level. However legislation is forced upon the UK which HSE has to implement. It was hoped that the BRTF could influence political thinking to reduce this burden. • There was scope for HSE and BRTF to work together influencing industry to produce its own sensible health and safety guidance. Currently there was a tendency for extensive risk adverse guidance unless HSE gave its approval. • The Treasury was due to publish new 'value for life' costings. The media may pick this up and it was hoped that BRFT could influence Ministers to stand by the consistent approach being taken. • HSE perceived that it was working with the BRTF agenda, although this was not the public perception. BRTF were asked to be more supportive HSE's performance on the Better Regulation Action agenda.
5	B\04/033 Policy Group: Delivering Change – Presentation by Kate Timms
5.1	Kate updated the Board with the Policy Group's change programme.
5.2	Following Board discussions on relocation in February and March 2004 PG had relocated 5 corporate support posts to Bootle and 4 more will follow. In addition 3 other policy posts are moving to Bootle (two on Freedom of Information and one duty Officer). One post had moved to Norwich.

	<p>Programme and Project working had progressed. The intent was that by March 2005 50% of policy group staff are engaged in strategic programme support.</p> <p>Policy Group was actively stopping work. Board members were reminded of the need to be vigilant to ensure other parts of HSE did not take up this work.</p>
5.3	The new Policy Group Management team had met on 5 July, and had produced an action plan to move the Group forward.
5.4	<p>Discussion raised the following points:</p> <p>Board perception was that closing out of HSWA section 3 work was difficult especially given the level of reactive work HSE was exposed to. There was going to be an increasing need to defend HSE's section 3 policy. A Judicial Review had been ordered following a death in Cardiff relevant to section 3 and HSE's stance not to investigate. HSE's policy was not to investigate individual's claims of stress due to Court processes etc. The Board agreed that this was sensible.</p> <p>A major constraint had been discussed relating to budgets when moving staff. Whilst financial prudence was required, staff were asked to remember that ultimately HSE funded the post moves and therefore protracted discussion as to which Division bore the cost were unhelpful.</p> <p>The Policy development Course now had a programme / project working case study which was proving useful to attendees.</p>
Action	Sandra Caldwell, Jane Willis and Alex Brett Holt to prepare a paper discussing HSE section 3 policy
6	B\04\010 Implementing the S&T resource Review – Oral presentation by Paul Davies
	<p>The paper proposed a number of pilots to test different approaches to the creation of pools of specialists. The intention of these pilots is to involve staff in developing ways to utilise our specialist resources more efficiently and to provide better access, across HSE, to these skills.</p> <p>The paper outlined proposals for 6 pilot projects to examine the feasibility and potential benefits from the pooling of topic specialist resource of importance to many parts of HSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Safety – HID to manage • Control and Instrumentation – NSD to manage • Noise and Vibration – FOD to manage • Ionising and Non-ionising Radiation – FOD to manage • Work Psychology and Organisational Behaviour – HID to manage <p>Ergonomics – FOD to manage</p>

Also included in the paper were proposals for implementing the review of occupational health resources.

In discussion Board members made the following points:

- HSE's resources will undoubtedly be constrained in the coming year. We need to be able to demonstrate that we are using our resources as efficiently and effectively as possible
- A quarter of HSE's staff are technical specialists it is right that we experiment with alternative approaches to see if there are better ways of deploying that resource
- The pilots should be run as projects within a programme, with proper evaluation of the outcomes. Decisions on possible roll-out will be based on the evaluation
- It is essential that staff are fully involved in developing the detailed proposals for each of the pilots
- The deadline of 1 October for the start of all of the pilots should not artificially constrain that involvement of staff in developing the pilots. If more time is needed then it will be found
- That variations in the way the different pilots are operated are to be welcomed if we are to gain the most from the exercise
- We need to improve the exchange of knowledge and experience between specialists – pooling of resource can help do this
- Important that the piloting arrangements are fit for purpose but not bureaucratic
- That good management skills in those asked to lead the pilots are critical if the pilots are to succeed
- Development of detailed proposals for operating each of the pilots should be delegated to the Directorate with management responsibility when necessary in conjunction with management from principal suppliers of staff

On the specific proposals for pilots, it was agreed that:

1. The process safety pilot may need more time to agree suitable arrangements, a target date of the end December was agreed
2. The proposal for a Control & Instrumentation pilot with a narrow generic technical focus was accepted but it was agreed that the precise scope of the pilot would be identified in discussion with the Corporate Topic Group (CTG) and C&I community
3. The Noise & Vibration and Ionising & Non-ionising Radiation Pilots would be located in FOD as described. FOD would liaise closely with NSD in developing the Radiation Pilot, drawing on their experience of international developments in this field. The end of December is the target date for implementation

	<p>4. The start of Work Psychology and Organisational Behaviour Pilot would be delayed into the early part on 2005 to allow time for the number of human factors specialists in the pool to be substantially increased. (Proposals to achieve this to be brought to the Board shortly)</p> <p>5. The Ergonomics Pilot would go forward as described</p> <p>In addition to the pilots, agreement was reached on the proposals to keep the Stress Group in BWED for the present and to review its position when the work on the Stress Management Standards is complete later this year. The Board accepted the proposals to restructure HSE's Occupational Health provision, establishing a new CTG, the Corporate Medical Unit, and also agreed to the transfer of HID's Occupational Hygiene team into FOD to join the CTG there.</p>
Action	Paul Davies to produce a communication to staff regarding the S&T paper, discussions and actions
7.	Getting the Best from our resources: T&S – Presentation by Vivienne Dews and Kathy Donnelly
7.1	<p>Vivienne Dews summarized HSE's travel and subsistence as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HSE had travelled 8.3Million miles by Car in 2003/04 (excluding PUS cars). Cost £2.7M 2. HSE had bought 20,000 rail tickets. Cost £1.8M. 70% of these had been First Class 3. HSE had bought 20,000 hotel nights. Cost £1.4M
7.2	There was wide variety in staff T&S claims ranging from zero to the top claim of £27,000. There were 100 staff who accounted for 13% of the spend.
7.3	RPD had undertaken significant work to improve HSE's travel deals and improved processing of claims. However in HSE there was still some tendency to see travel as denoting status or to supplement income
7.4	<p>A new approach to T & S was needed. This should include:</p> <p>Greater management accountability with line managers satisfying themselves beforehand the journey was necessary and was being done economically. Managers should also confirm that the claim was justified. Account 34 forms to be completed on line</p> <p>Claims should be paid with less central checking, with it being for staff and managers to get this right – back up by disciplinary action if fraud was discovered. It would, however, be necessary to audit some claims – do random checks and monitor spend patterns</p>
Action	Board members to encourage use of video conferencing and other means to reduce the need for travel

Action	V Dews to circulate presentation to Board T & S to be included in the corporate cascade
Action	V Dews to update on progress by the end of the Financial Year
8	B\04\035 DIAS Review presented by Heather Bolton and Karen Clayton
	The Board received a summary of the work on the review of DIAS.
	The Main Budget Holders meeting on 16 June 04 had agreed that HSE should retain DIAS communication functions in-house. This would, however, be a streamlined, more flexible and probably smaller function than currently and would buy in services where the skills or capacity were not available. The new service would be renamed "The Communication Delivery Service" and would be launched on 1 October. A new commercial team was being created to ensure we continued to raise the income necessary to fund communications.
	A commercial strategy would be prepared for September 2004.
	The review of DIAS is now complete; the way ahead was implementation of the review. This would include work on the processes and interfaces, particularly with Communication Directorate, which would probably need more resources in the intelligent customer role. The planning overhaul would also need to consider how communication planning should be handled.
	The Board thanked Heather and Karen for their work on the review and DIAS for maintaining high standards during a period of great uncertainty for them
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	Any other business
	The development of a programme of Board member visits is progressing. There is to be a review of the strategy road shows, following this the programme of visits will be circulated for Board members attention
9	Communication
	As of the start of the week 12 July 04 e-express will be launched. It was agreed that: Presenters of Board papers would summarise their papers to allow for Corporate cascade via e-express Summaries would be sent to the DG's Private Secretary for collation by 3pm on the Friday following the Board meeting. The summary would be forwarded to HSE's Internal communication manager for incorporation into e-express
	Next HSE Board meeting is 25 August 2004 in the Fortune Room