

Health and Safety Executive Board Minutes		HSE/05/M04	
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Exemptions:	None		

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

HSE Board

Minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on Wednesday 6 April 2005 in the Hope Room, Rose Court at 9.00am

Present

Timothy Walker
Jonathan Rees
Justin McCracken
Alex Brett-Holt
Dan Mitchell
Jane Willis
Vivienne Dews
Sandra Caldwell
Paul Davies
Allan Sefton
Colin Douglas
Mike Weightman
Giles Denham

Also attending

Item 3: Peter Buckley, Phil Kemball
Item 5: Steve Dennis
Item 6: John McGuinness
Items 7&8: Susan Mackenzie, John Rowson
Item 9: Elizabeth Gyngell

Minutes – Nicola Walters

1 Minutes of HSE Board held on 2 March 2005

1.1 The minutes were agreed.

2 Health and Safety – presented by Justin McCracken

2.1 There were a further four RIDDOR reportable incidents and two significant near miss reports.

- Elevated numbers of Legionella bacteria were found in water samples at Phoenix House. EMU responded quickly and staff have been kept informed of developments.
- An opening section of a window on 4th floor of St Peters House, Bootle was blown out by string winds. Two cars were damaged. There have been previous incidents and a full investigation is ongoing.

2.2 Following the request at the March Board meeting, a report was given on sickness absence rates. The 12-month trend for the statistics showed a downward trend. The Board were asked to comment on the suitability of the report.

2.3 The Board felt that the information was helpful and the following items were raised in discussion:

- It was a useful report although not a substitute for detailed discussion at lower management levels.
- It would be useful to indicate targets within the report.

- It would be beneficial to understand how the Cabinet Office analyses sickness absence data.
- Each Directorate should maintain a restricted and confidential list of long-term sickness cases.

3 Board Discussion on Final Hampton Report – presented by Peter Buckley and Phil Kemball – B/05/022

3.1 The final Hampton Review Report was discussed in conjunction with feedback from the Commission meeting on 5 April 2005. The Board were invited to provide comments that in turn could be fed to the Hampton report working group chaired by J Rees. M Walker will act as programme manager.

3.2 The Board expressed their thanks to all those who had been involved with the Hampton Review. The Board particularly welcomed the endorsement of the Commission's Strategy and the vote of confidence in HSE, signalled by being asked to take on additional responsibilities.

3.3 The Board felt it was important to identify the immediate actions required, whilst ensuring resources are utilised most efficiently. Some contact had already been initiated with the bodies identified to transfer to HSE. Each organisation was discussed and views were expressed on a number of issues surrounding implementation.

The Board wanted a clear, consistent message for the organisation on the essential themes from the report and task force, in particular on risk and the regulatory role. This would include the need to review existing publications and the integration of existing and new work streams.

3.4 The Board agreed that the following persons should act as liaison points for the bodies identified to join HSE,

- Coal Authority – D Mitchell
- Gangmasters Licensing Auth. – not confirmed
- Engineering Inspectorate – S Caldwell / electrical specialist
- Adventure Activities Licensing Auth. – T Rose / CATCUS / PEFD
- Security Industry Auth. – J Rees to make initial contact.

Action Following the working group meeting on 8 April, J Rees / G Denham to produce a note to the Board on work streams.

4 Board visits – review of the programme - presented by Justin McCracken

4.1 The current programme of Board visits was reviewed. The Board was asked to give comments and agreement to the requirement for increased Board visibility to promote within the context of the strategy, the Big Picture, HSE's settlement for SR2004 and Hampton's final report.

4.2 Discussion raised the following points:

- There was a requirement for Board members to listen and understand different work within HSE in addition to their particular discipline.
- There was also a requirement for the Board to deliver a consistent corporate message.

- Consideration should be given to larger offices and Rose Court and Bootle based staff should not be overlooked.
- Feedback from the visits was both important and valuable, both at the corporate level and within the management chain.

4.3 The Board agreed:

- Each Board member to make at least two visits between now and the summer. At least one of the visits should be to part of the organisation for which they do not have line management responsibility
- The format of visit should be adapted according to the Directorate visited. The '3 activity model' could be adopted in operational cases (visit with member of staff/ floor walk / open meeting for staff available).
- Feedback from visits should be collated and reviewed at July Board meeting.

Action DG office to ensure HSC/E Strategy roadshows are included within the programme.

Action Each Board member to liaise with K Carroll and negotiate a suitably coordinated set of visits.

5 Flexible Working and the Estates Strategy – Steve Dennis – B/05/024

5.1 In 2003 the Board commissioned three flexible working pilots. 'Hot desking' pilots for visiting staff in Bristol and Worcester and a small scale homeworking scheme in Policy Group. The paper invited the Board to consider whether it wished to extend the present desk sharing model nationally; the pace at which it wished to implement the estates programme; and whether to run more home working pilots.

The Board took into account the outcome of the evaluation of the pilots, the savings that had been achieved and views expressed by the trade unions and staff. The Board expressed their thanks to S Dennis and team for their work so far.

5.2 As part of the discussion the Board welcomed the need for a strategic view on estates however expressed concerns on the impact of the changes on staff, the need to learn from the existing pilots and the definition of home working.

5.3 The Board agreed:

- That the balance of savings from the pilots, extra inconvenience for and the views of visiting staff meant that the overall business case, compared with other options, did not favour the current 'hot desking' arrangements
- The current 'hot desking' model would not be extended to the next property events
- It remained necessary to use the estate as economically and effectively as possible and open plan working would be continued to be adopted
- More home based working should be considered and make savings on accommodation from this

- Consideration should be given to what work should be based in which office in light of the developing Workforce Strategy.
- Action S Dennis to undertake local consultation in offices were pilots held and in Newcastle-under-Lyme about future arrangements.**
- Action BSD to produce a further paper on the estates strategy and geographical aspects of the workforce strategy.**

- 6 Outcome of Consultation on HSC Science Strategy 2005-08 – presented by Paul Davies and John McGuinness – B/05/023**
 - 6.1 The Science Strategy had been substantially updated and revised to align with the new HSC/HSE strategy. The paper invited the Board to consider the consultation responses received and agree that the revised draft Science Strategy should be submitted to HSC for approval.
 - 6.2 The Board welcomed the paper and were committed to supporting the strategy.
 - 6.3 The Board agreed subject to the several amendments raised in the discussion, that the revised draft Science Strategy should be submitted to HSC for approval in May. It was also agreed that an annual paper on the strategy should be received. The paper should cover implementation during the previous year and a forward look at plans for the following year

- 7 Draft Workforce Strategy to 2010 – presented by Susan Mackenzie – B/05/021**
 - 7.1 The paper outlined the draft Workforce Strategy. The Board was asked to give approval to the draft and the proposal that PD produce a three-year plan that sets out the delivery programme for the Strategy. This plan to be then considered at the May Board meeting.
 - 7.2 The following points were made during the discussion:
 - Some of the wording within the draft required amendment.
 - The strategy should be communicated and discussed within the organisation including the trade unions, to provide a clear picture of the corporate vision and to engage and listen to views.
 - The proposed further paper should include work streams and principles and concentrate on how to achieve the outcomes wanted.
- Action Following any drafting comments, PD to circulate final draft of Strategy and then to cascade to staff.**
- Action PD to produce a paper for the May Board.**

- 8 Pay Reform – presented by Susan Mackenzie and John Rowson**
 - 8.1 An oral presentation was given on pay reform and the Board was asked to provide steer and comment.
 - 8.2 The Board acknowledged that the current pay system was complex and there was the need for a reform. The reform should take into account the proposed new Workforce Strategy.
 - 8.3 The Board felt that the presentation and subsequent comments had been a useful start however felt further discussion was required. In

particular there could be focus on preferred arrangements if starting from the beginning.

Action M Weightman / G Denham to liaise with PD on principles for further meeting.

Action DG office to arrange further pay meeting for Board members by Mid-April.

9 Workplace Health Direct – presented by Elizabeth Gyngell

9.1 The Board received a presentation on the Workplace Health Direct Project and lessons learnt so far in managing a large-scale project. The project has met its key milestones to date and recently undergone an internal Gateway Review.

The presentation outlined the need for skills and experience in large scale project management, the importance of robust governance arrangements and the assurance that properly managed risks provide a successful outcome.

9.2 The Board welcomed the presentation and commended the innovative work. Resources and promotion of the project were listed as important areas in which the Board could assist the project.

9.3 The board discussed the value of the gateway review and the requirement for competent, credible and reliable service providers.

10 Any Other Business

10.1 The Board agenda for May was discussed.

Next HSE Board meeting 4 May 2005 in Room 1102, Daniel House, Bootle at 10.00am