

Health and Safety Executive Board Minutes		HSE/05/M06	
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Exemptions:	Item 4.2-4.3 Exemption FOI Act Section 31 Item 6.2-6.4 Exemption FOI Act Section 35		

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

HSE Board

Minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on Wednesday 25 May 2005 in the Fortune Room, Rose Court at 9.00am

Present

Timothy Walker
Jonathan Rees
Vivienne Dews
Paul Davies
Mike Weightman
Jane Willis
Giles Denham
Kevin Myers
Alex Brett-Holt
Allan Sefton
Colin Douglas

Also attending

Item 2: Elizabeth Hodkinson, Jenny Eastabrook
Item 4: John Ewins
Item 5: John Rowson, Susan Mackenzie

Apologies

Justin McCracken
Sandra Caldwell

Minutes – Nicola Walters

1 Minutes of HSE Board held on 4 May 2005

- 1.1 The minutes were agreed subject to clarification of an action within item 4.
- 1.2 The Board expressed their thanks to Dan Mitchell and welcomed Kevin Myers, Director of HID. Congratulations were also given to Kevin Myers on his recent award for 'Outstanding Safety Achievement' from the Construction Industry.

2 The Future of Diversity in HSE – presented by Elizabeth Hodkinson and Jenny Eastabrook – B/05/09

- 2.1 The Board received a paper and presentation on the future of diversity within HSE. Following a review of the current schemes and initiatives in place, it was proposed that HSE's overall performance in diversity both internally and externally could be improved and that activity should be refocused. The Board was asked to consider and give commitment to a top-level vision, focus on the business benefits of diversity and agree to a limited number of key priorities to achieve maximum impact.
- 2.2 The Board welcomed the paper and expressed their thanks to E Hodkinson and J Eastabrook for their work. General agreement was expressed that considerable progress had been made in the last few years on diversity but further work was required, as HSE had not

reached a suitable position.

2.3 As part of the discussion the following points were raised:

- Discussion within the organisation has shown that the Board are perceived as dealing with diversity on a cyclic basis rather than achieving sustained policies and improvements
- It is important that diversity is linked into the change agenda
- The draft Board Vision for diversity is a good start however some elements required redrafting including further reference to values, links to business needs, policies effecting stakeholders and equal opportunities
- It is essential to HSE's business success that the Board maintains top-level commitment to diversity and drives further sustained progress
- Further addition and amendment was also required to the key priorities including:
 - Making communication of the Vision a priority in itself
 - Ensuring that HSE staff recognise and acknowledge there are still issues within the organisation
 - Focusing the external diversity priorities on one or two areas such as Workplace Health Direct.
- There should be a clear definition on what the Board means by diversity. Diversity encompasses not only the well documented issues such as race, age and gender but also many other issues across the organisation
- Board members should give further consideration to how and what they can do to achieve top-level commitment and positive outcomes to diversity. Further discussion within Directorates and exchange of ideas was suggested
- It is a key priority of the Board to take every opportunity to reinforce the diversity Vision to the organisation. Communication should commence immediately such as through Board visits.

2.4 It was felt that a steering group was required for diversity.

Consideration should be given to its membership and structure.

2.5 There was general endorsement to revise the HSC/E Race Equality Scheme. The Board also welcomes the formation of MAGNET.

Action E Hodkinson and J Eastabrook to redraft the Vision and priorities with a note from T Walker.

Action T Walker to circulate note, Vision and priorities to SCS.

Action Each Board member to discuss within the Directorates how diversity can be managed and improved. Proposals for Board members' individual diversity objectives should then be circulated to other Board members (copied J Eastabrook / E Hodkinson) by end June.

Action Final draft version of the Vision, and Board members' diversity objectives, to be discussed and agreed at a Video Board meeting in July.

Action V Dews / A Brett-Holt / C Douglas to consider the membership and structure of a diversity steering group.

3 Women in HSE – presented by Alex Brett-Holt

3.1 In association with item 2, a short oral presentation was given on women within HSE.
Responses to a 2002 survey of Band 1 and 2 women in HSE on barriers to women's progression to the SCS had suggested cause for concern including perceptions of long hours of working and a macho culture.
A recent meeting of women in Bands 0-3 in Bootle discussed whether the concerns were still valid and suggested that not all SCS managers demonstrated the values.

3.2 The Board recognised that further discussion was required with the assistance of a facilitator and agreed that a suitable meeting should be arranged. It was felt that discussion should include how Board members are perceived across the organisation rather than just within their individual Directorates and what can be done to stimulate debate. In addition internal behaviours towards each other should also be explored.

Action **DG office to consider and arrange a suitable meeting or awayday.**

4 Update on the SFAIRP Infraction Case – presented by Giles Denham – B/05/029

4.1 The Board received an update on the progress of the European Commission's infraction proceedings against the UK Government for alleged under implementation of Article 5.1 of the 1989 Framework Directive on health and safety because of use of the 'so far as reasonably practicable' qualifier.

5 Improving Science and Technology Governance Arrangements – presented by John Ewins – B/05/033

5.1 The Board received a paper on improving the governance arrangements for science and technology resources within, across and outside the strategic programmes.

5.2 The Board felt it was important to recognise that whilst the paper proposed a re-establishment of a science co-ordinator and recruitment of some new project officers for the Fit3 programme, this did not mean there was dissatisfaction with the performance of people currently in the research support team, who are carrying out the work required of them. However the review has shown we need to recruit further skills and competencies into the team to support the use of science in the Fit3 programme.

5.3 As part of the discussion the following points were raised:

- The changes proposed in the paper represent a large change programme for HSE and for staff in COSAS in particular
- It would be helpful to clarify how the revised Science Strategy committee will fit into wider oversight arrangements in relation to HSL
- It is envisaged that the committee will be a group that can raise strategic issues/questions to the RDG
- Work with HID may be able to offer lessons in changing behaviours as well as decisions
- Strategic/change issues need to be communicated to staff.

5.4 The Board agreed:

- Re-establishment of a science co-ordinator and project officers in the Fit3 programme
- Creation of a science network for information exchange and discussion between everyone with key roles in commissioning research
- Reconstitution of the Science Strategy Committee.

6 Pay Reform Project – presented by Susan Mackenzie and John Rowson

6.1 An oral presentation was given on the Pay Reform Project.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 The Board agenda for 6th July was discussed.

7.2 Completion of Redgrave Court, Bootle may now be delayed a further 2-4 weeks. A completion date is not yet confirmed due to uncertainties with the commissioning of M&E systems such as the heating and ventilation.

7.3 HRH Prince Andrew is available to officially open Redgrave Court on 30th September 2005.

Next HSE Board meeting 6th July 2005 in Fortune Room, Rose Court, London at 9.30am.