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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

Staff Survey 2005

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Issue

1. The summary results from HSE's 2005 staff survey and development of an action plan aligned to our workforce vision and HR Strategy.

Timing

2. For discussion on 7 December. When a NOP consultant will be presenting the survey to the Board

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the Board agree to:
 - a. the development of a plan to address the key survey results
 - b. agree that the full survey results and the proposed action plan to address major findings be released to and discussed with staff through the January Exchange briefings
 - c. agree that future staff surveys should be run annually

Background

4. HSE introduced the staff survey in 1995 on a biennial basis. It has proved to be a very useful instrument in assessing critical aspects of the employment relationship.
5. It was originally held in January but following Board discussion earlier this year it was decided to bring the survey forward to September and then aim for a timetable to:

- ascertain employee perception of the effectiveness of the communication strategy where significant effort had been applied in response to negative findings in the 2004 survey;
 - align more closely with the timing adopted in other government departments;
 - assess the effectiveness of change management given the implementation of major projects, new ways of working and structural change;
 - monitor staff perception more frequently, on a range of topics in addition to standard questions.
6. We have little trend data because HSE was included in the Department of Environment in 1995, had an HSE specific survey in 1997, and moved to an electronic basis in 2000 and changed survey providers in 2005.
 7. To ensure HSE secures maximum value from employee surveys in future it is suggested that arrangements are now put in place to enable year on year comparisons for at least a 5 year time frame. Results could then be fed into a balanced score-card and performance management.
 8. a promptly agreed and publicised plan of action will be essential to meet employee expectations. Only 39% of survey respondents thought that management would take action on problems identified.

Additional Questions for 2005

9. On the advice of the staff survey advisory group (SASAG) drawn from across HSE this survey aimed to track changes in the perception of internal communication following the real efforts which have been made in that area. Equal Opportunities/diversity issues were also explored in some depth.
10. The survey included 16 questions designed by the Cabinet Office. These questions were concerned with: job satisfaction, communication, change, performance management and confidence in senior management. The response to these questions will be used to benchmark HSE's performance against other Government departments. The results of the comparison will not be available until early in 2006. This will however still allow time for findings to inform the planned action.

Response Rate

11. The response rate was 66%, which matches the level of participation in the 2004 survey and is encouraging given that we also ran the HSE wide stress survey in April.
12. The comparative rate of response for Directorates and by Job Band is shown in Annex 1.

Key Findings

13. The summarised findings from the 2005 survey. Were:

Strengths	Areas for improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Communications “within my part of HSE” is improving (though still room for further improvement)▪ Employees are generally positive about learning and development within HSE▪ 57% feel their performance has improved over the year as their skills have developed▪ Work life balance is generally seen as about right (67%). With people feeling action will be taken if workloads are too high▪ The majority see HSE as an equal opportunities employer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A quarter of all employees are dissatisfied with their job▪ Staff’s perception of senior managers is poor with just a quarter feeling that senior managers motivate and inspire them▪ 40% of employees feel poor performance is not dealt with effectively▪ staff feel that the impact of change and how it will work in practice are not clearly communicated

Argument

14. The improvement in markings on communication strongly suggests that the action, which has been taken, has begun to change perception.

15. The survey results suggest we have much to do on change management, leadership, senior management effectiveness, performance management and job satisfaction. These are inter-related; concerted effort would probably have a ripple effect on others. Change management is a particular problem – Annex 1 shows that no HSE directorate has satisfactory results.

16. It seems there is scope for shared learning on senior management effectiveness. The Local Authority Unit and Legal Advisers have comparatively good results, although this may be influenced by the fact they are smaller than many HSE commands. The Board will want to think particularly about this as the results overall are only slightly better than in 2004, despite the efforts made.

17. Not surprisingly job satisfaction improves with seniority and that dissatisfaction is expressed in the main by staff who have been in the same position for 5 years or longer.

Consultation

19. We suggest that the action plan be developed in consultation with the staff involved in the projects in performance management and management capabilities, the HR Business Partners working closely with D/D managers, and those tackling similar findings in other government departments. The Trade Unions will also need to be fully involved.

Presentation

20. The headline results and a brief message to staff are posted on the "Have Your Say" page on the intranet.
21. The reports of the directorate and divisional results will be provided to senior managers by mid December. Managers will be expected to discuss these results and provide information on initiatives underway to address findings. Guidelines will be prepared to support managers in leading this communication.
22. Results and proposed action for HSE wider issues will be included in the Exchange Brief for January. Managers will be issued with a customised powerpoint presentation to facilitate discussion. Directorates could then of course, add points specific to their area to those discussions.

Financial/Resource Implications Costs and Benefits

23. The total cost of the staff survey is £25,400 met from PD budget. Any additional analysis requested is costed on an ad hoc basis. There has been no quantification of the cost of staff time spent involved in completing the survey or personnel representatives who have managed this project.
24. The survey gives staff the opportunity to have their say and for the Board to establish a picture of HSE's performance, drawing comparisons with previous years results and other Government departments. The survey provides evidence about where action is needed, and feedback on whether earlier actions have made a difference.

Environmental Implications

25. Not applicable.