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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

Monthly Health & Safety Report - February 2006

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Cleared by Justin McCracken on 25th January

Issue

1. Health and safety issues in HSE, particularly increase in RIDDOR incidents.

Timing

2. For discussion at this meeting

Recommendation

3. That the Board:
 - notes that HSE is likely to fail to meet our target for RIDDOR accidents;
 - understands the causes behind recent RIDDOR accidents;
 - discusses the rolling indicator for sickness absence (just received at time of clearing paper) which has risen again;
 - notes that other measures of health and safety performance continue to be encouraging,; and
 - supports a piece of work to examine how HSE's RIDDOR numbers and rate compare with similar organisations.

Background

4. This report focuses on the target of RIDDOR reportable incidents that was set in the 2005/06 Corporate Plan for health and safety. The target was less than 10 (ie no more than 9) reports for the entire year. The target originally appeared in the 2004/05 Plan,

when it was exceeded. It is based on a 10% reduction on the figures from 2003/04. The target includes incidents to contractors.

Argument

5. The accident and ill health monthly data report is found in Annex 1 to this paper.

The Board should note that we are now only one incident away from exceeding our yearly target for RIDDORs. It is likely that this will happen in the next three months.

i) RIDDOR incidents reported during December/ January 2006

a) **Major injury** - Fracture suffered by staff member in Legal adviser's office in Rose Court on Sunday 4 December. The injured person (IP) stepped out of the lift on the 7th floor, but lift floor was approx 20cm higher than the actual 7th floor. IP hurt her foot and was in considerable pain - 2 weeks later an x ray confirmed a fracture to the foot. The misalignment of the lift was most likely caused by problems with the relays (the mechanisms by which the lift locates itself and opens its doors at floor level), which have now all been replaced. Since the relays have been changed, there have been no reported problems. An interim report has been produced following investigation.

b) **Over 3 day injury** - Back strain to FOD inspector sustained whilst lifting barrier to office car park. On 12 December, IP was first to the office car park in Stoke, and lifted the barrier, which is approx 10ft long, to fix it in an open position against a latch. Apparently first person in car park routinely lifts barrier. Following the incident, IP continued to work, but went off sick on 21 December advising line manager that back pain was direct result of original injury on 12th. IP returned to work 4.01.06. The investigation report is not yet available.

c) **Over 3 day injury** - REFIT employee sprained leg on Monday 16th while working in Redgrave Court, setting up IT cables within the new desks. IP took the necessary cables out of a plastic bag, and subsequently during the course of his work slipped on it. IP did not tell anybody about the incident at the time. IP telephoned his line manager the next day to inform them that he would not be in work due to slipping incident. There were no witnesses to the incident. IP is now back in work. The investigation report is not yet available.

ii) General comments

The disappointing news about recent RIDDOR incidents should not deflect from what is overall a positive picture. DSE ill health and slips and trips are down and the numbers of reported near misses are up. RIDDOR incidents are very much down compared to 2004/05, although our target is unlikely to be met.

Some general points to note from the RIDDORs this year:

- 4 of the RIDDOR incidents have been slip, trip & fall incidents, 3 have been manual handling. These are well known causes which we are already targetting, so do not suggest that new programmes of activity are called for

- Most of the incidents (including the three above) have occurred while staff are working on their own
- In 2 incidents there was a substantial lag time between the incident occurring and the decision being made that it was RIDDOR reportable. In both cases this was because the IP did not immediately inform HSE facts that made the incident RIDDOR reportable, e.g. the IP took time off but only later told line management that this was due to an incident at work.
- Checking with the HSA prior to reporting of the incident has prevented some non-reportable incidents being reported.
- Graphs 1 & 2 show how this year's RIDDOR performance compares with other recent years (note that the most recent all industry average of reported injuries is 587 per 100,000 employees)
- The Board has noted previously that being a RIDDOR reportable incident is a matter of chance and some non-RIDDOR reportable incidents have been of greater concern (e.g. the falling windows in Bootle). For this reason a request was made to look at other indicators that can give a better indication of health and safety performance. RIDDOR incidents would not be ignored but would be considered in context. This work will be included in the Board paper in March on the Corporate Plan.
- The Board set this as a challenging target for the organisation. It is not known how this target benchmarks against other organisations. It would be sensible to find this out and so be able to make a more informed judgement about the significance of the RIDDOR number and rate

Presentation

6. The Board needs to be prepared to deal with a statistic that some may feel reflects poorly on the organisation. The Board can emphasise that our performance this year compared to last has substantially improved and this target is very challenging.

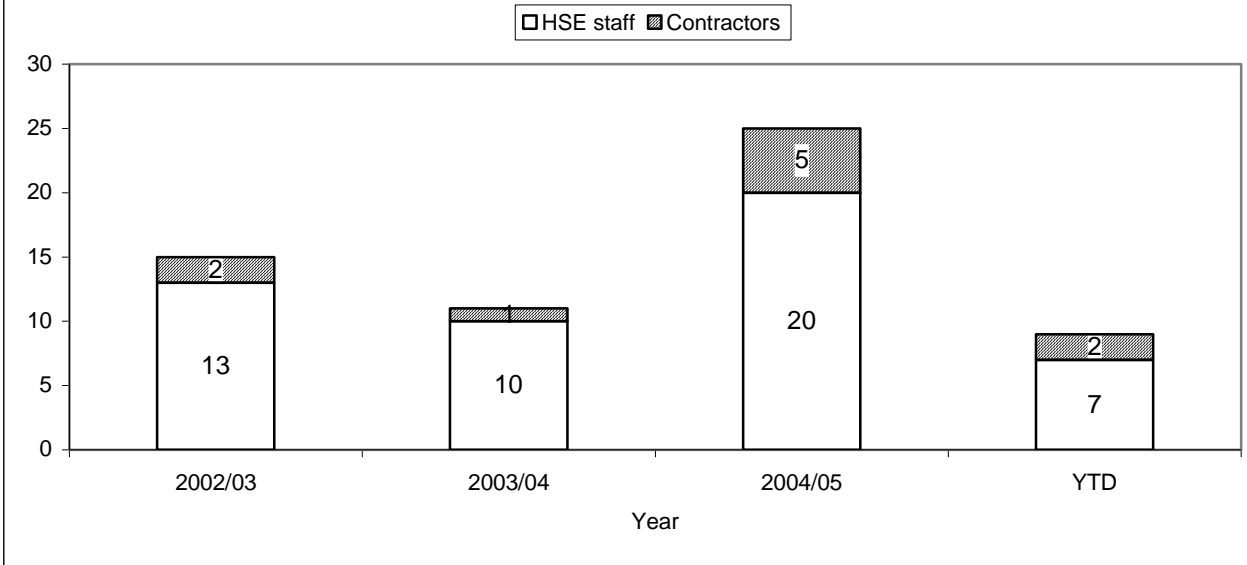
Action

7. Once the Board has discussed these figures a benchmarking report on HSE's performance can be included in next month's health and safety report.

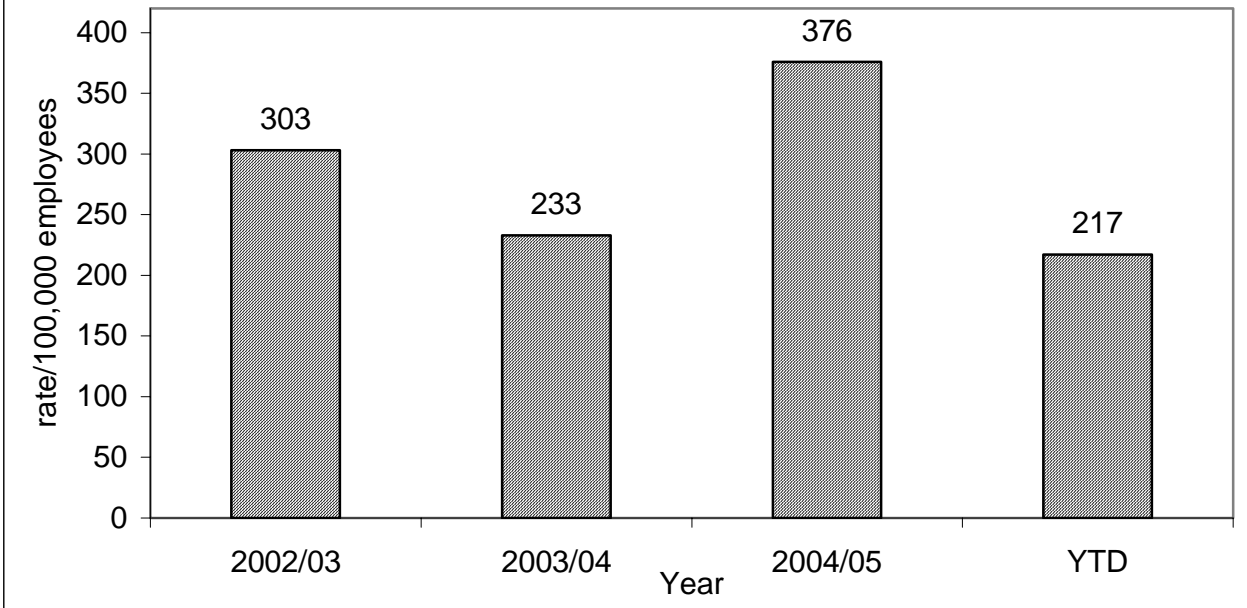
Future health & safety Board papers

March 2006	Corporate Plan for Health and Safety 2006/07 including review about benchmarking or RIDDOR incident data
April 2006	Internal Governance Review Report

Graph 1: Numbers of RIDDOR incidents reported by HSE



Graph 2: RIDDOR rate for HSE over the last 4 years

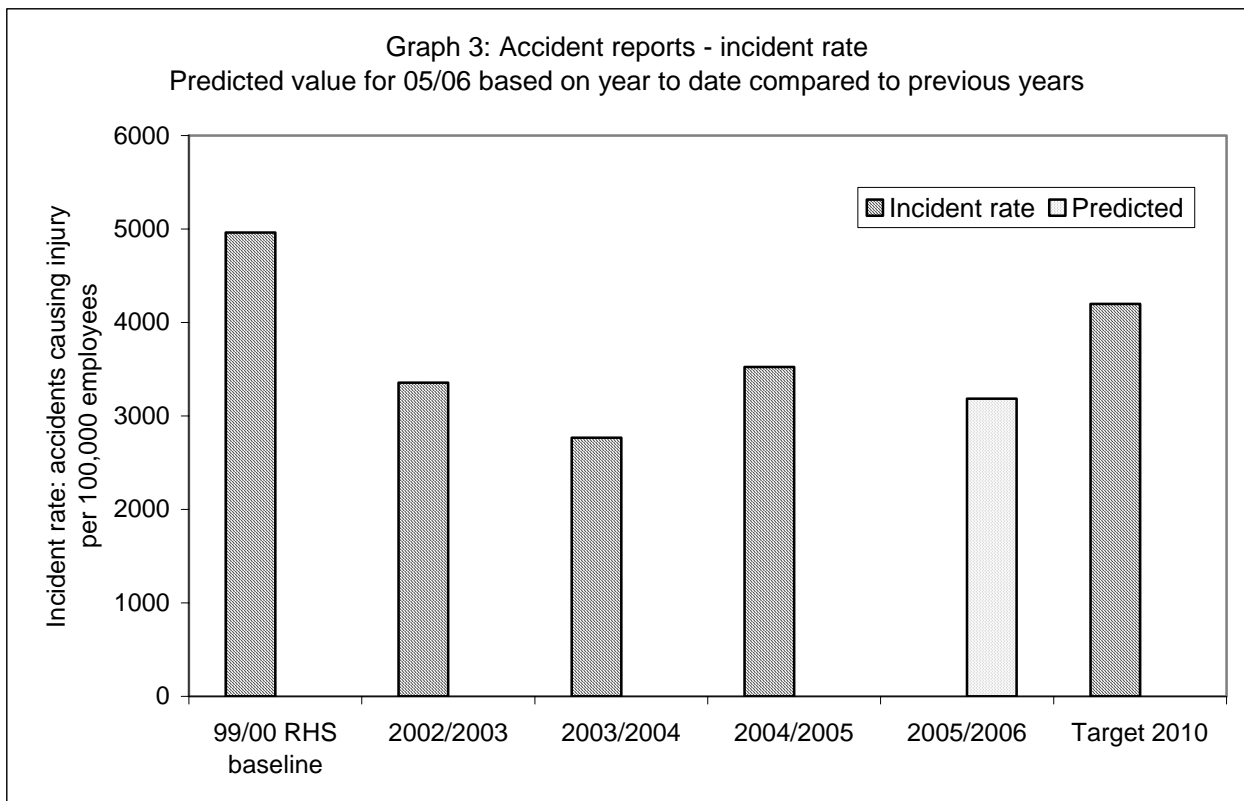


Annex 1 - Progress against targets at 19 January 2006

There have been 47 incidents/ill health reports for the period 19 December 2005 to 19 January 2006.

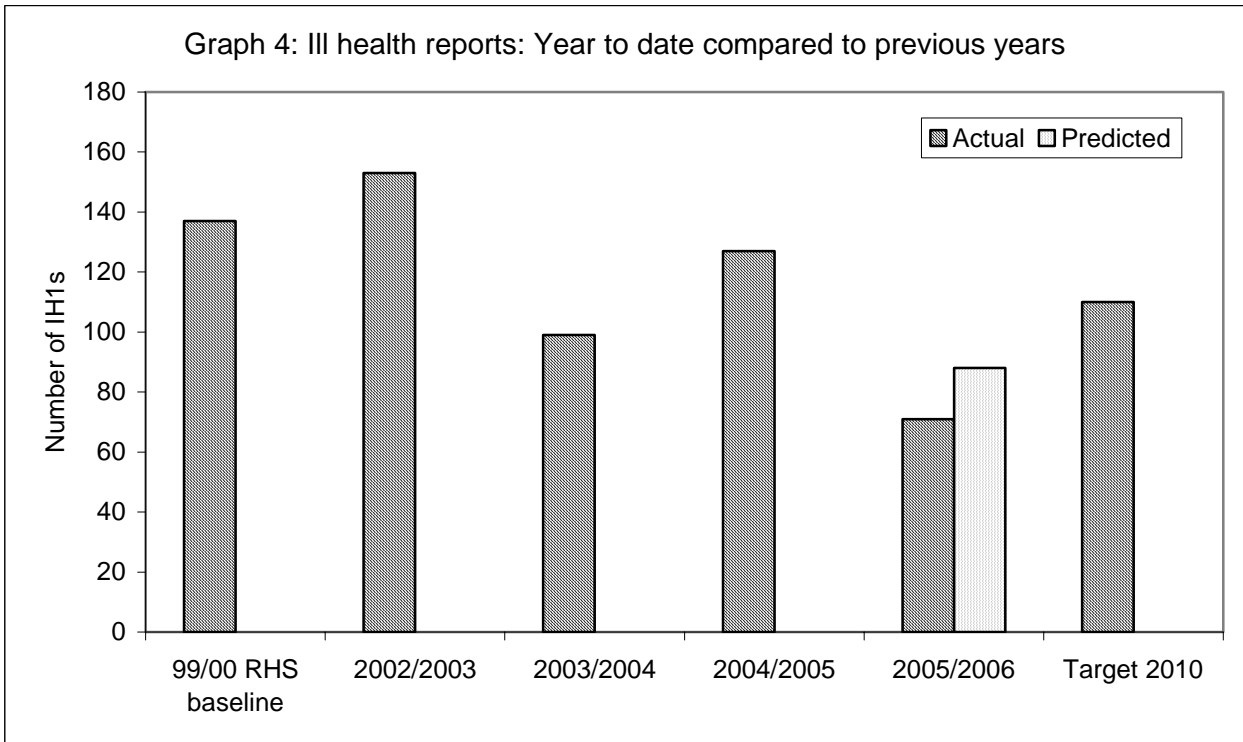
Category	Actual number reported since 1/4/05	Number required to fail target	Target for 2005/06
RIDDOR reports	9*	8	<10
DSE/IH1 reports	24	45	<57
Slips/trips causing injury	35	37	<47
Near misses	169		

The accident incident rate (see Graph 1) has risen from 3113 last month to 3185, which is still below the RHS target and the rate for 2004/05.



There have been 71 IH1s received in the year to date. This gives a prediction of 88 for the year as a whole, which remains below the 2010 target and the 2004/05 level (see Graph 2)

* There has also been a RIDDOR reportable incident involving drinking water at HSL. It was agreed earlier this year that this would not be counted towards our statistics as it related to factors entirely beyond HSE's control. The FM contractor at HSL reported the incident.



Graph 5 (below) shows that the rolling sickness absence indicator has shown a slight increase for the 4th month running. The trend line indicates that HSE may still hit the 6.2 target by the end of 2006/07. PD will look again at any identifiable causes for the rise in time for the next Board paper

