

| Health and Safety Executive Board Paper |                  | HSE/06/81       |            |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------|
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**HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE  
The HSE Board**

**HSE Emergency Response Exercise Programme**

**A Paper by Elaine Harbour**

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**Cleared by Justin McCracken on 25 August 2006**

**Issue**

1. Exercising HSE's arrangements to respond to major incidents and civil contingencies.

**Timing**

2. Routine

**Recommendation**

3. The Board is asked to note the details of the proposed Exercise and tests.

**Background**

4. At the 5 July 2006 Board meeting it was agreed that:
  - a) A corporate exercise would be held in October 2006 to test HSE's response arrangements; and
  - b) A 3-year programme of annual exercises would be undertaken
5. A programme of Exercises (rehearsing our procedures, using a scenario on a named day) and Tests (an unannounced check of our response) is being developed to July 2009. Following the October event a further exercise, with Board Members more extensively involved in considering resilience and resourcing issues, is being planned for early 2007. In addition, later this year, there will be a number of unannounced Tests to check that Board members can be contacted reliably despite the absence of a formal contact rota.
6. Directorates will need to underpin the 3-year corporate programme with their own Exercises. We will feedback any learning points from the corporate events to inform the D/D programmes and future corporate exercises, and OPSD will support the Directorate exercises as required.

**Argument**

7. The date for the first corporate exercise, Exercise Max, has been set for the first two weeks in October 2006. The Exercise will comprise:
  - a) An unannounced test of the communication flow to the Board; and
  - b) An exercise involving HSE Secretariat and Press Office
 Annex A outlines the objectives, scope and arrangements for the exercise.

8. Whilst the details of communication test will be unannounced, to obtain maximum benefit and learning experience from the exercise HSE Secretariat and Press Office will be informed in advance of the October test date. They will run through a scenario using the inputs arising from the preceding test.

### **Consultation**

9. Corporate exercise working group members – Ann Peatfield (FOD), David Bosworth (HID), Norman Byrom (NSD), Evan Bale (OPSD), John Freeman (Policy Group) and Clare McNicholas (OPSD).

### **Presentation**

10. Internal presentation implications only at this stage. We propose to publicise the 2-week window for the October Exercise using:
  - a) A global e-mail w/c 11 September; and
  - b) An e-express article w/c 25 September.
11. “Stand down” will be via a global e-mail on the day. This global message will also inform those not involved that the test has been completed.

### **Costs and Benefits**

12. Corporate exercise, underpinned by D/D exercises, will provide reassurance of our ability to respond appropriately to a potential major incident or civil contingency event.

### **Financial/Resource Implications for HSE**

13. Costs for the October Exercise are approximately £9,000 (full costs).

### **Environmental Implications**

14. N/A

### **Other Implications**

15. N/A

### **Action**

16. For information only

## EXERCISE MAX – HSE CORPORATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Date: October 2006

Location: Redgrave Court, Rose Court and HSE Field Office(s)

### Scope of the Exercise

- a. This Exercise aims to test the corporate plans and procedures put in place by HSE to provide an emergency response to major incidents and civil contingencies.
- b. The Exercise is **not** dealing with the deployment of operational staff or the interactions with other agencies.
- c. The Exercise will be run in two phases, with the outcome from one feeding into the other.

### Objectives and outcomes of the Exercise

The objectives are:

- a. To increase awareness of the HSE emergency response arrangements in key staff
- b. To test, in Phase 1 –
  - i. HSE's communication channels up to the Board;
  - ii. the interfaces between operational Directorates, in particular whether they recognise other's involvement and act accordingly; and in Phase 2 –
  - iii. the Secretariat and Press Office involvement.
- c. c) To identify the lessons learned and actions arising.

The expected outcomes are:

- a. Increased assurance and confidence in HSE's corporate emergency response arrangements;
- b. Increased clarity of communication lines within HSE.

### Participants

Phase 1 - Operational Directorates: Operational units in FOD, HID & NSD (main involvement is likely to be at B1/B2 level) and D/D HQs.

Phase 2 - HSE Secretariat, HSE Press Office.

HSE Board members will be contacted during the Exercise but no significant unplanned work will be required.

### Scenario Story Board and How the Exercise Will Work

The scenario has been created in the form of a 'story board' in which 'injects' will be fed to participants. Participants will have no prior knowledge of the individual parts of the scenario, information will be given as it would emerge chronologically in a real situation.

The individual Units involved in Operational Directorates will not be identified in advance.

### Observers/Support to Participants

Exercise Co-ordinators – Elaine Harbour (OPSD), Ann Peatfield (FOD), David Bosworth (HID), Norman Byrom (NSD), Evan Bale (OPSD), John Freeman (Policy Group)