

Health and Safety Executive Board Minutes		HSE/06/M11	
Meeting Date:	8 November 2006	Open Gov. Status:	Fully Open
Type of Paper:	Minutes	Paper File Ref:	
Exemptions:	None		

**HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE**  
**Minutes of the HSE Board meeting held on Wednesday 8**  
**November in the Shakespeare Room and by video link to**  
**Redgrave Court, Bootle**

**Present**

Geoffrey Podger  
Justin McCracken  
Jonathan Rees  
Alex Brett-Holt  
Sandra Caldwell  
Vivienne Dews  
Colin Douglas  
Giles Denham  
Patrick McDonald  
Eddie Morland  
Kevin Myers  
Mike Weightman  
Jane Willis

**Also attending**

Steve Dennis (for items 2 and 5)  
Gaynor Coldrick (for item 2 and 4)  
Peter Baker (Item 3)  
Bill Tomkins (Item 5)  
Stuart Clarke (Item 6)  
  
(from agenda item 3 onwards)

**Apologies**

Bill Gunnyeon (DWP)

**Minutes**

Peter Buckley

**1 Minutes of the HSE Board held on 4 October and the Action Points**

1.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed without amendment.

**2 Agenda Item 2 - Finance and staffing – current position - (Paper B/06/92 closed)**

2.1 Vivienne Dews introduced the paper and the supporting material (some of which had arrived quite late for which apologies were offered). Vivienne turned first to the issue of the affordable staffing plans and thanked the Main Budget Holders and their staff for all the hard work that had gone into producing them. The plans do add up to an affordable position. There were still significant risks associated with the plans, not least that two sharp (perhaps slightly artificial) peaks in post losses occur in January (as a result in part of the Voluntary Approved Early Retirement Scheme) and April. There would still be a need to monitor the position closely and to make adjustments as and when necessary.

2.2 During the subsequent discussion on the affordable staffing plans, the following points were made:

- a. It was agreed that tables should be produced showing net staff lost from April 2006 by Directorate, and that PEFD would identify any issues which required further Board discussion as a result of producing those tables;
- b. The comparative staff numbers in different parts of HSE in

previous years would be produced so long as the data was easily available;

- c. Factoring in the number and timing of returns of secondees and of people from career breaks was an important way of mitigating one of the significant risks to the plans;
- d. Explaining the impact in different parts of HSE was an important role for Board members both corporately and within their individual commands – Board members were asked to clear centrally (with PEFD) messages to their own staff about the impact of the affordable staffing plans;
- e. It was important to have a picture across HSE on essential work which was being done more efficiently along with work which was being dropped – supplemented where necessary with divisional or directorate examples in communications to staff from Main Budget Holders;
- f. Although implementing further contingency measures was not currently necessary, the Board ran through a number of issues and noted that:
  - i. FOD had work underway to ensure application was made for recovery of all costs associated with its prosecutions;
  - ii. A review of the spend on development was already underway; and
  - iii. The issue of maximising publications income would be discussed at the next Board Meeting.

- 2.3 Steve Dennis then took the Board through the latest staffing and financial position to the end of October as follows:
- a. Both the September and October payroll costs were on track in terms of affordability against the profile of adjusted budgets;
  - b. The October figure included the pay rise;
  - c. There was also some cooling off in the Travel and Subsistence budget with a reduction of £75k in October indicating that the control measures were now beginning to bite;
  - d. Looking forward there were still risks on the costs of estates and income gap from nuclear licensing work. There was also the issue of the total spend this year and its impact on resources for the next financial year.

- 2.4 The Board was reminded that the key corporate financial requirement was to live within HSE's overall budget. No virement into or out of payroll was permitted without the Board's consent and no external recruitment without the consent of the Recruitment Review Panel – so any emerging payroll underspend needed to be declared and returned to the centre.

- 2.5 The Board then moved on to the issue of staffing moves during which the following points were raised:
- a. The supplementary paper from HR was very useful;
  - b. The cultural issue of managers' willingness to release staff into affordable posts needed to be tackled to allow moves to be made efficiently;
  - c. This would need a lead from Board Members to make

- moves work although some moves had already taken place smoothly;
- d. The Business Partners should be able to facilitate moves within directorates and divisions;
  - e. For those moves across directorates and divisions, the Board was happy for Gaynor Coldrick to work up the proposals in the supplementary paper taking into account:
    - i. The speed with which decisions needed to be made;
    - ii. The make up of any networks to get decisions made and to stick; and
    - iii. Plugging into existing networks such as the Local Career Review Groups.
- 2.6 The Board noted that the dialogue with HSE Trade Unions was continuing with the next Meeting planned for 20 November.
- 2.7 The Board then discussed the content of a short update to staff on the financial and staffing position and asked Peter Buckley to draw up a draft for the Chief Executive to consider.
- Action Point 109** **HRD and PEFD to rework the staff turnover tables taking April as their starting point, producing previous years figures if these were easily available, and identifying any issues which required further Board discussion as a result of producing those tables.**
- Action Point 110** **Board members to clear with PEFD messages to their own staff about the impact of the affordable staffing plans.**
- Action Point 111** **Gaynor Coldrick to implement a process to facilitate intra-directorate and divisional moves taking into account the Board's observations.**
- Action Point 112** **PEFD to discuss the nuclear income position with DCE (Ops) and NSD and the estate pressure with RPD.**
- Action Point 113** **Peter Buckley to canvass contributions and present a draft message from the Chief Executive to staff with an update on the staffing and financial position.**
3. **Agenda item 3 – HSE's Corporate Medical Capabilities and the maintenance of EMAS (Paper B/06/93 closed)**
- 3.1 Sandra Caldwell introduced the paper by:
  - a. Giving feedback from the meeting between the Chief Executive and her with HSE's doctors; and
  - b. Outlining the issues for the Board to consider as follows:
    - i. What should be the future strategic role of HSE's doctors;
    - ii. What should HSE use its clinical expertise for;
    - iii. How should HSE develop the capacity for delivering occupational health priorities;
    - iv. Whether to fill the current vacancy of the Head of Corporate Medical Unit (CMU).
- 3.2 During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- a. HSE's occupational health priorities have changed considerably over the years;
- b. There remains a need for in-house clinical expertise;
- c. Progress against the health elements of the PSA target was good;
- d. Building on this success there was a need to decide:
  - i. What the future priorities were for occupational health;
  - ii. What clinical skills, expertise and experience were needed to contribute to those priorities;
  - iii. What HSE's contribution to those priorities might best be, taking opportunities, costs and value obtained into account.
- e. The Fundamental Review S&T workstream provided opportunities for better deployment of HSE's clinical capabilities as did collaboration with HSL's medical unit;
- f. Until HSE's priorities on occupational health were clearer it would be best not to recruit a Head of CMU;
- g. Providing HSE's doctors with continued professional leadership was important;
- h. Taking all of the above into account now would be a good time to review the provision of occupational health expertise within HSE.

3.3 In summing up the discussion, Geoffrey made the following points:

- a. The Board recognised the challenges HSE's doctors currently faced and was grateful for their valuable contribution to the work of HSE;
- b. It was right not to recruit until HSE was clear about future priorities and where the provision of medical expertise might best sit within HSE;
- c. The need for a review was agreed and:
  - i. To do it quickly and to involve the staff already involved in this area of HSE's work on occupational health;
  - ii. Peter Baker was well placed to guide the review; and
  - iii. To maintain linkages with the newly formed Health Board;
- d. Peter Baker and Patrick McDonald were asked to discuss how best to provide continued leadership and professional support to Corporate Medical Unit staff.

**Action Point 114 Sandra Caldwell to discuss with appropriate Board members how best to take the review forward in the light of the Board discussion.**

**Action Point 115 Peter Baker and Patrick McDonald to liaise on providing professional support to EMAS staff.**

**4 Agenda item 4 – Report back from the HSE Board Human Resources Sub-group (Paper B/06/97 Closed)**

4.1 The Board discussed the paper and agreed it would like further

discussions – on the basis of work done by the HR Sub-group – on the following key strategic issues:

- a. Talent management and succession planning;
- b. Performance management; and
- c. High performance award system.

**Action Point 116**      **HR to bring forward papers on the above to subsequent Board meetings.**

5                    **Agenda item 5 – HSE Charging Regimes (Paper B/06/94 Closed)**

5.1                This part of the minutes is closed.

6                    **Agenda item 6 – Progress against the PSA targets second quarter 2005\2006 (Paper B/06/96)**

6.1                Vivienne Dews introduced this paper with the following remarks:

- a. The Commission had considered the paper the day before and asked for amendments to:
  - i. Bring out more strongly the work on Major Hazards Programme, following the change in its status to Amber/Green
  - ii. Explain what Fit3 is doing to tackle injuries in the services sector, including the work with Local Authorities;
  - iii. Refer to the impact resources have on delivery of outcomes.
- b. The text would therefore be modified before it went to Ministers.

6.2                During the subsequent discussion the Board asked that a revised version in tracking mode be copied to Board members when it is sent to the Minister in time for the KIT Meeting the following week.

**Action Point 119**      **SPU to revise the draft report to Ministers and circulate it to Board Members and then forward it on in time for the KIT Meeting the following week.**

8                    **Agenda item 8 – October tour of HSE Offices (Paper B/06/104)**

8.1                Colin Douglas introduced the paper with the following remarks:

- a. The financial situation and COIN dominated many of the events although other issues were raised;
- b. The mood of the meetings was as important as the frequency with which issues were raised;
- c. The one issue which had not impacted as well on staff as was hoped was the coverage of the Fundamental Review;
- d. But it was proposed to use the opportunity of completion of the action plan following Phase 2 of the review as an opportunity to continue to communicate on this important workstream the impact of which by its very nature was mainly long term;
- e. The Board needs to consider what response it should make following completion of the visits.

- 8.2 During the subsequent discussion the following points were made:
- a. Each Board member recounted their experiences;
  - b. The commitment of HSE's staff had been very apparent at all the visits;
  - c. The mood had varied at individual visits but the frustration of operational staff about COIN had been very apparent;
  - d. The Board intended to continue the dialogue with staff, although the role of local managers in listening, challenging misconceptions and providing feedback was also important.
- 8.3 As a part of this continuing dialogue the Board agreed that a note to staff from the Chief Executive should be drafted dealing with the financial and staffing position, on prioritisation and on COIN (see Action Point 113).

## **9 Agenda item 9 – Any Other Business**

### **Agenda for November Meeting – B/A06/11**

- 9.1 The agenda for the November Meeting was discussed and it was agreed to find another half day in December to discuss the four year rolling business plan and to add agenda items to deal with communications spend for this and next financial year including maximising income from publications.