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HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The HSE Board

Speaking with consistency - advertising strapline and corporate messages

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Cleared by Colin Douglas on 24 May 2007

Issue

1. To agree a consistent strapline to be applied to a wide range of HSE promotional advertising and materials, and to agree a new set of corporate messages to replace those that were agreed with the Corporate Communications Strategy in 2004.

Timing

2. Immediate

Recommendation

3. That the Board:
 - i. agrees the strapline 'Don't chance it, change it' be applied consistently to a wide range of HSE advertising and promotional material, as set out at paragraph 7-10
 - ii. agrees the corporate messages at paragraph 13, subject to further testing with staff and discussion with the Commission

Background

4. HSE has run a number of advertising campaigns over the past two years covering a wide range of topics including Backs, slips & trips, falls from height, asbestos, dermatitis, the business case for health & safety. In each case, we have needed to identify a specific audience and message in order to ensure that our advertising has most impact. This inevitably results in each advertising campaign having different messages.
5. Whilst such diversity of messages is not a problem (and, indeed, is essential since we are asking people to do different things in each of these campaigns), there is benefit in having an 'overarching' theme that connects them.
6. As a separate, but related matter, there is also benefit in having a consistent set of corporate messages that can be deployed by HSC/E colleagues when writing or delivering speeches/presentations, giving media interviews, issuing press releases, etc. We last produced such a set of messages when we introduced the Corporate Communications Strategy in 2004, and distributed to staff plastic, credit-card sized hand-outs with the text of the messages.

Argument

Strapline:

7. We have learnt from advertising activity over the previous two years that to have most impact we need to provide very specific advice, have a simple call to action, remind people of the potential consequences of the risks they are taking, and illustrate how you can reduce or eliminate risks at low costs.
8. Working with our advertising agency, we developed several options for an advertising strapline/theme. It needed to work on advertising and promotional material that seeks to achieve the points set out in 7 above, and we had to ensure that it was not inconsistent with our sensible risk message.
9. Based on these requirements, we developed and tested a number of options and the one that came out comfortably on top was **'Don't chance it, change it'**. This strapline is currently being applied to the Workplace Transport campaign that will be running later in the year. We are now seeking the Board's approval to apply this more widely to other promotional activity and material as future opportunity arises.
10. We are still finalising details of the major campaigns for the year ahead, and this will determine how we use the strapline – i.e., simply applying it to topic specific advertising campaigns (such as Workplace Transport), or in addition to this running a generic campaign around the don't chance it change it theme and enabling specific topics to then attach themselves to that campaign. The Board will be looking regularly at planned campaign activity for the year ahead to consider what is affordable in the light of the current pressures on HSE's budgets and will, therefore, have the opportunity to review detailed spending proposals for such campaigns once they are developed.

Corporate messages:

11. There are, currently, four corporate messages that were agreed as part of the Corporate Communications strategy. They are:
 - i. Sensible health and safety is a cornerstone of a civilised society.
 - ii. Sensible health and safety is about managing risks, not eliminating them.
 - iii. The people best placed to make workplaces safer from harm are the staff and managers who work in them. They do this best by working together.
 - iv. We are committed to being a good partner – working with others to improve health and safety.
12. As part of the sensible risk campaign, we have already started to deploy a consistent message around 'saving lives, not stopping people living'. We propose to build on this by adding messages about the benefits of health & safety based on the statistics produced by COSAS about lives saved, injuries and ill-health prevented. We also propose to add a message to link to the 'Don't chance it, change it' advertising strapline.
13. Accordingly, we propose that our new set of corporate messages should be as follows:
 - i. HSC/E champions sensible health and safety – taking steps that are proportionate to the risk and potential harm.
 - ii. Sensible health and safety is about saving lives, not stopping people living. Each week it prevents five deaths and 300 serious injuries, and every day it avoids 500 cases of work related ill health.
 - iii. Good health and safety is good for business, with the failure to manage these risks costing employers around £4 billion every year.

- iv. Don't chance it with unnecessary risks when simple changes can often make your work safer.
14. If these messages are acceptable to the Board, it is proposed to test them with a selection of HSE staff (bringing them back to the Board if there are any significant issues) before taking them to the Commission at the end of the year as part of a draft Corporate Communications Strategy for 2008/9 to 2010/11.
15. Once finalised, it is important that these corporate messages are regularly deployed. This will require that Board colleagues and Commissioners lead by example in regularly communicating these messages in speeches and presentations that we give. It will also require staff across HSE to be using these messages in external presentations and communications. Clearly, it is not the aim that colleagues simply repeat, in robotic fashion, all of these messages every time they speak to external audiences. Rather, it will be important for us all to look constantly for opportunities to weave appropriate corporate messages into presentations, tailoring them to the content and audience without jeopardising consistency of message.

Consultation

16. COSAS, PFPD, Fit3, CDS

Presentation

17. The purpose of the proposals in this paper is to help us to get our messages across to external audiences in a more consistent way. It is important, in the current financial climate, that we do this in a cost efficient way so as to minimise criticism of wasting money. The proposals set out above seek to achieve this balance.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

18. The new strapline will be applied to the detailed advertising/campaign schedule that is still being worked up. The Board will have the opportunity, in future communication update papers, to agree major campaign plans before budgets are fully committed.
19. There will be a small production cost of around £800 to promote the corporate messages to HSE staff. It is not possible to provide a meaningful estimate of the impact on staff time of applying such messages consistently, but can be argued that it will save time by giving people ready-made messages that can be incorporated into presentations.

Action

20. Once approved by the Board, Communications Directorate will:
- i. implement the new strapline
 - ii. carry out further testing of the corporate messages, bringing them back to the Board as appropriate
 - iii. take the finalised corporate messages to the Commission for approval as part of a Corporate Communications Strategy