

Meeting Date:	5 March 2008	FOI Status:	Fully Open
Type of Paper:	Below the line	Trim Ref:	2008/61975
Exemptions:	No		

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

Developing an HSE Cycling Policy

A Paper by: HSE's Bicycle User Group (BUG) and the Green Team

Advisors: David Ashton, Gordon MacDonald

Cleared by: Justin McCracken

Issue

1. To agree a realistic policy on promoting cycling as a form of transport to work, as a means of developing a healthier workforce, but also as part of the broader work on 'Greening HSE'.

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendation

3. That the Board recognises the HSE Bicycle User Group (BUG) as a key forum for looking after the interests of HSE's commuting cyclists, and supports the BUG in its main activities as outlined in Paragraph 7.

Background

4. "Cyclists are the only group of workers that enjoy their journey to work", according to the large pharmaceuticals manufacturer, Pfizer. Published research has shown that there are other key benefits to cycling, such as:

- a. creating a healthier workforce (regular cycling halves the risk of heart attack);
- b. a workforce that arrives more invigorated and 'ready to go';
- c. staff are more likely to be more reliable with their time-keeping and less likely to be delayed;
- d. it is a highly effective form of stress relief;
- e. saves on car-parking space (at least 6 bikes can comfortably fit into the space occupied by one car).

5. A Bicycle User Group (BUG) has developed with a network across many of HSE's offices. It seeks to promote cycling as a form of transport to work and also for work activities (for example attending training courses/conferences or inspection especially in built-up areas) where appropriate, possibly also involving mixed transport e.g. bike and train, or even bike and car.

Argument

6. Approximately two-thirds of daily journeys are made using a car for a trip of less than 5 miles, and half of these are even shorter – less than two miles. The BUG and the Green Team are of the opinion that HSE staff could be encouraged to consider some of the alternatives to the car. Perhaps walking for distances up to 2 miles and cycling for distances of around 5 miles. For longer journeys, the use of mixed transport such as bike and train or bike and car could be encouraged.
7. The Board is asked to:
 - a. Recognise the role of the BUG in promoting cycling as a valuable form of transport for HSE.
 - b. Endorse the promotion of ‘greener’ forms of transport to and from HSE offices or other work-related activities.
 - c. Support initiatives by the BUG to liaise with HRD on schemes to encourage cycling, such as the stronger promotion of ‘Bike Week’, and on the inclusion of “cycling friendly” aspects in appropriate HR policies.
 - d. Endorse the initiation of a project to examine facilities and assess current and likely demand at each HSE office. Such a project could be conducted by BUG liaison with office accommodation managers.
 - e. Support BUG initiatives to look for opportunities to provide adequate changing facilities and secure, covered and convenient bike storage for HSE offices as one means of encouraging cycling.
 - f. Encourage liaison (via the BUG) with local authority groups to maximise mutual benefits (e.g. sharing local knowledge and experience, and possibly to take advantage of free training offered by local authorities).
8. These considerations are in keeping with the BSD Environmental Policy Statement of December 2006, which states one of its objectives as “reducing transport and travel-related environmental impacts”.
9. The BUG is realistic in its desire to promote cycling recognising many staff simply will not want to, or for work-related and home-related reasons, cannot bike to work. However, the BUG is keen to make this activity more accessible and wishes the Board to recognise the benefits to the individual and the organization.

Consultation

10. These proposals have been discussed within HSE’s BUG network, PFPD, and BSD Energy and Environment Team.

Presentation

11. Internal only. Publicity on the activity of the BUG and the promotion of cycling within HSE will be via Express, e-express, the intranet pages, and perhaps also by leaflet displays.

Costs and Benefits

12. The key benefits are a healthier, less-stressed work-force.
13. There are broader environmental benefits (reducing HSE’s ‘carbon footprint’), and, as indicated previously, benefits for the individual and HSE. These are difficult to quantify but figures obtained during ‘Bike Week’ indicate that around 1000-2000

miles are covered per week by HSE staff saving around 500kg CO₂ compared to car use.

14. There are no costs to business and stakeholders beyond optional participation in consultation.

Financial/Resource Implications for HSE

15. There are some minor resource implications in terms of 'facility time' for BUG coordinators. The BUG anticipates an upper-bound estimate of 10 staff days in total, funded from existing budgets.

16. Improving cyclists' facilities at some of HSE's offices may involve some capital expenditure although the BUG and 'The Green Team' feel that this is offset by the benefits to HSE. Clearer figures would become available by completing the project that has been proposed in Paragraph 8 to examine facilities at each HSE site. The H&WWW property events at field offices may provide an opportunity to include this work. It is estimated that any new or additional facilities at HSE offices would cost in the region of £4k. Each proposal will need to be looked at on its own merits and will be subject to the usual financial scrutiny and approval.

Action

17. Board members are asked to recognise the role of the BUG and endorse the development of a stronger policy to promote cycling and other 'greener' forms of transport (Para. 8).