

Health and Safety Executive Board		HSE/ 12 / 69	
Meeting Date:	26 September 2012	FOI Status:	Open
Type of Paper:	Above the line	Exemptions:	None
TRIM Reference:	2012/361126		
<p>People Survey 2011 Paper by Gaynor Coldrick, HR Director</p>			

Purpose of the paper

1. The Board is invited to note HSE's response to the 2011 Civil Service wide Employee Engagement Survey (the People Survey).

Background

2. HSE has been taking part in the (now mandatory) Civil Service-wide survey of employee engagement since October 2009. The Survey covers a range of issues on attitudes towards different aspects of work, measures of engagement and retention.
3. The 2011 survey took place against a backdrop of internal and external change with preparations for the introduction of Fee for Intervention, Directorate change programmes, together with public sector-wide pay freezes and changes to pensions. Sixty three per cent of staff responded to the survey – a 13 per cent increase on the 56 per cent participation rate the previous year. The results showed that whilst HSE's Engagement Index had decreased from 58 per cent to 55 per cent, it remained in line with the Civil Service average.

Key themes

4. Results show that against a background of great change and uncertainty, staff continue to be engaged with their work and with their immediate teams and line managers.
5. The theme 'Leadership and managing change' was the strongest driver (the biggest impact) of engagement for HSE. However, this was also the lowest scoring theme, with a score of 33% positive responses and there has therefore been a renewed focus on responding to this feedback as is evident later in the paper.
6. The theme 'My work' was the second most important driver of engagement. Whilst this score had dropped by 2%, it remained high at 75%.
7. The theme 'my line manager' was the third most important driver of engagement. Although the overall score remains unchanged from 2010 at 67%.
8. Board members will be aware that there are an additional six drivers of engagement outlined in the survey, however their statistical association with engagement is not as strong as those outlined above for HSE.

Argument

Action Planning Process

9. HSE is naturally divided up into smaller functional units with which the staff predominantly identify. The business activity falling out of the People Survey results therefore reflect that devolved arrangement.
10. During 2012, the Senior Management Team (SMT) and Senior Civil Service (SCS) colleagues discussed the responses from the People Survey (2011). This included a review of HSE and Directorate results and discussion about proposals to address key issues. Subsequently, each Directorate developed an action plan outlining activities to address specific issues highlighted in their individual results. The results were also shared with the HSE Trade Unions at the National Whitley meeting.
11. This paper outlines a number of themes, which emerged from the survey responses and SMT/SCS discussions. It also provides an overview of some examples of the work that is underway corporately and within Directorates.

Examples of Action Planning across HSE

Reward and recognition

12. Pay and benefits is traditionally a low scoring area across the Civil Service, however, HSE's results tend to be more positive. Against a backdrop of public sector pay restraint and pension changes there is no doubt this will continue to be a difficult area. HSE is currently developing a three-year reward strategy, which will aim to keep overall pay and reward packages competitive, and maximise available funding. We will however continue to be constrained by Government pay policy.
13. As there is less opportunity to financially reward performance, many Directorates have placed increased emphasis on praise and recognition. For example, within Field Operations Directorate (FOD), corporate communication channels such as 'FOD Briefing' and 'FODcasts' are being used to highlight significant achievements by staff, while colleagues in HSL are using the intranet to celebrate individual and team successes. Managers from Operational Strategy Division (OPSTD) are putting a renewed focus on writing to staff to show their appreciation of good performance on specific pieces of work.

Developing our workforce

14. Given the reductions in staff numbers together with low attrition, there are some concerns by staff about the perceived lack of career progression in HSE. To support staff in continuing to develop their careers some new opportunities have been developed such as improved career review groups and more targeted discussions at mid year and end of year performance/appraisal meetings.
15. The People Survey also showed that 49 per cent of our staff felt that the Learning and Development (L&D) on offer did not contribute to improving job performance. The introduction of a centralised training portfolio - Civil Service Learning - has established a core curriculum of L&D opportunities for all Civil Servants. It places greater responsibility on managers and staff to identify learning needs. The shift

is away from classroom-based learning towards a blended learning approach, which will include coaching, mentoring and e-learning, all of which require more active involvement of both staff and their managers. Part of our aim is for training to be better focused and more cost effectively delivered than it has been in the past.

16. In Human Resources Directorate (HRD), where the structure and roles will change with the introduction of Shared Services, individual transition and development plans have been developed for staff in preparation for the new structure, which comes into effect on 1 April 2013.
17. Within FOD and HID, career review groups have been used to open up more development opportunities, while managers in Business Services Directorate (BSD) are developing opportunities for 'task and finish' project work to help broaden people's knowledge and skills and to meet HSE's business needs.
18. Cross-Cutting Interventions Directorate (CCID) identified skills and development needs through a local career review group and a self-assessment skills review. This has helped to give staff a better understanding of the requirements to develop their skills and careers in policy, as well as providing the Directorate with a global view of skills and gaps. As a result, staff have a better idea of who to approach with specific queries, and L&D initiatives can be better targeted. In addition, Directorates including Communications, Chemicals Regulation, Corporate Science, Engineering and Analysis and Legal Adviser's Office have been encouraging staff to enhance their skills through up-skilling, job shadowing or secondments.

Performance management

19. The survey results showed that within HSE, staff tend to value their line manager significantly more than the Civil Service average. However, there is less satisfaction with the management of poor performance with 63 per cent of staff feeling that poor performance is not managed well.
20. There is some evidence that management of poor performance is improving with increased numbers of line managers seeking advice and support from the HRD casework team, and sickness absence levels in HSE consistently below Cabinet Office targets. From April 2013, a new, performance management system will come into effect, which will focus line managers' assessment on behaviours and attitudes as well as delivery of objectives. The new system will place greater emphasis on defining performance expectations and consistency, and will encourage more regular discussion between the line manager and their staff in addition to the mid-year and end of year checkpoints. Human Resources Directorate are sampling and monitoring Performance Agreements to ensure compliance and consistency.
21. Across all Directorates, there has been continued emphasis on performance feedback throughout the year, in addition to the mid-year checkpoint reviews.
22. Within FOD, the peer review process – where colleagues get together to discuss casework, identify common issues and share good practice - has proved beneficial in improving consistency and quality standards. At the Health and Safety Laboratory, line manager workshops, performance management training

for new line managers and the development of a manager training plan have all taken place.

Leadership and managing change

23. The results indicated this remains an area where staff felt improvements could be made. Whilst there is a planned programme of externally driven and internally driven change across HSE, some changes, such as pay freezes and FFI, are not necessarily welcomed by staff which can impact how they feel about the overall management of change. One area of significance is the question set around confidence in senior management decisions, which has seen a reduction by six per cent. With this in mind, an increased emphasis has been placed on involving staff in shaping outcomes along with timely briefings to SCS colleagues to update them on recent developments or issues with a request for them to cascade to staff. However, it is clear from the free-text that adverse comments on 'management of change' may reflect objections to the change itself, whether it be FFI or accommodation moves, which have been necessary for budgetary reasons.
24. In addition, during September, October and November SMT members will be visiting all HSE offices as part of their regular programme of SMT visits. This round will focus on explaining the current position for a number of areas such as an update on the Government's perspective, preparations for the implementation of Fee for Intervention, Shared Services and the impact of the Civil Service Reform plan. It also gives opportunity for the senior management to explain why certain decisions have been taken and put them in the context of wider considerations.
25. During 2010/11, HSE established a number of change projects including Fee for Intervention, FOD Change Programme, Estates Rationalisation and Shared Services. A renewed focus has been placed on using the positive outcomes and lessons learned from other projects to help embed new ways of working for staff. Corporately, a programme of 'bitesize' training sessions were offered to staff across HSE to support them in dealing with change and to managers in helping them to lead and manage change.
26. In addition, much work has been done by individual Directorates in supporting staff through change. Within FOD, a dedicated Change Manager was appointed to lead the FOD Change Programme support by a network of Band 2 Change Champions to help support staff adapt to new ways of working.
27. The Office of Nuclear Regulation (ONR) held a leadership event to discuss the issues around the leadership and management of change within ONR with 76 per cent of attendees rating the event 'useful' or 'very useful'.
28. Hazardous Installations Directorate (HID) undertook a series of briefings to discuss future plans and challenges and seek staff views on the delivery of HID's intervention programme. While Business Services Directorate colleagues shared their experiences of managing change in their day-to-day activities through face-to-face workshops. These are being used to share good practice and lessons learned across the Directorate and feed into future change exercises.
29. CCID introduced 'band forums' for staff in job bands 3-6 to encourage staff to become involved decision-making across the Directorate. Human Resources

staff in Bands 5-6 are being encouraged to attend management meetings in order to better understand and feed into decision making during this significant change process.

30. For implementation of the Löfstedt recommendations, Communications Directorate moved away from siloed disciplines to a more cross-functional way of working, which is helping to build knowledge and skills across the Directorate.
31. Staff in the Planning, Finance and Procurement Directorate, who will be directly impacted by the move to Shared Services, completed a Shared Services preference exercise, which helped them to select those posts they would like to be considered for in the new delivery model. Coaching/advice sessions were held for those staff to help them to make informed decisions.

Staff engagement and morale

32. It is recognised that the themes outlined above will naturally influence the engagement and motivation of staff. During the course of the year, a number of Think Tank engagement events and an annual conference with the Band 1 community were held. A programme of 'Learn a Bit About ..' sessions have been introduced to keep staff up to date on key projects or initiatives such as 'Working in the European Union, Government Reforms, the FOD Change Programme and London 2012.
33. All Senior Civil Servants have staff engagement as a measure of performance within their personal performance contracts and are required to demonstrate how they have increased engagement across their teams.
34. Within Directorates, CCID has used the People Survey results, along with a change mapping exercise to establish a 'Gold Standard CCID'. Staff are encouraged to volunteer to support improvements in four key areas: work, structure, people and communications. Work on the communications element of this has led to a new quarterly newsletter, all-CCID auditorium sessions and the establishment of 'band forums' which allow colleagues of the same job band to network and share information. BSD has held several informal break-out sessions with staff to improve cross-BSDB communication and awareness. CD has increased the number of informal staff briefings, so that staff are informed of news and changes face to face and good performance can be highlighted.

People Survey 2012

35. The 2012 People Survey will run from 1 – 31 October. A communications plan has been developed to encourage more staff to take part. In the run up to the survey, a series of communications are scheduled. These will highlight the survey commencement date and examples of the actions that have taken place. Briefings will also be provided to Line Managers to ensure they are equipped to answer any questions and encourage their staff to take the survey.
36. On the 1 October, the survey will launch with an all staff message from the CE along with an overview of progress made since the previous survey. Reminders will be included on the intranet and through e-express - HSE's weekly all staff email. In addition, staff will receive a pop-up on their computer, which invites them to take the survey, ask for a reminder or gives them the option to stop the

pop-up. Whilst the survey is live, regular response rate updates (weekly moving to daily) will be provided to SMT and Line Managers.

37. HSE's headline results will be available on 15 November and Directorate results from 28 November. The results will be discussed by SMT at its December meeting and by the SCS at their quarterly meetings. In terms of staff communication, an all staff email from the CE outlining the results and next steps will be issued following cascade of the survey results within Directorates.

Action

38. The Board is asked to note the actions taken in response to the 2011 People Survey and preparations for the 2012 survey.

Paper clearance

39. The paper has been cleared by Gaynor Coldrick.