Estates Excellence National roll out 2012-14 – update and interim findings

Purpose of the paper
1. This paper provides an update on the national roll out of Estates Excellence (EE). The Board is asked to note progress.

Background
2. EE was developed in response to the HSE Strategy. Through EE, HSE has encouraged others to be "part of the solution", by supporting and facilitating engagement and ensuring a consistent and proportionate approach in line with current Government priorities. EE channels resources and expertise from business and regulatory partners to support SMEs grow their knowledge and control health, safety and fire risks. In this context, EE has some significant differences to Local Enterprise Partnership pathfinder projects as developed in some parts of the country.

3. EE was trialled across the South East between 2009 and 2011 (headline pilot results are set out in Annex 1). HSE expanded the project in late 2011 to see if it could be replicated in other parts of Great Britain. The project forms part of HSE’s current Field Operations Directorate business plan. Nine roll outs were proposed for 2012/13 and, subject to the outcomes from this paper, a further nine are proposed for 2013/4, with the aim of reaching 3-4500 SMEs by 2014.

4. EE targets areas with poor accident and ill health statistics or other local relevant factors such as early morbidity or high fire risks. The aim is to 'help SMEs help themselves' to develop their understanding about sensible health and safety and other risk areas. It offers SMEs, irrespective of sector or enforcing authority, a flexible package of benchmarking, training and occupational health (OH) support. The support is free of charge and local to their ‘estate’. Participation is voluntary. The concentrated package is delivered over a six-week period, after which businesses are invited to join an EE ‘community’ and apply for recognition through EE participation certificates.

5. Benchmarking visits are carried out by NEBOSH-qualified EE partners from local large companies, national stakeholders, health professionals or regulators. These visits are not inspections. They use an independently assessed tool to score how well a company understands a particular topic e.g. risk assessment, noise or fire safety, and whether they understand how to sensibly implement that knowledge. The scores are shared with the business and the results used to discuss what further support the business may benefit from, such as the free training or OH support.

6. Participation in EE does not exempt SMEs from future inspection if they are in a higher risk sector, or from a reactive investigation. EE does though offer them the chance to check they have sensible precautions that will stand them in future good stead and reduce key risks.
7. Governance is provided by the EE National Project Board (EENPB) comprising a range of national stakeholder representatives who support, oversee and champion EE and promulgate lessons. FOD currently chairs the EENPB and provides a national coordination role to ensure consistency.

**Update and interim findings**

8. The project will deliver the nine roll outs in 2012/13, and has offers of commitment for further roll outs in 2013/4 from Public Health Wales, Fire and Rescue Services (FRS), Local Authorities, national landlords and others.

9. The economic and political climate has provided a number of challenges; in some estates as many as 10% of SMEs occupying the premises have closed over the four month run up to an intervention; SMEs have not had time to participate; some businesses have been suspicious. But other businesses have recognised that EE supports the growth agenda; there is also a marked uptake in the free training provision.

10. We will not have all the results from 2012/3 until April. However, findings so far suggest:

   - EE can be replicated outside the South East.
   - Uptake rates are influenced by the economic and political climate and the experience of the teams (uptake rates are currently around 50% compared to 64% in the pilot).
   - The percentage of SMEs taking up free training following benchmarking has increased (to up to 82%).
   - Partner stakeholder support is strong and growing (illustrated by a reduction in HSE funding).
   - Individual ‘estate’ roll outs can be led by different stakeholders (but the national coordination role and EENPB are important to maintain consistency).
   - SMEs will voluntarily sign up to risk reductions and feed back on progress. (EE teams have been tasked with collecting case studies and a formal evaluation will be completed. One early example from Fire and Rescue Services (FRS) demonstrates the immediate impact on fire safety).
   - A flexible approach taking into account local SME needs and conditions is important to maximise outcomes.
   - Feedback from participating SMEs remains very positive.

11. HSE/FOD committed to providing 25% of the staff resource to the roll out of EE to 2014 to help pump prime the system with a view to stepping back over time as the confidence of other stakeholders to take on more developed. In practice FOD has provided an average of 20% (range 5 to 30%) including administrative support, 18% of the benchmarking visits (via Band 5 visiting officers) and 9% of the training (also Band 5). This equates to approximately 1 Band 5, 2 Band 6, 0.33 OHI, 0.75 Band 2/3 (includes national coordination role) and 0.10 Band 1/0 FTEs. For 2013/4 HSE resource is expected to reduce below 15% based on existing offers of support. Partner stakeholders have become the key ‘part of the solution’ providing significant gearing in physical, intellectual and financial terms (see below) to HSE’s contribution.

12. A list of current EE’s local and national stakeholders is set out in Annex 2.
13. HSE/FOD provides a key coordinating/facilitating role in bringing together stakeholders at divisional and local levels. In areas where new stakeholder groups have formed HSE has also led in coordinating and administering the roll out. Stakeholder representatives on the EENPB are proactively exploring ways to provide dedicated support and offers to lead individual future roll outs have been received.

**Financial**

14. In addition to staff resource HSE put aside £82,100 to support the initiative to 2014. This represented 47% of the projected total cash spend (to include printing, venues, OH provision, training etc). This funding forecast is being revised downwards due to increased contributions from partner stakeholders. For example, HSE had expected to fully fund OH provision but stakeholders e.g. Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives, Serco, Adur & Worthing NHS and Anglian Water have stepped in to provide or facilitate these services for some locations. Others have offered future support. Current spend for 2012/3 is expected to be around £20,000. This revised HSE contribution is likely to be maintained for 2013/4.

**Argument**

15. EE is a useful additional tool for regulators and enhances the range of regulatory support provided by HSE. It is comprehensive and more tailored than a Safety and Health Awareness Day, but is distinct from an inspection.

16. EE captures the imagination of stakeholders bringing to life ‘being part of the solution’ in a way that supports SMEs and delivers positive outcomes.

17. EE has impact despite the difficult economic and political climate although the challenges increase and SME engagement may reduce. In times of growth it has the potential to develop more quickly and reach further.

18. The principle of pump priming by HSE and then handing over the reins to a third party(ies) is likely to be achievable. Withdrawal of HSE from the Board or the current role of national coordinator would present a reputational, consistency and delivery risk. A gearing of 1 to 10 is considered realistic for future planning considerations.

19. The NPB has set clear terms of engagement for all participating stakeholders based on the principals of sensible, proportionate health and safety and real risks. All stakeholders, including regulators, agree to operate within these terms. Set toolkits, training packages and briefings are provided to ensure consistency of delivery and to support partners in the new ways of working. All visiting staff attend a common monitored interactive briefing event and benchmarking visits follow an independently verified process using a set tool.

20. Evaluation of the current project is scheduled for June 2013.

**Action**

19. Continued roll out of EE by HSE will enable HSE to demonstrate its support to the Government’s growth agenda.

**Paper clearance**

David Ashton
Headline results from the 2009-11 South East Pilot

The 2009-11 pilot covered six ‘estates’.

The pilot was evaluated by Salford University and HSE’s statistical unit

The following headline figures illustrate the successful “reach” of EE across the six pilot estates, some of the benefits to the participant companies, and to employees who displayed signs of ill-health.

- 1195 contacts were to SMEs (defined for the purpose of this project as employing under 80 employees).
- 767 of the 1195 SMEs requested benchmarking visits (64%).
- 365 of the 767 SMEs attended workshops or drop in sessions (48%).
- 1775 employees and managers received free training over a range of topics from risk assessment to fire safety.
- 5 leadership events were run for larger firms (supported by IoD) and 5 small firms events were supported by FSB.
- 299 employees undertook 661 occupational health tests.
- 13% of employees tested required referral to an OH physician.
- 84% of companies who undertook benchmarking or received training took risk reduction actions as a direct result of the initiative.
- Businesses reported improved knowledge bases. Increases per individual topic ranged from 25% to 76% with the biggest gains seen for risk assessment and fire safety.
- 6 online communities were set up (one per geographic area).
Annex 2 – EE stakeholder partners  
(not exhaustive)

Anglian Water  
Arco  
British Heart Foundation  
British Sugar  
CBRE  
Clancy Dowcra  
EEF  
Federation of Small Businesses*  
Fire & Rescue Services*  
FMC Technologies  
HARSCO Infrastructure  
HaS VSS  
Hilton Hotels & Resorts  
Institute of Directors*  
Kent County Council  
Land Securities Group  
Lea & Ouse Valleys Safety Association  
Local Authorities*  
Meggitt  
Monarch Aircraft Engineering  
NHS  
Pasta Reale  
Police  
Public Health Wales  
QBE Insurance  
Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives*  
Scottish Water  
Scottish Power  
S.C.O.S  
Serco*  
SERGO*  
Southern Water *  
Thales UK  
Trade Unions Congress*  
UK Power Networks  
Veolia  
Virgin Atlantic  
Willis  
Wrigleys  
Zurich Insurance*  

*also indicates National EE Project Board representative