

**Health and Safety Executive Senior Management Team Paper SMT/08/42**

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## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

## Senior Management Team

**Progress with Culture Workstream within the H&WWW Programme**

## A Paper by Heather Bolton

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Cleared by Geoffrey Podger on 31 July 2008

**Issue**

1. To consider and inform the future direction of the “culture” workstream within the How and Where We Work Programme.

**Timing**

2. For review at the meeting.

**Recommendation**

3. SMT members are invited to:
  - i confirm that further feedback gathering is unnecessary (para 10);
  - ii agree that work needs to continue (para 12);
  - iii agree that resources should be allocated to a small team to take the culture workstream forward and pull together a working group to agree actions (para 13);
  - iv agree that it would be worth re-considering the transition plans from Rose Court into Redgrave Court to identify further opportunities to re-organise work across traditional boundaries (para 15);
  - v agree to the setting up of “lunch and learn” or “coffee and cake” sessions with senior staff on issues of the day (para 16);
  - vi agree to the organisation of an HSE wide Band 1 conference in Spring 2009 (para 17);
  - vii agree to the organisation of a Redgrave Court Open Day and, agree when should it take place (para 18);
  - viii consider whether it is worth putting some effort into encouraging new volunteers to re-establish the Merseyside Sports and Social Club and with what scope and facilities (paras 19 - 21).
  - ix agree a short article to be placed in e express on 11 August updating staff on progress with the workstream (para 24).

**Background**

4. The workstream was formally commissioned following the SCS conference at the end of September 2007 when members considered the culture that would be desirable within our single integrated HQ, the culture we felt currently prevailed in both Rose Court and Redgrave Court and how the gap (which was significant) might be bridged.

5. The overall aim of the workstream is to identify some cultural enablers that will help to foster a more positive working climate and, thereby, lead towards other more tangible benefits. This links directly with the benefits outlined in the H&WWW Programme business case i.e.
  - developing “closer working” relationships between staff and with the new governing body;
  - supporting more joined up policy and delivery;
  - creating a strong common identity for HSE's HQ staff; and
  - creating wider development opportunities
 and with the two non financial targets identified in the paper to the HSC in November 2007, HSC/07/74 (closed)
  - find ways of making optimal use of our collective experience and knowledge both in the interests of HSE as a whole and in support of individual colleagues;
  - address the currently and often too rigid divide between policy and operational functions.
6. The main purpose of the workstream so far has been to obtain feedback from staff on our current culture and identify what needs to be done to help develop our single HQ culture. A pilot workshop was held on 29 February followed by 8 more workshops run during May and June. 3 more workshops have been planned in September and October for the Magnet, Equal and Sage diversity networks and a workshop will also be organised for PSD towards the end of this year. Presentations have also been made at most Directorate senior management meetings. Annex 1 gives a brief summary of the evaluation of/attendance at the workshops.

### **Argument**

7. The feedback from each workshop has been consistent with the feedback from the SCS conference last September in terms of the attributes people aspire to in a single HQ and the current attributes in our HQs – both positive and negative. There are no notable/major inconsistencies from band, gender, discipline or Directorate. Feedback from the SCS conference was copied to SCS members in October '07. Full details of the comparative information from the workshops will be placed on the H&WWW intranet site.
8. Delegates were asked for ideas to address the culture gaps. Annex 2 summarises the list of ideas that attendees felt “others” should take forward. Annex 3 summarises the list of ideas delegates have agreed they will take forward themselves. Many more ideas have been raised at senior management meetings, by our communications experts and in discussion with other enthusiastic individuals who are keen to see the organisation improve. The complete list will be placed on the H&WWW intranet site.
9. One of the critical points is that cultural change obviously cannot be achieved by this activity alone – at best this has simply been an opportunity to take a “temperature check” of staff views and the worst that could happen is that this feedback is ignored.
10. This has required a significant effort over the last few months at SCS level in order to stimulate interest, gather feedback and generate ideas. However,

despite this, less than 10% of staff in Redgrave Court attended any of the workshops (for various reasons) and only 123 people overall. Some of our human factors and occupational psychologist experts have indicated that this might not be a sufficiently representative sample. However, the feedback so far already gives a hard hitting view on a number of key issues. This is reinforced by feedback from the last two staff surveys in 2005 and 2006 where some of the same key issues emerged showing staff felt there had been very little improvement (from a fairly low base) on communications, management of change, management, leadership and unacceptable behaviour. The surveys also indicated a significant degree of scepticism that anything would change as a result of the survey feedback and the same scepticism has been repeated at these workshops. The next staff survey is scheduled for around November this year which provides another opportunity to gather views. **It is, therefore, recommended that it is unnecessary to do further analysis and we should feel confident that the main issues have already emerged. Does the SMT agree?**

11. Expectations have clearly been raised in commissioning the workstream, particularly in Redgrave Court. This has been reinforced by support through the regular H&WWW updates to staff, including those from the Chief Executive. However, at the workshops many staff expressed deep scepticism that the organisation would act on the feedback citing many examples of initiatives that have been given high priority by the (then) Board but which have not resulted in much real change. This has led to a high level of cynicism that anything will actually be done.
12. If we don't deliver on the feedback now this will utterly reinforce the belief that senior management generally don't deliver on what we say we'll do. This would result in further disengagement of staff. We already have morale issues and criticism of our management and leadership capabilities. Ignoring this would make any initiatives in future, including the conclusion of the H&WWW Programme, much harder to deliver. **The question is not only should we take this forward but also what would be the impact if we chose to ignore it. We need to break the cycle of perceived non-delivery. Does the SMT agree?**
13. SMT need to put weight behind developing a collective responsibility for action. Some work can be led by the culture workstream but some needs action and commitment across the SCS. We need to make the sort of investment that should lead to much more compelling results. This means allocating resource to help put together plans that can be integrated and become embedded in our current structures and normal procedures e.g. tackling leadership and management issues needs engagement with HR Division; tackling estates related issues needs engagement with BSD; tackling the many communications issues needs engagement with CD/CDS and so on. The culture workstream can help drive the process by acting as catalysts to stimulate actions and help achieve some of the changes more quickly. **Resource will need to be allocated to continue the culture workstream and pull together a small working group to plan next steps including representatives from HR Division, BSD, CD and some organisational culture expertise. It should be part of the working group responsibilities to devise a benefits realisation plan for which SMT is held accountable. Does SMT agree?**

## Issues Emerging

14. The main issues emerging so far are listed at Annex 4. In summary they are:
- i there is very little confidence that senior management will act on any of the feedback from these workshops;
  - ii there are a significant number of communications issues to address;
  - iii the operations and policy divide is still a major barrier to effective working;
  - iv HSE is poor at following up the many initiatives undertaken;
  - v HSE is still very much a Directorate based culture, rather than a corporate one;
  - vi there are a number of environmental issues concerning how we use Redgrave Court;
  - vii there are a number of leadership issues to address;
  - viii there is a lot of pride in the work/achievements of HSE but staff feel we do not sufficiently showcase our work;
  - ix there is little awareness of the impact of the H&WWW Programme at and below probably Band 2 level in Redgrave Court;
  - x Some layers of senior management feel outside some of the communication loops;
  - xi it may be worth considering a re-launch of the HSE values.

## Next Steps

15. Some steps are already being taken which will help teams work more closely together in our new single HQ. SMT at their last meeting agreed to the setting up of the new team to be sited in FOD HQ to deal with enforcement work (Team Enforcement). The team will bring together the work previously done within OPSD, FOD HQ and XCD. This is a great example of thinking broadly about the opportunities for closer working that a single HQ offers and there will be more examples where work could be done differently by thinking strategically/organisationally rather than on just a Directorate basis. **Perhaps more needs to be done to consider further opportunities to re-organise work by thinking again about the transition plans from Rose Court into Redgrave Court and stimulate more team working across traditional boundaries. Does the SMT agree?**
16. The programme of SMT visits to HSE offices has been very successful. Many staff in the workshops referred to them extremely positively. There is an opportunity to build on that success and create some of the same positive reaction in Redgrave Court where nearly half the staff within HSE will be based. For example, many staff have suggested they would appreciate short sessions from senior staff talking about issues of the day. This could be done by SMT and SCS members via “lunch and learn” or “coffee and cake” sessions in either the auditorium or one of the larger conference rooms. These could be regular one hour sessions scheduled around an important theme. Advertising, briefing and presentation material could be prepared beforehand with assistance from CD staff (as with the SMT visits now). **These could be organised from perhaps October/November this year. Does the SMT agree?**
17. The regular SCS conferences have helped to generate a more corporate and collective understanding and will to work together amongst the SCS layer of management. However, there have been no collective meetings of senior staff at

an HSE level below the SCS in recent years (if ever?). There is an opportunity to invest more in our senior staff and help to generate commitment to work together towards real improvements. This was one of the ideas emerging from the workshops. **It is recommended that a Band 1 conference is organised in spring 2009. The timing would lend itself to a focus on taking HSE's new strategy forward. Does the SMT agree?**

18. Another idea emerging from the workshops is to hold an open day in Redgrave Court to signify the development of our new single integrated HQ. This would help to bring staff together, showcase some of the campaigns (e.g. asbestos, shattered lives, construction coming up in the next few months) and build a sense of community. Staff could also showcase their work and some of the key HSE initiatives to their families. We could learn from the successful event held in HSL on the opening of the new Buxton site. **Does SMT agree to the organisation of a Redgrave Court Open Day and, if so, when should it take place?**
19. Some of the comments received relate to the desire for more social interaction. However, at its 1 July 2008 Annual General Meeting the Merseyside Sports and Social Club Committee was disbanded. Members had been informed that several of the Committee intended to stand down and nominations were invited, although none were forthcoming and no-one other than the Committee attended the AGM. Given the number of resignations the Management Committee would have been neither quorate nor viable.
20. **Decisions now need to be taken about the funds remaining but SMT members may want to consider whether it is worth putting some effort into encouraging new volunteers to re-establish it, and with what scope and facilities.** The alternative is to distribute the sum the Club has accumulated to local charities and lose it for the foreseeable future. This seems a particularly poor outcome and comes at a time when the culture workshops reveal that staff feel they and the business would benefit from the opportunity for more social interaction.
21. In advance of the discussion it would be useful if SMT members might themselves consider volunteering to play an active leadership role on the Committee and sound out their SCS/Band 1 colleagues if they might similarly be prepared. Three existing Committee members (all from RPD) would be prepared to continue.
22. At the SCS conference last September a number of ideas for action were raised. Annex 5 provides a summary of the ideas that have been taken forward and where we are to date.

### **Consultation**

23. A representative from HSE Trade Unions was invited to the pilot workshop in February. Reports on progress with the workstream have been given to the H&WWW TU sub committee and the Operations Group TU forum. PFPD, HRD and the H&WWW Programme Director, Manager and Communications Manager have been consulted on the production of this paper.

### **Presentation**

24. Feedback from all the workshops will be made available to all staff on the H&WWW intranet site which is just in the process of being updated. This SMT paper should also be open to staff. **It is recommended that an article is placed**

**in e express for Monday 11 August giving HSE staff brief details of the discussion and an update on how things will be taken forward.**

**Costs and Benefits**

25. Costs and benefits have not been widely explored at this stage. Part of the continuing work should include the development of a benefits realisation plan (see also para 13).

**Financial/Resource Implications for HSE**

26. The amount spent to date on H&WWW activities at SCS level is as follows (figures from OPSD work recording):

From 1 October 07 to mid July 08 - 46 days of SCS (approx 5 days per month) time spent on H&WWW. This equates to £32,890 (46 days x £715 (FEC) at pay band 1).

The resource dedicated so far also includes:

- a small proportion of Band 6 time;
- associated travel costs for SCS member plus the time/costs of staff attending the workshops;
- some modest opportunity cost as a result of the time spent.

27. If further resource is dedicated to taking the work forward as recommended costs would be:

Payroll costs	Around £120K to continue to support this with an SCS member taking the lead and to fund some additional administrative /communications support (e.g. Band 3 and Band 5 resource)
Other costs	Around £100K to include funding a Redgrave Court open day, a Band 1 conference, some additional internal communications effort and provision of soft seating areas.

There would also be some additional opportunity costs.

**Environmental implications**

28. N/A

**Action**

29. SMT members are invited to consider the feedback and agree how the work should be taken forward.

## H&WWW WORKSHOP EVALUATION SUMMARY

### Number/Band of Attendees:

	FOD	HID	ND	LAU	OPSD	RPD	CSAG	LAO	PG	SD	CD	CSD	HSL	PSD	TOTAL
<b>Male</b>	2	8	5	1	1	16	6	0	4	1	3	9	0	0	56
<b>Female</b>	3	4	2	0	6	11	3	1	5	0	3	4	0	0	42*
<b>Women's Network</b>	6	3	0	0	2	3	1	0	2	0	2	4	1	0	25
<b>Total</b>	11	15	7	1	9	30	10	1	11	1	8	17	1	0	123

\* includes 1 x Band 4 from TU office

### Band of Attendees

	FOD	HID	ND	LAU	OPSD	RPD	CSAG	LAO	PG	SD	CD	CSD	HSL	PSD	TOTAL
<b>SCS</b>	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5
<b>1</b>	0	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	11
<b>2</b>	2	2	3	0	1	6	2	0	5	0	1	8	0	0	30
<b>3</b>	8	6	1	0	0	7	5	0	2	0	3	3	0	0	35
<b>4</b>	0	1	1	0	2	10	0	0	3	0	2	4	0	0	23
<b>5</b>	0	1	0	1	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	9
<b>6</b>	1	2	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	11	15	7	1	9	30	10	1	11	1	8	17	1	0	122*

\* Plus 1 x Band 4 from TU office

Do you think the workshop was useful?	Yes	No
Pilot Workshop (29/2/08)	23	
7 x Culture Workshops (May and June 08)	67*	1*
Women's Network Workshop (11/6/08)	22	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>2</b>

\*1 person answered yes and no

### Selection of Comments:

- Any opportunity to talk about how to improve 'HSE is an opportunity to take.
- Really good, enjoyable too. Good bunch of people.
- Probably needed longer to explore everyone's viewpoints, but generally very useful.
- I'd like to see more input from 'culture change' experts in HSE.
- Usefulness dependent on whether it contributes significantly to developing a single HQ culture. Time will tell on that, since culture change takes a long time to achieve.
- It helped explore the breadth of issues and appreciate wide ranging opinions. It was recognised that a plan of action would be some time coming, but there were things we could do now.
- Excellent summary of H&WWW Programme – I know far more now.

- Indicative of an organisation wanting to move in the right direction, aiming to get the best out of people and the environment in which we work.
- The event was welcoming and inclusive and the aims made very clear. I came away thinking that suggestions would, if feasible, be taken forward.
- Good that staff at all levels have an input into the future of Redgrave. Nice chance to meet other colleagues.
- Very well set out and presented.
- Very informal and that encouraged interaction. Interesting to hear the views of others from other D/Ds.
- Useful to me to focus on my actions.
- This was an extremely important workshop and I think many of the issues raised apply across the organisation.
- A welcome exercise. Gave me more confidence in senior managers wish to listen to the views of staff.
- Should be extended to give more people a chance to attend.
- Two way action and reaction most effective indeed. 'Doing' as well as 'talking' produced relevant and frank discussion.
- HSE is good at having workshops but very poor at follow through.
- I hope HSE doesn't miss this prime opportunity to address a number of long standing cultural issues. The door has opened – don't slam it in our faces – there is a lot of good will in this organisation and failure will damage it.

## H&WWW WORKSHOPS SUMMARY OF LIST OF IDEAS OTHERS SHOULD TAKE FORWARD

### Communications

- Lectures in the auditorium on business issues (SMT/SCS).
- Have more cross unit meetings to get better understanding of the work/reduce silo working.
- Promote the work of our frontline staff and understanding of our frontline work by facilitating field visits and exchanges. Have a more co-ordinated approach to interaction with field offices especially on new initiatives.
- Actively encourage more networking. More job shadowing to see what other teams do.
- Promote success across HSE and do more to showcase some of our achievements and promote greater understanding internally of what we do. Publicise pieces of work that are making a real difference to health and safety outcomes.
- Welcome packs /improved induction for new joiners. Introduce new joiners to people in Directorates they will be working with.
- Communicate the value of storing corporate information and how staff can become more effective by using what's available to them.
- Need photos/skills and experience on eHR/ need eHR kept up to date.
- Name badges on all desks in Redgrave Court to make it easier to locate colleagues.
- Make it mandatory for staff to include address/VPN/telephone number on emails.
- Use real names for organisational units not just acronyms – explain these better on the intranet/eHR.
- Communicate how HSE is now organised/who does what.
- Set up action learning sets across the organisation to learn from each other – start with Band 1s and 2s.
- Consider the current policy on publishing papers from the Board and SMT – to explore whether more can be made open.
- Support social events & social organisations to help staff get to know each other and improve morale.
- Need to improve the efficiency of our IT systems.
- Monthly charity event sponsored by Directorates e.g. eat cake for Shelter.
- More events/opportunities for staff at all levels to contribute to the future of the organisation.
- Introduce a transparent mechanism for feeding problems to senior management.
- 'It's good to talk' even in an open plan office.
- Use less formal means of communication better e.g. plasma screens, express magazine and use more effective means of communicating important corporate and strategic messages.

## **Leadership**

- SMT should continue their good work in visiting offices but take more time at them to talk informally to staff.
- Encourage visibility and approachability of senior managers with lower grade staff (sometimes without their managers attending to encourage openness).
- Senior managers who are currently based in Rose Court need to be seen round Redgrave Court regularly.
- Senior managers could meet staff in other Directorates to report on current issues in their part of the organisation and hear ideas and views.
- Coffee events with senior staff encouraging staff to come and discuss issues of the day.
- New Board should make it clear what sort of HSE they want to lead. Publicise and promote what is HSE's primary objective/what HSE is for - e.g. to protect workers health and safety.
- SMT to allocate clear responsibilities for strategy and planning.
- Hold managers accountable for delivery.
- Create opportunities that further HSE's mission for collaborative working.
- Senior managers to consider their leadership style and skills and the impact they have on others.

## **Corporate teamwork**

- Organise Redgrave Court open day before end of planning year to signify developing our single integrated HQ.
- Cross Directorate meetings to explore synergies.
- Demonstrate joined up working with colleagues in HSL and PSD.
- Policy and operational staff need to better understand each others work. E.g. Policy staff ought to undertake visits with inspectors.
- More presentations like the shattered lives campaign to cross sections of HSE staff to help others learn about the organisation.
- Develop and promote a shared set of values – re-launch existing values.

## **Estates**

- Provide some soft seating areas in the communal areas of the building (coffee shop etc) to encourage informal meetings.
- Use open space areas to display information about HSE, campaigns etc and actively promote and showcase some of our achievements.
- When re-configuring Redgrave Court keep those who are going to be affected properly informed.
- Sort out confusing room numbering, especially in the Drum.
- Fresh wall art around the building – e.g. from local artists.
- Integrate building/cleaning/contractor staff with culture we're trying to create.
- Implement and enforce a tidy desk policy.

**H&WWW WORKSHOPS  
SUMMARY OF IDEAS INDIVIDUALS WILL TAKE FORWARD**

- Deal with people face to face rather than e:mail.
- Use coffee area for team meetings.
- Tidy up personal space.
- Challenge some of the negative behaviours (what are we going to do about it/who are you going to raise it with).
- Talk about Redgrave Court culture in team meetings.
- Promote and develop the 'culture' amongst new recruits to Policy Group.
- When I socialise with friends who work in HSE, make the effort to find out how work is going in their area.
- Run charity events e.g. come and eat cake' and raise money for charity.
- Use unit meetings to 'celebrate success.'
- Improve my KIT methods with members of my team who are based in different geographical locations.
- Influence my own team meetings with some of the points/suggestions made today.
- Get to know new colleagues/starters.
- Widen my network of contacts in HSE in relation to my new post.
- Take non operational staff out on joint visits to introduce them to the work of FOD.
- Offer a shadowing opportunity to other staff.
- Smile more (but not inanely!)
- Challenge inappropriate email use/inappropriate behaviours.
- Become involved in diversity focus groups.
- Do a joint visit with someone from Policy.
- Take steps to update part time workers to keep them up to speed.
- Look for ways to help people's career development.
- Make more time to 'walk the talk'
- Be less critical in my written responses.
- Actively stop rumours and tittle tattle.

## MAIN EMERGING ISSUES

1. There is very little confidence that senior management will act on any of the feedback from these workshops. Time and again staff expressed their cynicism that anything would be done differently and cited many other initiatives where recommendations have not been followed through;
2. There are a significant number of communications issues to address (there is not enough face to face communication, silo working is prevalent, Who's Who directory incomplete, organisational structure not well understood, too many closed papers to the Board/SMT etc);
3. The operations and policy divide is still a major barrier to effective working. It is unlikely to disappear simply by staff being co-located in Redgrave Court;
4. HSE is poor at following up the many initiatives undertaken so some people quickly learn not to bother taking certain things forward (if they ignore them for long enough they stop being asked about them);
5. HSE is still very much a Directorate based culture, rather than a corporate one. Loyalties tend to lie in sections, units, divisions and Directorates. Loyalty to HSE and commitment to the corporate strategy often comes further down the list;
6. There are a number of environmental issues concerning how we use Redgrave Court (not easy to find where staff sit, conference rooms have dual numbering system, the "street" not well used to showcase our work, communal area round the coffee shop has hard seating only and does not encourage more informal meetings);
7. There are a number of leadership issues (senior management are not sufficiently visible, SCS need to show a corporate commitment to change and improve, we need to show more open communication/ listening behaviours, we need to clarify HSE's overall purpose and ensure it is well understood at all layers);
8. There is a lot of pride in the work/achievements of HSE but staff feel we do not sufficiently showcase our work to our own staff and should take the opportunity to do more;
9. there is little awareness of the impact of the H&WWW Programme at and below probably Band 2 level in Redgrave Court;
10. Some layers of senior management feel outside some of the communication loops e.g. there are no collective meetings of Band 1 managers beyond Directorate boundaries and many feel this creates a barrier to more effective working across traditional boundaries;
11. HSE values were mentioned many times at most workshops with a general feeling that these work and are understood but need to be re-launched with firm commitment for the necessary behaviours attached to them.

**SCS CONFERENCE 27 SEPTEMBER 2007  
SOME OF THE IDEAS FROM DISCUSSION RE CULTURE**

<b>IDEA</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Develop a core script for the SCS re key messages	A core script was developed and sent to SCS members in November 07. The script was used at all the workshops.
Hold workshops to get staff views	9 workshops held, 3 more planned
Organise a career development group for administrative staff/policy specialists	A Band 2 Career Development Review Group for the North West, covering all disciplines, is being developed by HR Division. This should be rolled out later this year.
Board members should not be co-located in Redgrave Court but spread throughout the various buildings	The re-configuration plan for Redgrave Court is now being implemented. 6 SMT members will be located on the same floor/same building (5.3), 6 will be located in other buildings around Redgrave Court and 2 are located in other offices (HSL and PSD).
Provide soft seating areas in Redgrave Court to encourage interaction/less formal discussions	This idea was also repeated at many of the staff workshops. In response to these requests 4 sofas, 8 chairs and 4 low coffee tables are now on order and will be delivered to Redgrave Court mid August. They will be placed in the coffee/deli area.