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## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

## Senior Management Team

**ESTATES EXCELLENCE – A Partnership Approach to SMEs in the South East**

A Paper by Heather Bryant, Mike Wilcock and Ceri Morris

Advisor: n/a

Cleared by David Ashton on 28 September

**Issue**

1. FOD ESED will be delivering a range of targeted risk based support to SMEs across the Region in 2009 and 2010. Working with a wide range of partners, the “Estates Excellence” project will visit around 1000 premises in six Local Authorities with a view to reducing risks, accidents, ill health and days lost by providing support and advice, and developing an ongoing and sustainable support structure in cooperation with local business.

**Timing**

2. Immediate

**Recommendation**

3. That the SMT note this project and possible wider application subject to evaluation.

**Background**

4. In response to the challenges set by the new Strategy – “*The Health and Safety of Great Britain – be part of the solution*” – East and South East Division (ESED) ran a stakeholder conference in February 2009 to engage a range of key stakeholders from across the South East, to encourage ideas and to help deliver the strategy. Arising from that conference the idea of a project, “*Estates Excellence*”, was developed that would provide concentrated engagement on a number of industrial estates across the South East (Medway, Arun, Cherwell, Southampton, Swale and Slough) to work mainly with small businesses to benchmark their performance, and support them to improve and reduce risks, accidents, ill health and sickness absence. The difference in this project is that much of the work (including the planning) is being shared with stakeholders - for example HSE, LA and stakeholders such as insurance risk assessors and County Council safety officers will be helping with the benchmarking visits, Serco are providing free access to their occupational health services, others including ACAS and Dept of Health will be providing supportive training, others including South East TUC, IOSH, Southern Water, EEF etc are helping in other ways. The emphasis will be on helping others help themselves although we will use enforcement where necessary. Further details are provided in the attached briefing note

## **Argument**

5. The project offers an innovative approach by involving partners directly in supporting large numbers of SMEs to help themselves. The trial (in Medway) in November 2009 will be used to develop and deliver pilot work in the remaining estates from April 2010. The project as a whole will be fully evaluated towards the end of 2010 and consideration given to roll out of the technique across the country in 2011/12.

## **Consultation**

6. Robin Dahlberg, CSAG, Comms Directorate, together with Local Authorities around the South East, GOSE, Sector Skill Councils and Strategic Health Authorities and other stakeholders are involved in the development of this project – see list of stakeholders in the briefing note

## **Presentation**

7. Publicity and media are critical to the delivery of this project. A communications plan is under development.

## **Costs and Benefits**

8. Estates Excellence is resourced from within existing FOD ESED staffing and from the support offered by stakeholders. Communications are funded from within the strategy budget. Evaluation is planned.

## **Financial/Resource Implications for HSE**

9. The total planned Communication budget is approximately £180k over two years.

## **Environmental implications**

10. None

## **Action**

11. The SMT is invited to note this developing project.

# ESTATES EXCELLENCE – A Partnership Approach to SMEs in the South East

## Briefing Note

### Background

1 In response to the challenges set by the new Strategy – “*The Health and Safety of Great Britain – be part of the solution*” – East and South East Division (ESED) ran a stakeholder conference in February 2009 to engage large stakeholders from across the South East, to encourage ideas and to help deliver the strategy. During the one day event, attended by Robin Dahlberg, a number of ideas were proposed that involved HSE and LAs working with a range of partners to promote better health and safety performance and improved business efficiency. Delegates signed up to take forward a regional project “*Estates Excellence*”.

2 Linking to the key themes of Creating a Healthier Safer Workplace; Leadership; Competence; Worker involvement as well as Support for SMEs, *Estates Excellence* is based on the simple idea of targeting all premises on a single “estate” or geographic area and providing a range of support and guidance delivered by a team of partners working together to offer a service. All companies on the estate will receive a “Benchmarking” visit that will identify where they are in relation to recognised standards of health, and safety, and a range of other business critical issues like security, and fire. The approach to the majority (SMEs) will be tailored to their needs and the findings from the initial visit. Larger employers, including estate landlords, would, it was proposed, be engaged and encouraged to offer support throughout the process.

3 In time participants believe that this could build into a system that will offer other business benefits, including financial, by having a “score on the door” that could be used by insurers and customers to offer discounts and increased custom. For a defined period after the initial benchmarking visits participants on the estate will then receive a range of support activities delivered by the partners to help them “close the gap” between where their benchmarking score was, and where it should be. Ongoing support would then follow, with promotional activities continuing, supported by local stakeholders including the landlords and other partners who would have an interest in promoting more efficient and profitable businesses. A later follow up will then determine the level of improvements made, and the need for further support activities.

4 Critical to the idea was the contribution made by the Estates Excellence Team, comprised of both regulators and other stakeholders who would work together to supply their expertise to the estates and use incentives to promote better business practices, especially health and safety improvements.

### Aim and Progress so far.

5 Working with partners from across the South East, (Annex 1) ESED have developed a project designed to provide risk based support, guidance and tools through a range of partner led interventions. Targeting six estates (Annex 2) on the basis of high rates of injury, ill-health and mix of industries, over 2009/10 and 2010/11 the project will begin in Medway in November 2009 with a trial targeting up to 200 premises delivered by HSE, LA and other partners. Using the experience of the trial five other estates will be targeted from April 2010 in a rolling programme that will all follow a similar timeline (Annex 3) - with a lead up period of awareness raising, delivery of the intervention, and then later follow-up. In all, *Estates Excellence* should reach over 1000 companies across the South East and is ESED’s flagship project for 2009/10. Materials and approaches are being designed with the potential for much wider roll out, subject to the project evaluation.

## 6. The project will:

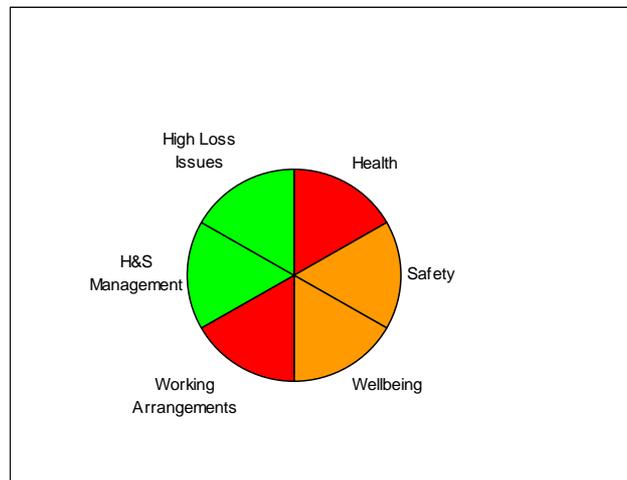
- i) Assist business by reducing the costs associated with unhealthy and unsafe workplaces e.g. increased absenteeism, accidents and ill-health, civil claims and high insurance premiums;
- ii) Engage with small and medium size business owners, managers and supervisors to improve knowledge of sensible health and safety to enable them to take action to reduce risks;
- iii) Engage Industrial Estate Owners and landlords and improve their knowledge and systems in place to assist those they affect such as business in the South/East, security providers and contractors:
- iv) Engage large business and other influential organizations including NHS Primary Care Trusts in South East to work with the project and its representatives to achieve its aim and purpose, bringing the key stakeholders and others together to support healthier workplaces;
- v) Promote partnership working; sharing resources between businesses, their representatives and government and clarifying what is required as well as what is not in terms of sensible risk actions;
- vi) Engage with business leaders and directors in areas, to improve their knowledge of the benefits of sensible health and safety management;
- vii) Work with the media to improve societal and business knowledge of the proportionate sensible health and safety approach, real risks, and the financial benefits of efficient health and safety management;
- viii) Improve the knowledge of unionised and non – unionised employees in particular in relation to occupational health risks;
- ix) Work with vulnerable persons such as young persons (apprentices and work experience), migrants, older workers and ethnic minority workers that will benefit from further knowledge in health and safety

## 7. It is hoped that the initial Benchmarking visits to SMEs will generate a score in six topic areas covering:

- Health – Asbestos, MSD, DSE, Noise, HAVs COSHH
- Safety – Workplace Transport, Falls, Slips/Trips, Machinery Guarding, Electrical
- Wellbeing – Stress, Absence Management
- Working Arrangements – Vulnerable workers, RIDDOR, Welfare, First Aid, Worker Involvement
- Health and Safety Management – Risk Assessment, Safety Policy, Access to competent person, Training and Supervision
- High loss issues – Fire, Gas Safety, Security, Legionella, pressure systems

8 For each topic area SMEs will be rated on the basis of their knowledge and what they have done – receiving a score ranging from no knowledge or action to exceeded minimum requirements. A Red Amber Green (RAG) pie chart or similar will be generated for each visit directing businesses to the further Estates Excellence support activities covering those

topics with the poorest scores. These follow up activities will range from the provision of basic information to “*get right*”; through more sophisticated products to “*get efficient*”, and further support to “*get fit*” and will be delivered locally by a range of partners within the Estates Excellence project over the three weeks after the initial Benchmarking visits:



**Example of Estates Excellence Benchmarking “Pie Chart”**

9 For larger employers and landlords the approach will differ. Although it is hoped that they will eventually contribute to the project, *Estates Excellence* is planning to offer an amended service to this group by providing a similar product, but targeted at the competency of key staff in the organisation on site. Thus the senior manager, person responsible for health and safety advice and a shop floor employee will receive a “pie chart” indicating their level of knowledge (as opposed to a direct measure of competence) in each of the six topic areas (a form of training needs analysis) and the company will thus be able to assess any shortfalls in leadership and involvement that might need further work to improve. (In time this could evolve into a system similar to Regulatory Development Needs Analysis (RDNA)). They will also be offered the same programme of supporting activities as SMEs.

10 Where unacceptable standards or imminent risks are identified, *Estates Excellence* staff will obviously raise this and seek voluntary remediation or cessation. However, throughout the planning process we have been clear that HSE and other enforcing authorities would retain the power to take appropriate enforcement action should it prove necessary and it is planned to have warranted staff available on each estate.

### **Continuing support and the benefits of Membership**

11 Participants in the Estates Excellence project will receive support during the delivery phase as described above and additional longer term support, probably in the form of membership of an online community offering access to specific information and learning tools. Details are yet to be finalized, but could include access to an on-line learning game developed in partnership with Business Link that takes participants through different levels of difficulty. This particular tool has potential for vulnerable workers, since it will appeal to younger employees and can be easily translated to provide a learning tool for minority ethnic groups.

12 Although the benefits of membership should be measurable in terms of both improved benchmarking scores based on knowledge and action taken, other benefits that should accrue over time include reduced injury and ill-health and increased business efficiency. The project is working with the Chief Scientific Adviser’s Group (CSAG) to

develop a robust evaluation process. The Medway trial will be evaluated after the event, and lessons from the trial carried forward into both the delivery and evaluation of the larger pilot work in 2010. Wider benefits will be captured as part of that later evaluation process.

### **Next Steps**

13 Delivery of the trial in Medway is on target, although time is tight. Contributions from CSAG, Communications Directorate and COI are essential and a budget (Strategy Funding) is available to deliver the planned (mainly communications) products. Should the main pilot prove successful consideration can be given to wider roll out.

### **HSE Contacts:**

Project Director – Heather Bryant 532 3909  
Project Manager – Ceri Williams 502 4084  
Working Group Chair – Mike Wilcock 503 4214

## Annex 1 – Estates Excellence – South East Partners

Note: these tables are not exhaustive but represent activity at September 2009

**Project Stakeholders** – directly contributing to the project board and working groups

LACORS/HELA/LA*
SEBUS - South East Businesses*
SERTUC - South East TUC*
EEF*
Kent County Council*
Serco*
Zurich Insurance*
HSE*
Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)*

**Other Stakeholders** – offering products, or part of the SE Stakeholder group (\*)

Business Link
LA (Business Managers/Heads of Service)
Strategic Health Authority
GOSE*
Local Government Employers
Sector Skills Council
South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)*
Dept of Health – South East
BSC
IOSH
ACAS
IOD*
CBI*
Primary Care Trusts
Fire Services
B&Q
BT*
Southern Water*
City Link*
Centrica*
South East Employers*

## Annex 2 – Estates Targeted

2009	2010				
Trial	Pilot				
Autumn	April	May	June/July	September	October
Medway	Slough	Swale	Southampton	Arun	Cherwell

### Annex 3 – Intervention Plan

Estate Intervention Plan							
Intervention Lead Up			Intervention Month				Follow Up Month 6-12)
- Month 3	- Month 2	- Month 1	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	1 week
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Landlord Meeting (B2/Principal EHO)</li> <li>2. Meeting with: - LA (non – EA) Business team</li> <li>3. Councillor</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Landlord Media Engagement</li> <li>2. Networking event for Large Business on site</li> <li>3. Engage Stakeholder Media</li> <li>4. Write to all SMEs on site</li> <li>5. Plan Product 1 events and product 2 and 3 venues</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Media engagement</li> <li>2. Telephone calls to SMEs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visit SMEs (visiting staff – HSE,LA and stakeholders)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver Products 1 – Get legal</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver Products 2 – Get Efficient (Stakeholders)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver – Products 3 – Fit for Work (Stakeholders)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Re- visits (visiting staff)</li> </ol>