

Health and Safety Executive Senior Management Team Paper		SMT/11/43	
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Review of health and safety guidance

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Issue

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
 - a. Update the SMT on work underway to integrate the work HSE is currently undertaking on the preparations for FASE, the external guidance review and the rationalisation of operational guidance;
 - b. Clear a paper for 25 May 2011 Board meeting on the scope and methodology for the review of external guidance and inform the Board on work being carried out on the use of HSE brand on guidance and in partnership marketing.

Timing

2. An above the line paper for the HSE Board meeting on 25 May 2011

Recommendation

3. The Senior Management Team is asked to:
 - Approve the attached Board paper.

Background

4. The SMT received a closed paper in September 2010 on HSE's work to review guidance (SMT/10/106). This paper provided a summary of existing projects including the rationalisation of operational guidance, the website services business improvement project and proposed that a review of HSE external guidance is undertaken. In order to make best use of HSE's resources in the short timescale leading up to the closure of the Incident Contact Centre (ICC) and Infoline the delivery of these projects has been integrated into one plan and essential work targeted.
5. Following the September 2010 SMT a Publications Governance Group was convened to oversee the publications process and use of HSE's website. There are three areas of work brigaded under the oversight of this group. These are:
 - An internal guidance review (Rationalising Operational Guidance (ROG) Project) which represents additional guidance amplified for HSE's Inspectors' purposes. This Operational Guidance can augment the existing externally facing guidance and is sometimes worded differently to such externally facing guidance. ROG's aims are to

delete out of date guidance, rationalise and remove duplication and set up a more efficient classification system on HSE's intranet to make it easier to find;

- A review of information on the HSE website aiming to publicise health and safety tools for SMEs, update the website to make our information and guidance easier to find, work with relevant parts of the business to update topic/industry-related microsites, updating RIDDOR-related guidance and updating frequently asked questions (FAQs). Much of this work is to be done in a series of priorities aimed at reducing the number of calls to ICC and Infoline in preparation for closure of the current contracts and ultimately with the loss of the ICC and Infoline provide advice, previously available from the ICC and Infoline, through the website.
 - An external guidance review (EGR) – see paragraph 6.
6. The aim of the EGR is to ensure HSE's guidance represents a practical, proportionate approach for organisations to help them comply with health and safety law. The objectives set for the review are derived from SMT/10/106 and are to:
- Reduce unnecessary burdens on businesses by ensuring the guidance focuses on compliance and avoid unnecessary duplication making it easier for dutyholders to understand how to comply;
 - Rationalise HSE's portfolio of publications and ensure key guidance is up to date;
 - Establish consistency of message within and across publications;
 - Provide a system to allow quality control, traceability and future-proofing to avoid having to conduct a further review in the future;
 - Influence HSE and key stakeholder attitude towards guidance so that effective guidance is produced where it is needed.
7. The common aim of EGR and ROG is to create common content for internally and externally facing guidance, eliminating duplication and only providing additional operational guidance where it is truly warranted. The aim is also to standardise the generic statements used across the suite of guidance so that common statements which appear in a number of guidance notes, are all the same and only differ when absolutely necessary and relevant to the industries concerned. To aid this aim and guide future development of guidance we have developed some 'publishing principles' which is available on the Intranet.
8. The attached Board paper provides further information of the scope and methodology for the review and work being carried out on the use of HSE brand . This review is being undertaken in parallel with continued activity to rationalise government websites and its content. HSE has been working with HMRC/Businesslink.gov and Direct.gov to review and rationalise the content on workplace health and safety and ensure it is written in an appropriate manner for the audiences of the dot.gov sites. HSE now has its own 'Workplace health and safety' theme on businesslink.gov which has been developed around the structure of 'health and safety made simple'.

Consultation

9. Cross-cutting Interventions Division, Operational Strategy Division, FASE Programme and Communications Directorate.

Financial/Resource Implications

10. This work has been built into Directorate and Divisional plans. This has required resource to be diverted from other activity. FOD resource (17 staff for Quarter 1 2011/12) has been allocated to priority areas to assist CCID and OPStD in the review. CEB has approved the use of two contracted editors for a maximum of six months.

Environmental implications

11. None.

Action

12. To agree the draft Board paper.