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Improvements and Changes to Internal Communications Channels

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Issue

1. To update SMT and seek feedback on changes and improvements to a number of Internal Communications channels.

Timing

2. Routine

Recommendation

3. The SMT is asked to:
 - a) Discuss proposed changes to the frequency of *express* magazine
 - b) Agree to the updated Global e-mail policy
 - c) Agree to the launch of the improved intranet news pages
 - d) Agree to the launch of the Change intranet site
 - e) Note improvements to Communications Directorate intranet site
 - f) Agree to the proposal to undertake an Internal Communications audit

Background

4. During the last twelve months, there has been a rise in the number of Civil Service and HSE announcements due to a number of factors e.g. controls and changes put in place by the Coalition Government; significant reviews such as the Common Sense – Common Safety report; VER scheme; and the recent Ministerial announcement. This has resulted in an increase in Internal Communications, particularly the number of requests for global emails and intranet news stories.
5. The recent VER scheme saw the departure of the long-standing Editor of *express*, which has led to a review of the management and frequency of the magazine.

6. In addition, SMT agreed that the 'wheel of change' produced by BSD be used as a communication tool of the key change projects in HSE.
7. Taking the above into account, this paper outlines planned changes and improvements to a number of Internal Communication channels.

Argument

EXPRESS MAGAZINE AND E-EXPRESS

Background

8. *express* magazine has been HSE's in-house magazine for over 22 years. In February, Colin Rogers, magazine editor for 20 years, left HSE under the VER scheme. The editorial role was a full time role and Colin was able to develop a high profile within HSE, as both editor-in-chief and 'roving reporter', and through his relationships with the business, was able to generate a network of contacts and a continual supply of content for *express*.
9. The magazine's content has tended to concentrate on in-depth features and interviews with key personnel, interspersed with human-interest articles about HSE's people.
10. Since October 2010, *express* magazine has been produced as an interactive on-line document, rather than a paper copy.
11. In addition to *express*, *e-express* - a weekly electronic news service has been in place for a number of years. Its format was modernised last year to include a short introduction and picture headline acting as a signpost to more information on the intranet.
12. *e-express* is used for current news and developments and more routine announcements such as training or events. Although not an explicit development, over time, *e-express* has been used to share more time-sensitive materials and news.
13. It is our recommendation that we keep both *e-express* and *express* in their current form, but make some changes to the frequency of *express*. We would also like to outline some suggestions for news gathering from around HSE.

Managing *express*

14. Going forward, the following colleagues will produce and manage the magazine in addition to their current responsibilities:

15. Euan Cragg-James will oversee production of *express* and assist with key features.
16. Colette Manning will act as editor in addition to her work as editor of the HSE Newsletter. (Colette has experience in editing magazines for McVities, KP Foods and Magazine Publisher IPC.)
17. Kath Crilly will provide editorial support for regular features such as Vox Pop and Who are you?
18. Ken Parkin will continue to design the magazine and manage publication online.

Proposed change to frequency of issue

19. As the majority of work to produce *express* is being absorbed within current roles in CD, the proposal is to move the frequency from monthly to bi-monthly in order to manage workloads amongst the team.
20. Any important news stories, which need to be covered in between issues of *express* can be published on the intranet and signposted to staff through e-*express* or if applicable, as a Global email.

Does SMT support the move to bi-monthly for *express* magazine?

Encouraging contributions from across HSE

21. Over the last 12 months, there has been a reduction in the number of contributions / stories coming from across HSE, which may in part be due to the communications freeze and reduction in the type of activities we would normally include.
22. With this in mind, we would like to ask SMT (particularly those members with large numbers in field offices) to consider nominating *express* representatives within their Directorates or Regions. The purpose is to work with the editorial team, helping them identify stories of particular interest or in developing issues with a spotlight on certain business areas or regions.

Would SMT members like to nominate members for their areas?

GLOBAL EMAIL POLICY

23. A new policy for the use of Global e-mails was issued in March 2010, when responsibility for this communication channel transferred from REFIT to Internal Communications. During this time, there has been a gradual increase in the number of e-mails being requested.

24. To help colleagues access important business messages, it is essential that this method of communication be protected. To this end, there has been a move away from using all staff e-mails as the main communication channel to colleagues, with the majority of news items being published on the intranet or through cascade by line managers.
25. As a result, the Global e-mail policy has recently been updated to make it clearer on the criteria for an all staff email:
- A major announcement significantly affecting the organisation e.g. the creation of ONR;
 - A major announcement affecting the majority of HSE staff e.g. changes to staff pay;
 - Mandated Civil Service wide communications affecting all HSE staff e.g. changes to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme;
 - Essential interruption to services e.g. major systems issues or temporary office closures; and
 - Immediate safety critical communications e.g. national incidents or severe weather affecting travel.

The full and updated policy can be found in Annex I.

Does SMT agree to the updated global email policy?

IMPROVEMENTS TO INTRANET NEWS PAGES

26. The intranet news pages are where HSE's latest news for staff is published. A recent evaluation of the intranet highlighted the News Centre as the busiest site on the intranet with 60,460 average monthly visits in 2010 - double the number of hits to the intranet homepage.
27. The move away from all staff e-mails has seen an increase for information communicated to staff via the intranet News Centre. Given this increase, a number of improvements have been made to help colleagues easily find the latest news and information.

How it currently looks ...

The screenshot shows the current HSE News Centre website. The header includes the HSE logo, navigation links (Home, Contact us, News, Forms, Search, Site map, Useful links), and a search bar. The main content area is divided into several sections: a left sidebar with navigation links, a main news area with a featured article 'Coffee with David Gartside', and three columns of news items under 'Inside HSE', 'Press office', and 'HSE in the media'. A footer contains metadata like '15.04.11 | Issue date 21.05.10 | Review date 20.05.12 | OG status: Fully open | Back to top'.

How it will look ...

The screenshot shows the proposed future HSE News Centre website layout. The header is a dark blue bar with the HSE logo, navigation links, and a search bar. Below the header is a 'Home' button and a breadcrumb trail 'HSE » #1 » #2 » #3'. The main content area is organized into several distinct sections: a left sidebar with a 'News centre home' menu and a local search bar; a 'Latest news' section featuring a large image of coffee and a 'Top story' card; a 'More news' button; an 'About You' section with a 'Photo of the month' competition; a 'Hot topics' section with links to H&S guidance, OSHCR, and voluntary organizations; a 'Press office' section with news items; and an 'HSE in the media' section with a location selector. The layout is clean and uses a color palette of blues, greys, and whites.

Main changes:

28. The site has been split into five distinct sections:
 - I. Latest News - this section has changed to show clearly the latest top five stories in a prominent position on the intranet page. A 'More News' link is available to enable staff to find previous news items more easily than before. In addition, an optional 'spotlight' feature can be added in when extra space is required to highlight particular stories or features.
 - II. Hot Topics - a new section that can be used to keep important or high profile stories / initiatives accessible for a longer period of time once they have dropped off the top five news stories e.g. OSHCR, Health and Safety Made Simple or Common Sense, Common Safety.
 - III. Press Office - a combined Press Office and 'HSE in the media' section providing quick links to HSE press notices and news from around the regions. This will avoid some of the duplication seen from time to time in Press Office-generated stories and external news feeds. The items will continue to be moderated before posting so as to avoid inaccurate or trivial matters being fed onto the intranet.
 - IV. Quick Links - New quick links (in the left-hand navigation bar) to a broader section of sources of internal news in HSE including *express*, *e-express*, FOD Briefing, HID Briefing, ONR Briefing, Government newsletters etc.
 - V. About You – building on the success of 'Exchange' – the feedback tool launched at the end of 2010, this section can provide greater interactivity with staff as and when appropriate.

Launch

29. The aim is to launch the improved news pages on Monday 16 May 2011.

Does SMT agree to the launch of the improved intranet news pages?

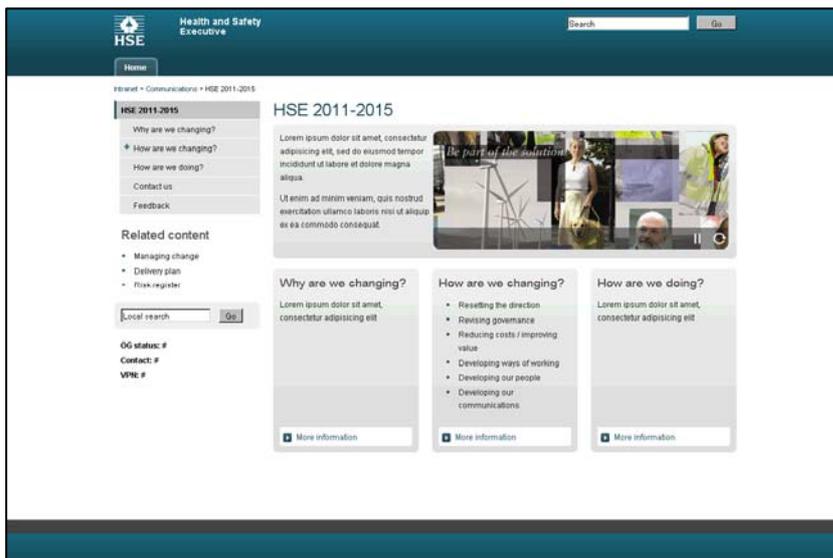
HSE'S CHANGE MAP 2011-2015: NEW INTRANET SITE

30. Following development of HSE's Change Map, a new section on the intranet has been developed to provide easily accessible information about HSE's change initiatives for 2011-2015 for HSE staff.
31. The intranet site is split into three areas:
 - I. Why HSE is changing – shares information on the external and internal factors that are driving change at HSE and in the Health and Safety system.

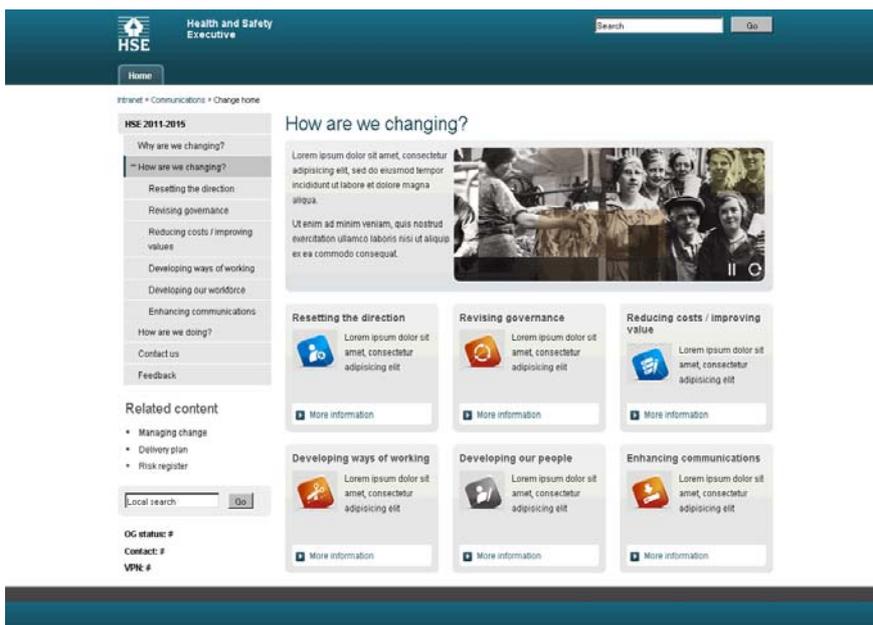
- II. How HSE is changing – provides summaries of the key change projects, which are based on information provided to BSD. The summaries will be approved by project leads and SMT members before publication.
- III. How are we doing - includes a quarterly update on progress. The majority of this information will be extracted from HSE’s quarterly business review after it has been through DWP and the Board.

How it looks

Landing Page



Project information has been grouped under the six headings of the Change Map



Launch

32. The aim is to launch the site on 16 May (at the same time as the new news pages) and it will be owned and maintained by Internal Communications.

Does SMT Agree to the launch of the Change intranet site?

CHANGES TO COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTORATE INTRANET SITE

33. The Communications intranet site has recently been updated to make it easier for staff to find information about:
- I. Communication Teams – provides an overview of the teams and the support and services available to HSE colleagues
 - II. Approval Processes – shares information on how to gain approval for communications expenditure, online and print publishing and publication of research reports.
 - III. How Do I? – gives answers to common questions from staff on a broad range of topics such as ‘how do I plan a stakeholder engagement strategy, use the HSE logo or send a Global e-mail?’.

Health and Safety Executive
Search Go

Intranet > Communications

Communications home

- Overview
- + Approval process and 2011 planning
- Internal Communications
- Communications Delivery Service
- Press Office
- Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Engagement
- Corporate Identity
- Writing for HSE
- How do I?
- Get in touch
- Feedback

Local search Go

OG status: Open
Contact: Dee Imiah
VPN: 523 4250

Communications

The Communications Directorate (CD) aims to improve communication at all levels of the organisation.

We manage all corporate internal communications, external communications including media liaison and stakeholder management and strategic co-ordination, online delivery and production (design, editorial and print) and event support.

Get in touch with communications

Communication Teams

- Internal Communications
- Press Office
- Strategic communications and stakeholder engagement
- Communications Delivery Service

More about the teams

Approval process

Find out about communications, publications, research planning and approval process.

- Communications Exemption Form
- Publishing Clearance Form

More about approval process

How do I?

- Find out more about branding?
- Commission a conference or event?
- Publish in Express / e-Express?
- Send a global email message?
- Decide how to use the HSE logo?
- Discuss communications plans?

More How do I?

The new area is available at <http://intranet/comms/overview.htm>.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT

34. An internal communications audit is proposed for the next quarter to enable us to understand staffs' communications needs and to assess the effectiveness of all HSE's internal communications channels.
35. The audit will mainly consist of an online feedback form, which will be publicised through a variety of channels across the business. There is no additional cost associated with undertaking the audit and the findings and recommendations will be shared with SMT.

Does SMT support the proposed internal communications audit?

Financial/Resource implications for HSE

36. None – the above will be managed within CD's existing resources.

Environmental implications

37. None

Action

38. .The SMT is asked to:
 - g) Discuss proposed changes to the frequency of *express* magazine
 - h) Agree to the updated Global e-mail policy
 - i) Agree to the launch of the improved intranet news pages
 - j) Agree to the launch of the Change intranet site
 - k) Note improvements to Communications Directorate intranet site
 - l) Agree to the proposal to undertake an Internal Communications auditCD will take forward, in consultation with other key stakeholders, any actions as a result of this paper.

Annex I

HSE policy on Global e-mail messages

- How decide if a Global message is necessary
- Procedure
- Who to contact
- The service Internal Communications will provide
- Annex 1 – an example of a good Global message

What are Global messages?

HSE staff are often overloaded with information and it is vital that only **urgent** messages are issued as Global e-mails. Global e-mail is the facility to send the **same** message to everyone in HSE with access to e-mail. This allows HSE to communicate messages of immediate importance to **all** e-mail users simultaneously or to selected staff at the following designated sites:

- All HSE;
- All HSE including HSL and ONR;
- All Bootle HQ.

How to decide if a Global message is necessary

In order to ensure that messages sent via Global e-mail are easily recognised as urgent by staff, it is important that this method of communication is only used on those few occasions when other communication methods are not appropriate.:

- A major announcement affecting the organisation e.g the creation of ONR,
- A major announcement affecting HSE staff, e.g. changes to staff pay;
- Mandated Civil Service-wide communications affecting all HSE staff e.g. changes to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme;
- Essential interruption to services, e.g., major systems issues or temporary office closures; and
- Immediate safety critical communications e.g. national incidents or severe weather affecting travel.

Internal Communications will act as a central point for issuing Global messages and advising on the most appropriate way to disseminate information. This should help prevent too many unnecessary messages being issued. For example, some messages might be better delivered via an intranet news story or management cascade.

Procedure

- If you feel a Global message is necessary, please contact Internal Communications in the first instance. They will advise you on whether this is an appropriate channel for your message to be issued and also advise on the content of your message.

- Global e-mail messages must be approved by a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT).
- Messages for broadcast by global e-mail must be sent to the [Internal Communications](#) e-mail account.
- It is your responsibility to ensure the message you send contains accurate information.
- When sending your message to Internal Communications for issue, please include the following:
 - a meaningful 'subject heading' ("Global Message" as a subject header is not appropriate);
 - a clear description including whether the message is for action or information and which parts of HSE (and/or HSL) the message is to be sent;
 - a contact name and number for anyone wishing to respond to the message.
- Messages sent to Internal Communications for broadcast should be black text on a white background, as this is the easiest combination to read on screen.
- **No** files should be attached to global messages. If necessary files should be posted to the Intranet and with a link to the appropriate Intranet site for further information. Please be aware, that publishing to the intranet takes additional time, so please build this into your planning. (Internal Communications can advise on lead times).
- Authors will need to consider carefully whether their message is relevant to **all** e-mail users, whether a narrower distribution is suitable, or if a different form of communication might be more appropriate.
- Not all staff have access to e-mail and those that do, are not always logged on. Therefore, it is essential that managers ensure staff who may not normally access e-mail are advised of the contents of global messages when they are received.
- Global e-mail should only be used for the *urgent* dissemination of information when it affects a significant number of staff.
- Global messages are not appropriate for items of a personal nature.
- Global e-mail messages should not be duplicated by paper tray-drops.
- If you are unsure whether a global message is appropriate, please contact Internal Communications for advice.
- Please follow up your e-mail with a telephone call to the team to ensure your message is being actioned. It is your responsibility to ensure that your message has been received by Internal Communications.

The Service Internal Communications will provide

Internal Communications will ensure that messages are forwarded to all e-mail accounts, or specified locations that comply with the policy for global messages.

Messages received by:	Will be broadcast by:
10.00 am	1.00 pm that day
1.00 pm	4.00 pm that day
3.00 pm	5.00 pm that day
6.00 pm	10.00 am the next day

Occasionally, there will be a need to issue messages more urgently. Please discuss these directly with Internal Communications.