

MANDATORY ACTIVITIES

Introduction

1.40 Over 2002/03 HSE planned to deliver a range of policy, technical and information activities to meet the mandate given by statute and Government. These included activities to:

- modernise and simplify the regulatory framework;
- provide appropriate information and advice;
- promote risk assessment and technical knowledge; and
- operate statutory schemes.

Table 20 Revitalising Health and Safety (RHS)

HSC and HSE will drive up health and safety performance in cooperation with employers, their associations, workers, Trade Unions and health and safety professionals in particular through progressing the ten-point strategy and 44 action points in RHS.

Aims/Targets

deliver the RHS Strategy Statement targets by 2004 and 2010.

Plans for 2002/03

HSC and HSE will drive up health and safety performance with stakeholders through progressing:

- the ten-point strategy; and
- 44 action points in RHS.

- Deliver HSC and HSE contributions to all action points;

- agree baselines and targets for improving health and safety management systems across the Civil Service as a contribution to delivering the national targets; and

- agree industry-specific targets and baselines that contribute to the national targets.

Progress during 2002/03

Work on initiatives to implement 8 of the 10 points in the ten-point strategy is well developed. Report on progress given to HSC in December 2002.

44 Action Points: action taken on all but the legislative proposals. Many are completed – a report can be found on the HSE website under Campaigns/RHS.

Many actions are completed; some continue as part of planned workstreams (see HSE website). Further work on the evaluation framework needed.

Civil service departments were invited to agree appropriate targets; not all have done so. Renewed initiative planned for 2003/04 involving the Council of Civil Service Unions. Good practice advice developed. Research in to public reporting of health and safety covered the public sector this year; 14 out of 20 included reported but were mainly low scoring.

Many industry sectors have agreed their targets, some more challenging than RHS; all involve all parts of industry including the Trade Unions. Some good progress reported eg paper making, quarrying. Reluctance in some sectors to set targets where confidence in achieving sign-up by individual companies low.

- Local authorities will also seek to contribute effectively in the business sectors enforced by them, eg through the Lead Authority Partnership Scheme.
- Continue joint working with Other Government Departments and external stakeholders;
- support Priority Programmes, track delivery of sector targets, and extend coverage;
- ensure baselines, and monitoring for priorities; and
- develop and maintain the RHS website including details of progress against the 44 Action Points (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/revital>).

LAs continue to promote the principles and targets laid down in RHS generally and through the Lead Authority Partnership Scheme (LAPS). Membership of LAPS continues to grow with 77 partnerships registered with LAU and a further 32 prospective partnerships in negotiation. The Commission and HELA acknowledge the strategic value of LAPS, particularly with regard to the Priority Programmes, and LAP Schemes are formally recognised in the Audit Protocol in helping to promote consistency of enforcement by LAs.

Continued working with DoH on 'Securing Health' issues. Opportunities for joint agendas with DWP following the transfer of HSC/E to DWP sponsorship. Work with DTI Business Link to aid SMEs. Many professional organisations and Trade Unions have assisted with promotional activities including a conference sponsored by Professional Organisations in Occupational Safety and Health featuring stress in autumn 2002.

Eight Priority Programmes chosen as key areas. Support given to develop performance measures to track progress alongside formal statistics. Delivery Plan for PSA targets developed with help under HM Treasury's PSA Plus scheme.

Health and safety statistics for 2001/02 published in December 2002 provided the baselines for the ill health and days-lost targets; both were higher than expected on previous data.

RHS website (under Campaigns) was updated to give information on progress with the Action Points and other useful information. Work under way to make it more user friendly with clearer links to Securing Health Together.

Other significant activities

A major stakeholder conference was held in May 2002 to encourage top companies to focus on Health and safety improvements. The conference was well attended with support from industry, public sector employers and Trade Unions. Workshop sessions were lively. Continued support from professional organisations and Trades Unions and major initiatives in some industries.

The Government and HSC's challenge to companies to publicly report on health and safety is going well. It is now being supported by visits from HSC/E senior staff and the pilot development of 'national account managers' for 15 companies. Recent research <http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr135.htm> indicates the number of FTSE100 companies publicly reporting has risen to 91%, compared with 56% in the baseline report.

Table 21 Securing Health Together - SH2

HSE and local authorities will continue to support the ten year strategy to improve occupational health including developing the SH2 stakeholder framework, the SH2 website and publishing appropriate information and data.

Aims: to achieve the targets in Securing Health Together:

Targets (in addition to the health targets in Revitalising Health and Safety):

- 20% reduction in ill health to members of the public caused by work activity.
- Everyone currently in employment but off work due to ill health or disability is, where necessary and appropriate, made aware of opportunities for rehabilitation back in to work as soon as possible.
- Everyone currently not in employment due to ill health or disability is, where necessary and appropriate, made aware of and offered opportunities to prepare for and find work.
- An additional target - an increase in the use of occupational health support by 10% by 2003 – has also been agreed.

Plans for 2002/03

- Improve joint working with Other Government Departments and external organisations; and
- improve knowledge base on occupational health and strategies for improving occupational health.

Progress during 2002/03

See Cross Government Working on Health section.

HSE worked with Institute of Directors (IoD), ABI and DTI to publish Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace (Published by IOD, 2002).

Research to improve knowledge base has mostly taken place within other specific programmes of work - eg framework for rehabilitation work, uptake of Occupational Health (OH) support - see relevant sections.

We have continued to keep in touch with international developments through European Network for Workplace Health Promotion, and contact with our Australian and Northern Ireland equivalents.

- Support the SH2 Partnership Board and Programme Action Groups;

- maintain, update and develop the SH2 website;

- gather and publish intelligence on work-related ill health and the health evidence base for action; and

- implement the OHAC recommendations for improving access to occupational health support. Work in this area is being taken forward with Department of Health and overseen by an externally led Project Board.

The Partnership Board, having set the strategic direction and key priorities for the strategy, has been stood down and its role is being reviewed with the Chair, Bill Callaghan. It will be replaced next year as part of a new management structure to deliver on the next stage of implementation.

The five Programme Action Groups have each come to a point where they have completed their initial work and produced conclusions, reports or models that now need to be pursued by different groups of people. This will provide the basis for the Securing Health Together plan of work for 2003/4. More details available on www.ohstrategy.net

The website has been rebuilt to overcome some technical difficulties. 60 projects are now live on the best practice database: www.ohstrategy.net

More accessible statistics published in Health & Safety Statistics Highlights and on web.

New information sources identified for improved targets monitoring, and for a better evidence base for action.

Major progress made with method for integrating multiple data sources for progress assessment.

The Project Board's final report was presented to OHAC on 1 April. Highlights were:

- The survey of use of occupational health support in GB provided comprehensive evidence of provision.
- The occupational health and safety telephone helpline piloted in Lanarkshire, has been upgraded to become the national advice line for an occupational health service for SMEs in Scotland.
- NHS Plus is now available to SMEs. This is a service provided to more than 50% of NHS OH departments, which have met the accreditation standards.
- The TUC has developed and evaluated body-mapping materials for use in the workplace.
- Finalised with Inland Revenue, leaflet on tax rules related to the purchase of occupational health support.

Table 22 Work to modernise and simplify the regulatory framework

Small firms, new patterns of employment & vulnerable groups

HSE and local authorities will seek to improve arrangements for the management of health and safety in small firms; in areas where patterns of employment are changing; and with groups that are hard to reach or at particular risk.

Aims

- raise awareness of health and safety issues;
- make information on controlling risks and support more readily available to these groups;
- improve partnership and working relationships with stakeholders;
- better involvement of these groups in policy formulation;
- better regulation and improved compliance; and
- support delivery of RHS and implementation of Government policy on social inclusion.

Plans for 2002/03

- Encourage all parts of HSE to ‘think small first’;
- improve guidance and other information including an improved web page with links to relevant sites;
- disseminate good practice and promote health and safety through high level campaigns;

Progress during 2002/03

The Small Businesses Commissioner Judith Donovan hosted a conference, with speakers from Small Businesses. About 100 HSE staff attended.

Leaflets aimed at small businesses have been reviewed and are due to be launched in May. After an initial review this year, an overhaul of the website is planned for 2003/4.

HSE contributed to the content and launch of the cross Government booklet for business start ups, the ‘no nonsense guide to rules and regulations for setting up a business’.

The Good Neighbour Directory was launched on the HSE Website to help small businesses locate firms in their area/region who may be able to offer them help with their health and safety arrangements.

HSE worked in partnership with Scottish Health at Work and the North Staffordshire Workplace Health Forum to launch HSC’s Good Neighbour Scheme in Glasgow and Stoke respectively. Representatives from large firms were invited to share their expertise and bring about improvements in the health and safety performance in small businesses.

- link with agencies such as the Small Business Service, and other small business support systems such as Inside UK Enterprise, Connect for Better Business and Fit for the Future;

- develop guidance on responsibilities for agency workers' health and safety and advise on good practice;

- work with Other Government Departments to improve health and safety of potentially vulnerable groups such as children and young people;

The Inside UK Enterprise (IUKE) programme started in December 02, visits took place from February 03. The programme, which is funded by Treasury's Invest to Save Budget, offers small businesses the opportunity to visit host companies around the country who offer examples of good health and safety practice.

HSE worked in partnership with the SBS to develop electronic health and safety business tools for the business support network to use with their small business clients. The tools will be supplemented by the IUKE visit programme. The whole programme is due to launch in May 03.

HSE worked with SBS, and Business links organisations in three areas to pilot a grant scheme. Part funding is offered to start-ups, and established micro-firms (up to ten employees). The scheme includes various mixtures of awareness raising events, training seminars and one-to-one consultations, the mix being as wide as possible during the pilot phase. Evaluation of the scheme has now started.

HSE has been working with stakeholders throughout the year to develop the guidance and informal consultation has taken place on initial drafts. Work has progressed more slowly than we anticipated, largely due to the need to resolve a number of complicated issues.

HSE contributed to the Basic Skills Agency's new 'Employer Toolkit to improve literacy and numeracy at work'. The toolkit identifies the health and safety risks in assuming all staff have good literacy skills.

Engaged support of DfES, Learning and Skills Council, Scottish Executive and National Assembly for Wales in publishing and disseminating free leaflet *B safe, health and safety basics for employers who offer work experience*.

Results of research on effective communication with young people and their attitudes to health and safety provided to DfES and disseminated at an international forum in Finland.

- advise on the implementation of the Equal Treatment Directive to, for example, older workers and people with disabilities.

HSE has actively participated in consultation on the implementation proposals, including work to identify and address possible conflicts between:

- proposed religion or belief equality legislation and requirements to wear personal protective equipment such as hard hats; and
- proposed disability rights legislation and health and safety requirements relating to 'competence' and 'fitness' to perform a task.

Cross Government Working on Health

In line with the SH2 strategy for joint working across Government HSE and local authorities will contribute to cross-Government action on health including:

- health inequalities;
- rehabilitation and job retention; and
- promoting better working environments (including passive smoking and violence).

Aims

- reduce ill health, and improved rehabilitation and employment opportunities for people with disabilities;
- improve working partnerships across Government and with external organisations;
- develop positive approaches to job retention and vocational rehabilitation; and
- continue work on HSC's programme on work related violence so that the success in achieving HSC's target to reduce violent incidents by 10% by 2003, can be assessed in 2004.

Plans for 2002/03

- Publish the Healthy Workplace Initiative's *Sign-up* newsletter, jointly with Department of Health (DH);

Progress during 2002/03

All four quarterly newsletters have been produced, published and distributed to 30 000 readers. The website has been regularly updated, though we now believe that because other new sites have come online that this may no longer be required. This will be reviewed in 2003/4.

As part of the HWI initiative we also gave assistance to existing OH networks, eg London. With DH we attempted to establish a new network in the SW, but this failed and we will now build on existing networks rather than try to create new ones.

- work with DWP and DH on job retention and rehabilitation and hold a conference to support this;

HSE has been working in partnership with DWP, DH and OGDs, to develop a framework of support and guidance that will enable employers to proactively manage sickness absence and help to retain their staff in employment. The draft framework was shared and discussed with stakeholders which include representatives from employers, Trade Unions, professional bodies and Government Departments at a conference (Turning a Challenge into an Opportunity) in May 2002. The report was published in May 2003 and will be used as a basis for developing guidance and policies for employers in partnership with their employees and their representatives and Trade Unions. HSE has also been contributing to the implementation of the DWP/DH Job Retention and Rehabilitation Pilots which went live on 1 April 2003.

- develop, with stakeholders, criteria for measuring and managing sickness absence;

Research was commissioned to develop and evaluate a sickness absence management tool, suitable for use by a wide range of employers including SMEs and the public sector, that would help employers to identify and prevent work-related ill health and identify employees who needed help to stay in or return to work. Researchers have brought together the results from 367 postal surveys, six focus groups, five workplace visits and 16 detailed telephone interviews to provide an overview of the current practice and essential background information to aid in the design of a data recording tool.

- commission research to support a workshop on the abuse of health and safety and the employment of sick and disabled people;

Research was commissioned into the extent and nature of employers' use of health and safety law as a false excuse for not employing or retaining disabled people. The results of the research were the subject of a workshop in December 2002 attended by representatives from employers, Trade Unions, professional bodies and Government Departments. The findings will inform further joint action by HSE and the Disability Rights Commission on removing barriers to employment of ill, injured or disabled people.

- publish research findings on violence to lone workers and design of the work environment;

Research has been completed and case studies are now being prepared. It is planned that these will be available on HSE website by the end of June 2003.

- hold the second ICVS conference and launch National Standards in managing work related violence.

A very successful joint conference was held with key stakeholders on 2 December 2002. One of the key messages was the importance of working together across Government industry and with the Trade Union and trade associates. Contributions from all will help to tackle the problem of workplace violence. A report of the conference is available free on HSE's website.

- Local authorities will contribute to cross-Government action on health.

HSE has established links with the North West Regional Public Health department (NHS) and are jointly working with NW FOD Director to develop closer working with NHS and local authorities on health related priorities.

HSE has established links with the National Assembly for Wales and its National Public Health Service and are sharing details with HSE's Health Unit.

HSE continues to work with Environmental Health professional bodies in England, Wales and Scotland, supporting their policies on health issues emanating from work activities.

HSE has given a series of presentations on local authority contributions to the Priority Programme including those on health targets.

HSE has established links with the Food Standards Agency and is exploring areas of common interest with a shared public health objective.

LAU contributed to the revision of the HSE Guidance on violence at work which will be published in 2003/04.

Improving worker participation in health & safety and corporate responsibilities

HSC will seek to increase employee involvement in the management of health and safety. This will meet Governmental commitments to review and harmonise employee consultation arrangements into a single package. HSC will also seek to introduce greater corporate responsibility for health and safety including health and safety reporting and guidance for directors on their health and safety responsibilities.

Aims

- greater worker engagement in health and safety in the workplace and associated health and safety improvements as a result;
- improved management of occupational risk with associated reduction in health and safety failures and increased Board Member awareness of health and safety responsibilities; and
- greater engagement of the insurance industry in risk reduction.

Plans for 2002/03

- Consolidate regulations, ACOP and guidance on safety representation and employee involvement;

Progress during 2002/03

Proposals for harmonised regulations have required careful preparation. Proposals were considered by HSC at its meeting in July 2003. Further work is required before consultation.

- undertake a Workers Safety Adviser pilot and advise HSC and Ministers on the outcomes;
- revise Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and ACOP; and
- publish research on health and safety reporting in annual reports and directors' responsibilities and revise guidance taking account of stakeholder comments and research findings.

The pilot finished in November 2002. Outcomes are planned to go to HSC in May 2003. After which a report will be made to Ministers.

Draft revised management regulations, that principally would remove the civil liability exclusion applicable under the current regulations, were sent to Ministers in February 2003.

Baseline research on health and safety reporting in annual reports was published in summer 2002. Follow-up research to measure the success of HSC's work on reporting has been completed and will be published in summer 2003.

It was decided that publication of baseline research on directors' responsibilities would not be helpful without similar follow-up research. A combined report is planned for publication in summer 2003.

Revision of the guidance, taking account of stakeholders comments and the outcomes of the research, will follow in 2003/04.

European and international work

In the European Union (EU) and internationally HSC and HSE will continue to play an active and constructive role to assure the delivery of UK obligations, to promote UK policy and influence and to shape EU and international agendas including the European Commission's Occupational Safety and Health Strategy. This work will focus on:

- Better practical implementation of existing law, and performance across the EU;
- sharing information and experience with partners in other EU Member States and Applicant Countries via joint working, bilateral contacts and funded projects (including leading a twinning project with Malta);

HSE succeeded in embedding elements of the HSC/E negotiating strategy on improving the implementation of existing legislation in preference to new proposals in the EC Occupational Safety and Health Strategy (as adopted by the Council Resolution of 3 June 2002).

Risk Policy Unit has continued to participate actively with European partners on the Trustnet project, designed to determine factors influencing the credibility and effectiveness of risk governance in hazardous activities and make recommendations to solve problems. This puts particular emphasis on engaging where appropriate, wider stakeholder and public input to issue framing and decision making.

- promoting the contribution of good health and safety to both competitiveness and employability across the EU; and

EC funded Twinning Projects:

1. Malta - HSE and the HSA, Dublin, successfully completed a 12-month project on the effective implementation of Occupational Health and Safety legislation with the newly formed Maltese Occupational Health and Safety Authority.
2. HSE contributed to projects that provided health and safety information and expertise in the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Sharing information and joint working:

1. The Annual high level forum between HSC/E, Ireland's HSA and HSE Northern Ireland met in November 2002. An official level group - the construction sector liaison sub group - has been set up to address shared problems with a shared workforce.
2. Information exchange with Dutch counterparts concentrating on psychosocial and agricultural issues - January 03.
3. HSE in liaison with European partners produced a protocol, based on HSE guidance, on the safe use of printing inks cured by UV light. Protocol adopted by; Germany, France, Italy, Spain and Belgium.
4. HSE provided technical assistance to 2 applicant countries (Cyprus and Lithuania) via the TAIEX scheme.
5. Worldwide – HSE provided advice and expertise to 11 Health and Safety Organisations as well as providing sector specific study visits in construction and nuclear.

Community Occupational Safety and Health

Strategy. Through effective negotiations by officials and briefing for Ministers and Government Departments, HSE has continued to emphasise the benefits high standards of health and safety bring in improving competitiveness. This has been reflected in the Community Strategy.

Euronews – five Editions published detailing UK progress on negotiation and implementation of EU Directives. Proposals on: Noise, Vibration, Asbestos Worker Protection, Self-Employed and the Import/Export of Dangerous Chemicals now implemented in the UK.

- progressing the consideration of key ILO OSH conventions for ratification (for example ILO convention 161 concerning occupational health services).

HSC and HSE will take a full part in the work of European and international institutions including:

- European Commission Advisory and Labour Inspection Committees and sub groups;

ILO Review of unratified Conventions completed (Commission Paper misc/02/17 reports).

Luxembourg Advisory Committee – HSE has represented UK interests at four meetings of the Government Interest Group of the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work and at two plenary meetings. Contributing to key discussions on the content of the EC Occupational Safety and Health strategy.

International Association of Labour Inspection – HSE elected Chairman of IALI at its Congress and General Assembly, one of two major conferences held during the year. HSE hosts the Association’s secretariat and is developing the IALI website.

Senior Labour Inspectors Committee. Senior staff attended the SLIC Committee on industry-specific topics. HSE led on the evaluation of Labour Inspection systems across Europe, including the EU Candidate Countries. Also involved on the working groups on construction, asbestos, machinery supply and the effectiveness of inspection.

Safety Commission for Mining and Other Extractive Industries (SHCMOEI). Have agreed and produced guidance based on the UK quarry regulations 1999 ACOP and guidance, on risk assessment at surface mines, use of explosives and use of vehicles. The guidance will be available on the HSE and Bilbao websites.

Aviation Health – HSE met with the US Federal Aviation Authority and liaised with Transport Canada to establish international guidelines for occupational health and safety issues on aircraft in flight. Subsequently obtaining agreement to the CAA setting up an aviation health unit at a DfT public consultation.

Miscellaneous. HSE is represented on the following International fora in ways that; contribute to HSE’s priorities, ensure UK law is not compromised and raise standards of Health & Safety internationally:

- 1) DG Employment’s Scientific Committee on Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL);
- 2) WHO/UN/ILO International Programme on Chemicals Safety (IPCS);
- 3) CEN, CENELEC, IEC and ISO;
- 4) International Maritime Organisation, and sub-Committees.

- the European Agency;

HSE (via the UK Focal Point) supported the Agency's 2002 work programme, and integrated its work with the UK's Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy. In addition, to the 'European Week campaign' activities included, participation at SHE Solutions 2002 show, EXPO2002 Safety and Health Exhibition, the European Good Practice Awards and SME funding Scheme.

- standards-making and liaison;

HSE is represented on numerous standards bodies and technical committees covering the range of industry and sector interests.

- the work of the ILO, UN, IAEA, OECD and WHO.

ILO - Agriculture, HSE contributed to a Command White Paper informing Parliament of ILO Convention 184.

HSE provided reports on various ILO Conventions including those addressing: the worst forms of child labour, Hygiene and Workers Representatives.

HSE provided briefing on the UK position for DWP on the Accident notification and reporting Protocol adopted by ILO in June '02.

UN - HSE provided policy and technical expertise to Dept for Transport at the twice-yearly meetings of the UN Sub-Committee of Experts of the Transport of Dangerous Goods and modal ADR/RID committees on road and rail.

Chemicals policy and regulation

HSE has continued to contribute to EU and international policy on chemicals including the management and supply of dangerous substances and preparations and the transport of dangerous goods by road and rail. HSE has also worked to provide information and guidance to promote the safe management of hazardous chemicals and substances including asbestos.

- Implement the health requirements of the Chemical Agents Directive (CAD) through the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH); and the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations (CAW);

The health requirements of the directive were implemented in GB on 21 November 2002 by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002, the Control of Lead at Work Regulations 2002 and the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002.

CAD implemented by the new Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 on 21 November 2002.

- negotiate and implement EU occupational exposure limits for dangerous substances and preparations, set UK occupational exposure limits and review the framework for these;
- implement changes to chemicals (supply side) legislation through the new Chemical (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations (CHIP3);
- implement the safety requirements of CAD and the Explosive Atmospheres Directive (ATEX) through the proposed Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR), which will also replace over 20 pieces of legislation relating to flammable substances and dusts. Safety standards will be maintained by a combination of DSEAR and Approved Codes of Practice reflecting good practice in past legislation;
- progress implementation of the globally harmonised system (GHS) for the classification and labelling of dangerous chemicals;
- consult on draft proposals to revise regulations implementing amending Directives EC framework Directives 94/55 and 96/49 on transport of dangerous goods by road and rail, and produce revised guidance;
- progress outcomes from the EU chemicals review and possible new EU regime for chemicals management;
- develop COSHH essentials to help small firms control chemicals; and

HSE continues to represent the UK on the EC's ad hoc group on chemical policies in the workplace-EU occupational exposure limits are negotiated in this forum. Further information on the negotiation of the second IOELV directive is set out below.

CHIP 3 (with supporting documents) introduced July 2002 as planned.

Safety requirements implemented by Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002 in December 2002.

UN Committee of Experts has developed and agreed a model scheme which will now be progressively refined. EU adoption subject to negotiation.

Unexpectedly complex range of legal issues has delayed implementation. Now rolling together 2003 amending directives with those of 2001 while completing full implementation of the Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive 1999/36/EC.

CD will be published summer 2003 with implementation expected in March 2004. 14 sets of regulations will be revoked.

HSE has participated in the development of an UK Position Statement on the likely new regime but detailed proposals are still awaited.

HSEs on-line risk assessment tool, Electronic COSHH Essentials (e-coshh), was launched in April 2002. E-coshh is very successful with target audience - particularly smaller businesses: a total of nearly 74 000 full on line risk assessments have been completed since launch giving an average rate of 4800 assessments per month; aim is 100 000 by end of 2003. Planned e-coshh expansion (Phase 2) will include process generated dusts and fumes, substances which cause asthma and risks from chemicals in commercial and retail premises. Phase 2 due for Ministerial launch during European

- Prepare for the Dangerous Substances European Week (13 – 17 October 2003).
- continue a two year campaign to improve the control of asbestos in the workplace through revised regulations on the control of asbestos at work.

Week for Safety and Health 2003. CFPD's e-coshh external promotion strategies to mid 2004, proactively target LA/SMEs/intermediaries, professional and press and trade associations/journals.

A newsletter covering all the risks from working with dangerous substances has been designed. 650 000 copies have been printed, many of which have been distributed to galvanise businesses to take sustainable action to prevent ill health from harmful chemicals.

The campaign has attracted over 1700 partners to promote the duty to manage asbestos. HSE policy advisers have spoken at over 40 events to promote the new duty. HSE also held conference for partners on 24 February at which the Minister for Work, Nick Brown spoke.

Occupational asthma

HSE will implement a strategy, agreed with external stakeholders, to improve the control of workplace substances that cause occupational asthma. A highlight during the year was the launch in March of a partnership project being led by the British Occupational Health Research Foundation to publish guidance for GPs, practice nurses, & of use to workers & employers, on the Management & Prevention on Occupational Asthma.

- Publish an action plan for taking forward the strategy and start implementation with stakeholders;
- work with TUs on training materials for use in safety representatives training courses; and
- develop COSHH Essentials style guidance for three major causes of occupational asthma.

Review of Gas Safety

- HSE will implement the recommendations within its remit from the final report of the Fundamental Review of gas safety.

Examples of partnership activities are; research project commissioned by the British Occupational Health Research Foundation to produce guidelines on the Management & Prevention of Occupational Asthma, & a collaborative project involving the Latex Allergy Support Group aimed at preventing asthma from latex gloves.

A work book was published in May 2002. This forms the basis of a new TUC training courses for safety representatives on occupational asthma.

Guidance on the control of wood dust, flour dust, & isocyanates in motor vehicle repair will be published in October '03.

The review report included 47 recommendations most of which are within HSE's remit. Progress on the main ones is given below.

- revise the gas safety (Installation and Use) Regulations;

Progress has been delayed due to new proposals from Ofgem (office for gas and electricity markets) for introducing further competition into the gas market. These have had a knock on effect on the proposals for amendments to the regulations. It is envisaged that a CD will be published early 2004.

- amend the Gas Safety (Management) Regulations;

Progress has been delayed due to new proposals from Ofgem for introducing further competition in to the gas market. Again this has had a knock on effect on the proposals for amendments to the regulations. It is envisaged that a CD will be published later in 2003.

- implement HSC strategy for gas safety publicity and awareness;

Development and costing of a strategy is nearing completion. HSC/E and the industry are investigating how the strategy will be funded.

- implement the HSC Gas Safety Research Strategic Plan;

Work is continuing to identify research including that which would inform future publicity/awareness strategies.

- prepare for transfer of enforcement responsibility for gas safety from HSE to local authorities;

Because LAs have not been allocated additional resources for enforcing gas safety legislation a revised transfer strategy is being developed. Work is underway to develop proposals for a staged transfer starting with homes in multiple occupation.

- introduce a streamlined accredited certification scheme; and

Criteria for streamlining initial assessment and re-assessment under the nationally accredited certification has been completed for domestic natural gas. Work to streamline LPG and commercial assessment is in hand.

- introduce Gas Safety Levy Regulations.

HSE is currently considering another statutory vehicle to introduce these regulations, now that the originally intended vehicle (DfT's Safety Bill) is no longer an option following HSC/E's move to DWP.

Other significant activities

During the year work has been completed on aligning the new domestic natural gas S/NVQs with ACS. Further work is being undertaken with regard to new S/NVQs for LPG and commercial work.

Public safety including fairgrounds

HSE will implement the outcomes of the review of safety on fairground rides. The effectiveness of this action will be assessed in light of the improvements achieved in the industry's safety record by Mid 2002.

HSE has actioned the recommendations of the Review of Safety on Fairground Rides. This was reported back to the Commission on 15 July 2003.

- HSE will continue to raise awareness on child safety in relation to work activities especially in agriculture, rail, construction and adventure activities.

Child safety, with a focus on educational visits, was the topic of internal HSE and DfES bilateral discussions. Results were the tightening of HSE policy and a press release of key messages. HSE also provided a health and safety objective to DfES's Splash Programme for disadvantaged young people.

Physical Agents

HSE will continue to commit policy and technical expertise on physical agents, focusing on completing negotiations on EU directives on noise and vibration.

- Complete negotiation of physical agents directives on noise and vibration and prepare plans for implementation; and work continues on negotiations on the Physical Agents (EMF) Directive.

Vibration Directive came into force on 6 July 2002 with a 3-year transposition period. Work well under way to issue in autumn 2003 Consultative Documents on implementing regulations and guidance.

Noise Directive came into force on 15 February 2003, with a three year transposition period. Expect to issue Consultative Document in spring 2004.

Other significant activities

Consolidated employer and employee leaflets on noise issued.

Workplace Safety

RHS Action Point 16 commits HSC to action on improving health and safety conditions for those affected by changing patterns of work including contractisation and home working.

- Amend the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations to take account of EC challenges and address other commitments made.
- Undertake research to help identify health and safety problems faced by homeworkers and ways to ensure they are given the same levels of protection by health and safety legislation as other workers.

The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 came into force on 17 September 2002. These included provision to address the EC challenges and a number of other commitments in the Workplace (HSW) Regulations.

The HSL scoping study on homeworking was published in April 2002. This has led to further research to develop six best practice case studies. The research is being carried out by HSL and tackles the six main broad areas involved with homeworking. Multi-lingual guidance will be produced from the research to provide Health and safety information to both employees and employers. The guidance is expected to be available from mid to late 2004.

- publish revised guidance on Section 6 of the HSW on the supply of products and substances and review personal protective equipment guidance;
- produce guidance to clarify issues and responsibilities for contractorisation;
- work with DTI to amend the Low Voltage Directive;
- monitor Pressure Systems Regulations and effectiveness of new compressed air decompression regime; and
- implement the HSC's Strategy to reduce the number of slips and trips incidents (which is supported by the Priority Programme).

Docks

- HSE will work with the docks industry to monitor progress on the delivery of their commitment to their industry targets.

Draft guidance aimed at auctioneers and those selling new and second hand plant and/or machinery through auction is currently with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) for comment. Following acceptance by RICS it is likely that this will become a partnership publication.

Following formal consultation a leaflet entitled 'Use of Contractors: a joint responsibility' that clarifies the general health and safety responsibilities of clients and contractors to protect each other, their workforces and others was published in September 2002. Approximately 36,000 copies have been distributed to date.

Discussions have been ongoing at European level. DTI is taking the lead for the UK and our input has been limited to comment on consultation documents. There is some European support to reduce the lower limit to 0 volts. This is something that the UK is resisting on the grounds that it will include all work equipment.

The Pressure Equipment Directive became obligatory through the EU on 29 May 2002. DTI, with HSE input, have been involved in the introduction of guidelines for both implementing and enforcement of the directive.

The HSC's Strategy is currently being progressed through a number of linked projects within the Slips Priority Programme.

The industry launched its Safer Ports Initiative in September 2002 with a programme of action to achieve the targets set out in response to Revitalising Health and Safety. HSE took a significant role in the preparation of this event.

Other significant activities

HSE has been involved in:

- Revising the ACoP and Guidance to the Docks Regulations, with the assistance of the Port Skills and Safety Ltd and the TGWU as the major docks union.
- IMO/ILO work on maritime security, as far as it affects port safety and security. This has a lead to civil contingency work on restricting the imports of ammonium nitrate.
- Assisting MCA with the preparation of regulations to safeguard the loading and unloading of bulk carriers.

Links with economic and other regulators

- HSE will continue to develop its relations with economic regulators for the privatised utility companies and the railways industry and with partners in the Environment Agency, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, The Maritime and Coastguard Agency , the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, the Civil Aviation Authority and the Air Accident Investigation Branch.

- Assisting DfT with the negotiations on the EC Port Service Directive.
- Assisting MCA with the preparation of guidance on the safety of fishing vessels and workboats.

All four activities have ‘knock on’ benefits for safety in ports and inland waterways.

EAU have continued to establish links across Government and engaged in the following activities: discussion with the Food Standards Agency to share best practice on undertaking regulatory impact assessments: joint meetings with the Environment Agency and DEFRA to discuss better methods for sharing information to improve resource use; discussions with Cabinet Office regarding the latest regulatory impact guidance; the Office of Fair Trade to clarify issues on the competition assessment; the SBS regarding the small business litmus test; and the rail industry in reviewing safety appraisal techniques.

HSE will shortly be publishing research examining the business costs of compliance with health and safety regulations. The findings will be shared with other regulators and the small business service to provide benchmarking.

HSE reissued the Memorandum of Understanding with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Marine Accident Investigation Branch.

Table 23 Providing information and advice on health and safety

HSE will continue to provide an information and advice service to inform the public of their obligations in relation to health and safety regulations and to raise awareness of risks to health and safety in the working environment. This work is critical in supporting RHS and SH2 and in particular the Priority Programmes.

Plans for 2002/03

- Action in 2002/3 will include activity to deliver behavioural change and better-informed decision making, to promote new approaches to health and safety and to monitor the effectiveness of health and safety communications.
- HSE will continue to manage HSE Books, InfoLine, Language Services, and advertising services.

Progress during 2002/03

Market research was undertaken to understand the needs, requirements and reactions of different audiences to a range of communications including the response of SMEs to positive/negative, rational/emotional messages.

The services are contracted out and were all retendered in the last two years. Comprehensive service level agreements are in place for each service, and regular contract management meetings are held.

- HSE will continue to develop and expand its web capability including publishing all research results freely on the internet and supporting HSEdirect.
- HSE will promote key messages through media, publicity, campaigns, newsletters, videos, posters, and attendance at exhibitions, conferences occasional seminars and workshops. Examples of publicity campaigns and guidance projects planned for 2002/03 are given below.

Publicity campaigns

- Revitalising Health and Safety - a stakeholder conference will be held May 2002;
- Safety Awareness Days.

HSE Achieved:

- 62.5 million Internet 'hits';
- added 37 000 new web pages.

DIAS:

- HSE Produced 350 new publications , of which 204 were priced and 146 were free including:
 - 32 guidance books;
 - 154 research reports;
 - 10 Approved Codes of Practice;
 - 5 videos;
 - 64 leaflets/information sheets;
 - 26 newsletters;
 - 39 other reports including HSC/E Annual Report.
- HSE managed and produced 50 leaflets taken over from the Forestry Commission;
- HSE collaborated with HSE Northern Ireland in joint badging of selected HSE publications;
- HSE issued 5.5 million free leaflets;
- HSE sold 738 000 priced publications;
- HSE sold 6200 videos;
- HSE planned and delivered 23 publicity campaigns;
- HSE sold 3900 electronic products;
- HSE organised 166 publicity events.

Other significant activities

- A new architecture and structure was agreed for guidance publications.
- New design standards for publications were developed.
- Extensive promotion of high profile publications such as new asbestos titles.
- The Worksmart TV series was extended beyond Granada TV to Meridian, Anglia and Border to provide a high profile, low cost TV presence for HSE.

The conference was planned and organised with stakeholder involvement and was aimed at the Chief Executives of the top 350 companies and public bodies in Great Britain. Several Ministers attended the event.

An increased number of Agricultural Safety Awareness Days were held in the year. SADs were also introduced for the construction industry. Evaluation showed that these events are an effective way of communicating health and safety messages.

- European Week of Safety and Health to be held October 2002 publicising adverse effects of Stress in the Workplace.

- Major campaigns to promote health and safety awareness in construction and agriculture through advertising at shows and events.

Guidance projects

- Essentials of office health and safety.
- Guidance on 'at work' road safety.

EW2002 attracted a very high level of interest with a record 185 000 Action Packs requested and issued. The evaluation of the event will be available shortly.

All the planned campaigns in Agriculture and Construction Working Well Together were delivered. Evaluation showed that the campaigns were effective in raising awareness and prompting action.

This is a joint publishing project between HSE and Norwich Union. Draft guidance is currently out for consultation.

HSE is currently collaborating with Department of Transport on the development and production of the guidance.

Other significant activities

Other guidance and publications were produced during the year, including:

- *CHIP for everyone – reflecting revised regulations;*
- *Jobs to die for* – powerful book containing testimonies of those who have lost loved ones through accidents at work;
- *Managing asbestos in premises – supporting new regulations;*
- *New and expectant mothers at work – guide for all employers;*
- HSE guidance entitled *Driving at work. Managing work-related road safety* was developed in conjunction with DfT. In developing the guidance we drew on the advice of a range of safety organisations, employers and TUs in particular Prospect and the Police Federation.

Table 24 Promoting risk assessment and technical knowledge

HSC's science and technology mission is to develop and apply science and technology to provide a sound independent knowledge base to evaluate the risks to people's health and safety from work activities and the means to assess and control these risks in order to help achieve its objectives. High quality science and technology provides an essential contribution to the formulation of UK and international regulatory decisions regarding people's health and safety. HSC's and HSE's activity in this area focuses on providing the scientific and technical underpinning essential to the goal of being an effective regulator and ensuring that the policy and standards set are technically sound and cost effective.

A Quality Statement for the implementation of the Chief Scientific Adviser's Guidelines 2000 on scientific advice and policy making has been drawn up and posted on the HSE intranet.

Progress: Two major policy processes were audited and found to be in accordance with Guidelines 2000.

HSC/E's Science and innovation Strategy

HSC/E's reputation is based on its science and technological expertise. To enable HSC/E to be an effective regulator and to ensure that the policy and standards that it sets are technically sound and cost effective, high quality scientific and technological underpinning is essential - science must be at the heart of policy making. HSC/E published a joint Science and Innovation Strategy in October 2001. This describes how HSC and HSE will apply science and technology to support their mission to ensure risks to peoples health and safety from work activities are properly controlled. Among other things, the strategy will:

- capitalise on existing strengths in HSE's ability to respond to operational needs;
- make transparent and direct linkages to the high level targets in the HSC Strategic Plan; and
- place a high priority on partnerships to identify gaps in scientific understanding and to share knowledge, especially with the national and international links already in place.

Research and technical knowledge

- HSE annually spends about 15% of its grant in aid on commissioned science and technology, both research and reactive work. HSE planned to spend £37.6million (at current prices) on commissioned Science and Technology (S&T) in 2002/2003. Overall expenditure on commissioned S&T was close to the plan of about £39m. Of this, the figure spent on research was £17.8m, not including research funded through HSE by industry. Research results are placed in full and free of charge on the HSE website.
- The HSC/E Science and Innovation Strategy describes the reorganisation of research and support activity in line with the Programme Blocks in the Strategic Plan (2001-04). Priority Programme Managers and those with responsibility for the other key blocks will identify and oversee research which address both specific and generic investigation of hazards to meet both policy and operational requirements to achieve HSE's priority targets and support work within its mandatory activities.

Progress: There has been good progress to implement this Strategy during 2002/03. The four Programme Blocks have all put in place appropriate arrangements to manage their research and support allocations, including Science and Innovation Advisory Groups to advice on business priorities.

- Research objectives, specific areas of current interest and new and emerging areas of interest within the Programme Blocks are identified in the HSE Strategic Research Outlook document (available on the HSE website).
- Key advisers to HSE policy makers are HSE's own scientific and technical staff, who provide considerable in-house expertise and extensive links to the wider national and international scientific community.
- HSE employs scientists and engineers who provide practical support and research; regulatory scientists and specialist inspectors who provide support and advice including commissioning work to improve understanding of risks to health and safety, to fill gaps in scientific, technical and medical knowledge and to develop and promote management and technical measures to minimise risk. Typical activities include:
 - occupational hygiene including chemicals, biological and physical agents, ergonomics and psycho-social issues including stress;
 - occupational safety including gas and chemical process safety and electrical and control systems; and
 - mechanical and structural integrity, risk assessment methodologies and application and human factors.

Progress: A major study of how HSE uses its corporate scientific and technological resources, undertaken as part of the HSE Change Programme, showed that improvements were needed in a number of key areas, eg horizon scanning, management of S&I knowledge and feeding implications about S&I developments into strategic planning. Actions taken to address these weaknesses included:

- The formation of a new Corporate Science and Analytical Services Directorate, headed by a full time Chief Scientist, which will aim to ensure that HSE policies, plans and programmes of work are based on sound evidence – especially scientific, economic, risk and statistical evidence; and
- the dispersal of many regulatory scientists and specialist inspectors to Corporate Topic Groups located in Directorates which are the dominant customers for their expertise but managed as a corporate resource.

The Health and Safety Laboratory

HSE's in-house agency, the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) undertakes research to enhance and add value to its primary role, which is to:

- provide casework support, evaluations of risk assessment methodologies and assessment of technical standards etc; and
- forensic support - investigation of incidents which may require research and intelligence activities.

Negotiation of a PFI deal to design, build and operate a new laboratory facility to enable HSL to collocate all its functions at Buxton is all but complete. Construction work will commence in 2002/2003 and HSL anticipate moving in to the new facility in the late summer of 2004.

Progress: Construction work has commenced on the new laboratory facility.

To secure access to expertise beyond the core capabilities of HSL, HSE has established a Framework Technical Support Agreement with seven external contractors (with an indicative spend of about £2m pa).

Risk assessment management and education

Decision-making on the basis of risk is fundamental to HSE’s regulatory activities and to promoting cross-departmental co-operation in risk management.

HSE’s approach to risk assessment is to ensure:

- good regulation through proportionality, consistency, transparency, targeting and accountability that promotes cross departmental co-ordination in risk management;
- effective risk communication to help stakeholders understand HSE’s messages and to enable them to participate in the decision-making process;
- young people receive sufficient risk education to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills on risk awareness; and
- safety critical professionals are encouraged to consider risk in both work practices and design.

Plans for 2002/03

Progress during 2002/03

- Programme of activities on risk assessment and education during 2002/03:
- publish guidance for duty holders on risk based decision making;

A Risk Education Programme consisting of four projects was agreed with HSC. Project Boards were established including external representation;

a range of medium and higher-level contacts has been developed in a variety of organisations that are able to exert influence on the educational system;

our innovative response to the plateau effect in health and safety performance is beginning to show results and earn the trust of educators.

Work evaluating ‘5 Steps to Risk Assessment’, and linked to this the production of an interactive risk assessment management tool for duty holders, is being funded through the Small Firms Programme budget. Both projects will conclude 2004.

- facilitate fora for discussing risk issues in HSE, Whitehall and Europe;
- develop policy on aspects of HSE's risk based decision making;
- publish research reports on key risk issues; and
- promote risk education in schools, colleges and universities in England, Scotland and Wales and facilitate the development and use of educational materials to support this.

Revision of risk assessment case studies has progressed, but few changes have been necessary to the existing publication, so the work now has a relatively low priority. The revised version is currently out for consultation within HSE.

The planned guidance to industry on HSE's view of the role of good practice has been subsumed in the bigger programme to review HSE's approach to good practice commissioned by the Operational Management Forum (OMF) and the Board.

HSE played a significant role in development of the Cabinet Office Report Risk: *Improving Government's capability to handle risk and uncertainty*, published in November 2002. HSE staff are also actively involved in implementation of the Report's recommendations.

Risk Policy Unit began a three year programme in mid 2002 to embed the principles of *Reducing Risks, Protecting People* (R2P2) in the culture of HSE. This includes: ensuring that revision of HSE internal procedural instructions reflect R2P2 conventions; creation of indexing, search and hypertext linking to improve accessibility; and the development of simplified guidance for staff engaged in policy and strategic development.

Reports have been published on *Trust in HSC/E as a regulator* and *Understanding and responding to societal concerns*. Internal research is underway to validate and refine a 'societal concerns gauging tool' based on external research completed in 2002.

Research and anecdotal evidence shows that risk teaching in school and university is becoming more widespread although further progress is needed. A range of teaching support materials have been produced and used extensively particularly in schools.

Other significant activities

A video and teacher pack entitled Check it out was produced illustrating risk management techniques for 14-16 year olds about to go on work experience. HSE funded the production of a CD ROM to teach risk management techniques to 11-14 year olds in science lessons.

Risk Education web pages were added to HSE's website and literature promoting the risk education programme produced.

Table 25 Statutory and other approval schemes

In some key areas of risk HSE will continue to operate statutory assessment or approval schemes aimed at ensuring product safety before supply.

Chemical product safety

The HSE is part, or the whole, of the UK Competent Authority or the relevant UK regulatory authority for several international programmes on chemicals and their potential effect on health, safety and the environment. Some programmes, eg under the Notification of New Substances and Existing Substances Regulations, place prescriptive legal duties on HSE. Most of these programmes operate on the supply side, establishing a regulatory regime for industrial chemicals at their point of supply which then guides the risk management of the chemical as it moves through the supply chain.

Progress during 2002/03: *HSE continues to meet commitments under these programmes, both in progressing the evaluation of substances assigned to the UK and in contributing to the international debate on chemical safety. The two programmes are due to be replaced in the long term and HSE has been contributing to the international debate (in which DEFRA leads for the UK) on the best way forward. Within the Notification of New Substances Regulations (NONS) Programme, 205 items were processed against prediction of 186.*

Pesticides and biocides approval

Pesticides can present high risks to humans, (particularly the worker) and the environment. They warrant a statutory approval scheme. HSE is the Competent Authority for approval of biocides and under the Control of Pesticides Regulations has the UK lead for worker protection for both agricultural and non-agricultural pesticides. HSE carries out the technical appraisal of non-agricultural pesticides and contributes to the occupational risk assessment of agricultural pesticides. As the Biocidal Products Regulations 1998 are rolled out there will be increasing demand on HSE's activities in this area.

Progress during 2002/03: *Obligations as regulatory authority for non-agricultural pesticides and on behalf of HSE as Competent Authority (CA) for biocides were met. The predicted output of 200 approvals was reached with 90% being within the revised target dates for completion. Five reviews of older pesticides were completed and a record 12 133 enquiries were answered. Receipt income for HSE was maintained.*

Employment Medical Advisory Service (EMAS)

The Employment Medical Advisory Service consists of doctors (medical inspectors) and nurses (occupational health inspectors) who carry out primary inspection of health risks in the workplace, investigate cases of ill health and provide advice to HSE and local authority inspectors on all aspects of occupational health issues. EMAS also runs statutory schemes for medical examinations for lead, asbestos, ionising radiation, chemicals, compressed air and diving.

Electrical Equipment Certification Service (EECS)

HSC Annual Report 2001/02 reported the background to the decision to close EECS by 30 June 2003. EECS ceased trading at the end of September 2002.

Other statutory schemes

HSE also has responsibility for:

- undertaking statutory activities for the notification and consent of genetically modified organisms, and additional inspection of environmental aspects of transgenic organisms under an agency agreement with DEFRA and the Scottish Executive; HSE received 265 notifications/consents under the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2000; 38 visits were made to premises under the agency agreement with DEFRA and the Scottish Executive for HSE to inspect the environmental aspects of transgenic organisms;
- the notification of use or storage of biological agents under Schedule 3 of COSHH Regulations 1999; HSE received 37 notifications for the use of biological agents under the COSHH Regulations (14 under the COSHH 1999 Regulations and 23 under the COSHH 2002 Regulations);
- approval of dosimetry services under the Ionising Radiations Regulations 1999: 35 approvals were issued; and
- approval of transportable pressure vessel design: 11 approvals were issued.