



HEALTH & SAFETY COMMISSION

Highlights

from the

Annual Report and Accounts 1997/1998



HSC'S MISSION STATEMENT

...

To ensure that risks
to people's health and safety
from work activities
are properly controlled

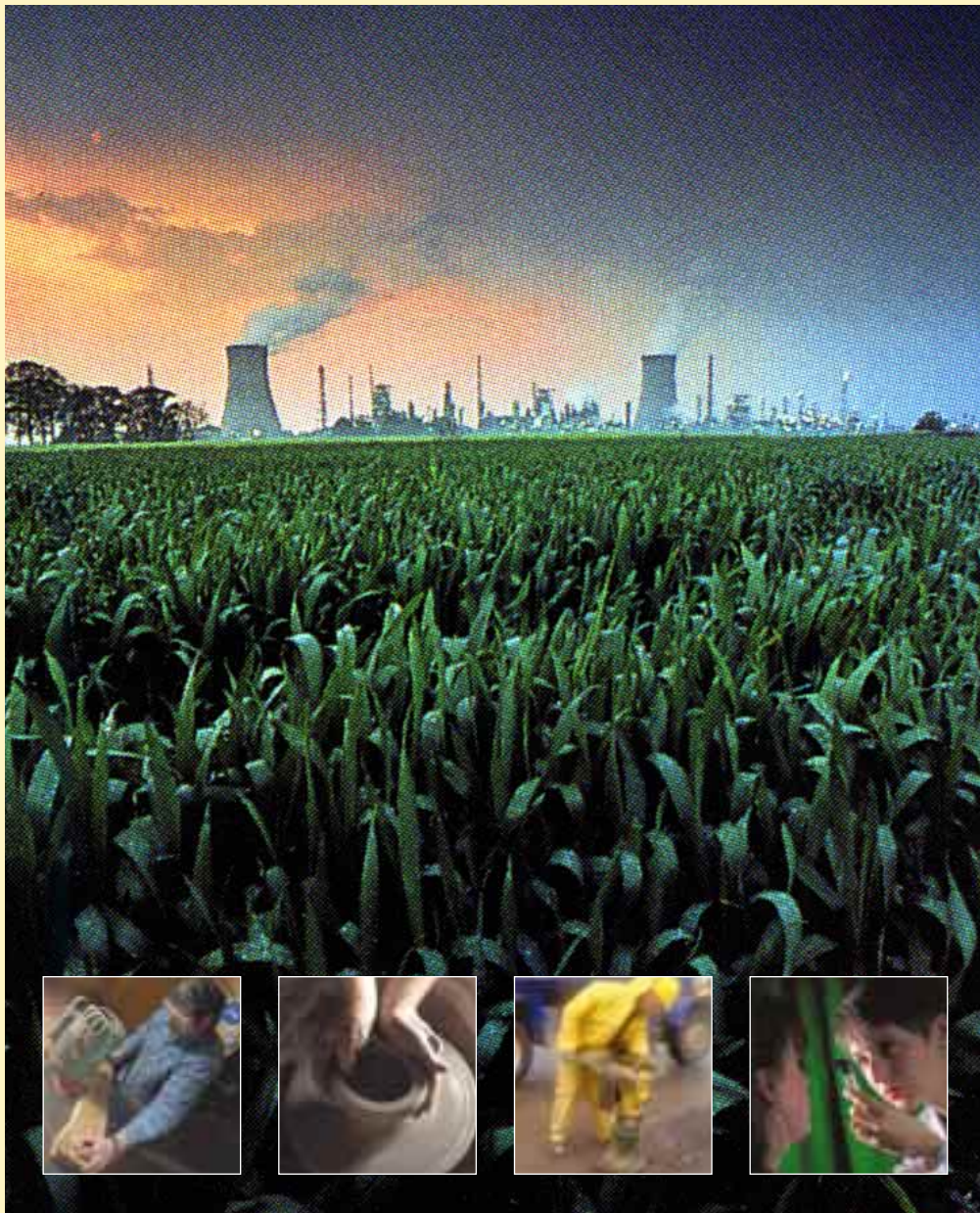


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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to introduce our new booklet giving highlights of HSC/E's work in 1997/98. I hope that you will find it of interest and that it will start you thinking about health and safety in your own workplace. If we are to build on the achievements we have undoubtedly made, we need the commitment and support of all those who can help to improve health and safety.

FRANK J DAVIES CBE,OSTJ

Our key objectives for 1997/98:

To improve standards of occupational health, including through the Good Health is Good Business campaign.

To implement HSC's strategy for reaching small firms, in partnership with local authorities and others.

To increase client contact, including the time spent by inspectors on site.

To continue to press for better regulation and better guidance, which is simpler, clearer and therefore more effective.

To take forward implementation of the COMAH Directive and to establish the necessary operational procedures.

Our continuing aims:

To modernise, simplify and support the regulatory framework, including European Union and other international work.

To secure compliance with the law in line with the principles of proportionality, consistency, transparency and targeting on a risk-related basis.

To improve the knowledge and understanding of health and safety through the provision of appropriate (and timely) information and advice.

To promote risk assessment and technological knowledge as the basis for setting standards and guiding enforcement activities.

To operate statutory schemes, including regulatory services, through, for example, the Employment Medical Advisory Service.

To maintain an efficient and effective central service which promotes and secures value for money.

The Health and Safety Commission (HSC)



CYNTHIA ATWELL



DAVID COULSTON

JOYCE
EDMOND-SMITH

ANNE GIBSON



ALAN GRANT



MIKE MCKIERNAN



ANN SCULLY OBE*



REX SYMONS CBE



ROBIN TURNEY

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)



JENNY BACON CB



DAVID EVES CB



RICHARD HILLIER

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY

COMMISSION (HSC) is a body of ten people, appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions for the administration of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. HSC's primary function is to make arrangements to secure the health, safety and welfare of people at work, and the public, in the way undertakings are conducted, including proposing new law and standards, conducting research and providing information and advice.

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

(HSE) is a body of three people which advises and assists the Commission in its functions. It also has day-to-day responsibility for enforcing health and safety legislation; investigates accidents; licences and approves standards in areas of significant hazard and commissions research. The Executive has a staff of around 4000 - collectively known as HSE - which includes inspectors, policy advisers, technologists and scientific and medical experts.

* It was with regret that the Commission learned of the sad death of Mrs Scully on 23 November 1997.

...

This booklet provides highlights of the work undertaken by HSC/E in 1997/98. It is not possible here to cover all the work we carried out during the year but full details are given in HSC's *Annual report and accounts for 1997/98*.

...

How we performed against our key objectives

Our key objectives are those areas where a particular effort was made in 1997/98 and are in addition to our mainstream work.

Key objective:

To improve standards of occupational health including through the Good Health is Good Business campaign



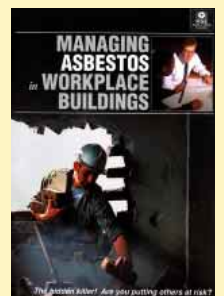
Our Good Health is Good Business campaign is a long-term programme to help bring about changes in the way health risks are managed. We promoted good management through media advertising, publicity initiatives and a wide range of field activity:

- The second phase of the campaign focused on dermatitis and occupational cancers (including cancers caused by asbestos).
- Much of this work was carried out in partnership with key intermediary organisations.
- So far over half a million copies of the campaign guidance have been issued.



ASBESTOS

- Work continued on proposals for further restrictions on the importation, supply and use of white asbestos.
- We issued a consultative document proposing new regulations.
- Two hundred and fifty visits were made to enforce the effective management of asbestos in workplace buildings.
- Thirty six per cent of contractors licensed to remove asbestos were inspected.



OTHER HEALTH ISSUES

- Numerous local and national projects were carried out, covering a wide range of health issues. Here are just two examples:
 - Enforcement initiatives on dermatitis in selected industries, such as metal-plating.
 - Providing small mines with advice on the practical aspects of controlling respirable dust.

GUIDANCE

Simple, user-friendly guidance is one of the ways we get important messages across. Here are just a few that were published during the year on occupational health issues:

- Case studies on hand-arm vibration *Vibration solutions*.
- A leaflet for purchasers of noisy equipment *Keep the noise down*.
- *Violence and aggression to staff in health services*.
- Revised guidance on *Seating at work*.

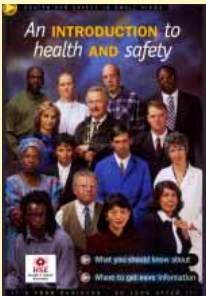


PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGY

■ HSE worked extensively with the Department of Health in the drafting of the Green Paper on the new public health strategy for England *Our Healthier Nation*. This was published in February 1998 and includes the workplace as one of the key settings for action. Similar work is continuing with the Scottish and Welsh offices.

Key objective:

To implement HSC's strategy for reaching small firms, in partnership with local authorities and others



The key to our strategy is **better communications with small firms**:

- We sent our booklet *An introduction to health and safety* to 750 000 small firms. It signposts what they need to know and where to get help and information.
- HSE's telephone InfoLine was expanded to handle increasing numbers of enquiries, particularly from small firms.
- The Commission held **breakfast meetings** with small firms.

Small firms were a key theme of the *European Week for Safety and Health* in October 1997:

- Hundreds of companies took part. The best efforts were recognised at an awards ceremony at London's Cafe Royal.
- The **Good Neighbour scheme** was launched. This aims to encourage organisations with health and safety expertise to help smaller businesses which may be less knowledgeable.



Throughout the year HSE used a variety of methods to contact small firms, such as preventive inspection and investigations, seminars and mailshots. In 1997/98 nearly **75 000 (81%) of planned inspections** by HSE's Field Operations Directorate were of small businesses. Here are just two examples of specific actions:

- A targeted inspection campaign of minor construction work in seaside resort towns.
- A blitz of the clothing industry in North London.



Key objective:

To increase client contact, including the time spent by inspectors on site

We want to free up our inspectors so that they can spend more time enforcing the law and advising on how to improve management of health and safety. HSE introduced a new measure and target of 75% for the percentage of inspector time spent in direct contact with clients and related activities such as travel to site and office follow-up. HSE surpassed this target, achieving 79%.



Measures to increase the time and the quality of inspectors' contact with clients included:

- **Improving office-based systems** - such as the introduction of an improved procedure for handling complaints.
- A trial introduction of **hand-written report forms** to employers, to reduce the amount of time spent in the office writing letters.

Key objective:

To continue to press for better regulation and better guidance, which is simpler, clearer and therefore more effective

The **Review of Regulation programme** made 33 recommendations designed to achieve a regulatory system which is simpler, clearer and more effective. The reforms made will have lasting effects on the health and safety system in Great Britain. Thirty of the Review's 33 recommendations have now been implemented. Some of the major outcomes are:

- **Paperwork:** Over 190 forms used by business were reviewed. Fifty-three per cent have been removed and 8% revised. All legislative paperwork requirements are now being reviewed and those which are unnecessary will be removed.
- **Guidance and information:** Of some 750 publications, 392 have been deleted; 223 found fit for purpose; and the remainder have been revised.
- **Legislative reform:** Fifty-three sets of regulations and Acts have so far been removed, while health and safety standards have been maintained and wherever possible improved.

Key objective:

To take forward implementation of the COMAH Directive and to establish the necessary operational procedures



CoMAH

The Control of Major Accident Hazards Involving Dangerous Substances Directive (COMAH) aims to protect both people and the environment. We are working closely with the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Environmental Agency and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that both elements are effectively covered.

- We issued a consultative document in May 1998, including innovative arrangements for HSE to act as joint competent authority with the environment agencies.
- Assessment principles and acceptance criteria for the evaluation of COMAH safety reports were prepared and are now being piloted.
- The recruitment programme for inspectors is now half completed and training is already under way.

We are confident that HSE will play its full part in establishing a regulatory regime which will address the control of major accident hazards well into the next century.

How we performed against our continuing aims

HSC/E's mainstream work stems from our statutory functions under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. These activities are wide-ranging and draw on extensive expertise across the organisation. Some highlights from 1997/98 are given below. Full details of HSE's key outputs and quality measures are set out in the output and performance analysis on page 14.

Aim:

Modernising, simplifying and supporting the regulatory framework ...

We are responsible for developing policy and introducing legislation in response to new risks, government initiatives and requirements of European Union directives. For example:

- We developed a strategy on safety aspects of the year 2000 'millennium time bomb'.
- We were involved in the negotiation of 32 EU directives. Our priorities are to support goal-setting measures which will achieve real improvements in health and safety in Europe.

The **UK presidency of the European Union** provided an opportunity for HSC/E to promote key themes, including occupational health. HSC/E planned and delivered an upbeat Presidency which raised the profile of health and safety across Europe.

Aim:

Securing compliance with the law...

HSE inspectors are responsible for enforcing health and safety law in over 600 000 establishments. Local authorities enforce the Act in around 1 250 000 establishments, mainly in the lower risk sectors. In 1997/98 HSE:

- carried out 186 000 regulatory contacts. This work included a number of initiatives such as a **national agriculture campaign** where, during a series of two-week inspection blitzes, 122 inspectors made 4500 visits to farms, issued around 1000 enforcement notices and initiated 14 prosecutions;
- investigated 33 600 incidents and complaints about working conditions;
- dealt with 660 safety cases in high hazard industries.



Aim:

Providing appropriate information and advice...

Information and advice get across important messages on health and safety to a far greater number of people than we could ever hope to reach through inspection alone. This year we:

- published over 400 new titles;
- issued 5.4 million leaflets;
- sold over 850 000 publications.

We were also successful in getting health and safety issues taken up by

'soaps' - tractor safety in *The Archers*, gas safety in *Brookside* and construction safety in *Coronation Street*.

HSE's web site now includes:

- who we are and what we do;
- summaries of the HSC/E Plan of Work and Annual Report;
- how to contact HSE to make enquiries or complain;
- press releases;
- the text of free publications;
- what's new' - information about new publications, videos and legislation;
- the full text of consultative documents including an on-line response facility;
- agendas of Commission and Advisory Committee meetings.

HSE web site <http://www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm>

HSE statistics <http://www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsestats.htm>



Aim:

Promoting risk assessment and technological knowledge...

Our mission to ensure that risks to people's health and safety are properly controlled requires a thorough knowledge and understanding of science and technology related to health and safety evaluation and the prevention of accidents and ill health. We use this intelligence when proposing standards and regulations, in advising industry and in enforcement. And we need to keep it up to date.

Work began this year on a project to establish a robust HSE **database of technological trends** and their implications for health and safety. A summary of the draft database *Trends table* is on the HSE web site.

DEFUSING THE MILLENNIUM TIME BOMB

HSE commissioned research to consider the way safety-related computer control systems will behave as the date changes from 1999 to 2000.

- The report *Safety and the year 2000* was published in January. It provides businesses with an effective and structured way of preparing for the millennium using a risk-based strategy. An abstract of the report is on the Internet.
- A free guidance booklet *Health and safety and the year 2000 problem*, aimed at small firms, was published in May 1998.



Aim: Operating statutory schemes, including regulatory services ...

We have an important role to play in ensuring that particular products or substances, such as chemical substances and non-agricultural pesticides are assessed, approved or certified to ensure that they do not pose a risk to people or the environment. For example we:

- issued 197 pesticide approvals;
- issued 800 diving certificates;
- processed 580 asbestos licence applications.



Aim: Maintaining an efficient and effective central service...

We are committed to improving our performance and the value for money we get from our resources by equipping staff with the skills and competencies they need to do their jobs; using information technology to drive down costs and increase effectiveness; and carrying through our programme of efficiency projects.

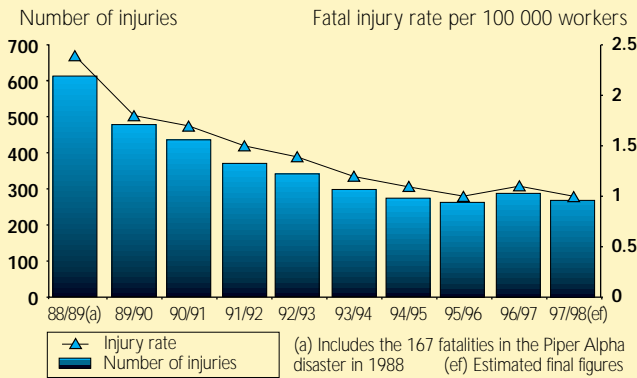
- We achieved nearly £9 million in efficiency gains.
- By the end of 1997/98 HSE had gained **Investors in People** status for 13 directorates/divisions - 50% of our staff.



Health and safety statistics

Fatal injuries to workers

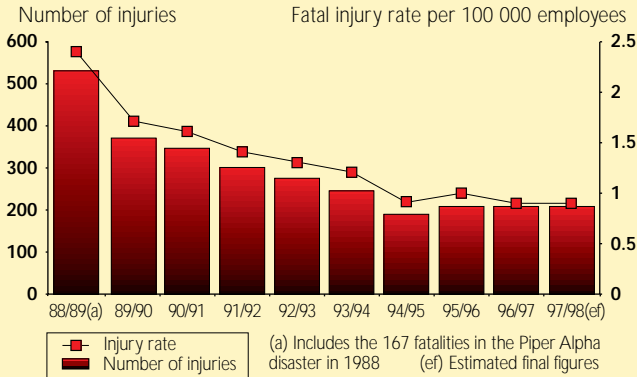
Figure 1
FATAL INJURIES TO WORKERS 1988/89-1997/98(ef)



In 1997/98:

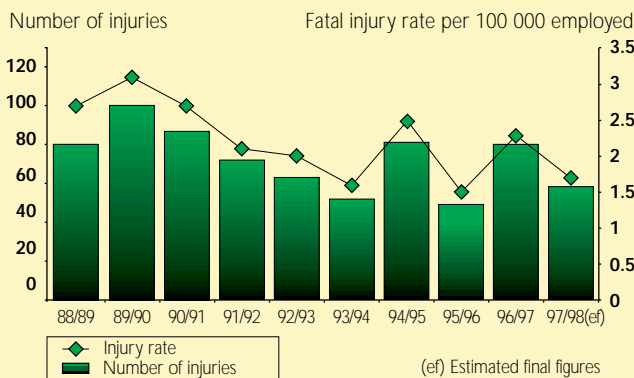
- The number of fatal injuries to workers is expected to be 268. This is 19 fewer than in 1996/97 and is the second lowest number reported in recent years.
- The fatal injury rate is expected to be 1.0 per 100 000 workers. This is the same as the rate for 1995/96: the lowest in recent years.

Figure 2
FATAL INJURIES TO EMPLOYEES 1988/89-1997/98(ef)



- The number of fatal injuries to employees is expected to be 210, a rise of three from the previous year.
- The fatal injury rate is expected to remain at 0.9 per 100 000 employees, the lowest level since 1986/87.
- These figures represent one of the lowest numbers of fatalities and fatality rate since RIDDOR was introduced in 1986/87.

Figure 3
FATAL INJURIES TO THE SELF-EMPLOYED 1988/89-1997/98(ef)

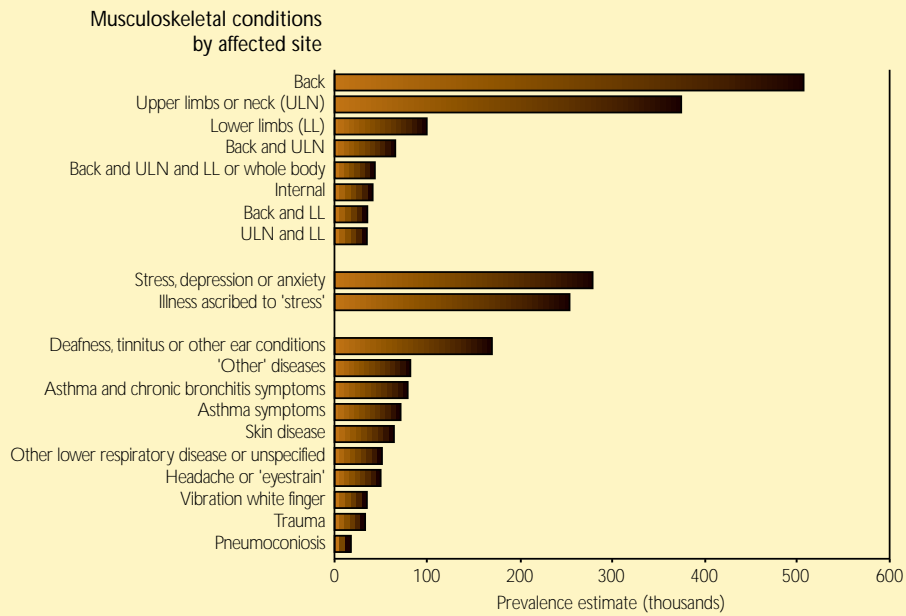


- The number of fatal injuries to the self-employed is expected to decrease by 22 to 58 compared with 80 in 1996/97.
- The fatal injury rate for the self-employed is expected to drop to 1.7 per 100 000 self-employed people, continuing the fluctuations seen in the rate over the last few years.

Estimated final figures for fatal injuries and fatal injury rates are based on the number of injuries reported so far, plus an estimate for late reports

Ill health

Figure 4
ESTIMATED
PREVALENCE OF
SELF-REPORTED
WORK-RELATED
ILLNESS,
BY DISEASE
GROUP IN
GREAT BRITAIN,
BASED ON
SW195 SURVEY



In 1995 an estimated 2 million individuals in Great Britain suffered from an illness which they believed was caused by their work (current or past). An estimated 19.5 million working days were lost because of work-related illness. The commonest types of reported illness were:

- musculoskeletal disorders (affecting an estimated 1.2 million people);
- stress, depression or anxiety (279 000).

Other illness categories with substantial estimated numbers included:

- lower respiratory disease (202 000);
- deafness or other ear conditions (170 000);
- skin disease (66 000);
- headache or 'eyestrain' (50 000);
- trauma (34 000);
- vibration white finger (36 000);
- pneumoconiosis (19 000).

Past exposures to asbestos continue to be the main cause of death from occupational disease, with some 1300 deaths a year from mesothelioma, most of them probably caused by asbestos. In 1996 there were 1% fewer deaths than in the previous year, but it is too soon to know whether this fall will be continued in future years - there were temporary falls in 1985 and 1990. Because of the long time intervals between asbestos exposure and death (15 to 60 years) the increasing trend that was seen up to the mid-1990s is a reflection of past trends in asbestos usage, and controls less strict than those in force in recent years.

Output and performance analysis

Contextual indicators (the environment in which HSE carries out its mission and aims)

HSC/E's mission: to ensure that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled.

Fatal and major injury rate for workers, per 100 000	116.2, 1996/97 (final rate) 115.6, 1997/98 (estimated final rate)	Source: <i>The costs to the British economy of work accidents and work related ill health</i> HSE Books 1994 ISBN 0 7176 0666 X. Cost figures are currently being re-estimated and will be available in future publications.
Estimated cost to society of work accidents and work-related ill health	£11-16 billion, 1989/90	
- of which, cost of work-related ill health	£4-5 billion, 1989/90	

OUTPUT MEASURES (how HSE carries out its aims)

	1996/97 Outturn	1997/98 Plan	1997/98 Outturn	Notes
AIM 1: MODERNISE AND SIMPLIFY THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK, BY:				
Introducing sets of regulations, approved codes of practice, consultative documents and new guidance documents	*	100	56	Indicator of one aspect of this work. Many policy outputs are difficult to quantify. Much unplanned new work.
AIM 2: SECURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW, BY:				
Making regulatory contacts, including inspections and investigations, with employers and duty holders	*	162 000	186 065	Includes all operational site visits, office meetings etc with clients.
Investigating incidents/complaints	27899	28 000	33 585	Cases completed, some of which may involve more than one contact.
Considering and processing safety cases/reports and nuclear licence actions	731	732	658	Demand-led measure, beyond HSE's control. Includes offshore safety cases, onshore major hazard safety reports and nuclear licence actions.
AIM 3: PROVIDE INFORMATION AND ADVICE, BY:				
Dealing with enquiries	520 000	600 000	448 000	Largely a demand-led measure.
Making available a range of publicity products	*	1731	2707	Includes publications, titles, exhibitions/displays, press adverts, notices and briefings, Internet pages, video and Autofax titles.
Number of publicity products purchased or accessed, millions	*	7.3	7.4	Includes free leaflets issued, publications sold, videos hired/sold, accesses to Autofax and Internet 'hits'. Noticeable shift in emphasis from printed to electronic media.
AIM 4: PROMOTE RISK ASSESSMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING, BY:				
Letting research contracts	365	285	340	Targets agreed with Ministers for HSE's research to involve more collaboration with industrial partners, etc.
Involving external collaborators in research projects	73	80	87	
AIM 5: OPERATE STATUTORY SCHEMES, BY:				
Providing regulatory services, eg issuing statutory certificates	*	3848	4218	This is an aggregate measure, comprising a wide range of our statutory products.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES (efficiency and quality aspects of how HSE carries out its aims)

	1996/97 Outturn	1997/98 Plan	1997/98 Outturn	Notes
AIM 1: MODERNISE AND SIMPLIFY THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK				
Percentage of sets of regulations, approved codes of practice, consultative documents and guidance documents introduced on time	*	70	84	
AIM 2: SECURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAW				
Percentage of high hazard/risk workplaces receiving annual regulatory contact	*	100	100	Continuing commitment. Excludes the Chemical and Hazardous Installations Division and the Railways Inspectorate who do not use this measure (they use an alternative assessment of hazards/risks).
Percentage of complaints (about work activities) investigated	*	86	74	Volume of investigations continued to be well on target but the proportion of investigations was low due to a higher number of complaints than anticipated.
Percentage of reported events (accidents/incidents) investigated	*	5.5	6.9	
Percentage of safety cases/reports and nuclear licence actions processed on time	*	86	90	
Percentage of prosecutions resulting in convictions	80	targets not set	77	1997/98 figure provisional - see also the general note below.*
Percentage of inspector time on site/contact and related activities (as a proportion of total time available)	*	75	79	Proportion of time (net of leave and training) spent by operational inspectors on regulatory programmes. Mines Inspectorate excluded.
AIM 3: PROVIDE INFORMATION AND ADVICE				
Percentage of public enquiries answered within ten days	98	100	97	Continuing Citizen's Charter commitment.
Percentage of customer satisfaction with HSE service	86	targets not set	86	Citizen's Charter measure (see general note below)
Number of justified or partly justified complaints against HSE staff per 100 000 contacts	4	targets not set	6	Citizen's Charter measure. Contacts include all public enquiries and regulatory contacts (see general note below).
AIM 4: PROMOTE RISK ASSESSMENT AND TECHNOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING				
Percentage of research projects completed on time	99	95	95	
AIM 5: OPERATE STATUTORY SCHEMES				
Percentage of service products (statutory certificates etc) processed on time	*	86	90	Excludes mines approvals and exemptions.
AIM 6: ENSURE EFFICIENT CENTRAL SERVICES**				
Efficiency gains (cash and productivity) as a percentage of total running costs	8.5	5.8	5.3	
Staff costs (as a percentage of the total) devoted to central services (personnel, planning, finance etc)	8.2	8	8.2	New calculation method, based on costing of aims.

GENERAL NOTES:

HSE does not set targets for certain measures and indicators, ie prosecution conviction rates, some Citizen's Charter results, measures that are demand-led and measures that are beyond our control. Instead, where necessary, the term 'expected demand level' is used.

* New measure, comparative figures not available.

** Aim 6 is now considered an internal business aim.

Health and Safety Commission and Health and Safety Executive Summary Financial Statements 1997-98

SUMMARY FOREWORD

These summary financial statements are only a summary of the information in the Health and Safety Commission's and Health and Safety Executive's financial statements and do not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the results and state of affairs of them.

For further information, consult the full annual financial statements and the Comptroller and Auditor General's report on those statements. These are included in HSC's Annual Report and Accounts 1997/98 (ISBN 0 7176 1638 X) which is available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6FS.

These summary financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 section 251 and The Companies (Summary Financial Statement) Regulations 1995 (SI 1995/2092) and were signed by Frank J Davies CBE, OStJ and Jenny H Bacon CB on 29 September and 28 September 1998 respectively.

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

The continuing aims and key objectives for 1997-98 of the Commission and Executive are reviewed in pages 2 to 11 of this report.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Commission's and Executive's continuing aims and key objectives for 1998-99 were set out in the Health and Safety Commission's Plan of Work, published in May 1998.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION AND EXECUTIVE

Commission members

Chairman: Frank J Davies CBE, OStJ
Other members: Cynthia Atwell, David Coulston, Joyce Edmond-Smith, Anne Gibson, Alan Grant, Michael McKiernan, Rex Symons CBE, Ann Scully OBE and Robin Turney.
Ann Scully OBE died in November 1997.
Cynthia Atwell stood down on 31 March 1998.
George Brumwell and Margaret Burns were appointed from 1 April 1998.

Executive members

Director General: Jenny H Bacon CB
Other members: David Eves CB and Richard Hillier.

SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1998

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

	1997-98	1996-97
	£000	£000
Grant in aid received from Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions	178 600	178 300
less:		
Staff and other operating charges	510	453
Allocation of grant in aid to the Health and Safety Executive	178 090	177 847
Surplus/deficit for the financial year	-	-
Commission members' emoluments	129	123

There are no material balances at 31 March 1998 and a balance sheet has therefore not been prepared.

Frank J Davies CBE, OStJ

Chairman
29 September 1998

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

	1997-98	1996-97
	£000	£000
Grant in aid received from the Health and Safety Commission	178 090	177 847
Other income	<u>36 030</u>	<u>33 787</u>
	214 120	211 634
Expenditure	<u>212 181</u>	<u>215 270</u>
<i>Operating surplus/(deficit)</i>	1 939	(3 636)
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	(75)	(575)
Notional interest on capital	<u>(2 532)</u>	<u>(2 590)</u>
<i>Deficit on ordinary activities</i>	(668)	(6 801)
Notional interest on capital reversal	2 159	2 590
Release to current replacement cost reserve	-	<u>(511)</u>
<i>Surplus/(deficit) for the year</i>	<u>1 491</u>	<u>(4 722)</u>
Executive members' emoluments	306	301

SUMMARY BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 1998

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

	1997-98	1996-97
	£000	£000
Fixed assets	<u>35 942</u>	<u>36 601</u>
Current assets	15 297	14 007
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	<u>(9 036)</u>	<u>(6 190)</u>
<i>Net current assets</i>	6 261	7 817
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than 1 year	<u>(3 031)</u>	<u>(3 038)</u>
<i>total net assets</i>	<u>39 172</u>	<u>41 380</u>
Reserves	39 172	41 380

Jenny H Bacon CB

Director General
28 September 1998

The certificate and report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the full financial statements for the year ended 31 March 1998 was unqualified and did not contain a statement made under either section 237(2) of the Companies Act 1985 (accounting records or returns inadequate or accounts not agreeing with records or returns) or section 237(3) (failure to obtain necessary information and explanations).

STATEMENT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

I have examined the summary financial statements on pages 16 and 17 which have been prepared in the form and on the basis set out in the Summary Foreword on page 16.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMISSION, THE EXECUTIVE, THE CHAIRMAN AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

The summary financial statement for the HSC is the responsibility of the Commission and the Chairman and the statements of the HSE, the Executive and the Director General respectively. My responsibility is to report to you my opinion on their preparation and consistency with the full financial statements and foreword.

BASIS OF OPINION

I have conducted my work in accordance with the Auditing Guideline *The auditors' statement on the summary financial statement* adopted by the Auditing Practices Board.

OPINION

In my opinion the summary financial statement is consistent with the full financial statements and foreword of the Health and Safety Commission and the Health and Safety Executive for the year ended 31 March 1998 and has been properly prepared on the basis set out in the Summary Foreword to the summary financial statements.

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General
12 October 1998

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9SP



MAIL ORDER

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Sheffield S3 7HQ

HSE home page on the World Wide Web:
<http://www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm>

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