

Principles of sensible risk management

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What they say...



“Who will protect us from the health and safety set?”

“...with their mantra ‘there’s no such thing as an accident’...”

“...cancer of a civilised society...”

“Please stop nannyng us!”

“Hypersafe is the one true faith.”

“The minister for health and safety should be prosecuted as a public hazard”

3 main types of stories:



1) Genuinely risk-averse behaviour

3 main types of stories:



2) Myths and blatant untruths

3 main types of stories:



3) Health and safety as a convenient excuse

Excessive risk aversion:



- Stifles creativity and efficiency in both private and public sectors
- Restricts personal freedoms, particularly for children
- Diverts attention away from the serious risks

Action so far:



Online debate & feedback from meetings:

- Great deal of common ground

Language: the problem is “excess”

- Most decisions made are good ones

A degree of managed risk is necessary
for children’s development

Action so far:



Ministerial Steering Group on Compensation:

- Ministers from across Whitehall are actively involved
- Stakeholders from inside & outside government are supporting the group

A broad coalition has been formed

Action so far:



Research into the root causes of excessive risk aversion:

- Aims to identify the scale and scope of the issue
- Looks into the key drivers

Looks for answers, not scapegoats

Bringing to a focus:



Research into the root causes of excessive risk aversion (cont):

- Review of media stories, exploring the facts behind them

Quantitative survey of managers across key sectors

- 12 case studies exploring the issues in some detail

Bringing to a focus:



Principles of Sensible risk management:

- Drawing conclusions & feedback into a set of high-level principles by Summer '06
- Achieve wide sign-up to the principles

Back them with specific actions to put them into action

Sensible risk management IS about:



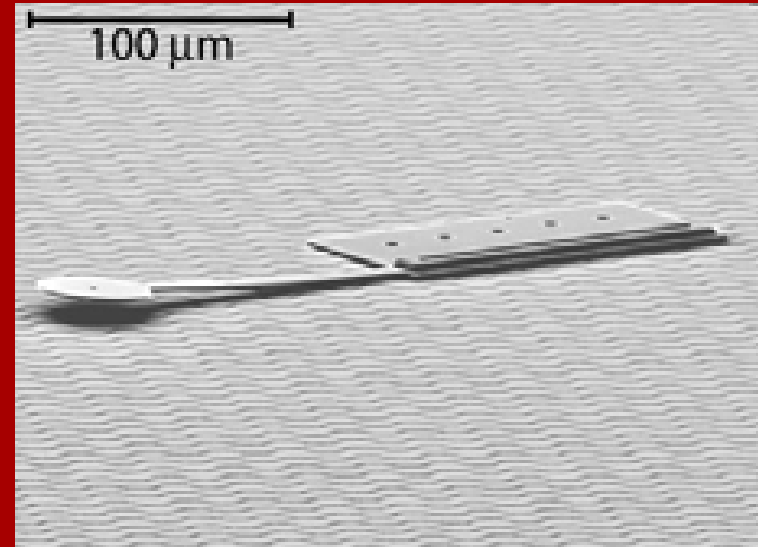
- Protecting people

Sensible risk management IS about:



- Providing overall benefit to society by balancing risks and benefits.

Sensible risk management IS about:



- Enabling innovation and learning

Sensible risk management IS about:



- Getting people who create risks to manage them responsibly – or expect robust action

Sensible risk management IS about:



- Letting people know they have responsibilities as well as rights

Sensible risk management IS NOT about:



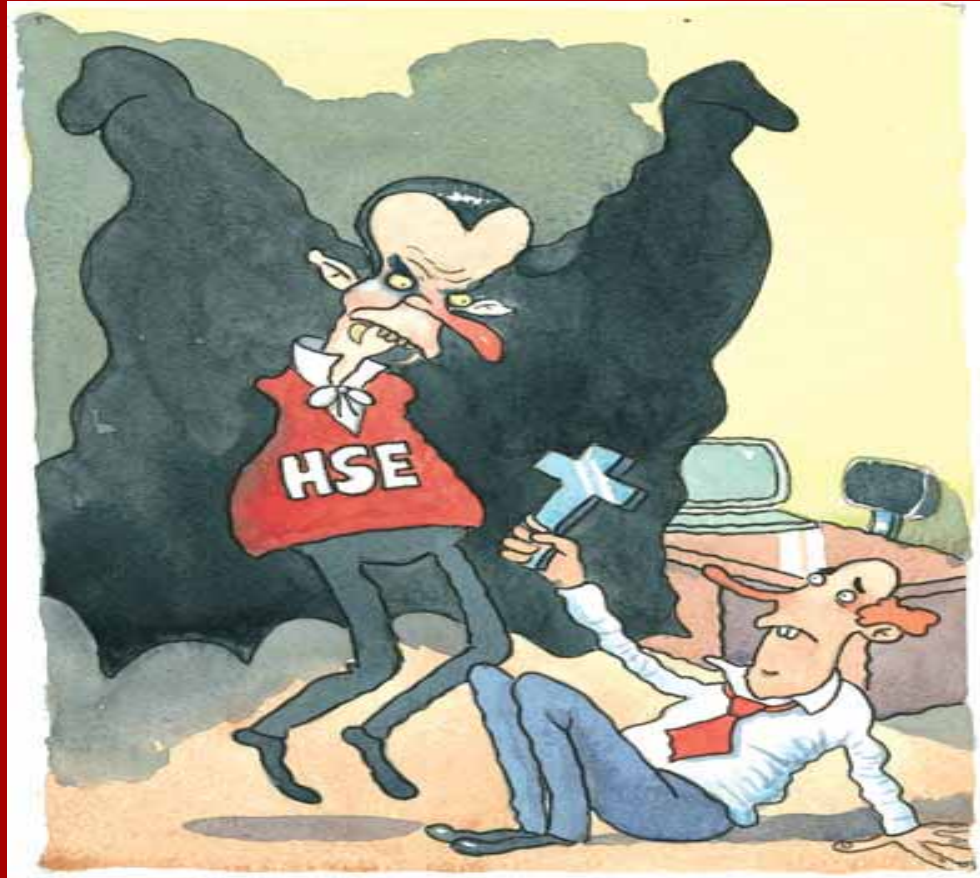
- Creating a totally risk free society

Sensible risk management IS NOT about:



- Generating useless paperwork mountains

Sensible risk management IS NOT about:



- Scaring people unduly

Sensible risk management IS NOT about:



- Stopping well managed recreation and learning