

---

# The HSE Management Standards for tackling Work-related Stress - Consultation Report

---



# Contents

|  | <b>Page Number</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| <b>1. Introduction</b>   | <b>3</b>           |
| <b>2. Results</b>  |                    |
| 2.1 Q1 - Can the states be achieved in your workplace?   | 4                  |
| 2.2 Q2 - How well is your organisation currently performing?                                     | 4                  |
| 2.3 Q3 - Is it useful to have a numerical target?  | 5                  |
| 2.4 Q4 - Should the target be in the Standard or the supporting guidance?                        | 6                  |
| 2.5 Q5 - Should the target be an absolute cut-off, an aspirational target or a stepped approach? | 7                  |
| 2.6 Q6 - Where did you find out about the consultation?  | 8                  |
| <b>3. Appendices</b>   |                    |
| Appendix 1 Table showing full results for Question 1   | 9 -10              |
| Appendix 2 Bar charts showing full results for Question 2  | 11 -13             |
| Appendix 3 Results for Questions 3, 4 & 5 broken down by size of organisation                    | 14 -15             |
| Appendix 4 Evaluation Criteria   | 16 -17             |
| Appendix 5 Consultation Questionnaire  | 18 -25             |
| Appendix 6 Analysis of Organisational responses  | 25 -28             |

# 1. Introduction

The Management Standards for Tackling Work-related Stress (the Standards) Public Consultation began on 25 May 2004 and ended on 27 August 2004. During this period 631 people responded, with 575 of these replying electronically via the HSE Consultation website, while 56 returned hard copies of the questionnaire (a further 9 hard copy questionnaires were excluded from the analysis as they were anonymous, as per the published Evaluation Criteria – see Appendix 4).

Electronic and hard copy responses were analysed using the BOMEL Response Collection and Analysis Tool.

Evaluation Criteria were drawn up at the beginning of the consultation exercise. These criteria specified what would be accepted as legitimate submissions, indicated how responses would be analysed and suggested that the criterion for assuming public support would be when the majority (i.e. >50%) of respondents who expressed a preference endorse the 'agree' or 'strongly agree' alternatives.

HSE also received corporate responses from 30 organisations all of which broadly welcomed the development of the Standards. Please see appendix 6 for a summary of the responses

## 2. Results

### 2.1 Q1 - Can the states be achieved in your workplace?

There are currently 6 Stress Management Standards (Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role and Change), which are comprised of 30 states (the full Consultation Questionnaire identifying all of these states can be seen in Appendix 5). The number of states currently assigned to each of the Standards ranges from 4 to 6.

Question 1 aimed to identify whether respondents believed that each of the 30 states could be achieved in their workplace. The first question was split into 6 sections and asked:

***‘Setting aside current management practice in your organisation, consider the states under the [1.1 - Demands Standard, 1.2 – Control Standard, 1.3 – Support Standard, 1.4 – Relationships Standard, 1.5 – Role Standard, 1.6 – Change Standard]. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this could be achieved in your workplace. Remember:***

*-We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.*

*-We **need** you to tell us if these ‘goals’ **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.’*

The response was very positive, with all of the states to be achieved receiving support from the majority of respondents. The state achieving the lowest level of support was CoS 1 (attaining support from 61% of respondents). The highest level of support was received for ReS 3 (attaining support from 96% of respondents).

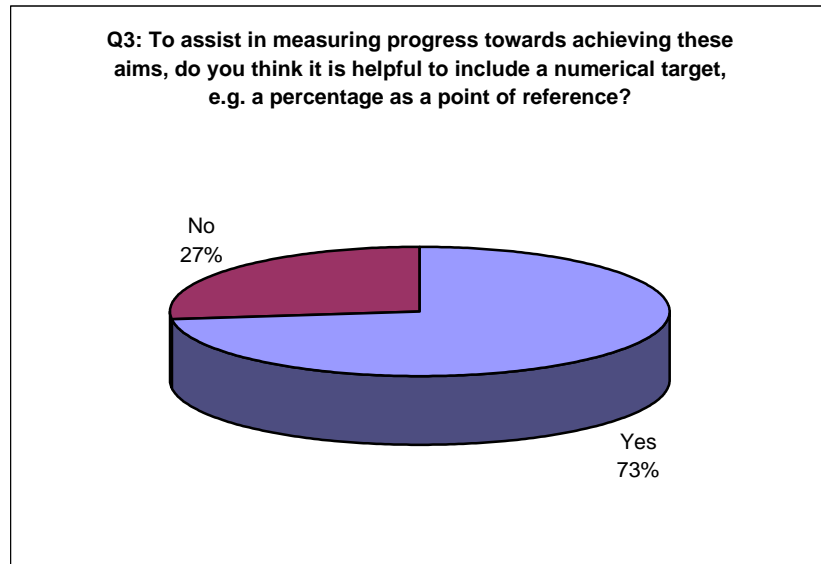
From a general perspective it can be noted that all 6 of the Standards received support from the public. A table showing the full results for all 30 states can be seen in Appendix 1.

### 2.2 Q2 - How well is your organisation currently performing?

Question 2 asked respondents to indicate on a scale how well they thought their organisation would currently perform against the states to be achieved for each of the 6 Standards. The results (see Appendix 2) show a fairly normal distribution for the Standards, with the exception of the Change Standard, which appears to have more weight at the negative (lower) end of the scale in comparison to the other Standards.

### 2.3 Q3 - Is it useful to have a numerical target?

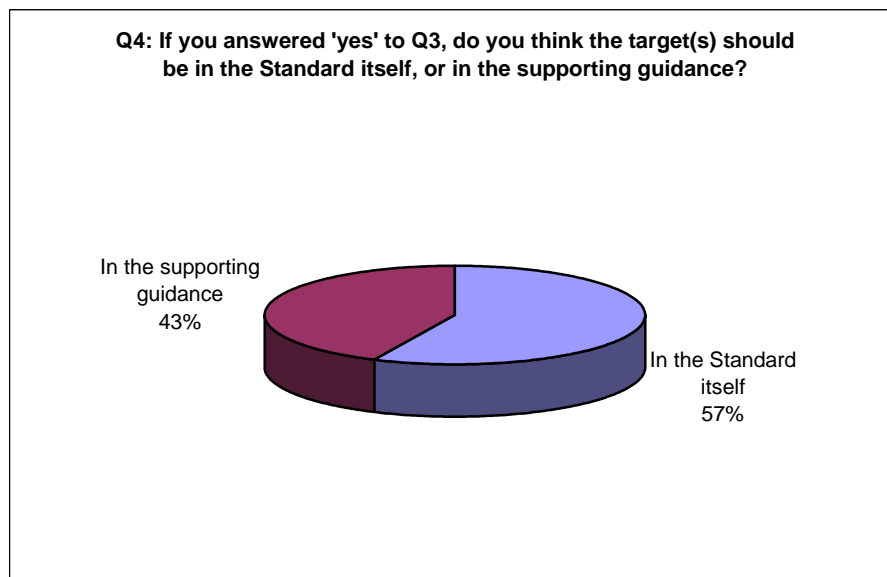
Question 3 asked respondents whether they thought it would be useful to have a numerical target (e.g. a percentage) as a point of reference to assist in measuring progress towards achieving the aims. The response to this was overwhelmingly in favour of such a target, with 73% selecting 'yes' (see figure 1 below). Appendix 3 shows respondents answers to questions 3, 4 and 5 broken down by size of organisation.



**Figure 1** –Respondents' answers to Question 3

## 2.4 Q4 - Should the target be in the Standard or the supporting guidance?

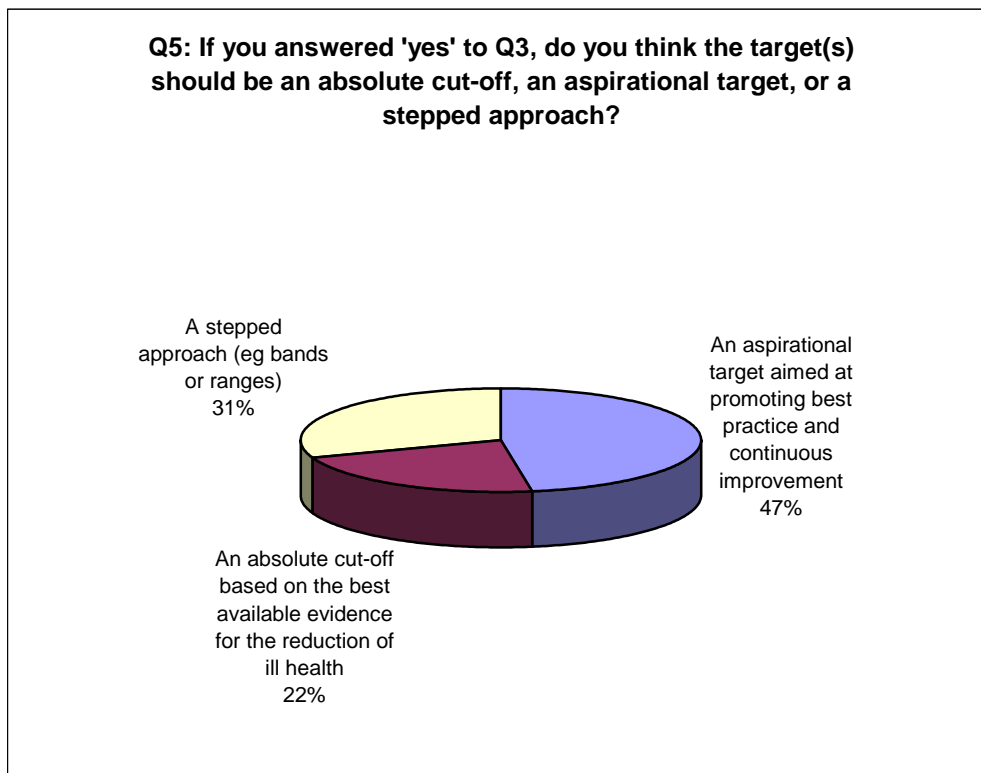
Question 4 asked respondents whether they thought the target(s) should be in the standard itself, or in supporting guidance. The majority of respondents (57%) suggested that the guidance should be in the standard, while 43% suggested that it should be in the supporting guidance.



**Figure 2** – Respondents' answers to Question 4

## 2.5 Should the target be an absolute cut-off, an aspirational target or a stepped approach?

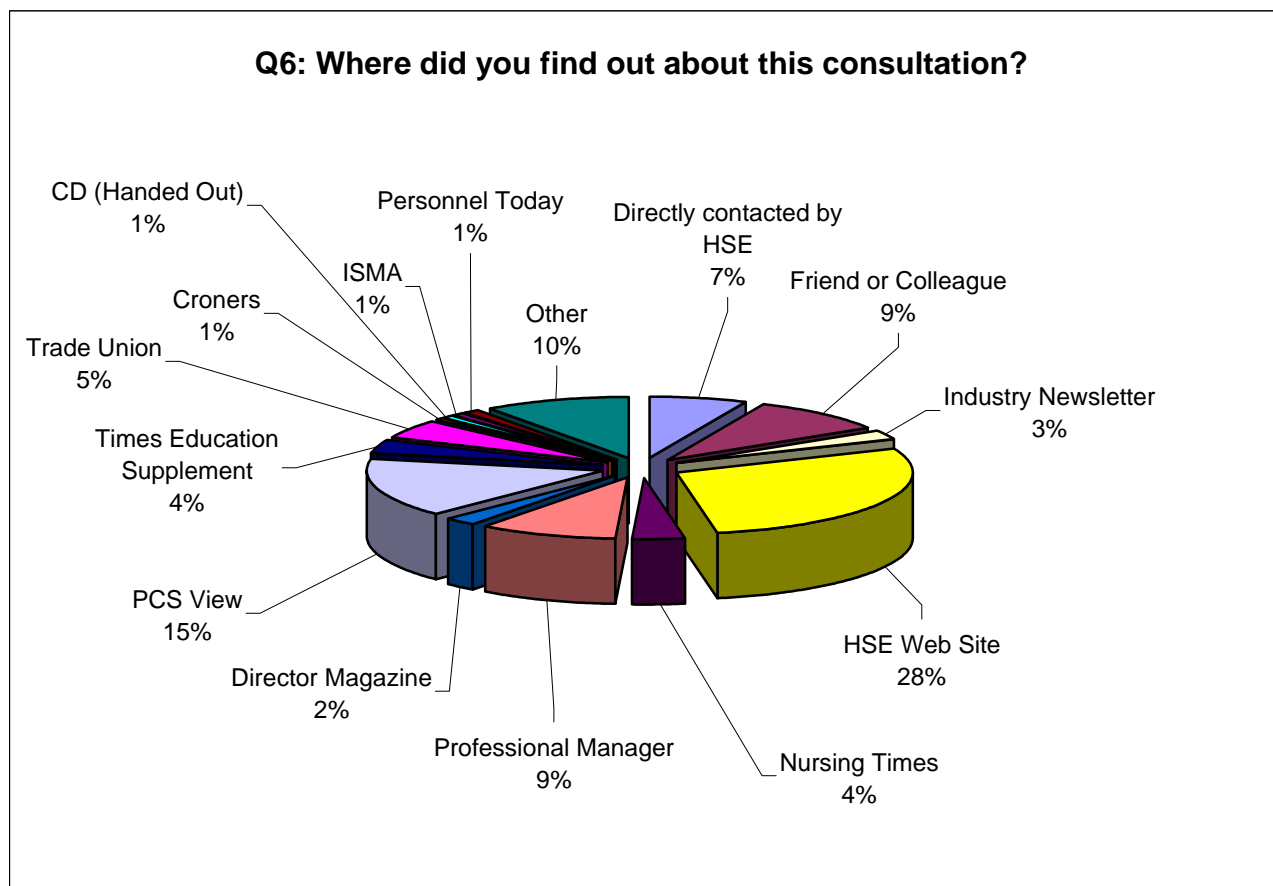
Question 5 asked respondents whether they thought the target(s) should be an absolute cut-off, an aspirational target or a stepped approach. The most popular option was an aspirational target (47%) followed by a stepped approach (31%), with the absolute cut-off option receiving the lowest support (22%).



**Figure 3 – Respondents' answers to Question 5**

## 2.5 Q6 - Where did you find out about the consultation?

Question 6 asked respondents where they found out about the consultation. The most commonly cited sources were the HSE web site, with 28% selecting this choice, followed by PCS View with 15%. The next most popular sources were Professional Manager (9%) and a friend or colleague (9%). Slightly less popular sources were: Directly contacted by HSE (6%); Trade Union (5%); The Times Education Supplement (4%); The Nursing Times (4%); Industry Newsletter (3%); Director Magazine (2%); Croners (1%); A CDROM which had been handed out (1%); The International Stress Management Association (ISMA, 1%) and Personnel Today (1%). Some of the sources in the 'Other' category (with less than 1% of respondents citing them), included: The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD); Coaching Psychology Forum and training events or seminars. A number of individuals who were handed out a CD also noted that this was done at Liverpool Street Station (One respondent noted this was a good idea as the station is in the Business District).



**Figure 4** – Respondents' answers to Question 6 showing where people found out about the consultation

### 3. Appendices

#### Appendix 1

Table showing full results for Question 1 (Can the states be achieved in your workplace?)

N.B. All of the frequencies below relate to the responses of individuals who expressed a preference for each question (i.e. excluding the 'neutral' and 'question not answered' categories).

|   | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> |
|---|--------------|-----------------|
| <b>Demand Standard</b>  |              |                 |
| DS 1 - The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work         | <b>77%</b>   | 23%             |
| DS 2 - People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands   | <b>80%</b>   | 20%             |
| DS 3 - Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees   | <b>84%</b>   | 16%             |
| DS 4 - Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed   | <b>78%</b>   | 22%             |
| <b>Control Standard</b>   |              |                 |
| CoS 1 - Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work  | <b>61%</b>   | 39%             |
| CoS 2 - Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work  | <b>91%</b>   | 9%              |
| CoS 3 - Where possible employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work | <b>87%</b>   | 13%             |
| CoS 4 - The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills   | <b>87%</b>   | 13%             |
| CoS 5 - Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken  | <b>74%</b>   | 26%             |
| CoS 6 - Employees are consulted over their work patterns  | <b>77%</b>   | 23%             |
| <b>Support Standard</b>   |              |                 |
| SS 1 - The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees   | <b>89%</b>   | 11%             |
| SS 2 - Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues                                       | <b>87%</b>   | 13%             |
| SS 3 - Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues                                       | <b>83%</b>   | 17%             |
| SS 4 - Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it   | <b>82%</b>   | 18%             |
| SS 5 - Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job  | <b>88%</b>   | 12%             |
| SS 6 - Employees receive regular constructive feedback  | <b>79%</b>   | 21%             |

## Relationships Standard

|  |            |     |
|--|------------|-----|
| ReS 1 - The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness      | <b>86%</b> | 14% |
| ReS 2 - Employees share information relevant to their work   | <b>91%</b> | 9%  |
| ReS 3 - The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour | <b>96%</b> | 4%  |
| ReS 4 - Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour        | <b>94%</b> | 6%  |
| ReS 5 - Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour          | <b>90%</b> | 10% |

## Role Standard

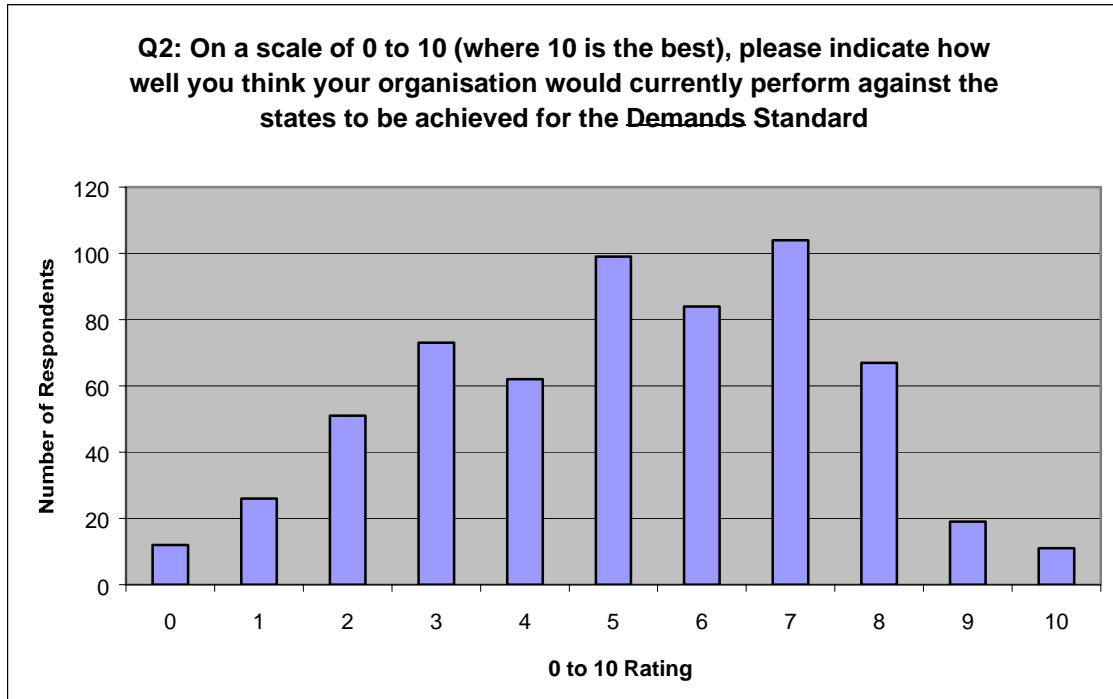
|  |            |     |
|--|------------|-----|
| RoS 1 - The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible                        | <b>81%</b> | 19% |
| RoS 2 - The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities                                      | <b>91%</b> | 9%  |
| RoS 3 - The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear                                       | <b>86%</b> | 14% |
| RoS 4 - Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities | <b>88%</b> | 12% |

## Change Standard

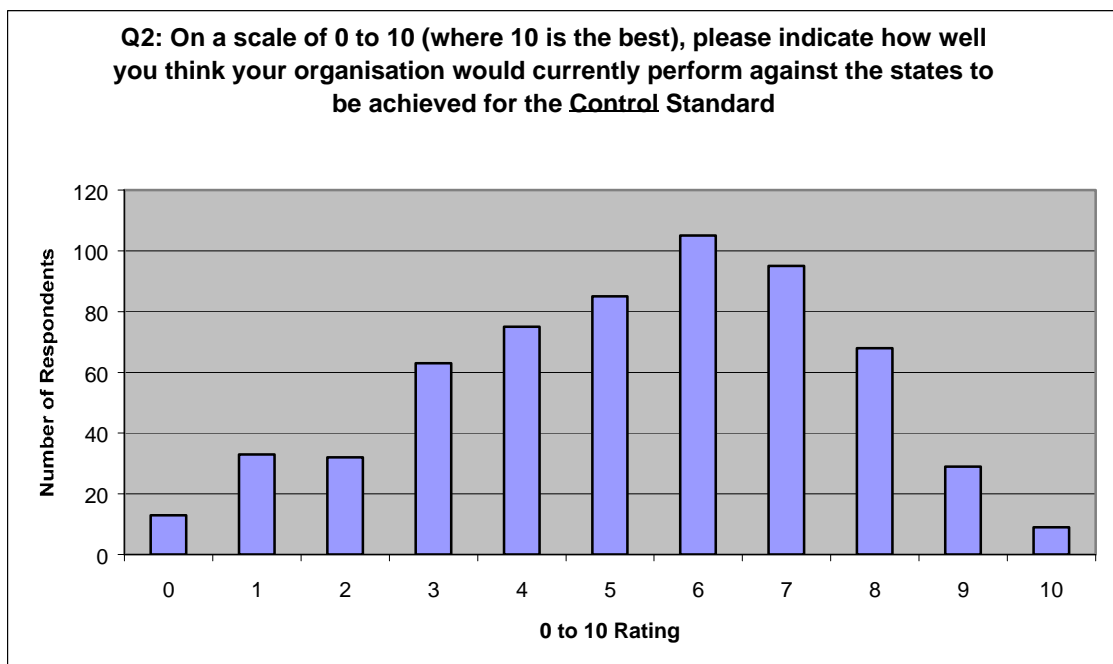
|  |            |     |
|--|------------|-----|
| ChS 1 - The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes                                | <b>75%</b> | 25% |
| ChS 2 - The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals                       | <b>68%</b> | 32% |
| ChS 3 - Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs | <b>79%</b> | 21% |
| ChS 4 - Employees are aware of timetables for changes  | <b>79%</b> | 21% |
| ChS 5 - Employees have access to relevant support during changes   | <b>78%</b> | 22% |

## Appendix 2

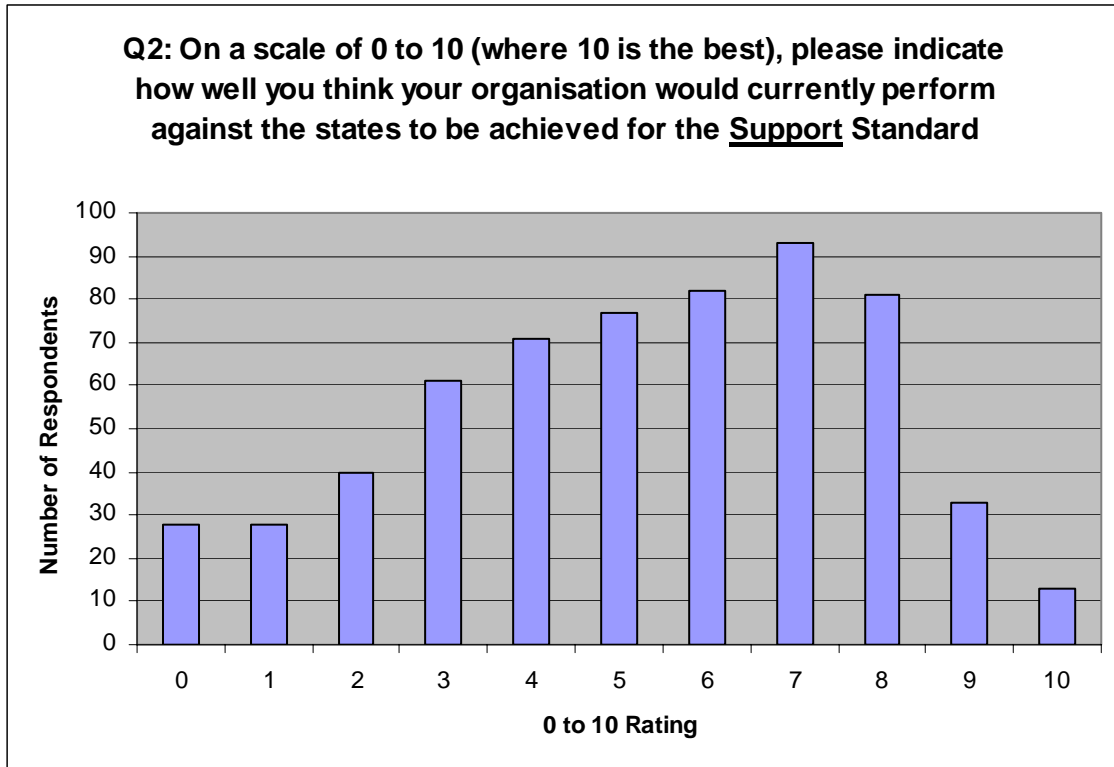
Respondents' answers to question 2 of the consultation questionnaire (How well is your organisation currently performing?)



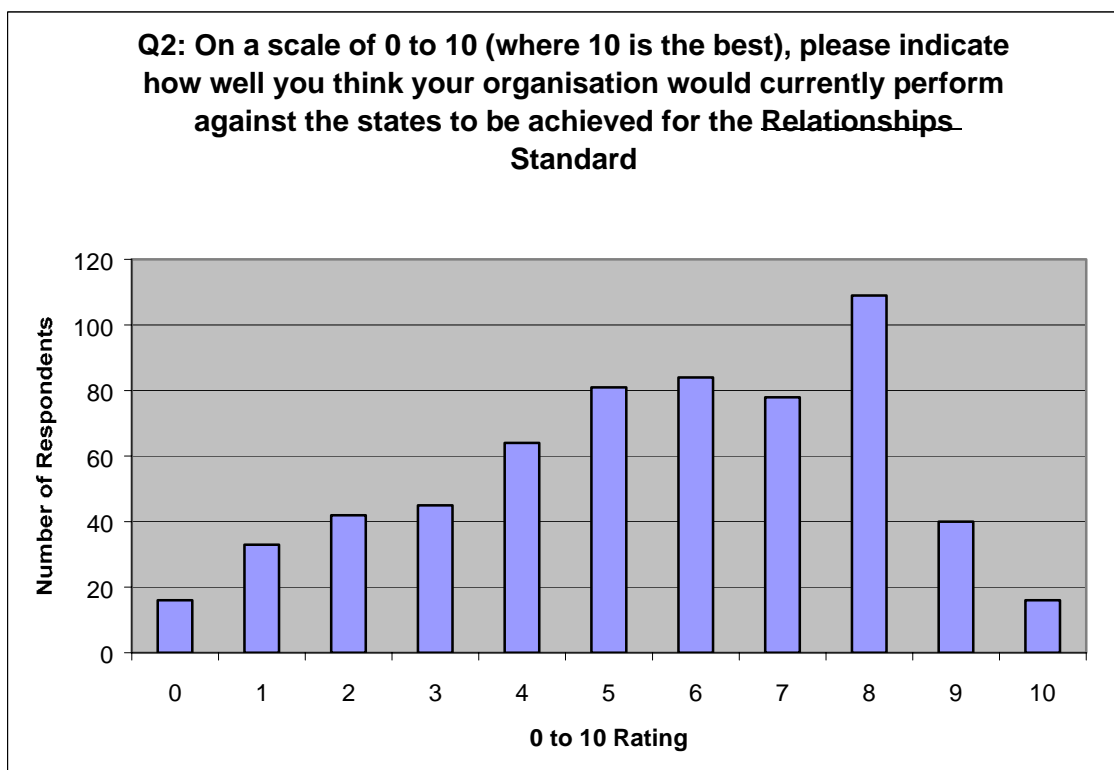
**Figure 5:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Demands Standard)



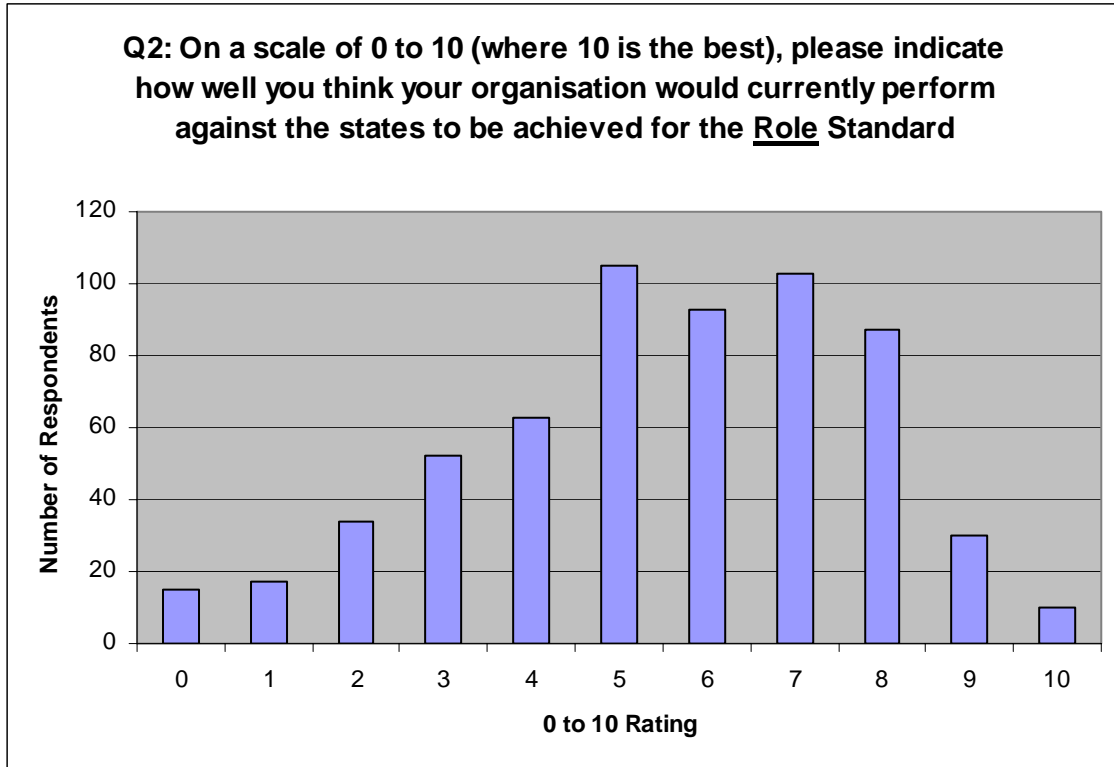
**Figure 6:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Control Standard)



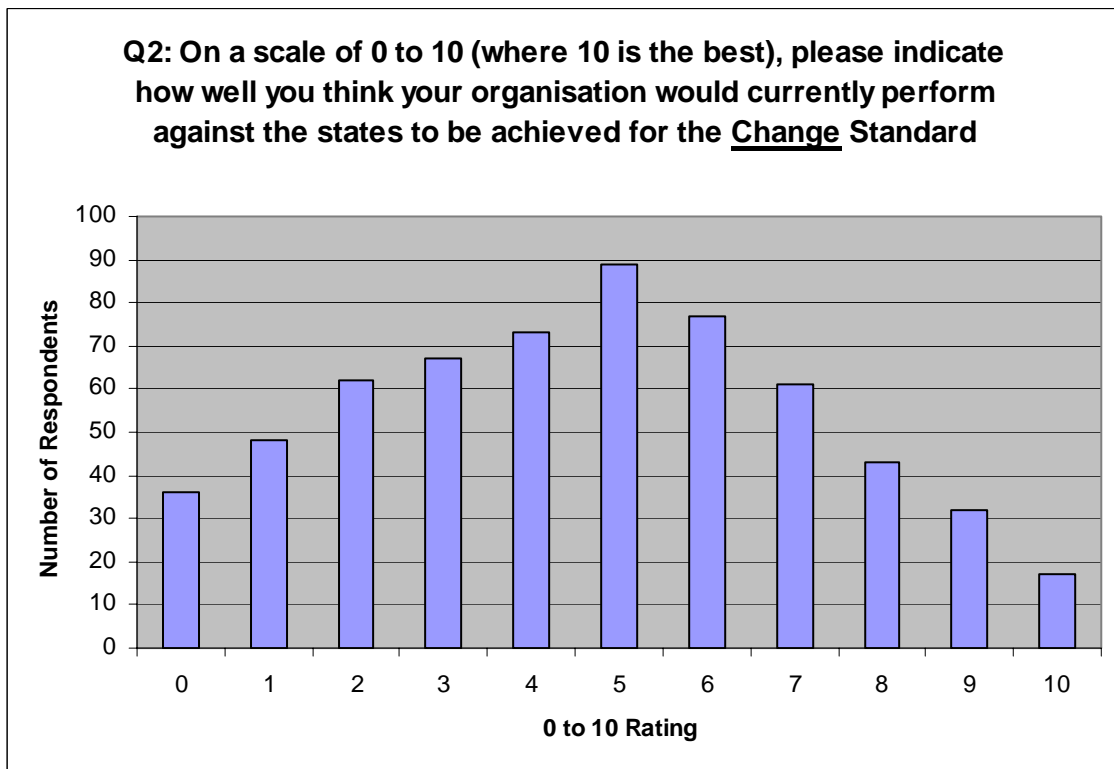
**Figure 7:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Support Standard)



**Figure 8:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Relationships Standard)



**Figure 9:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Role Standard)

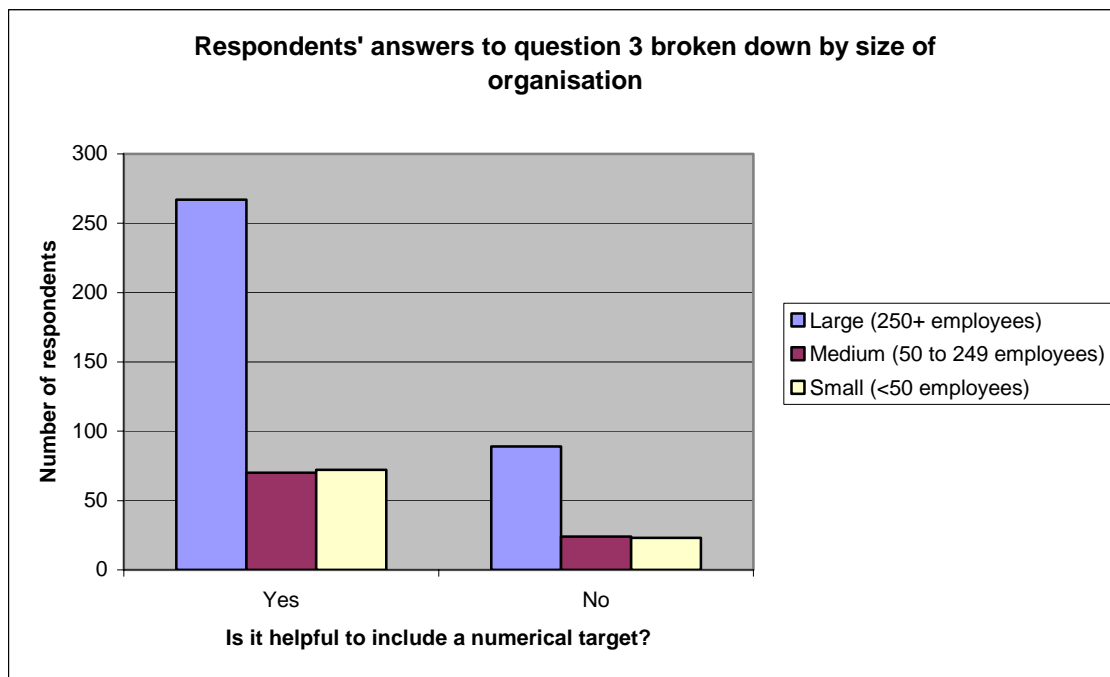


**Figure 10:** Frequencies for respondents' answers to question 2 (Change Standard)

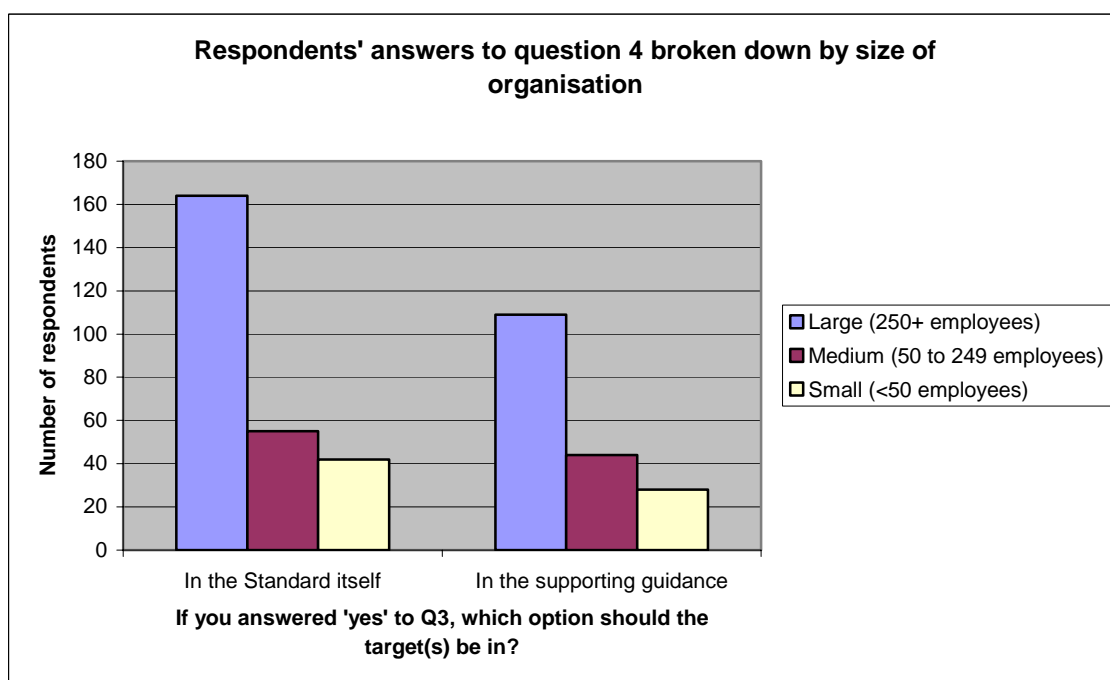
## Appendix 3

Respondents' answers to questions 3, 4 and 5 broken down by size of organisation.

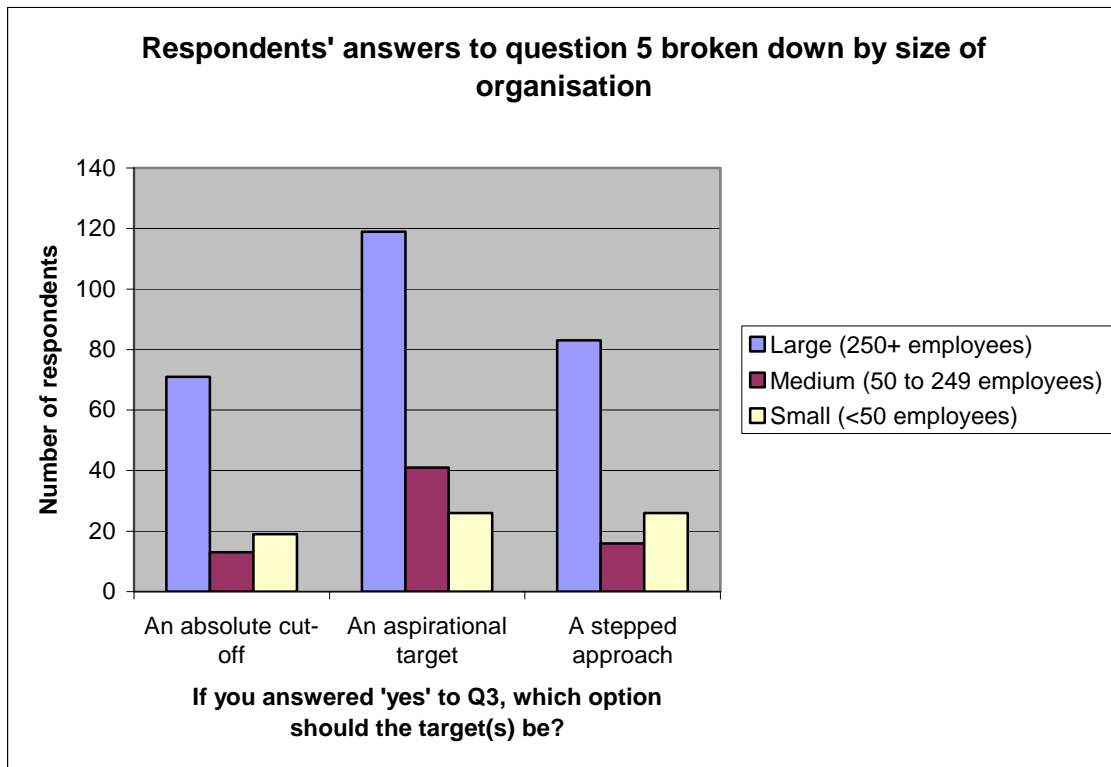
A small organisation is categorised as having fewer than 50 employees. A medium organisation is categorised by having 50 to 249 employees, while a large organisation has 250 or more employees.



**Figure 11:** Respondents' answers to question 3 broken down by size of organisation



**Figure 12:** Respondents' answers to question 4 broken down by size of organisation



**Figure 13:** Respondents' answers to question 5 broken down by size of organisation

## Appendix 4

### SMS Consultation Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria have been drawn up to inform judgement about the choices and comments provided to Health & Safety Executive (HSE) by participants of the Stress Management Standards Consultation Campaign, which runs from 25.05.04 – 27.08.04.

1. We will not extend the consultation period. Only responses received on or before 27.08.04 will be included in the analyses of the responses unless in exceptional circumstances and by agreement with HSE when the response period may be extended to 03.09.04.
2. The preferred way to contribute to the evaluation of the Management Standards is via the formal consultation questionnaire. Written submissions representing employee/employer organisations will be accepted only at the discretion of the Consultation Manager. Comments already received from other sources, such as discussions on HSE's website, emails, other written submissions and previous workshops held by HSE, have already been considered as part of the development of the Management Standards, and as such will not be processed as part of the consultation evaluation. Missing data. Responses with missing data will be accepted; those parts that contain responses will be analysed. No attempt will be made to return questionnaires for completion. Neither will there be coverage of missing data by, for instance, assuming a neutral position. Anonymous questionnaires will not be processed.
3. Weighting. It is likely that the campaign will receive responses from groups and from employer and employee representatives. We acknowledge that these collective responses have to carry more influence or weight, than a response from an individual. In the first instance, a multiple value will be applied to enable all responses to be adequately represented in the same forum.
4. If it is apparent that there are individual responses from a group that have also submitted a group response, then these will be treated collectively.
5. Part I: the states to be achieved. This section asks respondents whether they agree that the best practice outlined in each of the 30 states to be achieved could be achieved in their workplace. For each of the 30 items,
  - a. it will be accepted that there is public support for the proposed *state to be achieved* if the majority (i.e. > 50%) of those respondents who

expressed a preference endorse the 'agree' or 'strongly agree' alternatives

- b. where the majority do not support the *state to be achieved*, then there will be reflection on previous comments from experts, and current comments in this consultation towards possible revision or elimination of that *state to be achieved*
- c. full consideration will be given to the comments made by respondents regarding the presentation of the *states to be achieved* in each stressor domain. Where there is suggestion of a 'gap' in general (not sector specific) best practice, this will be evaluated with a view to revision or supplementing to the *states to be achieved* in that stressor domain

It must be noted that responses to these items will form the basis of recommended actions presented to the Health & Safety Commission, but that the Commission is not bound to accept the majority views of the public.

6. Part II: Q3. This is a yes / no question which asks whether it is helpful to include a numerical target as a point of reference. The way forward will be directed by the majority. This is straightforward if the majority response (i.e. > 50%) is NO. If the majority response is YES, then responses to Q4 and Q5 need to be taken into account with respect to the status of any target.
7. *If majority want a target, then* Q4 and Q5 will be evaluated in a systematic fashion, for there are contingencies in the responses. For instance, it is difficult to resolve response 4a with 5c. For this reason, Q5 will serve as the first means of directing the status of the target, and this will be based on a clear majority response. That is,
  - a. if the majority endorse alternatives (a) or (b), then this preferred option that the target put into the standard itself or into supporting guidance, as directed by responses to question 4 should be recommended to the Commission.
  - b. if the majority endorse alternative (c) then the stepped approach should be recommended to the Commission. This should be presented in / with supporting guidance. This should be confirmed by reference to Q4, although it rather cuts across the notion of "standard" to have alternatives.
  - c. Alternative options to the preferred option would be developed to put to the Commission based on the relative strength of support they receive. Those that receive no or very little support should not form options.

# Appendix 5

## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS FOR TACKLING WORK-RELATED STRESS

### CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE

If you would prefer to respond in writing, please print this form for completion and send it to the address given at the end of the questionnaire

#### Part I: The states to be achieved

An important aim of the Stress Management Standards is that working conditions do not cause harm, and where conditions are less than ideal, action should be taken to improve them.

Each Standard is supported by 'states to be achieved'. These reflect how a workplace **might** look if the Standard is being met.

For each Standard, HSE would like to know if the states can be reasonably applied **across all workplaces**. In questions 1.1 to 1.6 we do not want you to rate your organisation against each state, you will be given an opportunity to do this under Question 2. Rather, we want you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be **realistic** in a working environment like yours.

**Q1.1 Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Demands Standard (DS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- DS1: The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- DS2: People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- DS3: Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- DS4: Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

1.1 Comments:

**Q1.2 Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Control Standard (CoS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- CoS1: Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

- CoS2: Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

- CoS3: Where possible employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

- CoS4: The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

- CoS5: Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

- CoS6: Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

Strongly Disagree     Disagree     Neutral     Agree     Strongly Agree

1.2 Comments:

Q1.3 **Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Support Standard (SS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- SS1: The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- SS2: Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- SS3: Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- SS4: Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- SS5: Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- SS6: Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

1.3 Comments:

Q1.4 **Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Relationships Standard (ReS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- ReS1: The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- ReS2: Employees share information relevant to their work.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- ReS3: The organisation has agreed policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- ReS4: Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- ReS5: Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

1.4 Comments:

Q1.5 **Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Role Standard (RoS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- RoS1: The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the different requirements it places upon employees are compatible.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- RoS2: The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- RoS3: The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

- RoS4: Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

Strongly Disagree       Disagree       Neutral       Agree       Strongly Agree

1.5 Comments:

Q1.6 **Setting aside current management practice** in your organisation, consider the states under the **Change Standard (ChS)**. Please indicate, for each state if you agree that this **could** be achieved in your workplace. **Remember:**

- We are **not** asking you to rate your organisation against each state.
- We **need** you to tell us if these 'goals' **could** be realistic in a working environment like yours.

Select the option that best describes your opinion on each statement.

- ChS1: The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- ChS2: The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- ChS3: Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- ChS4: Employees are aware of timetables for changes.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

- ChS5: Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

Strongly Disagree  Disagree  Neutral  Agree  Strongly Agree

1.6 Comments:

**Q2** *On a scale of 0 to 10 (where 10 is the best), please indicate how well you think your organisation would currently perform against the states to be achieved for each Standard.*

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| Demands       | [ | ] |
| Control       | [ | ] |
| Support       | [ | ] |
| Relationships | [ | ] |
| Role          | [ | ] |
| Change        | [ | ] |

**Part II: Measuring working conditions linked to stress-related illness**

**Q3** *To assist in measuring progress towards achieving these aims, do you think it is helpful to include a numerical target, eg a percentage as a point of reference?*

YES  NO  (If NO please go to Q6)

**Q4** *If you answered 'yes' to Q 3, do you think the target(s) should be:*

(a) in the standard itself  or  
(b) in supporting guidance

Q5 *If you answered 'yes' to Q 3, do you think the target(s) should be:*

(a) An absolute cut-off based on the best available evidence for the reduction of ill health  or

(b) An aspirational target aimed at promoting best practice and continuous improvement  or

(c) A stepped approach, eg bands or ranges

**Q6 *Where did you find out about this consultation?***

Times Educational Supplement  PCS View

Director Magazine  Professional Manager

Nursing Times  HSE Web Site

Industry Newsletter  Friend or Colleague

Directly contacted by HSE  Other (please specify)

Name:

Organisation:

Position in organisation:

Approx number of employees:

Business sector:

Address:

Town/City:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Are you a Safety Representative?

Yes/No

**Thank you for your co-operation.** Please return completed questionnaire to:

The Stress Priority Programme Team  
Health and Safety Executive  
Rose Court 6SW  
2 Southwark Bridge  
London, SE1 9HS

## Appendix 6

# Management Standards for Tackling Work-related Stress Consultation

### Summary of Corporate Responses

Comments from organisational responses tend not to focus on the individual 'States', particularly as many of these organisations have contributed to previous consultative activities. HSE does not envisage any significant changes being made to the 'States'.

HSE has received corporate responses from Trades Unions, Employers' Representatives and Individual Companies (for key point summary by industry group see Annex 1).

The TUC, individual unions, CBI, IOD and the majority of individual companies have broadly welcomed the development of the Management Standards, and agree that stress is an important issue to tackle in the workplace. However, the TUC and unions would prefer to see an Approved Code of Practice supported by rigorous enforcement, while the Employers' Organisations are supportive of a non-legislative approach and would welcome a non-enforcement led approach.

All respondents express a concern that too much emphasis is placed upon using surveys as the sole means of assessing the risk of work-related stress and highlight that other methods need to be identified. Some suggest that sector specific guidance may be required to help address this issue.

Turning to the numerical target, all respondents express a concern about the use of percentages, particularly in the form used for the Management Standards pilot (ie. an absolute cut off). There is a consensus that the most effective approach would be to promote best practice through continuous improvement.

### **Conclusion**

The results of the consultation give support to the 'States to be Achieved' which reflect the evidence on which the Management Standards have been developed. Therefore, it is unlikely that these will be significantly changed ahead of the launch.

The consensus of views on a Continuous Improvement model leads us to consider that a Stepped Approach incorporating aspirational targets is the best and most acceptable way forward. However the detail of the proposed option has still to be agreed by the Health and Safety Commission.

## Annex 1 Key Points Summary – by Industry Group

### Trade unions

Responses were received from the TUC and 6 individual trade unions and can be summarised as follows:

- The approach is broadly welcomed by all
- Legislative approach would have been preferred (ACoP at least)
- Would prefer approach to be enforcement led
- A number of indicators are required to measure level of stress within an organisation apart from staff surveys
- Sector specific guidance needed
- The percentages used for the pilot exercise are unacceptable, would prefer a model based on continuous improvement.

### Business Organisations

Responses were received from the Confederation of British Industry and the Institute of Directors and are summarised as:

- Stress is an issue to be addressed and the Management Standards are an important milestone in tackling this issue
- Support for the non-legislative approach
- Happy that the approach is not enforcement led
- It is important to recognise that other tools and methods are available to identify and measure work-related stress
- The Standards may not be achievable all of the time due to factors such as operational constraints etc
- The percentage targets represent the weakest element of the Standards but it is recognised that some form of target would be useful to measure progress over time.

### Other Organisational responses

Responses received from individual organisations indicated that:

- The general view of the proposed Standards varies from - the development should be welcomed and promoted as a management tool, to – the Stressor headings are wrong and should be changed (One organisation)
- The non-legislative approach is supported and that this approach should be clearly expressed to avoid confusion
- There is some concern that benchmarks may be used as an enforcement tool
- There should be a greater emphasis on training (for employers and employees at all levels) in dealing with stress at both organisational and individual levels
- SMEs may have practical difficulties in implementation and that specific guidance could be needed
- Indicators other than surveys alone are required to measure the level of stress in an organisation
- The two pass survey approach used for the pilot may be unhelpful with the first pass perhaps lacking the sensitivity to identify 'hotspots'

- The percentage target as a 'pass/fail' may not be achievable across all sectors. Emphasis should be on trends and continuous improvement