

Royal Mail

Large Organisations Partnership

Improvement Plan

2009



October 2008 v1.08

Contents

1.0	Introduction	
1.1	Overview.....	3
1.2	LOPP Structure.....	3
2.0	LOPP Targets	
2.1	H&S Core Business Function.....	4
2.2	Promoting Best Practice.....	4
2.3	Engaging our People.....	5
2.4	Training.....	5
2.5	Regulatory Consistency.....	6
2.6	Transport.....	6
2.7	Musculoskeletal Disorders.....	7
2.8	Slips & Trips.....	7
2.9	Health & Wellbeing.....	7
3.0	Implementation.....	8
4.0	Measuring Performance.....	9
	Appendices	
1	Targets	10
	Progress.....	11
2	LAP Methodology.....	13

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Large Organisations Partnership (LOP) scheme is a joint HSE and local authority venture aimed at improving the way the health and safety regulatory authorities interact with large businesses.

Royal Mail Group Ltd are participating in the scheme and have identified several priorities for improvement with regard to health and safety performance. These priorities were agreed in conjunction with the trade unions, the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACoRS) and HSE, and are contained in the Improvement Plan.

The plan aims to:

- promote further integration of health and safety management systems into everyday work processes;
- achieve improved health and safety performance; and
- to cultivate a stronger safety culture throughout the organisation.

The first business within the Group to introduce an Improvement Plan will be Royal Mail (letters), which employs the majority of the workforce and sees the highest number of accidents.

The other Group businesses, Parcelforce Worldwide and the Post Office Ltd will also participate, but will have separate Improvement Plans focusing upon areas that are directly relevant to their own work activities. The degree to which individual businesses will be involved in LOPP will be proportionate to the size of their undertaking and the particular work related hazards they encounter.

1.2 The LOPP Structure

LOPP establishes relationships between the partner organisations. These relationships help form a communications network which is used to share information on improving health and safety performance amongst those who can act upon it. Ideally, there should be LOP contacts within each organisation at national, regional and local levels.

The Royal Mail Improvement Plan will run for a period of three years (2008/9 to 2010/11), and will be subject to an annual review by senior management and LOP representatives from each partner organisation.

The aims and objectives for the Royal Mail Improvement Plan are contained within Section 2.

2.0 Royal Mail - Improvement Plan

The areas for improvement within Royal Mail are:

2.1 Management of Health & Safety as a Core Business Function

Within Royal Mail there has historically been a reluctance to consider health and safety as a key business driver. Priorities for managers were perceived to lie elsewhere, and consideration for health and safety was sometimes delayed until other business needs were satisfied. The degree of importance attached to health and safety matters by management can be variable, and dependent upon the outlook of the individual. Commitment to health and safety performance improvement should be evident throughout the management structure. This needs to originate from the highest levels of the organisation, and be based on a strong unambiguous lead demonstrating Group, Board and Business Executive commitment to improving health and safety.

Aim: To ensure that management identify health and safety performance improvement as a key business issue.

Objective:

- a) *Royal Mail to share with HSE their proposed approach to incorporating health and safety into performance reviews for their managers (by end February 2009).*
- b) *Royal Mail to deploy their defined approach, and to introduce an integrated health and safety management system (by November 2009).*

2.2 Promoting Best Practice

Within Royal Mail Group, there are teams and individuals who in the course of their everyday work develop innovative solutions to business problems, or are capable of developing best practice approaches. Some of these innovations are in relation to health and safety. It should be an aim of the organisation to ensure that there are mechanisms to develop and/or identify and promote such best practice approaches for wider application. As a related benefit, this should affect an improved consistency of local standards between individual business units, and reduce the duplication of effort across the organisation.

Aim: To ensure that there are mechanisms for identifying, developing and promoting best practice within the organisation.

Objective:

- a) *Royal Mail to develop a network for newly appointed Area Safety Managers. Royal Mail to define the structure of the network (by end of December 2008),*
- b) *and to deploy the network (by end of March 2009).*

2.3 Engaging our People

An organisation's greatest asset is its workforce, and the active participation of the workforce is essential for any safety management system to be successful. Trade Union health and safety representatives operating in partnership with management are an important part of realizing health and safety improvements. The presence of trade union safety representatives prevents thousands of major injuries at work every year in the UK.

Whilst well established arrangements for worker consultation exist within the group, the *quality* of that engagement needs to be improved. A more effective health and safety partnership between the employer and the workforce will bring benefits to both the individual and the business, and enhance the LOP engagement process.

Aim: To improve the quality of worker safety representative engagement in matters affecting occupational health and safety.

Objective:

- a) *A joint statement by Royal Mail/Trade Unions on strengthening joint working arrangements and establishing shared goals, to be publicly launched at the National Safety Event (June 2009).*
- b) *To Establish review meetings between AGMs, ASMs, Unite and CWU to agree actions in support of LOPP Improvement Plan objectives, and LAPs. (by end June 2009).*

2.4 Health and Safety Training

Communicating the importance of health and safety to the workforce is vital in ensuring that the challenges facing the Group are met. Management and Trade Unions play a pivotal role in ensuring that these messages are delivered and are clearly understood. To do this more effectively, joint training will be introduced to ensure that they possess the necessary skills and knowledge.

Aim: *To equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver more effective health and safety training.*

Objective:

- a) *To build Slips & Trips good practice into workplace coaching activities (by end of March 2009)*
- b) *Identify opportunities for joint training on health and safety for Royal Mail/CWU/Unite (by end March 2009).*

2.5 Consistency in Health and Safety Regulation

Royal Mail Group businesses and trade unions are entitled to expect a consistent approach when dealing with the enforcing authorities. This should apply to the advice tendered; the use of enforcement notices; decisions on whether to prosecute; and in the response to incidents. In areas of the business where inconsistencies may arise, clear guidance for Inspectors is required. This should provide advice on the standards to be achieved in complying with legislation and an indication of the appropriate enforcement sanctions for frequently encountered health and safety concerns within the Royal Mail Group Ltd.

Aim: Promote greater consistency in regulatory enforcement of health and safety within Royal Mail.

LOP Account Manager Objective: *Provide guidance for LA and HSE Inspectors in relation to the consistent application of HSE's Enforcement Policy as applied to Royal Mail's undertakings, by December 2008.*

Hazards

Emphasis is also placed upon the major hazards to be found within Royal Mail's business environments, and improvements are sought in the following areas:

2.6 Transport

The term "transport" covers the use of all types of vehicles and mobile powered work equipment in the workplace, and does not refer to road risk on the highway. Across the Group, the hazards associated with workplace transport present the greatest danger of death or serious injury and more needs to be done to ensure that the hazard is being effectively controlled.

Aim: To reduce the number of people that are killed or injured as the result of workplace transport incidents within Royal Mail.

Objective: *To review and update the Yard Risk Assessment process by end of January 2009.*

2.7 Musculo-skeletal Disorders

Musculo-skeletal disorders (MSD) resulting from manual handling activities and work processes are responsible for a substantial amount of occupational illness within the Letters Business, and they make a major contribution to the annual number of working days lost (19% of sickness absences in 2005/06). Targeting a reduction in the prevalence of MSDs is therefore a priority.

Aim: To reduce the prevalence of MSDs within Royal Mail.

Objective: a) To introduce new delivery methods across the business, and train the workforce to use them (commencing October 2009);

b) Produce a Joint Guidance Note on pouch weights (by end January 2009).

2.8 Slips and Trips

Slips and trips are the primary cause of major accidents within the organisation, and account for 40% of all accidents in Royal Mail. Injuries sustained as a result of slips and trips are also the major cause of working days lost. The impact of this is felt both in human and economic terms, and resources aimed at a reducing the frequency of these incidents will bring both social and economic benefits.

Aim: To reduce injuries associated with slips and trips.

Objective: a) *To complete Walk Risk Assessments and Walk Logs to adequately reflect significant Slip/Trip hazards on delivery routes, and in accordance with Local Action Plan agreements (by end of March 2009 for LAP Areas, and by end of March 2010 for remaining areas).*

b) *To conduct Awareness Sessions on the avoidance of Slip and Trip accidents for each RM Territory (by end January 2009); and within RM Areas (by May 2009).*

2.9 Health and Wellbeing

By providing safe and healthy workplaces and improving the support available for those with developing health problems, we can help to prevent illness at work and promote swifter rehabilitation for those out of work through ill-health. This can help reduce the 150,000 working days that were lost to accidents within the organisation last year and contribute towards a reduction the 36 million working days that were lost in the UK nationally.

Aim: To keep people healthy in work and to provide accessible support to enable them to remain in work, or return to work more quickly.

Objective: To pilot a new online assessment tool (by end January 2009).

3.0 Implementation

The targets established within the Improvement Plan will be delivered using a variety of methods at a national, regional and local level.

Letters Business: LOPP provides the basis for national consultation and delivery of strategic targets. Contributions will be made through Royal Mail internal initiatives, Trade Union involvement and HSE and LA projects, e.g. "Moving Goods Safely", "Better Backs", Euroweek etc. An annual review of progress will be conducted by RM Operations Director, RM Safety Director, CWU, Unite and the regulatory authorities.

Area Level: RM Areas will address specific objectives through Local Action Plans (LAPs) and targeted LA/HSE inspection and enforcement work. Review meetings will be held between AGMs, ASMs, Unite and CWU as described in Section 2.3(b). See appendix 2 for an illustration of how LAPs may work in practice.

Unit Level: This will involve the implementation of individual Unit Plans, which wherever possible should also support the targets in the LAP.

A collaborative approach between LOP Partners will be necessary to ensure the successful implementation of the Improvement Plan and to fulfil the specified aims and objectives. Achieving the targets is a collective responsibility.

Locally, it is important that all those staff with responsibility for delivering improvements within the business units have a clear understanding of what will be required in practice.

Area General Managers (AGMs), Area Safety Managers (ASMs) and the Area Management Team as a whole need to be directly involved. AGMs should ensure that all those from whom a contribution is required are aware of their responsibilities and have the means to discharge them successfully.

4.0 Measuring Performance

In order to identify any improvements it is firstly necessary to establish a baseline against which any progress may be judged. Royal Mail use a system of internal audits to assess their health, safety and environmental performance. This process is conducted in line with the international standards and is subject to an assurance process. As this methodology is considered to be sufficiently robust, the existing arrangements will be used.

Appendix 1 summarises the specific targets for the LOP Improvement Plan. Progress towards these targets will be assessed on a quarterly basis by the Corporate Social Responsibility teams. The assessment, monitoring and auditing process will be transparent, and subject to independent scrutiny.

It is important that both quantitative and qualitative indicators of performance are considered. To this end, the following means may be used to gauge performance:

- RIDDOR reportable incidents
- RM CSR Audit scores
- Assessment during inspections by regulators.
- Feedback from Trade Unions.
- RM Management comment
- Workforce Surveys

Performance against the Improvement Plan will be communicated between the LOP partners and to the workforce on a regular basis. This will allow resources to be allocated in areas of most need and assist in delivery.

Appendix 1: Targets

	Topic	Aim	Objective
2.1	H&S Core Business Function	To ensure that management identify health and safety performance improvement as a key business issue.	<p>a) Royal Mail to share with HSE their proposed approach to incorporating health and safety into performance reviews for their managers (by end February 2009).</p> <p>b) Royal Mail to deploy their defined approach, and to introduce an integrated health and safety management system (by November 2009).</p>
2.2	Best Practice	To ensure that there are mechanisms for identifying, developing and promoting best practice within the organisation.	<p>a) Royal Mail to develop a network for newly appointed Area Safety Managers. Royal Mail to define the structure of the network (by end of December 2008);</p> <p>b) and to deploy the network (by end of March 2009).</p>
2.3	Engaging our People	To improve the quality of worker safety representative engagement in matters affecting occupational health and safety.	<p>a) A joint statement by Royal Mail/Trade Union on strengthening joint working arrangements and establishing shared goals, to be publicly launched at the National Safety Event (June 2009).</p> <p>b) To Establish review meetings between AGMs, ASMs, Unite and CWU to agree actions in support of LOPP Improvement Plan objectives, and LAPs. (by end June 2009).</p>
2.4	Health & Safety Training	To equip staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver more effective health and safety training.	<p>a) To build Slips & Trips good practice into workplace coaching activities (by end of March 2009).</p> <p>b) Identify opportunities for joint training on health and safety for Royal Mail/CWU/Unite (by end March 2009).</p>
2.5	Consistency in Regulation	Promote greater consistency in regulatory enforcement of health and safety within Royal Mail.	Provide guidance for LA and HSE Inspectors in relation to the consistent application of HSC's Enforcement Policy as applied to Royal Mail's undertakings, by December 2008.
2.6	Transport	To reduce the number of people that are killed or injured as the result of workplace transport incidents within Royal Mail.	To review and update the Yard Risk Assessment process by end of January 2009.
2.7	Musculoskeletal Disorders	To reduce the prevalence of MSDs within Royal Mail.	<p>a) To introduce new delivery methods across the business, and train the workforce to use them (commencing October 2009).</p> <p>b) Produce a Joint Guidance Note on pouch weights (by end January 2009).</p>
2.8	Slips and Trips	To reduce injuries associated with slips and trips.	<p>a) To complete Walk Risk Assessments and Walk Logs to adequately reflect significant Slip/Trip hazards on delivery routes, and in accordance with Local Action Plan agreements (by end of March 2009 for LAP Areas, and by end of March 2010 for remaining areas).</p> <p>b) To conduct Awareness Sessions on the avoidance of Slip and Trip accidents for each RM Territory (by end January 2009); and within RM Areas (by May 2009).</p>
2.9	Health & Wellbeing	To keep people healthy in work and to provide accessible support to enable them to remain in work, or return to work more quickly.	To pilot a new online assessment tool (by end January 2009).

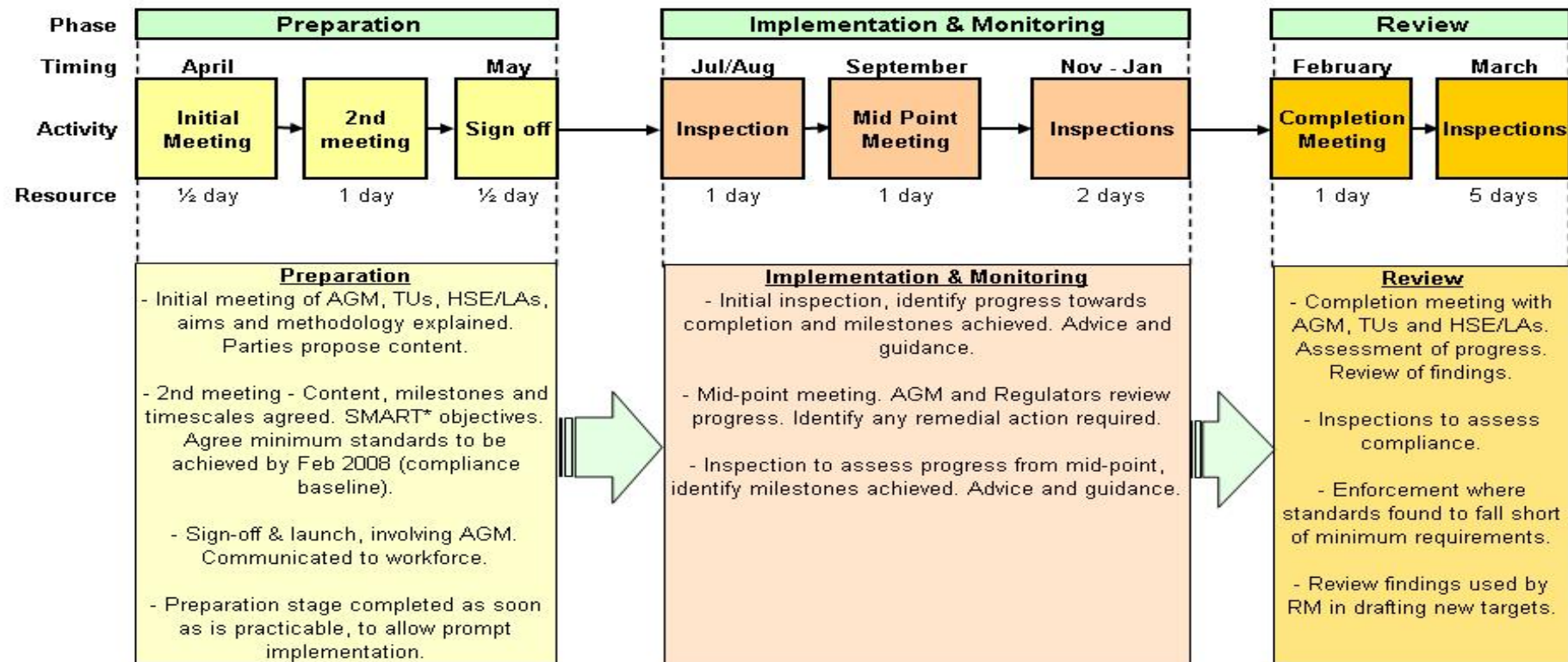
B) Progress on Targets

	Topic		% Completed				Target Met
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	(Date)
2.1	H&S Core Business Function	a) b)					
2.2	Best Practice	a) b)					
2.3	Engaging our People	a) b)					
2.4	Health & Safety Training	a) b)					
2.5	Consistency in Regulation						
2.6	Transport						
2.7	Musculoskeletal Disorders	a) b)					
2.8	Slips and Trips	a) b)					
2.9	Health & Wellbeing						

This page is intentionally left blank.

Appendix 2

Local Action Plan - Methodology



*Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound

1. See SIM 05/2007/04 para 14 for advice on possible content of Local Action Plan

2. Inspectors are advised that the resources and timings indicated above are by way of example, and the actual format will be dependent upon local circumstance.