

Health and Safety Executive		Sector Information Minute	
Policy Group		SIM 7/2006/07	
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Target Audience:
All FOD Inspectors

LOCAL AUTHORITY STRATEGIC INTERVENTION PLAN (LASIP) 2006/07

This SIM provides guidance on the continuing intervention work with Local Authorities (LAs) and provides a link to the LASIP Briefing Pack 06/07.

BACKGROUND

1 Local Authorities (LAs) are one of the key sectors where the biggest impact can be made to achieve the PSA targets for days lost. In 2004/05 the cost of sickness absence for LAs was in the region of £820 million, with the average number of days lost at 10.5, although for some LAs it is as high as 15. LAs employ around 2.2 million and it is estimated by their own Employers Organisation that 40% of LA sickness absence is work related.

2 In order to achieve the impact required LASIP 05/06 asked FOD to engage with the majority of LAs over a 3-year period, in line with the principles set out in the briefing pack. The approach to individual LAs was envisaged in two phases. Phase 1; strategic engagement with Chief Executives and elected members and Phase 2; follow-up and review of action plans.

3 Whilst the LA sector continues to be a high priority in 06/07, there have been significant developments (see the PSP Business Group Delivery Plan (BGDP)) that bear on the overall direction of this project, namely:

PSP and stress programmes have linked up to deliver the implementation of the Stress Management Standards (SMS) in the public sector.

The Ministerial Task Force has taken a special interest in LAs and in response Jim Fitzpatrick, the ODPM Minister, (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) wrote to Chief Executives telling them about the forthcoming, high level, stakeholder engagement initiatives which the PSP will be facilitating in the Spring. These events will seek to secure their commitment to the regional workshops, which are scheduled for Autumn 06. (Further details of the workshops and FOD's role in them are contained in SIM 07/2006/08).

Corporate Sciences and Analytical Services Directorate (CoSAS) has analysed the BVPI 12 (03/04 & 04/05) sickness absence data and employee

totals for 436 LAs in England, Scotland and Wales (4 LAs are missing due to incomplete data: Cumbria, Elmbridge, Devon & Lincolnshire).

The analysis concluded that FOD activity should be prioritised and targeted at those LAs where the greatest impact can be made to reduce days lost through SA. In practice this means targeting those LAs that combine large size and high sickness absence rates.

OVERALL STRATEGY

4 In view of the above HSE's approach to LAs has been re-modelled. A number of activities have been planned for 06/07, details of which are contained in the BGDG, with the main thrust being:

- To persuade LAs to improve their management of sickness absence (MSA) procedures and return to work strategies (R2W),
- To tackle the main causes of work related sickness absence, and
- To persuade LAs to implement the stress management standards (SMS)

The programme of regional workshops is the main means of delivering these messages, but there will still be a programme of targeted inspections of LAs. In order to facilitate this strategy the role of the Account Manager should continue.

INTERVENTION STRATEGY FOR LAs ALREADY ENGAGED (FROM LASIP 05/06) (PSP3)

5 The scope of the project has necessarily changed but recognises that work commenced in 05/06 is still relevant, important and in many cases is on-going and will take some time to conclude. However, due to the resources available these interventions need to be carefully managed. The amount of time dedicated to LAs will vary and will depend on their response to the initial intervention, the quality of action plans provided and where they appear in the CoSAS analysis. To help the scaling-down process a flow chart is contained in the LASIP Briefing Pack 06/07 which outlines the decision process to be followed.

PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS (PSP4)

6 FOD are required to use local knowledge to identify large and influential LA "champions" for the PSP-. (See BGDG)

TARGETED INSPECTION (LASIP 06/07) (PSP5)

7 A more targeted approach, based on management system inspections, is required for 06/07. Divisions are requested to select and target interventions

to LAs where potentially the greatest impact can be made to reduce days lost through sickness absence. LAs should be selected on the basis of the information contained in the regional profile tables, which includes the CoSAS analysis and other useful information. Colleagues in HSE can obtain this information by emailing the CaLGER Unit at calgergeneral.hse.gov.uk.

External requests will be considered in line with HSE's FOI procedures. The aims of the inspections are to:

- Persuade LAs to adopt best practice on MSA/R2W and to implement the SMSs.
- Determine how well health and safety is integrated into the overall management systems by focussing on the risks that present serious problems in LAs, which are:
 - work related stress across the organisation (including violence and aggression in social service departments)
 - manual handling
 - slips and trips
- Establish how well occupational health is integrated into the overall management system including MSA/R2W.

TIMING

8 As outlined in the BGDp the regional workshops (PSP1) are planned for September. The PSP will be selecting the LAs who will most benefit from attending and invitations will be sent direct to them. The timing of the inspections should, as far as possible, take account of this and could be used as additional leverage to persuade LAs to attend, either before or after a planned inspection (see SIM 07/2006/08).

GUIDANCE MATERIAL

9 Guidance and information to assist inspectors undertaking activities in support of the intervention plan and the topics to be covered can be found in the LASIP Briefing Pack 06/07. (NB -Reference should only be made to the **new** briefing pack as the content of the previous pack is no longer up-to-date).

RESOURCE REQUIRED

10 **Follow up activity from 05/06 (ie LASIP 05/06 Phase1):** FOD made contact with 55 LAs in England during 05/06 (according to data extracted from FOCUS). FOD (England) has allocated 2 staff years to complete the follow up work which equates to an average of 5 band 3 days per LA .

11 Management system inspection: FOD has allocated 8 inspector years for targeting those public sector organisations where the greatest impact can be made to reduce days lost through SA. (for England). Of this 3.6 has been allocated to LASIP which equates to 33 inspections of LAs. It is estimated that each inspection will require on average 15 inspection days which includes, planning, preparation, inspection, feedback and follow up.

- **CMU resource:** An allocation of 2.5 OHI years has been allocated to the PSP for the purpose of assessing the adequacy of occupational health provision, and technical support on MSA/R2W to FOD and to duty holders.

The table below provides the suggested break down of activity based on the national analysis undertaken by CoSAS and work undertaken last year.

Region	Number of LA management system interventions for 06/07	Number of LA's to follow up from 05/06
YNE	12	9
NW	7	9
MID	7	6
ESE	3	21
LON	2	3
SW	2	7
Wales	To be agreed locally	2
Scotland	To be agreed locally	9

ENFORCEMENT

12 Guidance on assessing performance can be also be found in the LASIP briefing pack in the section.

- **Management systems:** The FOD guide to Inspection, the LA Benchmarking Tool & HSG 65 should provide the framework for the inspection to assess the standard of risk control for stress, MSDs and slips and trips. If examination of the overall safety management system through the topics inspected provides, in the Inspectors judgement, sufficient evidence to indicate a breach of legislation then any enforcement action should be considered in accordance with the Enforcement Management Model. If other matters of evident concern are noted, during the course of the inspection, then these should be dealt with in the normal way.
- **SA management & return to work:** See Para 36 & 37 of the main BGDG.
- **Stress:** See para 36 & 37 of the main BGDG, and OC 202/3 (revised).
- **MSD:** It is not possible to encompass the risk of musculoskeletal disorders rigorously within the EMM at the moment. The manual handling assessment charts (MAC) are applicable for manual handling

of objects but not service users/patients. The enforcement guidance provided for NHS Trusts can be used as a framework to steer a decision process and ensure the main factors are considered during inspections of social service departments.

- **Slips and trips:** Guidance on enforcement can be found in the FOD Inspection Topic Pack.
- **Violence and aggression:** There is no EMM guidance for the management of violence and aggression at present. The Department of Health ' [A Safer Place](#)' report and audit tool provides a framework by which social services could be judged. Useful information can also be found in the two SIMs relating to NHS Trusts.
- **Occupational health:** There is no EMM guidance for OH or specific sector guidance. However OC 244/5 provides general guidance.

RECORDING

13 A standardised approach has been agreed for reporting Fit3 interventions. The key word "PSP6" should be used in the comment field for each contact under the PSP including LASIP. Further instructions are provided at paragraph 34 and 35 of the main BGDG.

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