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## **Local Government Panel/HSE Board**

### **LA and HSE Partnership – Findings of the evaluation**

**Paper by Tony Hetherington (HSE/LAU)  
Cleared by Sandra Caldwell on 1 Oct 2008**

#### **Purpose**

1. This paper alerts members to the headline findings of the evaluation of the partnership between Local Authorities (LAs) and HSE and seeks their advice on how to take some issues forward and will inform full HSE Board discussion. The draft management summary of the report is attached. This summary may be subject to some minor editorial changes, but is largely finalised.
2. The summary provides independent support for the findings of the 2007 “stocktake” conducted by Phil Scott (HSE) and Mark DuVal (LACORS). The report and its recommendations for action will inform thinking regarding the development of HSE’s new strategy and the way forward for the partnership.

#### **Background**

3. The strategy for workplace safety to 2010 and beyond took, as part of one of its key themes, the development of a partnership with LAs as co-regulators of health and safety. In July 2004 a joint statement (The Statement of Intent) was agreed between HSC, HSE and LA representative bodies. The Statement of Intent set out the high level commitments which provided the framework of objectives for achievement of the strategic goal. These commitments were used as the basis for evaluation of the success of the partnership.

#### **Argument**

4. The report concludes that the partnership is in good health, having produced a “step change” in the relationship between HSE and LAs. The researchers found that the majority of the elements of the Statement of Intent have been delivered either wholly or partially and set out where further work is required.
5. The report details twenty specific recommendations for further work. In many cases work is already in hand by HSE, LACORS or groups of LAs to take forward these issues, as summarised below:

**Maintaining the partnership and partnership teams (Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 7)** Discussions with HSE and LACORS in progress, a project to examine communications routes is in progress in Surrey and Sussex

**Standard setting and performance management (Recommendations 10 & 11)** The Section 18 Standard and underpinning arrangements provide a basis for taking the recommendations forward

**Improving current planning arrangements (Recommendations 12 & 13)** Discussions with Fit3 teams continue

**Improving Training and development (Recommendations 16 & 17)** The Section 18 Standard and its associated Regulatory Development Needs Analysis tool and underpinning arrangements provide a basis for improvement

**Enforcement allocation (Recommendations 19 & 20)** Similar work to explore enforcement allocation between LAs and HSE is in hand to respond to Recommendation 6 of the August 08 report from the Better Regulation Executive report "Improving outcomes from health and safety". Work includes proposals to explore a wider enforcement remit for LAs in Hampshire and the development of a joint LA-HSE delivery plan for Dorset in which combined LA and HSE resources will be targeted to risk, independent of formal allocation structures.

6. Members views are sought on how to take the remaining recommendations forward:

**Recommendation 3 Clarify and communicate more widely the role and responsibilities of high level governance structures and bodies.** It is proposed to develop a clear statement of governance structures and the roles and responsibilities associated with these structures. We need to try to be brief and perhaps use graphics more than text. Members are asked to consider how we might more effectively promote the governance structures to key stakeholders, particularly within local govt and specifically councillors.

**Recommendation 8 Examine ways of helping local authorities to release staff for secondment to HSE Partnership Liaison Officer roles.** It was found that one difficulty in recruitment of experienced LA staff to work on secondment to support the partnership was the understandable unwillingness of LAs to release scarce local resource. Members are asked to consider if there are any means available to encourage or support LAs to allow easier release of LA staff to provide a dedicated contribution to regional partnership working alongside HSE's partnership managers.

**Recommendation 15 Consider how to engage further local councillors and Chief Executives in the health and safety system, looking at existing mechanisms such as LGP or new ways of doing this.** Members are asked for any views on how this recommendation may be met.

**Recommendation 18 Explore ways that the partnership can engage more widely with external stakeholders.** For example: other regulatory bodies, other bodies responsible for health & safety enforcement eg CSCI, CLG,

engaging more fully with health, engaging with larger retailers. Members are asked for any views on how this recommendation may be met.

### **Actions**

7. Members are asked to
  - 1) Note the findings of the evaluation and agree that work in hand to meet recommendations is appropriate;
  - 2) Advise on possible responses to Recommendations 3, 8, 15 & 18.

### **Contact**

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