

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION and LOCAL GOVERNMENT PANEL
MEETING 9 MAY 2006**

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HSC/LGP MEETINGS

A Paper by HSE Local Authority Unit/LACORS

Issue

1. To agree the terms of reference for meetings between the Local Government Panel (LGP) and the Health and Safety Commission (HSC).

Recommendation

2. Members are invited to comment upon, and approve, the attached draft terms of reference for LGP/HSC meetings. The aims, membership and ways of working for these meetings is also set out.

Background

3. The draft terms of reference are based upon the recommendations for revised liaison and governance arrangements between HSC/E and local authorities made to the Commission in July 2005 (HSC/05/45). They were also refined in the light of comments from the LAs and HSE Working Together Steering Group, Programme Board and HELA.

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MEETINGS BETWEEN HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PANEL

Aim

Local Government Panel (LGP) meetings with the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) will have two distinct strategic purposes:

- To enable a strategic dialogue on local, central and devolved government issues that impact on health and safety regulatory functions, and vice versa, thus allowing effective discussion of local government's contribution to HSC policies and strategies.
- To review the effectiveness and performance of the local authority (LA/HSE) partnership in relation to stated objectives and assess its impact on health and safety outcomes.

Terms of reference

- To enhance opportunities for the wider agenda of local government to influence national health and safety policy and strategy over a 3 year cycle and beyond including implementation of European Directives.
- To raise the profile of health and safety enforcement in the local government community and more generally.
- To strengthen the link between LA health and safety enforcement and HSC's Strategy.
- To strengthen the link between HSC's strategy and LA health and safety enforcement, and LA corporate priorities to enhance social, environmental and economic well-being.
- To demonstrate how the principles of effective enforcement can be furthered through an effective central/local government partnership.
- To contribute to the development and implementation of HSC's Strategy and commend its adoption by the LA Associations as the basis for regional and local partnership activities.
- To take an overview of LA performance information and audit reports, including the annual "Partnership Report", prepared jointly by HSE and LACORS (on behalf of the LA Associations), which will provide a report on partnership arrangements (planning, delivery, auditing), the overall state of the partnership and the impact of the partnership on health and safety outcomes.

Membership

- The LGP will comprise elected members, through nominations from each GB LA Association – the LGA, WLGA and COSLA plus LACORS' Chairman. The LGP should approximate to, but be no greater than, the size of HSC (i.e. currently 9 Commissioners, including a local government Commissioner, plus the Chair).
- The length of membership and terms of re-election will be agreed at the first meeting.

Ways of working

The LGP will meet HSC twice a year:

- An autumn meeting to take a forward look at HSC's Strategy and factors influencing local government's contribution to it.
- A late spring/early summer meeting with an emphasis on reviewing the performance of the partnership in the previous year for the annual "Partnership Report"
- The dates for the LGP/HSC meetings are likely to be set for the same day as the HSC's monthly meetings to ensure that there is maximum attendance across the HSC and LGP.

LGP/HSC meetings will be jointly chaired.

The LGP will meet the joint chairs of the national HSE/LA officer enforcement liaison group (HELA) and the local government commissioner twice a year – timed to inform LGP/HSC meetings. In practice, this is likely to be in the form of a pre-meeting prior to the LGP/HSC meetings.

The outcome of the LGP/HSC meetings to be formally reported to each LA Association for necessary action and communication to member authorities.

The LGP's elected members will require consistent, high quality support to ensure that they are able to make best use of their meetings with HSC. This will be provided by LACORS.

LGP/HSC will review annually the efficacy of the interface arrangements.

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