

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2005 –2006

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Managing corporate risks is a key issue for all organisations. One key risk is the health and safety of our staff and others such as visitors and contractors who may be affected by our activities. It is essential that an effective system is in place to manage this risk.

1.2 Effective management of this risk not only prevents staff from suffering work related ill-health and injury, but also maximises the productivity and well being of our employees.

1.3 This report provides an account of the activities carried out by the Health and Safety Adviser and the Assistant Health and Safety Adviser during 2005-06 to ensure that Agency has systems in place for managing this risk.

1.4 The report concludes with an outline of the improvements and targets planned for 2006-07. The Board is invited to consider and endorse these planned priorities.

2 NEW LEGISLATION AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

2.1 **Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006** – are likely to come into force in October 2006. The potential application of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to general fire safety matters will be substantially restricted so as to ensure that devolved fire safety matters are dealt with under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. Much of the content of these regulations continues provisions which are currently contained in the workplace fire precautions legislation. Our fire safety guidance has already been amended and is being implemented to ensure we comply with this new standard.

2.2 **Asbestos Worker Protection** - Modernisation of an existing Directive to re-focus protection onto maintenance workers, such as electricians, plumbers and decorators, at risk of accidental exposure to asbestos. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) also propose to make additional amendments to the relevant regulations to simplify and clarify the regulatory regime.

2.3 **Construction Design and Management Regulations (Revision)** - Revision of the Construction (Design & Management) (CDM) Regulations 1994 and the Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) (CHSW) Regulations 1996 will increase the focus on effective planning and management of construction projects, specifically to improve risk management by ensuring responsibility is placed with those best placed to influence or manage it. This will also take account of changes in the Work at Height Regulations.

2.4 **‘Buying for life’ in public sector construction** – Lord Hunt would like the public sector to be exemplary construction clients i.e. to ‘buy for life’ – meaning they become clients who influence the design, construction, maintenance and use of a building, and help raise health and safety standards for all workers involved in such projects. As Minister for Health and Safety he would like to see fewer injury and ill-health incidents in the construction industry during the building, maintenance and refurbishment of our community facilities. Government has much to gain from raising its game and controlling construction projects more effectively. It is only by taking ownership of health and safety performance, showing leadership in setting standards and working in partnership with the industry that we will drive out poor health and safety on schemes that we are responsible for.

2.5 **Fit for work, Fit for life, Fit for tomorrow** - is a three-year HSE programme focused on injury, ill-health and days lost due to work activity reduction. Based on analysis of the incidence of injury and ill-health across known hazard and business sector hotspots major initiatives and interventions planned to achieve a reduction in the incidence of work-related fatal and major injuries include:

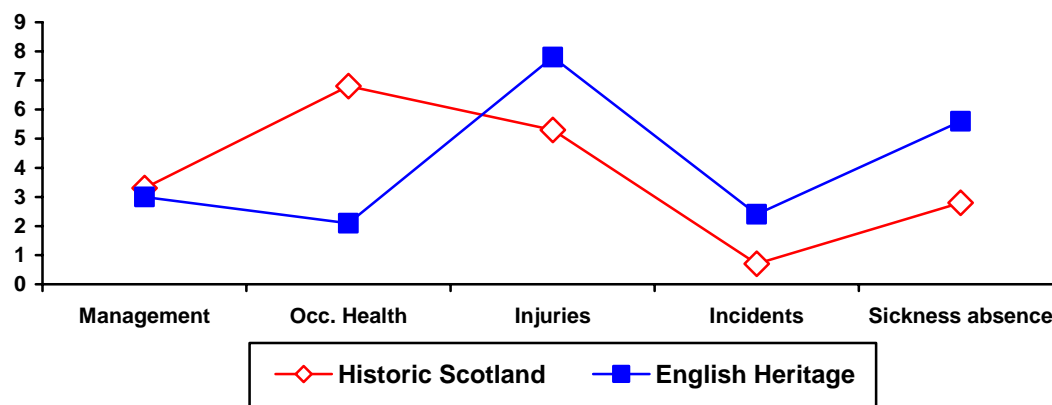
- ‘Moving goods safely’ – a supply chain initiative aimed at reducing injury and ill-health arising from the movement of goods in the logistics, road haulage and goods delivery sectors;
- undertaking a major media campaign aimed at promoting safe work at height and implementing the Work at Height Regulations 2005, backed by operational activity to embed improved working practices;
- rolling out HSE’s Stress Management Standards to government organisations, using a direct marketing strategy aimed at Chief Executives in conjunction with a series of workshops for HR professionals;
- Supporting the revised Noise at Work Regulations with an awareness and worker involvement campaign.
- To achieve a reduction in days lost due to work-related injuries and ill-health, the programme will continue to target the public sector, tackling this issue through the Ministerial Task Force. In particular, we will seek to influence senior management in the top 350 public sector organisations, sharing best practice and encouraging departmental ‘champions’.

3 MONITORING

3.1 **Audits** – Much more time was spent during 2005-06 auditing our sites and depots with 23 audits being undertaken compared with only 9 in 2004-05. A much better response to audits was also achieved, with action plans being received and updated to address the points raised. It was also agreed within PIC that the Regional Works manager would co-ordinate the response to audits and monitor the action plans.

3.2 **Vibration Assessments** – We subscribed to a vibration database so as we could access “in-use” data for hand held vibrating tools to complete assessments in accordance with legislation which came into force last year. We have now collected information on the equipment used within HS and will be tagging equipment in 2006-07 with time limits for safe use based on these assessments.

3.3 **Benchmarking** – for the first time in 2005-06 we benchmarked our health and safety performance against that of English Heritage (EH) using the HSEs newly launched corporate benchmarking tool. Although our overall management systems were comparable, EH has performed slightly better than us in most areas, and generally compared with other public sector organisations such as local authorities who have also used the guidance, we have a lower than average score. It is hoped that the QSA safety management auditing system to be introduced in 2006-07 will enable these scores to be improved.



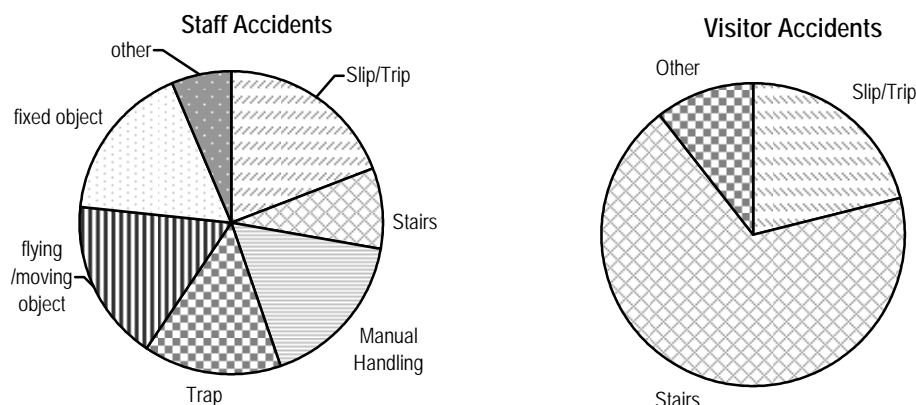
4 ACCIDENTS

4.1 **RoSPA Award** – Our accident rates in 2005-06 together with our overall approach to the management of occupational health and safety measured against key performance indicators has been judged good enough to receive a silver award. This is an improvement on our bronze award in 2004-05.

4.2 **Staff Accidents** – Unfortunately, for the first time since 2001, there were major injuries to staff. Both these injuries were slips/trips resulting in fractures at Longmore House. There was also a rise in the number of “over 3 day” reportable injuries from 5 to 7, these were caused by slips/trips, manual handling, and one burn. The number of less serious incidents remained much the same at 37 compared to 39 last year. Manual handling incidents over all fell by almost 40% which is encouraging given the introduction of new manual handling guidance last year. However the number of slip and trip incidents rose by 350%, and should be the focus for staff in 2006-07.

4.3 **Visitor accidents** – The number of accidents reported in 2005-06 fell by almost 40%, however half of those reported were reportable to the HSE. With the exception of one chemical burn all of those reported to the HSE involved visitors falling down steps or stairs and being taken directly to hospital. Whilst the number of slip and trip visitor accidents has fallen, the number of falls down stairs has remained constant. Hopefully the visitor services risk assessment process will highlight those stairs where improvements such as handrails and lighting can improve our visitors’ safety.

4.4 A graph analysing accident causes for visitors and staff is shown below:

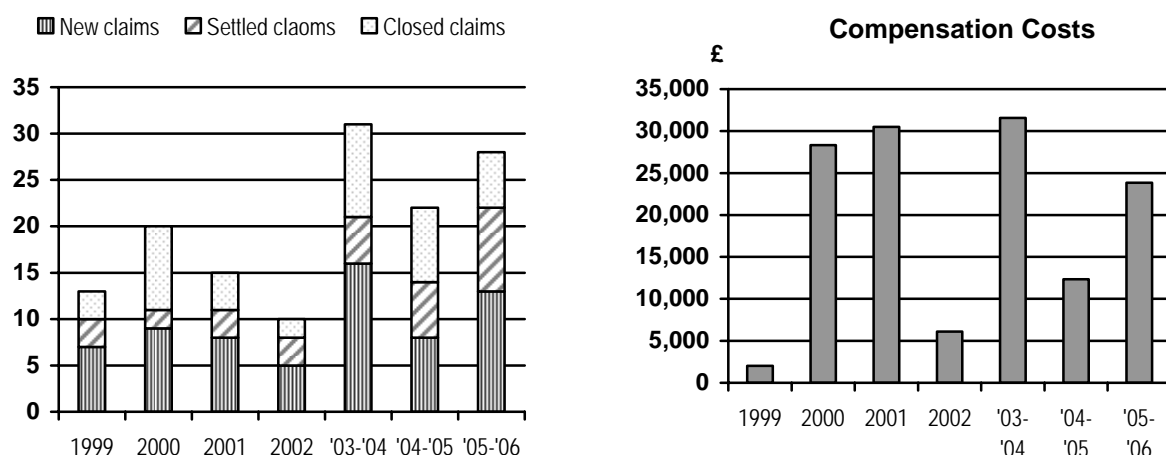


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4.5 Road Traffic Accidents – No injuries and only 11 road traffic accidents were reported during 2005-06, a drop of over 50% on the year before. Of the 8 of these for which our staff were blameworthy, one resulted from a hand-brake not being properly applied, and five involved manoeuvring at slow speeds and hitting stationary objects. Two involved skids whilst driving on 30 mph roads, one on a bend and the other to avoid a bird, both of these resulted in considerable damage to the vehicle.

4.6 Safe Driving Awards – 44 members of the MCU received safe driving awards for the number of consecutive years which they have driven for HS without a blameworthy accident. Frank Donaldson in Central Region and Andrew Garrity in South Region received Diamond Awards, for 25 and 27 years accident free years of service respectively.

4.7 Compensation claims – Comparisons with previous years are shown in the graphs below. There were 13 new claims in 2005-06, 5 of which related to the use of a chemical cleaner on the Brough of Birsay all of which were settled quickly for very small amounts. The other small claims settled were for damage to cars from pot holes and a flying stone thrown up by a strimmer. The average cost of a small claim dropped by over 80% to £166. There was one large compensation payment of £22,500 for a long running case involving an employee injured on a first aid training course 7 years ago. Twelve cases are still on-going, offers have been made on three of them and the remainder are currently repudiated.



5. GUIDANCE, TRAINING and INITIATIVES

5.1 Fire Safety and Evacuation – this was revised in anticipation of new legislation that will come into force later this year, and in response to criticisms by HMF I of our existing arrangements. District Works Managers were trained to revise the fire risk assessments at our sites in accordance with the new guidance, and have trained staff in the fire safety arrangements at each site. To date about 50% of fire risk assessments have been revised and improvements planned into work programmes where necessary.

5.2 Working with hazardous substances – This was revised to take account of legislative changes, and includes new guidance on exposure to biological agents. This new guidance also promotes the use of a database of assessments to which we have subscribed to ensure staff are provided with the most up to date and accurate information in an easy to understand format. This database also aids the identification and selection of safer substances.

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5.3 Safe use of pesticides – This was revised to reflect current best practice in the selection and use of these substances, and the training requirements for the staff concerned.

5.4 Working at height – New regulations were introduced in 2005, specifically requiring risk assessments to be carried out and suitable prevention and protection measures to be put in place where people may fall a distance likely to cause injury at work. This guidance gives managers responsible for completing these assessments, information on the how to ensure adequate measures are in place.

5.5 Management of Occupational Road Risk – For many of our staff, statistically this is the largest risk they face at work. Revised guidance has been approved by SMT, who have also been trained in the new requirement under this guidance to complete driver risk assessments. This will be issued this year, and all managers and vehicle liaison officers trained in the implementation of this guidance. A driver training programme will also be rolled out, and it is planned to make a DVD to be used for staff training in the management of this risk.

5.6 Risk Assessment – The risk assessment software was introduced to PIC following the successful pilot. There are now 870 assessments on the database covering the activities carried out by MCU staff and VS staff as well as those considering visitor safety at the various monuments and depots. Risk assessments have now been completed at all staffed monuments. During 2006-07 it is hoped to complete assessments at the key keeper and unstaffed sites.

5.7 Design Risk Assessment Training – Three 2-day training sessions were delivered by an external consultant to over 60 PIC staff who are involved in the design or specification of construction works to ensure we fulfil our duties as designers under the Construction Design and Management Regulations. These regulations are due to be revised in 2007, and our guidance will also be revised to reflect these changes, and the changes in our working practices agreed following this training.

5.8 Induction – Last year not only did we participate in the induction training for seasonal PIC staff, but prompted managers to complete an induction checklist and induction training with their staff for every new starter that was employed. At the time of writing, 40% of employees who started their employment or transferred to another department, in the reporting year, have been confirmed as receiving induction training. This gives a substantial target to improve on in the coming year and hopefully withw increased awareness of this process all new starts will receive health and safety as part of their induction training this year.

5.9 Workstation assessment – Assessors have now been appointed and trained for all operational areas. Many operational areas have completed assessments for all their staff have and have made any necessary adjustments. Other areas are working through a programme of assessment.

6. PRIORITIES FOR 2006 – 2007

6.1 Injury and work related ill-health reduction – Accident and ill-health reduction is obviously the main aim of any health and safety strategy. Ultimately we must aim to have no accidents, but this will need to be achieved by a sustained effort over a number of years. For the first time this year we have set a target for RIDDOR reportable accidents to be reduced by 30 % from 9 to 6.

No data is currently available on the number of days lost due to work related ill-health. This will be collected over the coming year so as targets for the number of days lost due to occupational ill-health can also be set and monitored. The government has set targets for work related ill-health to reduce the number of incidences by 20% and the number of days lost by 30% by 2010.

6.2 Health and Safety Management System – Whilst the Agency has always had a corporate health and safety policy, and a range of health and safety instructions outlining the specific arrangements and responsibilities for various aspects of health and safety, there has been no policy outlining the overall management system which details how health and safety arrangements are planned, controlled and communicated. It is proposed that a formal policy addressing this be introduced this year.

There is also no formal policy on the monitoring of health and safety performance and the auditing of the health and safety management system. These arrangements will also be formalised. An increased responsibility will be placed on local managers for the routine inspection and hazard identification in their work locations, whilst health and safety audits will focus more on the management systems and arrangements in place. Following the qualification of the Health and Safety Adviser as a RoSPA Quality Safety Auditor it is proposed to begin auditing our health and safety management system against the recognised standards of OHSAS 18001 and HSG 65.

It is also proposed to revise the corporate health and safety policy so as to bring it in line with current best practice. This will mean that health and safety will form an integral part of all the Agency's planning processes, and details of our health and safety performance will be included in our annual report. The Inspectorate introduced a health and safety policy for their staff last year, and a policy has also been drafted for PIC. The revised corporate policy will require each Director to develop a local health and safety policy for their area of responsibility.

6.3 Consultation and staff involvement – With the exception of PIC Edinburgh Region, who have a health and safety committee, we have no formal arrangements in place. SMT have approved a paper committing HS to exploring ways of encouraging greater staff involvement in health and safety and improving our consultation arrangements so that all staff are consulted in accordance with the law.

6.4 Work equipment – New limits for exposure to noise come into force this year. Revised health and safety instructions on exposure to noise and vibration will be issued shortly together with training for the relevant managers. A two year rolling programme of noise assessments is planned to comply with this new legislation.

Given these changes in legislation, the opportunity is also being taken to review the way in which we carry out work equipment assessments and ensure that the work equipment that we provide is safe for use and fit for purpose. New guidance on the provision and use of work equipment is planned for this year.

6.5 Health and Safety Promotion – This is an area where we have had only a limited impact in the last few years, with only a few depots taking part in promotional campaigns such as European week for health and safety, and no departments actively perusing accreditation under Scotland's' Health at Work Scheme. Proposals will be put to SMT later this year for

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the employment of volunteers from “Project Scotland” to look at innovative ways of promoting healthier lifestyles amongst our staff, and raising awareness of basic safety issues.

Liz Crichton

LIZ CRICHTON
Health & Safety Adviser
May 2006