

# Board Paper

18 December 2013

<b>Paper Title</b>	<b>Health and Safety - 6 month report - Update</b>
<b>Paper Reference:</b>	Paper NRW B O 53.13
<b>Paper Sponsored By: Paper Authored By:</b>	<b>Liz Davis Steve Burton</b>

<b>Purpose of Paper:</b>	<b>For Information Only</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	To note the developments and wider considerations
<b>Decision Required:</b>	None

<b>Impact:</b> To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic	<b>Impact on the Environment:</b> Ensuring we manage H&S properly will ensure we keep the environment safe and comply with H&S standards.
	<b>Impact on the Economy:</b> A good H&S culture will ensure Natural Resources Wales is an employer of choice and raise the standards for ourselves and our contractors.
	<b>Impact on Community:</b> Monitoring and investigating incidents will ensure that Natural Resources Wales is delivering the key deliverables through managing the Health and Safety risks.
	<b>Impact on Knowledge:</b> Sharing our knowledge both internally and externally will help improve our H&S performance.

## **Background**

1. The attached report was submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARAC) meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November. In addition a suite of annexes gave more detailed background information. Overall the Committee considered that excellent progress had been made and welcomed the comprehensive nature of the report. In reviewing and agreeing the material ARAC identified three areas for further consideration
  - **A need to focus on wellbeing** - The report focuses on the Health and Safety side of the business and therefore wished ODPM to consider how staff wellbeing was being managed
  - **Developing double loop learning** - Although the report demonstrated learning from the incidents ARAC were keen to ensure whole of the organisation was learning from the incidents and accidents
  - **Continued drive to promote a culture that promotes health safety and wellbeing.** Through the reporting and then investigating of incidents ODPM were tasked with considering how the cultural messages were being managed

## **Next Steps**

2. ARAC welcomed this report and the progress made so far in such a short space of time. They noted that, at the moment, the report focuses on traditional H&S aspects and incidents and wanted to ensure the wellbeing aspect was not missed.
3. In broadening this work ODPM had already recognised the need to improve the wellbeing aspects and are allocating resources to this.
4. There is already a significant amount of wellbeing support in place including Occupational Health Providers, Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) as well childcare vouchers and cycle to work scheme. These are currently undertaken by different providers. ODPM recognises the need to align these to the NRW requirements and ways of working and will therefore be looking to streamline these in due course.
5. More critically there is a need to develop initiatives such a stress audit, or consideration of adopting the Corporate Health Standards or something similar. To take this forward the Health and Safety plan has already recognised the need to monitor stress especially in these early days. We are already liaising through the Partnership Agreement to see how we compare with other organisations. However, this work needs further consideration and will be part of the People Strategy.
6. The ARAC identified a need to ensure the lessons from the incident reviews and the reporting were shared more widely across NRW so that improvements could potentially be made in similar or different areas.
7. Currently there is no formal processes in place to ensure either these are actively shared however scrutiny of incidents can reveal patterns of incidents or the need to change approaches in other workplaces.. We will consider ways of publishing lessons learned and liaise with senior line managers to ensure they are cascaded appropriately.
8. Finally the ARAC identified the need to consider further the cultural changes in managing and reporting H&S risks. The ARAC requested some further thought and consideration

be given to how we could measure the cultural changes to managing the H&S risks. This will be considered through the H&S Committee and ODPM will report back to ARAC its recommendations.

## **Risks**

9. The risk relating to the reporting of health and safety through ARAC to the Board is a weakening of the lines of accountability from workplaces through line managers to Directors and the CE. We need to align the performance reporting in the dashboard to the Directorate risk registers and ensure the Committee is supporting those priorities with technical advice and partnership working.
10. The corporate risk of failing to ensure that appropriate systems of governance are in place exposes the Board and Executives to legal challenge. The receipt of this report is part of that governance system.

## **Financial Implications**

11. There is little financial implications with regard's the ARAC recommendations. They should in the long term save money for the organisation through the reduction of lost time incidents.

## **Legal and Compliance Issues**

12. The recommendations do not affect our legal or compliance obligations.

## **Communications**

13. There are routine communications on health, safety and wellbeing issues. There is an approach to rapid dissemination of 'stop' notices. This paper and the report will be available to staff on a routine basis.

## **Equality impact assessment (EqIA)**

14. No EqIA has been undertaken.

## **Annex**

A: Health Safety and Wellbeing Update for Audit and Risk Assurance Committee