

02 October 2014

Paper Title	NRW Health, Safety & Wellbeing programme
Paper Reference:	NRW B B 71.14
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Purpose of Paper:	Decision
Recommendation:	That the Board note the update and agree the proposed next steps
Decision Required:	Next steps agreed

Impact: To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic	Impact on the Environment:
	Impact on the Economy:
	Impact on Community: High performance in the management of the health, safety and well-being of our staff, contractors, customers and the wider community is vital for the individuals concerned and positive in terms of our reputation and risk management
	Impact on Knowledge: (must be completed)

Issue

1. As an organisation, we undertake many high risk activities that need to be carried out safely. For example, we harvest forests, routinely work in or near water, we have many lone and remote workers, use chainsaws, and regulate dangerous facilities. These are just a small number of the high risk activities that our staff undertake routinely. We also have responsibility for public safety on our land and assets, for example on the forest estate, nature reserves and flood risk assets. In addition the ongoing continued use of legacy HSW systems of differing types is not an effective and efficient means for NRW to manage and monitor our HSW obligations.
2. Our Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing report for 2013/14 identified next steps and future work. However it is clear to deliver those actions and other identified work, HSW requires a clear long term strategy. There is a need for visible, strong and sustained leadership at Board, Executive Team, Leadership Team and with all line managers. This commitment to HSW should not just be seen as a priority but at the heart of everything we do.

Background and Update

3. Our Corporate Plan 2014-2017 sets out our purpose of ensuring that the environment and the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future, Our people and how they work are fundamental to the success of the corporate plan and we want to succeed in a safe and healthy way.
4. Over the next three years we need to consolidate and improve the way we do things by being accountable for health and safety and by having leaders, managers and staff who strive to create safer work places.
5. In our Annual Health, Safety and Wellbeing report for 2013/14, next steps and future work was identified for action. In addition an improvement plan was compiled.

Key Priorities:

- Improve visible leadership from The Board and Executive Team

- Engage managers in delivering actions and learning outcomes from serious incident reviews and ensuring there is active participation from those involved in the review
- Build and implement a 3 year Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy
- Align HSW policies and procedures
- HSW committee, fora, groups to actively engage with staff in developing and promoting a safe working environment and culture.

6. These priorities are being taken forward via current governance arrangements including:

- Clive Thomas as interim Executive Director of ODPM with responsibility for Health, Safety and Wellbeing will chair the main Committee and focus on the delivery of a HSW strategy, formal governance arrangements and a three year action plan for improvement.

- Andrew Johnson (ODPM) and Peter Garson (Operations Directorate) will lead the development of the strategy with Andrew also taking on responsibility for the development of supporting action plan; and the leadership of the specialist team of health and safety advisors.

7. These governance arrangements for the strategy & improvement plan are in addition to, the primary accountability resting with line managers; from the front line to Executive Team. Each is responsible for leading and managing health, safety and wellbeing, ensuring staff are working in a safety culture, have the competence to fulfil their role; the tools to assess and control risks and the confidence to report concerns. To support this accountability, there is the governance structure to drive improvement and to provide oversight of performance.

Next steps – Adoption of a Programme Approach

8. We intend adopting a clearer programme approach to drive the improvement which will enable NRW to pursue its ambition with respect to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees. This comprises four key workstreams:

- Engaging staff to develop a **Health, Safety & Wellbeing strategy**. The strategy will provide the direction for NRW to move forward its health safety and wellbeing performance. Our people and how they work are fundamental to the success of our corporate plan and we want to succeed in a safe and healthy way. We will improve the way we do things by being accountable for health and safety and by having staff at all levels who strive to create safer work places. We want to be recognised both internally and externally that we are leaders for managing health, safety and

wellbeing. The strategy will take into account the views of our staff through existing regional HSW fora and the National H&S Committee.

- Reviewing and refreshing our **Governance arrangements**. Whilst NRW has governance arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing, there is a need to re-confirm and clarify a number of key points including the role of ODPM, including the Executive Director. It will be important to involve the newly appointed Executive Director for ODPM in this discussion from November 2014 onwards. The purpose of the governance structure is to ensure that H&S improves in NRW through effective implementation of the H&S Strategy. It also allows for engagement with staff at all levels in the organisation to build a strong H&S Culture and to develop and implement the H&S Action Plan. It is proposed that NRW follows HSE's advice on best practice for Governance of H&S. This advice helps relate the day to day management responsibilities for H&S that managers have and the need to ensure effective engagement with NRW staff and stakeholders on H&S. Managers will be supported in carrying out their H&S responsibilities by our Health and Safety advisory and Learning and Development teams within ODPM. Irrespective of any further clarification in governance arrangements, management responsibility will remain with local managers, not ODPM.
 - **Developing our Health, Safety and Well Being Culture**. This will be integral to the delivery of our strategy. We aim to consolidate and improve the way we do things by being accountable for health and safety and by having leaders, managers and staff who strive to create safer work places. We aim to be an organisation that puts safety at the heart of everything we do, providing people with the evidence, tools and processes to help them make the right decisions for themselves and others. In essence, a system that is 'behaviour led'. We should be forward thinking and looking at lead and lag indicators to manage performance. The development of a strong NRW safety culture will therefore be a theme with in Strategy and the existing culture will be assessed using a methodology such as the HSE's H&S Climate tool.
 - A clear **Action plan** will provide the means by which the strategy will be delivered and monitored. The plan will be wide ranging, focussing on a priority basis on matters of training and systems to ensure legal compliance and to shape the NRW health and safety culture with the right leadership and behaviours.
9. It is important that we allow sufficient time to engage with staff on these proposals through the climate testing tool and through HSW committees. There is a direct relationship between HSW performance and employee engagement on H&S. It is proposed that programme of four work streams: Strategy, Governance, Culture and Action Plan are taken forward over the next 6 months with a formal launch of the

strategy by no later than 1st April 2015 but with many actions taking place before then.

Risks

10. Extended delays to delivering the proposed programme will impact on our ability to develop the culture that supports our values and improves our standards of health, safety and wellbeing and poses the risk of failing to be legally compliant.

Financial Implications

11. There will be direct financial implications from this proposal. However, the shift in focus will enable us to develop a culture that supports our values and improves our standards of health, safety and wellbeing, and ensure legislative compliance. Until the strategy and action plan are developed it is not possible to quantify the financial implication however the proposition is that operating to the highest safety standards will be the most cost-effective strategy.

Communications

12. A programme of pro-active engagement will be required to deliver the strategy and action plan. This may require the formation of separate group to oversee communications or utilise existing arrangements in relation to the National H&S Committee. A formal communications plan will need to be developed as the programme and action plan are delivered.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

13. No Equality Impact Assessment is required for this paper but will be relevant to the strategy and action plan.