

MINUTES OF SERVICE HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE

Wednesday 20th June 2007 – 10:00 hours
Lecture Theatre, FSHQ

Present:	DCO K Foreman	KF	Chair
	Ms J Morrison	JM	Sr H S & W Adviser
	Mrs M Goodrich	MG	OHU
	Mrs J Nixon	JN	Solicitor
	GM J Salt	JS	CRR
	SM I Kay	IK	CFP
	SM P Watts	PW	ER
	SM M Anderson	MAn	F & G
	SM I Murison	IM	ICT
	D Williams	DWm	HR
	FF A Price	AP	FBU Chair
	CM D Williams	DW	FBU Sec
	FF I Chapman	IC	FBU H & S rep
	T/GM D Dickson	DD	FOA
	Mr P Morgan	PM	Unison
	Ms J Boardman	JB	Secretary

07/12 Apologies for absence

GM M Abram (CFP), SM P Kilgour (ER), Ms E Fulton

07/13 New positions

KF congratulated JM on her temporary appointment as Acting Senior Health Safety & Well-being and welcomed FF Ian Chapman to his first SHSWC meeting as FBU Health & Safety representative.

07/14 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Actions:

07/02 Complete

07/04 (06/06) – Complete.

(06/26) – Task and finish group have almost completed their investigations into Working Time Regulations and should be available to be discussed at the next meeting. It was agreed that JS would send out an interim reminder to managers to monitor the hours of their staff who work as part time advocates.

(06/38) – There were no reports of risk assessments being completed by safety representatives. This situation will continue to be monitored for the next meeting.

(06/39) - CFOA Health & Safety and HSE protocol still in draft and not received.

(06/64) - Further review of stress statistics with comparator organisations due in September. Analysis of appointments broken down by station – agenda item 07/16.

(06/65) – complete.

(06/66) - Health Promotions programme report due for next meeting.

07/06 Working group to investigate impact of sports related injuries to be set up after appointment of permanent Senior Health Safety & Welfare Advisor.

KF confirmed that anxiety/depression in support staff was discussed at Senior Corporate Managers Meeting and no patterns/trends were identified – complete.

Letters to new starters to be amended to include pre-employment medicals being a pre-requisite to employment - still outstanding.

Reminder article about being fit for duty being personal responsibility and bringing 6 monthly test results - still outstanding.

Achievement of reducing duty days lost published in Corporate Newsletter – complete.

PM advised the committee about an IOSH national report on stress and the related costs to organisations. KF advised that the SIS document on stress is to be reviewed and all relevant data and national research will be considered as part of that review.

The committee discussed the differing flexi systems currently in operation in the organisation. KF advised that flexi systems are being reviewed and possibly harmonised (Dave Lewis and Phil Mobbs leading). Rep bodies expressed their wish to be involved in this review. The objective of the review was to balance flexibility for employees with the over-riding business need.

07/08 Complete.

07/09 DWm advised that no further handsfree kits will be fitted but due to costs, current fitted sets will not be removed. IM to issue a reminder of the initial instruction of not using mobile phones in cars and of the possible consequences of doing so, as well as reinforcing personal responsibility of driving safely. IM also to investigate possibility of putting reminder messages with phone bills and doing spot checks to check compliance with this instruction.

07/10 SMT discussion paper still to be completed. Martin Dowle to book time with KF to gain clear steer on requirements.

07/15 Calendar of departmental events/exercises

An updated off site exercise planner from ER is attached.

JS advised that CRR will shortly be linking their events through Outlook (MS Resource Scheduler) and that a Resource Co-ordinator was shortly to be appointed who would co-ordinate CRR events. The Outlook tool will be used to monitor all CRR events occurring on station. Currently all events should be recorded onto the events planner on the web page.

It was clarified that all events are discussed at PDG groups and should be the subject of discussion with local rep bodies. In order to ensure that health and safety reps are informed of all events, it was suggested that upcoming events should be included as a standing item at JCP meetings.

07/16 Accident statistics

OHU Statistics for 01/04/07 – 31/05/07 had been distributed, broken down by station for the first time. Musculo-skeletal problems were shown to be the main cause of concern. OHU's health promotion presentation to all stations is due to commence shortly and will target the stations with the highest number of referrals first. Representative bodies to attend a presentation for information. It was agreed that a newsletter item would be compiled to promote this and include information about stopping smoking, in light of the national smoking ban to commence 01/07/07. OHU have also updated their information leaflet for the intranet, which will also be promoted in this newsletter item.

MG advised that a breakdown of reasons for the cases of anxiety/depression showed no trend and were mostly a combination of home and work issues. KF informed the committee that Resources Forum study all long term sickness cases individually, looking at causes. OHU encourage stress risk assessments to be completed in cases of stress, anxiety and depression. It was clarified that no theme of overwork or otherwise has been identified. A further review of stress statistics with comparator organisations is due in September and will include Cheshire County Council, in view of their ongoing changes. MG will attempt to include other Fire & Rescue Services (action 07/04 (06/64).

JM advised that the national returns on sickness and accidents were recently issued and could be useful for comparison.

It was confirmed that staff can still self-refer to OHU.

H & S The May summary of statistics had been distributed, which now uses the accident 'triangle'. This format has been adapted for the health and safety noticeboards at FSHQ and will be forwarded to stations for them to complete locally. May incidents have decreased from the same period last year and it was noted that most were whilst conducting routine duties.

Although there were 23 duty days lost, these were attributable to incidents occurring in April.

There was a discussion about the recent near miss attack on fire fighters involving a petrol bomb, with KF reassuring the committee that this is being taken very seriously and a conviction will be secured if at all possible. It was noted that following CRR intervention at 08, attack incidents had decreased. It was suggested raising awareness of this issue via a national TV promotion, or even inclusion as a storyline within a TV drama. JS to investigate. It was noted that a CRR business objective for 2007 is to reinforce key messages with KS2 children.

It was noted that there have been successful prosecutions following attacks in GMC and Lancs. Conflict Management training had been received at Ellesmere Port, with further training planned by L & D.

It was noted that nationally there has been an increase in the last 5 years of deaths of fire fighters during incidents. MA advised that A9 debriefs always consider exposure to risk of the fire crews involved in an incident.

IC noted that the shorter recruit training course does not incorporate all items covered in older courses and individual experience is often not known in an operational incident. KF advised that the course has been reviewed after each cohort of trainees and the trainees were continually assessed following posting. Any issues relating to training should be communicated to Dave Langer (operational issues) and Graham Cross (training issues), with KF included in correspondence.

07/17 Noise

FBU had distributed a list of discussion points relating to noise, in light of the regulations update of 2006. It was noted that Hampshire had recently changed their DSU's because of a noise issue. A recent insurance claim in another brigade relating to hearing loss will be investigated by AP.

Items discussed included the possibility of conducting a further noise assessment review (further to that of Salford University in 2004), daily and weekly personal exposure limits, pre-employment benchmarking of hearing loss and OHU testing after relevant incidents. OHU have a noise dosimeter if needed.

It was agreed that a Working Group including OHU, Health & Safety and Rep bodies will consider the updated regulations, including the issues raised by the FBU and will present an interim report to the next meeting.

07/18 Display Screen Equipment

JM advised that there had been an increase in the amount of requested DSE assessments, with a particular trend in laptop users not using appropriate accessories. Managers were made aware that ICT have agreed that all future orders for laptops may have their necessity queried and will advise on required accessories (for local payment). ICT will also organise a DSE assessment when setting up new equipment. The next Service wide DSE assessments are due to be completed in October 2007. OHU have an on-line DSE package which JM will review.

07/19 No smoking policy

JM reminded the committee of the national smoking ban to come into effect 1st July 2007 and agreed to reinforce the no smoking message with an item in the Green. Workshops are arranging no smoking stickers in all Service vehicles. JN to clarify regulations in relation to lease and private cars.

07/20 Personal responsibility

Further to coaching and mentoring on completion of accident and near miss investigation reports, a lack of ownership of any individual's personal responsibility towards their own and their colleagues' health and safety at work has been noted. It was agreed that an item be placed in the Green to raise awareness of both employer and employee duties, based on the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and CFRS Health & Safety Policy.

07/21 Any other business

AP raised concerns of certain areas of the Macclesfield premises not conforming to fire prevention regulations, which could have implications due to public use. IK advised that the old style fire precautions risk assessments are not suitable and sufficient and that a new policy and pro-forma risk assessment, which covers all areas of use, is currently being trialled at Northwich and will be presented to JCNP in July 2007.

It was agreed that the health and safety representative at Macclesfield forward all concerns to Area Manager – Community Fire Prevention for investigation and that the new fire precautions policy needs to be communicated Service-wide.

07/22 Date of next meeting

This was confirmed as Thursday 16th August 2007, 10:00 in the Lecture Theatre, FSHQ.

The meeting finished at 12.30 pm.

ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action required	By whom	Completion date
07/04 (06/26)	Managers to be reminded of their duty and obligation to monitor hours worked by their staff, when task and finish group have completed their review.	PMo/ DW	16/08/07
	Send out an interim reminder to managers to monitor the hours of their staff who work as part time advocates.	JS	30/06/07
(06/38)	Inform H S & W on occasions when H & S rep completing RA's, not managers (monitor for 6 months).	JM	16/08/07
(06/39)	CFOA health & safety protocol for Fire Services to be distributed to SHSWC when available.	JM	16/08/07
(06/64)	Further review of stress statistics with comparator organisations due in September. To include Cheshire County Council and other Fire & Rescue Services.	MG	17/10/07
(06/66)	Quarterly report on Health Promotions Programme.	JM	16/08/07
07/06 (a)	Set up Working Group after appointment of permanent Senior Health Safety & Welfare Adviser to investigate impact of sports related injuries on operational activities, high risk contact sports and fitness standards applying to all ages.	MG	17/10/07
(b)	Letters to new starters to be amended to include pre-employment medicals being a pre-requisite to employment	PMo/ DWm	27/07/07
(c)	Publish reminder article in the Green about personal responsibility to be fit for duty and that bringing 6 monthly test results was not negotiable and would be enforced.	PMo/ DWm	27/07/07
(d)	Flexi systems to be reviewed and possibly harmonised with rep body involvement (Dave Lewis and Phil Mobbs leading). Rep bodies expressed their wish to be involved in this review.	PMo/DL /FBU/ FOA/ Unison	31/12/07
07/09 (a)	Issue reminder of initial instruction of not using mobile phones in cars and consequences of doing so, as well as reinforcing personal responsibility of driving safely.	IM	20/07/07
(b)	Investigate possibility of putting reminder messages with phone bills and doing spot checks to check compliance with using handsfree kits instruction.	IM	16/08/07
07/10 (a)	Work with Martin Dowle, Road Safety on guidance/education on driving and prepare a SMT discussion paper.	JM/JS	16/08/07
(b)	Martin Dowle to book time with KF to gain clear steer on requirements.	JM/MD	16/08/07
07/15	Upcoming events to be included as a standing item at JCP meetings.	PMo/ DWm	20/07/07

ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action required	By whom	Completion date
07/16 (a)	Representative bodies to attend an OHU MSD presentation for information.	MG/FBU/ FOA/ Unison	16/08/07
(b)	Compile newsletter item to promote OHU MSD promotion and include information about stopping smoking, in light of the national smoking ban to commence 01/07/07. Also include new OHU leaflet.	JM/MG	20/07/07
(c)	Accident 'triangle' poster to be forwarded to stations for them to complete locally with their monthly stats.	JB	20/07/07
(d)	Raise awareness of issue of attacks on fire fighters via a national TV promotion, or even inclusion as a storyline within a TV drama.	JS	16/08/07
(e)	Update on CRR business objective 2007 of reinforcing key messages with KS2 children..	JS	16/08/07
(f)	Issues relating to training to be communicated to Dave Langer (operational issues) and Graham Cross (training issues), with KF included in correspondence.	IC	16/08/07
07/17 (a)	Recent insurance claim in another brigade relating to hearing loss to be investigated.	AP	16/08/07
(b)	Working Group including OHU, Health & Safety and Rep bodies to discuss the points on noise raised by FBU and present interim report.	OHU/H & S / Rep bodies	16/08/07
07/18 (a)	Future orders for laptops may have their necessity queried and advice will be given on required accessories (for local payment).	IM	20/07/07
(b)	Organise DSE assessment when setting up new equipment.	IM	20/07/07
(c)	Review OHU's on-line DSE package.	JM	16/08/07
07/19 (a)	Reinforce the no smoking message with an item in the Green.	JN	20/07/07
(b)	Clarify regulations in relation to lease and private cars.	JN	20/07/07
07/20	Promotional item be placed in the Green to raise awareness of both employer and employee duties, based on the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and CFRS Health & Safety Policy.	JM	20/07/07
07/21 (a)	Forward fire precautions concerns from Macclesfield to AM – CFP for investigation.	AP	16/08/07
(b)	New fire precautions policy to be communicated Service-wide.	IK	16/08/07