

## **MINUTES OF SERVICE HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE**

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2007 – 13:30 hours  
Lecture Theatre, FSHQ

Present:	AM J Redmond	JR	Chair
	Ms J Morrison	JM	Sr H S & W Adviser
	SM I Kay	IK	CFP
	Mr A Elliott	AE	CRR
	SM P MacGugan	PM	ER
	SM M Anderson	MA	F & G
	SM I Murison	IM	ICT (AM)
	Mrs S Proctor	SP	AM
	Mr P Mobbs	PMo	HR
	Ms E Fulton	EF	Corporate Comms
	FF A Price	AP	FBU Chair
	CM D Williams	DW	FBU Sec
	FF I Chapman	IC	FBU H & S Rep
	Mr H Nelson	HN	Unison
	Ms J Boardman	JB	Secretary

### **07/35 Apologies for absence**

DCO K Foreman (Chair), Mrs J Nixon (Solicitor), GM J Salt (CRR), SM D Dickson (FOA), Mr P Morgan (Unison), Mrs M Goodrich (OHU)

FBU noted that with DCO Foreman's absence, they had been asked if they wished to chair this meeting and had agreed to JR as chair.

JR noted that there was no representation from OHU.

### **07/36 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

The minutes of the meeting of Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2007 were agreed.

#### **Actions:**

07/04 (06/26) – This item is still outstanding in order to avoid confusion by publishing an item in the Green closely followed by the new policy. The Working Time report has been presented to SMT and the publication of the policy is imminent. FBU noted that their request had been to raise awareness of working excessive hours, particularly for those with more than 1 job, since the policy had been delayed. JR agreed that the policy should be published as soon as possible with an accompanying item in the Green, as well as a discussion of the policy at a future SHSWC meeting. It was noted that a further Working Time Audit would be conducted in the near future and would include staff with more than 1 job.

(06/39) - CFOA Health & Safety and HSE protocol has just been received and will be distributed for comment and feedback to HSE.

(06/64) - Further review of stress statistics with comparator organisations due in September. JM advised that this will link with an on-going review of CFRS' current PTSD and stress procedures. Still outstanding – update report to be presented at next meeting.

(06/66) – MSD health promotion presentation – agenda item 07/28 - complete.

- 07/06 a) Working group to investigate impact of sports related injuries to be set up after appointment of permanent Senior Health Safety & Welfare Advisor (Oct 07). Outstanding due to delay in appointing permanent position.
- c) Reminder article about being fit for duty being personal responsibility and bringing 6 monthly test results has been drafted but not published yet.
- d) Green book flexi system review – Dave Lewis' initial paper to SMT identified further work which will be presented to AM's then rep bodies.
- 07/09 a) IM had issued reminders about not using mobile phones whilst driving – complete. Reminders would continue 3 or 4 times annually.
- b) Current provider Vodafone can't put reminders about not using mobile phones whilst driving with phone bills. MA suggested approaching provider about sending messages to **all** users (not just CFRS/business users) either via bills or text messages for safety reasons. JR agreed and that MA should liaise with Martin Dowle regarding education on using mobile phones and driving (link with 07/10 a) and remove this item from action list).
- 07/10 a) Driving discussion paper still outstanding. To include 07/09 b) (above).
- 07/16 b) OHU leaflet finalised and distributed to all premises, Area Managers and FSHQ noticeboards – complete. FBU asked that any future drafts be available for discussion and comment prior to publication. A discussion on OHU services noted that support and counselling for those with drug/alcohol problems could be listed under counselling services, rather than just being included in pre-employment medicals and that conducting exit medicals is being investigated to determine health status on leaving the Service.
- d) CRR are investigating methods of raising awareness of issue of attacks on fire fighters through a national TV promotion with several avenues of enquiry to be discussed. JS had notified the Secretary that a paper was due on this and item 07/16 (e) (below). JR reported that Joe Allen had reported to AM's this week on CRR's intervention in Runcorn following a recent attack incident. The police and Social Services had been involved and arrests had been made. IM noted that Runcorn had direct contact via mobile phone rather than going through Control centres. PM reported that this contact was only to NPU who only operated until 22:00 and so had asked for direct contact to Police Control after this time. FBU noted that fire service personnel are seen with a neutrality that the Police are not and that they oppose being directly involved in police manoeuvres. JR acknowledged this but re-iterated the need to comply with the Crime & Disorder Act and to assist the police without taking on their role.

- e) CRR business objective of reinforcing key messages with KS2 children – still outstanding. JR noted that messages are currently being conveyed about bonfires which could have been an opportunity to include messages about attacks on fire fighters. JR also noted that the new Violence at Work policy agreed at this week's AM's links into these types of messages. It was suggested that a DVD/CD be produced containing various messages for KS2. PM mentioned that 04 have several KS2 messages from past issues in that area and FBU mentioned a video called 'Hoax'.

It was agreed that MA would remind PDG managers of recent incidents at 05 and 09 and that in the interest of sharing information, include this on the activity database.

- 07/17 b) A functional hearing test had been held recently at FSHQ with OHU's occupational hygienist measuring noise levels in different fire fighting scenarios. FBU acknowledged that work is currently being conducted on cumulative noise levels and not just on individual items. Further report from the Working Group to next meeting.
- 07/18 e) JB had reviewed the on-line DSE package used by Cheshire County Council and had also attended an advanced DSE assessor training course. A recent item in the Green reminded all staff to carry out their annual DSE assessments. An audit of returns will be conducted in November and the SIS will be reviewed in December. JM outlined the DSE assessment procedure. FBU requested a list of DSE assessors.
- 07/25 A health check questionnaire covering risk assessments and insurance cover will be developed to ensure good standards and safety of contractors on CFRS sites and also for CFRS using outside agency premises will be passed to Corporate Governance – complete.
- 07/26 a) JM had reviewed OHU's interactive DVD on stress, which included managerial skills and it was felt that this could be a resource used as a more positive and preventative pro-active measure. JM will obtain a copy and review with rep bodies. FBU advised that they were aware of a discussion on the staff survey at a recent management conference which they would like to consult on and discuss at a future SHSWC meeting, as they feel there is indication of high levels of stress. JR advised that the staff survey presentation will be delivered to CFA shortly.
- b) Outstanding – report prior to next meeting for discussion. PM noted that there have been issues of dealing with fitness and overweight problems at Widnes that were difficult to manage. There was a discussion on fitness levels and the need to be fit all the time, not just at times of testing. MA queried the need to revisit the issue of health and fitness on stations as part of the work routine, as well as using PTI's more effectively. JM advised that the Corporate Health Strategy would address the use and role of PTI's as part of keeping people healthy and in work, the draft of which was due to go to SMT on 30/10/07 and reported back to the next SHSWC meeting.

- c) Following a recent decline in near miss reporting, JM advised that this would be promoted in December, to tie in with the CFOA calendar theme for that month and the distribution of the CFOA 2008 wall planners and blotters – complete.
- d) Distribution of first aid certificates is now being progressed by L & D – complete.
- e) PTSD review group (JM/Gerry Wightman/Barry Rose) are to visit Devon Fire & Rescue to review their processes.

07/27 Violence at Work policy was discussed at Area Managers and will now go to Group Managers and implemented as soon as possible.

07/28 PTI's will now be covered in Richard Gorst's project on station gyms – complete.

07/29 An information paper on the planned Corporate Health Initiative 2008 with Cheshire County Council and Police was distributed for discussion within departments and SHSWC support for this was asked for. The current Health Initiative being run solely at CFRS was discussed in relation to team encouragement and support and the lack of interest on stations.

07/30 An item for the Green detailing changes on risk assessments had been drafted and was to be submitted for publication – complete. JM advised a Significant Changes Log sheet would now accompany all new and reviewed risk assessments that would be an audit trail of on-going changes within all risk assessments.

07/31 MA had discussed the issue of applying common sense to working in extreme weather conditions including not wearing of fire tunics. HN advised that the 3-in-1 jackets, originally scheduled for delivery in October were now due in November and will be issued to all fire fighters – complete.

07/32 a), b) Deferred to next meeting due to no representation by OHU. FBU advised the Committee that the H & S rep at GMC had been tasked with coming with alternatives to the Calcot recliner to present to management. It was noted also that referrals to OHU concerning issues with the chairs had stopped and the remaining issues were being dealt with.

- c) MA had discussed the Service's culture change at Station Managers forum – complete.

### **07/37 Calendar of departmental events/exercises**

PM distributed an update of planned off-site exercises. JR noted that Joy Flanagan was preparing a Corporate Events Calendar listing all events and meetings and would ask that this be made available to rep bodies.

### **07/38 Statistics**

**OHU** - none presented due to absence.

**H & S** The September summary of statistics had been distributed and it was noted that accident rates remain on target. The increase in accidents to contractors was noted in conjunction with the increase in contractors working on stations and visitors at station open days. A reduction in routine accidents was noted probably due to less time actually spent on stations. No trends were identifiable. JM advised that the accident 'triangle', updated monthly, is now available on the Health & Safety intranet page.

A poster campaign promoting a reduction slips, trips and falls by taking more care will take place in November connected to ARA's. JR commented positively on the low cumulative accident figures for the year so far.

FBU commented on the increase of RTA's involving Support Staff, JM reported that H & S historically only investigated those resulting in personal injury with Workshops investigating the RTA itself but that in future this process would be linked. H Day would be invited to the next SHSWC meeting.

### **07/39 Musculo-skeletal update**

JM distributed a selection of posters to be used for an upcoming manual handling promotion to support the on-going MSD presentation currently being undertaken by OHU at all stations. Feedback on the posters within 2 weeks was asked for. The new risk assessment form will include an assessment sheet for manual handling, as well as one for noise and COSHH.

### **07/40 Health & Safety Practitioners' Seminar, FSC, update**

JM updated the committee on the various presentations. These included Managing Conflict by Northern Ireland (copy of presentation already sent to CRR), Contractors (copy to Facilities), Manual Handling, Young People, Stress and Noise. London have completed a large study measuring all noisy activities and adding them together to reach an exposure level, including travel time with sirens, AFA's operating whilst at premises and conducting daily checks, which will be shared with committee members. OHU will be obtaining testing equipment to go inside helmets to conduct further noise level tests. JM asked that any ideas for additional scenarios for testing be forwarded. HSA's and 72d's at other premises were suggested.

There was a discussion on operational staff using ear defenders and the issue of hearing instruction in risk critical environments. Stores stock ear plugs and there are 10 pairs on each appliance, with some in the first aid box. They could become part of personal issue with RTC gloves. Some work needs doing in this area and OHU will assess the use of ear defenders in risk critical areas. FBU queried the maintenance of ear defenders in station compressor rooms, which JM will investigate.

FBU commented on the increase in time spent in appliances and that the rear seats were not designed for long seating times and could give rise to or aggravate back problems. This issue is to be discussed at FBU national level and JR advised that an outcome would be awaited before progressing this issue locally.

**07/41 Date of next meeting**

This was confirmed as Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2007, 10:00 in PO's Conference Room, FSHQ.

The meeting finished at 16.15 pm. It was noted that AE had to leave at 15:15 and IM at 16:00.

JR asked that all committee members, as representatives of Area Managers, reflect the information from this meeting back to their departments.

## ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action required	By whom	Completion date
<b>07/36</b> (06/26)	Working Time policy to be published as soon as possible with an accompanying article in the Green, as well as a discussion on the new policy at a future SHSWC meeting.	JN/PMo	<b>19/12/07</b>
(06/39)	CFOA health & safety protocol for Fire Services to be distributed to SHSWC members for comment and feedback to HSE.	JM	<b>14/11/07</b>
(06/64)	Further review of stress statistics with comparator organisations due in September. To include Cheshire County Council and other Fire & Rescue Services. Liaise with PMo if required for access to other Services' HR departments.	MG	<b>19/12/07</b>
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	<b>19/12/07</b>
(c)	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 – drafted and to be published.	PMo	<b>31/10/07</b>
(d)	Green book flexi system review – Dave Lewis' initial paper to SMT identified further work which will be presented to AM's then rep bodies	PMo/FB U/ FOA/ Unison	31/12/07
07/10 (a)	SMT discussion paper on guidance/education regarding driving. To include approaching provider about sending messages to <b>all</b> users (not just CFRS/business users) either via bills or text messages for safety reasons.	MA/JS	<b>19/12/07</b>
07/16 (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	<b>19/12/07</b>
(e)	i) Update on CRR business objective 2007 of reinforcing key messages with KS2 children, taking advantage to educate about attacks on fire fighters. CRR to develop DVD/CD containing various messages for KS2. ii) Remind PDG managers of recent incidents at 05 and 09 and include on the activity database.	CRR / FBU	<b>19/12/07</b>
07/17 (b)	Further feedback on noise levels from Noise Working Group.	MG/JM	<b>19/12/07</b>
07/18 (c)	i) Ensure all DSE assessments have been completed, conduct audit and review of SIS. ii) Compile list of DSE assessors	JM/JB	<b>19/12/07</b>

## ACTIONS

Agenda item	Action required	By whom	Completion date
<b>07/26 (a)</b>	i) JM to obtain copy of Stress DVD and review with rep bodies.	JM	<b>19/12/07</b>
	ii) Include discussion on staff survey and stress on future SHSWC meeting.	FBU	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>(b)</b>	i) Investigate high incidence of repeat step tests at Widnes and OHU referral rate for back problems – report prior to next meeting for discussion.	PMo/MG	<b>19/11/07</b>
	ii) Draft Corporate Health Strategy to SMT for discussion at next SHSWC	JM	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>(e)</b>	PTDS group to visit Devon Fire & Rescue to review their processes and report to next meeting.	JM/L & D/BR	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>07/27</b>	Violence at Work policy to go to Group Managers and be implemented as soon as possible.	JM	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>07/29</b>	Departmental feedback on CHI 2008.	JB	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>07/32 (a)</b>	Raise the issue of recliner chairs at CFOA OHU meeting to compare issues with other Services – deferred to next meeting.	MG	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>(b)</b>	Review issues relating to recliner chairs and include referrals to OHU – defer to next meeting.	All	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>07/37</b>	Distribute Corporate Events Calendar to rep bodies.	Joy Flanagan	<b>19/12/07</b>
<b>07/38</b>	H Day to be invited to next SHSWC meeting to discuss RTA's	JM	<b>16/11/07</b>
<b>07/39</b>	Comments on MSD posters to JM	All	<b>30/10/07</b>
<b>07/40 (a)</b>	Distribute copy of LFRS Noise study to committee.	JM	<b>16/11/07</b>
<b>(b)</b>	Investigate maintenance of ear defenders in compressor rooms.	JM	<b>19/12/07</b>