

ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES &  
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**1. Why has this report come to the Committee?**

1.1 A summary health and safety report is produced for Personnel Committee to review the management of health and safety at work within the Council. It was also agreed that Management Scrutiny Committee would review this report.

1.2 This report details the full calendar year of 2010.

**2. Background**

2.1 This report follows a standard format, detailing significant health and safety events, Council-wide initiatives to improve health and safety performance, information from formal health and safety audit reports, which have been used to capture all of the pro-active and reactive auditing undertaken by health and safety professionals and incidents reported to the Health & Safety Executive.

**3. Significant Health and Safety Incidents during 2010**

**3.1 Sunderland International Airshow**

3.1.1 The provision of health and safety advice and support to the Sunderland International Airshow 2010 was delivered within this reporting period. The event was a significant success from a health and safety management perspective. The lessons continually learnt from previous years and the thorough event planning for health and safety combined to support the delivery of a well managed, safe and enjoyable flagship event for Sunderland.

3.1.2 All 3 days of event delivery presented a very low occurrence of minor incidents on site with no significant Health and Safety occurrences.

3.1.3 2 fairground incidents that occurred within the event site were investigated by the Health and Safety Executive.

3.1.4 In the first incident a child strayed away from his parents and without supervision he tried to climb on to a moving ride. The ride operator spotted him doing this and emergency stopped the ride. The ride overrun is approximately 1 metre and the child was struck before the ride stopped. He was knocked into the centre of the ride. The site doctor treated a superficial lower abdomen abrasion and advised hospital attendance to ensure further internal injuries had not been suffered. The hospital confirmed to North East Ambulance Service that he was discharged later that afternoon.

- 3.1.5 A dangerous occurrence occurred on the Sunday involving the collapse of the Waltzer ride. 8 members of public were on the ride when it suffered a catastrophic failure of the steel guide rail that carries the ride cars. All members of the public left the ride unhurt. 1 child later presented to St. John for first aid, who subsequently confirmed that there were no injuries to treat. The child was upset but not injured.
- 3.1.6 HSE investigated the Health and Safety management arrangements for the Airshow and particularly the level of proactive document inspection and validation the council undertook as part of the event planning. The rides involved were within statutory inspection requirements which the Corporate Health & Safety Team had checked and verified before the event. The Principal HSE Inspector for the North and East Region and the local Fairground HSE inspector concluded that they were very satisfied that the Event Organiser H&S responsibilities had been well managed and pursued their investigation directly with the Fairground owners and operators.
- 3.1.7 Investigation and lack of enforcement action verifies the Council does not carry any responsibility or liability as we can demonstrate validation of statutory checks and documents prior to the event.

## **3.2 Sunderland Aquatic Centre – Diving accident**

- 3.2.1 In October diving activities were suspended at Sunderland Aquatic Centre following a serious accident involving a 7 year old child. During supervised diving activities the child fell through the railings of the 3 metre springboard onto poolside sustaining fractures to his left wrist and right elbow as well as cuts and bruises.
- 3.2.2 The cause of the accident was inadequate edge protection to the diving platform. Whilst guard rails were in place they were not adequate to prevent a person from falling onto poolside.
- 3.2.3 The Council are currently in discussion with the design company regarding modifications required to the diving platforms to ensure safety of all users. Until such time as the remedial works are identified and undertaken, the diving platforms remain out of use
- 3.2.4 HSE investigated the accident and were content with the steps the Council has taken following the incident.

## **4. Council wide initiatives to drive improvements in performance**

### **4.1 Stress Risk Assessment Project**

- 4.1.1 The Council Stress Risk Assessment Process for non-school based employees has been delayed until after May 2011, as a consequence of the current change programme which will impact on the organisational structure which underpins the risk assessment process.
- 4.1.2 In respect of the equivalent work for school employees, Children's Services directorate have sourced funding to support schools in implementing the National Wellbeing

Programme over 2010/11 and 2011/12. The programme has 5 phases, with 20 schools in each phase. The programme was launched in October 2010.

## **4.2 IR1 Project (on-line incident reporting)**

- 4.2.1 The HR/SAP development team have identified software which integrates incident reporting into the HR/SAP system. This will enable costing of incidents involving employee absence. The system went live in April 2011.
- 4.2.2 On-line reporting by employees and managers will be enabled with the introduction of employee and managers self service functionality on the SAP system.

## **4.3 Port Health and Safety Audit**

- 4.3.1 The Port Director commissioned an health and safety audit/review of the Port in summer 2010.
- 4.3.2 The terms of reference of the review were to assess the suitability in current arrangements for the management of health and safety within the Port of Sunderland, specifically:
  - a current position statement on compliance with health and safety requirements in relation to the Port
  - whether formal systems for identifying and controlling significant risks exist,
  - whether these are being followed by managers and employees
  - identify areas of non compliance
  - prioritise the risks to be addressed
  - assist the Port Director to integrate the findings into an action plan which will form the monitoring tool for the Port Health and Safety Improvement Board (to be established following the review)
- 4.3.3 The review involved an inspection of premises under Port control, interviewing key members of staff, observing activities, reviewing records and existing management systems. This was undertaken in July and August.
- 4.3.4 The findings have been presented to the Port Director and the Port Board. The Port Director has established a Health and Safety Improvement Board to ensure progress is made in addressing both the management arrangements and physical condition of the Port where health and safety legislative requirements are not currently met.
- 4.3.5 Given the very high risk nature of some of the activities at the Port, this issue is reported to Executive Management Team in Quarterly Health & Safety Reports.

## **4.4 Streetscene Health & Safety Audit**

- 4.4.1 A number of serious incidents occurred in Environmental Services in 2008, which resulted in injuries to employees, damage to equipment and enforcement action by the

Health and Safety Executive (HSE). These represented serious failings in the health and safety management systems operating in certain parts of the service.

- 4.4.2 As a consequence a full health and safety review of the service was undertaken between October 2008 and March 2009. An Health and Safety Improvement Board was established and a clear action plan developed to drive improvements in health and safety performance.
- 4.4.3 In October 2010 the Deputy Executive Director of City Services commissioned a follow up review to be undertaken to establish the health and safety performance within Streetscene, and to determine if the improvements specified in the plan were being implemented on the ground.
- 4.4.4 The review identified clear improvements in the overall management of health and safety across the Service. Employees, Managers and Operational Managers interviewed all demonstrated a far greater awareness and ownership of health and safety. In addition the Trade Unions have described “a sea change in the culture”.
- 4.4.5 All the elements of safety management are now in place, including management monitoring. This was not the case in 2008/9.
- 4.4.6 The ongoing challenge for the Service is to further develop systems so that they are implemented and followed by all managers and employees, so they become robust and operate effectively, particularly those designed to measure performance.
- 4.4.7 HSE quote at least a 5 year timescale to improve and embed health and safety management systems in poor performing area. Given that Streetscene are 2 years into an improvement programme, the improvements noted by this review should be recognised and celebrated. The Service must maintain progress, to continue to protect employees, and minimise losses associated with accidents and incidents, particularly given the current financial constraints.
- 4.4.8 The Head of Streetscene is incorporating the findings of the review and subsequent actions into the Streetscene Improvement Board Action Plan.

#### **4.5 Review of Operation of Multi-Agency Events Group**

- 4.5.1 The review of the operation of the Multi-Agency events group is under-way, to identify if improvements can be made to the process. The review will incorporate lessons learnt from the prosecution of Chester-Le-Street Council following the Dreamspace fatalities, and recommendations from the Lord Young Review regarding community based events.

### **5. Formal Audit Reports and Action Plans**

- 5.1 Table 1 details the total number of audits undertaken in each directorate for 2010, the findings and the category within which they fall (critical, major, minor,) and whether managers have verified that actions have been completed.

- 5.2. Over the year there has been an improvement in the verification of actions as the audit system has become embedded in the Council.
- 5.3 The high number of unverified actions in Children's Service's have been investigated and they relate mainly to schools. Children's Services have put in place follow up arrangements; and the situation is being kept under review.

## **6. Incident reporting**

- 6.1 Table 2 details the employee incidents reported for both for 2010 and 2009
- 6.2 In 2009 major incidents (defined as incidents which are reportable to HSE) make up just over 6% of all employee incidents reported, and in 2010 this figure is reduced slightly to just over 5%
- 6.3 The total number of reports to the HSE for 2009 is 91 and 2010 is 86. This does not represent a decrease in major incidents as the employee numbers have also decreased during this period. The incident rate is calculated based on the number of incidents per 100,000 employees, and this shows performance a slight increase in rate from 653.82 in 2009 to 661.53 in 2010.
- 6.4 Of the major incidents reported, the two highest causes are slips, trips and falls and manual handling injuries. This reflects the 2 highest causes of incidents at work nationally. Analysis has not identified any trends regarding the incidents.
- 6.5 HSE do not publish incident rates for the local authority sector, however the rate for all industrial sectors in 2009/10 was 502.7 per 100,000 employees.
- 6.6 We would expect a rate higher than this national all-sector average because:-
- nationally there is a high level of under-reporting, however in the Council we have confidence that all incidents are reported, and
  - the incident rate varies greatly for different industrial sectors, all of which we cover in the Council. (Figures for different sectors per 100,000 employees are waste industry - 2056.0; construction industry – 781.5; public administration – 873.3; social work – 533.2; education – 296.2 per 100,000 employees; finance 161.9).
- 6.7 Further information, such as the cost of these incidents are not currently available, however in the future, when the IR1 project is fully implemented and we have a reporting system integrated with SAP/HR we will be able to cost such incidents.

## **7. Conclusions and Recommendation**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the content of the report.

Table 1  
**Audit Database Statistics 01/01/2010 to 31/12/2010**

<b>Audits</b>	<b>City Services</b>		<b>Chief Executives</b>		<b>Children's Services</b>		<b>Health, Housing &amp; Adult Services</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Issued</b>	<b>Verified</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>Verified</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>Verified</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>Verified</b>	<b>Issued</b>	<b>Verified</b>
Total number of audits	44		13		75		24		156	
Total number of non- confs	205	172	65	25	829	386	88	66	1187	649
Critical - 24 hours to fix	22	20	3	3	30	27	1	1	56	51
Major (up to 1 week to correct)	112	89	16	8	268	101	14	10	410	208
Minor - up to 12 weeks to correct	71	63	46	14	531	258	73	55	721	390

Table 2

<b>Incident reporting</b>		
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>Total No of Incidents</b>	1503	1698
<b>HSE reportable</b>	91	86
<b>HSE Reportable %</b>	6.05%	5.06%
<b>Major Incident 1st</b>	Slip/Trip/Fall 36.26%	Slip/Trip/Fall 40.7%
<b>Major Incident 2nd</b>	Manual Handling 22.58%	Manual Handling 19.77%
<b>Incident Rate</b>	653.82	661.53