

**Minutes of the HSENI Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting
Tuesday 23 August 2011, Robens Room, Ladas Drive**

**In attendance J Keyes (Chair)
D Breen
B Monson**

1. Apologies

K Toner due to other pressing commitments.

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 June 2011 which had been previously circulated were approved and adopted.

3. Update on Agreed Action Points

- Personal Safety Training is being progressed and will roll out in September.
- Annual Report and Statement of Accounts were laid at the NI Assembly before the summer recess.
- NIAO Report on Good Practice in Risk Management was drawn to the attention of relevant staff.
- Manpower planning meeting was held on 6 July 2011.
- Major Incident Response Plan staff briefing is being organised.
- Reminder to field staff regarding CMS reporting was issued.

4. Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare

It was reported that the progression of the personal safety training will be predicated on giving priority to training all staff who either have not yet received training, or staff whose last training was more than five years ago.

It was agreed that the workstation assessments recently undertaken at Ladas Drive and will be extended to include all offices.

**Action: Extend workstation assessments to include all offices.
Mr Breen**

SMT welcomed efforts being made by staff at Ladas Drive in making best use of the available, if limited, storage space.

It was noted that HSW inspections of both Ladas Drive and Longbridge were scheduled for September.

It was reported that one incident occurred during the period involving a slippage on a wet patch on the floor of a toilet.

5. Audit, Risk Management and Finance

It was reported that the Departmental Accounting Officer had acknowledged receipt of the HSENI " Report to Those Charged with Governance", issued by the NI Audit Office, which indicated that HSENI's accounts were unqualified and that there were no significant issues regarding internal control.

It was noted that PwC in its capacity as HSENI's Internal Auditors has completed an Internal Audit Quality Assessment Framework. While this has confirmed a robust approach to internal audit, it has suggested a small number of additional actions. It was agreed that the proposed actions would be fully considered and implemented appropriately.

Action: Consider the proposed actions in the Internal Audit Quality Assessment with a view to implementation. Mr Keyes

It was noted that DETI plan to introduce a revised risk management framework at the end of September 2011.

Action: Explore implications of revised risk management framework for HSENI. Mr Breen

It was reported that HSENI has submitted its response to the October 2011 Monitoring round. This has resulted in a surrender of £120k due to ongoing vacancies and reduced training requirements; otherwise expenditure is in line with projections.

6. HR

It was reported that during June 2011, staff were absent for a total of 77.8 days at a total cost of £9,360. The HSENI absence rate was 3.0%, whilst that of NICS was 3.6% and DETI 2.9%.

Confirmation was again sought that the scale of the absence rate was due to a small number of staff being on long term sickness absence. This was again confirmed, as was the fact that staff absence continued to be managed in accordance with NICS policy. Indeed the percentage of staff at work over the period was 91.3%.

It was confirmed that there were two warnings issued during July.

The meeting considered the report by NISRA's HR Consultancy Services entitled "Analysis of Sickness Absence in HSENI 2009/10". The SMT welcomed this helpful report which provided a detailed analysis of

sickness absence by business area, grade, gender, age group as well as considering reasons for sickness absence. It was noted that a key finding indicated that staff in HSENI lost less days (7.8 days or 3.5 % of available working days) than staff in the NI Government Departments (11.0 days or 4.9%). It was acknowledged that this was an encouraging finding.

It was also confirmed that 6 vacancies currently remained viz a Principal Inspector, a Trainee Inspector, a Gas Safety Compliance Officer, a Workplace Health Nurse, an AO and a PO. It was reported that a further Gas Safety Compliance officer plans to resign at the end of August 2011 to take up another safety related post. In addition a DP will retire at the end of October.

It was reported that the EO1 post in the Legislation Unit had been filled and that active steps were being taken to fill the PO post by elective transfer. As previously reported the other posts will remain unfilled because of future DRC pressures.

It was agreed that because of these developments a further manpower planning meeting was warranted.

**Action: Convene a further manpower planning meeting.
Mr Keyes**

Significant progress was noted in regard to the Continuous Improvement Team's Action Plan, with 17 actions completed out of a total of 27. It was also noted that the findings arising from the recent IiP assessment will be considered at the next CIT meeting and any new action embedded in the Action Plan.

Action: Consider findings of IiP Assessment at next CIT meeting. Mr Breen

Finally the SMT noted and endorsed the very comprehensive Learning and Development Plan for the extended period April 2011 to August 2012.

7. Case and Project Work

An updated table showing the current caseload of the Major Investigation Team (MIT) was provided. Out of the 38 cases, 19 cases were currently being investigated, while the remainder were either with the PPSNI (5 cases) or in the court system (14 cases). It was acknowledged that whilst the workload was heavy it was still manageable.

A useful review of the current range of awareness campaigns was tabled. This provided a clear indication of the timelines against which each was operating. All were on track.

Customer survey evaluation results from the operations of HSWNI were considered. These demonstrated high satisfaction levels among customers of the service. The SMT in acknowledging the hard work and dedication of the team, recognised the value in continuing to provide this important outreach service to small businesses.

Linked to this were the results of the School Farm Safety Talks delivered jointly by HSWNI and the General Compliance Team. These again pointed to high satisfaction levels and the professionalism of the staff involved.

8. Business Planning

The printing of HSENI corporate publications viz Operating Plan, Corporate Plan and Annual Report was progressing well. Once printed these publications will be issued and distributed widely.

It was agreed that to coincide with the release of these documents that further SMT Q&A sessions would be held during October.

Action: Arrange dates for SMT Q&A sessions in October. Mr Breen

9. Performance Monitoring

It was agreed to defer consideration of inspection numbers until the next meeting.

10. Board Business

It was confirmed that the next Board meeting would be on 20 October 2011 in Longbridge House.

11. A.O.B.

i. Water Systems and Potential Infection Risks

It was noted that DHSSPS Health Estates had issued a letter to all Health Trusts and Boards, reminding them of the need to control legionella in health care facilities. It was acknowledged that this development had followed considerable input from HSENI staff.

ii. **Honours**

It was noted that advance notice had been given for nominations for the Birthday 2012 Honours Round.

Action: Remind colleagues of the need to consider appropriate nominations. All

iii **OECD Conference**

It was agreed that consideration should be given to HSENI attending this event.

iv **Joint HSENI/HSA MSD project**

To explore the possibility of securing EU funding for a cross border MSD project.

v **Blackberry Devices**

It was agreed that the further provision of blackberry devices would, as before, be done on the basis of a sound business case.

12. Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the next SMT meeting would be on 29 September at 9.30am in Ladas Drive.