

**Minutes of the HSENI Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting  
Thursday 25 March 2010, Robens Room, Ladas Drive**

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

**1. Apologies** None

**2. Minutes of last meeting** – The minutes of the last meeting held on 26 February 2010 which had been previously circulated were approved and adopted.

**3. Update on Agreed Action Points**

- Internal Audit Reports for 2009 will be dealt with at April ARMC
- Response to second revised draft NIAO VFM report is being finalised
- The Capita concession contract will be available for sign off before end of March.
- Efforts continue to obtain legal expenses invoices from the PPSNI.
- NIPSA has been invited to join Longbridge House Working Group
- Attendance at News Release training is being planned.
- Work is progressing to develop a specialism framework.
- Meeting with NIO to discuss the transfer of responsibility for the industrial use of explosives is planned.
- A date is to be agreed for the CP5 scoping event.

**4. Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare**

Mr Keyes reported that he had led a health, safety and welfare inspection of Ladas Drive on 2 March 2010. The key issue emerging surrounded the operation of one break glass fire alarm point. Subsequent inspection by a fire alarm engineer confirmed the need for a slight adjustment after which he certified the entire system to be functioning properly.

Mr Breen reported that the HSENI stress management questionnaire survey finished on 12 March and that the responses were now being analysed ahead of running a series of focus groups.

**Action: Arrange for staff focus groups to be held. Mr Breen**

Finally Mr Breen reported that no reportable incidents occurred during the period involving staff.

## **5. Audit, Risk Management and Finance**

Mr Keyes reported that given the extent of the revisions made to the second draft of the NIAO VFM report it would likely be the end of March before HSENI would be in a position to provide a comprehensive response to DETI for onward transmission to the NIAO.

**Action: Forward comments on the second revised NIAO VFM report to DETI by 31 March 2010. Mr Keyes**

Mr Keyes drew the SMT's attention to a recent request by the Minister asking that HSENI continue to take all appropriate actions to ensure the prompt payment of invoices within the target of 10 working days.

The SMT considered the risk register for the period ending 31 March 2010. It was agreed that there were no new risks to add to the register and it was acknowledged that no risks crystallised in the period.

In regard to Risk D it was agreed that consideration needed to be given to forming a working group to oversee the review of HSENI Major Incident Response Plan and that the estimated completion date for this should be extended to 31 March 2011.

It was also agreed that the risk rating relating to Risk G should be downgraded to likelihood low given the recent substantial IT infrastructure developments.

The Quarterly Assurance Statement was considered and agreed.

**Action: The Quarterly Assurance Statement to be signed off and passed to DETI. Mr Keyes**

The SMT acknowledged the recent amendments to the Business Continuity Plan.

Mr Breen reported that outturn for DRC would be well within the tolerance limits for underspend, currently estimated to be in the region of 0.22%. The outturn for the Programme budget was less certain given the difficulty in obtaining invoices for payment from the PPSNI. It was acknowledged that efforts were continuing to resolve this issue.

He went on to say that this year's external audit of the accounts would commence on 4 May 2010 with the aim of laying the accounts and annual report for 2009/10 at the Assembly before the summer recess.

New central guidance on gifts and hospitality had been received and would be adopted for HSENI's purposes and placed on Sharepoint.

Mr Breen emphasised the importance for all budget holders to complete Economic Appraisals for all planned expenditure in 2010/11 in a timely fashion.

**Action: Ensure all planned expenditure in 2010/11 is backed by economic appraisals. All**

Finally he reported that the recent talk by a representative from CPD was well attended and those who attended gained a useful insight into procurement policies and procedures.

## **6. HR**

Mr Breen reported that during January 6 staff were absent for a total of 53 days which equates to an absence rate of 2.2% and a cost of £8,069.

Mr Keyes again sought assurance that these figures did not indicate any underlying absence management issues. Mr Breen confirmed that this was the case. He did however point out that, exceptionally, one warning had been issued and that the particular situation was being closely monitored and managed.

Mr Breen confirmed that a SLA had been arranged with NISRA from 1 April 2010 for them to prepare sickness absence statistics on HSENI's behalf.

Mr Breen updated the meeting on the current vacancies. There has been a high level of interest in the compliance officer post which has a closing date of 2 April 2010. The other vacancies were being progressed with HRConnect.

Dr Monson confirmed that the move from Avenue House to Longbridge House was likely to take place on 30 April 2010. He gave an assurance that the new location had been adequately modified to meet HSENI's needs. He did point out that certain other issues such as key holder responsibility needed to be resolved.

Mr Breen confirmed that the lease on the Lancer Building, Omagh, had been renewed for another three years and that the Cookstown office would have to be vacated by the one staff member currently based there, probably by 14 May.

Mr Toner and Dr Monson indicated that work to develop a new specialism framework was continuing following a very positive engagement with staff.

## **7. Case and Project Work**

Mr Toner referred to the monthly MIT caseload report. This revealed that of 32 investigations, 18 had been passed to the PPSNI for progressing and of these, 8 were in the court system. Of the remaining 14, all were at various stages of investigation. It was noted that 4 investigations were being led by colleagues from other sectoral groups. SMT took the view that the current caseload was manageable and paid tribute to the work of the members of the MIT and their colleagues in other sectoral groups for maintaining a very high standard of investigation.

One prosecution was concluded during March which resulted in Fermanagh District Council being fined a total of £45,000 for breaches arising from an incident when a man was killed while working at a landfill site. So far this year MIT has completed 17 prosecutions with fines totalling £427,300.

The outcome of two industrial tribunal appeals is still awaited.

Dr Monson reported that HSENI's new Work and Well Being unit was recently launched and that new guidance for employers on mental health and wellbeing would be formally launched during the UK Week for Mental Health in April. In addition, planning was well advanced to join an initiative "Wellbeing in Wellies" which was being developed with the young farmers clubs.

He went on to say that the Backs Guidance for the Health Sector was being printed.

## **8. Business Planning**

Mr Breen reported that the published Operating Plan 2010/11 had been approved by the Minister and acknowledged by the Assembly ETI committee. The internal version had been placed on Sharepoint.

Mr Breen also reported that very positive progress continued in regard to the drafting of the joint health and safety strategy for Northern Ireland. The draft strategy will begin a period of internal consultation both within HSENI and the Councils during April.

## **9. Performance Monitoring**

Mr Toner reported that as of the 24 February 2010 there had been 6275 inspections including gas safety inspections. The fact that that the inspections for March have still to be taken into account means the outturn for the year will be substantially higher than the planned target. It was agreed that the additional inspections have come in the

main from the input of the 13 trainee inspectors who joined HSENI in March 2009 and the new gas safety unit, both groups having ,more quickly than expected, been able to make a very positive contribution on the ground. The SMT acknowledged the effort of all field staff in achieving this significant result.

## **10. Board Business**

Mr Keyes reported that at the last liaison meeting with the Department he had flagged up the need to begin the process for appointing the next HSENI Chairman when the current Chairman's term of office ends on 31 March 2011. It was emphasised to the Department the enormous benefit HSENI had derived from the three month shadowing afforded the incumbent Chairman when he took up office and asked if this could again be offered. The Department accepted this and is progressing the appointment process.

## **11. A.O.B.**

- (i) Meeting with HSA** Mr Toner reported that he was to meet his counterpart in the Authority to discuss areas of mutual interest for co-operation.
- (ii) Fuel Oil Forum** Mr Toner reported that the next meeting of the Forum would take place after Easter.
- (iii) HSL** Mr Toner indicated that issues over service delivery remained unresolved.
- (iv) Fire Risk Assessment – Crown Premises** Dr Monson indicated that a meeting with DFP to discuss the issue of risk assessment across crown estate was planned.

## **12. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed the next SMT meeting given the intervention of Easter will be on 6 May, starting at 9:30am.