



Health & Safety Service Plan 2006-2007

Drawn up in accordance with HSC Section 18 Guidance

1.0 Service Aims and Objectives

1.1 Aim

The Council recognises that its Health and Safety enforcement function represents an important mechanism for reducing accidents and ill health in the workplace as well as contributing directly to economic success and a safe working environment. The Council's aim is to ensure that all employees in the Local Authority enforced sector and the general public enjoy a working environment that is safe and without undue or unreasonable risk to health.

1.2 Our objectives include:

- To enforce the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions under that Act, at premises within the Council's jurisdiction, having regard to the level of risk to workers.
- To take enforcement action according to a clear, published enforcement policy, based on the principles of proportionality in applying the law, consistency of approach, transparency in application of the law and targeting action based on risk and accountability.
- To promote the management of health, safety and welfare at work through education and advice (which form an integral part of the enforcement regime).

Local performance indicators are set and published each year in the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and the local press.

There are no specific national performance indicators relating to health and safety enforcement.

2.0 Background

2.1 Profile of the Local Authority

The area served by SCDC is approximately 350 square miles, much of which is farmland given to primary production of food, mainly cereals and vegetables. Villages range from small rural settlements to suburban and new village settlements such as Bar Hill and Cambourne. There are no large towns within the district, the largest village currently having a population of 7,060.

2.2 There is increasing pressure from development, particularly research and high technology industries and new housing. The population of approximately 133,000 is rapidly expanding. New build and new villages will take the population to over 150,000 within 5 years. It is anticipated that the 102nd village of Cambourne currently under development will have a new population of 10,000 persons within 3 years.

2.3 With this projected growth it is anticipated that there will be an increase in the number of businesses in the District. This increase in business numbers has already started.

3.0 Premises Profile (as at 1st April 2006)

3.1 Breakdown by Type of Business:

Retail Shops 267
Wholesale, warehouse etc. 112
Offices 344

Catering, restaurants and bars 496
Hotels, camp sites etc 63
Residential care homes 84
Leisure and cultural 151
Consumer services 151
Other 45
TOTAL 1,713

3.2 Data Base

The database is incomplete and there are likely to be more premises in the District than we are aware of. It is appreciated that the database needs to be continually reviewed and updated. This work is to be pursued this year and it is believed that there are probably 2500 to 3000 businesses in the district, for which we are the enforcing authority.

3.3 Demands on the Service

The local authority is required to provide a balanced programme of enforcement activity, providing the resources for a range of different types of activity, identified in HELA circular 67/1(rev3) (See Appendix 1) it is expected to focus on the priorities set by the Health and Safety Commission which in turn reflect the Revitalising Health and Safety (RHS) initiative of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The specialist health and safety officer has been given a nominal target for preventive inspections; these will focus on nationally identified Revitalising Health and Safety topics. The implications of this are reflected in the target and anticipated levels of enforcement activity.

The current workload will consist of:

3.3.1 Health and Safety Premises Inspections

These will be largely joint inspections of food premises by Food Safety Officers and topic based inspections of high-risk premises by the Food and Health and Safety Team Officers and the specialist Health and Safety Enforcement Officer. Two Technical Officers will intermittently assist with this planned inspection programme.

3.3.2 New Business Enquiries and Inspections

All plans for new businesses and substantial alteration to existing businesses are submitted for comment to a Health and Safety Team Officer. Advice is given and new businesses visited on opening to confirm compliance. New businesses will be subject to an overview inspection and inspection against the priority issues identified in section 4.2 below.

3.3.3 Health and Safety Complaints and Enquiries

Complaints may relate to poor working conditions, welfare issues, working hours and a wide range of technical matters. They can arise from employers, employees, union and safety representatives and members of the public.

3.3.4 Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences

It is proposed to draft a local procedure based on regionally agreed criteria and national guidelines for the selection and investigation of reported accidents and dangerous occurrences. These can range from minor injuries to fatalities

3.3.5 Licensing and Registration

Applications or representation for New Premises Licences under the 2003 Act, or variations to the licenses are sent to us for consultation. Application for temporary events that are for over 500 people are also sent to us for action. We can comment or object if necessary. Temporary events for fewer than 500 people may also be drawn to our attention for us to take and necessary action under Health and Safety Legislation. Registration of skin piercing activities at certain businesses is also carried out.

3.3.6 Formal Notifications

The Council receives formal notifications from specialist engineers relating to lifting equipment, asbestos removal, pressure systems and location of cooling towers. Follow up work is often required in all of these areas to ensure safe working systems are in place.

3.3.7 Advice to businesses

The Council is fully committed to give advice to businesses to enable them to comply with their statutory duties. It can include one to one advice during inspections or other contacts, response to telephone calls and other requests as well as more formal campaigns and media activity.

As well as the pro-active work of inspecting the above premises the department last year dealt with the following:

3.3.8 2005/2006 Activities

Accident notifications 111

Complaints 27

New business enquiries 22

Delivered one CIEH Foundation Certificate in Health and Safety course.

3.4 Enforcement Policy

There is an Environmental Health Enforcement Policy, which has been endorsed by the cabinet in 2004. This is available on the Councils website, and by request to members of the public.

The Council has endorsed the central and Local Government Enforcement Concordat and is committed to complying with recognised standards for good enforcement practice.

Enforcement activity is monitored for compliance with the policy as part of an in-house quality management scheme.

4.0 Resources

4.1 Staffing

The Officer with overall responsibility for Health and Safety Service delivery is Mr Dale Robinson, Chief EHO. Officers with specialist responsibilities for Health and Safety: Mr J G Keerie Principal Environmental Health Officer, supported by Mrs Carol Archibald, Team leader.

Officers undertaking Health and safety Enforcement duties are:

1 Health & Safety Enforcement Officer
3.5 EHO's (Food and Health and Safety Officers)
1 Technical Officer
Associated Admin support.
This calculated at 2.5 full-time equivalent

4.2 Topic Based Inspection Programme in Partnership with HSE

The HSE has reviewed its overall approach to programme working and has created some new programmes and terminology. The new partnership agreements involving joint working between HSE officers and Local Authority Officers has been embraced by many local authorities including South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The new Fit 3 programme identifies topic-based inspections working to the theme 'Fit for Work, Fit for Life, Fit for Tomorrow'. The programme is committed to focusing resources on agreed health and safety priorities and this will represent most of the programmed work for the coming year.

Programmed high risk inspections will form the basis of much of the inspection effort, with the Fit 3 suite of ongoing interventions used to assist appropriate topic selection. Programmed high risk inspections will include premises rated A, B1 and B2 due for inspection in accordance with the risk rating set out in national guidance 67/1(Rev 3).

In 2006/07 we will target businesses in pursuit of accident and ill-health reductions. We will use a range of intervention techniques, including self-assessment questionnaires, providing free guidance and information as well as targeted inspections as part of the following initiatives that are specifically designed by the HSE to deliver the Fit 3 programme.

- i) Slips and trips programme where we will follow up on last years visits as well as making fresh visits.
- ii) Falls from a height partnering the HSE with their ladder safety campaign.
- iii) Dermatitis in hairdressers and florists
- iv) Backs 2006 Campaign specifically aimed at reducing musculoskeletal disorders. (Currently planned for October 2006)

4.3 Enforcement Initiatives based on HSC Priorities and Key Issues

The Health and Safety Commission have specifically directed HSE and LA's to give high priority to focused initiatives rather than concentrating on routine inspections (Ref LA circular 67/1). Fit 3 is a portfolio of campaigns designed to deliver national targets for reducing accidents and ill health in work places.

This approach requires improved partnership working with HSE to which South Cambridgeshire District Council has already demonstrated its commitment when it signed the HSC's statement of intent on 11 November 2005. This aims to improve future standards of workplace health and safety and means a significant change in how the HSE and LA's work together making them collectively more effective.

The requirements of S18 of The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 directs LA's on how they should resource and deliver their health and

safety service. S18 guidance is being revised to lend further support to the targeted approach to health and safety enforcement and partnership working which has been outlined in this year's service plan.

The annual statutory return (LAE1) for health and safety by which LA performance is measured is also to be revised to reflect the change in approach with less focus on the number of inspections and more attention given to the campaigns undertaken.

4.4 Allocation of Enforcement Tasks

4.4.1 Specialist Health and Safety Inspector

During proactive inspections the Specialist Health and Safety Enforcement Officer will focus attention on the following priority topics identified by the Health & Safety Commission - workplace transport, falls from height, musculoskeletal disorders, slips and trips, as these represent the largest (or fastest growing) causes of injury and ill health in the British economy and have been identified as key target areas to achieve the Governments Revitalising Health and Safety strategy and the Fit 3 topic based campaign agenda. Separate guidance will be prepared for these visits.

The service receives a considerable amount of reactive work that takes a large proportion of the specialist health and safety inspector's time. The limited staff resource means that work has to be priorities. Due to customer expectations reactive work often takes precedence over proactive inspections. Attempts will be made to ensure an appropriate balance is maintained between reactive and proactive work within the current resource constraints.

4.4.2 Environmental Health Officers

For EHO's carrying out combined inspections at food businesses, key issues to consider will include:

- "Priorities for Health & Safety in Catering"
- Welfare
- Slips and Trips
- Manual handling
- Cellar Safety

Inspections will normally be carried out against an aide memoir checklist prepared for food businesses, based on these nationally identified priorities.

Complaints relating to safety and welfare issues in food premises, other than warehouses and residential homes, will be passed to an EHO for initial investigation.

The Team Leader will normally take decisions on the delegation of work.

4.5 Reported Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences

Accidents/Incidents may be formally notified to the authority or received by way of a complaint. Accidents/Incidents will be selected for investigation in accordance with the RIDDOR guidance, having given due regard to available resources to carry out investigations and the

seriousness of each. Accidents/Incidents, which fall within the discretionary category, for investigation, will generally only be selected where the incident relates to one of the following topics: Falls from heights; Transport; Slips and trips; Manual handling. Targets for reducing accidents at work by 2010 are set out in the Revitalising health and safety document.

4.6 Complaints and Requests for Service

Subject to the exercise of professional discretion, the following guidelines will apply to the handling of complaints and requests for service:

- Where the matter is outside the jurisdiction of the enforcement team, the enquirer or complainant will be advised accordingly and redirected to the appropriate body.
- Reported incidents will be dealt with in accordance with the Incident Selection Criteria, subject to the need to ensure that all incidents notifiable under RIDDOR are so notified.
- So far as possible, advice will be given by phone or by letter. Visits will only be carried out in the first instance where the matter appears to involve one of the following:
 - Public concern and a serious breach of health and safety requirements
 - Serious breach of health and safety requirements
 - A priority area {manual handling, slips and trips, falls from height, work place transport and work place induced dermatitis}
- Anonymous complaints will be recorded. Further action will only be taken at the discretion of the Team Leader or Principal Officer.

4.7 Inspector Development and Refresher Training

It will be necessary to allocate time for relevant staff to undergo training on the following matters:

- Enforcement Management Model implementation
- Occupational Induced Dermatitis
- Topic based inspections
- Legislative Changes
- Partnership working with the HSE

It is intended to provide refresher training on inspection issues that reflect the HSC priorities.

4.8 Intra-authority Audit Programme for the Management of Health and Safety Enforcement

The Health and Safety Commission requires enforcing authorities to periodically undergo independent audit of their arrangements to carry out enforcement activities, and to prepare improvement plans taking into account the outcome of such audits. This authority has taken part in an intra-authority audit programme organised by the Cambridgeshire Health and Safety Liaison Group.

A work plan to address issues identified by the audit will be developed and challenged during 2006/07.

4.9 Data Base

No planned survey work is to be undertaken. The database will be updated from the following sources:

- Notifications of new businesses made under health and safety and food safety legislation.
- Notifications received of applications for Planning or Building Regulation approvals, where there is evidence of a change of occupier or change of use.
- Changes in the use or occupation of premises identified in the course of routine visits on the district.
- Complaints and enquiries that indicate the existence of new businesses or a changed occupation or use.
- Business rating list.
- BT Commercial Premises Listings
- Information from HSE data base

4.10 Documentary Reviews

The following documents will be subject to review and revision if appropriate:

- Policy in respect of Enforcement of Health and Safety at Work
- Incident Selection Protocol
- Incident Investigation Protocol
- At least five of our current practise and procedure notes will be reviewed.

4.11 Partnership and Joint Working

It is intended to explore further areas of joint working to include, the National Care Standards Commission for Social Care (CSCI) Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), Health and Safety Executive.

5.0 Performance Targets

5.1 Elements of BV166 include issues relating to Health and Safety enforcement. Other indicators and information relating to health and safety is collected and published by HELA annually.

In addition, the following local indicators are recorded:

- i - Response times to complaints/requests for service and percentage within target of 3 days
- ii – Response times for accident notifications are the same day.

6.0 Liaison

6.1 In order to ensure that its activities are consistent with other local authorities and the HSE, regular liaison meetings are held with Local Authorities from Cambridgeshire. HSE representatives attend these meetings.

6.2 Other bodies with which we consult/liaise include:

Cambridgeshire Liaison Group for Occupational Health & Safety
LACORS (Local Authority Coordinators of Regulatory Services)
Trading Standards

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
CSCI, Health Protection Agency (HPA) Police and Fire and Rescue.
HSE and their national Help Line

7.0 Quality Control and Review

- 7.1** A documented quality management system is in place, which includes:
- Team Leader monitoring of correspondence
 - Reviews of documentation and computer records
 - Accompanied inspections/peer review
 - In service training
 - Inter-authority auditing
 - Benchmarking of performance
 - Regular team meetings
- 7.2** In addition staff take part in a structured staff development programme, which amongst other things identifies training needs.
- 7.3** The Department has reviewed and updated its enforcement policy in accordance with the format laid down in Section 18 guidance, the Enforcement Concordat, to which the Council is a signatory, and the Code for Crown Prosecutors. The policy will be available on the Council web site. (www.scambs.gov.uk)

8.0 Glossary

HSC = Health and Safety Commission (National body whose job is to protect everyone in Great Britain against risks to health or safety arising out of work activities; to conduct and sponsor research; promote training; provide an information and advisory service; and submit proposals for new or revised regulations and approved codes of practice).

HSE = Health and Safety Executive (The enforcement arm of HSC, HSE's job is to help the Health and Safety Commission ensure that risks to people's health and safety from work activities are properly controlled).

EHO = Environmental Health Officer (Enforcement officer employed by LA).

LAC = Local Authority Circular (advice/guidance from HSE/HELA).

FSO = Food and Health and Safety Officer (Specialist Enforcement Officer employed by Local Authority).

RIDDOR = Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

RHS = Revitalising Health and Safety (The Revitalising Health and Safety strategy was launched jointly by the Government and Health and Safety Commission on 7 June 2000. This 10 year strategy seeks significant improvements in workplace health and safety by setting, for the first time, challenging targets aimed at reducing the incidence of work-related ill-health, the number of fatal and major injuries and working days lost caused by injuries and ill health).

HELA = Health and Safety Executive Local Authority Unit (A liaison body set up to ensure, amongst other things, consistent enforcement by both HSE and Local Authorities).

COSHH = Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations.