

8th December 2016

Paper Title	Wellbeing, Health and Safety Update
Paper Reference:	NRW B B 73.16
Paper Sponsored By:	Ashleigh Dunn
Paper Presented By:	Emyr Roberts

Purpose of Paper:	Scrutiny
Recommendation:	To note issues and progress made to date

<p>Impact: To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic</p>	<p>How do the proposals in this paper help NRW achieve the Well-Being of Future Generations Act principles in terms of:</p> <p>Looking at the <u>long term</u>:</p> <p>Taking an <u>integrated</u> approach:</p> <p>Involving a <u>diversity</u> of the population:</p> <p>Working in a <u>collaborative</u> way:</p> <p><u>Preventing</u> issues from occurring:</p> <p>The NRW Roadmap describes how our success depends on the way we work together to create a better Wales. The roadmap sets out our vision and what we will do to deliver it. Through the work that we do and the way that we do it, NRW will make a positive contribution to improving the wellbeing, health and safety of our staff and customers across Wales. Our values mean that we will be both responsible and accountable for our actions and we will act to keep ourselves and others safe and well.</p>
---	---

Issue

1. Wellbeing, Health and Safety (WHS) update for the NRW Board.

Background

2. This briefing paper describes the headline issues and recent developments in relation to wellbeing, health and safety, providing an update, key headline statistics and interpretation plus a brief summary of progress made on specific issues.

Assessment

Wellbeing & health

Sickness absence statistics for 2016/17

3. From April to September 2016, the rolling year sickness absence rate is currently at 6.1 days lost per employee per annum equating to 2.8%. For this and future updates absence rates will be quoted this way to be fully consistent with other management reports and the annual rolling year benchmark. The NRW benchmark is no more than 7 days lost per employee equating to 3.1%.

4. The top three absence reasons for this period total 52% of all reported sickness absence from 1 April 2016. Note there has been a significant step up in incidences and days lost due to mental health reported since the last update, an increase of 150% in terms of days lost This would seem to be due to a combination of late records and an increase in reporting of mental health incidences.

Absence reason	% Overall	Days lost
Mental Health	25%	1438
Respiratory System	15%	873
Musculoskeletal System and Connective Tissue	12%	705
Total absence	100	5786

5. Our occupational health data indicates that 40% of our management referrals are related to mental health issues. 40% of those mental health related referrals are workplace stress related. Work related stressors are workload and change of role, bullying & harassment and workplace incident. Further detail for July to September inclusive is provided in the table below. Note that the data is indicative as mental health causes are not always the result of single stressors and that a combination of issues e.g. workplace and personal may be at play.

Month	Referrals	Mental health	Personal stress	Anxiety	Workplace stress	Causes
July 2016	15	6	2	2	2	Workload, workplace incident
Aug 2016	11	7	1	2	4	Workload (3), role change
Sep 2016	16	4	2	1	1	Bullying & harassment
Total	42	17	5	5	7	

Wellbeing initiatives & developments

6. Absence due to mental health will continue to be drawn to the attention of leaders and managers as we focus on improving wellbeing in the organisation. Leaders and managers need to actively work on measures to deal with this issue, recognising the potential impact on staff from issues such as job evaluation, business area reviews, organisational change and impact of staff leaving on VES. There are good examples where directorates have helped staff deal with stress related issues and return to work effectively. Learning from such experiences has been captured to help improve the way staff are supported and managed and also to prevent occurrences in the first place. To help employees deal with personal problems that might adversely impact their work performance, health and well-being we have provided access for all staff to our employee assistance programme. In addition we are providing emotional resilience training to staff to provide them with self-awareness and skills to strengthen their personal resilience.

7. Analysis of mental health absence and management referrals for mental health to our occupational health provider indicates that a significant number of staff showing signs of stress or actually suffering from stress are not necessarily being referred for assessment and help. In July to September 2016 some 37 staff recorded absence due to mental health issues whilst only 15 referrals were made for mental health issues in the same period. Other evidence also indicates that many line managers are not using our tools for managing stress such as the stress risk assessment, either pro-actively or reactively. To address this we have raised awareness across the business of the availability of the referral process as part of the stress risk assessment procedure through face to face engagement with leadership groups and through regular reminders to managers of the policies and procedures that we have in place to help manage these issues.

8. We are continuing to work with the business to improve the quality of our absence data. Whilst managers can no longer enter 'unknown' as an absence reason, the data still has a large number of blank or unknown absence reasons which we are investigating to ascertain the true nature of the illness. This is important as, this year to date, unknown/blank absence reasons account for 421 days (106 instances) which is 7% of all reported absence for this period.

9. We have instigated and raised awareness on a number of initiatives to support our health and wellbeing commitment in NRW including:

- Updating and reissuing our Occupational Health, DSE and Provision of eye tests and glasses
- Provided information on upper limb disorders and how to minimise them.
- Working in the Winter months
- National cycle to work day – 14 September.
- National eye health week – 19-25 September
- Time to Change Wales
- Care First newsletters
- Let's Talk initiative
- Stoptober 2016
- World Mental Health Day – 10 October

10. All of these initiatives reminded and encouraged staff of how to look after themselves and their colleagues at work and outside of work. These initiatives have been brought to the

attention of staff through our Intranet, Managers Monthly updates, Yammer pages and through engagement at local WHS Forums and team meetings.

Health & Safety

Headline accident and near miss statistics for 2016-17 as of 31st October 2016 with 2014-15 and 2015-16 full year figures for comparison.

	Incidents since last update	Incidents (2016-17 Year to date)	2015-16 Full Year	2014-15 Full year
RIDDOR – staff ¹	2	8	12	0
Lost time incidents – staff ¹	1	3	8	2
Incidents, no lost time - staff	14	64	96	55
Near miss – staff ²	38	143	304	131
Serious incident reviews ³	3	7	3	4
Incidents - contractors	3	5	6	60
Incidents – public	10	44	60	
Near misses – contractors	18	46	88	98
Near misses – public	3	16	76	

- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) incident is a particular type of incident that is required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- A lost time incident (LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work and they have subsequently had time off or been on light duties as a result of their injuries (reportable under RIDDOR if over 7 days). Lost Time starts the first day after the person was injured.
- An incident with no lost time (Non-LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work but only needed minor 1st aid treatment and subsequently have not had any time off work. Non-LTI's include property damage to NRW vehicles and equipment.
- A Near Miss is an unplanned or uncontrolled event that does not cause injury, ill health or damage, but could do so.
- Member of public injuries relate predominantly to mountain bike accidents on our purpose built trails, and slips, trips and falls on walking trails. Trails are risk assessed and routinely inspected periodically and are also inspected following an accident.
- Public near misses are predominately public incursions on to live harvesting sites.

Latest health & safety updates

RIDDOR & Lost time incident updates

11. Two additional RIDDOR reportable incidents have been reported since the last update. One was an over 7 day absence involving a stomach injury to a member of staff whilst walking down a river bank as part of their normal duties.

12. The second RIDDOR is a further Hand Arms Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) reportable disease identified as part of our ongoing occupational health surveillance in place for all staff

who use vibrating equipment. This condition would seem to have developed since the member of staff has worked for NRW, however we are reviewing the evidence and assessment used as part of the diagnosis. We do not have a response as yet from the HSE with regard to this new case. At this time we have a further 17 staff in the ongoing surveillance process and are awaiting the outcome of their assessments, so cannot rule out that all cases have been identified.

13. In relation to Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) and the matters identified in the Notice of Contravention issued by the HSE, we are continuing to work through the actions assigned in the risk assessment action plan with relevant line managers. Work by the Task and Finish Group is ongoing, including the trial of a vibration meter which has been completed. The meter received favourable responses from staff and their line managers. Based on this trial the task and finish group have decided to adopt the use of this recording system over the current paper system as it gives a better and more accurate measurement of exposure, which along with the data management reports it produces will help managers better control the exposure to vibration of their staff. The task and finish group are working to progress the procurement of this technology in line with NRW's governance arrangements. We are also liaising with colleagues in the Environment Agency with whom we regularly exchange best practise, as both organisations have been trialling this meter independently and are intending to implement following favourable trial outcomes.

Near miss updates

14. Near Miss reports for the period of this report continue to be low in comparison to previous years and in relation to the total number of incidents this year to date. We have started to deliver training for all line managers in October on reporting and investigating incidents and managing health and safety risks, and are supporting the business through further campaigns and engagement on a regular basis. Following feedback from staff we are also providing near miss reporting pads for field staff to complete either as a reminder for themselves or to hand to their line manager, to record onto AssessNET. We are also working with ICT to insert the AssessNET reporting tool icon on all NRW IT screens as a means to further improve access to the tool.

Serious Incident Reviews

15. Three new serious incident reviews have been commissioned since the last update. These involve the fall from height of a contractor undertaking seed collection, a fire involving a dumper vehicle and a member of the public fatality on the woodland estate. Further information and updates on all serious incident reviews are provided in the table below.

No	Date	Description	Location	Status	Lessons learned
1	11 March 2016	Contractor seriously injured at direct production harvesting site whilst working on a windblown coupe	Talley	Review closed	Actions complete. Review of coupe plans for windblown trees; liaison internally and with external bodies on incident findings, review of risk assessments, method statements and emergency plans

2	1 May 2016	Member of public injured falling from their bike on a trail following collision with a temporary barrier	Ynys Llanddwyn, Newborough Warren	Investigation completed. Report to be finalised	Actions ongoing. Improvements in relation to official trail designation, signage and risk management.
3	13 July 2016	Railway bridge strike at Queensferry. Arm of a 7.5 tonne excavator being transported on the back of a wagon struck the underside of the A494 railway bridge.	Queensferry, NE Wales	Review closed	Actions complete. The need for an agreed documented method of loading equipment of certain heights with the appropriate safety margins was identified.
4	30 July 2016	Member of public near miss during harvesting activity	Cwmcarn, Caerphilly Borough	Investigation complete, final report awaited.	Actions ongoing. Interaction between harvesting & recreational activity; need for communications and review of contract management
5	14 September 2016	Contractor fall from height undertaking seed collection	Nercwys - NE Wales	Investigation complete. Final report signed off. See below for further detail	Recommendations for contractor management but not related to or contributing to this incident
6	12 October 2016	Dumper vehicle fire	Afan Forest, Carmarthenshire	Investigation started. See below for further detail	
7	23 October 2016	Member of public fatality involving non-permitted vehicles	Cilgwyn Forest, Llandovery	Investigation started. See below for further detail	

Current reviews

16. Serious Incident review (5) of a contractor falling from height undertaking seed collection work – a contractor fell approximately 15 metres from a tree whilst collecting seed when a branch he was roped to detached itself from the tree. The contractor received first aid at the scene and walked off site but later received hospital treatment for 2 cracked vertebrae and was placed on light duties. A RIDDOR report was submitted by contractor. Our review looked at our contractual relationship including checks carried out prior to contract award and the supervision carried out during contract. The review is now complete with minor recommendations around contractor management but not related to or contributing to this incident.

17. Serious Incident review (6) of a contractor site Dumper Fire at Afan – A site dumper caught fire whilst undertaking re-instatement works following tree harvesting activity in Afan. There were no injuries arising from this incident but due to the potential severity and likelihood of recurrence, a review of the incident has just commenced.

18. Serious Incident review (7) of a Member of Public Fatality at Llandovery – NRW received a report of a fatality of a member of public on the woodland estate near Llandovery

involving the use of motorbikes and an all-terrain vehicle, an unpermitted activity. Our review of the incident has commenced. Any recommendations identified from the investigation will look at the opportunities for improvement that may be applied across all our woodland estate. The fatality is currently the subject of a police investigation.

Other updates

19. Construction Design and Management (CDM) – concern has arisen which indicates that NRW is non-compliant with the CDM regulations on aspects of operations of standing sales special condition coupes and elsewhere where civil engineering works are being carried out. These concerns were compounded by initial findings from the serious incident investigation into the Afan Forest dumper fire, where this may be a contributory factor. As a result Operations undertook a very rapid review of all relevant ongoing activity which identified gaps in aspects of our health and safety procedures in forestry operations. As a result we have temporarily suspended activities at a site at Abergwngregyn until we are satisfied that sufficient training has been provided to our staff who work with forestry contractors. There were two other sites where work was planned but these will be assessed before operations commence.

Recommendations

20. Note issues and progress made to date.

Key risks

21. Ongoing WHS risks identified and monitored through updated WHS risk register. No additional risks foreseen.

Financial Implications

22. None foreseen. Investment in learning and development requirements for NRW included within 16/17 training budget. Possible future employer liability claims in relation to HAVS disease.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

23. Not undertaken for this briefing paper.