



Consultation of Health, Safety and Risk Management Policy and Guidance

INTRODUCTION

The Council's Commitment

The Council recognises the importance of developing a strong health, safety and risk management culture within Torbay through the active involvement of management and staff. To achieve this an infrastructure has been produced to enable consultation to take place at all levels commensurate with the importance of monitoring the performance of health safety and risk management throughout the organisation.

Managing Health and Safety

Consultation on related issues and monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements will take place at four distinct levels i.e. Operational (at the workplace through Section Heads' meetings etc), Directorate (normally as an adjunct to JCC meetings when Section Heads and the employee representatives meet), Strategic by the Central Health, Safety and Risk Management (HSRM) Forum and at Member level through the auspices of Chairmen's meetings and of the Scrutiny Committee.

This is represented in diagrammatic form at Appendix 1. The boxes detail the consultation forum for health and safety at each level, the circles show where the monitoring of the performance of HSRM would lie as a function of management. It is important to note that the purpose of this infrastructure is to build on the existing joint arrangements for consulting and managing the Council's activities in relation to HSRM and not to replace them. This is apparent in recognising the role of Directors and Section Heads who manage related issues as an integral function of management.

The structure also recognises the arrangements within Torbay Contract Services (TCS) and the facilities afforded to the Shop Stewards Committee in interfacing between TCS Section Performance Review Meetings and the Contracting Services Advisory Board.

Role and General Scope Of HSRM Forums

The purpose of each forum is to keep under review the measures taken to ensure the Health and Safety at Work of employees and others affected by the work of the Council in addition to the wider risk management and loss control issues.

Each forum shall aim to work with the Council in creating a strong Health and Safety culture within the organisation and to promote initiatives to continuously improve the policy, organisation, planning, monitoring and review arrangements in meeting the Council's general duty of care to its employees and others.

Directorate HSRM Forum

In most cases this will follow the routine JCC meetings which is comprised of Section Heads, the Health and Safety Co-ordinator (which in most cases will be one and the same) and representatives from the employees side which in the main will be those nominated from the recognised trade unions.

The Directorate Health and Safety Co-ordinator will act as a focal point of contact on related issues.

The respective Directorate forum will be required to elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from management and the union side at their first meeting in each financial year. The Chair may alternate each year if so desired.

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson will also serve on the Central HSRM forum.

The Council's Principal Health and Safety Officer and Principal Solicitor (Common Law & Claims) will be co-opted onto each forum in an advisory capacity. Other persons may likewise be co-opted by either the employees representatives or management to address specific agenda items.

The secretariat will be provided by the relative Directorate in liaison with the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

The frequency of Directorate HSRM meetings will be at four monthly intervals. Special meetings may be called as necessary with the agreement of both sides (employers/employees).

Where no satisfactory agreement can be reached on any issue considered by the Directorate HSRM forum, the matter shall be referred to the central HSRM forum for consideration.

Responsibilities of the Directorate HSRM Forum

Consideration of Health, Safety, and Risk Management as it affects:-

- The Directorate Services and the Council in general
- The employees of the Directorate
- Other employees employed by the Council
- Other workers not employed by the Council
- The general public
- Best Value

The study of accident statistics and trends (including near misses) with a view to improving working practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.

Examination of safety audit reports.

Consideration of reports provided by Directors, Trade Unions and other Safety Committees and inspectors of enforcing agencies.

Assistance in the development of robust management systems for health and safety and safe systems of work including consideration and review at regular intervals of the Council's general health and safety policy statement of organisation and arrangements.

Ensuring adequate arrangements are in place for conducting risk assessments including their implementation review and evaluation.

Consideration of Health and Safety Training, particularly with regard to effectiveness of such training, together with the production of advice to Directors on training needs.

Consideration of the adequacy of health and safety communication and publicity within the Directorate and the Council in promoting an active health and safety culture.

Ensuring that where a Directorate Health and Safety Business Plan has been produced these detail initiatives to reduce accidents and improve the awareness of staff on related issues.

Powers of the Directorate HSRM Forum

The Directorate forum and/or representatives shall have the right to inspect, and undertake research into developing:-

- Equipment and work areas.
- Personal safety, protective and health equipment.
- General safety, protective and health equipment.
- Certificates and records relating to health, safety and welfare.
- New processes, systems of work and, risk assessments.
- Health and Safety Executive and other expert reports.
- Section policy statements, organisational arrangements and records of risk assessments.
- Training in relation to health and safety.

The Directorate HSRM forum may request to have materials and systems of work etc sampled, monitored and/or tested by the Council and/or independent experts.

Members of the Directorate forum can expect to receive the necessary training in connection with health and safety arranged either by the Council or respective trade unions.

Central (Strategic) HSRM Forum Membership

The membership of the Central HSRM forum shall be composed of representatives from employers and trade union sides.

The numbers and make-up of the members serving on the Central HSRM forum shall be as follows:-

- Head of Law and Admin
- Head of Human Resources
- Principal Health and Safety Officer
- Principal Claims Officer
- Principal Emergency Planning Officer
- The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the respective Directorate Health, Safety and Risk Management forum.

The Central HSRM forum shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson at their first meeting in each financial year. The employers side will provide the Chairperson in the first year and the trade union side will provide the Vice-Chairperson. Subject to the agreement of both sides, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall alternate between the employers side and trade union side each year.

Ordinary meetings of the Central HSRM forum shall be held at intervals of no greater than six months. Special meetings may be called at the request of three members of either side on ten working days notice.

Responsibilities of the Central HSRM Forum

Consideration of Health, Safety, Risk and Risk Management as it affects:-

- The Council
- The employees of the Council
- Other workers not employed by the Council
- The general public
- Best Value
- Corporate Governance

The study of accident statistics and trends (including near misses) with reports submitted to Directors on unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.

Examination of safety audit reports.

Consideration of reports provided by the Council, trade unions, the Directorate HSRM forum, outside agencies and inspectors of enforcing authorities.

Assistance in the development of robust management systems for health and safety and safe systems of work including consideration and review at regular intervals of the Council's general Health and Safety Policy Statement of organisation and arrangements.

Consideration of health and safety training, particularly with regard to the effectiveness of such training, together with the production of advice to Directors on training needs.

Consideration of the adequacy of health and safety communication and publicity within the Council.

Powers of the Central HSRM Forum

The forum shall maintain a strategic overview of all the matters referred to in Section 6 above in addition to monitoring Directorate business plans as they relate to HSRM.

Reports to Council

The Central HSRM forum shall provide regular updates on HSRM performance at Member level to the Chief Executive for discussion at Chairmen's Meetings. The Central HSRM forum shall submit a report to the Council's Scrutiny Committee as and when required and at least annually.

The Report will provide an analysis of HSRM performance, accident statistics (including near misses), incident reports and trends and will set out a summary of all matters dealt with by the Central and Directorate forums including what steps have been taken to further improve HSRM performance through Best Value principles.

Meetings Protocol

Agenda

The secretaries to the Directorate and Central HSRM forum shall prepare and circulate to all members an agenda in advance of every meeting. Items for consideration should be submitted to the secretary at least 10 working days before the date of meetings.

Minutes

The relevant secretaries shall prepare minutes after each meeting and distribute these to forum members within 28 days. Copies shall also be circulated to:-

- Chief Executive
- Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of all Directorate HSRM Forum and
- Chairperson/Vice-Chairperson of the Central HSRM forum.

Quorum

There shall be a quorum provided at least four in total (employer/unions) are present.

The Secretariat for the Central HSRM forum shall be provided by the Health and Safety Team.

STRUCTURE FOR HEALTH SAFETY, AND RISK MANAGEMENT (HSRM)

