



ENA HSL Study Feedback Event
23rd September 2021
Summary Report

A virtual event was held on Thursday 23rd September 2021 providing a platform for Energy Networks Association (ENA) Electricity Member Companies to summarise the exercise which involved the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) studying Human and Organisational factors and the interaction between staff in two key operational roles - Senior Authorised Persons (SAPs) and Competent Persons (CPs). As part of the study over 100 SAP and CPs across the sector were consulted and engaged with via a series of roadshows facilitated across the UK.

The study itself focussed on three key areas; leadership, behaviours and processes. It was envisaged that any findings from the study, positive or negative could then influence future industry strategies by introducing improvement measures that could be applied across the sector. A findings report was published following the study which concluded via a series of recommendations that there were areas of which the industry could look to improve upon. The challenge following the study was for the member companies (MCs), the Trade Unions (TUs) and HSE to consider the recommendations report and ensure that they were built into the next phase of the Powering Improvement strategy (2020-2025) and also considered for inclusion in MC business programmes.

The virtual event held in September 2021 was an opportunity for the MCs and TUs to feedback on how the findings report was absorbed and what initiatives had they individually taken and fed into their own internal improvement plans. It also offered an opportunity for the SAPs and CPs involved in the research to attend and share their experiences with the wider industry on how the study had impacted, either positively or negatively their own work experiences. Each MC was given a slot during the event to present.

David Spillett (Head of Safety, Health and Environment, Energy Networks Association) chaired and opened the event, an update and background into Powering Improvement and the theme for 2018 & 2019 on 'Human and Organisational factors'. By highlighting the what, where and the reasons why the behavioural safety study by HSL was sought after at the time (2019), and why the industry specifically looked at the three areas for improvement: leadership; behaviours; and processes. David stressed that the recommendations from the study may not have all been applied to every MC however provided high level recommendations for them each to consider.

David Talbot (Circuits Policy Manager, Electricity North West Ltd - ENWL) provided the first of the member company presentations to showcase how certain elements of the study were absorbed within ENWL, making reference to specific examples which have supported improvement within his organisation. A focus of particular success was the development of their internal operational manual. A new manual was developed throughout 2020 and into 2021 that was established to help and improve concerns outlined by their own staff including items brought out through the research. The new manual now ensures: **better user involvement during policy reviews** ensuring suitable engagement for the development of new and existing policies and procedures; **Improved usability** through integrating paper resources onto electronic applications reducing storage and increasing accessibility; **enhanced communicative capabilities of ENWL policies and procedures** through simplifying and humanising the written content (increased use of infographics/drawings, simpler terminology, removal of jargon) which helped the documents to be more easily understood and adopted; and **improved version control for revisions through making all documents electronic**.

Mark Moore (Safety Engineer, Northern Ireland Electricity Networks – NIEN) reflected by sharing that the roadshows he had attended as part of the research were very **open and transparent**, although some harsh feedback was received it was constructive. This was taken and reflected upon within NIEN, particularly in 2020 where NIEN suffered a series of serious incidents including a tragic fatality, this reinforced the need to improve in areas that were highlighted through the research study. NIEN developed their '**Safer Together**' programme in response which focussed on four essential elements: Leadership; Engagement; Competence; and Compliance. With each of these topics, a series of working groups were set up across the business **involving staff at all levels of the organisation** ensuring collaboration and transparency between the various skill sets and ensured that processes and procedural changes were done with complete consultation with all relevant parties. The working groups and tasks delivered to date have already started to bring about measurable improvement across NIENs business enabling a **developed and refined Safety Management System** to become a product of the work involved.

Graham Smith (National Grid) presented and updated on work that had been ongoing within National Grid. Following a significant fatality in 2018, National Grid were already working with HSL prior to the Powering Improvement study, a series of areas for improvement had already been identified and started to be actioned upon in response. Following a series of climate surveys on Electricity Transmission operations, **5 key areas were outlined by HSL for improvement: Competence and development assurance; just culture; control of work; learning organisation; and resourcing and work planning**. The feedback for National Grid was generally positive: "Health and Safety orientated behaviours was on par with the highest scores in the HSL database for both the all industry and Power Generation Sector". However National Grid were still keen to learn more, the Powering Improvement HSL survey gave a different lens, provided an opportunity for National Grid to monitor how it was progressing and provided and

opportunity to **share learning**. **The research also** reinforced the actions it was in the process of delivering. **Communication and engagement** between staff has seen a significant improvement as **roles have since been more clearly defined**, investigations of incidents have improved involving a wider range of skill sets and improved processes throughout the investigation process providing a better understanding of 'human factors and just culture'. An asset management procedure was further developed with a focus on competency which also redefined roles, responsibilities and importantly accountabilities across the business. National Grid also through a series of workshops consulted all level of the organisation and their TU representatives during this time and were able to simplify their processes and procedures so that instructions, wherever possible better supported compliance.

Kevin Liddle (Operational Assurance Manager, Northern Powergrid - NPG) identified that out of the 10 recommendations from the HSL study, a number were carefully considered by NPG through their Safety and Health Improvement Plan in 2020. There were several key pieces of focus: A **reviewed and improved accident/incident investigation process** which allowed staff to better understand why an incident had occurred and ensuring all contributing factors including human factors were considered; NPG have also increased the **involvement of TU representatives and end users** in any process and policy reviews, updates and drafting; **they have also devised and communicated out a new and improved format for their processes and procedures to streamline but importantly improve end user understanding**, and overall improved their communication processes through consulting with end users to refine the formats used.

Ian Crawley (Operational Safety Manger, Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks – SSEN) provided feedback on behalf of SSEN starting by reflecting on some significant incidents including a tragic fatality that occurred in 2016 at Beaulieu Dounreay where learnings were openly shared across the industry. On reflection this also highlighted the importance of interaction between the roles identified and the working party, and embracing the acceptance of healthy challenges. SSEN developed a series of initiatives (**Influencing Behaviours and Empowering Supervisors**) which were geared around giving staff the tools and knowledge to make constructive decisions and challenge both themselves as individuals and their colleagues to think more holistically about their daily tasks and the risks involved. SSEs Safety Family was developed and a license of '**If it's not safe we don't do it**' was also provided for all staff and endorsed by senior management giving all staff the autonomy to make an informed decision at the locality and stop working if they felt unsafe or uncomfortable to continue. Following the HSL research, it was also outlined that the existing operational Safety Management System which had been incrementally developed over time had in fact introduced problems when it comes to compliance, as a result this went through a wholesale revision. Similarly to other MCs this revision consulted and involved all levels of the organisation **ensuring openness, transparency but crucially that the end result was appropriate** for the tasks being carried out. It also **ensured that safe working methods were more readily available by becoming electronically available and more digestible as jargon was removed from the previous content**. Another area of improvement was through the development of a 'Just and Fair Culture' policy within SSEN, key aim during its development was to ensure the staff were '**protected and not punished**' which generated more engagement, better communication between roles and better compliance overall.

Jason Powell (Lead Operational Safety Advisor, Western Power Distribution – WPD) provided a high level overview of areas WPD had been focussing on following the HSL study, improving engagement with staff overall. Actions were built into WPDs annual Health and Safety Plan. From a leadership perspective, all team managers have since undertaken a series of online soft **skills training** (including mental health workshops, diversity and unconscious bias), monthly briefings have been issued to all staff on similar subject which also **include positive stories from safety audits** and inspections providing encouragement to staff and reinforcing positive behaviours. Working groups led by senior managers involving all levels of organisation have been held to assist in major policy reviews. From a Behaviours perspective, WPDs **Policy into Practice system** was developed which identified local people to be nominated points of contact offering local guidance and support on a variety of areas for all staff. A 'fair and just culture' policy is currently in development again through consultation with all levels and **arrangements for fatigue management are being implemented** in line with ENAs Fatigue Management Task Force alongside the other MCs in alignment with ENAs Position Paper 10. Finally from a processes perspective, WPD **updated its incident and accident investigation** process based on the most probable outcome and not just the actual outcome of an incident. Regular communication sessions are taking place involving senior management, staff and TU representatives which is supporting the review and development of existing and new processes and procedures. An item that appears to have been particularly beneficial is the electronic based risk assessments allowing for staff to review the project risk registers and tasks associated with the whole job at the locality.

Dave Naylor (Operational Assurance Manager, Scottish Power Energy Networks), provided an insight into three areas that SPEN had focussed upon following the HSL research: 1. **Enabling SAPs to focus on dynamic electrical safety risk management**; 2. **supporting learning at an organisational level: SAP seminars and craftsman seminars**; and 3. **End-user involvement in development and updating procedures**. For 1, to remove distractions for SAPs in response to their concern, SPEN resourced and assigned a fold lead or person on site who is able to have responsibilities delegated to them (i.e. customer service issues) to free up the SAPs time to focus on the operational aspects of the job. This has already received a lot of positive feedback from SAPs themselves but also from customers as service ratings of the jobs have seen significant improvement. With regards to 2. The scope and traditional 'instruction' style of safety rule application has also altered to a more 'engaging and collaborative' style, by allowing staff to engage and communicate with the tasks at hand ensures a safer task is carried out, the learning and

development of staff is improved and staff feel more engaged as the process is more transparent. Finally for 3. The introduction of craftsman seminars (trade specific) was introduced in 2020 providing an opportunity for two way communications to continue even further by ensuring that 'shop-floor' feedback was enabled to be captured through a feedback system which in turn filtered into process and procedural change reviews.

Finally Craig Short (Operational Safety Manager, UK Power Networks – UKPN) gave an overview of UKPN and highlighted the challenges faced within his organisation geographically and how the HSL study helped to shape some internally focussed initiatives which supported a more unified approach to process and policy application. From a Leadership perspective, craftsman forums were established in 2020 with a similar impact that other MCS had outlined. An increased focus on health and fatigue was generated through a series of health and wellbeing campaigns and workshops, which will continue to be delivered moving forward. Initially the scope of fatigue focussed on working time management but has since expanded to consider other contributing factors such as wellbeing. An **enhanced incident investigation** process was developed ensuring lessons are captured more successfully and implemented appropriately post investigation. A 'Three D's campaign – **Drift, Distraction and Discipline**' was designed and promoted widely across the business which primarily focussed on ensuring concentration and aiming to reduce opportunities for distractions to cloud judgements. From a Behaviours perspective, a worker accreditation and refresher training programme was developed to monitor staff and look for areas of growth with craft monitoring based on skillset, this was followed up with individual and group feedback sessions to share knowledge and best practice. These forums also provided opportunities for **procedural developments to be aired**, ensuring that **processes were developed in a way that more accurately reflected the work being carried out**.

Sue Ferns (Deputy General Secretary, Prospect) then provided feedback on behalf of the Trade Unions, recognising the update and ongoing work programmes from each of the MCs. Sue was clear that although some great work had been done to date in response to the HSL study and its recommendations report, there was still more to be completed across the sector to embed the initiatives on an ongoing basis with a particular emphasis on moving forward together. Sue highlighted three key areas:

- **increasing and maintaining the involvement of TU representatives** with a better standard of joint working to improve procedures and conditions for workers;
- **improvement in the training and development of SAPs** and subsequent programmes to enhance the personal development of their roles; and
- **a focus on 'Just Culture'** and recognising the important contribution of safety.

Although it is clear resourcing across the sector is becoming increasingly more challenging, the industry needs to work better at ensuring and maintaining the competence and skillset of current staff and retaining resource through focussed training, this needs to also be catered to suitably **equip new recruits to suitably capture corporate memory. This should also include actively searching through a more diverse resource pool and better promotion of the energy sector within society.** Better clarity of roles and responsibilities for SAPs and CPs is needed to enable a better understanding of the competency standards expected which adds recognition. The TUs know that work is ongoing in the area of **Fatigue and risk management** and welcomes more collaborative involvement with TU representatives, there is still a lot **more that can be done**. Improved risk assessment and accident/incident investigation processes will allow more focus on the wider contributing factors to incidents which should also consider health and fatigue. An improved accident and incident process will also support a more **suitable fair and just culture policy** to be embedded across the sector. **Learning and sharing** is vital and the open and transparent dissemination of messages needs to be more consistent. Sue finalised by requesting that as an industry we ensure lessons are captured and embedded within our collective strategies for moving forward.

Closing comments were made by Peter Vujanic (Head of SHE, UK Power Networks and chair of the Powering Improvement Steering Group). Giving an overview of Powering Improvement, National HESAC and the journey the industry has been on to date, Peter then went on to highlight the next steps. Recognising the overall strategic aims of Powering Improvement, and the points raised during the event, it was clear the industry is still on a journey. The areas of focus for 2022 and beyond will be developed through the theme for 2022 where the focus will be on supporting a positive health and safety culture. The broader pieces of operational excellence will need to be picked up within the upcoming strategy and delivery plans supporting the industry moving forward, the topics highlighted included:

- **Post Covid working;**
- **Innovation and Technology**
- **Net Zero & Green Recovery**
- **Regulatory expectations**
- **Workforce Resilience**
- **Skills and Training**
- **Health and Wellbeing.**

The event was summarised and a Q&A session was ran allowing feedback from all delegates.