ENA Occupational Health Committee

ena
energy**networks**
association

**POWERING
IMPROVEMENT**

Business Plan 2012

DEVELOPING IMPROVEMENTS IN HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Contents

1. Introduction

Powering Improvement

The primary focus of the **ENA Occupational Health Committee** during 2012 will be to continue to support and promote the industry's **Powering Improvement** health and safety strategy, and specifically the application of its principles to the management of occupational health and wellbeing within the electricity network businesses.

The strategy recognises that ill health remains a major challenge for the industry and occupational health issues will be a high priority throughout the course of the initiative. Powering Improvement has provided the opportunity to specifically raise the profile and importance of occupational health within the workplace, and this was the priority topic of focus during 2011. The aim for 2012 is to monitor the introduction of initiatives developed in support of the strategy, apply the published sector guidance to individual company practices, and maintain the momentum in raising awareness of occupational health issues.

Commitments

A set of six **Commitments** were agreed at senior level and cascaded throughout the companies during 2011, to both encourage the uptake of occupational health activities and help reduce the incidence of work-related ill health. This was supported by training and the provision of information, particularly to health practitioners and safety representatives, to ensure that the importance of occupational health was reinforced within the businesses throughout the year. An HSE Champion at Director level provided further assistance in maintaining the profile of the initiative.

COMMITMENT 1:	**To discuss and clarify at board level the commitment to successfully manage occupational health risks**
COMMITMENT 2:	**To identify the top three health risks and ensure they are being effectively addressed.**
COMMITMENT 3:	**To ensure that health surveillance & fitness for work assessments are being delivered to national & legislative standards.**
COMMITMENT 4:	**To review approaches to the management of stress and identify opportunities for improvement.**
COMMITMENT 5:	**To develop policies for the rehabilitation of individuals back into the workplace and consider a fast-track physiotherapy approach to the management of MSDs.**
COMMITMENT 6:	**To raise awareness of the importance of workforce involvement, specifically health & safety representatives and other workers' representatives, in the management of Occupational Health and support them in carrying out health related activities to support the delivery plan throughout the year.**

2.   Outputs 2011

In support of Powering Improvement a number of events, including workshops, conferences and training days, were held to help promote the aims and benefits of good occupational health management.

Guidance was developed and published in support of the six Commitments to assist companies in both raising the awareness of and tackling the key issues within the sector. This was accompanied by supplementary presentational information from workshops held to discuss ways of implementing the Commitments within the companies. Links to useful professional organisations and recommended sources of advice were also promoted.

A **Health Needs Assessment Tool** was developed to help provide companies with an initial means of identifying the key health risks to the organisation. The guidance outlines the issues commonly encountered in the electricity sector and a framework for introducing or reviewing suitable control measures in place to manage those risks.

Existing and new case study material was published on specific occupational health issues including health surveillance, stress and mental health and wellbeing, and MSDs.

The publication of individual company initiatives, either introduced or further developed during 2011, will be made available in the form of **Reporting Templates** to show case progress achieved during the year. Achievements within the sector as a whole will also form part of the **Powering Improvement Annual Report** for 2011.

All of the above information is freely available via the Powering Improvement web site (**www.poweringimprovement.org**)

3. Outputs 2012

Work Programme

Going forward the Committee will review the progress and achievements of the Powering Improvement initiative, and address any new occupational health issues as they arise. Progress will be monitored during 2012 using leading and lagging indicators; this will include the continued collection and analysis of industry health data and the publication of good practice case studies as appropriate.

The Committee will continue to promote the benefits of Occupational Health Risk Management via the following routes:

- **Annual Occupational Health Business Plan** (this plan)
- Communication of key messages via **ENA and Powering Improvement web sites**
- Articles for journals and external publications, and the ENA **Safety and Environment Review**
- Engage and support **Health and Safety Representatives** via company HESACs to promote worker engagement in occupational health and wellbeing
- Maintain awareness of priority topics, including **MSDs, Stress and Mental Wellbeing and Public Health issues**
- Contributing to and maintaining knowledge levels via attendance at relevant conferences and workshops

In all cases an integrated approach to the management of occupational health within the companies will be required through the use of awareness programmes, employee engagement, specialist OH healthcare provision and ongoing support at all levels of the organisation. This will be achieved through the continued implementation of suitable health surveillance systems and fitness to work programmes that not only maintain the health, wellbeing and welfare of employees, but also provide business cost benefits.

Measurement Indicators

The Committee has identified the need to review indicators of success that are applied to occupational health initiatives. Whilst established data collection routes will continue to be used to provide continuity and benchmark progress to date, there is also a need for leading indicators of performance and additional reporting metrics to be employed.

The Committee has agreed to look at developing high level monitoring protocols based on existing indicators that could be utilised by all companies, thereby enabling both a sector wide review of progress and inter-company comparison.

A combination of health data (lagging) and proactive initiatives (leading) are proposed as suitable indicators of performance, which once developed will enable progress to be measured throughout the lifetime of the Powering Improvement strategy. These indicators are likely to be based on sickness absence data, health surveillance programmes, occupational health KPIs and achievements of initiatives on specific topics.

There is also the opportunity to utilise and report on the use of existing tools such as the ENA Health & Wellbeing Framework, which was developed by the Committee to help assess and monitor company performance in health and wellbeing issues.

Other frameworks, such as the **Business in the Community (BITC) Workwell Model,** provide a strategic, integrated and holistic approach to public reporting on employee wellness and engagement. BITC has devised a **Company Public Reporting Framework** which reflects the 'equation' that Engagement combined with Wellness enables Sustained Employee Performance. This promotes the link between good employee engagement practices and strong business performance, as evidenced in the Government's MacLeod review.

The Framework is aligned to four principles each of which are defined by corporate input and output characteristics, and associated metrics that companies can report on. The inputs reflect the company approach and policy, the outputs are the actions demonstrated in the workforce, and the metrics are the quantitative measures that provide evidence that the interventions are working. The Workwell Model is therefore another potential tool that could be used to enhance occupational health management within the companies.

4. Existing Framework

Achievements to date need to be set within the context of the programme of work undertaken by the Occupational Health Committee over the last few years. This will also shape the future direction of the group and the key priorities to be addressed.

Health & Wellbeing Framework

The health and wellbeing agenda is an increasingly important one, evident from a higher level of Government policy and industry engagement and take up, leading to a positive impact on business productivity. Part of the sector's response included the development by the Committee of a strategic approach, based on best practice, to the effective management of health and wellbeing by ENA member companies.

A Health and Wellbeing Framework was produced in 2009 based on the principles of a sound management system. This is composed of a number of individual protocols that set out requirements for the effective management of health risks and the promotion of wellbeing issues in the workplace.

Case Studies

Member companies have published their approach to the management of health surveillance and fitness to work programmes within the business. The systems and procedures in place are summarised in the form of case studies that provide examples of good practice to be shared both within the industry and externally, to help promote the further development and improvement of health surveillance processes. The case studies are promoted via both the ENA and Powering Improvement web sites and complement existing good practice guidance previously published on the management of MSDs, stress and hand arm vibration.

Occupational Health Advisory Group (OHAG) Guidance Notes

An existing suite of Guidance Notes are published on the ENA web site. OHAG is committed to a programme of further development of medical advice in key areas affecting the health of employees within the utility sectors, and guidance on new topics is developed as necessary. This includes work in support of implanted devices, health and wellbeing and mental health. New guidance is planned on public health issues and the impact on employee health arising from renewable generation sources.

Background

Policy development

The programmes and outputs above have arisen in response to wider developments in occupational health and wellbeing by Government and the industry in recent years.

SAFELEC 2010

Preceding the Health & Wellbeing agenda, the Government's **Revitalising Health and Safety** and **Securing Health Together** initiatives included targets to reduce the number of working days lost from work-related injury and ill health, and to reduce both the incidence of fatal and major injury accidents and the incidence of cases of work-related ill health by 2010. The Electricity Industry's response to these headline targets and separate industry-wide collective targets were enshrined into the **SAFELEC 2010** initiative. Progress against these targets, which included a focus on occupational health risks, was monitored and reported on an annual basis.

Health & Wellbeing

Dame Carol Blacks' review of the health of Britain's' working age population, ***Working for a healthier tomorrow*** (March 2008), outlined a new vision for health and work in Britain. It estimated the economic costs of sickness absence and worklessness associated with working age ill-health as being over £100 billion a year. On average ill health still costs businesses £600 per employee per year (CBI), and long term absence contributes up to 75% of all absence costs (CIPD). In 2009/10 of 28.5 million working days lost, 23.4 million were due to ill health compared to 5.1 million to injury (HSE).

The report served as a fresh driver and impetus to improve the health of the working population and its recommendations were accepted in full by Government. The vision is to engender a culture of health and wellbeing, and design fit for purpose models for work in the 21st century. It is accepted that healthy, engaged workforces will lead to increased efficiency, productivity and performance for businesses. This is to be achieved through focusing on prevention over cure via early and coordinated intervention strategies in occupational health. These should also take account of the changing nature of work including changes in demographics, working age, life expectancy and the current economic climate.

HSE Strategy
In 2009 the **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)** launched their new strategy, *"The Health and Safety of Great Britain: Be Part of the Solution"*, and ENA Member Companies 'Signed up to the Pledge' to demonstrate support for its vision and aims.

Health and safety is a priority and an integral part of companies' business, and the companies support the goals set out in the HSE strategy. The industry has aligned itself with the principles outlined in the strategy, and the companies are working towards implementing its aims through Powering Improvement. This will ensure a common approach to the management of health and safety is maintained, as part of an overall approach to improving performance within the health and safety framework for Great Britain.

Powering Improvement
As part of the companies' commitment to the HSE, the industry adopted its own strategy to ensure a continued focus and improvement in the management of health and safety. Powering Improvement commits the industry to build on its partnership approach to bring about continuous improvements in the management of safety and occupational health in the electricity sector for the five years leading up to 2015.

The three overarching themes of the strategy reflect those of the HSE strategy and emphasise the importance of **Leadership, Improving Competence and Worker Involvement**. The Committee will encourage all Member Companies to raise the awareness and application of these themes to occupational health issues. This will be accompanied by providing appropriate information and guidance to staff at all levels to further equip them in the implementation and maintenance of control measures designed to manage occupational health in the electricity industry.

The programme retains those elements of reporting under SAFELEC that are still relevant, but also adopts more qualitative leading indicators of performance. The sharing of information and best practice will be a priority, and common standards will be adopted to ensure a consistent approach to the management of health and safety in the industry.

Government policy
Industry initiatives have developed alongside, and with consideration of, Government policy on occupational and public health matters.

Companies are working to integrate the new Medical Fit Note within their procedures, which was one recommendation arising from Dame Carol Black's review. More recently the introduction of the Responsibility Deal invites businesses to help tackle public health issues within the workplace, and some member companies are implementing programmes in support of the Health at Work Pledges on chronic conditions, occupational health services, employee health and wellbeing and healthy eating.

The report from the Government's Sickness Absence Review was published in November 2011, which includes recommendations on routes to keeping employees in work and their rehabilitation following illness. This benefits driven review was commissioned to look at ways of improving support to employers, individuals and the State in the assistance given to those either in or in danger of entering long term unemployment.

A new approach to employee assessment by a team of suitable professionals will be aimed at providing an independent review of an individual's health and situation. This will be enacted after four weeks of absence to help establish routes for rehabilitation and assistance in helping the employee back to work. Companies will look for opportunities to enhance and expand their existing approaches in this area following publication of the Government's response to the recommendations.

Occupational Health Committee

Structure and Membership

The **ENA Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Committee** established a standalone committee to focus on health and wellbeing issues. The Occupational Health Committee provides the opportunity to identify and share good practice, and drive forward improvements in the critical area of health and wellbeing. Membership of the committee is achieved via a balance of safety, occupational health and HR professionals from ENA member companies.

Committee Objectives

The work of the Committee is defined by its Terms of Reference and Objectives. The main purpose and role of the Committee is to collectively address current occupational health and wellbeing issues, share, learn and promote good practice, and develop an overall strategic view with regard to the management of occupational health and wellbeing within ENA member companies.

The Objectives are implemented via this Business Plan, which enables the Committee to focus its attention on specific initiatives with clear outputs, and seeks to help ENA member companies to:

- Prevent and reduce ill health and injury in our workplaces
- Prioritise activities to meet legal requirements
- Promote health and wellbeing in our workplaces
- Adopt a strategic approach to sector health and wellbeing issues
- Promote our industry as socially responsible
- Promote ENA member companies as exemplar employers
- Promote good health practices at work and at home

The Committee aims to supplement the work of the individual ENA Member Companies in these respects though support of their programmes and the promotion of effective manager/employee relationships, access to competent persons, financial investment, training, and auditing.

There is both a need and an appetite for the sharing of resource, knowledge, best practice and experience among ENA members for the benefit of all concerned. This represents the core of the work of the ENA Occupational Health Committee.

Stakeholder engagement will also be maintained through open relationships with key regulatory bodies such as HSE, and other utility sectors and providers where appropriate. This includes the energy generation, gas distribution and water industries.

Occupational Health Advisory Group (OHAG)

The Occupational Health Committee draws as required on the medical expertise of the OHAG, which is an independent body of senior occupational health physicians from ENA member companies.

OHAG provides advice to the companies and promotes good practice in occupational health across the electricity industry. This includes the preparation of Guidance Notes on topics of interest covering all aspects of the industry from generation, through transmission and distribution, to retail and supply. The guidance notes will be of interest to managers, employees and occupational health professionals within the industry. They give general advice which has to be interpreted in the light of local circumstances.

OHAG have a seat on the Occupational Health Committee allowing for regular representation, and the Occupational Health Committee and OHAG also strive to have one joint meeting per year to discuss and coordinate respective work plans and priorities.