

ENA Occupational Health Committee

Healthy Workplaces Framework (2021 – 2023)



**DEVELOPING IMPROVEMENTS IN
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT AND WELLBEING**

1. Objectives 2021 - 2023

Structure and Membership

The ENA Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) Committee oversees the work of the **ENA Occupational Health Committee**, which is comprised of a balance of safety managers, occupational health specialists, trained clinicians, and HR professionals from ENA member companies. Representatives from Energy UK and its generation and retail member companies also attend the Committee meetings as part of the collective approach to health and safety management within the Powering Improvement initiative.

The Committee's objective is to support and promote the management of occupational health and wellbeing within the electricity network businesses. This is achieved through the development of collaborative industry solutions to commonly encountered health related issues, and the sharing and promotion of individual company practices to help improve sector wide occupational health performance.

An integrated approach to managing health requires the use of specialist healthcare provision to support health and safety management teams. Health surveillance, fitness to work and occupational hygiene programmes are employed to ensure the health, wellbeing, and welfare of employees. Work programmes and initiatives address the key health issues within the sector and help raise awareness of and implement HSE and Government priorities. Effective health interventions also deliver tangible cost benefits to the businesses through reduced work-related sickness absence and healthier, more productive employees.

This plan is designed to be used within the businesses to promote this collective work, and the Committee objectives are outlined in Appendix A.

Powering Improvement

The industry's overarching Powering Improvement (PI) health and safety strategy commits the industry to build on its partnership approach to bring about continuous improvement in the management of safety and occupational health within the electricity sector to 2025 and beyond. The strategy recognises that ill health remains a major challenge for the industry, and so occupational health issues are a core focus and priority within the initiative. PI therefore provides the opportunity to raise the profile and importance of occupational health within the workplace.

The first two phases of PI (2010 – 2020) ensured alignment with HSE's strategy "The Health and Safety of Great Britain: Be part of the Solution", and the transition to the new GB strategy, 'Helping Great Britain (GB) Work Well' and the accompanying Health Strategy. PI Phase 3 (2020 – 2025) continues to align itself and provide line of sight to these national strategies.

ENA companies support the PI principles, which include commitments on health:

- > All workers in our industry have the right to go to work each day and not be injured or made ill by their work;
- > We recognise that everyone in our industry has a responsibility to look after their own, their colleagues', and the public's health and safety;
- > We recognise the serious consequences of work-related accidents and ill health, both personal, economic, and reputational;
- > A safe, healthy, and competent workforce is essential to any business;
- > We are fully committed to addressing occupational health and wellbeing issues as well as safety ones.

2. Priorities 2021 - 2023

Building on previous work, the direction of the Occupational Health Committee will be shaped by the key priorities to be addressed throughout PI 2020 – 2025 and beyond, as well as by the consequences of the national pandemic and other emerging health issues.

1. Existing commitments

The industry will continue to address existing causes responsible for the majority of ill health conditions and working days lost. This includes prioritising the following health topics and interventions:

- Core Health Surveillance and Fitness to Work standards and policies;
- Identified PI priority issues (MSDs, mental ill health, fatigue);
- Traditional causes of ill health in the industry, including HAVs, noise, skin dermatitis etc.;
- Issues related to the use of PPE, RPE and hygiene.

2. Occupational Health Management

The Committee will review the indicators of success for occupational health management and develop a new framework for recording sector wide progress on health. Suitable leading indicators of performance and reporting metrics employed within individual companies will be collectively adopted through the Committee, through a review of:

- The monitoring and recording of health data and reportable health incidents in line with regulatory requirements and industry good practice;
- The maintenance of health records and risk assessments in line with legal compliance to help measure any impact from the latency and longevity of health related issues;
- The Healthy Workplaces Programme comprised of a series of high level monitoring protocols based on existing indicators, addressing the two distinct arms of occupational health management and employee health and wellbeing. This has enabled a sector wide assessment of occupational health performance through the collation of suitable quantitative and qualitative information, via a combination of health data (lagging indicators) and proactive initiatives (leading indicators);

A wider focus is needed on the collective business case for health investment including cost benefit analysis, illustrating the return on investment from proactive health interventions on reduced sickness absence levels and improved employee health;

Where possible the health performance of the companies should be compared and contrasted with other utility sectors and leading industries, and national health data (Office of National Statistics).

3. Collective working

The Committee will:

- Continue to share information and best practice in order to help assess the impact of company occupational health policies, initiatives and campaigns. This will help identify emerging health trends within the industry, and promote a culture of shared learning across the industry to deliver optimum health outcomes;
- Remain cognizant of wider initiatives arising from Government policy, public health body campaigns and health charities;
- Maintain oversight of wider European work, building on themes within the EU OSHA Healthy Workplaces Campaigns and the European Week for Safety and Health at Work.

4. Emerging issues

The Committee will increasingly look to apply existing approaches and interventions to both recognised health issues observed in new work activities, and new and emerging health related topics. This should include the collective consideration of innovation solutions and preventative interventions where possible to further reduce the risks to employee health.

Emerging issues include, but are not limited, to:

- Fitness to work issues arising from safety critical activities;
- Sleep deprivation and fatigue management;
- Health issues from the use and impact of new technology, or from existing equipment used in new ways;
- Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) associated with industry wide programmes (e.g. the smart meter roll-out);
- Long term health issues arising from the national pandemic, including long COVID, mental health, and working from home/flexible working practices etc.
- Physiology and ergonomic issues from new work environments and working practices, and the requirements of an increasingly younger and older workforce;
- Increasing prevalence of public health related issues within the workforce (obesity, heart disease, cancer, diabetes etc.).

5. Health & Wellbeing

Employee health & wellbeing (HWB) and public health initiatives highlight the companies' focus on employee physical and mental wellbeing through proactive health programmes. These are monitored by leading indicators and are based on the promotion and awareness of common health issues. Physical wellbeing covers many of the current public health issues affecting individuals, whilst mental wellbeing deals with the management of stressors (work and life pressures) and the symptoms of mental ill health.

The Committee developed a HWB Framework in PI 2020-2015 that provides guidance on an overall management approach to workplace and individual employee health, and this continues to be referenced as the basis for managing HWB issues.

The promotion and monitoring of wellbeing initiatives requires a qualitative approach, compared to the quantitative assessment of occupational health management issues. A HWB matrix has been developed by the Committee setting out the range of programmes and interventions in place within the businesses. This provided an initial benchmark for the key health issues affecting and impacting staff, and is now regularly reviewed and updated to maintain its currency. The matrix assists in the development of targeted campaigns and action plans designed to improve employee health. Industry performance will be monitored and opportunities for improvement established based on individual company needs and feedback.

6. HSE Health Strategy

The HSE Health Strategy 'Go Home Healthy' is accompanied by Health Priority Plans for MSDs, work-related stress, and occupational lung disease. This is in addition to the Utilities Sector Plan which identifies the key overarching challenges as being an ageing workforce, maintaining and upgrading essential assets and infrastructure, and managing rapid developments in technology.

Companies will eliminate or reduce MSD risks through work design, suitable equipment, and flexible ways of working where possible. Where this cannot be achieved then suitable control measures will be employed supported by training, awareness, and communications tools to help manage these risks.

Companies will continue to apply the HSE Management Standards and other company specific tools to proactively manage work-related stress and mental health issues. Effective management requires an integrated approach beginning with leadership commitment and supported through guidance, training and awareness, employee engagement, and targeted intervention measures that address both work and home factors as part of a holistic approach to this issue.

The main cause of lung disease within the industry is from potential exposure to asbestos and silica dust. Whilst these risks are well managed in line with legal requirements, existing policies and procedures will be maintained, reviewed, and improved where possible to ensure these risks remain sufficiently controlled.

The Committee will also review and promote other HSE health campaigns as appropriate, and maintain a watching brief on health studies and research conducted by HSE and HSL to determine any learning and application within the sector.

Appendix A - Occupational Health Committee

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 develop an overall strategic sector level approach to the management of occupational health and wellbeing within ENA member companies. There is also an appetite to share resource, knowledge, best practice, learning and experience among ENA members for the benefit of all concerned.

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

- Prioritise activities to meet legal requirements;
- Proactively prevent and reduce ill health and injury in the workplace;
- Promote health and wellbeing in our workplaces;
- Promote the industry as socially responsible;
- Promote ENA member companies as exemplar employers;
- Promote good health practices at both work and at home.

Stakeholder engagement will be maintained through relationships with key regulatory bodies such as HSE, other utility sectors, service providers, and professional health bodies where appropriate.

The need for clear, effective communications is increasingly important, and the Committee will look to increasingly promote health messages at a national level through ENA. This is in addition to and in support of the regular health campaigns and various employee communication channels employed by the companies. This will help publicise the importance of managing occupational health alongside established safety messages.

Appendix B - Previous Committee Outputs

PI 2015 - 2020

Following the first phase of PI (2010 – 2015) and the specific focus on occupational health in 2011, the strategy partners agreed that a similar approach would be adopted for the second phase (2015 – 2020) and that a year should again be dedicated for addressing occupational health. 'Managing Occupational Ill Health Risks' in 2016 provided an opportunity to define and promote health messages to 2020 and beyond.

A key output was the development of a Journey on Health Roadmap, which is an interactive online repository of resources and case studies. It provides a means to learn and share information on all aspects of successful occupational ill health management. This tool and all PI occupational health publications are available to use via the Powering Improvement web site (www.poweringimprovement.org).

The Roadmap and other PI outputs contributed to the work featuring as a Commitment within the HSE examples of industry support for the 'Tackling Ill Health' GB strategy theme.

The profile of occupational health and wellbeing in electricity industry companies was enhanced through the sharing of knowledge and visibility of good practice. This was achieved through communication, leadership and the provision of health tools and resources to help reduce the incidence and occurrence of ill health.

The ENA Occupational Health Committee was responsible for setting out the priorities for health and managing the implementation of the Powering Improvement (2015-2020) outputs:

- > Review and reassess the top three risks that impact the health of their employees and implement control measures to facilitate improvements;
- > Consistent standards and approaches to the management of work-related ill health, including health surveillance and fitness to work programmes;
- > Review the approach to managing mental ill health against the HSE Management Standards with respect to work-related stress and existing mental ill health programmes;
- > Collate and publish examples of successful member company initiatives and case studies to promote good practice.

Forward look

Specific Outcomes and Outputs are set out in the 2021 PI Delivery Plan on Occupational Health, and these will be delivered by both the PI strategy partners and via the Committee work programme for 2021-2023 as set out in Appendix C.

Year	Work programme (Outputs)	Progress	Risk
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete Healthy Workplaces Framework & circulate to internal stakeholders • Agree Committee work programme actions 2021 – 2023 • Develop a new Health Reporting Template • Draft 2021 SHE Review of case studies on key identified health risks and COVID-19 learning • Review and develop existing Health Roadmap • Review company fatigue management policies and promote ENA Position Paper in conjunction with the dedicated ENA Task Force • Develop overarching principles on Health & Wellbeing and revise both the HWB Framework and HWB Matrix • Support and co-host a PI Occupational Health webinar 		
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop health data analytics & communicate within businesses • Identify national health campaigns and support with industry messages • Develop novel routes to promoting health messages and Committee outputs • Influence and support the focus on health at the 2022 ENA SHE Conference • Consider options for cost benefit analysis and return on investment from health interventions 		
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a review of emerging technology and its application and use within the industry • Review company innovation practices and consider opportunities for collective health interventions 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider work and engagement with contractors and supply chain		
2023 - 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop work programme for 2023 – 2025 (PI Phase 3)		