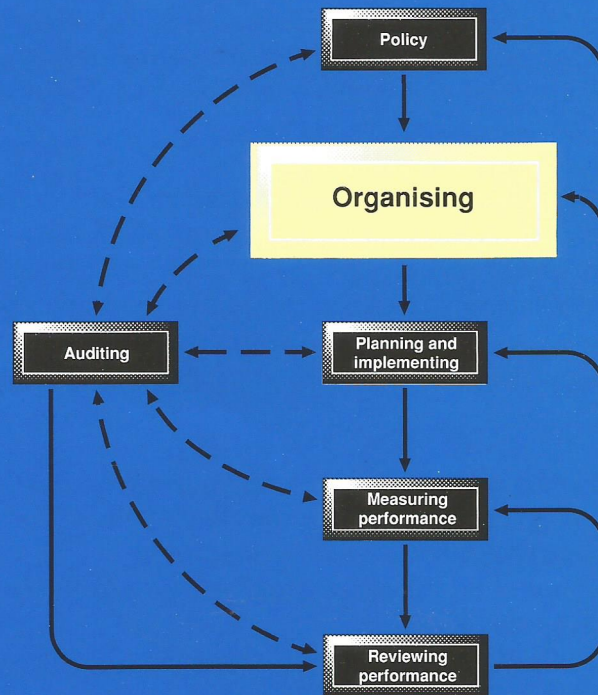


ORGANISING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY



Synopsis

Organising for health and safety involves establishing responsibilities and relationships which promote a positive health and safety culture and secure the implementation and continued development of the health and safety policy. This chapter examines the characteristics of structures and processes which:

- establish and maintain management **control** within an organisation;
- promote **co-operation** between individuals, safety representatives and groups so that health and safety becomes a collaborative effort;
- ensure the **communication** of necessary information throughout the organisation; and
- secure the **competence** of employees.

ORGANISING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

Organising for health and safety is the process of designing and establishing the responsibilities and relationships which form the social environment in which work takes place. The influence of an organisation's culture bears on all aspects of work activity, affecting individual and group behaviour, job design and the planning and execution of work.

A culture which promotes safe and healthy working is therefore crucial to the proper implementation and continued development of effective policies. Such cultures take time to mature and, typically, five to ten years to consolidate, but they are an essential means of influencing the behaviour of individuals. Each organisation will have a distinctive approach to health and safety which is shared 'common knowledge' and which promotes a common way of thinking about and responding to health and safety issues.

In this chapter the activities necessary to promote positive health and safety cultures have been categorised into four separate elements. These are concerned with:

- methods of **control** within the organisation;
- the means of securing **co-operation** between individuals, safety representatives and groups;
- the methods of **communication** throughout the organisation;
- the **competence** of individuals.

Control is the foundation of a positive health and safety culture and the management techniques used by those in positions of control are considered in more detail in chapters 4 to 6. All four elements are, however, inter-related and inter-dependent so that, for example, action taken to achieve control, competence and co-operation all communicate management's intention and commitment. Consistent activity in each area is necessary to promote a climate in which a positive health and safety culture can develop and targets can be achieved.

CONTROL

In organisations achieving success in health and safety, control is achieved by securing the commitment of employees to clear health and safety objectives. Managers take full responsibility for controlling all those factors which could lead to ill health, injury or loss. They provide clear direction and take responsibility for the working environment in which accidents, ill health and incidents could occur. This creates a positive atmosphere and encourages a creative and learning culture in which the emphasis is on a collective effort to develop and maintain systems of control before the event rather than on blaming individuals for failures afterwards.

Establishing and maintaining control is central to all management functions including health and safety. Organisations achieving high standards of health and safety allocate health and safety responsibilities to line managers, while specialists act as advisers. A senior figure at the top of the organisation is nominated to co-ordinate and monitor policy implementation.

The key functions of successful health and safety management can be classified into three broad areas. These are:

- formulating and developing policy and the organisation, which includes

identifying key health and safety objectives and reviewing progress towards their achievement;

- planning, measuring, reviewing and auditing health and safety activities so that legal requirements are satisfied and all risks are minimised;
- ensuring effective implementation of plans and reporting on performance.

Further details about these three functions are given in Appendix 2.

These functions may be performed by the same individuals or groups, although it is important when specifying and documenting duties and responsibilities, to establish the precise nature of the functions which are to be performed and the boundaries of discretion. Effectiveness is promoted by the clear definition of responsibilities and co-ordination to ensure that individual contributions support the achievement of the policy objectives, that no key tasks are overlooked, and that duplication of effort is avoided. The clarification of responsibilities is particularly important where two or more organisations work together, for example, when contractors are employed to provide goods or services within an existing establishment.

Organisations successful in health and safety management describe their policy arrangements and organisational structure for health and safety in written statements. Additionally, directives and performance standards are used to define in detail who should do what, when, and to specify the results required. Performance standards link responsibilities to desired outputs and recognise that the achievement of goals is always based on specific work, the nature of which is defined and the effects of which are measured. Where necessary, the work input may be further defined by written systems, rules or procedures which clarify the processes by which jobs and tasks should be performed in order to achieve the desired results. Guidelines on drawing up performance standards are given in Inset 4. Defining performance standards is an important part of planning and measuring health and safety activities and is considered in more detail in chapter 4.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Performance standards are the basis for planning and measuring health and safety achievement. They reflect the fact that the attainment of objectives requires the input of specific effort. If organisations are to be efficient and effective in controlling risks they need to co-ordinate activities and ensure that everyone is clear about what they are expected to achieve. They need to understand and specify what has to be done, from controlling the direction of the organisation as a whole to dealing with the specific risks created by different activities, products or services.

Setting performance standards is one of the cornerstones of the effective implementation of health and safety policies. Policy is translated from good intentions into a series of co-ordinated activities and tasks which:

- set out clearly what people need to do to contribute to an environment free of injuries, ill health and loss;
- assist in identifying the competences which individuals need to fulfil their responsibilities;

- form the basis for measuring individual, group and organisational performance.

Performance standards link responsibilities to desired outputs and should specify who is responsible, for what and with what expected result. They should be devised for all work relevant to health and safety, including the work of managers (at **all** levels) and other employees. A performance standard should generally cover the following:

- **Who is responsible?** The standards should identify the name or position of those with responsibility for carrying out the work, providing the detail necessary to support general organisational statements.

Consideration should be given in all cases to the competence criteria for doing the work.

- **What for?** The standards should identify what is to be done and explain how. This may involve the application of specific procedures or systems of work (legally prescribed or otherwise) and the use of ▶

The clear definition of responsibilities is reinforced by holding individuals accountable for their responsibilities. This often involves the use of supporting systems and arrangements, such as:

- reference to health and safety responsibilities in individual job descriptions;
- formal performance review and appraisal systems which include the measuring and rewarding of individual performance in health and safety related activities;
- procedures which identify and take action on failures to achieve adequate health and safety performance and which apply equally to managers and other employees. Such procedures can be integrated with normal disciplinary arrangements and be invoked when justified by the seriousness of the failure to comply.

The health and safety performance of individuals, particularly supervisors and managers, is closely monitored and is a determinant in career progression and personal development assessments. Health and safety objectives are regarded as being of equal importance to other business aims, and individual health and safety targets are agreed to secure commitment to their achievement. The emphasis is on identifying what needs to be done in order to prevent injuries, ill health and loss. Performance standards form the basis for the objective measurement and assessment of individual performance. Such standards are also used to measure group and organisational performance.

A combination of rewards and sanctions is used to motivate all employees. More emphasis is, however, placed on the reinforcement of the positive behaviour which contributes to risk control and the promotion of a positive safety culture. The general payment and reward systems support the achievement of health and safety objectives and avoid conflict with output and other commercial objectives. Where safety award schemes are used, these emphasise the attainment of specific standards

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- ▶ specific documents and equipment. Some examples of what is to be done might be:
 - drawing up plans at various levels to implement the health and safety policy;
 - carrying out assessments in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988 (COSHH) before hazardous substances are used;
 - the periodic monitoring of health and safety performance;
 - checking contractors' health and safety performance before awarding contracts;
 - the holding by supervisors of weekly 'tool-box' talks with their team on health and safety issues. ('Tool-box' talks, or 'tailgate' meetings, are planned regular meetings where supervisors discuss with their team a specific health and safety issue or topic.) This may include, for example, a reminder of important safety procedures or the lessons from a recent accident;
 - providing training in accordance with the Woodworking Machines Regulations 1974 before employees are allowed to operate a circular saw;
 - taking the steps necessary to comply with Section 30 of the Factories Act 1961 before entering a confined space;
 - providing first aid after an accident.
- **When?** The standards should specify when the work is to be carried out. This may be on a regular basis (eg monthly inspections by supervisors or managers) or only when particular tasks or jobs are done (eg when using a ladder or a particular chemical).
- **With what expected result?** The standards for outputs may be specified by reference to specific legal requirements. They may alternatively be in terms of the satisfactory completion of specified procedures (eg the completion of reports following an inspection or the completion of a training procedure). Output standards can be used to specify how individuals are to be held accountable for their health and safety responsibilities. The quantity and quality of outputs can be used to measure personal, group or corporate performance.

of performance rather than arbitrary targets or those based solely on the avoidance of accidents or ill health. The best schemes reward group rather than individual effort and support the collaborative approach to health and safety management. Effective supervision is of critical importance and further guidance on this is contained in Inset 5.

SUPERVISION

Adequate supervision complements the provision of information, instruction and training in ensuring that the health and safety policy of an organisation is effectively implemented and developed. Supervision has two key aspects:

- **Task management.** The primary task is to ensure the achievement of specific health and safety objectives and safe working in accordance with performance standards. This involves the provision of direction, help, guidance, example and discipline, with the aim of ensuring that risks are fully understood and performance standards and supporting procedures and systems are consistently applied. Effective task management also involves local planning to achieve objectives; training and coaching in skills to develop individual competence; and monitoring to identify any existing performance standards which are inappropriate or inadequate and require revision. It involves both the use of formal monitoring systems and general monitoring through spot checks and continuous observation.

- **Team building** in which the supervisor encourages individuals to work together in pursuit of team health and safety objectives. The

supervisor's role includes the leading of team activities such as 'tool-box' talks, team briefings, and problem solving exercises. It involves coaching and counselling to encourage and support the participation of all team members. A particularly important objective is to secure a growth in understanding of the risks involved in the work of the group and how these can be either eliminated or better controlled.

Levels of supervision need to be the subject of positive management consideration and decision making. The appropriate level depends on the risks involved and on the competence of employees to identify and handle them. In some cases legal requirements stipulate the supervision of certain activities, eg in factories young people working at certain dangerous machines have to be supervised by an experienced person until they have received sufficient training. Employees new to a job, undergoing training, doing jobs which present special risks, or dealing with new situations may need more supervision than others. Some supervision of fully competent individuals will, however, always be required to ensure that standards are being consistently met. ▶

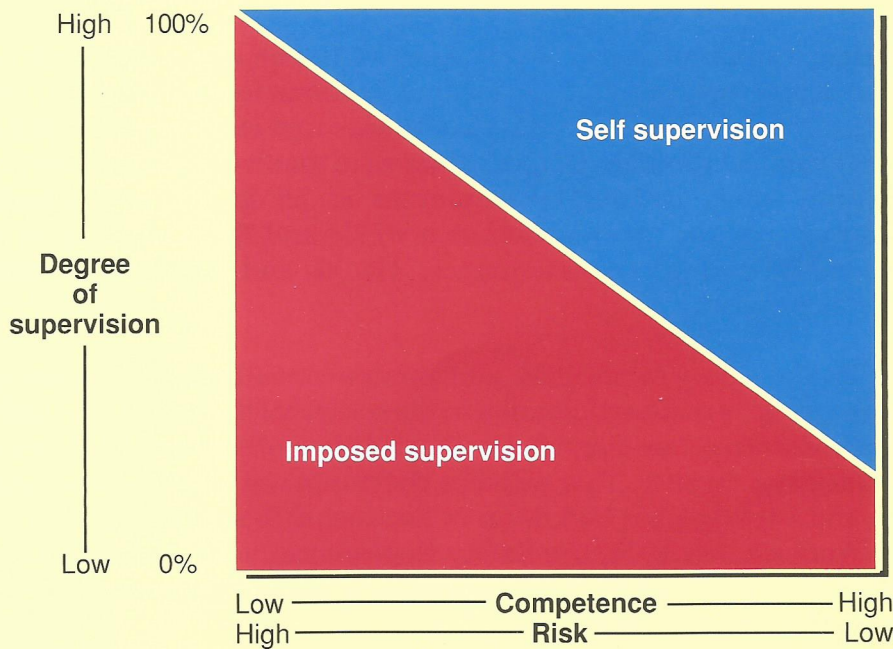


Diagram 4 Levels of supervision
Levels of supervision are determined by the risk of the job and the competence of the person

▶ Health and safety supervision should not be reactive, involving only responses to requests for help. Supervisory regimes should be designed and organised as part of a proper system of active management control. Particular attention should be given to the problems of people working alone, job sharing and part-time working, and continuity at shift change-overs.

Supervisors and employees need to exercise judgement and discretion, for example, when making decisions on when to seek help or guidance, when to report hazards, or when to halt work because they consider it too dangerous to continue. They should, however, exercise this discretion within the framework of control established at the top of the organisation. Although authority to act can be delegated to supervisors and individual employees, the ultimate responsibility for complying with the employer's legal duties cannot be delegated. It follows that management must ensure that those exercising discretion and judgement are competent to do so and have clear guidelines.

A growing number of organisations are developing new methods of team working which are often linked to the widening of job content and to flexible working. This can mean, for example, that:

- some maintenance tasks become the responsibility of the work group, which may involve some maintenance workers joining

production teams;

- job variety for individuals is increased and they have to become competent in new tasks;
- supervisors become responsible for areas of work which are not within their established expertise or experience.

In some cases the formal supervisory role may not be defined and 'team leaders' may be allowed to emerge naturally or be elected by group members. There may also be a policy that there should be a minimum of direct supervision so that the groups are encouraged to identify and solve their own problems.

Such initiatives can have positive benefits if group performance criteria covers health and safety. However, the health and safety implications need to be carefully considered, with specific steps being taken to deal with them. Team and flexible working usually increase the discretion available to supervisors and others. In situations where supervisors acquire wider responsibilities they need to become familiar with new risks and with how these relate to the activities of the whole group and of other groups. Increasing the discretion and responsibilities of supervisors and others therefore needs to be accompanied by sufficient training and experience to develop their competence in the exercise of the relevant health and safety judgements.

CO-OPERATION

Participation, commitment and involvement in health and safety activities at all levels is essential, not only to fulfil legal obligations for consultation, but also to achieve effective risk control. Pooling knowledge and experience is a key aspect of risk control. Participation complements control in that it encourages the 'ownership' of health and safety policies by employees at all levels, and establishes an understanding that the organisation as a whole and those working in it benefit from good health and safety performance. Health and safety really does become 'everybody's business'.

Health and safety committees and similar consultative bodies are used as a means of securing formal participation in the control of the health and safety effort. Safety representatives are provided with paid time off for specialist training and adequate facilities on site. This satisfies the minimum legal requirements for co-operation and participation laid down in Sections 2(6) and 2(7) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and the Offshore Installations (Safety Representatives & Safety Committee) Regulations 1989.

However, successful organisations are not satisfied with mere legal compliance and they **actively encourage and support safety representatives** in their

role, recognising the valuable contribution they can make. Safety representatives are provided with training which, in common with all employees, enables them to make an informed contribution on health and safety issues. They also enjoy the positive benefits of an open communications policy and are also closely involved in directing the health and safety effort by the nature of the issues discussed at health and safety committees. Effective consultative bodies are involved in planning, measuring and reviewing performance as well as in their more traditional reactive role of considering the results of accident, ill health and incident investigations and other concerns of the moment.

In organisations achieving success in health and safety, employees at all levels are also involved in groups concerned with setting performance standards, devising operational systems, procedures and instructions for the control of risks and with monitoring and auditing activities. The involvement of supervisors and others in writing systems and procedures is particularly important. Reference to their intimate knowledge of how work is done is essential if procedures are to be relevant, accepted and written in a form which can be applied in practice. Such arrangements secure the effective participation of employees in safety policy formulation and development. In some cases *ad hoc* problem solving teams brought together from various parts of the organisation can help solve specific problems, including issues which may have arisen from an accident, a case of ill health or an incident. All these group activities have the support of management and access to advice from health and safety specialists.

Other approaches to promote involvement include the use of hazard report books, suggestion schemes, or safety circles (similar to quality circles), where safety problems are identified and solved. These too can help to develop enthusiasm and enable useful expertise and knowledge to be drawn upon.

The involvement of employees may, in the short term, increase the potential for conflict and disagreement about what constitutes safe and healthy working. The activities of supervisors and managers need therefore to be supported by procedures which establish when and how specialist advice can be obtained to resolve problems and disputes, when a specific investigation should be made, and the circumstances in which work should be suspended. In the longer term the potential for conflict is reduced as the participants develop constructive working relationships and shared objectives.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is essential. This involves information coming into the organisation, flowing within the organisation and going out from the organisation.

Information inputs to the organisation

Good sources of 'health and safety intelligence' coming into the organisation are as important for the development of health and safety policy and performance as market information is for business development. Such information is particularly necessary for those responsible for policy making, planning, setting performance standards, measuring, auditing and reviewing performance. Arrangements are necessary to monitor legal developments with which the organisation may need to comply; technical developments which might be relevant to risk control; and developments in health and safety management practice.

Information flows within the organisation

Effective internal communication is essential if the health and safety policy is to be understood and consistently implemented. Systems are also needed to communicate key information such as:

- the meaning and purpose of the policy;
- the vision, values and beliefs which underlie it;
- the commitment of senior management to its implementation;
- plans, standards, procedures and systems relating to implementation and performance measurement;
- factual information which will help secure the involvement and commitment of work people (including relevant information from outside services);
- comments and ideas for improvement from individuals and groups;
- reports on performance.

A comprehensive system is made up of a variety of formal and informal means of communication which together ensure an adequate flow of information up, down and across the organisation. Organisations successful in health and safety make full use of three inter-related methods: visible behaviour by managers and others; the written word; and face-to-face discussion. The content of all three methods needs to be consistent and should be co-ordinated so as to reinforce key messages. These organisations also adopt open information policies, in some cases providing libraries or information rooms to which all employees have access.

Visible behaviour

Leading by example, is essential in promoting a positive health and safety culture. The visible demonstration by managers, and particularly by senior managers, of the importance and significance of health and safety objectives communicates powerful signals. Managers also need to be aware of the negative effect of behaviour which

EXAMPLES OF STATEMENTS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY PHILOSOPHY

*"A good safety record goes hand in hand
with high productivity and quality standards."*

*"We believe that an excellent company is by
definition a safe company. Since we are committed to
excellence it follows that minimising risk to people,
plant and products is inseparable from all other
company objectives."*

**"Experience shows that a
successful safety organisation
also produces the right quality
goods at minimum costs."**

**"Prevention is not only better, but
cheaper than cure ...
There is no necessary conflict between
humanitarianism and commercial
considerations.
Profits and safety are not in competition.
On the contrary, safety is good
business."**

***"Total safety is the ongoing integration
of safety into all activities with
the objective of attaining industry
leadership in safety performance.
We believe:
Nothing is more important
than safety
... not production, not sales,
not profits."***

The Health and Safety Executive wish to thank the five companies who have allowed us to quote their views.

suggests insincerity, and effort needs to be put into maintaining consistency between what is said and what is done. Amongst the methods which successful companies use to signal commitment are:

- regular 'health and safety tours' by managers, including, when appropriate, senior managers, planned so as progressively to cover the whole site or operation. Such tours are not detailed inspections but are designed to demonstrate management commitment and interest and to enable them to see for themselves obvious examples of good or bad performance. They can also focus attention on current priorities in the overall safety effort.
- the chairing of meetings of the central health and safety committee or other joint consultative body being the regular responsibility of a member of top management.
- managers becoming actively involved in accident, ill health and incident investigations, with the level of seniority being determined by the severity of the event and their involvement extending to the collection of information and the interviewing of witnesses.

Written communication

The most important written communications are: health and safety policy statements; organisation statements identifying health and safety roles and responsibilities; documented performance standards; and supporting organisational and risk control information and procedures. These may be supplemented by mission statements, codes of ethics or statements of philosophy. Extracts from some actual statements of philosophy are shown at Inset 6. These extracts are not intended to act as models but rather to show how such statements can make explicit the values and beliefs which underlie the health and safety policy. An outline of what might be contained in a statement of health and safety policy is given in Inset 7.

AN OUTLINE FOR STATEMENTS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Written statements of health and safety policy should at the very least:

- set the direction for the organisation by communicating senior management's values, beliefs and commitment to health and safety;
- explain the basis of the policy and how it can contribute to business performance (eg by reducing injuries and ill health, protecting the environment and reducing unnecessary losses and liability);
- establish the importance of health and safety objectives in relation to other business objectives;
- commit the organisation to pursuing progressive improvements in health and safety performance, with legal requirements defining the minimum level of achievement;
- explain the responsibilities of managers and the contribution that employees can make to policy implementation outlining the participation procedures;
- commit the organisation to maintaining effective systems of communications on health and safety matters;
- identify the director or key senior manager with overall responsibility for policy formulation, implementation and development;
- commit the leaders of the organisation to supporting the policy with adequate financial and physical resources and by ensuring the competence of all employees and by the provision of any necessary expert advice;
- commit the leaders to planning and regularly reviewing and developing the policy;
- be signed and dated by the director or chief executive of the organisation.

Such written statements of policy will need to be supplemented by statements of organisation and arrangements necessary to implement it.

These documents have to be tailored to the needs of each organisation but generally the degree of detail should be in proportion to the level of complexity and risk: in particular, the greater the risk the more specific instructions need to be. The style of presentation should reflect the needs of the users, whether they be managers, supervisors or other employees.

In addition to permanent documents, organisations use notices, posters, hand bills, and health and safety newsletters to inform employees about particular issues or about progress in achieving objectives, eg results of inspections, compliance with standards, results of investigations.

The use of notices or posters to support the achievement of specific targets or to improve knowledge of particular risks is more effective than general poster campaigns. Posters can also refer to specific weaknesses which have been identified, for example by accident or incident analysis. The subjects can also be addressed at the same time in 'tool box' talks and other initiatives designed to promote face-to-face discussion and involvement.

Face-to-face discussion

Face-to-face discussion, with an emphasis on the open and honest exchange of views, supports other communication activities by enabling employees to ask questions and make a personal contribution.

Health and safety tours and formal consultative meetings are important opportunities but other systems are used to ensure a good level of communication and participation. These include:

- planned meetings, sometimes known as 'team briefings', at which information is cascaded down the organisation and performance information is given;
- putting health and safety issues on the agenda at all routine management meetings (possibly as the first item);
- monthly or weekly 'tool box talks', or 'tailgate meetings' at which supervisors can discuss health and safety issues with their teams, remind them of critical risks and precautions, and supplement the training effort. These meetings also enable individuals to make their own suggestions about improving safety arrangements.

Flows of information from the organisation

Health and safety information may need to be communicated outside the organisation. For example, it is necessary to supply enforcing agencies with certain accident and ill health data and under Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act information must be provided about the safe use of articles and substances supplied for use at work. It may be necessary to communicate with the planning authorities, the emergency services and local residents. On sites where the Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazards (CIMAH) Regulations 1984 apply, these groups must be involved in aspects of emergency planning. In all such cases openness is important and the information given needs to be relevant and to be presented in a form which can be readily understood. Professional advice can be sought on how best to present information so that it can be understood by the audience to whom it is addressed.

Maintaining means of communication in times of emergency is also important and special contingency arrangements may be necessary.

COMPETENCE

Arrangements need to be made to ensure the competence of all employees (including managers) if they are to make the maximum contribution to health and safety. All employees need to be able to work in a safe and healthy manner, and managers need to be aware of relevant legislation and how to manage health and safety effectively. It may also be necessary to examine the abilities of contractors' staff where they work close to, or in collaboration with, direct employees.

Arrangements made by companies who manage health and safety well will include:

- recruitment and placement procedures which ensure that employees (including those at all levels of management), have the necessary physical and mental abilities for their jobs, or can acquire these through training and experience. This may require assessments of individual fitness by medical examination, and tests of physical fitness, or aptitudes and abilities;
- systems to identify health and safety training needs arising from recruitment, changes in staff, plant, processes or working practices; the need to maintain or enhance competence by refresher training; and the presence of contractors' employees;
- systems to provide the information, instruction, training and supporting communications effort needed to meet these needs;
- arrangements to ensure competent cover for staff absences, particularly for staff with critical health and safety responsibilities;
- general health promotion and surveillance schemes which contribute to the maintenance of general health and fitness, and include assessments of fitness for work, rehabilitation or job adaptation following injury or ill health, however caused.

Training makes an important contribution to the achievement of competence and Inset 8 provides further guidance. Experience of applying skills and knowledge is, however, another important ingredient and needs to be gained under adequate supervision at all levels. Proper supervision helps ensure the development and maintenance of competence and is particularly necessary for those new to a job or undergoing training.

The objective of ensuring the competence of employees is always to maximise their contribution to health and safety either individually or in groups. Working in compliance with performance standards and participating in initiatives such as hazard spotting, problem solving and improving standards all help to develop competence and to contribute to better health and safety performance.

Whatever levels of competence are achieved by managers, supervisors and other employees, professional health and safety advice will sometimes be needed. Advice can be obtained from outside consultancy organisations but successful organisations often employ in-house health and safety advisers. Their roles and functions are outlined in Inset 9.

TRAINING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

Training will help people to acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes to make them competent in the health and safety aspects of their work - whatever their position in the organisation. It includes formal off-the-job training, instruction to individuals and groups, and on-the-job coaching and counselling. Ensuring that people are competent may demand more than training, for example, a period of supervised experience to practice and develop new skills. Training is therefore only one element in ensuring that people's health and safety performance is satisfactory.

Health and safety requirements should be integrated into job specifications for all employees, and training to meet those requirements calls for a similar approach to that for other business training. A typical training cycle is illustrated here.

Deciding if training is necessary

Training should not be used to compensate either for inadequacies in other aspects of the safety system, such as poorly designed or inadequately protected plant, or for inadequate workstations and procedures which are not designed according to sound ergonomic principles. It may, however, be appropriate to use training as a temporary means of control pending improvements in such areas.

Identifying whether training is necessary demands an understanding of job requirements and the abilities of individuals.

Identifying training needs

Job and task health and safety analyses help to identify health and safety training needs. With new jobs this analysis can involve comparison with similar existing jobs, or possibly by reference to other organisations with similar jobs. With existing jobs the analysis can involve:

- consideration of accident, ill health and incident records relevant to those jobs to identify how such events have occurred and how they can be prevented;
- information from employees about how jobs are done, the sequence of tasks involved and the tools, materials and equipment used;
- observing and questioning employees to understand what they are doing and why. In complex process plant the analysis needs to take account of all the possible consequences of human error, including those which may be remote from the particular task in hand.

With management jobs the analysis should cover both the job itself and the tasks of, and risks run by, subordinates so as to take account of the supervisory part of the job.

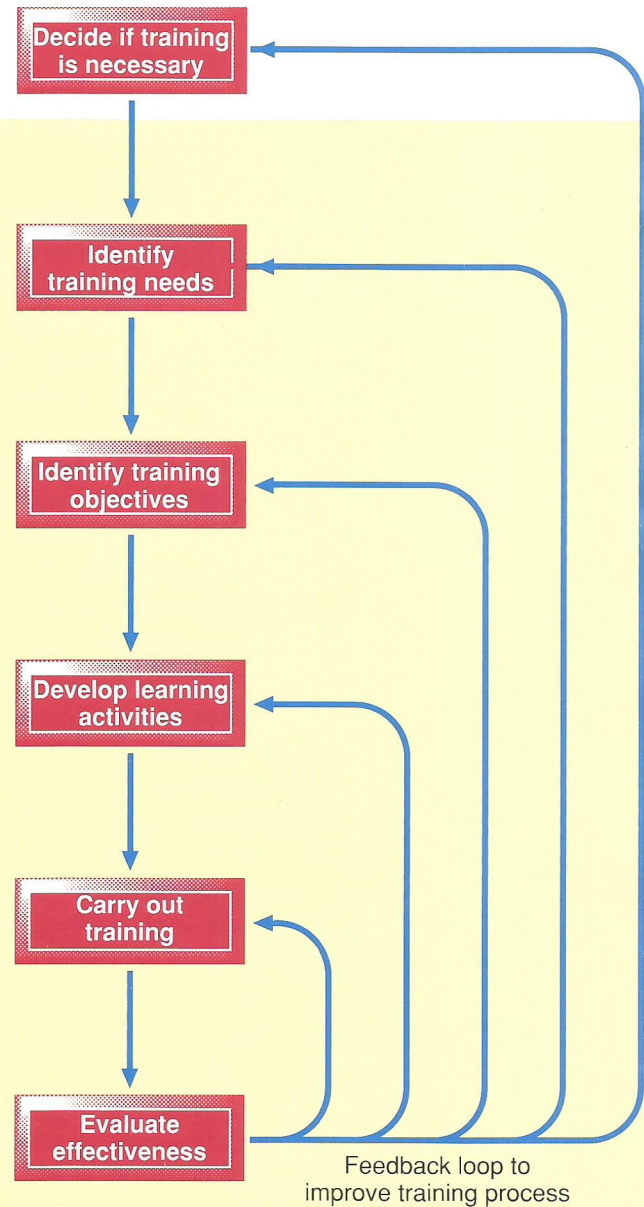


Diagram 5 A typical training cycle

Analysis can be applied to complete jobs or subsidiary tasks. Complete analysis is essential for new starters, but with existing employees the need may be to improve performance on particular tasks.

Job and task health and safety analyses are detailed and resource intensive. They can, however, support the safety management system in a number of respects as well as identifying training needs, including:

- recruitment, selection and placement;
- the identification of critical tasks for which planning and monitoring activities should be a priority;
- the assessment of an individual's performance in a job;
- the assessment of the suitability of an individual for promotion or substitution to a job where health and safety factors are critical.

There are three main types of training needs - organisational, job related and individual.

Organisational needs are common to all those in the organisation. They include knowledge and information about:

- the health and safety policy and the philosophy underlying it;
- the organisational structure and systems for:
 - the control of health and safety;
 - securing the co-operation of all employees;
 - communicating health and safety information;
 - ensuring the competence of individuals.

In addition, everyone needs to have an overview of the planning, measuring, reviewing and auditing systems relevant to them and to understand the major risks and how they are controlled.

Job needs are of two main types:

- Management needs which include:
 - leadership skills for directors and senior managers responsible for the whole organisation, health and safety advisers, managers and supervisors;
 - communication skills;
 - techniques of health and safety management;
 - training, instruction, coaching and problem solving skills relevant to health and safety;
 - understanding of the risks within a manager's area of responsibility, of the health and safety principles which underlie their control and of relevant legislation;
 - knowledge of the planning, measuring, reviewing and auditing systems.

For the last aspect, in particular, special consideration should be given to the needs of those who occupy key positions, including those who draw up performance standards: health and safety advisers; those who may have to report on accident, ill health and incident investigations; those involved in review and audit activities; and those who have to implement emergency procedures.

- Non-management needs which include:
 - an overview of health and safety principles;
 - detailed knowledge of relevant safety performance standards, systems, procedures and rules intended to control the risks of the job, and of the principles underlying them;
 - communication and problem solving skills, to encourage effective participation in health and safety activities.

Individual needs are specific to an individual and are generally identified through performance appraisal. They may arise because an individual

has not understood formal job training which has been delivered.

Training needs vary over time and regular assessments of needs should be made which cover:

- inducting new starters, including part-time and temporary workers;
- maintaining the performance of established employees (especially in the case of critical emergency procedures) and keeping them up to date with changes;
- changing roles arising from job moves, promotion or the possibility of having to deputise for others;
- introducing new equipment or technology.

Identifying objectives

Having identified all the relevant needs, specific training objectives should be set. Using job and task health and safety analyses, together with an assessment of relative risks, objectives can be prioritised. Once set, objectives can be used as the basis for measuring the effectiveness of training.

Deciding on training methods

Training can be carried out internally or externally. Internal training can involve in-house resources or the use of consultants. A range of equipment and activities may be appropriate depending on the nature of the subject. In general there should be the maximum possible trainee participation.

Carry out training

In some cases training needs may have to be met through closely supervised on-the-job experience. For some high risk jobs and tasks it may be necessary to arrange for such experience to be gained outside the real work situation, for example, at a training facility where simulation exercises can be mounted.

Evaluation and feedback

The effectiveness of training should be measured against the training objectives which have been set. Formal evaluation should be undertaken after training to establish if it has led to the desired improvement in work performance. The results of this evaluation can be used to improve the training process. The effectiveness of training can also be assessed as part of performance measurement activities which aim to identify the underlying causes of substandard performance.

Companies achieving high standards of health and safety give a high priority to health and safety training and develop systematic and documented approaches to it. Resources are allocated according to need and are safeguarded from arbitrary cuts or

► modifications such as those arising from cost reduction or rationalisation exercises. This is a reflection of the philosophy which regards people as the organisation's most important resource, and good health and safety performance as contributory to business success.

National and Scottish vocational qualifications

Reference to national vocational qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish vocational qualifications (SVQs) can help with the assessment of health and safety competence. NVQs and SVQs are based on standards developed by lead bodies (LBs) which are made up of representatives of employers, trade

unions and professional groups. For each occupational area, LBs identify standards of competence for that occupation and the level of performance required to achieve them. NVQs and SVQs reflect ability to perform activities within an occupation to the standard expected in employment, rather than just the training which has been given.

The competences identified by each LB should include the health and safety competences relevant to that occupational area. However, the standards used relate only to broad areas of competence. In applying the competences it will be necessary to ensure that sufficient detail on relevant health and safety aspects is incorporated into the safety performance standards for the work.

ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISERS

Organisations that successfully manage health and safety give health and safety advisers the status and ensure they have the competence to advise management and workers with authority and independence. Subjects on which they advise include:

- health and safety policy formulation and development;
- structuring and operating all parts of the organisation (including the supporting systems) in order to promote a positive health and safety culture and to secure the effective implementation of policy;
- planning for health and safety, including the setting of realistic short and long-term objectives, deciding priorities and establishing adequate performance standards;
- day-to-day implementation and monitoring of policy and plans; including accident and incident investigation, reporting and analysis;
- reviewing performance and auditing the whole safety management system.

To fulfil these functions they have to:

- maintain adequate information systems on relevant law (civil and criminal) and on guidance and developments in general and safety management practice;
- be able to interpret the law and understand how it applies to the organisation;
- establish and keep up-to-date organisational and risk control standards relating to both 'hardware' (such as the place of work and the plant, substances and equipment in use) and 'software' (such as procedures, systems and people) - this task is likely to involve contributions from specialists, for example, architects, engineers, doctors and occupational hygienists;
- establish and maintain procedures for the

- reporting, investigating and recording and analysis of accidents and incidents;
- establish and maintain adequate and appropriate monitoring and auditing systems;
- present themselves and their advice in an independent and effective manner, safeguarding the confidentiality of personal information such as medical records.

Relationships

Within the organisation

- The position of health and safety advisers in the organisation is such that they support the provision of authoritative and independent advice;
- The post holder has a direct reporting line to directors on matters of policy and authority to stop work which is being carried out in contravention of agreed standards and which puts people at risk of injury.
- Health and safety advisers have responsibility for professional standards and systems and on a large site or in a group of companies may also have line management responsibility for junior health and safety professionals.

Outside the organisation

Health and safety advisers are involved in liaison with a wide range of outside bodies and individuals, including: Local authority environmental health officers and licensing officials; architects and consultants etc; the fire service; contractors; insurance companies; clients and customers; the Health and Safety Executive; the public; equipment suppliers; HM Coroner or Procurator Fiscal; the media; the police; general practitioners; hospital staff.

SUMMARY

Organisations achieving success in health and safety create and sustain a culture which secures the motivation and involvement of all members of the organisation and the control of risks.

This leads them to establish, operate and maintain structures and systems which aim at:

- securing **control** by:
 - managers who lead by example;
 - clear allocation of responsibilities for policy formulation and development; for planning and reviewing health and safety activities; for the implementation of plans; and for reporting on performance;
 - the allocation of health and safety responsibilities to line managers with specialists acting as advisers;
 - the allocation of health and safety responsibilities to people with the necessary authority and competence who are given the time and resources to carry out their duties effectively;
 - ensuring that individuals are held accountable for their health and safety responsibilities and are motivated by systems of target setting and positive reinforcement;
 - the provision of adequate supervision, instruction and guidance;
 - payment and reward systems which avoid conflict between achieving output targets and health and safety requirements;

- encouraging **co-operation** of employees and safety representatives by:
 - involving them in policy formulation and development and in planning, implementing, measuring, auditing and reviewing performance;
 - making arrangements for involvement at the operational level to supplement more formal participative arrangements;

- securing effective **communication** by means of visible behaviour, written material and face-to-face discussion;

- ensuring **competence** through recruitment, selection, placement, transfer and training and the provision of adequate specialist advice.

FURTHER READING

- 1 *Safety management - a human approach* (2nd edition) Petersen D 1988 New York Aloray ISBN 0 913690 12 0
- 2 *Leadership in safety* Findlay JV and Kuhlman RL 1980 Loganville, Georgia Institute Press
- 3 *Human-error reduction and safety management* Petersen D 1984 New York Aloray ISBN 0 913690 09 0
- 4 *Safe behaviour reinforcement* Petersen D 1989 New York Aloray ISBN 0 913690 13 9
- 5 *A guide to job analysis* Boydell TH 1970 British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education ISBN 0 85171 0131.
- 6 *A guide to the identification of training needs* Boydell TH 1976 British Association for Commercial and Industrial Education ISBN 0 85171 059X.
- 7 ACSNI *Study group on human factors - first report on training and related matters* HSC Advisory Committee on Safety of Nuclear Installations HMSO 1990 ISBN 0 11 885543 3