

ANGUS COUNCIL

ROADS COMMITTEE

28 NOVEMBER 2002

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF ROADS

ABSTRACT

This Report gives an appraisal of the management of Health and Safety within the Roads Department.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee agree to note the contents of this Report.

2 INTRODUCTION

Health and Safety Legislation applies to all aspects of the work undertaken by the Roads Department, covering staff working within offices and on site locations, and the public affected by ongoing works and utilising the road network as vehicle users or pedestrians. This Report details:-

- the main aspects of the statutory duty for Health and Safety relating to the activities of the Roads Department
- changes in the Department's Safe Working Practices
- sickness absences
- work place inspections
- safety audits
- contractors' performance with respect to non-conformances issued for Health and Safety on site
- public liability claims against the Council in respect of road related incidents

3 DETAILS

Staff/Office Health and Safety

Report No. 115/01 presented to Committee on 25th January 2002 detailed the production and distribution of Safety Working Practices for the Roads Department.

Since that time, a further 2 Safe Working Practices (for Lone Working and Use of “Hilti” Nail Gun) have been added, and 18 of the existing Safe Working Practices have been revised. The two new procedures have been as a result of further Risk Assessments carried out by the Department. Risk Assessments are also subject to a 2 year rolling programme of review in line with the need for periodic reviews to ensure that they remain up to date. A list of current Safe Working Practices is given in Appendix I. The Department’s Health and Safety Policy has been revised to reflect changes in personnel within the Roads Department. A copy of the revised policy is attached as Appendix II.

Over the period April 2001 to March 2002, 7 work related Health and Safety incidents have been recorded by the Department, one of which resulted in 7 days of sickness absence by one member of staff. The total sickness absence recorded in the period April 2001 to March 2002 represented 2.46% of the total number of working days which compares favourably with the overall Council average of 4.34%.

Work place inspections are carried out at 3 monthly intervals as a joint inspection by the Director’s representative and a Trade Union Health and Safety representative. In 2001/02 inspections were undertaken only at the main Roads Department Offices at County Buildings and Kirriemuir Road Depot.

These inspections are however now being extended to include Arbroath Harbour, the A92 Project Office in Arbroath and satellite Road Supervisors’ offices.

Health and Safety issues as a result of the work place inspections are considered and prioritised by the Departmental Management Team and actioned as appropriate. There are currently significant Health and Safety issues with regard to the Kirriemuir Road Depot Offices where security, ventilation, heating and electrical wiring problems require to be dealt with. The Director of Property Services has been asked to examine the building and report on possible long term solutions.

Safety Audit/Contractor’s Performance

Through the Department’s Quality Assurance system, “non-conformances” are raised when any procedure or working practice is found to have been incorrectly carried out. In particular for Health and Safety matters, non-conformances can be raised relating to the Department’s own work or against the contractor undertaking a project on site. In addition, at the end of a contract, the contractor’s overall performance is assessed and recorded. The number and severity of non-conformances issued to a contractor combined with the overall performance report are considered as part of the review of the Standing List of Contractors.

As a result of internal quality audits carried out during 2001/02, 13 improvement recommendations were raised, with no non-conformances issued. A recent specific safety audit raised further improvement recommendations which have led to a review of procedures where necessary.

With regard to contractors, 14 non-conformances were raised against different contractors for a range of Health and Safety concerns. These were duly closed out following corrective actions by the contractors concerned.

Insurance Claims

The Insurance Section of the Finance Department receive and deal with insurance claims made in respect of damages and/or injuries to third parties as a result of incidents and accidents on the road network where the Council is alleged to have been negligent or in some way responsible. These arise from a variety of problems such as trips, potholes, drainage/flooding and winter weather conditions. In the financial year 2001/02, 109 claims were received (an increase of 16% from the previous year). The increase in the number of claims reflects the national trend for other Scottish authorities and may be attributed to a combination of under-investment in the road network infrastructure and a tendency towards a more litigious society. Notwithstanding the increase in claims the Council takes a number of proactive risk management measures aimed at mitigating such risks and therefore claims. These measures have included an independent audit of the Roads Department's inspection systems, the robustness of which allowed 75% of 2001/02 closed claims to be settled at no cost to the Council.

Training

Staff training in health and safety matters has continued through a variety of training courses including:-

- Risk Assessment
- Managing Safely
- Fire Safety
- Manual Handling
- Construction (Design Management) Regulations 1994
- Code of Practice on Safety at Street Works and Road Works
- Display Screen Equipment

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications as a direct result of this Report. Details and costs of any proposed improvements to the Kirriemuir Road Depot Offices will be the subject of a separate report once the Director of Property Services' recommendations have been brought forward and considered.

5 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications arising from the proposals in this Report.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

There are no environmental issues as a result of this Report.

7 **PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

As stated above the Director of Property Services has been asked to examine the building-related Health and Safety issues at the Kirriemuir Road Depot Offices with a view to recommending long-term solutions. These will be the subject of a separate report in due course.

8 **CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance, the Director of Property Services, the Manager of Personnel Services and the Trade Unions have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

9 **CONCLUSION**

The Roads Department adopts a very pro-active approach to Health and Safety and various monitoring and control procedures are in place to promote continuous improvement.

R W McNeil
DIRECTOR OF ROADS

NOTE:

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

IC/AS
30 October 2002
REPORTS/hasaw

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APPENDIX 2**ANGUS COUNCIL ROADS DEPARTMENT****HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Angus Council Roads Department operates a safety policy within the context of Angus Council's Statement of Health and Safety Policy. (RI/SWP/4/001/002).

These policies have been developed in order to comply with statutory requirements and, in the case of the Roads Department Policy, BS 8800 (1996).

Angus Council Roads Department recognises that Occupational Health and Safety is an integral part of the performance of the Department. For this reason high standards in terms of operational and systems safety have been set to help to ensure a healthy working environment and the safety of all those affected by the Department's activities and services.

Employee co-operation is seen as a vital element in the success of this process.

Departmental commitment to OH&S of employees emanates from the Director and is propagated via the Management Team. Management responsibilities are outlined in Safe Working Practices (RI/SWP/5/001-003).

A Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group has been established to help to ensure a unified and consistent approach to Health and Safety throughout the Department.

Legal requirements such as the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 are seen as being a minimum standard of performance and the philosophy of continuous improvement in accordance with Best Value principles has been adopted.

Roads Department Management is committed to the provision of adequate resources to ensure that this policy is implemented. OH&S objectives are reported to the Roads Committee and published internally in order that Management and staff know what is expected of them.

The Director of Roads is responsible for implementation of these policies and regularly reviews safety matters with the Management Team via the Management Review Procedure (DI/CP/001).

The management of OH&S is seen as being the responsibility of Roads Department Management with ultimate responsibility for OH&S resting with the Chief Executive of Angus Council. Roads Department Management will also ensure that the policy is understood, implemented and maintained at all levels within the Department with active participation by all staff to facilitate involvement and understanding.

This policy applies not only to the premises occupied by the Roads Department but also to the sites of works procured by the Department.

Systems are in place to monitor, audit and periodically review Health and Safety as part of the EN ISO 9000 : 2000 integrated management system implemented within the Roads Department.

An Internal Audit Procedure (SS/CP/017) is used in conjunction with the Integrated Management Software Package, "Q Pulse", and Corrective Action Procedure (SS/CP/008).

Adequate training in relevant OH&S matters will be provided for all staff in the Roads Department based on assessed requirements.

A Training Procedure (SS/CP/012) is used to identify training needs and a training co-ordinator organises relevant courses and maintains records.

SIGNED:

DATE:

Mr R W McNeil
Director of Roads