

ANGUS COUNCIL

CONTRACT SERVICES COMMITTEE - 18 AUGUST 1998

HAND AND ARM VIBRATION SYNDROME

ITEM No. 5

REPORT BY CONTRACT SERVICES MANAGER

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the potential consequence resulting from HAVS (Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome) faced by Angus Council Contract Services and ask Members to approve the course of action being taken to minimise this risk.

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the contents and approve the course of action detailed in this report.

2. BACKGROUND

The issue of HAVS was highlighted to all Chief Officers by the Safety Section in June 1996. Subsequent work has identified Contract Services' employees as being most at risk due to the activities carried out and machinery used, mainly by employees in Ground Maintenance. Cleansing section employees may also be affected, however, the numbers of and potential risk to these employees is lower due to the types of machinery used and activities carried out by this service.

It is understood that other Councils and some private sector companies have recently paid out six figure sums in HAVS compensation to affected employees.

3. CURRENT POSITION

Suppliers of machinery to the Ground Maintenance section of Contract Services have been contacted to obtain vibration acceleration levels for machinery supplied by them. However, vibration levels are not available for all equipment currently held. Using the available information, a listing of machinery has been compiled which details vibration levels produced and period of maximum usage for each item of equipment.

Information has also been sought from Glasgow City Council who is further advanced in the assessment and on-site testing process regarding HAVS. Glasgow City Council has kindly offered details on HAVS, machinery vibration levels and suitability for purpose, for specific items of machinery, produced and held by them.

Training in vibration and noise has taken place for Ground Maintenance employees and this will be extended to Cleansing employees in due course.

The possibility of implementing a pilot scheme, within Contract Services, of health surveillance with regard to HAVS is at present being investigated by Personnel Department, Finance via the Risk Management section, and Contract Services.

4. FURTHER ACTION

Machinery replacement schedules are being prepared taking into account the age, condition, vibration and usage levels. The schedules will be used to prioritise a replacement programme for machinery along with estimated costs of replacement.

Details of the replacement programme will be reported at the October cycle, thus allowing any action required to be approved and taken into account in the budget preparation for future years.

Machinery vibration levels will have to be assessed, detailed and taken into account, prior to the purchase of any new items of machinery, this process will cover all sections of Contract Services. A pilot system was put in place for the purchase of machinery in financial year 1997/98, however this will have to be further developed in the light of experience gained and advice received from Glasgow City Council.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

6. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, Director of Law and Administration, the Director of Finance and the Director of Personnel have been consulted on the contents of this report.

M P Graham
Contract Services Manager
24 July 1998

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 this report.