

SCOTTISH POLICE
AUTHORITY

Meeting	Scottish Police Authority Board Meeting
Date	27 September 2018
Location	Stirling Court Hotel, Stirling
Title of Paper	Health & Safety Report
Reference	B.08.2018/57
Presented By	DCC Fiona Taylor
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	No

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide a strategic overview in relation to Health & Safety within the Scottish Police Authority and Police Scotland.

The Chief Constable and Chair of the SPA have joint responsibility as “duty holders” in many areas and this responsibility is then discharged through the Police Scotland National Health and Safety Board. Matters are currently escalated via Executive Members to the SPA Board.

This paper is presented in line with SPA Governance Framework and is submitted as a standing agenda item.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Health & Safety Team currently comprises a Health & Safety Manager, 8 Safety Advisors and 2 Safety Assistants who are based across the country and operate in support of the command structure within the North, East and West. Team members have references covering all areas of policing including all specialist areas. Decisions in relation to Health & safety are made through a network of local Health & Safety committees within SPA and Police Scotland with national decisions made at the Health & Safety Board which is held quarterly. The team work closely with Wellbeing colleagues.
- 1.2 It is important to note that significant progress has been made in terms of Health & Safety and the organisation has moved from a position where enforcement action was being taken by the Health & Safety Executive in 2016 for our failure to manage the risk of Asbestos in some of our offices to a position where, while we recognise that we have many years of work and a long way to go, we are now providing best practice in a number of key areas across the UK.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 The Health & Safety Manager was appointed in August 2017 and since then a complete review of the Health & Safety Management System has been underway with a new Health & Safety Policy Statement now in place and a revised Health & Safety Policy document currently with SPA officers for review.
- 2.2 A comprehensive 3 Year Action Plan has been developed and approved through the Health & Safety Board and work is underway to progress all action points with updates presented at each meeting. This document has been developed in consultation with Representative Bodies and includes all aspects of the Health & Safety Management System. Over the next year all generic risk assessments and Health & Safety guidance documents will be reviewed and updated by the team.

2.3 FIRE SAFETY

Fire Safety duties under the Fire (Scotland) Act and its associated regulations are a large part of the teams work and is vitally important particularly in terms of our residential sleep risks and custody suites. The Fire Risk Assessments for all our premises are carried out by a specialist team within Mite and then uploaded onto their electronic system for our Safety Advisors to manage with actions going to both local divisions and to Estates colleagues. Fire Risk Assessments are carried out on a 3 year rolling programme as follows.

- Buildings which contain both 'primary' and 'secondary custody' facilities, the Scottish Police College, Nelson Street, Aberdeen any other sleep risks and any which are classed as Houses of Multiple Occupation, will be subject of an annual fire risk assessment;
- Buildings over 3000m² gross internal area are assessed every two years;
- All other buildings every 3 years.

Significant progress has been made by the Estates Team and by Divisions to resolve outstanding actions and this work will continue for some time to come.

2.4 FORMAL INSPECTIONS

The Health & Safety Manager has established a 2 year rolling programme of Formal Inspections to look at every police premise that we currently have in our Estate. These build on the regular 6 monthly inspections from local safety representatives within the offices and are carried out in conjunction with Representative Bodies. Some legacy premises had never had a visit from a Safety Advisor and the introduction of these safety inspections reduces the risk to both Police Scotland and to the SPA. Inspections have already flagged some significant issues allowing immediate action to be taken.

2.5 RIDDOR ACCIDENTS

One of the key performance indicators that we have as an organisation comes from the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) Regulations. RIDDOR injuries

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relate to specific serious accidents or any incident where the injured person is then off work over 7 days. These statistics were previously not available in great detail but last year the new team manually analysed the data to understand how well we were performing in terms of the safety of our officers, staff and members of the public. For the period 2017/18 we had 171 RIDDOR accidents that required to be reported to the Health & Safety Executive. This is very low when you consider that we have in excess of 23,000 officers and staff and the figure also includes injuries to members of the public and custodies.

Not content, the team then looked at the cost to the organisation in straight abstraction which related to 7628 lost days at a cost of £1,365,412 which absolutely demonstrates how important it is to reduce our RIDDOR figures. These figures do not include any further recurring absence or future psychological issues. It is important to note that the vast majority of RIDDOR incidents relate to very minor accidents but where the individual is then off work for over 7 days. This is the first time that a cost has been attributed to Health & Safety.

Following a trial within Greater Glasgow Division the team has been carrying out proactive work across the country with presentations at some shift briefings where Safety Advisors now have enough data to be able to tell officers the most likely ways that they will be injured at work and how the risk can be minimised often through improved use of Dynamic Risk Assessment techniques. This data is monitored on a weekly basis and at the time of writing this report we are 25 RIDDORs down on the same point last year. The 4 most likely types of accident that may happen to an officer within Greater Glasgow Division come from the following activities:

- Carrying out a vehicle stop when the officer is outside their own vehicle.
- Method of entry to premises.
- Making an arrest.
- Carrying out a foot pursuit.

We also know that our stereotypical RIDDOR within Greater Glasgow Division will be a male officer, over 30 years of age, who chases a suspect on foot and slips on the grass resulting in a soft tissue injury. That officer will then remain off work for 7 days making the accident automatically reportable under RIDDOR.

Once we understand the data, then our Safety Advisors can make a real difference.

This is ground-breaking work and we are not aware of any other emergency service who are involved in this long term approach using behavioural safety techniques.

2.6 NOISE AT WORK

In 2016 the Health & Safety Executive requested that Police Scotland give consideration to its obligations under the Noise at Work Regulations and how we as an organisation could reduce the risk to officers and staff working within noisy environments such as football matches, pop concerts, marches, nightclubs, etc. Again, this is work that has never been carried out before within the UK and Police Scotland have now carried out initial assessments and in July trialled active hearing protection at the TRNSMT Festival in Glasgow. These new headsets not only protected the officers hearing from the noise of the music but allowed them to speak to members of the public without removing the hearing protection and allowed them to hear Airwave radio communications.

Further work is now on-going to look at how a smaller, more compact solution can be put in place and trialled for Response Officers to use on a day to day basis. Examples of where noise levels are loud enough to exceed the Health & Safety Executive guidance are nightclubs, road traffic noise, parades, domestic disputes, etc. Other Services are being kept informed of progress via a number of local and UK national meetings.

2.7 COMPLEX SCENES

The Health & Safety Team have also been requested to attend a number of high profile incidents and these have included the Glasgow School of Art Fire, Victoria's Nightclub Fire, recovery of the deceased crew from the FV Nancy Glen and the fatal fire at Cameron House. The team form part of a multi-agency response to serious incidents putting in place a site specific risk assessment and ensuring that our officers and staff have the correct personal protective equipment and know how to use it. We also help to establish a safe system of work and liaise with structural engineers and contractors as required. This has been described as "enabling work" allowing police officers and staff to carry out their tasks safely and easily.

2.8 SAFETY ALERTS

Safety Alerts are now issued in what has become a very familiar and eye catching design via the Intranet. These have been issued on a variety of topics ranging from Cannabis Cultivations through to accessing roadworks on the motorway network and unusual concealed weapons.

2.9 TRAINING

Over the last year the team has completely reviewed all the Health & Safety Training within Police Scotland and new courses are being offered. Going forward we hope to expand on the number of courses offered and also look to provide Safety Advisor inputs into some of the specialist courses offered throughout Police Scotland.

The Health & Safety Team are happy to provide Health & Safety Awareness training to assist new Board Members in understanding the SPA's responsibilities in this area.

2.10 FUTURE CHALLENGES

There are a number of future challenges that we need to address going forward and these include:

- Further work to address issues under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations, extend trials of hearing protection and build a business case for new equipment to allow compliance.
- Issues within some business areas including Road Policing and Fleet where the Health & Safety Team are working hard to further improve the safety continuum from the point that we trial a particular make of vehicle, using a new risk assessment process designed by the Health & Safety Team, through to Divisions own risk assessment based on how they will use it and that assessment then helps to determine levels of driver training and supervision. The new Fleet Risk Assessments have been shared with other Forces across the United Kingdom.
- A review of respiratory protective equipment for use at incidents.
- Further work to enhance the level of personal protective equipment.
- A full review of all generic risk assessments and Health & Safety guidance documents.
- Improve police officer and staff training at all levels.

- Ensuring that all business areas update and review their Health & Safety Risk Assessments.
- Introduction of a Board Health & Safety Champion.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no current financial implications at this time other than the on-going Estates works for Fire Safety.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no current personnel implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are legal implications associated with this paper. Police Scotland requires to be compliant with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Fire (Scotland) Act 2005. Failure to ensure compliance both in terms of our Estates and working practices may lead to enforcement action against SPA/Police Scotland by the Health & Safety Executive and/or the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service. The Health & Safety Executive also charge a “fee for intervention” on an hourly basis should they have to come into the organisation to investigate a breach.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are reputational implications associated with this paper. The potential for enforcement action by the Health & Safety Executive and/or the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service due to unsafe working practices and/or breaches of legislation leaves SPA/Police Scotland exposed to reputational harm. In particular the Health & Safety Executive have the power to issue publicity orders to highlight any breaches found.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no currently no social implications.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 There are no current implications for community impact.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no current implications for equalities.

10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no current implications for environmental impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are requested to note the information contained within this report.