



# Board Paper

22nd September 2016

<b>Paper Title</b>	Wellbeing, Health and Safety Update
<b>Paper Reference:</b>	<b>Paper NRW B B 62.16</b>
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<b>Purpose of Paper:</b>	<b>Information</b>
<b>Recommendation:</b>	To note issues and progress made to date

<p><b>Impact:</b> To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic</p>	<p>How do the proposals in this paper help NRW achieve the Well-Being of Future Generations Act principles in terms of:</p> <p><b>Looking at the <u>long term</u>:</b></p> <p><b>Taking an <u>integrated</u> approach:</b></p> <p><b>Involving a <u>diversity</u> of the population:</b></p> <p><b>Working in a <u>collaborative</u> way:</b></p> <p><b><u>Preventing</u> issues from occurring:</b></p> <p>The NRW Roadmap describes how our success depends on the way we work together to create a better Wales. The roadmap sets out our vision and what we will do to deliver it. Through the work that we do and the way that we do it, NRW will make a positive contribution to improving the wellbeing, health and safety of our staff and customers across Wales. Our values mean that we will be both responsible and accountable for our actions and we will act to keep ourselves and others safe and well.</p>
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## Issue

1. Wellbeing, Health and Safety (WHS) update for the NRW Board.

## Background

2. This briefing paper describes the headline issues and recent developments in relation to wellbeing, health and safety, providing an update, key headline statistics and interpretation plus a brief summary of progress made on specific issues.

## Assessment

**Headline accident and near miss statistics for 2016-17 as of 28<sup>th</sup> August 2016 with 2014-15 and 2015-16 full year figures for comparison.**

	<b>Incidents (2016-17 Year to date)</b>	<b>2015-16 Full Year</b>	<b>2014-15 Full year</b>
RIDDOR – staff <sup>1</sup>	6	12	0
Lost time incidents – staff <sup>1</sup>	2	8	2
Incidents, no lost time - staff	50	96	55
Near miss – staff <sup>2</sup>	105	304	131
Serious incident reviews <sup>3</sup>	4	3	4
Incidents - contractors	2	6	60
Incidents – public <sup>4</sup>	34	60	
Near misses – contractors	28	88	98
Near misses – public	13	76	

- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) incident is a particular type of incident that is required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- A lost time incident (LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work and they have subsequently had time off or been on light duties as a result of their injuries (reportable under RIDDOR if over 7 days). Lost Time starts the first day after the person was injured.
- An incident with no lost time (Non-LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work but only needed minor 1st aid treatment and subsequently have not had any time off work. Non-LTI's include property damage to NRW vehicles and equipment.
- A Near Miss is an unplanned or uncontrolled event that does not cause injury, ill health or damage, but could do so.
- Member of public injuries relate predominantly to mountain bike accidents on our purpose built trails, and slips, trips and falls on walking trails. Trails are risk assessed and routinely inspected periodically and are also inspected following an accident.
- Public near misses are predominately public incursions on to live harvesting sites.

<sup>1</sup>Four additional RIDDOR reportable incidents have been reported since last update. These were all work related occupational diseases from hand arm vibration (HAV) exposure. Three of the diagnosed individuals joined NRW in April 2015 from the Internal Drainage Board, used vibrating tools in their legacy roles and continued to do so in NRW. However this is the first time they have received occupational health surveillance in relation to HAV. The fourth individual is legacy FCW where no previous health surveillance records could be located. Following assessment the individual was also diagnosed with HAV related disease. See more detailed information on our work on HAV in section 4i.

<sup>2</sup>The number of near miss reports for the period of this report are low in comparison to previous years and in relation to the total number of incidents this year to date. We continue to draw this issue to the attention of line managers and staff as we actively focus on improving reporting in the organisation. We have recently run a campaign on why it is good to report health and safety incidents using our intranet, Yammer and infographics posted around our offices. Whilst there was good feedback, directorates need to support these initiatives with their teams. We have training for all line managers in the autumn on reporting and investigating incidents, and support will be provided to the business through further campaigns and engagement.

<sup>3</sup>Two new serious incident reviews commissioned since last report. See more detailed information in section 4iii and 4iv in relation to a railway bridge strike at Queensferry, North Wales and a member of the public incident at Cwmcam, South Wales.

<sup>4</sup> See more detailed information in section 4ii for an update on the serious incident review involving a member of the public at Newborough.

### Sickness absence statistics for 2016/17

3. From 1 April 2016 to date, sickness absence rates are currently at an average of 3.8 days lost per employee equating to 2.6%. The NRW benchmark is no more than an average of 7 days lost per employee equating to 3.1%. The top three absence reason for this period total 53% of all reported sickness absence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 are:

Absence reason	% Overall	Days lost
Mental Health	21%	575
Respiratory System	18%	493
Musculoskeletal System and Connective Tissue	14%	364
<b>Total absence</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2684</b>

4. Absence due to mental health continues to be drawn to the attention of leaders and managers as we focus on improving wellbeing in the organisation. Leaders and managers are actively working on measures to deal with this issue, recognising the uncertainty that exists within NRW in relation to job evaluation, business area reviews, organisational change and VES leavers. In addition initiatives to develop management skills such as the Tyfu management programme will also equip our managers to better deal with such issues.

5. We are continuing to work with the business to improve the quality of our absence data. We have recently removed the ability of Managers to enter Unknown as an absence reason, however, the data still has a large number of blank or unknown absence reasons which we are investigating to ascertain the true nature of the illness. This is important as this year to date, Unknown/blank absence reasons accounts for 289 days which is 10% of all reported absence for this period.

### Wellbeing

6. We have instigated a number of initiatives to support our wellbeing commitment in NRW including:

- The launch of the new framework for Employee Benefits occurred in June 2016. NRW staff are now able to access the following benefits:
  - Salary sacrifice schemes – childcare vouchers and cycle to work
  - Retail and leisure discounts
  - Online benefits platform which brings together all of the products on the framework effectively as a “one stop shop”.

By early August nearly 60% staff had activated their membership cards with many thousands of views of the online benefits platform.

- The 100 days of Kindness campaign started running from 27th June and lasts until the 11th November 2016. The campaign is an informal opportunity for individuals to take small steps to make their workplace more inclusive, with individuals carrying out one act of kindness a day to support this. This gives all involved a sense of

togetherness and in turn, creates a more inclusive working environment. Suggested examples include making a coffee for a colleague who may be under pressure; asking “how are you today” and actually listening and responding; opening a door for someone and smiling at them as you do so.

- We continue to publicise wellbeing campaigns on Yammer and WH&S Managers Monthly such as Men’s Health week 13-19 June, monthly newsletters from our Employee Advisor Provider; Cycle Solutions Roadshows.

## 7. Headline Developments

- Update on Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)** – we are continuing to address the issues identified in the Notice of Contravention from the HSE and actions have been assigned through the risk assessment action plan to relevant managers. Further work by the Task and Finish Group is ongoing, including the trial of a vibration meter which measures the exposure of an individual user. We provided HSE with an update of our actions to date. Whilst their response was favourable, they reminded us that should our monitoring establish that we have many staff regularly exposed to vibration above the action value then we may need to do further work to reduce exposure as low as reasonably practicable and not just below the limit value. We will undertake an initial audit of exposure monitoring in October forms to establish whether we need to reduce exposure further once a reasonable amount of data has been gathered by teams.

However our legacy records of occupational health surveillance have been found to be insufficient to demonstrate legal compliance, so we have undertaken an exercise to identify users across NRW who work with vibrating tools across NRW. They have been provided with an initial surveillance questionnaire to complete so they can be fully re-assessed. This has also included staff transferred into NRW from the Internal Drainage Board (IDB). As a result of this exercise, a further four RIDDORs have been reported to HSE for hand arm vibration related occupational disease. At this time we have further staff that are still awaiting an occupational health assessment, so cannot rule out that all historic cases have been identified. Although we may have more individuals who are diagnosed with HAV related occupational disease as a result of our surveillance, this work will benefit staff where previous management of this risk was insufficient in some of our legacy bodies. We need to ensure that all managers who manage staff who are exposed to vibration comply with our policy, procedure and risk assessment and that we look to reduce exposure to as low as we can. It is imperative that relevant line managers are aware of what they need to do to manage this risk and the priority this requires to complete the action plan. We need to be able to demonstrate that we have reduced exposure to vibration to as low as reasonably practicable, which may need to include changing work practices by reducing or stopping work using vibrating tools for alternative ways of working.

We continue to be vulnerable in this area if the HSE decide to re-investigate at this stage. We have contacted HSE to explain the further reports and that there maybe more. Their initial response is that they may not investigate further at this stage, but will review the latest RIDDOR reports before coming to a decision.

- Update on serious incident review of member of the public injury at Ynys Llanddwyn, Newborough Warren** - The dunes and beach in this area are part of

a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) as well as being a popular recreational area. A member of the public was injured after falling from their bike on a trail. A temporary barrier had been put in place to prevent ponies used to manage grazing on the SSSI escaping the site which has previously led to complaints. The investigation is ongoing, however initial findings indicate that the official designation of the trail is unclear, signage may have been removed through vandalism, the temporary barrier was poorly marked and there were no signs to direct the public to avoid the cattle grid.

- iii. **Serious incident review of railway bridge strike at Queensferry** - On 13 July, the arm of a 7.5 tonne excavator being transported on the back of a wagon struck the underside of the A494 railway bridge. The excavator had been transported along this route previously with no issue, however on this occasion it would seem the excavator had been loaded in a different configuration. There were no third party injuries or damage, however the hydraulic system on the arm of the excavator was damaged resulting in a loss of hydraulic oil but no pollution incident was caused. Network Rail and North Wales Police were informed of the incident promptly and no further action is being taken against NRW. A serious incident review was undertaken which found an issue with the measurement of the load height and the decision to transport the excavator as loaded in the knowledge of height limitations on route. The need for a formal procedure for loading equipment of certain heights with the appropriate safety margins was also identified. A separate management investigation is being undertaken to explore the decision making process and actions of the driver
- iv. **Serious incident review of member of the public near miss at Cwmcarn** – NRW were notified by visitor centre staff at Cwmcarn that a mountain bike rider had reported a near miss when a tree fell approximately 20ft in front of him whilst riding on the trail. Immediate enquiries by Caerphilly County Borough Council visitor centre staff found that harvesting contractors had begun tree felling adjacent to one of the mountain bike trails whilst the trail was open to the public. A serious incident review has been commissioned.
- v. **Update on Abercynon fatality** – The inquest into the death of tree felling contractor Geraint Evans was heard on 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016. A verdict of accidental death was recorded. We now await the conclusion of the ongoing HSE investigation.

### **Recommendations**

8. Note issues and progress made to date.

### **Key risks**

9. Ongoing WHS risks identified and monitored through updated WHS risk register. No additional risks foreseen.

### **Financial Implications**

10. None foreseen. Investment in learning and development requirements for NRW included within 16/17 training budget.

### **Equality impact assessment (EqIA)**

11. Not undertaken for this briefing paper.