

HSE SAFETY CORNERSTONES

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In order to strengthen Great Britain's already exemplary health and safety record, the HSE is introducing six key themes for its five-year plan.

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The most successful method of developing a health and safety scheme involves consulting with your employees.

Recent HSE News and Prosecutions

Read about an oil and gas production company that received a record-breaking fine, the HSE's new Facebook channel and a manufacturer that ignored the daily risks its employees were exposed to.

Helping Great Britain Work Well in 2016

Through comprehensive initiatives and tireless work, Great Britain has been able to establish one of the leading health and safety records in the world. This is reflective of its robust health and safety legislation and management. Health and safety, when paired with rigorous risk management, helps strongly contribute to the financial success of Great Britain through increased production, inspired innovation and growth. But, our work is not done—last year, work-related injuries and newly diagnosed illnesses caused by poor working conditions cost the British economy £14.3 billion.

The challenge now is to improve health and safety even further. To do that, the HSE recently introduced its five-year strategy. The strategy is composed of six key themes, and each theme represents an area of health and safety in which every Briton can contribute to keep health and safety evolving and improving:

1. **Acting together:** Promotes broader ownership of health and safety practices in order to emphasise that it is the responsibility of each industry, business and citizen of Great Britain to embody these principles
2. **Tackling ill health:** Highlights the effects of work-related ill health, which can impact Britons across all industries, and effectively addresses those issues through the implementation of safe practices
3. **Managing risk well:** Simplifies risk management schemes in order to help businesses grow more effectively and safely
4. **Supporting small employers:** Provides small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with advice to help them understand what compliance tasks they must accomplish in order for them to grow their businesses
5. **Keeping pace with change:** Anticipates potential emerging health and safety challenges, and implements comprehensive strategies in order to effectively address them
6. **Sharing our success:** Promotes the benefits of Great Britain's world-class health and safety system

At this time, the HSE has yet to release specific details on how each theme will effectively achieve its objectives. However, the intention of the strategy is quite clear: to remove any present or potential barriers for establishing comprehensive, accessible health and safety programmes for Great Britain, and to send the message that everyone has a part to play when it comes to improving health and safety.

For more information on Great Britain's health and safety record, as well as the HSE's six themes, visit, www.hse.gov.uk/strategy.



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Involving Staff in Health and Safety

Regardless of the industry, there are always inherent workplace risks. When left unidentified or inadequately addressed, these risks can cause potentially serious and long-term damage—both to your organisation and to your employees. A common strategy to mitigate these risks is to establish a comprehensive, company-wide health and safety risk management plan. And, the most beneficial approach to developing a successful plan is through employee involvement.

Research conducted by the HSE has shown that when employees are consulted during health and safety planning sessions, there are fewer work-related injuries and productivity and motivation is improved. However, the process is not as simple as just asking your employees to fill in a questionnaire. Instead, it should be structured around a collaborative consultation session. This consultation should be built upon the following five principles:

1. **Talk:** Ask your employees to discuss what issues and risks they regularly encounter.
2. **Listen:** Engage in the discussion, and record the issues and risks that are mentioned.
3. **Seek and learn:** Investigate your employees' claims.
4. **Share:** Discuss what steps can be taken to address the concerns that your employees raised.
5. **Consider:** Request feedback about the proposed safety steps, and ask if your employees have additional suggestions.

Through this collaborative method, your company can develop a bespoke health and safety risk management plan while also educating your employees on the potential hazards. For the most effective results, at a minimum, your company should conduct these consultations annually.



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NEWS AND PROSECUTIONS

Total E&P Ltd fined a record amount after massive gas leak

Total E&P Ltd, an oil and gas production company, was fined a record £1.125 million after it admitted to failures which led to the largest recorded release of gas from the Elgin Offshore platform, 150 miles east of Aberdeen.

While the company had initiated a 'well kill' operation after identifying high pressure gas leaks which were the result of casing failures, the company failed to identify and implement sufficient control measures.

Upon completing its investigation, the HSE stated that the incident was foreseeable and preventable. As such, the incident should act as an industry-wide lesson of the importance of rigorous and vigilant risk management.

Construction firm fined for putting more than 100 lives at risk

RGB (Plastering and Construction) Limited was fined £8,000 and ordered to pay £6,130 in costs after admitting to numerous safety failings. The company had been hired to carry out construction work on an eight-storey office block in order to turn it into flats. However, it was discovered that more than one-third of the construction workers were sleeping at the worksite. In addition, the company had failed to implement proper fire safety precautions. The HSE commented that the company's failings highlighted the importance of ensuring that any company or individual hired to complete a job is properly qualified and knowledgeable.

HSE launches Facebook channel

Recently, the HSE launched its own Facebook channel. Visitors to the channel can find valuable information on current and forthcoming health and safety initiatives, up-to-date guidance on safe work practices, and news stories that highlight the health and financial consequences of ignoring safe work practices and relevant legislation.

Manufacturer fined after failings caused HAVS in 21 workers

Linde Heavy Truck Division Ltd was fined £50,000 and ordered to pay £14,793.60 in costs after 21 employees were diagnosed with hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS). Despite establishing HAVS safety measures in 2011, the damage had already been done before that. In its investigation, the HSE found that the company had completely failed to identify the risks, such as HAVS, that its employees could be exposed to on a daily basis.