WORK POSITIVE

prioritising organisational stress

BACKGROUND

The Work Positive Stress Risk Assessment is a 68 item questionnaire. As well as incorporating the 35 items from the HSE Indicator tool (developed as part of the HSE Management Standards for Work-related Stress), it includes a wider range of issues and an open ended question to record any issues not covered in the questionnaire and provides some qualitative information.

The questionnaire is intended as a means of consulting with staff on the potential causes of stress at work. There are many different ways of distributing and collecting the questionnaire and encouraging a good response rate (see the Work Positive Pack or Website for more details).

You are invited to categorise your staff in up to two ways. This allows you to break down the results to identify any 'hot spots' and target your resources effectively. For example, you may choose two of the following categories:

Role (with subcategories Operator, Team leader, Manager)
Location (with subcategories Site A, Site B, Site C)
Department (with subcategories Customer Service, Human Resources, Finance, Marketing, Facilities)

It is recommended that you do not use groups of less than 10 employees in order to protect their anonymity.

You must make sure that the instructions to staff are very clear. A template for a covering letter to accompany the questionnaire is in the pack and on the website.

The Analysis Tool allows you to input the responses to the questionnaire into an Excel file. This provides meaningful information on which to base your evaluation of the risks.

THE WORK POSITIVE ANALYSIS TOOL - GETTING STARTED

When you open the file you will see the following tabs on the bottom of the Excel screen:

- Instructions and help
- Categories
- Input
- Summary of results
- Subtotals
- Graphs
- Graphs (B&W)
- Open
- Raw data

Before inputting the questionnaires you must input the categories of staff (if categories are being used). Click on the Categories tab and input the subcategories for your chosen categories.

You can now commence to the input tab and begin to input the responses to your questionnaires.

ANALYSING THE RESULTS

Summary of results

The scores for the 35 questions from the HSE Indicator Tool (the first 35 questions on the Work Positive questionnaire) provide feedback on your performance against the HSE Standards. A lower score indicates poor performance, or a potential problem area. The scores range from 1 to 5. The information is presented in the form of average scores and charts provide:

- Your score on each of the six Management Standards, colour coded to highlight potential problem areas
- A suggested interim target in each of the six areas, based on where you are now
- A suggested longer-term target based on the scores of the top 20% of respondents in a nation wide survey to determine how organisations are performing in terms of managing work related stress.

These figures are being used as a benchmark to enable HSE to monitor improvements in stress management. The aim is to get more workers and organisations to where the top 20% are now (2004).

You may find that a relatively high score in your 'role' results is prioritised as 'needing clear improvement' or 'needing urgent action' and similarly a relatively low score on 'demands' results in a lower prioritisation. The reason for this is that the results are weighted in line with the national data. Nationally, scores for 'demand' are lower than those for 'role'. Therefore the same scores on different Standards do not always result in the same prioritisation as the aim is to bring you up to the scores of the top 20% of respondents in the national survey on each of the Standards.

Subtotals

The subtotals provide you with the total number of responses for each response option on each question, and the percentage of responses for each of the response options for each question. This information is very useful if you are providing feedback to staff as you can quickly pull out the percentages of staff that responded to each question, e.g:

I have to work very intensively
- 43% Often, 17% Always

My work area is well designed for the job
- 40% Disagree, 13% Strongly Disagree

Graphs

It is important to look at the responses to each question as well as the Summary of Results as there may be a high risk response to a certain question that is lost when calculating the average for the Standard (group of questions). By looking at the graphs you can quickly identify the high risk areas.

Open Question
This tab allows you to review the responses provided to the open ended questions and identify if there are themes in the responses. This can help with prioritising the risks as well as adding meaning to the data

Prioritising issues
For example, if a large number of respondents report having unachievable deadlines in the closed questions and then report 'pressure to meet deadlines' as an issue in the open ended questions then this indicates that this is a higher priority than another issue that has been identified as high risk from the closed questions but not reported in the open ended questions.

Interpreting data
The open question can also help add meaning to an issue. For example, if respondents report that they are concerned about their safety at work and then there are numerous reports in the open ended questions about 'fear of being attacked when working in the community' then you can take this information to staff to provide a starting point for discussions.

Raw Data
This tab provides all the raw data from the questionnaires and gives instructions for how to filter out data by category so that you can create a separate file for each sub-category of staff.

ACTION PLANNING

Select the hazards that are most commonly reported by staff across the whole organisation and those that are most commonly reported by specific staff groups (if categories of staff have been used). Try to prioritise the risks and document them on an Action Plan, a template is provided to assist you. The Action Plan should be a **working document** that is regularly reviewed to assess improvement.