Aiming for Zero Road Worker Safety

Further information

Monday 11 June 2012

The Highways Agency set out a bold vision in the Strategic Plan, to be the world's leading road operator. A leading operator is a safe operator and with Aiming for Zero we have set out a similarly bold vision for the health and safety of our workforce.

The rationale for this is clear. Every year a small number of people suffer serious injury or die while working on the Strategic Road Network. This is totally unacceptable and we must do more to protect our workers.

Aiming for Zero is our response. It sets an unambiguous goal for our health and safety performance, confirms the Agency's leadership role in the industry and brings together health and safety work across the whole business.

To deliver this vision, the Aiming for Zero overarching strategy was published in April 2010.

http://www.highways.gov.uk/aboutus/27625.aspx

There are four AfZ work streams:
- road worker safety;
- construction and maintenance safety;
- traffic officer safety; and
- office-based staff safety.

We have published individual strategies and action plans for each of these four work streams, to improve health and safety for all employees working directly for, or on behalf of, the Agency. Aiming for Zero is not about discrete groups, however, and we cannot deliver it alone. We need all of our people, both within the Agency and our supply chain, to work together and take action across the business.

That means taking practical steps to drive forward our Aiming for Zero action plans. It also means showing health and safety leadership in everything we do - challenging unsafe activities, reporting accidents and all near misses, and proactively integrating health and safety into all of our projects.

In August 2010, the Highways Agency established a new Aiming for Zero Governance Structure:

- **Health & Safety Group**
  - Chair & SRO: Ginny Clarke
  - **AfZ Programme Board**
    - Programme Manager: Paul Mitchell
  - **National Health & Safety Team**
    - **Construction & Maintenance Safety Programme Team**
    - **Road Worker Safety Programme Team**
    - **Traffic Officer Safety Programme Team**
    - **Office-Based Staff Safety Programme Team**
4. The Aiming for Zero Programme Board.

During the past 18 months, the AfZ Strategies were published for Construction and Maintenance Safety, Traffic Officer Safety and Office Based Staff Safety.

The purpose of the AfZ Programme Board, which meets quarterly, is to:

- ensure that a balanced and collaborative approach to implementing the AfZ vision is achieved consistently throughout all parts of the HA.
- ensure that health and safety risks for all employees are significantly reduced.

AfZ Programme Board members are accountable to the Health and Safety Group, i.e. the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), for the successful realisation of AfZ Programme outcomes.
5. The Road Worker Safety Project Themes.

We have four project themes, with each theme containing research projects and other work streams.

1. Continual review of working practices to reduce risks to road workers.
2. Reducing speed and improving compliance through road works.
3. Improving driver behaviour through road works.
4. Improving communication of road worker safety initiatives.
Theme 1: Continual review of working practices to reduce risks to road workers.

This theme comprises projects to:

(i) investigate the suitability of innovative working practices. For example:

(a) investigate whether the number of temporary traffic management signs could be reduced for specified situations, in order to reduce the need for road workers to cross a live carriageway;

(b) investigate whether the number of cones could be reduced for specified situations, in order to reduce the need for road workers to cross a live carriageway; and

(ii) investigate whether maintenance and operations guidance documents could be enhanced to reduce the risks to road workers whilst working close to live traffic.

Some of these projects include "on road trials".
Theme 2: Reducing speed and improving compliance through road works.

This theme comprises projects to:

(i) investigate different speed restriction methods to reduce the speed of vehicles through road works;

(ii) improve compliance with speed restrictions at road works; and

(iii) investigate Red X (on gantry signals) and hard shoulder non-compliance issues.

Some of these projects include “on road trials”.

Theme 3: Improving driver behaviour through road works.

This theme comprises projects to:

(i) educate drivers with the aim of significantly improving driver behaviour, especially at road works, to encourage road users to drive within the speed limit and to comply with Red X signals when displayed;

(ii) educate professionals within the HA and the supply chain, to better understand the need to significantly reduce risks to road workers, by changing working practices and

(iii) educate professionals within Other Government Departments and Agencies and the roads industry, to better understand the need to significantly reduce risks to road workers, by a change in Government priorities and by improved training and education for drivers.
Theme 4: Improving communication of road worker safety initiatives.

This theme is concerned with internal and external communications to HA staff, supply chain staff and other external stakeholders, so that they are aware of the latest developments in road worker safety initiatives.

National Highways Sector Schemes are bespoke integrated management schemes within an ISO 9001:2000 framework. They have been developed in partnership with all sides of the highways industry to interpret the international quality management standard as it applies to a particular activity or industry within the United Kingdom.

http://www.highways.gov.uk/business/10385.aspx

Sector Schemes for Quality Management in Highway Works can be downloaded from the UKAS web site:

http://www.ukas.com/Technical-Information/Publications-and-Tech-Articles/Publications/PubsForCBAccred.asp

For example: NHSS 12A / 12B Static temporary traffic management on motorways and high speed dual carriageways including on-line widening schemes.

The Traffic Signs Manual gives guidance on the use of traffic signs and road markings prescribed by the Traffic Signs Regulations and covers England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/traffic-signs-manual/

Chapter 8 (part 1) Road works and temporary situations – design.
Guidance for the design of temporary traffic management arrangements which should be implemented to facilitate maintenance activities or in response to temporary situations.

Chapter 8 (part 2) Road works and temporary situations – operations.
Guidance for planning, managing, and participating in operations to implement, maintain and remove temporary traffic management arrangements.