

Transforming the culture of workplace health and safety

adidas

The Dawn Group

Diageo Runcorn Packaging

Linklaters

Wylfa Power Station (Magnex North)

About the British Safety Council

The British Safety Council is one of the world's leading health and safety organisations. Our mission is to support a healthier, safer and more sustainable society. Our range of charitable initiatives, such as free health and safety qualifications for school children both in the UK and overseas, is supported by a broad mix of commercial activities centred on membership, training, auditing and qualifications.

The British Safety Council is the only organisation to offer the fullest suite of health and safety qualifications, including the NEBOSH National General Certificate and IOSH, IIRSM and IEMA accredited diploma courses.



Transforming the culture of workplace health and safety

Featuring: adidas, Dawn Group,
Diageo Runcorn Packaging, Linklaters
and Wylfa Power Station (Magnox North)

A report by Howard Fidderman on behalf of the British Safety Council
April 2010

This is the first of a series of reports commissioned by the British Safety Council examining prominent health and safety issues facing organisations today. This first report highlights successful and innovative approaches to health and safety engagement from leaders in the industry.

About the author

Howard Fidderman is a freelance editor, journalist and researcher. Since 1992, he has edited and written for *Health and Safety Bulletin*. During that time, he also devised and wrote *Eurosafety* magazine. In the past four years, Howard has completed major projects for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents on worker participation in non-unionised companies in Scotland, health and safety assistance for small firms, pre-qualification schemes, sectoral help for small firms, and on helping organisations report publicly on their health and safety performance. Other work includes a 2006 UK research report for the European Chemical Industry Council's EU-wide study on managing chemical risks in small workplaces.

Previously Howard worked for six years as political adviser to Gavin Strang MP and Jo Richardson MP, the then Labour party spokespersons on health and safety and equal opportunities, and for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's *Sanity* magazine, where he ran the news and arts review sections. He is the co-author of *Fit for the job: health, safety and disability at work*; and editor of *Sick building syndrome: the invisible burden on office workers* and *Using personal computers to manage safety*. His other publications include an Institute of Directors' book on health and wellbeing. He has had first-hand experience of worker involvement as a National Union of Journalists lay official and safety representative.

Contents



Foreword
page 06



Introduction: Learning from others
page 07



adidas
page 10



The Dawn Group
page 15



Diageo Runcorn Packaging
page 20



Linklaters
page 25



Wylfa Power Station (Magnox North)
page 30

Foreword

“The British Safety Council’s charitable mission is to support a healthier, safer and more sustainable society. One of our strengths is our knowledge and expertise concerning the management of workplace health and safety risks built up over the 50 years we have been in existence.”

The British Safety Council is proud to publish this report by Howard Fidderman on our behalf in which the innovative and successful approaches to health and safety engagement adopted and practised by five of our leading members are featured. We thank all five organisations: adidas, Dawn Group, Diageo Runcorn Packaging, Linklaters and Wylfa Power Station (Magnex North), all of whom are Sword of Honour winners, for their participation and their willingness to share publicly their respective approaches to leadership, workforce involvement and culture more broadly – the ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘to what effect’.



This will be the first in a regular series of reports in which the British Safety Council will share with its members and wider stakeholder community the evidence on how best to meet the major health and safety challenges that we face.

The British Safety Council’s charitable mission is to support a healthier, safer and more sustainable society. One of our strengths is our knowledge and expertise concerning the management of workplace health and safety risks built up over the 50 years we have been in existence. Another strength is our membership – more than 8,000 small, medium and large organisations operating in all sectors across the globe. It is from our membership that we draw much of the knowledge and expertise that shapes and influences our advisory, audit and training services.

The British Safety Council has a proven track record of working with our member organisations and other stakeholders to promote director

leadership, encourage workforce involvement and help develop the competence necessary to ensure the risk of injury or ill health in the workplace is effectively mitigated.

Leadership, worker involvement and competence are three of the essential components of the Health and Safety Executive’s strategy, *The health and safety of Great Britain*. We have, consistently, played our part in shaping and delivering the knowledge and competence necessary to build a culture in workplaces where leadership, workforce involvement and competence live and breathe.

We hope you find this report informative, helpful and a source of inspiration. Above all we are keen to work with you to identify and publicise your exemplary practices. So do share your knowledge and experience with us so that we can share it more widely with our member organisations and others who are key to achieving good health and safety in the UK and across the globe.

Julie Nerney
Chief Executive, British Safety Council

2

Introduction: Learning from others

Launching a new strategy in 2009 for improving the health and safety of Britain, the HSE asked stakeholders to “be part of the solution”. As part of its contribution to the solution, this British Safety Council report looks at how five of its member companies and their workforces have benefited from exemplary safety cultures that demonstrate enlightened and innovative engagement at all organisational levels. The aim of this report is to share some of what the companies have achieved in practice, not to provide an academic review of safety culture.

The five organisations were chosen from among the 40 that achieved a British Safety Council Sword of Honour in 2009. As such, all 40 will have excellent safety management systems and be in the vanguard of health and safety practice. The five selected for this report represent a mixture of company sizes and sectors and include unionised and non-unionised sites. Above all, they show how employers and workforces have gone beyond policies and procedures to encourage strong leadership and worker involvement – two of the HSE strategy’s 10 goals – and a commitment to continuous improvement. All five companies are unequivocal that the engagement of their directors, managers, workers and contractors has resulted in significant and cost-effective qualitative and quantitative benefits.

Introducing the five organisations

At the Area North headquarters of sports equipment firm **adidas**, an imaginative approach to health and fitness has engaged managers and workers alike – to a point where adidas believes there is “compelling” evidence that interventions by its wellness centre have helped halve its sickness rate, saving 700 staff days a year. The workforce’s expectations are now so ingrained that when adidas



moved the warehouse off site and 12 miles up the road, the culture travelled with it.

As a major construction company, the **Dawn Group** has trained and involved its subcontractors’ workforces in health and safety, as well as all of its own managers, and believes that the results have enhanced both its corporate image and

competitiveness. At the same time, the contractors have suggested improvements of their own, and injury and absence rates have decreased while staff morale and empowerment have improved.

The safety culture at **Diageo Runcorn Packaging**, which processes and packages alcoholic drinks such as Guinness, shows the benefits of a head office initiative to persuade its managers to lead on health and safety. At the same time, the site's engaged and unionised workforce has suggested significant safety improvements that have been taken up by other parts of the group. The site's injury rate has halved over the past five years.

Global law firm **Linklaters** has focused on keeping its fee-earners fit, healthy and productive through a rolling programme of health and wellbeing initiatives. The firm has also comprehensively engaged its support staff and contractors, and has enjoyed significant improvements in the early reporting of ill-health symptoms, requests for preventative interventions and in sickness absence, saving an average of a day a year per employee.

Everything at Magnox North's **Wylfa Power Station** is governed by a procedure or regulation, which necessitates constant innovations among managers and the workforce to keep engagement fresh. The investment has more than paid off in a 10-year journey that has taken the station from "minutes from meltdown" headlines to a safety culture rated by the World Association for Nuclear Operators as the best it has seen.

Open minds

The five companies featured in this report adopt all-embracing approaches to health, safety and wellbeing, both in terms of the issues they address and the personnel they involve. The scope is holistic and imaginative, and can stretch to sensible drinking at Christmas time, sports injuries, safe cycling, and first aid and fire safety in the home. There is significant cooperation – often on specific initiatives – between the health and safety team and one or more of the facilities', occupational health, security, catering and HR departments, as well as with the employees and, in most cases, their representatives. The breadth of the approach is reflected in the varied backgrounds of those responsible for health and safety at the companies – two facilities managers, one soldier, one technologist and one HSE inspector – which appears to allow the personnel to take a strategic view of the business.

“The five companies featured in this report adopt all-embracing approaches to health, safety and wellbeing, both in terms of the issues they address and the personnel they involve.”



The approach has a double benefit: the advanced state of the companies' safety culture means that non-occupational injuries and general ill-health conditions may, in some instances, represent a more significant risk to the business than traditional workplace accidents. At the same time, health and wellbeing issues provide a hook for engaging all levels of staff, which also offers health and safety managers a Trojan Horse for imparting messages about more traditional workplace safety – this can be particularly important in helping avoid complacency where safety management systems are embedded and injury and incident levels are low.

The engagement extends beyond direct employees to the staff of contractors – particularly those that are resident or long-term. Some involve the contractors' staff in their various site initiatives as a matter of course; one of the five even pays for two contractors a year to undergo the British Safety Council's Five Star Audit. Most will have contractors on their safety committees, which allows the host to extend its safety culture and also to learn from the contractors.

Visible leadership

All but one of the organisations have put all their directors or equivalent through some kind of health and safety training, and all say the directors "lead" in one way or another. All cite this backing as important, although what is usually decisive is whether this commitment is reflected in the behaviour of directors and senior managers, and

then communicated to the workforce. At least two of the organisations were surprised to discover their staff were not as convinced of the commitment of their senior managers as the health and safety teams thought they should be. The problem was that the staff could not see the commitment, not that the commitment was not there. But, as one health and safety manager notes, the perception is the perceiver's reality.

In short, directors and senior managers must both lead, and be seen to lead – through words and actions. The five companies are brimming with ideas on visible leadership: in some, the MD or equivalent will address the whole of the workforce on health and safety issues, either regularly or when necessary; sometimes this will involve shutting down production, which demonstrates the importance the organisation gives to health and safety and focuses the mind of the audience. Another expects all managers to sign up to a series of commitments.

Empowered employees

Two of the companies have union-appointed safety representatives; two have representatives of employees' safety (RESs); and while the fifth has neither, this is because most of its staff are managers who, in any case, meet with representatives of their contractors on site. What was striking was that, unionised or non-unionised, the representatives were heavily engaged, with RESs carrying out many functions traditionally the domain of unionised safety representatives, including workplace inspections and investigations.

The health and safety managers claim to want "strong-willed" representatives and also value the importance of "informal opinion makers". In general, the companies accept that the greater the training and empowerment of the representatives, the greater the benefits for the organisation. This is, obviously, in part because the health and safety relationships are, in principle and in practice, cooperative. Few RESs, however, have had the extent of training that the two-stage TUC health and safety course for representatives affords.

The shopfloor workers are engaged too, often reporting large numbers of "issues" or incidents. All the participants emphasise that the key here is that the workforce must be able to see that a "no-blame culture" is operational over time and that reporting of incidents results in improvements. At the same

time, workers are expected to take personal responsibility, whether it is for a healthy lifestyle or for checking that managers have closed the issues they have raised. Some, but not all, of the companies also operate formal behavioural safety systems.

Please "steal with pride"

The experiences of the five companies also indicate:

- it takes time, effort and patience to introduce a successful health and safety culture – there is no magic bullet;
- as a safety culture becomes embedded, the importance of keeping it fresh and avoiding complacency becomes ever more important;
- it is often a case of "horses for courses" – different messages and approaches will often be needed for different layers of the organisation;
- it is important to tailor the message to the situation and the workforce;
- line managers can sometimes be the hardest group to convince;
- all have an "open-door" policy, although the channels of engagement are such that they rarely need to be used;
- it is important that the company provides feedback to a worker who has reported a problem or made a suggestion;
- all rate the British Safety Council's Five Star Audit and Sword of Honour as valuable processes and awards that also bring buy-in at a senior level;
- although the recession has brought uncertainty and, in some instances, reduced order books, it has also afforded opportunities to show the value of a health and safety culture to the business, to work with contractors to improve standards and to show commitment to the staff;
- engagement can, and should, be enjoyable, with competitions, dramatic re-enactments and even safety bingo on offer; and
- the best organisations are eager to share and to learn from the experiences of others. To paraphrase one of our five participants: please "steal with pride".

3

adidas

Sector: **retail distribution**

Business: **manufacturer of sporting shoes, clothing and equipment**

Location: **Stockport and Trafford, Lancashire**

Employees: **450**

Ownership: **adidas AG, based in Germany**

“To deliver five-star standards, it is not just about policies and procedures,” says adidas’s head of health and safety and facilities for its Area North region, Barry O’Connor. “It is about engaging staff and demonstrating how senior management drives the health, safety and wellbeing culture.” At adidas, this has involved the “whole package”, notably an enlightened approach to health and fitness and workforce participation.

adidas’s Hazel Grove site near Stockport is the headquarters for Area North, which covers the UK, Ireland, Holland and Belgium. The site, for which the British Safety Council awarded its Sword of Honour, includes administrative and showroom facilities, as well as a wellness centre; the distribution centre moved two years ago to nearby Trafford Park.

The health and safety team includes Barry O’Connor and a health and safety coordinator, Maureen Rowland, supported by a fire safety consultant and other members of the facilities team.

The wellness centre

Wellness International has operated and managed a wellness centre at adidas for the past 15 years. The services offered to the adidas staff, at no cost to them, include: a lifestyle centre, including a gym; Know Your Numbers; lifestyle coaching; stress coaching; exercise stress testing; resting electrocardiograms (ECGs); medical support, including an onsite doctor; and sport-specific



training and coaching. As the pioneer of corporate health within adidas, the wellness centre has been instrumental in demonstrating to employees that adidas is committed to their health and wellbeing and, as such, the centre has been vital in spreading the health, safety and wellbeing culture through all levels of the workforce.

At least 90% of the adidas employees on site now know their “numbers” for blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index and their resulting cardiac risk score, to name but a few: following their test, they are given targets and dietary advice, a training plan and a personal trainer, and other medical advice or referrals as may be necessary. During the 18 months until the middle of 2009, of 111 employees examined by the doctor at Wellness International, 58% were suffering from

musculoskeletal problems – none of which was work related. Barry O'Connor concluded that such injuries were a significant risk to the business and now works closely with Wellness International to ensure appropriate training and monitoring as well as early diagnosis and physiotherapy referrals.

Barry O'Connor describes as "compelling" the evidence that Wellness International's interventions have reduced absence rates significantly. The average number of days lost from sickness and injury in 2008 was 4.95 per employee, against a retail marketing sector average of 8.5. The average fell to 2.63 in 2009, which amounts to 700 fewer days lost. Altogether, 297 staff went through the wellness programmes in 2008/09 compared with 82 the previous year. Although more difficult to quantify, adidas believes that fitter people are "mentally much tougher" and far more productive.

There are two crucial advantages in Wellness International being a private company and not part of adidas: it affords impartiality and confidentiality to employees; and it also requires the centre to demonstrate to adidas that it is meeting its targets and constantly evolving. The wellness centre service is fully integrated into the company's health, safety and wellbeing agenda. It participates in initiatives with the health and safety team, ranging from healthy menu options and healthy food preparation with the contracted caterers, through blood donation drives, to testicular and breast cancer awareness campaigns.

The success of the wellness centre is emblematic of an adidas mantra, "Impossible is nothing". This meant that the centre had to be operational from day one of the new Trafford Park warehouse. The centre now also tours each year to two sites in Belgium and Holland, where 60 staff can discover their "numbers" and receive the same advice as the Stockport workers, albeit that the small workforce totals necessitate a contribution to a gym membership rather than a Stockport-style "lifestyle centre".

Meet the directors

The wellness centre may be the showpiece, but there is genuine engagement on health and safety issues throughout the organisation. After a 2008 British Safety Council audit recommended senior managers needed clearer health and safety objectives, the British Safety Council delivered a

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tailored one-day course on directors' responsibilities and how to develop a safety culture that, says Barry O'Connor, was an eye opener. All the Area North board members attended, and a director now carries out a monthly health and safety tour. In 2009 it was a question from the Area North managing director, Gil Steyaert, which led to Barry O'Connor entering for a Sword of Honour. The board, says Barry O'Connor, "provides me with the support, resources, responsibility and freedom to do my job".

Health and safety is now the first item discussed at the monthly board meetings. A named director reports to the board and carries out a monthly site inspection. The MD also chairs a three-monthly address to the workforce at Stockport, at which staff may raise issues on any topic, including health and safety. One of these meetings was used to reinforce the "wellness message", including a speech from a 52-year-old employee whose life had, literally, been saved by the centre: having detected raised blood pressure in 2003, the centre ran a resting and stress electrocardiogram that found significant health issues with the worker. It referred him to a consultant and, two angioplasty operations and eight stents later, he has completed his rehabilitation at the centre and has been back working normally for some time.

A recent survey by the health and safety team of employees nevertheless found that director and senior manager awareness was a concern. Barry O'Connor insists that this is a matter of communication, rather than a deficit: "We know the board is engaged in health and safety, so we are going to conduct a series of table-top exercises to simulate a disaster – we are on the Manchester flight path – to test the board against its business continuity plan. We will then feed the results back to the shopfloor to show them the response of their senior managers."

"Strong-willed" representation

The main way that adidas elicits its employees' views is through its safety representatives and safety committee. There are approximately 20 representatives; all are volunteers and all are below supervisor grade. As well as attending the committee, they undertake work inspections once a month. Those carrying out the inspections all hold a Level 2 health and safety qualification. They also receive additional bespoke training, for example three hours on hazard spotting.

The safety committee attendance averages between 12 and 20 members invited from all areas of the business, including the two "partner" contractors at the Trafford site. A typical meeting back in 2003 would have seen each representative bring five issues; the latest committee heard just four issues in total, allowing it to concentrate on more proactive issues. The committee mandates one member to report back to the worker who raised the concern.

When establishing the committee in 2003, Barry O'Connor asked each department to supply volunteer representatives, although he also spoke informally with some opinion-makers: "There will be people who put their heads above the parapet and who have influence. If you can get them on side, then you can influence others. It has proved easier to secure representation from the high-risk warehouse than the office."

Barry O'Connor is adamant about the advantages of engaging representatives who are strong-willed. Although the managers and supervisors had some concerns at first, they saw over time the benefits the committee was bringing; now they attend for a limited time, which allows the representatives space to raise issues discretely, but also means that "the issues the committee needs them to take away are getting through then and there."

“ We know the board is engaged in health and safety, so we are going to conduct a series of table-top exercises to simulate a disaster – we are on the Manchester flight path – to test the board against its business continuity plan. We will then feed the results back to the shopfloor to show them the response of their senior managers.”

Barry O'Connor, head of health and safety and facilities, Area North region



Winning trust, proving value

“It would be fair to say,” acknowledges Barry O’Connor, “that any warehouse would regard ‘health and safety’ as a person with a baseball bat out to give it a hard time.” In his early days at adidas, he addressed this analogy head-on, positioning health and safety as a support service for improving working practices and efficiency. The difference now is that when Barry O’Connor appears at the warehouse, he believes he is viewed as someone who treats all requests for support seriously. Engaging the workforce and their supervisors in the safety culture, he says, was a combination of winning trust and proving value:

- When the health and safety team first broached the issue of manual handling, the warehouse staff doubted the team could teach them

anything. So Barry O’Connor and Maureen Rowland highlighted the incidence of warehouse workers who, later in life, would end up with severe back problems from daily wear and tear. At supervisor level there was already an appreciation of the issues, but they needed the benefits explained and reassurance that training and a new system of work would not affect the time it took to complete a task. Above all, at all stages the team agreed the system of work with the supervisors and the workforce.

- Over time, the workforce saw that the purpose of the company’s investigation of accidents was not to apportion blame but to support the workers, avoid a repetition and implement improvements. Once the no-blame culture was accepted, the trust followed.



“When it comes to corporate wellness, adidas got it right. As a company, adidas cares. By making a difference in the health and wellbeing of each staff member, the company has also made a difference to the lives of their families.”

Tricia Kalloo, CEO, Wellness International

Involving employees

“We live in an environment at adidas,” says Barry O’Connor, “where people are not shy and will express an opinion.” Aside from the committee and a direct word with the health and safety team, employees can raise questions at the directors’ three-monthly meetings or through Dear Gil – an anonymised system for questioning the MD (who conceived the idea himself). adidas has also run two annual employee opinion surveys that, while not directly about health and safety, do address issues such as control over work and stress.

The health and safety team personally induct each new member of staff and 72 of the 450 have gained a Level 1 qualification in health and safety. adidas believes this proportion can be improved still further and is now looking to restart the programme after a hiatus for a major fit-out on site.

The company also makes a point of “rewarding and recognising success” with three levels of Crème awards: Maureen Rowland’s work on the Sword application was recognised by the MD presenting her with a silver award in front of the whole site.

The value of engagement

The experience of adidas Area North demonstrates the importance to a business and its staff of a safety culture that looks beyond a narrow interpretation of the workplace and accidents. In a well-developed culture, and in “lower-risk” environments, health and wellbeing issues can offer a successful means of engaging all levels of the workforce. “When it comes to corporate wellness, adidas got it right,” says Tricia Kalloo, chief executive, Wellness International. “It is not just a one-time initiative or check on the SBP (strategic business plan). As a company, adidas cares. By making a difference in the health and wellbeing of each staff member, the company has also made a difference to the lives of their families.”

In addition, the experience of adidas shows:

- it is important not only that a board “leads” on health and safety and supports its management team in driving the culture, but that it demonstrates visibly, and communicates, its beliefs and actions;
- the value of a business case for health and safety interventions – not just at board level but also for convincing line managers and supervisors;
- true engagement is dependent upon a genuine and visible no-blame culture;
- the need to tailor the message to the situation and the workforce; and
- the importance of “informal opinion makers” and why managers should welcome empowered workforce representation.

4

Sector: **construction**

Business: **construction and property development**

Location: **Prestwick**

Employees: **140**

Ownership: **private**

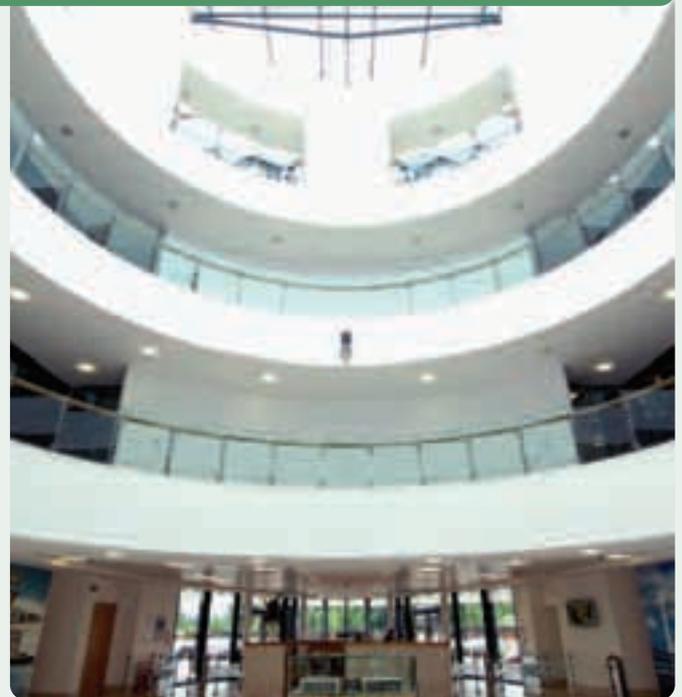
The Dawn Group

The Dawn Group is a construction company that strongly believes its culture of actively engaging both its own managers and contractors has enhanced its corporate image and competitiveness. This has been particularly beneficial during the current recession, reducing injury and absence rates and helping to decrease insurance premiums, while enhancing staff morale and improving personal empowerment.

The Dawn Group was founded in 1972 and has three divisions: Dawn Construction (which is the largest division and includes facilities management); Dawn Homes (private and public residential); and Dawn Developments (development and regeneration). The group is privately owned by one of its co-founders, Alan MacDonald.

The group operates in the private and public sectors from bases in Prestwick and Glasgow; recent projects include schools, hospitals, offices, retail parks, hotels, and industrial and residential developments. At any one time, the group is managing about 20 sites. The group's annual turnover is approximately £100 million, of which Dawn Construction is responsible for £65 million.

The hazards and risks on Dawn sites are no different to those faced by other major construction companies and include manual handling, work at height, slips and trips, plant and equipment, and segregation of pedestrians and vehicles. The most significant risks at the head office of Dawn Construction arise from fire and



terrorism, due to its proximity to the perimeter fence of Prestwick International Airport.

An “in-built” culture

The Dawn Group used an external consultant for health and safety advice until 2002 when the managing director, Ray Eve, decided the company had reached a size that necessitated a full-time health and safety manager. Dawn appointed Jim Crombie, who had eight years' experience in a similar position and 24 years in the Royal Engineers: the army, he says, has an “in-built” safety culture and provided him with extensive construction experience. He is now supported by two health and safety advisors.

Health and safety awareness, says Jim Crombie, was already a core value embedded in the group



when he arrived – the result, he believes, of it being a “family company”. There were, however, no structured procedures, with the external consultant concentrating instead on site inspections and writing risk assessments. Jim Crombie wrote a new policy and procedures for each division and, with “chipping away, it came good”: all personnel – ranging from the construction director to trainees – “understood their roles and responsibilities” and completed the five-day Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS) and gained a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card.

By January 2008, Jim Crombie and the other senior managers believed they needed outside assistance to make further advances. He turned to the British Safety Council, which recommended a safety management system (SMS) that would integrate the different procedures. It took eight months to develop the 860-page SMS, after when Jim Crombie rolled it out in December 2008 and January 2009. Each site uses a construction phase safety plan based on the SMS.

No “big stick”

Jim Crombie emphasises that he has not needed to use a “big stick with the directors or, for that matter, anyone else in the group”. The safety culture, he says, “permeates from the top of the organisation via the SMS to reach the frontline staff, encouraging every employee to embrace their responsibility in law to take reasonable care of themselves and others”. This involves “observable high-level management commitment and clear leadership by managers whose behaviour reflects and reinforces the message they are sending out”.

Since 2008, the board has discussed and approved an annual health and safety plan that is distributed to all personnel; its quarterly meetings consider a report from Jim Crombie. All managers within the Dawn Group have health and safety responsibilities in their job descriptions and are, in any case, a proactive group. If any manager identifies a problem on site, says Jim Crombie, “the ethos is to fix it”. When senior managers visit a site, they have to complete a safety logbook, even if it is only to



The safety culture permeates from the top of the organisation via the SMS to reach the frontline staff, encouraging every employee to embrace their responsibility in law to take reasonable care of themselves and others.”

Jim Crombie, health and safety manager, The Dawn Group

confirm there were no problems. “When we visit sites,” he adds, “we discuss things openly with managers. The starting point is not battering them over the head. We’ll suggest alternative practical solutions.”

One week before the board meeting, Jim Crombie chairs an 11-member group management safety committee of construction directors, contracts managers and divisional managers. The committee started in April 2008 in response to a British Safety Council audit recommendation and has developed into a strategic and policy discussion and decision-making forum. Jim Crombie reports any outstanding issues to the board the following week and distributes the minutes and action points to all Dawn employees.

The family way

“The contribution of worker involvement and consultation in safety developments is invaluable,” says Jim Crombie. All Dawn staff receive an induction on their first day of employment from a member of the safety department. Contractor personnel inductions are conducted on site by a SMSTS-trained Dawn manager. Staff are subsequently trained in the content of the SMS and in how to report unsafe conditions and structural damage.

There are, however, no employee representatives of safety – largely because as a main contractor, most of Dawn’s staff are managers. Jim Crombie and the appropriate line managers liaise directly with the small number of office staff and non-managerial positions. Even in the lower-risk offices, Jim Crombie believes that health and safety is now ingrained to the extent that, this past Christmas, the secretaries asked him about the Christmas tree lights and decorations.

The group’s principal methods of informing and consulting employees are site meetings, toolbox talks, safety alerts, posters, noticeboards, suggestion boxes, the group’s intranet and

performance appraisals. Every Monday Jim Crombie sends a summary of the previous week’s site visits to the directors, divisional managers and contract managers, who then cascade the information to their staff. Colin Johnstone, a health and safety advisor with Dawn, emphasises “how quickly, easily, clearly and effectively the information can be channelled up from the coal face, via all relevant persons in between, to the boardroom and vice versa”.

The company’s “family” ethos also means that staff are positively encouraged, and have proved willing, to raise health and safety concerns with their line manager, although they can also take advantage of the “open-door policy” to approach any director or manager. “There is no need to book an appointment, even with the MD,” says Jim Crombie.



Convincing contractors

As a managing contractor, Dawn's reputation is partly determined by the thorough way in which it engages its subcontractors. While Dawn has 140 staff of its own, an average of 1,100 subcontractor personnel are likely to be on the group's sites at any time. On two recent large projects, for example, Dawn inducted 4,500 people, although the short-term and transient nature of the tasks and the sector meant that it never had more than 200 operatives on each of the two sites at a time. Over the course of a year, Dawn will induct 10,000–12,000 subcontractor staff. Inductions last between 10 and 15 minutes and must, says Jim Crombie, "be short and to the point and supplemented by noticeboard information and weekly toolbox talks".

During the past two years, two developments have had a considerable impact on Dawn's dealings with its subcontractors. First and foremost, Jim Crombie believes that the process of applying for the British Safety Council's Five Star Audit, and the resulting SMS, has helped firmly establish the safety culture in the minds of the contractors. At the same time, the economic uncertainties have meant that contractors looking for continuity of

work with Dawn must show commitment and a willingness to comply with Dawn's proactive approach to health and safety (or they will have to find work elsewhere). And when the recession is over, says Jim Crombie, "I will be able to remind them they were working safely in the recession, and so they can maintain and even improve on these standards now".

Contractor changes

One significant advantage of this interactive engagement is that subcontractors may come up with useful suggestions of their own. During the recent construction of the Shawfair Park Hospital in Edinburgh for the Spire Healthcare, a subcontractor supervisor suggested that a supervisor or manager from each subcontractor should take turns to carry out a daily safety inspection of the entire site, rather than just their own work areas. Dawn implemented the idea and found that "as a consequence all subcontractors began working and interacting more closely and, in addition, more consideration was being given by contractors to the operations of other trades". A further positive effect has been that "subcontractors are now much more open and prepared to speak to other companies' personnel



if they see them working unsafely or to communicate with each other when they notice potential problems in their own or another person's work areas".

This, says Jim Crombie, "has improved the quality and quantity of information coming through our open-door policy, and assisted in achieving an overall increased safety performance and awareness on site, with the added benefit of regularly providing our management team with a number of differing perspectives and observations on site safety conditions and work activities."

Dawn is now implementing the inspection system across all group sites, alongside a mandatory daily early morning site safety meeting. The meeting was trialled at a site in Coatbridge, Lanarkshire and brought together Dawn Construction management and representatives of all the contractors. The 10–15 minute meeting covered: the day's work activities and impact on other contractors and activities; risk assessment and method statement compliance; close-out of the previous day's issues; and raising awareness of site movements and the use of equipment. The meetings, said Jim Crombie, caused concerns to be raised and dealt with openly and quickly in "an effective and appropriate manner".

Coatbridge, however, decided to link the meetings with the inspections so that the last person to attend the daily site meeting – no matter whether it is a contractor or a Dawn manager – also carries out the site inspection. Jim Crombie is rolling this idea out to all sites: "It works really well", he says, "and what's more, the meetings start on time."

Beyond a "quick word"

With the vast majority of contractors, Jim Crombie says a "quick word will fix most things". There will, however, always be subcontractors and workers who are less easily persuaded. In such cases, Dawn will give three warnings and offer training, education and support. Where there have been several failures, Jim Crombie treats the problems as systemic and deals personally with their directors – either by correspondence or by calling them in for a face-to-face meeting – to establish how they will prevent a recurrence.

Where the behaviour is so reckless, or there have been repeated failures and a negative response from directors, Dawn will ask the subcontractor to

“ Jim Crombie is adamant that the importance that Dawn placed on its safety culture has benefited the staff's morale, health and wellbeing.”

leave the site. To put this in perspective, of the 11,000 subcontracted workers on Dawn sites during the previous year, only 48 – working for about 30 employers – were removed from site. Jim Crombie usually recommends they are banned from all sites and removed from the tender lists, although before reaching a final decision, he first consults the two other Dawn divisions.

The benefits of engagement

Jim Crombie is adamant that the importance that Dawn places on its safety culture has benefited the staff's morale, health and wellbeing. They "feel valued, take personal responsibility and are more interactive", adds Colin Johnstone. More quantifiable benefits include:

- a sickness absence rate of 1.4%, which is significantly below the national and sector averages;
- no injuries of any type – reportable or not – to staff in the three years between 2007 and 2009;
- 46, 57 and 25 injuries of all types to contractors and other non-employees in the same three years (the vast majority were "very minor"); and
- "almost negligible" levels of ill health and staff turnover.

Jim Crombie credits the investment in safety culture with "enhancing Dawn's commercial image" and "corporate competitiveness" within the sector. It has also improved the group's relationships with clients, "increasing our potential for being accepted onto client tender lists and also for attracting new business sources in the current harsh economic climate". There are also additional benefits with the public and contractors, as well as a contribution to reduced insurance costs, he adds.

5

Sector: **manufacturing**

Business: **beverage packager and distributor (bottles, cans and kegs)**

Location: **Runcorn, Cheshire**

Employees: **200**

Ownership: **Diageo plc**

Diageo Runcorn Packaging

The safety culture at Diageo Runcorn Packaging shows how a head office can encourage its local managers to lead on health and safety, and how an engaged and unionised workforce can come up with innovative ideas for safety improvements that are then taken up by other parts of the group. The benefits include the raising of over more than 2,000 health and safety “issues” a year, some of which have resulted in significant improvements, as well as a marked decrease in the overall number of accidents and their severity.

Diageo Runcorn Packaging is part of the world’s largest alcoholic drinks company, Diageo plc. The Runcorn plant receives the products (mainly beers) by road tanker and processes them prior to packaging into bottles, cans or kegs for dispatch. The “own” brands include Guinness and Harp, although the site also packages other drinks on a contract basis. The 20-acre site opened as a Guinness plant in 1970 and, in the mid-1980s, witnessed the development of the “widget”, which affords draught properties to canned beers. The throughput is around 4 million hectolitres a year. There are 200 employees on site as well as 50 staff from resident contractors, notably TDG (warehouse), Compass (catering), Dalkia (utilities management) and G4S (security).

Bill Cross became the site’s health, safety and environment advisor 10 years ago, having been a shift manager and technologist for a similar length of time. He was originally a trained chemist. The most common injuries at the site are caused by



glass cuts and slips, trip and falls; the incidents with the potential to cause the most serious harm are being struck by an HGV or forklift truck and contact with machinery.

Active representatives

Most of the shopfloor workers belong to the Unite union. Each shift at the 24/7 site has three safety representatives elected by the workers through the union. The representatives are given time off for training, to attend the monthly safety committee meeting and to carry out their functions, including reviewing risk assessments and safe systems of work, workplace safety audits, accident investigations, and running mini shift safety committee meetings (which act as feeders to the main committee). Some safety representatives have been trained as manual handling assessors.

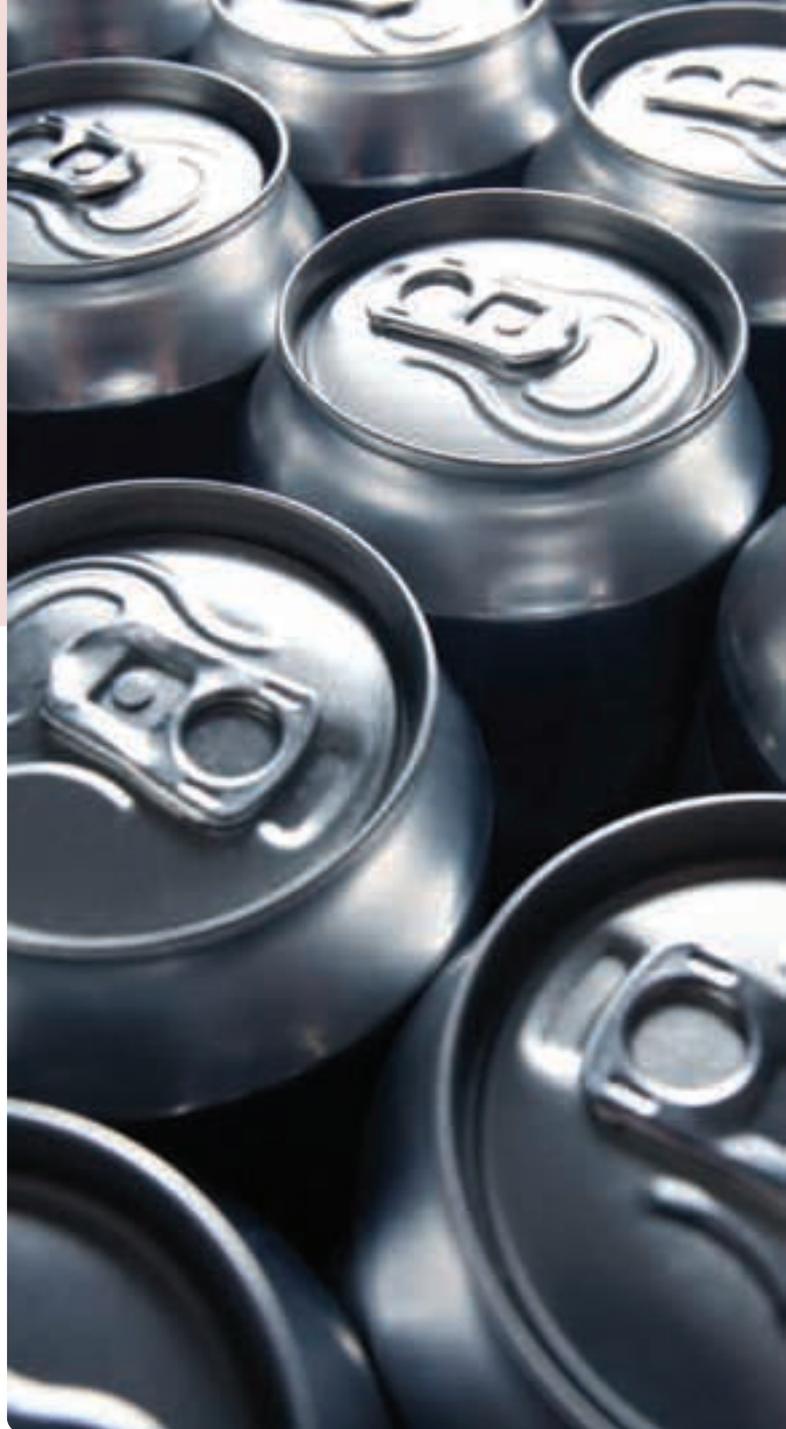
“During the last three months of 2008, Diageo’s central risk management team rolled out the Leading For Safety programme to help managers in its supply centres understand their health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities.”

Representatives from the resident contractor groups attend the safety committee meetings, as can anyone who has a particular issue they want to raise.

Leading for safety

During the last three months of 2008, Diageo’s central risk management team rolled out the Leading for safety programme to help managers in its supply centres understand their health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities. At each centre, the site manager and the health and safety advisor delivered the programme; all managers and leaders who had a responsibility for one or more persons, as well as the safety representatives, were required to attend.

The programme requires every manager to behave in a manner that promotes and rewards positive safety culture and, specifically, to take on 10 “leadership behaviours”. Managers must also rate themselves against each behaviour and sign a form of commitment. Alongside each behaviour, Diageo explains why it expects “great leadership” and what it expects of the managers personally. The behaviours include: frequently stating that “safety is our number one priority”; visibly challenging behaviour that threatens safety; reviewing the outcome of incident investigations; holding regular health and safety-only meetings; starting all meetings with safety; including safety in appraisals; recruiting and promoting people with a good safety attitude; conducting safety walkabouts; and reviewing and tracking safety projects. Bill Cross believes the programme has been a “big success” at Runcorn: 38 people attended and, as a result, some departments are now running their own initiatives.



Senior managers were, in any case, already involved in the investigation of every accident at the site; the investigation form was even redesigned to include comments from the manager. In many instances – particularly where a worker has been injured – the site manager becomes involved and meets the victim. Bill Cross believes the presence of senior managers in investigations has had a “very positive effect on the site’s safety culture as the workforce can see that management are genuinely concerned about their wellbeing”. An improvement plan will usually follow the investigation: after one minor incident, for example, the site manager’s investigation resulted in the company spending £70,000 on lifting equipment.

“As a site, we have an issue with individuals’ weight, nutritional intake and sleep quality and quantity. We are focussed on these issues and are promoting self-responsibility for their resolution.”

Bill Cross, health, safety and environment advisor, Diageo Runcorn Packaging



The site’s senior managers prepare a weekly newsletter on a rotational basis: the first item on the front page is a health and safety section, which includes a summary of the previous week’s performance. This, says Bill Cross, “means that all senior managers must concern themselves with health and safety matters and the workforce also sees that all senior managers support health and safety initiatives”. The site manager runs a quarterly “business brief” for all workers, which covers health and safety, as do the monthly team meetings with the shift managers.

Health and safety days

Once a year, the site stops production and the workforce travels to an off-site venue for a “health and safety day”. The company expects all of its employees to attend the event, which is used to promote health and safety throughout the site, and specifically to communicate the site’s annual health and safety performance and discuss the next year’s activities. The December 2008 day concentrated on health, wellbeing and behavioural safety, with the launch of a new DVD, *Zero Harm Strategy*, and a session on responsible drinking. The company spent £75 per employee on the event. (There was no health and safety day in 2009, largely because Diageo was implementing a further initiative, Perfect Plant, which included health and safety and was won by the Runcorn site.)

The focus of the 2008 day was the launch of Living Well as the site’s theme for 2009. During the day, the employees were split into groups and attended various sessions. These involved a health and wellbeing assessment (with a personalised report) and a computer-based Know Your Numbers initiative, as well as three sessions on “positive energy” through healthy eating, healthy activities, and sleep and relaxation. The feedback was good and Bill Cross believes that the campaign had a beneficial effect during the following year, with employees asking for further information on exercise and healthy eating. “As a site,” says Bill Cross, “we have an issue with individuals’ weight, nutritional intake and sleep quality and quantity. We are focused on these issues and are promoting self-responsibility for their resolution.”

In advance of the 2008 health and safety day, the occupational health advisor recruited shop floor employees as “wellbeing champions” and sent them on a training course. The champions hand out information to their colleagues and encourage them to participate in campaigns, while providing feedback to management on improvements and facilities the employees would like on the site. In



addition, the site's occupational health advisor runs health promotions, using email, leaflets and a quarterly newsletter, as well as events such as a "healthy heart day" in the canteen, which included blood pressure checks and advice.

To SIR with love

At the 2006 health and safety day, Bill Cross noticed workers were complaining that "nothing ever happened" when they raised problems with their line managers. This led him to introduce the Safety Issue Reporting (SIR) system in July 2007, which allows members of staff and resident contractors formally to raise a health, safety or welfare "issue" that requires action. The system extends beyond unsafe conditions to include unsafe acts, that is behavioural issues. Employees have been trained to assess the risk of safety issues before entering the details directly into a customised database that tracks them until closed out. At the same time, employees are expected to satisfy themselves that the problem has been resolved.

The safety committee agreed a target for every employee to raise 10 issues a year, ie 2,000 across the site. Although the employees exceeded the target in each of the first two years, Bill Cross acknowledges that 2,000 issues every year may prove "excessive". And, despite occasional dubious reports of "anonymous unsafe behaviour, often by a contractor", Bill Cross says the reaction of the site manager is that this does not matter because the process is throwing up large numbers of issues and that the workforce is, in any case, thinking about safety. For 2010, the site has introduced 10 behavioural SIRs in addition to 10 SIRs for unsafe conditions, although Cross says the site will not be "too strict" initially, providing "the basic 10 are raised".

The site manager chairs a monthly meeting that analyses and monitors the responses to the issues raised. The second year of the SIR system resulted in 81% of issues being closed out, and there is now a £200,000 budget for responding to SIR issues. The system has been refined and is now

“Employees can see that their safety suggestions are acknowledged and acted upon, which has resulted in the SIR system having had the biggest impact on the workforce in terms of continuous improvement of the safety management system.”

Bill Cross, health, safety and environment advisor, Diageo Runcorn Packaging

completely electronic; it has also been linked to the site's Deal With It behavioural safety programme, which encourages challenges to any unsafe behaviour.

Bill Cross attributes many of the improvements he has implemented in the past two years to issues raised by the workforce through the SIR system. “Employees can see that their safety suggestions are acknowledged and acted upon,” he adds, “which has resulted in the SIR system having had the biggest impact on the workforce in terms of continuous improvement of the safety management system.”

“The site's visible response to the issues has also raised morale,” adds Bill Cross. This has been picked up by the annual Diageo Values Survey, which includes health and safety questions, and by a 2008 evaluation of the site's safety culture by the Keil Centre. The evaluation takes place every two years and is based on a series of workshops in which the centre asks each shift team and peer group, including senior management, about 10 elements of safety culture. Assessed against a five-point scale on a Safety Culture Maturity Model, the site moved from level three (“involving”) in 2006 to level four (“cooperating”) in 2008. Aside from the good score, a striking finding was the “close agreement” among the responses of the different groups.

Rolling out

The SIR system may be the most significant initiative developed at Runcorn and exported to other Diageo sites, but there are other innovative ideas originating from the Runcorn site including:

- an induction process based around a DVD of the site. Introduced in 2005, the DVD has sections

relating to employees, contractors and visitors, and culminates in a multiple-choice test. The site is currently developing a separate induction for commercial drivers, which sets out the procedures for safe delivery or collection of goods;

- safety bingo, in which a prize-winning number is drawn for every lost-time accident-free week. This, says Bill Cross, “makes people take an interest in safety performance and helps to drive safe behaviour through peer pressure”;
- the development of visual risk assessments – the pictorial display at the place of work, says Bill Cross, “makes the hazards and control measures easy to see and understand”; and
- a health and safety DVD – *GRASP* – which was “made by the shop floor for the shop floor”.

The Diageo central safety leadership team also runs an annual Zero Harm Awards scheme, which recognises employees or teams that have made a significant contribution to health and safety.

Reaping the benefits

Engagement on the site, says Bill Cross, has resulted in the workforce suggesting major improvements, including the construction of an internal walkway and traffic light system for controlling forklift truck hazards, and the installation of devices to lift 90kg shrink-film reels on to the packaging machines.

The total number of accidents at the site – reportable and non-reportable – has decreased every year from a high point of 57 in 2004 to 27 in 2009. There have been just four major injuries to staff and contractors in the past 10 years, while injuries lasting over three days have fallen in every year, except one, since 2004, reaching two in 2009.

In the past three years between 2007 and 2009:

- the reportable accident rate (for all types of injuries) has fallen from 1,913 to 1,000 per 100,000 employees;
- the total accident rate has fallen from 18,660 to 13,500 per 100,000 employees; and
- the total number of accidents involving non-employees fell from 12 to seven.

6

Sector: **professional services**

Business: **global law firm**

Location: **City of London**

Employees: **1,800 (London), 5,000 worldwide**

Ownership: **partnership**

Linklaters

Investments in health and wellbeing initiatives and employee engagement have realised significant benefits for global law firm Linklaters, including increases in the early reporting of ill-health symptoms and in requests for preventative interventions. Staff are active at a representative level and more knowledgeable about their wellbeing generally, while sickness absence rates fell from five days per employee in 2006/07 to 3.85 in 2008/09.

Linklaters has two sites in close proximity in the City of London. There are about 1,800 permanent and 500 contract staff on the two sites. In day-to-day terms, the firm's permanent London workforce divides between 1,200 fee-earners (who include partners and other lawyers) and 600 business services staff, whose main role is to enable the fee-earners to maximise their potential. The health and safety team forms part of the business support service and includes a health and safety manager, officer and adviser – respectively, Peter Kinselley, Carly Hall and Sarah Kingsnorth.

A healthy “buy-in”

During the past year, Linklaters main office has undergone a major fit-out, caterers have provided 700 covers a day, and there have been 2,000 office moves. Despite this, the three-year reportable injury total for staff and contractors stands at just 11. Given such a low incidence and the firm's safety culture, Linklaters has concluded that ill health presents a far greater risk than accidents to the business.



To keep its partners and staff as healthy and fit as possible, the firm hosts a Fitness Centre and an array of awareness-raising initiatives, training and support services. These involve significant cooperation between the health and safety team, HR, an on-site GP, an occupational health nurse, the caterers and the Fitness Centre.

Musculoskeletal disorders are the most common threat to Linklaters' predominantly office-based workforce, so Peter Kinselley and the other departments run ergonomic roadshows, offering advice on prevention and rehabilitation, backing up the firm's sophisticated workstation assessments. The roadshows, says Peter Kinselley, “have resulted in an improved attitude towards ergonomics, and an increase in the number of preventative assessments we are asked to undertake”.



“The roadshows have resulted in an improved attitude towards ergonomics, and an increase in the number of preventative assessments we are asked to undertake.”

Peter Kinselley, health and safety manager, Linklaters

In 2009, the HR department launched a Wellbeing Initiative, which has engaged the workforce in a different issue or activity each month, including:

- a sun awareness week, with a GP presentation and mole clinic;
- gym staff conducting weekly 45 minute walks around the City of London, followed by a healthy lunch funded by the firm; and
- a blood-pressure and cholesterol-level day. The take-up was typically high, with 70 people undergoing the tests and one in four needing a GP follow-up.

In addition, a Security and Safety Roadshow ran three events in 2008/09 covering:

- personal safety;
- police advice on safe cycling in London;
- home security;
- first aid at home, including dealing with children;
- alcohol awareness at Christmas; and
- fire safety in the home (again, at Christmas).

Supporting the fee-earners

The chief operating officer (COO) for London, Alastair Mitchell, heads London Business Services and reports to the partners. Alastair Mitchell is responsible for setting the health and safety culture; when he took over, he explained to Peter Kinselley that, although uncertain as to his health and safety responsibilities, he took them seriously and wanted Peter Kinselley to bring him up to speed. Peter Kinselley gives the COO annual briefings on his responsibilities, as well as quarterly reports. The COO also participates in the quarterly health and safety committee meetings (which involve senior management, HR, IT, security, occupational health, health and safety and two employee safety representatives). At the past two business services meetings, the COO has highlighted to senior management the work of the health and safety team and its Sword of Honour award.

Engaging representatives

The extent of engagement within Linklaters is such that it has 39 safety representatives drawn from all 30 departments, including finance, marketing and its Colchester site, where 160 staff work, as well as the main contractors, such as Wilson James. Some of the larger departments will have two representatives. The fee-earners are represented through their secretaries.

When Peter Kinselley joined Linklaters four years ago, there were just four representatives, so he asked the line managers to appoint volunteer representatives (as well as fire marshals and first-aiders). Most of the office representatives are secretaries, although the fee-earners provide two first-aiders and one fire marshal. There is no time limit for acting as a representative, and Peter Kinselley is not aware of anyone resigning.



The representatives assist the line manager and carry out workplace inspections every two months, and report faults and concerns. They also have their own quarterly meeting, at which the firm will consult them on issues such as policy changes and the annual health and safety plan, as well as more point-of-use issues, such as the introduction of manual handling equipment. The health and safety officer, Carly Hall, is responsible for running the meeting; Peter Kinselley believes this also helps develop her own management skills – some of the representatives, he points out, are not “soft fluffy people” but confident individuals unafraid to challenge a partner. Carly Hall also has the responsibility for closing out issues raised by the representatives; outstanding matters are taken to the company’s health and safety committee.

The health and safety team provides the representatives with a one-day training course that explains the “basics” of health and safety and what the company expects of them. The representatives are currently helping to develop the course. Ten representatives completed a Managing Safety course in late 2009; the remainder will attend the course in the coming months.

Peter Kinselley also runs “bite-sized” training courses for all staff, for example on manual handling for secretaries. Courses should be “little and often”, he says, and reinforced.

Exchanging views

The representatives seek the views of their colleagues before their quarterly meetings – in person and by email. Staff can contact the health and safety team directly via the intranet and an “emailbox”; Peter Kinselley will also use the intranet to ask for feedback on initiatives. There is no facility and, he adds, no need for anonymised reporting.

The health and safety team “make a big point of being visible and walking the floors”. When recruiting Carly Hall and Sarah Kingsnorth to the team, Peter Kinselley went for their excellent communication skills rather than safety expertise (they both subsequently studied for safety qualifications). When Carly Hall joined, Peter Kinselley gave her two main tasks: to network with the HR team and to get the safety representatives system off the ground, both of which she has succeeded in doing.

The health and safety team keeps the staff informed through a staff bulletin, *London Life* magazine, strategically placed noticeboards and "office notes" for pressing concerns. But it also works through HR and the group secretaries' forum in an attempt to spread the message to the different professional groups.

"A work in progress"

Linklaters' line managers remain, admits Peter Kinselley, "a work in progress". Line managers are professionals who have a specific role, "so to get them involved in health and safety we have to have a compelling message". He has tried to do this with two short annual presentations – an hour a year, he believes, will result in a larger attendance than a half-day training course.

The first presentation, 18 months ago, explained their health and safety roles and responsibilities and resulted in a "reasonable 60% turnout". A second presentation, in October 2009, saw a reduced turnout, which Peter Kinselley attributes to a low turnover among managers (at four years' service, he is the "newest" in his management group), the pressures of the recession, and a feeling of "why do we need to do it again?". So, for the third presentation, he is arranging for an external speaker to explain the importance of supporting staff in the current economic climate. "The fact that we are going through hard times might help the line managers see the benefits we offer," he hopes. The carrot, however, comes with a stick: the low attendance was raised at the firm's health and safety committee and the COO has made managers' attendance at the next presentation compulsory.

For line managers, says Peter Kinselley, the "compelling message" comes from being able to see the benefits of engaging with health and safety: "They are very busy people and don't always see

where it fits in on the radar. Individually they are receptive, but it is harder to get them to do things collectively." Not that they are obstructive: they allow staff to attend meetings and "buy in very quickly to anything that helps them in their particular role". There is, he believes, "a lot in it for them: by demonstrating they care about people's health and safety, they are showing a 'people' side. If we can reduce sickness absence, there will be even less upheaval. If we can reach people in discomfort more quickly and get feedback from line managers as to what we can do better, that can only help."

Engaging the fee-earners

Linklaters' 204 partners and 1,000 other UK fee-earners, says Peter Kinselley, have to focus on steering the firm through the recession. They work long, pressurised hours and expect the same degree of service from his team for themselves and their staff that they offer clients. "So long as you are delivering to their expectations, you don't get feedback," he adds.

These pressures mean "there is not automatically strong buy-in" to health and safety at fee-earner level. "Health is the way in here," says Peter Kinselley. "Debating the legal requirements would not work – if they are in discomfort, they are looking for help to get back as quickly as possible, which is a big benefit to the organisation." The "generous budgets" and facilities allow the firm to refer them rapidly to "the best person". He is also able to attend the fee-earners' morning team meetings and explain the value of engaging with the services the company is offering.

Peter Kinselley adds that the levels of COO and senior management support and workforce engagement mean he does not need "full buy-in" from the partners. What is more important is that he does not need to be defensive when a partner

“Line managers are very busy people and don't always see where it fits on the radar. Individually they are receptive, but it is harder to get them to do things collectively... There is a lot in it for them: by demonstrating they care about people's health and safety, they are showing a 'people' side.”

Peter Kinselley, health and safety manager, Linklaters

“ We are involved at senior management meetings and in projects. We don't have to open doors; we are invited. In the end we are here to enable people to do their roles better and more efficiently, and that is what we are doing.”

Peter Kinselley, health and safety manager, Linklaters



questions his actions, for example about the disruption caused by a fire test. The firm is hierarchical and Peter Kinselley has no direct contact with the senior partner. Nevertheless, he has an “appropriate level of comfort” such that he could “go all the way up the chain” to secure the buy-in he needed.

“Invited” to the table

When Peter Kinselley arrived at Linklaters, the approach was compliance-based, reactive and lacking a sophisticated safety management system. A firm such as Linklaters, he believed, should instead aspire to best practice, which he now believes is in place. Today, while the decreasing sickness absence rate is a visible “benefit” of the new culture, Peter Kinselley points to the level of engagement as the really satisfying result. The firm has sufficient numbers of safety, fire and first-aid volunteers and a workforce that is increasingly aware of the benefits to their work and home lives that the firm's approach to health and wellbeing can deliver. There is a “tremendous ethic” within the health and safety department, and excellent cooperation with occupational health and other departments that has evolved considerably over the past two years. “Without the involvement of all the staff and the other departments,” says Peter Kinselley, the health and safety team “would not be able to do what we do”.

The “recognition” of the team's achievements, he believes, “is that we are not regarded with scepticism. We are involved at senior management meetings and in projects. We don't have to open doors; we are invited. In the end, we are here to enable people to do their roles better and more efficiently, and that is what we are doing.”



7

Sector: **energy**Business: **nuclear power generation**Location: **Anglesey, Wales**Employees: **650**Operator: **Magnox North**Ownership of site: **Nuclear Decommissioning Authority**

Wylfa Power Station

“Everything we do is governed by a process, procedure or regulation, and there is little scope for improvement. So the only way we can do things better is through our people,” says Fred Brookes, the manager of Wylfa Power Station’s environment, health, security, safety and quality (EHSS&Q) department. The plant’s safety culture, according to the World Association for Nuclear Operators (WANO), was the best it had seen, with all levels of the workforce rating it consistently.

It has not always been this way. Wylfa has “been on a journey for 10 years,” says Fred Brookes who arrived a decade ago as the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate’s full-time inspector for the site and then, four years later, became the site’s EHSS&Q manager. A decade ago, explains the gamekeeper-turned-poacher, “Wylfa was not a good place; it had suffered a significant event and enforcement action, as well as ‘minutes from meltdown’ headlines and several other incidents. During the journey, Wylfa has had three site directors, all of them, says Fred Brookes “people persons whose whole way of working is about involving people”.

The power station

Wylfa Power Station is a generating nuclear power station located on Anglesey, North Wales. The site is owned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and operated by Magnox North. Wylfa’s two Magnox-type reactors generate 1,000MW of electricity – more than 40% of the electricity consumed in Wales.



The site was commissioned in 1971 but is due to cease production at the end of 2010 because the fuel it uses is no longer made. Fred Brookes is optimistic, however, that there may be sufficient fuel reserves to allow an extension of up to three years, providing that a safety case can be made to the regulators. The extension is important because a different company is looking at a “new build” power station nearby and, should this proceed, staff training could start as early in 2016, thereby limiting the consequences for the workers and the community: Wylfa accounts for 50% of Anglesey’s GDP and, with 650 staff and 220 contract or agency workers, is the largest employer on the island. There is a strong sense of community on the site, and Fred Brookes estimates that about half of the workforce is related in one way or another.



The plant has 83 EHSS&Q staff, including security personnel but excluding the occupational health department. The most significant conventional safety risks are electricity, work at height and confined spaces, as well as the normal industrial risks.

Involving senior management

The Wylfa site is characterised by a battery of worker engagement activities that are supported by the site's senior management in actions as well as words. Five or six times a year, there will be a "site stand-down", during which work stops so that the site director, Nick Gore, or a senior manager can address all staff and contractors in meetings in the canteen, except for those on essential duties or shifts, who nonetheless see a DVD of the address. A stand-down will follow a significant "event" but is also used on planned basis, for example at the start of the annual "outage" (each of the reactors is overhauled every two years). A site stand-down, explains Fred Brookes, indicates the importance of the briefing and also ensures "everyone gets the same message".

Wylfa uses a Human Performance Programme – a systematic approach to identifying the potential

“The Wylfa site is characterised by a battery of worker engagement activities that are supported by the site's senior management in actions as well as words”

for human error. Fred Brookes attributes a large part of its success to "the support and encouragement" of the five senior managers (the functional heads), each of who sponsors two of the programme's "10 error-prevention tools". Sponsorship includes wearing shirts and fleeces with the words of the two tools on their backs – for example, "pre-job briefings", "independent verification" and "clear communication techniques". This, says Fred Brookes, "keeps it fresh in people's minds on a daily basis". The functional heads also opened and closed the HuP training for their departments. Wylfa now has 30 volunteer "human performance champions", as well as site champions for various topics, some of which cover health and safety – for example a "risk assessment champion" and a "portable appliance-

“ The site has 305 trained behavioural safety observers – almost half of the workforce. The 4,000 annual observations, says Fred Brookes, are particularly useful where staff are ‘so used to carrying out a particular routine that they may have become less attentive to the hazards associated with it.’ ”



testing champion”. The champions are trained and are responsible for promoting good practice and coaching their colleagues.

From reporting to sorting

The site has 305 trained behavioural safety observers – almost half of the workforce. The 4,400 annual observations, says Fred Brookes, are particularly useful where staff are “so used to carrying out a particular routine that they may have become less attentive to the hazards associated with it”.

Wylfa also sets considerable store by its staff submitting Loss Control Reports (LCRs) for anything that seems to be “not quite right”. An average day will see 20 to 30 of these green forms, which are soon to be renamed Learning Capture Reports. The experience at Wylfa is that an increase in LCRs is accompanied by a decrease in significant events, which led Fred Brookes to become concerned at a tailing off in LCR totals in 2009; he therefore stood down every team on site and, alongside another departmental head, he explained the likely scenarios should the trend continue, since then the trends have returned to pre-2009 levels.

The site, however, has tried to go beyond mere reporting with a See it Sort it Report it campaign, which started in February 2009 and tried to persuade people to resolve, as well as report, a problem. Again, management was heavily involved in the launch, handing out rucksacks to the workforce at the site entrance. The bag contained information on the purpose of the campaign and other “goods”.

Wylfa also uses 120 trained volunteer Operational Experience Feedback Communicators. The EHSS&Q team analyses the events, and the communicators “translate” the information for their own teams. The communicators can be at any grade below senior manager. WANO rated Wylfa’s learning from experience programme as the best in Europe.

“Steal with pride”

“We steal with pride”, say both Fred Brookes and Helen Evans, the safety & quality manager. Around 15% of the site workers will have been to a power station in America, regardless of grade, “to see what good looks like”. Ideas that they have returned with include:

- **task observations, which are similar to behavioural safety observations but are planned and focus on a complete activity. The team is currently refining the way in which it collects data and plans to roll it out across the site in April; and**
- **site standards inspection tours – the site’s 650 employees are grouped into 12-member teams. One day each week, a team will walk around the site, bringing staff from different departments together and a dozen pairs of fresh eyes to bear on potential hazards.**

Keeping it fresh

The biggest challenge, says Helen Evans, is “doing something new”. This has seen the EHSS&Q team:

- **use Bart Simpson and his nuclear worker father, Homer, to impart advice on PPE;**

- mock up some “dodgy” scaffolding with a scaffolder, and an unsafe office with the electrical contractor, and ask staff to spot the hazards;
- make an in-house DVD on working at height; and
- employ a cartoonist to make up posters in response to an issue or an incident.

One of Wylfa’s most successful briefings followed a back and leg injury to an operative caused by a telehandler at Magnox North’s Hunterston A Power Station in May 2009. Over one week, the EHSS&Q team showed all 650 staff – in groups of 30 – a DVD of the event and, after a briefing, the staff completed a “task observation”. This, says Fred Brookes, “was one of the most powerful health and safety messages that has been delivered to the site, as people were actually seeing first-hand a real event that happened on one of our sites ... The clear management support along with the timely delivery of the sessions and the fact that reactor re-fuelling and outage work were suspended, went a long way to getting the message home.”

A similar attitude extends to some of the more regular and formal meetings, for example the weekly site safety meeting of team leaders, contractors and safety representatives. The

meetings will normally have a monthly theme – most recently, slips, trips and falls – and also review significant events on or off site. Fred Brookes emphasises that it is important to introduce an element of fun into the meetings and so will often run a quiz in the fourth week to see what has been learnt.

Engaging the unions

Formal meetings with the site’s 12 Prospect and Unite union-appointed safety representatives take place every two months, at which non-unionised representatives from the contractors are also present. The meetings revolve around a set agenda, but also include discussions about future safety campaigns.

The EHSS&Q team clearly values the representatives; they will, says Fred Brookes, often fix things themselves and deliver team briefings. He frequently “chats” to the lead safety representative and drops into the representatives’ own monthly meetings if there are issues he wants to raise informally. And, every Tuesday between 2pm and 3pm, management and union – not just safety – representatives meet for a coffee. This is in addition to the formal monthly management and union consultation meetings and, says Fred Brookes, “it really works”.



Wylfa paid for the union safety representatives to study for a National Examination Board of Occupational Safety and Health certificate; all were successful. The representatives hold seminars and conferences and invite guest speakers; in 2009, they brought in Ken Woodward, a motivational speaker to present a session, which Magnox then repeated as a stand-down in the canteen. In April 2010, AKT – an acting troupe that enacts and facilitates a discussion about a real-life safety event – is performing at the start of the outage at Wylfa, and Magnox is also paying for the troupe to perform at a conference that the unions have arranged for all safety representatives on Anglesey, not just those at Wylfa.

Engaging team leaders

All 120 team leaders (first-line supervisors, project managers) are currently studying for a management diploma. The programme, says Fred Brookes, will develop their leadership skills, which will be useful for health and safety involvement. In addition, 80 team leaders have a Managing Safely certificate, with the remainder set to follow. Winning over the team leaders is crucial to success, says Helen Evans, “particularly where some of them think our processes are slowing them down”. The EHSS&Q team explains the benefits of the processes and engages them “from the beginning”. Despite significant progress, says Helen Evans, “there is more to do and we need to keep engaging with team leaders and their teams, since team members are able to bring pressure from the bottom up.”

The Dipstick

Notwithstanding the comprehensive safety culture, there will always be room for improvements. In an attempt to come up with a real-time measurement of the culture, particularly against the background of decommissioning, the EHSS&Q team used a Dipstick to gauge the views of the staff. The team ran two Dipsticks in 2007 and 2008 and, while the results overall were encouraging, both cast doubts as to the effectiveness of the team leaders (in particular that they did not spend enough time actually supervising) and a lack of visibility of senior managers.

Fred Brookes admits to being surprised at the results and believes that while this may be largely a matter of perception, it is still “the reality to the individual”. The Dipstick, says Fred Brookes, “delivered a powerful reminder to senior managers

“It has to come from the top and be supported by a bottom-up belief.”

Malcolm Collard, oversight manager, Wylfa Power Station



of the priority of their leadership roles and has helped them target where further action is needed.” As a result, Wylfa is adapting the approach of its senior management, including steps to improve “upward communications”. The team was due to run a third Dipstick in April, albeit with the name changed to Pulse. Fred Brookes says it will be interesting to see whether the management diploma will have any effect on the results.

Avoiding complacency

Helen Evans believes that the three important ingredients in the Wylfa culture are that the power station strives for continuous improvement, is a learning organisation and engages and talks to people. Engagement, adds Malcolm Collard, the oversight manager, has meant “winning hearts and minds. It has to come from the top and be supported by a bottom-up belief. It must involve: trust; a no-blame culture that the staff – and the contractors – believe in and is seen to be working; comprehensive reporting; and a visible response to health and safety concerns.”

The biggest challenge, says Fred Brookes, is “avoiding complacency” and coming up with new ideas. In addition to two Swords of Honour and numerous other safety awards and plaudits, there have been just three lost-time incidents in the past three years to employees, agency workers and contractors, and the average number of days lost due to sickness has hovered slightly above six days per worker for each of the past four years. “If we stand still,” warns Fred Brookes, “we will start to slip backwards. We have constantly to come up with better ways of engaging people and keeping them motivated, particularly as the station nears the end of its life.”

With So much to think about...



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