

Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee

Date	8 September 2020
Report title	Health and Safety Annual Update
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Report has been considered by	Not Applicable

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Audit, Risk & Assurance is recommended to:

- (1) Note the annual update on Health and Safety contained within this report.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of principal activities relating to the promotion and management of health and safety and outcomes during the past two years, and outline the strategic direction for occupational health and safety within the wide-ranging remit of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) for the next three year period.

2. Background

- 2.1 Through delivery of the *Health and Safety Strategy 2018-2020*, we have had the opportunity to deliver significant enhancements to health and safety, ensuring that the implications of the expanding activities of the organisation are understood and appropriate governance arrangements, management systems and critical resources are implemented.
- 2.2 Although good progress has been made, it is essential that we continue to build on this success in a planned, systematic way to ensure health and safety is further integrated into all WMCA operational activities, ensuring proportionality in health and safety management, and enabling improvement through efficient and effective delivery.
- 2.3 The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has significantly altered the landscape in which we all operate and the *Health and Safety Strategy 2020-23* will be tailored to address the health and safety challenges and opportunities presented by the 'new normal'.

3. Health and Safety Strategy 2018-2020 – Key Achievements

- 3.1 During 2018-2020 it has been imperative that the wider aims and objectives of WMCA, incorporating Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), Housing and Regeneration, Productivity and Skills, Public Service Reform, Strategy & Industrial Strategy are better understood.
- 3.2 This process has already provided the opportunity to implement enhancements to health and safety governance arrangements and management systems, ensuring standards of safety and compliance are being maintained consistently across the organisation.
- 3.3 The below table provides an overview of the key achievements and activities:

Key Achievements and Activities 2018-2020	
✓	Review of organisational Health and Safety Governance Structure Providing a robust platform and effective management structure for the delivery of health and safety aspirations and objectives. Ensuring no ambiguity exists relevant to accountability, responsibility, assurance and delivery of health and safety.
✓	Review and update of Health and Safety Policy Policy statement of intent, organisation & responsibilities, and arrangements for implementation have been reviewed and updated to ensure they reflect the updated arrangements for the management, governance and reporting of health and safety within the organisation. Sign-off by Deborah Cadman OBE, Chief Executive in January 2019.

✓	<p>Health and Safety Training for Strategic Leadership Team / Directors</p> <p>Providing an understanding of the moral, legal and business case for health, safety and risk management at the strategic level; and covered both personal and organisational accountabilities, responsibilities and liabilities.</p>
✓	<p>Introduction of Health and Safety Strategic Committee</p> <p>Strategic committee accountable to the WMCA Senior Leadership Team (SLT). To facilitate the appropriate level of challenge, allow effective escalation of issues where required, and support delivery of strategic direction in relation to health and safety. Inaugural meeting held January 2019, with meetings held at quarterly frequency.</p>
✓	<p>Revised Safety, Health & Environment Committee Structure</p> <p>Full review of the membership of existing Safety, Health & Environment (SHE) Committee to ensure sufficient coverage from employee representatives from across the organisations activities, with new employee representatives identified for Finance, Housing & Regeneration, Productivity & Skills, Public Service Reform, Transport (inc. Network Resilience, Rail Programme, Sprint)</p>
✓	<p>Improved Health and Safety Reporting</p> <p>Revised structure of Board report, which seeks to better identify the issues relevant to the various areas of the organisation. Presented to Transport Operations Board, TfWM Board, Corporate Management Team. Issued to all members of WMCA SLT as a vehicle to engage with all areas of the organisation.</p>
✓	<p>Review of Safety Management System and associated documentation</p> <p>Full review and update of Safety Management System, supported by suite of approx. 80 new and updated policies, procedures and guidance documents. All documentation made available via Health & Safety intranet in January 2020.</p>
✓	<p>Ongoing retention of OHSAS 18001 Standard Health and Safety accreditation</p> <p>Retention and confirmation of continued compliance with the requirements of the OHSAS 18001 standard. An internationally accepted method of assessing and auditing occupational health and safety management systems.</p>
✓	<p>Review of Health & Safety Induction</p> <p>Review and update of Health and Safety Induction course to ensure provision of suitable and sufficient, information and instruction to new employees. All new employees enrolled on to the course as part of the new starter process undertaken by HR & OD.</p>
✓	<p>Audit and Inspection Schedule</p> <p>Maintained high levels of safety compliance of organisational assets via undertaking proactive scheduled health and safety audits and inspections, ensuring the ongoing safety of staff, customers and stakeholders.</p>

4. Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2023 - Overview

- 4.1 The *Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2023* which is currently being produced, seeks to continue the integration of positive occupational health and safety management practices into all aspects of the organisations activities and undertakings.
- 4.2 The strategy is designed to ensure that all parties play their part to support a proactive, robust health and safety management system which meets legal obligations and reduces risk to those affected by our activities.

- 4.3 The key challenge for this strategy is how to embed three fundamental strategic aims into the fabric of the organisation which has a number of high risk health and safety activities.
- 4.4 These strategic aims are to develop a positive health and safety culture with coherent policies and procedures which are compliant with all relevant health and safety regulations:
- **Culture:** to engender an effective health and safety culture through the continuous improvement of attitudes, perceptions, competences and patterns of behaviour which determine the commitment to the style and efficiency of the organisation's health and safety management systems.
 - **Coherence:** to embed and ensure policies, procedures, guidance and advice are understood and easily accessible to all staff, stakeholders, partners, contractors, etc.
 - **Compliance:** to ensure the organisation adheres to all relevant health and Safety legislative requirements and that staff follow internal policies.
- 4.5 The overarching aim of this strategy is to provide strategic direction to encourage all departments to fully integrate health and safety into their operational norms and practices, ensuring the organisation becomes an increasingly safer and healthier place to work.
- 4.6 The below table provides an overview of the short, medium, and long terms aims:

Strategic Aims 2020-2023		
Short Term Aims (Year 1)	Medium Term Aims (Year 2)	Long Term Aims (Year 3)
Renewed commitment of leadership (i.e. Executive Directors / Directors / Heads of Service / Managers) in relation to accountability and the management of health & safety	Consistent standard of health and safety management thoroughly embedded, applied and evident throughout all areas of the organisation	Organisation operates a robust, assured, occupational health and safety management system, with continued accreditation to the internationally recognised standard ISO 45001:2018
Gap analysis of organisational activities and undertakings, particularly in relation to the organisation's new working practices, to ensure all are adequately risk assessed and appropriate control measures identified and implemented	Improved mechanisms to ensure health and safety in relation to Programme Delivery, including ensuring adequate provision of competent advice	Organisation viewed as a 'standard bearer' in relation to health and safety management practices
Alignment of "Health and Safety" and "Health and Wellbeing" strategies to maximise benefit to the organisation	Enhanced health and safety training opportunities accessible to all staff to ensure appropriate levels of competency	
Improved methods for health and safety promotion and awareness	Development of detailed Risk Management Model, utilising RM3 or equivalent framework	
Migration of external accreditation from BS OHSAS 18001 to ISO 45001	Strengthen relationships with stakeholders and partners to facilitate sharing of best practice, knowledge and learning	

4.7 In order to achieve the organisation’s vision for occupational health and safety, the strategy has been divided into five distinct strategic priorities – i) Leadership and Commitment, ii) Management and Control of Risk, iii) Communication and Engagement, iv) Training and Competence, v) Performance Management.

4.8 An *Annual Delivery Plan* for these priorities describing the actions to be addressed will be produced and communicated for each financial year the strategy covers. Progress against this plan will be reported periodically to the relevant Boards and Committees.

5. Covid-19: Health & Safety - Summary of Activities

5.1 The Health and Safety Team has supported the organisational response to the Covid-19 pandemic, providing input to the *Covid-19 Tactical Group*, *16 Summer Lane Recovery Working Group*, *Operations Recovery Working Group* and producing relevant updates posted to the Covid-19 H&S Staff Resources intranet section and included within Manager’s Briefings.

5.2 The team also continues to keep abreast of current HM Government, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) guidance and best practice in relation to the current situation.

5.3 Given the unprecedented challenges presented by the pandemic, throughout response and recovery a *Health and Safety Decision Log* has continued to be maintained to record decision details, decision owners and approvals.

5.4 The below table provides an overview of the key activities:

Health & Safety – Summary of Key Activities (March 2020 – To Date)	
Mar – Apr 2020	<p>Remote Working and Display Screen Equipment</p> <p>A full review of the Remote Working / DSE arrangements was undertaken to establish enhancements and identify additional support that could be reasonably provided to colleagues working from home for what may become an extended period of time. A working group, led by the Health and Safety Team, with representatives from Assets, Business Support, HR & OD, ICT, Policy & Innovation and Unison worked to develop arrangements, which incorporated a Remote Working & DSE Policy and online DSE Self-Assessment Tool.</p> <p>It should also be noted, the HSE stated at this time that there was no need for employers to provide workstation risk assessments in a ‘temporary’ situation. The introduction of these processes demonstrated best practice and enabled us to better support our colleagues working from home.</p>
Mar 2020	<p>Transport Network – Out-Based Staff</p> <p>The Health and Safety team worked closely with Bus Station, Travel Centre and Customer Intelligence Management Teams to establish and review updated working arrangements in response to the outbreak. Changes implemented include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bus Stations: reduction in staffed operational hours, reduction in time staff will be required to be in public areas, removal of staff from medium sized bus station locations; - Travel Centres: closure of Birmingham New Street and Wolverhampton; - CIT: reduction and eventual suspension of CIT activities.

Mar 2020	<p>Corporate Premises – 16 Summer Lane</p> <p>The Health and Safety Team has undertaken daily reviews of first aid and fire warden coverage, as the occupancy of 16 Summer Lane reduced to ensure it remained adequate for the building. Once building was closed to all but business critical colleagues, the out of hours procedures were invoked for first aid and fire arrangements and deemed satisfactory.</p>
Mar 2020	<p>Programme Delivery</p> <p>Respective Project Managers were requested to maintain regular contact and seek assurance that Contractor control measures in relation to the outbreak are not importing unacceptable general health and safety or Covid-19 risks in relation to projects for which we are Client, as defined by the <i>Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015</i>.</p> <p>In addition, where there is likely to be a requirement for de-mobilisation and re-mobilisation of capital schemes, it was identified as essential to ensure that responsibilities are clear in relation to sites in terms of their lockdown and re-opening, etc. to safeguard health, safety and compliance. These matters were identified and addressed as part of the usual project management and monitoring measure in place.</p>
May 2020	<p>Covid-19 Legal Considerations Review</p> <p>The Legal Services Manager, Head of HR & OD, Head of Strategic Facilities, and Health and Safety Manager held a meeting on 18th May 2020 to consider all legal implications in relation to Covid-19 response.</p> <p>The Legal Services Manager was suitably satisfied that the extensive work being undertaken across the organisation, with the oversight of the Covid-19 Tactical Group, was ensuring that legislative requirements are being met and duty of care is being discharged.</p>
May 2020	<p>Review of HM Government Guidance</p> <p>The Health and Safety Manager undertook a full review of HM Government Guidance issued on 11th and 12th May 2020 in relation to Safer Transport for Operators, Safer Transport for Passengers, Safer Public Places, and Working Safely during Covid-19 in Offices and Contact Centres. Detailed feedback has been provided to the Integrated Transport Services Leadership Team and guidance considered as part of the risk assessment process.</p>
May 2020	<p>Covid-19 Risk Assessment & Operational Procedures – Transport Premises</p> <p>A Covid-19 Risk Assessment was produced, the scope of which covered the operation of transport network locations in relation to Covid-19, with general hazard identification and control measures, as well as a section to document any additional site specific control measures that are required to eliminate or reduce risk to an acceptable level.</p> <p>To accompany these assessments, Operational Guidelines have been produced setting out the new operating norms at our facilities.</p>
May 2020	<p>Bus Station Covid-19 Audit</p> <p>A specific Bus Station Covid-19 Audit has been produced and utilised to assist in the development of site specific elements of Bus Station Covid-19 risk assessments. These audits were conducted by members of the TfWM Leadership Team and Integrated Transport Services Leadership Team during the period.</p>
May 2020	<p>Network Delivery – Remobilisation</p> <p>Health and Safety input provided to recovery plan for processes associated to the management of passengers and infrastructure at bus stops, shelters, and unstaffed interchanges, including the provision of adequate signage. This included production of Task Specific Risk Assessments detailing the control measures required for the introduction of additional staff undertaking engagement and monitoring duties and the management of our infrastructure.</p>

<p>May 2020</p>	<p>Interim Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Building Procedures An Interim Covid-19 Risk Assessment for 16 Summer Lane was produced, aligned to the Interim Arrangements for Building Users guidance</p>
<p>June 2020</p>	<p>The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings on Public Transport) (England) Regulations 2020 The Health and Safety Manager undertook a full review of the new statutory instrument following its introduction on 15th June 2020. Detailed feedback provided to the Integrated Transport Services Leadership Team and the legislation considered as part of the risk assessment process. Whilst these regulations for the public to wear face coverings only applied on vehicle, their application impacted on frontline operations.</p>
<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Covid-19 Secure Procedure for Safe Workplaces The Health and Safety Manager produced guidance setting out the management framework and procedure for “Covid-19 Secure” safe workplaces which is integral to the ongoing work in relation to the recovery of 16 Summer Lane and our transport premises. <i>SMS/C19 01.2 Covid-19 Secure: Procedure for Safe Workplaces</i> was presented and endorsed at Operational Assets Steering Group on 16th June 2020 and will be issued in July 2020.</p> <p>The procedure applies to all WMCA premises, including corporate offices, bus stations, travel information centres and temporary work locations across the transport network and must be followed to ensure that suitable and sufficient preventative measures have been implemented, as identified by the risk assessment process.</p> <p>A ‘Plan, Do, Check, Act’ framework, as is utilised for the wider Safety Management System, will ensure a defined structure for the management of Covid-19 in relation to our premises, with all roles and responsibilities clearly defined.</p>
<p>June 2020</p>	<p>Audit and Inspection Programme 2020/21 The Health and Safety Team recommenced the Health and Safety Audit & Inspection Schedule from mid-July 2020 following its suspension in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The audit methodology has been updated to utilise both physical and remote auditing methods, with all interviews with staff and record checks to be conducted remotely. Therefore the primary focus of any audit visit will be on physical inspection of the premises, with staff areas inspected as quickly as possible and with minimal interaction.</p> <p>Audit templates have been updated to incorporate both general health and safety and Covid-19 controls and management. This is essential to verify the continued effectiveness of the mitigation measures we have implemented across our premises.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Team audit schedule will be supplemented by the re-introduction of TfWM Director Inspections which will primarily focus on Covid-19 recovery.</p>
<p>July 2020</p>	<p>The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings in a Relevant Place) (England) Regulations 2020 The Health and Safety Manager undertook a full review of the new statutory instrument following its introduction on 24th July 2020. Detailed feedback provided to the Integrated Transport Services Leadership Team and the legislation considered as part of the risk assessment process. These regulations require the public to wear face coverings whilst entering or remaining in a relevant place, which includes enclosed transport hubs. The same exemptions which exist for wearing of face coverings on vehicle apply under this new legislation.</p>

<p>July 2020</p>	<p>Individual risk Assessment for Covid-19 The Health and Safety Team developed a process and template for the completion of Individual Risk Assessments in relation to Covid-19, which was finalised and communicated in July 2020. The Individual Risk Assessment considers both personal risk factors (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, medical conditions, etc.), as well as workplace exposure risk factors.</p> <p>The Individual Risk Assessment for Covid-19 can be utilised for any member of staff, but will be particularly significant for those staff working in frontline roles, from identified higher-risk groups, and those who have caring responsibilities for others who may be in a higher risk or vulnerable group. Each completed risk assessment will be subject to review by the Health and Safety Team and a copy securely held on record by HR, who can also escalate cases to Occupational Health as and when required.</p>
<p>July 2020</p>	<p>Covid-19 Secure Risk Assessment – 16 Summer Lane The full Covid-19 Secure Risk Assessment has been produced by the Health and Safety Team and this documents all control measures implemented at the premises to assist in the prevention of spreading Covid-19.</p> <p>This final risk assessment was reviewed by the Trade Union representative and reviewed/authorised by the Director of Housing and Regeneration on 24th July 2020. This has been effectively communicated to all building users via the intranet.</p>
<p>-</p>	<p>Personal Protective Equipment Throughout the pandemic, the Health and Safety Team has closely monitored the guidance from HM Government / Public Health England (PHE) in relation to the provision of PPE for employees and others.</p> <p>A suitable supplier has been identified to ensure a robust supply chain for Covid-19 related PPE items going forward. Measures will also be implemented to ensure stock of PPE is appropriately issued to ensure continued availability for staff. All PPE issued has been accompanied by information and instruction in its safe storage, use, removal, and disposal, and reminders issues emphasising that these items do not negate the need to follow other control measures e.g. social distancing, regular hand washing, etc. In addition, guidance document <i>SMS/C19 01.3 Personal Protective Equipment for Covid-19</i> has been produced and issued on 12th June 2020.</p>

5.6 A lessons learnt workshop facilitated by the Director of Implementation is to be held in due course, which will seek to bring out the key learning, opportunities and next steps in relation to Covid-19. The outputs of this sessions will be shared with Strategic Leadership Team and Joint Asset Board.

6. External Accreditation - BS OHSAS 18001 / Migration to ISO 45001

6.1 The organisation's Safety Management System (SMS) is externally accredited to the BS OHSAS 18001 standard for occupational health and safety management systems.

6.2 On 20th and 21st May 2020 our external accreditation body Alcumus ISOQAR undertook the BS OHSAS 18001 surveillance visit remotely in line with UKAS guidelines and with the audit overseen by a UKAS representative.

6.3 This was our first audit following the Covid-19 outbreak and documentation was provided for review in relation to both general occupational health and safety and the ongoing response to lockdown and recovery.

- 6.4 The audit confirmed that no non-conformances were identified against the 18001 standard during the audit visit, with organisational compliance and continued certification to OHSAS 18001 confirmed.
- 6.5 Our planned migration from BS OHSAS 18001 standard to ISO 45001 in November 2020 was also discussed and confirmation provided that this will now be subject to review by WMCA following the decision of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) to the revise the migration deadline to 11th September 2021 (from original deadline of 12th March 2021) in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 6.6 It has subsequently been agreed by the *Health and Safety Strategic Committee* that it will now be necessary to migrate during 2021 to ensure adequate time to update the SMS to reflect our new ways of working and successfully embedded the revised management system across the organisation.

7. Summary of Current Position

- 7.1 Whilst significant progress has been made to date, the effective implementation of the next three year strategy will be essential to ensure the continued integration of positive occupational health and safety management practices into all aspects of the organisations activities and undertakings.
- 7.2 There are not currently any specific areas of concern or particular items for urgent improvement, however it will be critical that all departments fully integrate health and safety, in line with bespoke health and safety delivery plans, into their operational norms and practices, ensuring the organisation becomes an increasingly safer and healthier place to work.
- 7.3 The Health and Safety team will continually support the wide-range of activities for which the organisation has a remit and promote the benefits of proportionate health and safety management as a positive instrument to ensure statutory compliance and organisational success rather than a burden to progress.
- 7.4 While the capacity of the Health and Safety team has broadly been sufficient, the Covid-19 pandemic has created particular challenges in relation to providing the requisite support across the organisation, whilst managing the multiple work streams associated to Covid-19 response and recovery.
- 7.5 As such the level of available resource within the Health and Safety team will be subject to evaluation as part of Phase 3 of the Integrated Transport Services directorate review, to ensure sufficient resource exists to successfully support organisational needs going forward.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, however as the remit and responsibilities of the WMCA evolve, and the impact of Covid-19 is realised, additional resources and budgetary allocation may be required to ensure effective delivery of the aims and objective set out within the Health and Safety Policy and associated Strategy.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 Although there are no current legal implications, cognisance should be given to all applicable Health and Safety legislation that places duties upon the organisation.

10. Equalities Implications

10.1 There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report. However, it can be confirmed that any changes implemented in relation to Covid-19 have been or will be subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

11. Inclusive Growth Implications

11.1 There are no inclusive growth implications arising from this report.

12. Inclusive Growth Implications

12.1 There are no geographical area implications arising from this report.

13. Other Implications

13.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

14. Schedule of Background Papers

Not applicable