Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee

Date	4 October 2022
Report title	Health and Safety Annual Update
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Accountable Chief Executive/TfWM Director	Laura Shoaf Chief Executive Email: Laura.Shoaf@wmca.org.uk
Accountable Employee	Pete Bond Director of Integrated Transport Services Email: Pete.Bond@tfwm.org.uk
Report has been considered by	Not Applicable

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

ARAC is recommended to:

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 year and outline the strategic direction for occupational health and safety within the wide-ranging remit of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

2. Background

2.1. The financial year 2022-23 represents the final year of the current *Health and Safety Strategy 2020-23.* This strategy has been delivered in unprecedented times, during which the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and subsequent recovery has significantly altered the landscape in which we all operate.

2.2. As we have adapted our ways of working, it has been recognised that the way we manage health and safety must also continue to evolve. With a shift from fixed workplaces and our previous operational norms, there has needed to be a renewed focus on health and wellbeing support, whilst also ensuring that high standards of occupational safety continue to be maintained.

2.3. The *Annual Delivery Plan* developed for each year the strategy covers have been tailored to support the current health and safety challenges and opportunities, with an overview of the key activities that have been implemented, in progress or are planned contained with this report.

2.4. When developing our next strategy, it is essential that we continue to build 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.

3. Health and Safety – Key Achievements

3.1. The Health and Safety Team have continued to utilise every opportunity to implement enhancements to health and safety arrangements and management systems, ensuring standards of safety and compliance are being maintained consistently across the organisation.

3.2. The below table provides an overview of the key achievements and activities:

Key Achievements and Activities 2021-22	
✓	**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 Laura Shoaf, Chief Executive in November 2021.
✓	**Safety Management System (SMS) Review and Update** The SMS has been reviewed and updated to ensure greater alignment to the clauses of the ISO 45001:2018 standard, as well as reflecting the updated arrangements for the management, governance and reporting of health and safety within the organisation. This includes changes required to support hybrid working, programme delivery and ongoing mitigation of the risk presented by COVID-19. The SMS also documents all safety provisions as required by pertinent Health and Safety legislation as it applies to WMCA.

✓	**Understanding the Context of the Organisation** Context of the Organisation document has been produced to ensure a detailed understanding of the organisation and its context in the wider world, including internal and external issues relevant to the SMS. This also includes the needs and expectations of interested parties, including both internal and external stakeholders. This is an essential tool to identify the full scope of our organisational SMS and ensure it remains fit for purpose.
✓	**Internal Review of WMCA Health and Safety Governance Arrangements** Review of the Health and Safety governance arrangements in place for WMCA in order to assess the overall effectiveness and suitability of these, given the complexity and nature of the activities and undertakings of the organisation. Ensuring arrangements continue to provide a robust platform and effective management structure, where no ambiguity exists relevant to accountability, responsibility, assurance and delivery of Health and Safety.
✓	**Internal Review of Metro Health and Safety Governance Arrangements** Review undertaken of arrangements for Metro, incorporating Programme Delivery (including Midland Metro Alliance - MMA), Network-Wide Programme (including Utilities), Midland Metro Limited (MML) (i.e. Metro Operations) and West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) as infrastructure owner.
✓	**ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems Standard** Successful retention of ISO 45001:2018 confirming compliance with the requirements of the standard. An internationally accepted method of assessing and auditing occupational Health and Safety management systems.
✓	**Ongoing Health and Safety Committee Structure** The *Health and Safety Strategic Committee* and *Safety, Health and Environment Committee* have continued to provide forums to facilitate the appropriate level of challenge, allow effective escalation of issues where required, provide a further means for consultation and communication, and support delivery of strategic direction on any proposed or implemented changes.
✓	**Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2022 – Transport Operations** Workstreams in relation to the preparation and delivery of the Commonwealth Games transport offering and mobilisation of 16 Summer Lane to support the delivery of these. This work aimed to ensure that both the CWG specific transport operations, existing operations on the transport network or at our corporate premises, and any applicable interfaces were managed so as to minimise risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
✓	**Programme Delivery – Health and Safety Resource and Assurance** Continued monitoring and oversight of Health and Safety performance on Programme Delivery project activity. Work continues to seek enhancements with the respective Project Sponsors, Project Managers, and project Health and Safety contacts to ensure suitable oversight and resources are available from a 'Client' perspective, as defined by the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015*.
✓	**Compliance Assurance of SMS for Metro Operator and Bromsgrove Rail Station** Compliance assurance of Midland Metro Limited's SMS with the *Railway and Other Guided Transport (Safety) Regulations 2006* in addition to all other relevant Health and Safety Legislation. This incorporated an audit conducted in August 2021, with the next scheduled audit to take place in September 2022. Similar arrangements exist for Bromsgrove Rail Station to verify compliance of the SMS against legislative requirements via an agreed operational model that identifies the specific Duty Holders and their respective responsibilities under the model for the safe operation and maintenance of the station and its infrastructure.

✓	**2GT Tram Body Issues** Ensured access to the appropriate forums and reporting to allow for adequate oversight and assurance in relation to 2GT tram car body monitoring and repair programme from a Health and Safety perspective on behalf of WMCA. This assisted in providing greater visibility of this issue by Transport Operations Board, CMT and SLT, via the monthly Health and Safety Board Report, providing opportunity for oversight and comment of the actions and mitigation measures in place.
✓	**Enhanced Accident, Incident and Near Miss Reporting and Incident Investigation Tool** Development and implementation of an online Accident, Incident and Near Miss Reporting Tool, providing real-time reporting. The importance of near miss reporting has also been promoted, providing early warning that intervention may be required and assist in preventing future adverse events. An online Incident Investigation Tool has also been developed.
✓	**Lone Worker Management** Introduction of a new app based lone worker management solution, StaySafe, which has been accompanied by a short 'Personal Safety' course available to all staff via Learning Pool and update of *SMS 14.1 Lone Worker Policy* and associated guidance outlining the available mitigation measures for effective lone worker management.
✓	**Musculoskeletal Health Awareness Week** Musculoskeletal (MSK) Health Awareness week took place in May 2022. This was a joint initiative between Equalities, Diversity & Wellbeing and the Health and Safety Team in order to raise awareness of the importance of MSK health and the things that can be done to support it.
✓	**Health and Safety E-Learning** Health and Safety Team working in collaboration with the Organisational Development & Engagement Team to utilise the Learning Pool platform to deliver general Health and Safety training (for employees and line managers) and fire safety awareness training to all colleagues across the organisation. Display Screen Equipment, Manual Handling and Personal Safety courses have already been made available.
✓	**Audit and Inspection Schedule** 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. This has included review and update to the audit criteria utilised by the Health and Safety Team to ensure ongoing statutory and procedural compliance, as well as drive continual improvement.
✓	**Health and Safety Team Resource** Additional *Health and Safety Advisor* role created to ensure consistent coverage across the broad remit of WMCA, address the challenges and opportunities of hybrid working, and support oversight of the significant number of capital programme delivery activities. A *Safety, Health and Environment Technician Apprentice* position has also been created to support the team and development of a future Health and Safety professional.
✓	**COVID-19 Response and Recovery** The Health and Safety Team has supported the organisational response and recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has included reference to HM Government, UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance. Working alongside HR and Facilities Management developed a 'Living with COVID' Policy to ensure that there is clear guidance and framework for line managers and colleagues setting out the organisational position now that all legal restrictions have been lifted.

4. **Health and Safety Strategy 2020-2023 / Annual Delivery Plan 2022-2023**

4.1. The *Health and Safety Annual Delivery Plan 2022-23* which supports the *Health and Safety Strategy 2020-23* has been subject to review at various forums prior to authorisation by SLT in April 2022. This plan provides further detail on how we will deliver against our strategic priorities, goals, and objectives, including areas of focus for enhancement to the Safety Management System.

4.2. 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.

4.3. The below table provides an overview of the objectives set out in the *Annual Delivery Plan for 2022-2023*.

Summary of Health and Safety Annual Delivery Plan for 2022-23
Leadership and Commitment
Health and Safety Strategy 20-23 & Annual Delivery Plan 22-23 - *Ensure strategic H&S aims and key deliverables are communicated and embedded throughout the organisation*   **Visible Felt Leadership -** *Expansion of visible felt leadership through direct engagement in audit, inspection, safety tours, safety conversations, briefing activities, etc. whilst demonstrating leadership actively 'lead and promote' a positive health and safety culture*   **Safety, Health and Wellbeing Charter -** *Renewed commitment in relation to management, accountability and ownership of safety, health and wellbeing*   **Develop Health and Safety Strategy 2023-26** - *Develop new H&S Strategy for next three-year period which builds upon progress to date, ensuring this is reviewed, authorised, and effectively implemented*
Management and Control of Risk
Health and Safety for WMCA CWG 2022 Activities - *Ensure effective H&S management of WMCA CWG 2022 activities*   **Permit-to-Work System -** *Review and update of permit system to ensure effective control of contractor activities*   **Risk Assessment Enhancement (inc. Health and Safety Risk Register) -** *Analysis of organisational activities and undertakings to ensure all are adequately risk assessed and appropriate control measures identified and implemented*   **Occupational Health and Safety Management System (ISO 45001:2018 Standard) -** *Continued accreditation to ISO 45001:2018 standard for occupational health and safety management systems*   **Psychological Health and Safety at Work (ISO 45003:2021 Standard) -** *Preparatory work and commencement of formal process to attain ISO 45003:2021 standard for psychological health and safety at work*   **Programme Delivery Health and Safety Assurance -** *Develop enhancements to the assurance mechanisms in place for TfWM and WMCA programme delivery*

Communication and Engagement

- **Health and Safety Communications Plan** - *Deliver H&S Communications Plan to promote H&S and encourage employee engagement*
- **'Safety Differently' Campaign -** *Develop and deliver H&S culture campaign "Safety Differently" across the organisation with enhanced H&S culture and ownership evident.*
- **Alignment of "Health and Safety" and "Wellbeing" Strategies -** *Maximise benefit to the organisation, engaging in partnership working to address health, safety and wellbeing matters*
- **Further Develop Links with External Partners / Stakeholders** - *Strengthen links and develop effective network with other H&S professionals to allow for active engagement, sharing of best practice, and benchmarking with other organisations*

Training and Competence

- **Training for Senior Directors and Executives -** *Ensure that sufficient training and guidance is provided regarding leadership in health and safety*
- **'Safety Differently' Training –** *Develop and deliver "Safety Differently" training to both new starters and existing employees*
- **Health and Safety Training Matrix** - *Develop a training matrix for all roles to ensure a defined structure exists for the provision of health and safety training and required competence can be demonstrated*
- **Health and Safety E-Learning** - *Further utilise Learning Pool e-learning platform to deliver H&S training to enhance staff competence and ensure compliance*

Performance Management

- **Internal Review of Safety Management System** - *Review and enhance existing processes for internal audit of SMS against ISO 45001:2018*
- **SMS Compliance Reviews** - *Introduce Safety Management System Compliance Reviews for each directorate / business area*
- **Health and Safety Dashboard Enhancement** - *Review and enhance existing reporting dashboards to ensure they provide optimal information to recipients in a clear and concise format*
- **Benchmarking & Performance Review -** *Identify and develop suitable mechanisms for benchmarking and performance review, which seek to bring out key learning and opportunities for improvement*
- **WMCA H&S Governance and Reporting Arrangements** - *Periodic review and update of WMCA health and safety governance and reporting arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate to the organisation's undertakings*

4.4. To support delivery of the *Annual Delivery Plan 2022-23*, the Health and Safety Manager presented a briefing note to SLT in April 2022 emphasising the importance of ongoing 'Leadership and Commitment', ensuring that we can continue to demonstrate that leadership take an active role in the management of health and safety.

4.5. A key component of the delivery plan is the *'Safety Differently'* campaign, which challenges traditional approaches to health and safety management, and is hoped will become a 'cornerstone' of our strategic direction going forward.

4.6. In summary, the *'Safety Differently"* principle calls for a different kind of thinking that recognises people as the source of diversity, insight, creativity, and wisdom about health and safety, and not as the source of risk that undermines an otherwise safe system. In addition, it emphasises the importance of safety as the presence of positives, and not simply the absence of negatives, as well as the necessity to create a 'just culture'.

4.7. Progress against this delivery plan is reported quarterly to the *Health and Safety Strategic Committee* and the *Safety, Health and Environment Committee.* Updates in relation to specific deliverables are also included as part of monthly Health and Safety reporting, which is presented to several Boards.

4.8. Should any significant new or emerging risks be identified, there is scope for these to be added to the delivery plan as necessary, and which will then be subject to the appropriate mitigation measures to eliminate or reduce the risk, so far as is reasonably practicable.

5. **Wellbeing – Key Achievements and Future Areas of Focus**

5.1. The Equalities, Diversity and Wellbeing Team has developed a *Wellbeing Strategy* (due to be reviewed and updated in 2023), which is underpinned by six pillars covering: mental wellness; work/life balance; musculoskeletal; keeping connected; healthy lifestyles and cultural and behavioural change.

5.2. Mental health and wellbeing have been identified as key priorities, with multiple initiatives delivered to support colleagues in this area. These include an Employee Assistance Programme, Mental Health First Aiders (with an additional 4 appointed in 2021-22), and *Mental Health Awareness* training for managers, as well as *Personal Resilience* training for employees.

5.3. To complement this, various tools to support individual and management capability have been developed, including *Wellbeing Working from Home Guidance*, a *Stress and Resilience Toolkit,* and a *Stress and Mental Health Guide for Managers*. Wellbeing has also been embedded within key processes, including Management Fundamentals, 1-2-1's and the Individual Performance Management (IPM) process.

5.4. To empower employees and promote musculoskeletal health, a number of campaigns have been delivered, including sessions on posture alignment therapy, yoga and pilates. Two Bitesize learning sessions were also delivered alongside floor walks providing ad-hoc advice and in-person DSE assessments during a designated *Musculoskeletal Health Week*. A musculoskeletal health resource was also developed to support staff awareness.

5.5. A *Reasonable Adjustments Policy* has been developed, with line managers encouraged to consider any reasonable adjustment needs for staff as part of the hybrid working model i.e. what can help support individual staff positive mental health and wellbeing in terms of their working patterns and their working environment. This was further reinforced in 2021-22 by the development and promotion of *Reasonable Adjustments Guidance for Managers.*

5.6. Additional activities conducted during 2021-22 and areas of focus for 2022-23 are detailed in the following table:

Additional Wellbeing Activities for 2021-22 and Summary of Future Areas of Focus for 2022-23

Additional Wellbeing Activities for 2021-22

- Delivery of Bitesize Learning sessions on Imposter Syndrome; Nutrition and Hydration
- Delivery of a wider 'Wellbeing@Work' campaign
- Provision of voluntary Health Checks for staff
- Influenza vaccination vouchers made available to employees
- Prevalent lifestyle conditions resources developed, covering topics such as cancer, diabetes, stroke awareness, and coronary heart disease
- Neurodiversity at Work resource developed with specific guidance on how to more effectively promote positive mental health and wellbeing for neurodivergent staff

Summary of Wellbeing Future Areas of Focus for 2022-23

- Development of a Carers Policy
- Development of a Menopause Policy, supported by initiatives to increase management competence, staff support, and wider staff awareness
- Continued delivery of initiatives that seek to destigmatise mental health issues
- Development and delivery of Work-Life Balance campaigns
- Delivery of Bitesize Learning sessions on Psychological Safety
- Strengthening of the role of wellbeing in induction, including through the development of a wellbeing induction guidance for managers (to include reasonable adjustment considerations)
- Delivery of training to support with awareness and management of Domestic Abuse
- Reinstating bookable Acupressure Sessions to support positive musculoskeletal health
- Delivery of corporate volunteering initiatives to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, improve team cohesion and support work/life balance

5.7. In addition to the above, the Health and Safety Team will continue to work closely with the Equalities, Diversity and Wellbeing Team, with a key objective to undertake an initial assessment and complete the necessary preparatory work prior to attaining ISO 45003:2021 accreditation during 2023. This standard covers psychological health and safety at work and the management of psychosocial risks.

6.   Summary of Current Position and Future Areas of Focus

6.1. Whilst significant progress has been made to date, the effective implementation of the current strategy and associated delivery plan objectives will be essential to ensure the continued integration of positive occupational health and safety management practices into all aspects of the organisation's activities and undertakings.

6.2. 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 into their operational norms and practices, ensuring the organisation becomes an increasingly safer and healthier place to work.

6.3. As we approach the end of the period covered by the current 2020-23 strategy, it will be vital that the new three-year strategy seeks to continue the positive occupational health and safety management practices and 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.

6.4. We must engender a sustainable organisational culture, aligned to the *'Safety Differently'* ethos, where all employees actively participate in, and support the advancement of, our shared aims and objectives in relation to health and safety in accordance with a defined *Safety, Health and Wellbeing Charter*.

6.5. Introduction of an ongoing programme of *SMS Compliance Reviews* will assist in ensuring that the safety management system is effectively embedded and consistently applied across the organisation, as well as identify areas for improvement and provide a benchmark for year-on-year comparison or comparison between directorates.

6.6. In order to promote leadership and commitment in relation to health and safety, the *Visible Felt Leadership (VFL) Programme* scheduled to be launched in September 2022, will be essential for engaging and motivating employees, whilst demonstrating commitment and support to overall health, safety and wellbeing management. The VFL Programme also supports the wider *WMCA #BetterConnected* campaign.

6.7. Continued accreditation to the ISO 45001:2018 standard will be essential to externally verify our continued high levels of performance in relation to the management of occupational health and safety. This will be complemented by attaining ISO 45003:2021 accreditation, bringing a greater focus on psychological health and safety at work.

6.8. It will be vital that suitable mechanisms for lessons learnt and benchmarking are in place, which seek to bring out the key learning, opportunities, and next steps in relation to our Health and Safety performance.

6.9. 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. Financial Implications

7.1. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, however as the remit and responsibilities of the WMCA evolve 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.

8. Legal Implications

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

9   Equalities Implications

9.1. There are no specific equalities implications arising from this report. However, it can be confirmed that any changes implemented in relation to new ways of working have been or will be subject to Equality Impact Assessment.

10.   Inclusive Growth Implications

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

11.   Geographical Area of Report's Implications

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

12.   Other Implications

12.1. There are no other implications arising from this report.

13.   Schedule of Background Papers

13.1. Not applicable