Supporting a new vision for the health and wellbeing of railway employees

We are helping the rail industry to reinvigorate its approach to workforce health and wellbeing in a new programme.

Launched on the occasion of the International Workers’ Memorial Day in tandem with ORR’s Occupational Health Programme 2014-19, the programme exploits the benefits of cross-industry collaboration to reduce the cost of poor health and support a ‘road map’ for a series of well planned, effective and prioritised activities that can improve health and wellbeing management across the railway.

Many people across government and society as a whole have started to recognise the human and economic costs of compromised health and impaired wellbeing. The associated cost of ‘absenteeism’ caused by impaired health in GB railway is in the region of £320million per annum. If coupled with ‘presenteeism’ (for example, attending work while unwell), it could be as high as £790million per annum. It is estimated that a 10% cut in absence costs alone would lead to an annual saving of £32million.

Research and analysis involving rail industry leaders, decision makers and occupational health experts has confirmed that recognising and addressing the wellbeing of the workforce brings a wide range of benefits. These include the boost to individuals’ capabilities and happiness, employee relations as well as reducing unnecessary costs and improving the overall sustainability of the organisation and the industry.

Our work on behalf of Network Rail, train and freight operators, rolling stock leasing companies, infrastructure companies, suppliers and supported by the Office of Rail Regulation, has led to a range of new resources including six booklets supporting companies’ development of health policies, and five pieces of supporting research. A new cross-industry policy group will be set up to drive improvements forward.

For more information about the RSSB or to subscribe to Information Bulletin, please visit www.rssb.co.uk.
There are 6 booklets designed to help individual companies develop health policies about addressing:

- Proactive Health Policy
- Internal Health Relationships
- Health Surveillance and Screening
- Mental Health and Stress
- Getting People Back to Productive Work
- Employee Wellness and Engagement

There are five reports about research into:

- The costs of impaired health
- Health data collection and usage
- Occupational health provider relationships
- Internal health relationships
- Health standards

For more information, have a look at our press release and the dedicated area of the website, which includes the road map.

HS2 Ltd joins RSSB

Safety is paramount on the railways and the new north-south high speed rail network will very much build on the industry’s best practice. To ensure the highest safety measures are put in place as the project develops, HS2 Ltd has joined RSSB to benefit from our expertise on risk analysis, standards and research.

Becoming a member means that HS2 Ltd links up with Network Rail, the train and freight operating companies, rolling stock leasing companies (ROSCOs) infrastructure contractors and suppliers in contributing to cross-industry collaboration to improve the rail system as a whole, as well as accessing a shared capacity to understand risk, guide standards and manage research, development and innovation.

HS2 Ltd’s Technical Director, Andrew McNaughton said:

‘This is another important step in the development of a world-class 21st century railway system that will bring huge benefits for the country. HS2 will free up much-needed space on our current network, shorten journey times between our biggest cities and deliver jobs and regeneration opportunities. It is one of our Strategic Requirements to design HS2 so that it will operate at a level of safety regarded as world-leading not just when it opens but throughout the century to come. The know-how of our colleagues, through RSSB, will be invaluable in securing this.’

RSSB’s chief executive Chris Fenton said:

‘2026 may seem like a long way off, but the manner in which HS2’s infrastructure operates tomorrow needs to be considered today. Through RSSB, we can support HS2 in designing in safety and efficiency into its interfaces by providing access to industry’s shared knowledge base, data, analysis, standards, research, development and innovation as well as involving HS2 Ltd in tackling cross-industry challenges. ‘I’m delighted to welcome HS2 Ltd into our membership.’

The company joins the rail industry body in the ‘infrastructure manager’ category and it will be an opportunity to determine how the new rail link will work in practice while designing in critical characteristics such as safety.

HS2 Ltd is the company responsible for developing and promoting the UK’s new high speed rail network. Its current projection suggests construction of the London-Birmingham section could begin in 2017, with the route opening towards the end of 2026. Rail industry leaders see HS2 as a crucial contribution to increasing capacity for the railway and a long term investment in modernising the nation’s transport system.
Management of Change and the Application of Common Safety Method on Risk Evaluation and Assessment

European Commission Regulation (EC) No 352/2009 establishes a Common Safety Method on Risk Evaluation and Assessment (CSM RA). The CSM RA sets out a risk management process that must be applied when any significant change, of a technical, operational or organisational nature, is made to the railway system.

To support the industry in demonstrating compliance with the regulation, RSSB has produced practitioner guidance notes for staff working within a railway undertaking (RU) or infrastructure manager (IM) to ensure the risk management process is appropriately reflected in their safety and quality management systems.

The risk management process set out in the regulation can be applied to any change to the railway system, whether or not it formally meets the test of ‘significance’. Applying the process more generally will avoid the need for duplicate processes.

It is the responsibility of the proposer of a change to identify the hazards associated with the proposed change and to determine what safety measures are needed to control the risks to an acceptable level.

The six Guidance Notes which will be published on the RGS Online website www.rgsonline.co.uk in June complement the guidance produced by the Office of Rail Regulation. They are:

GE/GN8640 Guidance on Planning an Application of the Common Safety Method on Risk Evaluation and Assessment - Issue 1
GE/GN8641 Guidance on System Definition - Issue 1
GE/GN8642 Guidance on Hazard Identification and Classification - Issue 2
GE/GN8643 Guidance on Risk Evaluation and Risk Acceptance - Issue 2
GE/GN8644 Guidance on Safety Requirements and Hazard Management - Issue 1
GE/GN8645 Guidance on Independent Assessment - Issue 1

A revision of the document Taking Safe Decisions which supports the process in the regulation is expected to be published on the RSSB website www.rssb.co.uk at the end of June.

Introducing the Data and Risk Strategy Group

The industry’s Data and Risk Strategy Group (DRSG) held its first meeting on 30 April 2014 chaired by Colin Dennis from RSSB. DRSG is a sub-group of the System Safety Risk Group (SSRG). SSRG reports to the RSSB Board with objectives of understanding 100% of system safety risk, identifying areas for improvement, facilitating safety cooperation across the industry including sharing good practice and horizon scanning to identify potential threats and opportunities.

The DRSG considers the data, modelling, analysis and outputs relating to the risk and safety intelligence information needed to make informed decisions that affect safety on the railway, such as:

- The Safety Management Information System (SMIS)
- The Close Call System (CCS)
- The Safety Risk Model (SRM) and related tools such as the SRM Risk Profile Tool
- The Precursor Indicator Model (PIM)
- The Annual Safety Performance Report
- The Industry Shared Risk Database.

In addition to any new systems in this area that might be developed such as the geographically distributed (GeoSRM), it also considers industry guidance such as:

- Taking Safe Decisions
- Rail industry guidance notes on application of the Common Safety Method for Risk Evaluation and Assessment
- Measuring Safety Performance

The group is made up of train operators (passenger and freight), Network Rail, ROSCO’s, Infrastructure contractors, suppliers plus a member from the Office of Rail Regulation and London Underground/Transport for London.

The group has been tasked with undertaking a review of the existing processes in place and ask whether these are the right processes and competencies in the industry to achieve the vision for the end of CP5.

DRSG will meet at least four times a year and will be supported by three standing groups covering SMIS management, Close Call System development and the High Integrity Software Group. There will also be project specific task forces that will meet for the duration of each project and will then be disbanded. The next meeting is scheduled on 30 July 2014.