

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2009/2010

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Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2009/2010

A message to all staff from the Permanent Secretary



I, and all of my Executive Team colleagues, remain committed to ensuring the highest levels of health, safety and wellbeing across the Department.

During the last year, as you will know, we recruited unprecedented numbers of new staff to cope with the economic downturn. It is extremely gratifying therefore that, even with our greatly increased staffing levels, overall accident levels have remained constant and the number of reportable accidents has reduced as has our sickness absence level. These are significant achievements and I am delighted that they have been recognised through two prestigious Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) awards.

But that does not mean that we cannot improve further. That is why we have signed up to the Health and Safety Executive's 'Pledge – be part of the solution' thereby giving a public commitment to:

- playing an active part in reducing work related injuries and ill-health;
- making health and safety an integral part of all that we do;
- ensuring that we apply a common sense approach to health and safety;
and
- guarding against the dangers of complacency.

Against this background, I hope that you will take just a little time to read this report so you can see what has been achieved and the plans we have for the forthcoming year.

Leigh Lewis

Foreword



Jonathan Russell – Director of DWP Health, Safety and Wellbeing

I am pleased to present the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report for 2009 - 2010.

This last year has seen us deliver a substantial programme of work. This has been achieved through working collaboratively across teams to a greater extent than before to progress our health, safety and wellbeing agenda. It has demonstrated how a strategic and practical approach to occupational health and workplace safety helps enable effective business delivery.

In addition to the two RoSPA awards, it's worth reflecting on the scale of some of the achievements we have delivered this year:

- Achieving the largest decrease in sickness absence in Government;
- Creating and implementing the Physiotherapy Advice Line;
- Creating and implementing the Live Well, Work Well health and wellbeing initiative;

It is important that what we do is business focused and our policies are practical and solution-based. Over the next year and beyond the Department faces significant change. We will manage the change positively and continue to deliver proportionate health, safety and wellbeing objectives, in a way that is valued by all our business customers and stakeholders.

Jonathan Russell

Foreword from Sheila Banks, the Departmental Trade Union Side Chair



The Departmental Trade Unions work hard with management with the aim of making DWP a healthier, safer place to work. This report reflects some of the progress that has been made during the last year and areas that have been identified that we want to improve in 2010/11.

We are particularly pleased that, despite the pressures brought about by the economic downturn, the number of assaults and attempted assaults on staff have gone down. Nevertheless there can be absolutely no room for complacency. The consequences of just one of these incidents for the individual member of staff involved can be incredibly traumatic and distressing. All abuse and violence aimed at staff is unacceptable. That is why we have been closely involved in the development of a much improved reporting and management system to deal with unacceptable customer behaviour which we hope to see fully operational very soon.

Improved reporting arrangements have revealed the prevalence of acoustic incidents and acoustic shock within the Department, reflecting our increased use of telephony. We believe improvements in our training and telephony in DWP contact centres are an urgent priority and are pleased that the Department is intending to address these issues in the work programme for the coming year.

Much of our work with management on Health & Safety is done through our joint safety committees. Our safety committee structure in DWP works throughout the department from local level right up to the national level committee jointly chaired by HR Director Chris Last and myself. Safety committees enable us to sit down and jointly identify trends, problems and potential solutions to the Health and Safety issues we face as staff and we look forward to this constructive relationship continuing in the coming year.

Sheila Banks

The vision

To make working for DWP a rewarding and productive experience by:

- Providing a healthy, safe and supportive environment in which to work, and
- Improving the health, wellbeing and engagement of our employees.

Our approach and objectives

Our approach is strategic: embracing all the physical, psychological and social factors that impact on the health, safety, engagement and wellbeing of our employees.

Our objectives are to:

- Prevent, remove or reduce the workplace factors that cause ill health and injury;
- Ensure health and safety risk across the whole of DWP is properly managed through effective and joined up risk management strategies;
- Support employees in the management of their ill health or rehabilitation, enabling them to remain in work or return to work more quickly;
- Promote the benefits of healthy lifestyles, empowering employees to make informed choices;
- Improve health and wellbeing through targeted intervention;
- Support DWP's business transformation through systematic review and refinement of health and safety policies and guidance;
- Support all health and safety business partners in implementing and maintaining all the components of a Safety Management System;
- Develop leadership and people capabilities in the health and safety arena.

Health and Safety Issues faced by DWP staff

Robust and practical policies and procedures are in place to ensure the key health and safety issues affecting DWP staff are controlled and managed. Effective performance measuring and review processes throughout the year have resulted in improvements in compliance in the four key risk areas ([see Appendix C for detailed data](#)). The number of accidents reported remained steady, the number of reported incidents involving verbal abuse rose by 4% while attempted assaults against staff fell by 9% and actual assaults by 23%.

These key health and safety issues are controlled by ensuring that:

- All staff who use Display Screen Equipment (DSE) have up to date training and an up to date DSE risk assessment;
- All other personal risk assessments are completed;
- Each business has effective incident management and accident prevention processes in place; and,
- All staff and managers are competent in health and safety management and practice through appropriate training.

Achievements during the year

One aim, in all aspects of our work, is to ensure the products meet the needs of the business. They have been developed in consultation with all key stakeholders, including health and safety business partners and the Departmental Trade Union Side.

The Health Safety & Wellbeing Team's (HSWT) main achievements in 2009/10:

- We have established and chair a health and safety Cross Government Working Group. The Group's role is to assist in improving health and safety across the Civil Service, promote the sharing of best practice between Departments and help ensure consistency and appropriateness of approach.
- DWP published information about its health and safety performance on the HSE Corporate Health and Safety Performance Index, ([CHaSPI](#)). DWP achieved a score of 8.2 out of a possible 10. This represents the fifth highest score out of forty nine public sector organisations.
- We developed an unacceptable customer behaviour reporting and management system, in partnership with our health and safety business partners and trade union side.

- We have 2 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) accredited auditors on the team and three others are working towards accreditation.
- We implemented the innovative healthy living programme entitled live well work well. This new approach has been specifically developed to fit the needs of individual employees and enable them to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing. The programme includes personalised information, guidance and support on a range of wellbeing topics. Management Information will identify health risk areas and enable the development of targeted solutions framework to drive improvements in health and wellbeing. To date 65,000 employees have had the opportunity to access the programme.
- In May, the Department was awarded two RoSPA awards: a Gold award for management of occupational health and safety and a Commended in the Astor Trophy for effective management of occupational health services.

In the Businesses

The key achievements, in no particular order of priority were:

In Jobcentre Plus, we have

- Continued to be involved with the 'Design Out' of new processes, changes and initiatives. Jobcentre Plus has a National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) qualified team committed to delivering support and advice across its regions, countries and core business directorates.
- Launched a new intranet site (not available outside DWP) based on the Safety Management System, ensuring its commitment to continuous improvement and delivery. This will continue to develop and expand in the coming year.
- A Safety Committee structure, which continues to be developed and reviewed to take into account business change ensuring all areas of business remain supported within this forum.
- Continued to improve upon our health and safety performance targets. Information and performance measurement is gathered on a monthly basis using Management of Safety and Health and Management Information System Programme tools. In addition a validation process has been developed and delivered to the performance community in operations to enable assurance of health and safety performance.

- An Organisation and Arrangements framework giving a clear statement of the roles and health and safety responsibilities of staff and managers at all levels;

“This has been a challenging year for Jobcentre Plus, and as we forge ahead into a new era of service delivery, I am clear that in managing those changes and challenges, health and safety must remain an integral part of that delivery to ensure a safe environment for our staff and customers alike. Both myself and our new Chief Executive, Darra Singh are confident that the strong working relationships that exist within the health and safety community will help ensure our continued success and commitment in the future.”
Ruth Owen, Jobcentre Plus Chief Operating Officer

In The Pension, Disability and Carers Service, we have

- Reviewed and published the Organisation and Arrangements framework, giving a clear outline of health and safety roles and responsibilities for staff at all levels
- A NEBOSH qualified central team to deliver advice and support to local health and safety business partners who are trained to Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) or NEBOSH standard
- Fully embedded the principles of ‘Successful health and safety management (HSG 65)’, published by the Health and Safety Executive, across PDCS
- Against a target of 95%, achieved 98% across all business units in each of the key risk areas (personal health and safety training, DSE training and risk assessment and training for managers)
- Carried out two full ROSPA audits and two team members who have gained formal RoSPA auditor accreditation
- Continued to act in genuine partnership with Trade Union side (TUS), working collaboratively to ensure health and safety is embedded in the workplace.

“We continue to ensure that staff operate in the safest environment possible. Our supportive network of health and safety business partners has again ensured the maintenance of a consistently high standard of health and safety compliance across the business, and it is pleasing to note that targets for key risk areas continue to be met and exceeded. We have also maintained and developed close working relationships with DWP health and safety colleagues and others, to ensure that our efforts are co-ordinated and compliment each other in this critical field.”

Sarah Scullion, PDCS HR Director

In Shared Services, we have

- An Organisation and Arrangements framework giving a clear statement of the roles and health and safety responsibilities of staff and managers at all levels.
- Established a Health and Safety Network of Managers, with the majority trained to IOSH standard.
- A fully operable safety committee structure in place.
- Introduced an effective health and safety data collection system and compliance rates currently stand between 91 – 94%.
- Developed a health and safety intranet site (not available outside DWP), which is now live.

“Shared Services continue to commit significant time and resources to Health and Safety and Wellbeing at Work. Working in close collaboration with our Trade Union colleagues we are all passionate about making Shared Services a safe and healthy place to work. This is simply good business, a healthy and safe workforce is a highly productive one”.

Kevin Roberts, Head of Corporate Services, DWP Shared Services

In Corporate HR, we have

- Achieved full compliance across three of the four key risk areas and achieved 94% compliance in Managers Health and Safety Training (which is compulsory for all EOs and above in Corporate HR).
- Produced quarterly Health and Safety Reports, an Annual Report and Health and Safety Plan for the Corporate HR board and staff.
- Maintained a dedicated Corporate HR Health and Safety intranet site (not available outside DWP).

In Corporate IT, we have

- An Organisation and Arrangements Framework, which provides a clear statement of health and safety roles and responsibilities for staff and managers.
- Issued quarterly newsletters to help raise awareness of health and safety and a new intranet site provides staff with direction and access to key contacts.
- Continuously improved and achieved compliance in all key risk areas, through quarterly analysis and measuring of health and safety management information, which informed Corporate IT (CIT) and Directorates priorities.

“Health and Safety compliance remains a key priority for Corporate IT and the proactive approach of its line managers and staff continues to contribute to the achievement of a safe working environment.”

Joe Harley CBE, DWP IT Director General and Chief Information Officer

In Group Finance, we have

- Continued to comply with HSG65 across the directorate.
- In Group Finance Division, achieved and maintained a fully compliant status across the four key risk areas, since December. This has been accomplished through the network of Health and Safety Representatives in each business unit who have taken responsibility for promoting health and safety awareness and pushing forward the health and safety agenda in their areas.

In Legal Group, we have

- A continuing commitment to working towards full compliance on health and safety, and as a result performance continues to improve across all areas. Compliance rates in three of the key risk areas are over 95%, with one area at 92%. Compliance figures in the non mandatory areas continue to improve too, with most achieving 90% or more.
- Taken follow up action on areas of non-compliance and Legal Group Management Board (LGMB) members are regularly updated on progress.
- Regular reviews of health and safety performance and initiatives to maintain awareness have been introduced.

In Strategy, Information and Pensions, we have

- Continued to promote and raise awareness of health and safety through all-staff bulletins and through our leadership team, including messages from our Director General.
- Made improvements during the year across all mandatory areas and continue to monitor and report on compliance.
- Continued to work closely with service providers through our Safety Committees to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all our staff.

In Employment Group (EG) and Welfare & Wellbeing Group (WWG), we have

- At Senior Management level, continued to support the health and safety of all EG and WWG staff and receive quarterly reports on compliance and any other key safety issues.
- Increased compliance levels through the use of red/amber/green reporting. Key mandatory training modules and risk assessment have reached over 90% attainment. We will continue to monitor compliance carefully as major organisational change takes place at the start of 2010/11 in EG Delivery Directorate.
- Created self help health and safety intranet pages for EG and WWG staff to aid induction and act as a refresher for existing staff. This will further help to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and also in line with DWP's health and safety policies.

In the Communications Directorate, we have

- worked with senior managers and colleagues to raise awareness of health and safety training.
- carried out a deep-dive analysis of our training statistics to identify and target non-compliance.
- made significant improvements in compliance with health and safety training, reaching 81% at the end of the year and we aim to reach target by the end of September 2010.

Health and safety service provider

Telereal Trillium has published an Expanded- PRIME annual report.

The Commercial Directorate Estates team

The Commercial Directorate Estates Team responsible for the Newcastle estate are committed to ensuring that the delivery of health and safety services to DWP and Non Departmental Public Bodies staff on the relevant sites is equal to those provided by Telereal Trillium.

Plans for the forthcoming year

The challenges ahead are to build on the work to ensure risks to employee safety continues to be controlled as well as focus activity on risks to employees health and wellbeing.

In 2010/11, working in partnership with our stakeholders, HSWT will:

- Implement the health and safety audit programme.
- Launch and implement the new Unacceptable Customer Behaviour reporting and management system.
- Develop an accident prevention strategy.
- Develop policy around customer handling staff dealing with suicide/self-harm threats.
- Develop further guidance on TU appointed safety representatives.
- Develop a single departmental policy on office environment (heating, humidity etc).
- Develop appropriate management information collection arrangements to enable monitoring of contractor performance.
- Develop and implement a strategic Wellbeing Framework for the Department. We will achieve this by:
 - Continuing the roll out of the “live well work well” initiative across DWP providing a range of health and wellbeing related solutions.
 - Launching and maintaining the new Employee Assistance Programme to support our staff in the delivery of business services.
 - Taking action to ensure value for money when extending/renewing the eye-care and health and safety learning contracts.
 - Continuing the programme of work undertaken in conjunction with the Health and Safety Laboratory in developing a simplified approach to managing stress.

- Improve learning products for staff who work in contact centres. We will do this by:
 - Developing DWP-wide Keeping Safe training products and communication tools.
 - Ongoing work around health and safety in contact centres - delivery of new learning products, telephony issues etc.

Finally...

We hope you have found this health and safety annual report useful. For more details of policies and procedures and keeping up to date on new items, you can view our intranet site 'Health and Safety' (not available outside DWP).

It is our aim to build on the achievements referred to in this report and ensure continuous improvement in all our products. It is important that we continue to develop simple, proportionate policies to ensure the control and management of health, safety and wellbeing is embedded in our day to day activities.

We welcome customer feedback on our policies and procedures and on ways in which we can continue to improve our service.

Jonathan Russell
Director of Health, Safety and Wellbeing

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this report please contact Dawn Kane, Health Safety and Wellbeing Team on 0113 232 4834

Appendix A

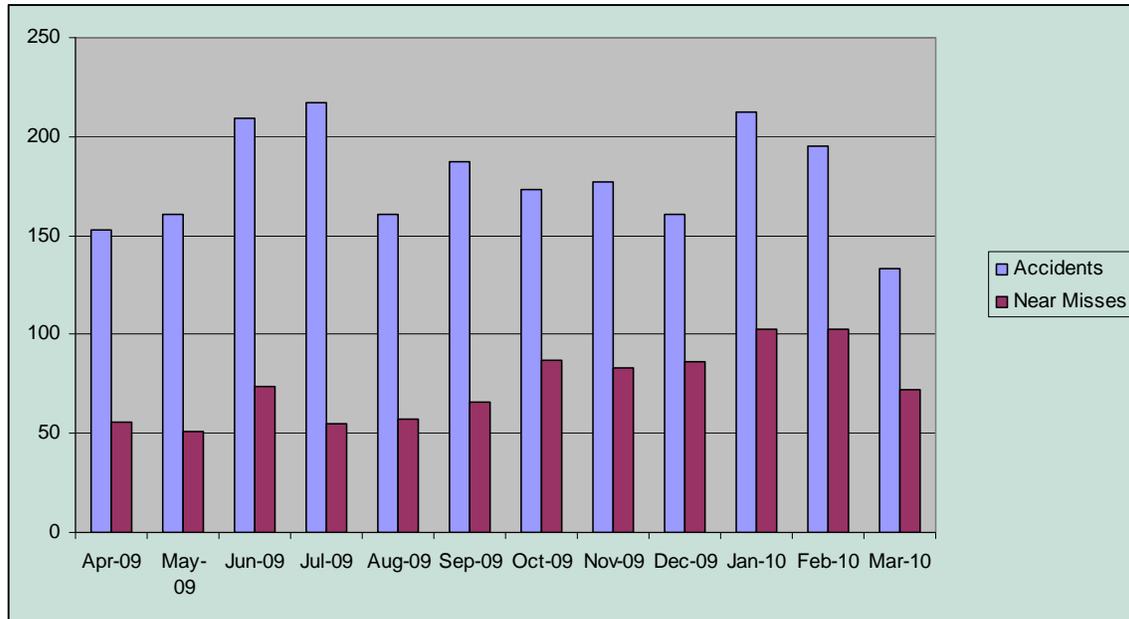
Accidents in DWP (E Prime)

	2008-2009		2009-2010	
	Number	Number per 100 staff	Number	Number per 100 staff
Accidents	2130	2.03	2139	1.82
Near Misses	784	0.75	893	0.76
TOTAL	2914	2.78	3032	2.58
No of accidents which were reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)	172	0.16	121	0.10

- The overall level of accidents remained constant despite an increase in staffing levels
- The number of RIDDOR reportable accidents reduced by 30%
- There were no fatalities in the Department
- There have been no enforcement notices served on the Department.

Charts

Accidents in DWP April 2009 to March 2010



Accidents on the non PRIME Newcastle Estate

	2008-2009	2009-2010
	Number	Number
Accidents	149	152
Near Misses	9	33
TOTAL	158	185

Appendix B

Incidents in DWP

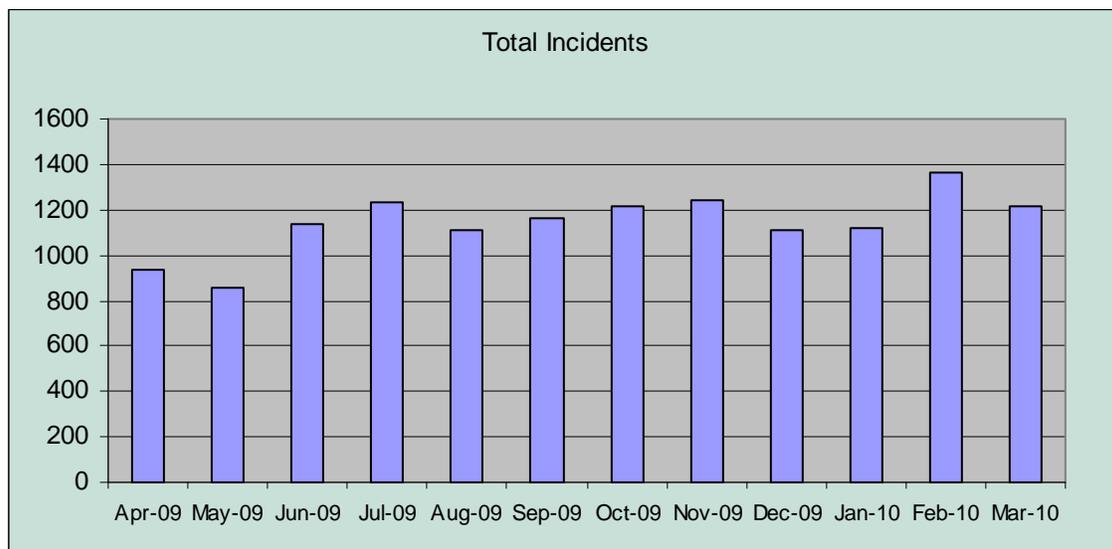
	2008/09	2009-2010
Verbal abuse/threat	12160	12610
Actual assault	435	336
Attempted assault	925	840
* Other/ not known	216	214
TOTAL	13736	14000

(all figures include Customer Care Officers)

*Other: Refers to damage to property, customers fighting with no staff involvement or forms with insufficient information to categorise.

Whilst there was a slight increase in the total number of reported incidents, there was a marked reduction in the number of actual and attempted assaults: -23% and -9% respectively.

Charts



Appendix C

Other key risk areas

A statistical summary of the four key risk areas is shown below, detailing the percentage of staff and managers who have completed health and safety training and have DSE risk assessments.

Rounded percentage totals as at 31/3/10				
Last year's figures shown in brackets				
DWP Business	Display Screen Equipment Risk Assessments	Display Screen Equipment Training	Personal H&S Training	Managers H&S Training
Jobcentre Plus *	(94) 94	(94) 94	(89) 95	(90) 96
The Pension, Disability and Carers Service	(98) 99	(97) 98	(97) 98	(98) 98
Shared Services	(96) 93	(95) 92	(89) 94	(88) 91
Corporate IT	(94) 96	(90) 96	(88) 95	(95) 94
DWP Communications	(53) 81	(53) 81	(47) 81	(74) 79
Group Finance	(80) 96	(82) 97	(76) 97	(64) 98
Corporate HR	(97) 95	(97) 96	(96) 96	(99) 94
Legal Group	(92) 97	(93) 95	(91) 95	(89) 93
Strategy, Information & Pensions	(49) 55	(39) 65	(26) 65	(21) 54
WWEG	(19)	(19)	(14)	N/ k
EG	90	90	92	98
WWG	92	92	91	97

*Taken from MISP