

# **THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL HEALTH & SAFETY TEAM**

## **Introduction**

The Health & Safety team forms part of the Council's Corporate Services and is based in offices in the ground of Inverness High School, Dochfour Drive, Inverness. The team currently comprises a Manager, 3 Health & Safety Advisers and a Senior Clerical Assistant/Typist. The service specific responsibilities of the advisers are shown at the back of this leaflet. Some may be unfamiliar with the range of duties we perform and others may be unsure of the extent of our involvement in issues such as risk assessment. It is hoped therefore that the following information may help to clarify the situation.

## **Role**

The principal role of the team is to assist the Council in meeting the requirements of health and safety legislation. This in itself enables the Council to meet the legal obligation contained in Regulation 7 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to seek competent assistance in health and safety matters.

The development of a safety culture and the promotion of health and safety in general terms are other important roles. The aim being to have an organisational culture which considers safe working practices and healthy working conditions to be the norm.

## **Functions**

In order to fulfil this role members of the health and safety team undertake the following functions:-

### **1. Policy Development including:**

- Development and review of Corporate Health & Safety Policy.
- Advice on development of Service and workplace specific policies.
- Guidance in Support of implementation of Health & Safety Policy.

### **2. Health & Safety Advice to Council Members, Management and all employees, relating to:**

- Meeting legal requirements.
- Establishing safe systems of work.
- Safety management.
- Health & Safety training needs.
- First-Aid and accident prevention, recording and investigation.
- Design and layout of buildings.
- Procedures for risk assessments including COSHH and DSE.
- Discussions at all levels throughout the Council's organisation to encourage improvements in health and safety performance.

### **3. Health & Safety Monitoring, including:**

- Visits, Inspections and audits of Council workplaces and work activities to monitor compliance with policy, legal requirements and best practice.
- Preparation of reports highlighting problems and detailing recommendations arising from site visits and inspections.

### **4. Health & Safety Consultation, including:-**

- Facilitating and advising on means of health and safety consultation throughout the Council's organisation. This includes formation of safety committees, safety working groups, co-ordinating groups, etc.
- Attendance at consultative groups.
- Consultation with recognised trade unions on proposed developments in health and safety policy and guidance.
- Meeting with enforcement agency and other outside bodies.
- Encouraging the inclusion of health and safety on the agenda of all appropriate workplace, team and management/supervisory meetings.

### **5. Health & Safety Training, including:-**

- Responding to the Health & Safety training needs of the Council.
- Development of appropriate Health & Safety training courses.
- Delivery of courses in conjunction with the Employee Development Team.

### **6. Accident Investigation, including:-**

- Carrying out investigations where appropriate.
- Advice to others who may have to investigate accidents, including requirement to notify HSE in certain circumstances.
- Maintaining accident records and preparation of reports on accident trends and accident prevention.

### **7. Maintaining a comprehensive library of Health & Safety reference material including:-**

- All relevant Health & Safety Legislation.
- Approved Codes of Practice, British Standards and Guidance Notes.
- Videos and reference books.
- Leaflets and information sheets.
- Training equipment and course materials.
- CD ROM Information system.

The above is not a definitive list of all the functions carried out by the Health & Safety Team. It is intended as a guide to the type of service we can provide if anyone is having difficulty with a health and safety related issue.

