



HEALTH AND SAFETY  
AUTHORITY



Health and Safety Authority  
**Programme of Work**  
**2008**

Working to create a  
National Culture of  
Excellence in Workplace  
Safety, Health and Welfare  
for Ireland



## PROGRAMME OF WORK 2008

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**FOREWORD**

**I am pleased to present the Authority's programme of work for 2008. This is the second programme since the introduction of our Strategy Statement for 2007 to 2009 and the first since I was appointed as Chief Executive.**

There are some things that you will find familiar in this programme. Progress has been made in reducing fatality and accident rates across a range of sectors and issues. Overall fatality rates have been falling since 2000 and the fatality rate in the construction sector, particularly in relation to falls, has declined. However, the agriculture, quarrying and construction sectors still have high rates of death and injury and these sectors will feature prominently in this programme, as they have in all previous programmes.

As many injuries and illnesses arise because of decisions made by directors and senior managers, the Authority will be working to increase their awareness of occupational health and safety issues and of their legal responsibilities. In our activities we will be supportive of employers so as to enable them to meet their responsibilities.

The Authority has been implementing a comprehensive programme to renew, update and simplify occupational safety and health legislation. This programme will continue in 2008 and we will carry on the revision of existing guidance and the production of new guidance aimed, in particular, at smaller employers.

Some areas of our programme might not be as familiar. We believe that the education sector has an important role in preparing young people for the world of work and the Authority will be working to ensure that occupational health and safety becomes a core part of curricula and of many training activities.

With approximately four inspectors per 100,000 workers, the Authority must target most of its inspections at higher risk sectors and non-compliant employers. We will develop our systems during 2008 so that those with a poor compliance history can expect to receive more inspections. Measures of compliance will include inspection history, enforcement history and degree of compliance with injury and construction notification requirements.

Workers who are non-Irish nationals have far higher rates of injury than Irish workers. The Authority will conclude research investigating the reasons for this and will target sectors employing large numbers of non-Irish national workers for intervention.



The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 contains provisions for the payment of penalties instead of prosecution. In consultation with the social partners, the Authority will bring forward proposals to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment for the early implementation of the necessary regulations and support infrastructure for such a system.

The staff of the Authority have contributed greatly to the overall improvements in health and safety provision in the workplace. The Authority will implement a staff development programme to ensure that its employees continue to have the necessary skills to implement our programme of work in an effective, fair, helpful, open and professional manner and to achieve our goals.



**Martin O'Halloran**  
Chief Executive Officer



## 1 HEALTH AND SAFETY AUTHORITY GOALS

- Goal 1:** Raise the level of general awareness of occupational safety, health and welfare in the workplace among employers, employees and society in general.
- Goal 2:** Target the workers and managers of the future by fostering a culture of safety through early and continued interventions in the education and training systems.
- Goal 3:** Make relevant specific information and guidance easily available to those who manage and promote workplace safety in all sectors and assist them to achieve their targets.
- Goal 4:** Enforce occupational safety, health and welfare legislation through targeted and prioritised inspections and through legal action where necessary.
- Goal 5:** Develop a research programme on current, emerging and future high-risk areas in workplace safety, health and welfare which will inform all our actions.
- Goal 6:** Ensure that the Authority and its staff, resources and facilities deliver on these corporate goals in line with best practice and value for money.

### KEY ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS:

- Safety and health management and the personal responsibility of directors and managers.
- Second level education initiative.
- Legislation programme including: REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals), GHS (Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals), machinery, electromagnetic fields, optical radiation, Construction Code of Practice, payment in lieu of prosecution, intoxicants, mines, and associated guidance.
- Construction safety partnership.
- Public service procurement.
- Inspections of hotels, restaurants and financial services sectors.
- Small contractors' resource pack.
- Simply presented information for small businesses.
- Promote codes of practice in the construction and agriculture sectors.
- Workplace vehicle and pedestrian safety.



- ■ Contribute to FETAC recognition of occupational safety awards.
- ■ Animal handling in agriculture.
- ■ Publish revised Forestry Code of Practice.
- ■ Commence implementation of the prevention recommendations in our workplace health and wellbeing strategy and work with other government departments and agencies to ensure the implementation of promotion and rehabilitation recommendations.
- ■ Review best practice in relation to intoxicants in the workplace.
- ■ Increase inspection numbers by 10% to 17,500.
- ■ Target small and non-compliant employers for inspection.
- ■ Put in place infrastructure for payment in lieu of prosecution.
- ■ The number of enforcement notices issued is expected to rise, based on existing non-compliance rates.
- ■ Conduct 1,500 chemical agents (including REACH and GHS) inspections.
- ■ Work towards implementation of the HAY Report on resourcing of the Authority.
- ■ Implement the REACH programme, including the final recruitment phase.
- ■ Implement a major redesign of the enforcement management system to facilitate improved targeting of inspections.
- ■ Implement the Government decision to decentralise to Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, including moving the Kilkenny office to its new location.
- ■ Implement the provisions of Towards 2016.
- ■ Ensure high standards of corporate governance and in the management of our staff and finances.
- ■ Inform the national agenda on safety and health.
- ■ Support and advise the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment in relation to the drafting of safety and health regulations.



## 2 OVERVIEW OF 2008 PROGRAMME

**This document refers to the planned principal activities of the Authority during 2008. The Authority carries out a wide range of operational activities but not all of these are detailed in this programme. Our main activities are addressed under five headings:**

- Key Sectors
- Key Hazards and Issues
- Multi-Sector Programmes
- Chemicals Programme
- Corporate Enablement Programmes

The Authority works in consultation and partnership with a wide range of interests to provide advice, assistance and encouragement aimed at the prevention of work-related accidents and the promotion of occupational safety and health at all levels of Ireland's economy.

The Authority's areas of work are as diverse as the economy itself, covering every type of workplace and every kind of work in the public and private sectors. Our work has two principal strands – on the one hand it involves a focus on prevention, education and training, and on the other it involves enforcement of the law.

**In 2008 we will conduct 17,500 inspections of workplaces, on both a targeted and random basis.**

Where our partnership or advisory approach does not have the desired effect, or where breaches of legislation occur, the Authority is empowered to enforce compliance and to seek penalties wherever necessary. In 2008 we will conduct 17,500 inspections of workplaces, on both a targeted and random basis. Targeted inspections will be based on various factors including previous inspection history, high-risk sectors and compliance with duties such as notification of accidents and construction projects. Our inspectors will expect managers to be able to demonstrate compliance. Poor compliance will result in the taking of appropriate enforcement action.

A challenging legislative programme will see the continuing promotion and implementation of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.





## **2.1 KEY SECTORS**

Ireland has over 200,000 workplaces and a workforce of over two million people. Therefore, in order to make the best use of its resources, the Authority will prioritise a number of specific sectors for attention. These include the high-risk sectors of agriculture, construction, mines and quarries, as well as the health services, local authorities and the chemical process industries.

Using both promotion and enforcement activities, the Authority will work to improve the standard of safety on Irish farms and to achieve an increase in the percentage of farms in compliance with the Agriculture Code of Practice. We will also publish a code of practice tailored to employers of three or less employees in the construction sector. A similar code of practice will be developed for the fishing sector and an inspection programme will target key risks. An inspection programme covering all sectors will target safety management, including the presence of a safety statement or compliance with a code of practice. The public sector will continue to be the focus of an inspection and information programme to identify compliance levels and to seek remedial action where necessary.

Research will be conducted into the safety issues involved in the employment of non-English-speaking workers in the construction sector, including risk perception, levels of awareness of employer obligations and worker entitlements in this regard. This research will be carried out with a view towards establishing a best practice approach to the safety and health of new workers in our economy, in partnership with the industry and other agencies.

## **2.2 KEY HAZARDS AND ISSUES**

Following analysis of inspection reports, accident statistics and the changing nature of the Irish workplace, the Authority will be targeting a number of key hazards in 2008. Targeting slip and trip hazards and manual handling, two of the biggest causes of reported injuries each year, feature strongly in this programme of work. As does working at height, which is one of the biggest causes of accidents in a number of sectors, most notably construction.

Manual handling will be targeted through an active inspection programme in the construction, healthcare and transport sectors. This will be carried out as part of an EU-wide manual handling campaign and will follow up on the EU SLIC manual handling campaign carried out in 2007 in the healthcare and transport sectors.

As in previous years, moving vehicles, machinery, noise, vibration, the transport of dangerous goods, electricity, asbestos, chemical fumes, dangerous dusts and stress are issues singled out for attention. In relation to vehicles, the primary focus will be the particular danger they pose to workers/pedestrians on construction sites and the implementation of new requirements for reversing vehicles arising from the 2006 Construction Regulations.



### **2.3 MULTI-SECTOR PROGRAMMES**

While much of the Authority's work is by necessity sector-specific or hazard-specific, there are many programmes that clearly span all sectors and hazards. We will commence a youth education programme to influence the managers and workers of the future, and an innovative micro-business support programme will be tailored to meet the needs of those employing ten or less staff, including the self-employed. We will implement the recommendations of the Evaluation Report of the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC), produced following their 2007 review of our enforcement function.

Across all our activities, we will continue our programme aimed at influencing chief executives, directors and senior managers in favour of workplace safety and health. This is a three-year programme which started in 2006 and we will compare the results found in 2006 with those from 2007 and 2008 with a view towards ongoing improvement of our initiatives. During inspections, we will promote the recently published Guidance for Directors and Senior Managers.

### **2.4 CHEMICALS PROGRAMME**

Chemicals remain a key focus in 2008 as the Authority concludes its implementation phase on REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) and moves to the operational phase. The Authority also concludes its competent authority role for certain elements of the existing chemical legislation (e.g. notification of new substances) in 2008 and continues its transition from existing legislation on classification, packaging and labelling for dangerous substances and preparations to the new GHS (Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals) system. To address the new requirements of REACH and GHS, the Authority will assist the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in introducing the Chemicals Regulation and Enforcement Bill detailing the administrative and enforcement requirements. In addition to the policy elements for REACH and GHS, the Authority will introduce a comprehensive chemicals advisory and inspection programme for 2008 and beyond.

On the occupational side, the Authority will continue to fulfil its competent authority role for existing legislation in regard to carcinogens, chemical and biological agents and asbestos. A particular emphasis in 2008 will be on streamlining available guidance and developing training guidance for asbestos workers.

### **2.5 CORPORATE ENABLEMENT PROGRAMMES**

The Authority's enforcement management system will be re-designed to enable more effective targeting of inspections. The Authority will continue to implement its move to decentralised offices in Thomastown. Authority staff will receive training and development opportunities to enable them to manage their demanding programmes.



## 3 KEY SECTORS

### 3.1 OVERALL INSPECTION PROGRAMME

The Authority will carry out a programme of 17,500 targeted and random workplace inspections in 2008, across all sectors, so that its inspectors can provide supportive advice and information on site, assess compliance with the law and take enforcement action where appropriate.

Targeted inspections will be risk based; workplaces will be selected on the basis of inspection history, high-risk sectors and compliance with accident and construction site reporting requirements. The purpose of this approach is to target our resources effectively throughout 2008, focusing on prioritised workplaces, and those companies, regions and sectors with a poor compliance record.

Our inspections will continue to focus on influencing chief executives and senior managers in relation to workplace safety and health management requirements and duty-holder responsibilities. Safety statements will be sought in the majority of workplaces routinely inspected and assessed by our inspectors. In particular, specific risks observed by inspectors during inspections will be used as examples of poor safety and health management and managers will be informed that the system, as well as the risks, needs to be improved. 10% of inspected workplaces will be targeted for a revisit to assess improvements to safety management systems.

The development of our IT-based enforcement management system will continue in 2008 with a projected full implementation date in the first quarter of 2009. This upgrade will facilitate more targeted inspection programmes as set out above.

The Authority will target 17,500 inspections in the following sectors:

- 7,000: Construction sites, to continue to roll out 2006 Construction Regulations and Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP), and promote Code of Practice for Employers of Three or Less Construction Employees.
- 1,600: Retail and private petroleum store and carriage of dangerous goods by road (ADR) inspections.
- 1,500: Manufacturing, to cover risk assessments, safety statements, work equipment standards and CE marking, of which at least 500 will be targeted at those employers where two or more notices were served in 2006 and 2007 and at those with more than 50 employees and where no accidents were notified in the last two years.



- 1,500: Chemical inspections, covering 300 process industries and COMAH 2006 (SEVESO II) sites.
- 1,500: Agriculture, forestry and fishing.
- 1,000: Services-based inspections in hotels, restaurants and financial sectors, covering manual handling and safety and health protection for foreign workers in hotels; work organisation, stress and bullying in financial services.
- 1,000: Others, covering education, retail, commercial diving, and following up on accidents and complaints etc.
- 700 other chemical agents REACH or GHS inspections.
- 500: Occupational hygiene visits.
- 500 inspections will also cover noise.
- 500: Road Transport, to cover risk assessments for driving/periods for driving, load security etc.
- 500: Mines and quarries, of which at least 100 will be follow-up inspections for enforcement notices served in 2006 and 2007; enforce new Quarries Regulations; follow up on silica survey.
- 300: Local authorities, to concentrate on large infrastructural projects, safety and health management issues.
- 300: Manual handling, to continue the EU SLIC manual handling campaign in health care, transport and construction.
- 200: Health services, to concentrate on violence to workers, psychiatric hospitals, nursing homes.
- 100: Waste recycling centres.

Concentrate inspections on small and non-compliant employers.

*(Note: Some inspections, such as Noise, will address both sectorised and topic based inspection targets)*

We will continue and complete the Safety Management Application Field Enforcement Re-development project in 2008, including the introduction of a risk-rating and inspection-targeted SAFE (**S**ystem for **A**ccident and **F**ield **E**nforcement) system. We will also develop sector-specific guidance for inspectors and develop inspector training programmes in order to implement the recommendations from the EU SLIC's Evaluation Report.

Based on known non-compliance levels, about one in five inspections may result in enforcement action in 2008.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- **17,500 inspections carried out.**
- **SAFE system re-development programme completed by end 2008 and inspection rating system implemented.**



### 3.2 AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHING

The Authority will support the work of the Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee (FSPAC) in agreeing and implementing a revised farm safety action plan. We will work to improve the standard of safety on Irish farms and to achieve an increase in the percentage of farms in compliance with the Agriculture Code of Practice through promotion of the code and initiatives to achieve greater behavioural change amongst farmers.

We will introduce best practice guidelines on animal handling for marts, abattoirs and meat factories.

In collaboration with the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI), we will host a joint seminar on farm safety.

We will benchmark agriculture safety and health standards internationally.

We will publish the revised Forestry Code of Practice and Child Safety Code of Practice.

We will carry out 1,500 inspections as follows: 1,350 farms, 50 forestry operations and 100 fishing boats. The focus in all three areas will be on the relevant codes of practice and safety and health management.

We will continue to manage the FSPAC's participation in the National Ploughing Championships and will have a presence at two other shows to promote safety, particularly in relation to the safety of the elderly on farms. We will continue our joint initiative with Teagasc, particularly on training and relevant research. We will promote continued and further training, including the half-day code of practice training and tractor skills training for young people.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- **An overall 5% increase in the compliance rates recorded through inspections, correlated to the known and targeted hazards/risks in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector.**
- **A 20% increase in the level of adoption of the Agriculture and Forestry Codes of Practice.**
- **The Fishing Code of Practice introduced and promoted.**
- **1,500 inspections carried out.**

### 3.3 CONSTRUCTION

The Authority continues to focus on its commitment to improve safety and health standards on construction sites. This will be achieved through a focused programme of 7,000 construction site inspections. In 2008 the Authority will continue to implement the 2006 Construction Regulations and Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) and promote the Code of Practice for Employers of Three or Less Construction Employees 2008 and the Code of Practice on Scaffolding launched in 2007.



In addition, we will continue to focus on: the appointment of competent designers, project supervisors and contractors; the provision of safety and health plans and safety statements; the management of work at height; traffic management and safety in the operation of vehicles; welfare arrangements; manual handling; slips, trips and falls; cement dermatitis; and health surveillance.

Two inspection campaigns during the year will focus on noise and hand-arm vibration respectively.

We will explore opportunities for an inter-agency approach to address the findings of research, started in 2007, into the safety issues involved in the employment of non-English-speaking workers in the construction sector.

We will continue to contribute to the implementation by FÁS of the Claritas Report on the administration of the Safe Pass and Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS). We will contribute to the development and review of the Safe Pass and CSCS programmes.

We will develop, consult on and publish codes of practice on construction anchors, pre-cast concrete and roofwork.

We will publish the following guidance documents: Guide for Best Practice Clients, Construction Plant/Equipment Safety, Use of Explosives in the Construction Industry, and Guide to Wet Concrete Work.

We will consult on and seek ministerial approval for I.S. 360: 2004 Code of Practice: Safe Use of Cranes in the Construction Industry – Part 1: General, having regard to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, the Construction Regulations 2006 and the General Application Regulations 2007.

We will support and actively participate in the Construction Safety Partnership, taking account of the six goals in the 2007 to 2009 strategy statement.

We will consult with the Construction Advisory Committee (CAC), a sub-committee of the Board of the Authority, on codes of practice and relevant guidance documents. Following on from the setting up of a CAC sub-committee on third level education in 2007, we will research and develop a framework curriculum on safety and health for third level institutions.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **An overall 5% increase in the compliance rates recorded through inspections, correlated to the known and targeted hazards/risks in the construction sector and particularly with reference to senior management responsibilities.**
- **Relevant guidance developed and drafted on best practice clients, plant and equipment, use of explosives in the construction industry and wet concrete work.**
- **Codes of practice published on pre-cast concrete, anchors and roofwork.**
- **Research completed, recommendations made and actions taken on the issues involved in the employment of non-English-speaking workers within the construction sector.**
- **7,000 inspections carried out.**



### 3.4 MINES AND QUARRIES

Improvements in the safety and health management of the mining and quarrying sector will be achieved by a number of key measures. As in 2007 the Authority will carry out a programme of 500 inspections, targeting smaller operators, with a focus on machinery, CE marking, mobile and fixed plant, work at height, safe use of explosives, silica dust, and slips, trips and falls. These will include at least 100 follow-up inspections to quarries where enforcement notices were served in 2006 and 2007.

We will review explosives legislation in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

We will continue to support the work of the Quarries Safety Steering Committee to develop best practice approaches for quarry safety. We will work with FÁS in developing training modules for the quarrying sector.

We will support the running of the annual mines rescue competition and the development of emergency planning.

We will arrange for international benchmarking and research to develop and apply effective safety management systems in mining and quarrying operations.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- **An overall 5% increase in the compliance rates recorded through inspections, correlated to the known and targeted hazards/risks in the mining and quarrying sector.**
- **New Mining Regulations produced.**
- **Compliance with new legislation across the mining and quarrying sector reviewed such as with Working at Height, Vibration and Noise Regulations.**
- **Explosives legislation reviewed in conjunction with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.**
- **National conference held with appropriate attendance by those in the mining and quarrying sector.**
- **500 inspections carried out.**

### 3.5 HEALTH SERVICES

The Authority will continue the inspection programme it began in 2007 by targeting existing safety and health management systems and practices in the health services sector through a programme of 200 inspections. These will focus on worker protection in general hospitals, nursing homes and psychiatric institutions and will include risk assessments for work activities, maintenance/cleaning procedures, security/violence procedures, manual handling and control of biological agents. We will liaise with the Health Service Executive and representative organisations to tackle violence at work for psychiatric care workers.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **A 5% increase in the overall compliance rate, correlated to the known and targeted hazards/risks in the health services sector.**
- **Improved overall awareness among the target audience of requirements and responsibilities with regard to worker safety.**
- **200 inspections carried out.**

**3.6 LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Through a programme of 300 inspections, the Authority will seek to improve safety and health management in the local authority sector by insisting that appropriate management systems are in place. In addition, we will seek to ensure that local authority managers and officers comply with their duties in respect of the 2006 Construction Regulations, both for their own employees and those of their contractors. Inspections will focus on compliance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and on client duties regarding construction work. Evidence will be sought that local authorities are implementing systems to ensure the competence and resources of those appointed to manage major construction projects, including roadworks. We will engage with local authorities and client bodies in implementing procurement procedures that encourage safety and health performance, in particular for small projects.

We will support the implementation of a best practice safety and health management system for all local authorities, in co-operation with the social partners. We will also liaise with the local authorities to introduce safety and health as a key driver in their procurement policies, in particular with regard to construction projects.

We will publish a Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) for roadworks maintenance and we will develop and publish an SSWP for house maintenance.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **An overall 5% increase in the compliance rate, correlated to the targeted hazards/risks in the local authority sector and in particular under the heading of client responsibilities.**
- **Clear examples recorded of local authority systems in place to ensure the competence and resources of those appointed as project supervisors.**
- **New occupational safety and health management system piloted for the local authority sector.**
- **300 inspections carried out.**





### 3.7 WASTE RECYCLING

The Authority will carry out 100 inspections of waste recycling centres operated by both local authorities and private organisations, covering landfill sites, waste transit and sorting centres, and centres which handle construction, domestic and hazardous wastes. Many of these will follow up on the inspections carried out in 2007. The inspections will concentrate on safety and health management, including the designation of traffic and pedestrian routes, the provision of information to all workers with a particular emphasis on non-Irish nationals, and the presence of risk assessments and safety statements.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Evidence will be sought of a commitment to occupational safety and health management in compliance with the implementation of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and relevant regulations.
- 100 inspections of waste recycling centres undertaken.

### 3.8 WORKPLACE VEHICLE TRANSPORT SAFETY

The Authority will begin to review safety and health management in the workplace vehicle transport sector by carrying out 500 inspections in 2008. These will concentrate on fleet risk assessments while travelling on the public road.

We will develop sectoral information on hazards associated with workplace vehicles and vehicles supplied for work, focusing on the management of risk associated with driving for work, vehicle maintenance and loading of vehicles.

We will collaborate with the Road Safety Authority, An Garda Síochána and other key external stakeholders to increase awareness of the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the General Application Regulations 2007 for transport-related activities. Research is to commence to establish a baseline for accident statistics involving vehicles at work and persons driving for work.

We will develop a series of regional seminars on workplace transport safety, including carriage of dangerous goods by road, to increase awareness of the risks associated with vehicles used for work.

### 3.9 TRANSPORT AND STORAGE OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

The Authority will develop legislation and guidance relating to the carriage of dangerous goods by road (ADR), the examination of dangerous goods drivers and safety advisers, and the storage and transport of liquid fuels. The Authority is the competent authority in this regard and in respect of the Transportable Pressure Equipment (TPED) Regulations.

We will carry out 1,600 inspections for the carriage and storage of dangerous goods by road, in particular as it relates to prescribed participant duties, training, safety and health management systems and risk management. Dangerous goods drivers and safety advisers will be assessed through examination. ADR driver training providers will be assessed for approval.



We will assist in the review of the Dangerous Substances Acts and associated regulations, process exemptions, derogations and approval requests. We will also act as the appeals body for the licensing of retail and private petroleum stores.

The Authority will partner with the competent authorities in other EU member states and internationally to develop an integrated and consistent approach to ADR, the Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) and TPED implementation and enforcement. The necessary regulations will be drafted to implement the 2009 ADR provisions for Ireland. We will also contribute to the development of national and international legislation where required. We will consult and partner with stakeholder groups.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Evidence will be sought of a commitment to occupational safety and health management and of carrying out risk assessments in compliance with the implementation of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and relevant regulations.**
- **500 inspections of transport facilities undertaken and 1,600 Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) inspections undertaken.**

#### **3.10 SERVICES AND FINANCIAL SECTORS**

The Authority will begin to review safety and health management in the hotel, restaurant and hospitality sectors by carrying out 1,000 inspections in 2008. Some of these inspections will be carried out in the financial services area. These inspections will concentrate on the level of awareness of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, preparing safety statements and carrying out site-specific risk assessments. Manual handling will be considered in hotels. Work organisation, bullying and having procedures in place for dealing with stress in the financial sector will also be covered. The hospitality sector employs a lot of non-Irish-national workers and these are at higher risk of injury.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Evidence will be sought of a commitment to occupational safety and health management, preparing safety statements and carrying out risk assessments in compliance with the 2005 Act and the 2007 General Application Regulations.**
- **1,000 inspections of services and financial sectors undertaken.**

#### **3.11 MANUFACTURING SECTOR**

The Authority will continue to review safety and health management in the manufacturing sector by carrying out 1,500 inspections. Some of these inspections will also look at safe machine operation and CE marking. These inspections will target those companies with more than 50 employees who did not notify any accidents to the Authority under the 1993 General Application Regulations in 2006 and 2007. The level of awareness among senior managers of their responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 will continue to be checked.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Evidence will be sought of a system being in place for notifying and investigating accidents and ill-health due to work activities, for setting out these procedures as part of the safety statement preparation and for modifying risk assessments after the investigation.
- 1,500 inspections of the manufacturing sector undertaken.

**3.12 NON-IRISH NATIONALS**

In 2008 the Authority will further develop services based on the outcomes of research into issues of safety for workers who are non-Irish nationals. We will implement an inter-agency approach in the construction sector to address the high rate of death and injury among non-Irish nationals. We will conduct inspections in sectors employing non-Irish nationals including construction and hospitality.

**3.13 SMALL CONTRACTORS**

The Authority will work with the social partners to develop a resource pack, based on the findings of research into the needs of small contractors, on basic safety management for small contractors.

**3.14 COMPETENCE**

The Authority will lead the development process to determine standards leading to awards in the area of health and safety in accordance with FETAC (Further Education and Training Awards Council) guidelines. We will work with FÁS and FETAC in relation to worker competence. We will assist professional bodies in the design sector in the development of competence for their members.



## 4 KEY HAZARDS AND ISSUES

**Each year the Authority prioritises a number of key hazards for specific attention across its various activities. In all cases, the Authority's primary objectives are to:**

- Raise awareness and increase understanding of the hazard.
- Provide information or advice on how to manage the risks associated with the hazard.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation.
- Reduce the number of accidents or instances of ill-health arising from the hazard.

**The activities planned to meet these objectives are set out for key hazards below.**

### 4.1 MAJOR ACCIDENT HAZARD SITES

The Authority acts as the national competent authority under the 2006 COMAH Regulations on the Control of Major Accident Hazards (SEVESO II Regulations). It is also our role to ensure compliance with safety and health legislative requirements in other designated workplaces that present a potential risk of major accident hazards. In 2008 we will inspect all designated sites under the 2006 COMAH Regulations and assess the safety reports required to be submitted. Up to 300 inspections are planned. We will also monitor the level of awareness and implementation of the new EU REACH Regulation during these inspections.

We will provide land-use planning (LUP) advice to planning authorities and to An Bord Pleanála in respect of major accident hazard establishments and nearby developments. We will publish new LUP guidance for developments around flammable liquid storage facilities in light of the recommendations of the final Buncefield Report, as part of a revised LUP advice system. We will also ensure that 'top-tier' major accident hazard sites meet their obligations to provide information to the public on what to do in the event of an emergency at these sites.

Overall, in line with our central competent authority role, we will monitor the preparedness of systems for the testing of external emergency plans at all designated 'top-tier' major accident hazard sites.

Oil jetties and all offshore installations not covered by the 2006 COMAH Regulations will be inspected under the applicable legislation, as well as other potential high-hazard sites. The Authority will also fulfil its responsibilities as they relate to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Act in its role as national competent authority.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- All 2006 COMAH sites inspected and follow-up actions taken where deemed necessary.
- Land-use planning requests responded to within the mandatory time frame and planning appeal hearings attended as requested by relevant authorities.
- Land-use planning guidance published.

**4.2 CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL AGENTS**

In 2008 the Authority will carry out 500 inspections on a proactive and reactive basis for chemical agents and asbestos in workplaces, with particular regard to control measures based on risk assessment. This will also include 50 Vibration Regulations inspections. We will actively monitor atmospheres in workplaces for chemical contaminants such as harmful dusts and fumes and concentrate on silica in quarries, welding fumes in workshops and polyurethane fumes during paint spraying. A risk-based intervention strategy will be used to deal with asbestos complaints and we will focus on demolition and building refurbishment.

We will develop guidelines for biological agents. We will provide specialist support and advice to the inspectorate as required regarding exposure to biological agents at the workplace. We will monitor biological agents in the workplace as part of the 500 total occupational hygiene inspections envisaged.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Appropriate guidelines in place for biological agents legislation.
- Legislative proposals and inputs provided in a timely manner to the drafting of composite text legislation.
- 500 chemical and biological agents (including vibration) inspections carried out as planned.

**4.3 SUMMARY OF OTHER HAZARDS AND ISSUES****Slips, Trips And Falls**

Slips, trips and falls account for a considerable volume of work-related accidents and this category of accident will be addressed as a key hazard across all programmes and sectors. In 2008 a specific slips, trips and falls safety programme will be carried out in a number of different companies and findings will inform wider programmes as required. Information will also be produced for employers and building designers on the prevention of slips, trips and falls on their premises. General awareness of this hazard will be maintained through inspection and promotional activities.



**Working At Height**

The Authority will carry out inspections to monitor compliance with Part 4 (Work at Height) of the 2007 General Application Regulations. In particular, we will address ladder safety, the use of A-frame ladders and the use of trestles in all relevant construction activities with a special focus on small and medium-sized enterprises. Guidelines will be produced and publicised concerning ladder safety and a 50% level of compliance will be targeted.

**Workplaces And Equipment**

The correct installation, maintenance and usage of equipment in workplaces are important in the avoidance of accidents or injuries among the workforce. Consequently, the Authority will place a priority on initiatives designed to minimise incidents arising from incorrect procedures with regard to equipment usage.

We will develop an approach for the introduction of competency requirements for the statutory inspection of plant. Regulations will also be developed to implement the new Machinery Directive [2006/42/EC] and amending Directive 95/16/EC on lifts. We will also revise and publish guidance relating to the management of workplace equipment.

We will review and recommend updates to legislation relating to pressure systems in workplaces. We will develop a co-ordinated approach to machinery and gas safety issues with other relevant agencies. We will develop guidelines on optical radiation.

The Authority will be represented at EU level through the various policy formulation and implementation groupings.

A programme of 200 machinery inspections will be carried out to address the requirement for CE marking, declarations of conformity and the provision of satisfactory user information.

Additionally, we will follow up on the manual handling survey in the transport sector from the EU SLIC (Senior Labour Inspectors Committee) manual handling campaign.

We will also liaise with the Defence Forces to ensure that safety and health is managed and that there is provision made for adequate and appropriate training with regard to transport and noise.

**Electricity**

In 2008 the Authority will continue to work with customers, designers, contractors and farmers to ensure that safe practices are used in respect of electrical installations and the use of electricity generally in all workplaces. Ten inspections of electricity generating stations will also be carried out and we will implement a code of practice relating to work on overhead lines.

**Vibration, Noise And Optical Radiation**

The Authority will conduct 500 noise inspections and up to 50 on-site inspections in 2008 as part of the occupational hygiene inspection target. Guidance will also be published on the 2006 Noise at Work Regulations and the Authority will work to raise awareness of the key provisions of these regulations.



**Other Sectors**

The Authority will carry out 1,000 inspections covering education, retail and commercial diving sectors and will follow up on prioritised accidents and complaints.

The Authority plays a leading role in the development of legislation and guidance relating to commercial diving. In 2008 we will contribute to the development of new Commercial Diving Regulations and enforce their provisions when commenced. This will also involve the provision of easy to understand guidance and information in support of the regulations.

**Manual Handling**

The Authority will carry out 300 manual handling inspections in the construction, health care and transport sectors in 2008. In addition, manual handling will be assessed in many of the services-based inspections to be carried out in 2008.

We will also continue to liaise with FETAC towards the achievement of a number of competency standards in manual handling training with the aim of improving the consistency and content of such training. We will do further work on web-based cases of manual handling and ergonomics.

**Psychosocial Issues**

The safety, health and welfare of workers can be impacted by a range of factors other than immediately tangible incidents. These include incidents of harassment and/or bullying of employees which if not prevented or if left unchecked can have profound implications for individuals.

The Authority will inspect larger workplaces (of more than 100 employees) for the existence and implementation of a policy for dealing with bullying in line with the Code of Practice on Bullying. Additionally, we will follow up individual enquiries and complaints at workplace level within our remit with requests to employers for the submission of their organisation's policy for dealing with bullying, both formally and informally, in line with the code. We will promote, inform and guide workplaces in the management of such behaviours at the workplace with specific initiatives and a general support programme.

We will also review safety and health management in the financial services sector with particular reference to the identification of occupational stress and the implementation of procedures for dealing with it.

**Measurement And Evaluation**

Across all of the above areas, the Authority will monitor and measure progress on a qualitative and quantitative basis and will also conduct research into the effectiveness of its various campaigns. Where specific numbers of inspections are not outlined in the performance criteria above, it should be taken that these are included in the overall target figure for inspections planned for the year.



## 5 MULTI-SECTOR PROGRAMMES

**Each year the Authority concentrates on certain important themes and develops special initiatives around these. A number of initiatives in which the Authority will engage in 2008 have implications for and relate to all sectors. There are also significant national programmes which continue year on year and which span all work activities.**

### 5.1 INFLUENCING DIRECTORS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES

The chief executives, directors, senior managers and/or proprietors of workplaces have enhanced responsibilities under the 2005 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act. In certain instances, there is now also the possibility for senior executives to be found personally culpable where regulations may have been breached. This is particularly so where injury or fatality has been the consequence for a worker to whom the senior executive had a duty of care under the 2005 Act.

During 2008 the Authority will work to inform this category of managers of their enhanced responsibilities under the 2005 Act. The Authority's guidelines on the safety and health responsibilities of directors and senior managers will be distributed by its inspectors. Inspections will focus on influencing chief executives and senior managers to commit to active workplace safety and health management and to be aware of their duties in this regard.

#### PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- **Satisfactory awareness and compliance levels will be anticipated in up to 50% of all inspections and advisory or enforcement action will be taken in the remainder of inspected workplaces where a sufficient commitment to compliance is not recorded.**
- **2008 figures will be benchmarked against 2006 and 2007 returns and appropriate measures factored into the ongoing programme into 2009.**

### 5.2 INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION PROGRAMMES

To facilitate customers seeking to report notifiable accidents and to make complaints, and to ensure that reports of accidents and complaints received are dealt with efficiently and effectively, the Authority will promote simplified reporting procedures with an improved user-friendly online accident notification form. This facility will augment the availability of our Workplace Contact Unit, which also deals with such matters.





We will prioritise serious complaints and accident reports, investigate them and take any actions necessary to achieve required improvements. Where breaches of regulations are identified, this will result in enforcement action or prosecution where appropriate. In such instances, prosecution files will be prepared in accordance with procedures and time frames agreed with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The Special Investigations Unit will conduct criminal investigations into serious incidents and workplace fatalities where there is the potential for duty-holders to be prosecuted on indictment. Other legal proceedings may be undertaken where necessary to ensure compliance with regulations.

All other complaints received will be dealt with in accordance with available resources. Reactive work within the terms of section 12 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, i.e. where the safety of non-employees may be at risk from work activities, will only be undertaken where a work activity directly impacts on the safety and health of the non-employees concerned. The Authority does not have a role in the promotion of risk avoidance for the general public where such risks are unrelated to a work activity.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **At least 90% of prioritised complaints investigated across all sectors.**
- **Improved system for reporting accidents online in place.**
- **All prosecution files prepared in accordance with procedures and time frames as agreed with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.**

#### **5.3 PROMOTION**

The Authority will promote the Code of Practice for Employers of Three or Less Construction Employees. We will deliver seminars to key organisations on the main elements of this programme of work. We will work on two specific awareness projects.

#### **5.4 COMPETENCE AND AWARDS**

The Authority will develop a memorandum of understanding with FETAC on a mode of operation for the development of standards in safety and health. We will develop an award, at level 5, in safety and health.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Agreed policy implemented.**
- **Evidence of support as appropriate to existing recognition programmes.**



**5.5 MICRO-BUSINESS AND SELF-EMPLOYED SUPPORT PROGRAMME**

The Authority will continue with its programme of dissemination of user-friendly information to the micro-business and self-employed sectors. We will introduce new approaches and initiatives based on international benchmarking and research. We will continue to develop internet services aimed at micro-businesses and we will explore the use of e-learning for this sector.

We will expand and promote a range of accessible information including:

- Expand the Simple Safety toolkit.
- Review and reissue the Safe Company booklet.
- Draft information leaflets on the 2007 General Application Regulations.
- Advise and assist in the production of catering safety guidelines.
- Promote the use of the Quarry Toolkit.

User-friendly safety assessment systems will be promoted around critical safety issues in these sectors. The range of easily accessible information material designed to meet the needs of micro-businesses and the self-employed will be expanded and promoted. Specific guidelines will be developed for the self-employed to promote safety and health management among sole traders. We will also develop guidance for small businesses as to how best to choose a safety consultant, which is an important consideration for many businesses.

We will involve third level students of safety and health, where appropriate, on the development of initiatives and special projects to support micro-businesses, with a view towards inculcating such concerns into their future careers.

A specially targeted initiative will be piloted among micro-businesses in the north-west region, working with local stakeholders and the Authority's Regional Advisory Committee, and findings from this initiative will be adopted and rolled out nationally.

An internet-based training programme will be put in place that supports owner/managers of micro-businesses using media and material that is most relevant and accessible for the target group. The use of e-learning solutions in particular will be explored.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Pilot programme undertaken in the north-west region.**
- **Guidance document for small businesses on choosing a safety consultant produced and appropriately distributed.**



**5.6 WORKPLACE HEALTH PROGRAMME**

In 2008 the Authority will commence the implementation of the prevention recommendations of its workplace health and wellbeing strategy. In addition, we will work with other government departments and agencies in implementing promotion and rehabilitation recommendations. The Occupational Health Unit will provide training and guidance for compliance inspectors on workplace health issues. This will ensure an increased emphasis on workplace health across a range of sectors where inspections are carried out.

We will develop new and updated guidance on workplace health issues.

Research will be carried out to inform the Authority on the requirement or otherwise for intoxicant regulations in workplaces.

We will continue to implement the new occupational first-aid system.

We will continue to make progress in the implementation of FETAC manual handling training standards and the registration of training providers.

The final report on the research into construction accidents involving non-Irish nationals and implementation of recommendations arising from the report (in conjunction with the Research and Construction Policy Units) will be delivered.

A joint Health and Safety Executive (HSE) UK and Health and Safety Authority 'Work Positive' initiative tackling stress in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will be progressed.

Advice on a range of workplace health issues will be given to the Workplace Contact Unit and inspectors.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Recommendations on prevention from the workplace health and wellbeing strategy will start to be implemented.**
- **Inspectors will address workplace health issues effectively during inspection.**
- **New occupational first-aid system will be fully implemented.**
- **FETAC manual handling training standards will be completed and instructors will be registered.**
- **Construction research will be completed and recommendations arising will start to be implemented.**
- **Research to inform on the requirement for intoxicant regulations will be completed.**
- **Stress project for SMEs will be delivered and a report produced.**



**5.7 EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

Building on the significant progress made in this area in 2007, the Authority will continue to foster and encourage the development of a 'safety first' mindset amongst children and young people, through its own initiatives and in partnership with others. As these are the workers and managers of the future, we believe that this is an essential component of the formal education system. In pursuit of this aim, we will engage in a number of education-specific initiatives including:

- Implement a safety and health management system for post-primary schools in eight pilot sites.
- Implement the key recommendations of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's (NCCA) probe on health and safety in the curriculum at primary and second level to include: engaging with curriculum support services and embarking on a programme of advocacy aimed at influencing revised and new curricula.
- Evaluate, revise and extend the roll-out of the 'Choose Safety' senior cycle programme to further post-primary schools.
- Develop and implement a training course for primary school teachers through the delivery of summer courses in safety and health in six education centres nationwide.
- Develop and pilot safety and health in-service training for post-primary teachers in four education centres nationwide.
- Participate in the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition through key sponsorship and involvement at the Primary Science Fair, which will display 100 schools' projects involving safety.
- Roll-out year three of the Junior Achievement Ireland programme for primary and secondary level schools.
- Devise the revised syllabi for the second level teacher and student resources: Spirit of Enterprise and Science in Action 2008/2009.
- Begin the implementation of a new national initiative to develop a culture of safety and health for young people subject to the availability of finance.
- Develop proposals for influencing higher and third level curricula around the inclusion of safety and health.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Roll-out of a pilot safety and health management system in eight post-primary schools.**
- **High level of recognition and usage of the Authority's education programmes and resources.**
- **Implementation of key recommendations of the NCCA's report.**
- **High levels of interaction and strong relations built with the second level support services and other support services to schools.**



**5.8 ENGINEERING PROGRAMME**

The Authority is committed to having in place the most comprehensive and up-to-date information available to facilitate its inspection programme. To this end we will undertake to:

- Review the 2007 General Applications Regulations in relation to the inspection of pressure systems.
- Produce regulations and guidance to implement the new Machinery Directive [2006/42/EC].
- Produce regulations and guidance on optical radiation.
- Continue the project on the prevention of slips, trips and falls.
- Contribute to the National Standards Authority of Ireland's (NSAI) programme on new standards for lifting equipment.

**5.9 PUBLIC SERVICES PROGRAMME**

The Authority will implement a programme to address safety and health requirements in public sector procurement. We will develop a programme of continuous improvement for the delivery of safety and health through key government departments.

**5.10 COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER CONTACT PROGRAMME**

The Authority will continue to provide its customers with expert advice and information encouraging two-way communication and interaction with workers, employers and other stakeholders. To achieve this aim, the most appropriate communications techniques will be used to ensure optimum levels of awareness of safety and health messages among target audiences, including:

- Identify, develop and implement, in conjunction with other interests, a substantial initiative that supports and builds on the work of safety representatives in Irish businesses.
- Support policy owners and unit heads in general promotion and awareness-raising initiatives using a range of communications tools such as direct mail, advertising, press releases, safety alerts, conferences, trade fairs and other means as appropriate.
- Manage the focal point activity for Ireland and liaise with the EU Agency for Safety and Health.
- Support the specialist and regional advisory committees as appropriate.
- Continue the development of the Workplace Contact Unit's performance.
- Update and manage the Authority's website to achieve the organisation's goals on such communication.
- Manage the design, print and distribution of all the Authority's publications.
- Manage media relations and proactively target national and regional media with key messages in the form of press releases, press launches, photo opportunities and other appropriate tools.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- Authority's website up to date.
- Key safety messages in the public domain.
- Evaluation of all major communications campaigns undertaken.

**5.11 RISK ASSESSMENT PROMOTION PROGRAMME**

The Authority will support the European Agency for Safety and Health by raising awareness of the EU-wide theme (risk assessment) during European Safety Week, acting as the national focal point for this campaign. European Safety Week will be launched in advance of the week itself in order to raise awareness of the particular hazards and the ways in which the associated risks can be managed. A national press and communications campaign will be initiated and the issue will also be addressed during inspections where necessary. We will also seek to influence organisations who work in this field to promote the theme of European Safety Week throughout the year.

**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- National media coverage of EU Safety Week obtained.
- Regional events promoting risk assessment awareness undertaken.



## 6 CHEMICALS PROGRAMME

**In 2008 the Authority moves from its REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) implementation to its REACH operational strategy. Our existing competent authority role for new substance notification will conclude by August 2008. While the main elements of REACH enter into force on 1 June 2008, existing legislation on marketing and use remains in place until June 2009. In addition, existing legislation on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances and preparations remains in place until the new Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) Regulation is finalised and enters into force. With the many new developments in chemicals coming on line, the programme of work is a rolling one until such time as REACH and GHS are fully in force.**

To address these areas in 2008, we will:

- Fulfil our role as the competent authority in relation to regulations on the classification, packaging, labelling, notification, export, import, marketing and use of dangerous substances and preparations. This will involve consultation and provision of services to Irish industry and stakeholders as well as participation by the Authority in EU working groups and input into the transposition of EU legislation.
- Conclude the European discussions on the three human health risk assessments for existing substances. Develop risk reduction strategies and harmonised classification and labelling proposals as necessary.
- Prepare the Authority and notifiers for New Substance Notification (NONS)-REACH transition and ensure that the handover file is passed to the European Chemicals Agency on schedule.
- Conclude the REACH implementation strategy and develop the three-year operational strategy.
- Continue to support all stakeholders through awareness campaigns and a dedicated helpdesk for REACH and GHS. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) remain the key focus of this effort.
- Continue to partner with competent authorities in Northern Ireland and Great Britain to develop an integrated and consistent approach to REACH and GHS implementation, operation and enforcement.
- Finalise contributions to the EU interim strategy on REACH.
- Develop competent authority competence in REACH Information Technology (REACH-IT) requirements.



- Finalise legislation, structures, policies and procedures for enforcement of chemical legislation in Ireland and at the EU level. A major focus will be the enactment of the Chemicals Regulation and Enforcement Act in conjunction with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.
- Participate in European Commission and European Chemicals Agency committees established to deal with REACH.
- Contribute to the negotiations on GHS at the EU and UN as appropriate.
- Participate in GHS interim strategy work.

**In addition to the introduction of new chemical management systems in REACH and GHS, the Authority also deals with the existing occupational legislation on chemical agents and carcinogens. In 2008, we will:**

- Consolidate the guidance and information available on chemical agents and carcinogens.
- Provide EU support relating to chemical agents exposure and occupational exposure limit values (OELVs) through the National Experts Working Group on OELVs as required.
- Finalise the revision of the Asbestos Regulations of 2006.
- Develop and publish a short guide and comprehensive guidelines to the revised Asbestos Regulations.
- Develop and finalise Irish guidelines on the training of asbestos workers in line with the EU Training Guidelines which are included under the 2006 Asbestos Regulations, implementing Directive 2003/18/EC.

**Finally, we will work in 2008 to ensure that our stakeholders and customers are provided with a transparent, consistent and joined-up approach to chemicals management requirements in the workplace. We will:**

- Conduct 700 chemical-related inspections in companies which manufacture, supply and use chemicals, determining levels of awareness around the REACH and GHS Regulations. Many of these inspections will concentrate on the premises subjected to the 2006 COMAH Regulations but others will review downstream users of chemicals including technology companies, furniture manufacturers and wood-processing industries.
- Recruit, train and develop staff to enable the Authority to implement its competent authority and enforcement brief for the new chemical legislation.
- Develop the Authority's strategy on the safe use of nanoparticles in the workplace and contribute to the EU and international developments for chemical safety regulatory policies on nanotechnology.
- Initiate the development of the Authority's three-year chemicals health and safety strategy.
- Conclude the baseline survey of chemicals usage in Irish workplaces and follow up on the outcomes as necessary.





- Examine the development of targeted and user-friendly guidance on chemical legislation in the workplace, in particular for use by SMEs.
- Continue to partner with stakeholder groups in the Technical and Scientific Advisory Committee (TSAC) and the ad-hoc groups established under its remit.

#### **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Implementation strategy for REACH and GHS on schedule.**
- **All REACH awareness inspections carried out as planned.**
- **Resources and processes in place to ensure the fulfilment of our competent authority role.**
- **Inputs provided in a timely manner in relation to the Chemicals Regulation and Enforcement Bill.**
- **Appropriate guidelines in place for chemical legislation.**
- **Codes of practice in place as required.**



## 7 CORPORATE ENABLEMENT PROGRAMMES

### 7.1 RESEARCH AND STATISTICS PROGRAMME

The collection and analysis of data to monitor safety and health performance is vital to the Authority's overall functioning and to support decision-making and assist in the identification of major risks. Key tasks to be completed by the Research and Statistics Unit in 2008 include:

- Commissioning a programme of high-quality research on priority topics. Current priority topics include:
  - Survey of chemicals usage in Irish workplaces.
  - Review of health and safety teaching and research in the third level education system.
  - Evaluation of 'Choose Safety' module for secondary school students.
  - Differences between Irish and non-Irish-national workers in the Irish construction sector.
- Comprehensive review of available statistical data for the period 2003 to 2007. This review will draw on the Authority's database of reported accidents and enforcement actions and will also incorporate data from a range of other public agencies to provide a more complete account of progress in the area of health and safety at work over the five-year period. The review will also identify key statistical indicators against which the implementation of the Authority's Strategy for 2007 to 2009 may be measured.
- Extensive participation in the project to develop a new database application for the Authority. We will ensure that the new system will capture data required for statistics at national and European levels. The Unit will also advise on the incorporation of international classification systems in order to maximise compatibility with the systems of other agencies and the European Commission.
- Input to development and harmonisation of health and safety at work statistics at EU level through participation in Eurostat (Statistical Agency of the European Commission) Working Groups and Technical Groups.
- Ongoing provision of statistics to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment for responses to parliamentary questions (PQs), to regional and sectoral advisory committees, to the press, and to queries from members of the public through the Authority's Workplace Contact Unit.



**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- **Publication of Statistical Summary 2006–2007.**
- **Production of five-year statistical review 2003–2007 including development of statistical performance indicators to support implementation of the Authority’s 2007–2009 Strategy.**
- **Publication and dissemination of additional project reports in the Authority’s research series.**
- **Ensure compatibility of new database application with national and European statistical requirements.**

**7.2 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) PROGRAMME**

The objective of the Authority’s ICT programme is to develop and maintain systems and processes to support prevention and enforcement by:

- **Maintaining ICT services:**
  - Maintain existing ICT services to include user support, system maintenance and upgrade and policy updates.
  - Maintain information systems to support all aspects of prevention and enforcement including Internet/Intranet, SAFE (inspection/enforcement database), e-mail and file sharing.
  - Ongoing development of service-level agreements (SLAs) to enhance customer service.
  - Maintaining and enhancing our ICT systems and landline/mobile phone systems.
  - Evaluation of emerging technologies to obtain the most cost-effective solutions to meet the Authority’s business needs.
- **ICT development projects:**
  - Developing ICT systems to enable new and more flexible ways of working, including the support of decentralisation to Thomastown.
  - Further roll-out and enhancement of the virtual private network (VPN) system to allow access by staff to the Authority’s systems over broadband; and further feasibility testing of VPN connection via mobile connection.
  - Further development of the Authority’s Intranet as a business portal.
  - Project manage the implementation of the ICT requirements for new offices and facilitate all changes in other offices.
  - Further development of the Authority’s website to include additional functionality such as e-consultation and online requests for information.
  - Support the redevelopment of the SAFE system, co-ordinate and oversee the development of the new system, implementation, piloting and training of staff.
  - Develop and deploy ICT server, storage and network infrastructure to facilitate SAFE redevelopment.
  - Participate and support in REACH-IT testing, training and deployment prior to entry into operation (EIO) in June 2008.
  - Install, configure, test and commission REACH-IT VPN links to EChA in Helsinki.
  - Evaluate and begin migration to Microsoft Exchange 2007 and Microsoft Server 2008.



- Continue to reduce database total cost of ownership by consolidation of database instances.
- Evaluate and conduct a feasibility study on the use of electronic document management software.
- Continue to enhance and test the Authority's ICT disaster recovery capability.
- Continue to roll out and support collaborative software to facilitate team-working across the organisation.
- Enhance disaster recovery capability to include server virtualisation and central tape backup library.

### **7.3 FINANCE PROGRAMME**

The Authority ensures that robust controls exist over financial processes and that its assets are effectively safeguarded in line with best practice accounting standards.

In 2008 we will manage and maintain existing financial procedures and processes. We will:

- Complete annual accounts for 2007 before the end of February.
- Agree a revised timetable with the Comptroller and Auditor General to facilitate the inclusion of audited financial statements in the Authority's published annual report.
- Ensure robust controls exist over financial processes and that the Authority's assets are effectively safeguarded.
- Implement, where practicable, recommendations contained in internal audit reports conducted during 2008; and review previous reports to measure compliance etc.
- Maintain the risk register.
- Ensure the 2009 grant is sufficient to enable the Authority to meet operational objectives.
- Ensure the Authority meets its overall budget in 2008.
- Ensure payroll and T2016 are delivered flawlessly to Authority staff.
- Ensure Travel & Subsistence guidelines are applied and all employees are paid on a timely basis.
- Continue to deliver a first-class travel service to all employees.
- Fully implement electronic funds transfer (EFT) for creditors' payments.
- Monitor electronic T&S.

We will seek to improve financial systems by:

- Fully implementing electronic procurement.
- Maintaining a comprehensive fixed assets register.
- Introducing monthly-only creditor and T&S payment runs and management reports.



In order to maintain high-quality office accommodation, we will:

- Move the Kilkenny office to its new location.
- Project manage the move of the Authority's headquarters (HQ) from Dublin to Thomastown – decentralisation – including liaison with the Office of Public Works etc.
- Ensure property, indemnity and public liability insurance levels are adequate and in place for 1 January 2008.
- Ensure office accommodation and services at HQ and field offices are maintained to a high standard.
- Re-evaluate security procedures in HQ and field offices.
- Identify future office accommodation needs.

In terms of procurement, we will ensure:

- Compliance with all public procurement guidelines and EU legislation with regard to competitive bid and tendering activities.
- Full compliance with the corporate procurement plan.
- A greater than 95% invoice/purchase order match rate.
- All suppliers are paid correctly and on time.

#### **7.4 HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) AND TRAINING PROGRAMME**

The Authority will endeavour to ensure that its staff, resources and facilities deliver on corporate goals in line with best practice and value for money. In respect of the HR programme, responsibilities will include:

- Recruitment of phase 3 of REACH staffing in accordance with project timelines.
- Development of a new HR strategy for 2008 to 2009 in consultation with staff.
- Management of the overall recruitment programme to ensure delivery of competent staff.
- Contribution to the change management process.
- Continued development of the decentralisation implementation plan.
- Management of staff occupational health services.
- Continued development of the capability of the online HR service.



In respect of the training programme, responsibilities will include:

- Management of the application process for renewal of the Excellence Through People Award.
- Implementation of the organisational learning strategy in accordance with the agreed action plans and upgrade of the HR system.
- Roll-out of technical and developmental training programmes.
- Review of the operation of the performance management and development system (PMDS) integrated model.
- Assistance with developing training material/courses for REACH staff.
- Continued roll-out of the leadership development programme for senior managers.



## APPENDIX ONE: LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE PROGRAMME

### LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR 2008

#### EU REGULATIONS AND DIRECTIVES DUE FOR IMPLEMENTATION/TRANSPOSITION IN 2008

##### (1) Chemicals legislation

The Authority will assist the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE) in the development of the Chemicals Regulation and Enforcement Bill relating to:

###### (i) REACH Enforcement provisions

Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency and amending Directive 1999/45/EC and transposing Directive 121/2006/EC.

###### (ii) GHS Enforcement Regulations

Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Classification and Labelling of Substances and Mixtures based on the Globally Harmonised System. (When adopted and published in the Official Journal of the EU.)

###### (iii) Export/Import Enforcement Regulations

Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning the export and import of dangerous chemicals, as amended by Commission Regulation (EC) No. 775/2004.

##### (2) Marketing and Use Directive Re. Measuring Devices Containing Mercury

Directive 2007/51/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 September 2007 amending Council Directive 76/769/EEC relating to restrictions on the marketing of certain measuring devices containing mercury. (Subject to clarification with the EU Commission, for transposition by 3 October 2008 and to apply from 3 April 2009.)

##### (3) Machinery Directive

Directive 2006/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2006 on machinery, and amending Directive 95/16/EC (recast) [OJ L157, 9.6.2006, pp. 24–86]. (To be transposed no later than 29 June 2008 and to apply from 29 December 2009.)



**(4) Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road**

The Authority will make legislative proposals to DETE to reflect any necessary legislative changes resulting from changes to the annexes of the ADR which will become effective from 1 January 2009. This includes consideration of any necessary changes to the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Act 1998.

**'DOMESTIC' IRISH LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE**

- (1) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Diving) Regulations (and associated draft code of practice)**
- (2) Draft regulations relating to 'payment in lieu of prosecution' fines under section 79 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005**
- (3) Dangerous Substances Legislation**

The Authority will assist the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in the development of and implementation of dangerous substances legislation reformation, following on from the 2007 review of the Dangerous Substances Act 1972.

**(4) Draft Pressure Systems Regulations**

These regulations will replace and revoke miscellaneous provisions of the existing legislation.

**(5) Research and preparatory work relating to the development of proposals for regulations relating to tests for intoxicants under section 13(1)(c) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005****(6) Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, Codes of Practice**

The Authority will:

- Publish the Code of Practice for Access and Working Scaffolds.
- Publish the Code of Practice (ESB) on Overhead Power Lines.
- Finalise the Code of Practice for Avoiding Danger from Underground Services.
- Finalise the Code of Practice for Safety Statements in Construction Sector for concerns with less than 3 employees.
- Develop, consult on and publish the Code of Practice on Construction Anchors.
- Consult on, seek ministerial approval for and publish I.S. 360: 2004 Code of Practice: Safe Use of Cranes in the Construction Industry – Part 1: General, having regard to the 2005 Act, the Construction Regulations 2006 and the General Application Regulations 2007.
- Consult on, seek ministerial approval for and publish I.S. 820: 2000 for Non-Domestic Gas Installations, as amended by Amendment No. 1: 2003 of Standard Specification, and Amendment No. 3: 2001 of I.S. 3216: 1988 – Standard Specification (Code of Practice for the Bulk Storage of Liquefied Petroleum Gas) Declaration.





- Commence review of, and development of proposals for replacement of the following existing codes of practice:
  - Code of Practice for Working in Confined Spaces.
  - Code of Practice on Preventing Accidents to Children and Young Persons in Agriculture.
  - Code of Practice for Rider-Operated Lift Trucks: Operator Training.
  - Code of Practice for Managing Safety and Health in Forestry Operations.
  - Code of Practice for Safety in Roofwork.

#### **REGULATORY IMPACT ANALYSIS (RIA)**

An RIA process will be carried out in relation to legislative proposals in consultation with the Legislation and Guidance Sub-committee (L&GSC), Board and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

#### **LIAISON WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT**

The Authority will provide ongoing and efficient liaison with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in relation to the legislation programme, co-ordination of response material for parliamentary questions, representations to the Minister etc.

#### **PROPOSALS FOR INCLUSION IN THE 2009 PROGRAMME OF WORK**

##### **EU DIRECTIVES DUE FOR TRANSPOSITION POST-2008**

###### **(1) Electromagnetic Fields**

Directive 2004/40/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (electromagnetic fields). (Initially due to be transposed no later than 30 April 2008, but expected to be subject to revision.)

###### **(2) Optical Radiation**

Directive 2006/25/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2006 on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to risks arising from physical agents (artificial optical radiation) (19th individual Directive within the meaning of Article 16(1) of Directive 89/391/EEC) (OJ L114, 27.4.2006, p. 38). (To be transposed by 27 April 2010.)

###### **(3) Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED)**

Contingent on agreement on the approach for revisions of TPED by DG TREN by end 2007. (Depending on the final transposition date in the Directive, transposition may need to be brought forward to the Programme of Work for 2008. Also related to transposition of the Inland Transport of Dangerous Goods Directive (ITDGD).)



**'VINCENT BROWNE' REPLACEMENT REGULATIONS**

- (1) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Chemicals, Carcinogens, Mutagens and Biological Agents) Regulations
- (2) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Fishing Vessels) Regulations
- (3) Finalise associated guidelines as necessary for the above
- (4) Draft Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Mines) Regulations

**'DOMESTIC' IRISH LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE**

- (1) Develop proposals relating to intoxicants and medical fitness to work
- (2) Review remaining provisions of the Safety in Industry Acts 1955 and 1980







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