



Research Report

Inspection Process SURVEY



Health & Safety Authority

PREPARED BY
Annette White
Research Director
REDC Research & Marketing Ltd

OUR REFERENCE / 136215





Table of Contents

	<i>Page No.</i>
1. Executive Summary	1.
2. Research Objectives & Method Chosen	3.
3. Research Sample	4.
4. Survey Respondents	5.
5. Inspection Outcomes	8.
6. Inspection Impact	10.
7. Qualities of the Inspector	12.
8. Key Survey Insights	14.

Appendices

Appendix A – Questionnaire

Appendix B – NACE Codes



1. Executive Summary

1.1 Details of the Survey

This report provides details of a representative quota controlled sample of 1,000 businesses who received a HSA inspection visit in 2015. The aim of the survey was to understand the experience and rating of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) Inspection Service.

The seven-minute feedback survey was conducted by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) by RED C from 29th February – 23rd March 2016. Respondents had to remember the inspection and have been involved in dealing with the inspector to qualify for interview.

While respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of response at the outset respondents were given the opportunity at the end of the survey to decide if they would like their responses to be returned to the HSA, allowing the HSA to see their directly attributable response. A very high level of circa 80% agreed to allow HSA see their responses with the majority of these happy to be re-contacted to discuss their views further with HSA.

1.2 Survey Respondents

For the most part survey respondents were senior level staff or owners. A look by industry shows some variation with NACE A companies (agriculture, forestry, and fishing) most likely to be self-employed respondents.

Just under half reported that this was not their first interaction with Inspectors. Of these, 47% had an interaction within the past 2 years. NACE A & those Self-Employed were less likely to have had previous inspection experience.

1.3 Inspection Outcomes

Over 4 in 5 received advice/notice as a result of the inspection, with verbal advice the most common (46%), followed by written advice (37%). Levels of agreement with outcomes were generally positive with lower levels of agreement for more serious advice/notices.

Implementation of advice is high, with 4 in 5 claiming fully implemented to date. NACE A show lower levels of full implementation.

Over 4 in 10 claim that a follow up was required on their inspection, with 3 in 10 actually receiving a follow up. Overall, for 1 in 8 of all inspections the inspector returned in person to follow up.



1.4 Inspection Impact

Over 9 in 10 claimed a positive impact of the inspection, with 6 in 10 claiming it had a very positive impact. Negative impact is only claimed by 1% of those inspected.

For the most part the inspections appear to have increased the focus of the organisations on Health & Safety, resulting in safer workplaces – particularly for the self-employed & NACE A industries.

3 in 4 improved workplace precautions following the inspection. The inspection appeared to be most impactful for self employed, NACE A and for those who had not engaged with an inspector previously suggesting first inspection is likely to yield greatest change.

1 in 4, however, felt that the inspector's requirements were unnecessarily demanding with those who hadn't experienced it before, who had harshest outcomes, or who have not yet fully completed improvements deeming this to be the case a little more.

1.5 Qualities of the Inspector

While Inspectors rate highly overall the perception of the inspectors qualities appears to be impacted by the inspection outcome. A focus on perceptions of abilities to identify and enforce for larger companies & specific industries would be an area for possible attention.

1.6 Key Survey Insights

The process of inspection, regardless of advice given, appears to improve workplace focus and attention on Health & Safety.

First inspection is likely to yield greatest change and so a focus on reaching companies not yet inspected is likely to increase overall workplace health and safety across Ireland.

The inspection requirements and focus may need more tailored delivery by industry and company size to maximize impact and rating.



2. Research Objectives & Method Chosen

The key requirement for this research was to conduct a survey relating to the experience and rating of the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) Inspection Service.

This review has been conducted in previous years by means of an online employer survey, conducted by HSA. While response rates were high, at 30-35% of those contacted, those chosen for contact were based on available email addresses. The final sample received was circa 10% of all inspections conducted. However, the concern with this sample was the degree of representation of this method.

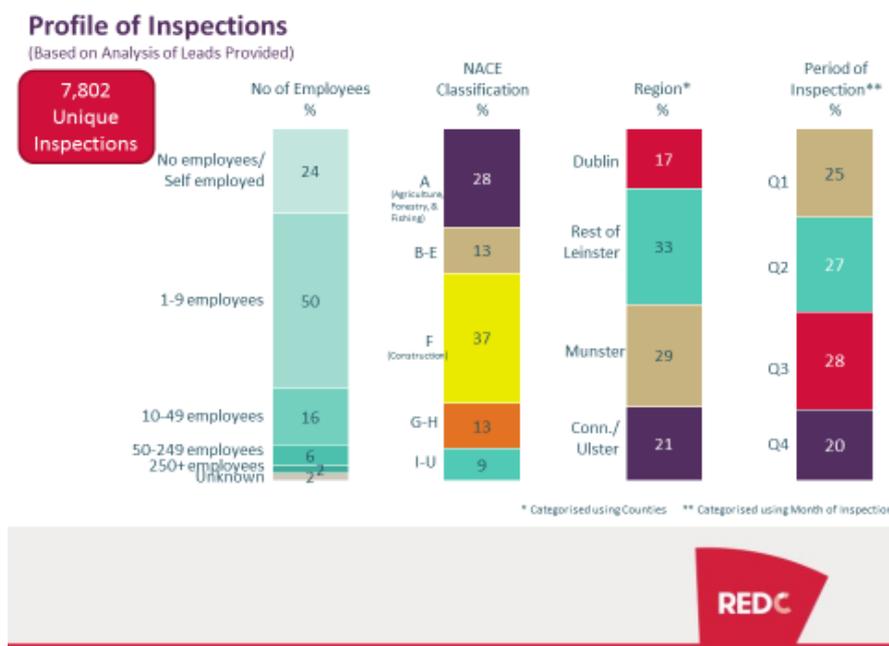
RED C recommended conducting the survey through use of a Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) method, from our CATI centre in Dundalk. This method allowed for greater reach within the inspection universe and allowed for the sample to be managed to deliver a representative profile of businesses inspected through use of quota controls.



3. Research Sample

This research was designed to focus only on Inspections, with HSA Investigations excluded from this sample. During 2015 there were 7,802 unique inspections conducted by the Health & Safety Authority (HSA) Inspection Service, excluding complaint and incident investigations. Unique inspections refers to inspections to a particular company, that may have involved one or more visit to that company, i.e., workplaces within the sample that were inspected on more than one occasion during 2015 were only interviewed once.

The sample profile of these inspections is broken down as follows;



RED C used this profile to set quotas for the survey – thus ensuring a representative final sample, reflective of the inspection profile on the following aspects;

- / Company size (no. of employees)
- / NACE Classification – based on NACE category
- / Region – based on county
- / Inspection period – based on month

The sample size for the project was 1,000, which provides a margin for error of +/- 3.1%, at a 95% confidence level. This is a sizeable total sample and represents a sample size used for many consumer and business studies.



While the margin for error of the total sample is +/-3.1% sub-samples of smaller sizes will have greater margins for error and so through the report we highlight data variances across sub-groups. This helps us to understand variation in opinion across different grouping but few are statistically significant variations. Nonetheless the trends noted in data variation do help us to understand potential differences across key business characteristics such as company size, NACE Classification etc and so we have highlighted them as they occur. For reference, below is the margin for error for various sample sizes;

Sample Size	Margin for Error (95% Level of Confidence)
1,000	+/-3.1%
700	+/- 3.7%
400	+/- 4.9%
200	+/- 6.9%
100	+/- 9.8%

All fieldwork was conducted by RED C between 29th February & 23rd March 2016

While respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity of response at the outset respondents were given the opportunity at the end of the survey to decide if they would like their responses to be returned to the HSA, allowing the HSA to see their directly attributable response. A very high level of circa 80% agreed to allow HSA see their responses with a very high proportion of these happy to be re-contacted to discuss their views further with HSA.



4. Survey Respondents

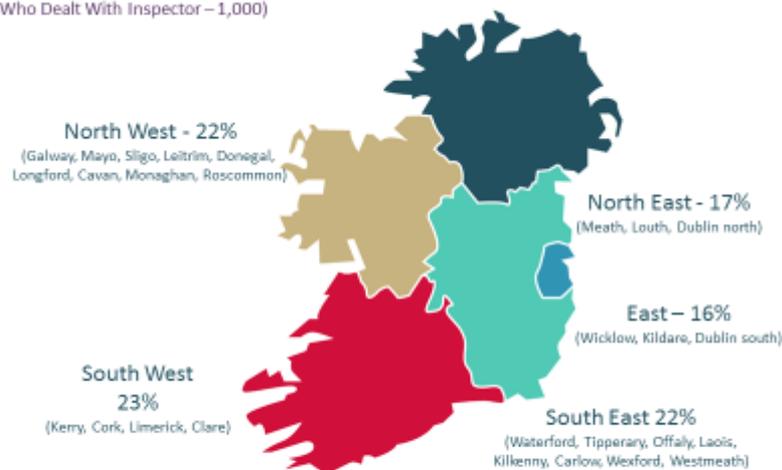
Each contact provided to RED C had up to three possible contacts who were involved in the inspection. In order to ensure that we spoke to appropriate contacts the survey questionnaire included qualification criteria for all who were asked to participate as follows;

- / All had to remember the inspection
- / All had to be either the main person or one of the team who dealt with the inspector at the time of the inspection

While the survey was quota controlled based on county of interview some additional classification questions allowed RED C to profile survey respondents based on inspection region, providing a sample split as follows;

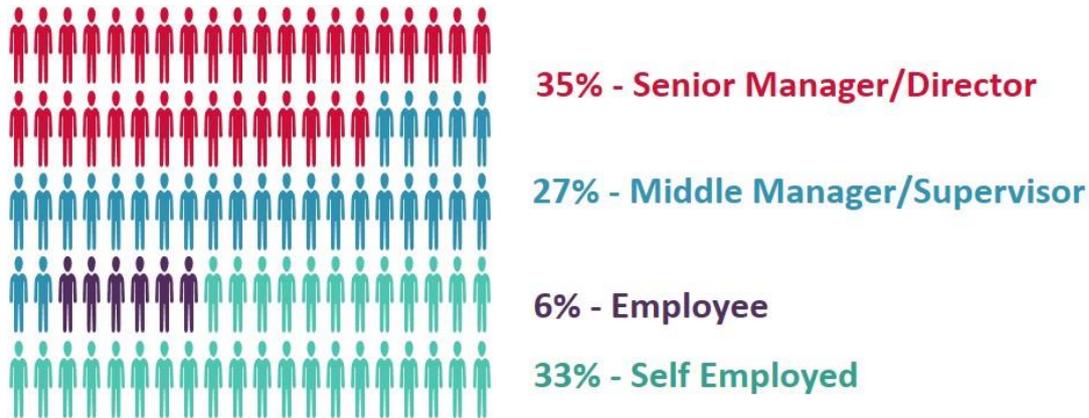
Inspection Team Spread of Survey Respondents

(Base: All Who Dealt With Inspector – 1,000)





The survey also allowed RED C to determine the position of the respondent within the company, with the survey sample claiming the following;



Overlaying this information within the NACE categories showed an interesting mix across industry, whereby NACE categories of B-E (*Industry) & G-H (Wholesale & Retail, Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles, Transportation and Storage) had higher than average Senior Manager/Director, while the NACE A category and Self-Employed showed huge overlap, with 80% of NACE A claiming to be self-employed – indicated by the circles below.

	Total	NACE A (280)	NACE B-E (130)	NACE F (370)	NACE G/H (130)	NACE I-U (90)
Senior Manager/Director	35%	15%	48%	39%	49%	42%
Middle Manager/Director	27%	4%	42%	35%	32%	32%
Employee	6%	1%	6%	6%	10%	12%
Self-Employed	33%	80%	4%	20%	9%	14%

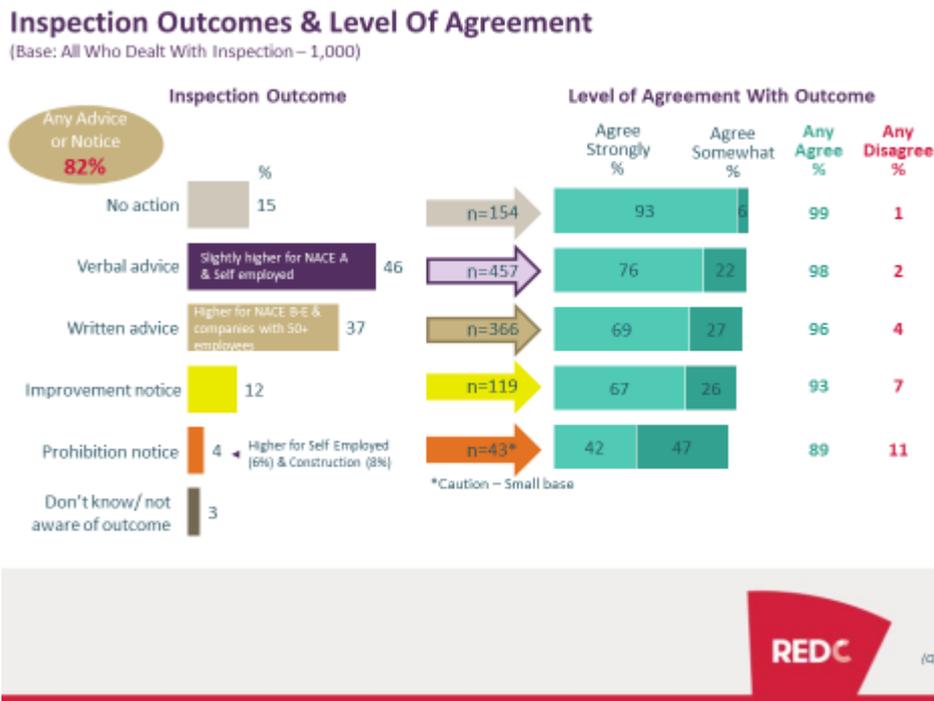
The research also aimed to understand the degree to which this was the first engagement with an Inspection or not. For just over half (51%) it was their first experience. Within the 49% who had previous experience almost half claimed this as relatively recent experience (47% within the past two years). Across the respondents, Senior & Middle Managers claimed higher levels of previous experience. Previous inspection experience was also more prevalent in NACE B-E & F (Construction) classified industries, and for companies with more than 10 employees.

* Industry = Mining & quarrying + Manufacturing + Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply + Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities: NACE B to E.



5. Inspection Outcomes

Over 4 in 5 (82%) recalled some action or advice from the inspection. Verbal advice was most prevalent – having been received by almost half but over 1 in 3 recalled having received written advice. 1 in 8 received Improvement Notices and only 4% received Prohibition Notices. For all advice categories there was high agreement with the outcome, but Prohibition notices were less likely to be agreed with overall.



There were high levels of advice implementation, with 79% of those having received advice, claiming to have implemented it fully. Full implementation was higher for the NACE F –Construction (89%) and lower for NACE A (70%). More serious Notices of Improvement and Prohibition Notices showed higher levels of full implementation.

Only 4% had implemented half or less than half of the advice received and interestingly there wasn't much variation by inspection quarter.

Degree of Implementation by Inspection Period

	Q1 %	Q2 %	Q3 %	Q4 %
Implemented Fully	84	74	81	75
About Three quarters	13	22	15	15
Half or less	3	4	4	9

Over 4 in 10 (43%) claimed a follow up was required for their inspection, with follow up's required higher for those who received written advice, Improvement Notices, or Prohibition Notices.



7 in 10 of those who required a follow up had received it at the time of survey.

Follow up methods varied with almost 4 in 10 of those who had a follow up receiving a personal visit. This equates to a personal return visit for 1 in 8 of all inspections.





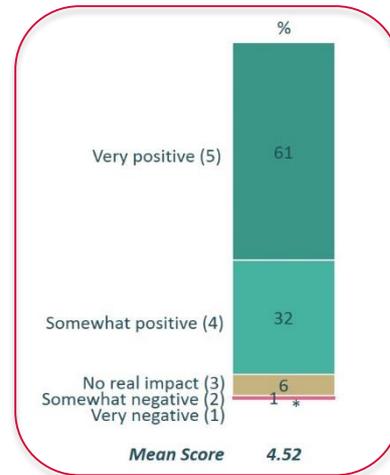
6. Inspection Impact

For 9 in 10 the overall inspection impact on Health & Safety in the workplace was positive.

In fact over 6 in 10 rated it very positive.

Slightly higher than average levels claiming very positive were seen among Middle Managers, Self Employed, NACE A, and among those who received an Improvement Notice.

Slightly lower than average top positivity ratings were seen among those in NACE B-E, G/H, I-U (*Service Sectors) and among those companies with 10-49 employees.



When asked about levels of agreement with a range of statements about the inspection impact on the business, again the positivity of the experience came through overall, resulting in safer workplaces – particularly for the self-employed & NACE A industries.

Positive Inspection Impact on the Business – Level of Agreement

(Base: All Who Dealt With Inspection – 1,000)



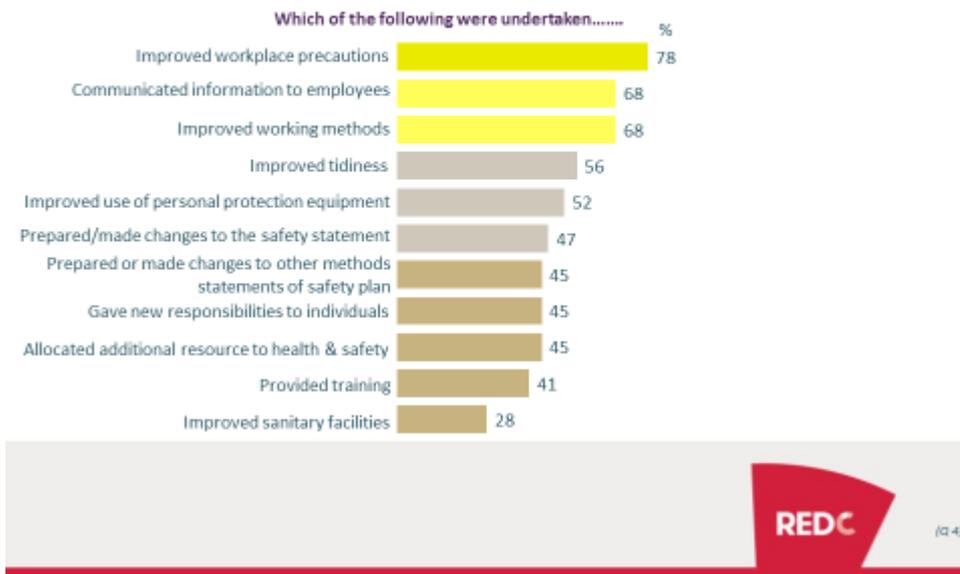
* See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of these service sectors



When prompted with a number of possible actions that could have been undertaken as a result of the inspection the following were the levels of implementation;

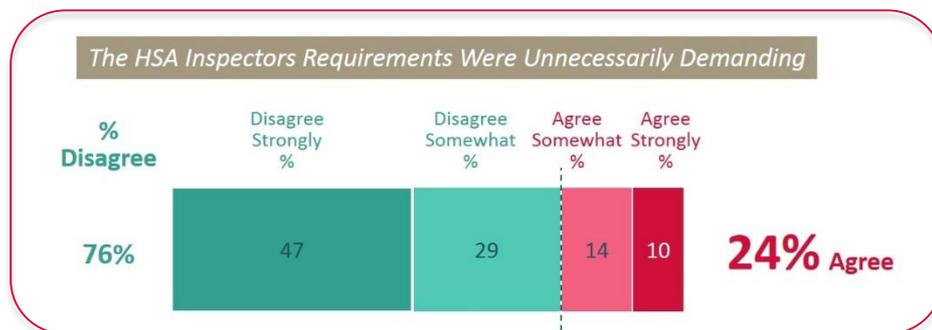
Prompted Actions Taken As A Result Of The Inspection

(Base: All Who Dealt With Inspection – 1,000)



Overall more than 3 in 4 businesses reported improving workplace precautions as a result of the inspection. The inspection appeared to be most impactful for self-employed, NACE A and for those who had not engaged with an inspector previously.

While the inspections were positive overall there was some degree of difficulty for those being inspected. One in four felt the requirements were unnecessarily demanding.



This view was stronger among those who hadn't experienced an inspection previously, among those who had the harshest outcomes, e.g., had been served



prohibition notices, and among those who have not yet fully completed improvements.

7. Qualities of the Inspector

Respondents were asked to rate the qualities of the Inspector across a number of pre-defined measures.



Personality traits all scored highly overall. However, for these measures, levels of agree strongly tend to decline depending on inspection outcome – with those where ‘no action’ required are most positive, and those who receive Prohibition notices being less positive – suggesting perhaps a reflection of the outcome rather than the Inspector.

However, it is the last three measures on the chart that showed lower levels of agree strongly and more variation across different companies.

Ability to identify key health and safety problems showed lower levels of agree strongly among Senior Managers and among companies with 50+ employees.

Ability to help you to tackle key Health & Safety issues showed lower levels of agree strongly among NACE G/H, I-U & companies with 50+. However, this element had higher agree strongly levels for those Self-employed & NACE A.



Lower agree strongly levels was also seen for the ability of the inspector to insist upon or enforce adequate health and safety standards among NACE G/H, I-U & companies with 50+ employees.

This showed that the perception of the Inspector abilities varies depending on your role, the company size and NACE sector – suggesting that Inspectors may need to provide a more tailored approach depending on the company being Inspected.



8. Key Survey Insights

The process of inspection, regardless of advice given, appears to improve workplace focus and attention on Health & Safety. Companies, regardless of size and industry, rate the experience positively for its impact on Health & Safety, even if some find the process demanding.

First inspection is likely to yield greatest change and so a focus on reaching companies not yet inspected is likely to increase overall workplace health and safety across Ireland. This suggests that unless regular inspection of specific companies is required for specific reasons the resource of the Inspectors should focus on extending the reach as much as possible across the business universe.

The inspection requirements and focus may need more tailored delivery by industry and company size to maximize impact and rating. Demonstrating a clear understanding on the industry and organization as much as possible is likely to provide an even more positive response to the Inspectors.



Appendix A – Questionnaire

INSPECTIONS PROCESS SURVEY FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

My name is _____ and I'm calling from RED C on behalf of The Health & Safety Authority. May I please speak with _____ (contact from leads)

Once correct contact reached re-introduce;

My name is _____ and I'm calling from RED C on behalf of The Health & Safety Authority. This organisation has commissioned RED C to conduct a short seven minute survey regarding your experience with the inspection process from the Health & Safety Authority or HSA.

All responses for the survey are entirely confidential and the responses you give will be grouped with the responses of others to provide overall feedback to HSA.

Their records show that you had an inspection from this organisation in _____ (INSERT MONTH OF INSPECTION FROM LEADS) 2015

Q.A – Q.C ARE QUALIFYING QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE IF THE INDIVIDUAL CAN ANSWER THE SURVEY

Q.A Do you remember this inspection?

Yes – CONTINUE

No – CLOSE

Q.B Who would you say mainly dealt with the inspector

Self

Other Work Colleague

ONLY ASK Q.C IF CODE 2@Q.B

Q.C And would you say you were

One of a team who dealt with the inspector CONTINUE

or

You had no dealings with the inspector ASK TO SPEAK TO COLLEAGUE TO DEALT WITH INSPECTOR & REINTRODUCE, CLOSE THIS RESPONDENT





Main Survey

Q.1 Thinking about the inspection itself, there are a range of five possible outcomes. Which of the following was the outcome or outcomes of your inspection – there can be more than one? Was it....

1. No action
2. Verbal advice
3. Written advice
4. Improvement notice
5. Prohibition Notice
6. Don't know/not aware of outcome DO NOT READ OUT

ASK ALL CODE 1-5@Q.1

Q.2 How much do you agree or disagree with this outcome. Please use a scale of agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. ROTATE ORDER OF ATTRIBUTES.

SCALE

Agree Strongly

Agree Somewhat

Disagree Somewhat

Disagree Strongly

ASK ALL CODE [2-5@Q.1](#) (ALL WITH SOME RECOMMENDATIONS)

Q.3 To date, to what extent has your workplace implemented the HSA inspectors recommendations?

1. Implemented fully
2. About three quarters
3. About half
4. About one quarter
5. Not yet implemented
6. Don't know





ASK ALL

Q.4 Which, if any, of the following changes were implemented in your workplace as a result of the HSA inspection? READ OUT, ROTATE ORDER OF CHANGES, WITH OTHER ALWAYS LAST.

Yes/no/dk

1. Prepared or made changes to the safety statement
2. Prepared or made changes to other method statement or safety plan
3. Gave new responsibilities to individuals
4. Provided training
5. Communicated information to employees
6. Improved working methods
7. Improved workplace precautions
8. Improved use of personal protection equipment
9. Improved tidiness
10. Improved sanitary facilities
11. Allocated additional resource to health and safety
12. Any other changes (if yes, specify change)

ASK ALL

Q.5a Some of the HSA inspections require follow up contact by the HSA Inspector. Did your inspection require any follow up contact by the HSA Inspector?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

ASK ALL YES @Q5a

Q.5b. Since the inspection have you had any follow up contact from the inspector?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

ASK ALL 'YES' @ Q5b

Q.6 How did the inspector conduct this follow up contact? PROBE FULLY, CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- In person, return visit
- Via email
- Via telephone
- Via letter
- Can't Recall/DK





And now a couple of questions to rate the qualities of the inspector who visited your premises. We are not looking for this information to rate specific individuals but rather to gather an overall view of the qualities of the inspection team as a whole.

Q.11 Thinking of your own experience with this inspector can you tell us if you agree or disagree that each of these qualities applied to the inspector that you dealt with during the inspection. Please use a scale of agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly. ROTATE ORDER OF ATTRIBUTES.

SCALE

Agree Strongly

Agree Somewhat

Disagree Somewhat

Disagree Strongly

- Helpful
- Polite/Courteous
- Knowledgeable
- Experienced
- Good Listener
- Approachable
- Good Communicator
- Able to help you tackle health & safety problems
- Able to identify key health and safety issues
- Able to insist upon or enforce adequate health and safety standards

And finally just a couple of questions about yourself to help us to understand a little more about the individuals in each company who are involved with the inspections;

Q.12 Which of these jobs best describes your position within the company.... READ OUT, SINGLE CODE

- Senior Manager/Director
- Middle Manager/Supervisor
- Employee
- Self Employed





Q.13 Was this your first engagement with an inspector from the HSA?

INTERVIEWER NOTE – WE WANT TO DETERMINE HAD THEY BEEN INVOLVED IN AN INSPECTION BEFORE THIS OR WAS THIS THEIR FIRST TIME EVER

- Yes
- No

ASK ALL NO @Q.13

Q.14 How long ago was it that you had dealt with an inspector from the HSA prior to this inspection experience? PROBE TO PRECODES, SINGLE CODE

- Within the past 2 years
- 2-4 years ago
- More than 4 years ago

ADDITIONAL CLASSIFICATION FOR ANALYSIS PURPOSES

REGION – ASK ALL DUBLIN INSPECTIONS (FROM LEADS)

Q.15 The inspection was held in Dublin – was this

- Northside (north of Liffey)
or
- Southside (south of Liffey)

Q.16a/b/c/d – ASK EACH AS PER LEADS CLASSIFICATION – ‘NACE CATEGORY’

ASK OF NACE H (TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES BY ROAD)

Q.16a - Was the inspection related to the transport of dangerous goods by road?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

ASK OF NACE G (RETAIL SALE OF AUTOMOTIVE FUELS)

Q.16b - Did the inspection focus on the dispensing of petrol / diesel / LPG as fuel for the public?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know





ASK OF NACE C, D, G (CONTROL OF MAJOR ACCIDENT HAZARDS - COMAH)

Q.16c - Are you subject to the COMAH Regulations?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

ASK OF NACE C, F, G, I, S (OCCUPATIONAL HYGIENE)

Q.16d - Did the inspection focus primarily on all or some of the following topics: chemicals, asbestos, noise, biological agents, safety data sheets, ventilation or respiratory protective equipment?

- Yes (it's OH)
- No (It's a general inspection)
- Don't Know

That was my last question, thank you for your time. Just to reassure you all answers given are confidential and this survey is being conducted on behalf of HSA.

RQ1 However, sometimes HSA like to look at individual cases to improve inspection experience. Are you happy for us to pass your individual responses to this survey to HSA along with your identifying details?

1. Yes, pass on details
2. No, do not pass on

ASK RQ2 IF YES @RQ1 (CODE 1)

RQ2 And from time to time HSA also likes to re-contact companies to discuss their experiences and responses to this interview. Would you be happy for HSA to re-contact you about this survey if the need arose?

1. Yes, happy for re-contact
2. No, do not want re-contact

THANK AND CLOSE





Appendix B – NACE Codes

A full description of the NACE codes is available from CSO here;

<http://www.cso.ie/px/u/NACECoder/NACEItems/searchnace.asp>

However, below is NACE Code overview for reference;

- A - Agriculture, forestry and fishing
- B - Mining and quarrying
- C - Manufacturing
- D - Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
- E - Water supply; sewerage; waste management and remediation activities
- F - Construction
- G - Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
- H - Transporting and storage
- I - Accommodation and food service activities
- J - Information and communication
- K - Financial and insurance activities
- L - Real estate activities
- M - Professional, scientific and technical activities
- N - Administrative and support service activities
- O - Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
- P - Education
- Q - Human health and social work activities
- R - Arts, entertainment and recreation
- S - Other services activities
- T - Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods - and services - producing activities of households for own use
- U - Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies

