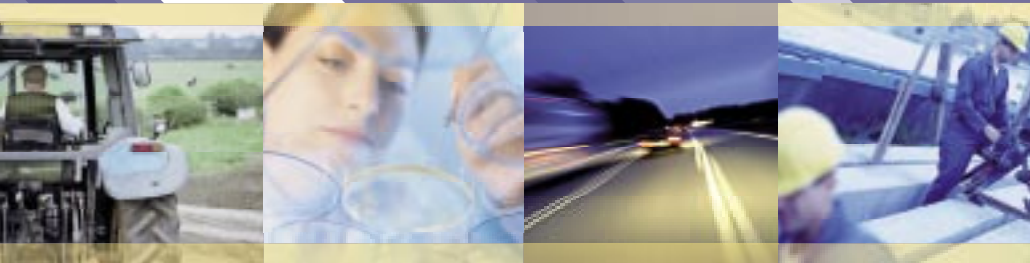




HEALTH AND SAFETY  
AUTHORITY



Health and Safety Authority  
**Strategy Statement**  
**2007 - 2009**

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

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## FOREWORD BY MINISTER FOR LABOUR AFFAIRS, TONY KILLEEN, T.D.



The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, marked a new beginning for the improvement of workplace safety.

To start with, this legislation is the most modern in Europe in the area of occupational safety and health. It reflects the demands and challenges of today's workplace. It also reflects the needs and particular circumstances of the Irish labour force and this is important to our economy. Above all, it provides for the protection and promotion of the safety and health of every individual at work in Ireland. The Health and Safety Authority supports this legislation with information, advice, guidance and codes of practice to provide practical help to all those who have a responsibility in the area. That includes both employers and employees.

Included in the 2005 Act is a provision for the Authority to set out its medium term strategy every three years. This is the first such strategy under the Act and I welcome the emphasis on an overall long term goal by the Authority to address national culture when it comes to workplace safety and taking responsibility.

This strategy answers key questions – for example, how the Authority will initiate and manage the delivery of the REACH programme which will fundamentally change the way in which we manage chemicals in Ireland and worldwide. The Authority will use new powers made possible under the 2005 Act – such as development of Codes of Practice for workplaces with three or less employees. This is extremely important as micro businesses represent a very substantial cohort of Irish businesses. Helping micro business with straightforward advice has been a priority of mine since my appointment. There is also a response set out on the implementation of an “on the spot fine” process to support the very effective enforcement function of the Authority.

The Government supports a collaborative and partnership approach to the economy. The functions and goals of the Authority underpin this way of working and will be a feature throughout the period of the strategy.

I am delighted to endorse this first Statement of Strategy by the Health and Safety Authority and I wish the Board and Executive every success in their continued endeavours to make this country one of the safest places in the world in which to work and to do business.

Tony Killeen T.D.  
*February 2007*

## 1. INTRODUCING OUR STATEMENT OF STRATEGY

We are pleased to introduce the Health and Safety Authority's strategy for which provision has been set in Section 43 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. The strategy aims to foster and protect a national culture of workplace safety for Ireland. It spans the three year period from January 2007 through to December 2009.

The Authority has a considerable task – to achieve the safety, health and welfare of the two million people who work in Ireland today, whether as employers or employees. Working in partnership with employers and employees, the Authority has a responsibility to ensure that at all times safety and health in the workplace is a key priority for everyone. We must all think each day how we and our colleagues can stay safe at work and how we can ensure that people are not injured while working for us.

This Strategy is aimed at bringing about a culture change. This change will build on the modern Irish workplace - valuing competitiveness whilst also linking this to valuing the safety and health of our workforce. We will act to achieve this change by providing information, advice, guidance and support to everyone but where this approach fails the Authority will take legal action to protect workers and enforce safety in the workplace.

The Health and Safety Authority's responsibilities cover every type of workplace and every kind of work, in the public and private sectors, ranging from places where just one or two people are employed to corporations with multiple locations and thousands of people on their payroll. The areas of work are diverse, from retail, arts and crafts to healthcare, construction, agriculture, forestry, mining, quarrying, manufacturing, fishing, chemicals and the service industries.

The Authority cannot achieve the nationally required culture of workplace safety on its own. We need everybody - employers, employees, colleagues, families, individuals and organisations to work with us to put workplace safety, health and welfare at the top of every agenda.

### **The Authority's Strategy is focused on two principal objectives:**

- To persuade society, employers and employees of the need to put workplace safety at the core of everything they do.
- To enforce the 2005 Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act through an inspection and investigation system which provides confidence for all stakeholders in our capacity to intervene with workplaces which are not safe.



Last year, a total of 50 people died as a result of accidents in Irish workplaces. In 2005, a total of 74 people died as a result of accidents in the workplaces of Ireland. In 2004, - the year for which the most recent statistics from the Central Statistics Office are available, 57,800 people were injured in Irish workplaces. Of these, 21,800 people suffered injuries severe enough to cause more than three days absence from work.

These deaths and serious injuries were personal tragedies for each individual involved and for their families, friends, colleagues and employers. These tragedies were compounded by the fact that most of these injuries and deaths were avoidable.

We continue to make progress in reducing the number of workplace accidents. The most recent statistics available show that Ireland had the lowest non-fatal accident rate in the EU. Unfortunately, our record for work related deaths is not so good with data placing us at about average among the EU member states, prior to the new accessions.

The Board of the Authority has guided the development of the Strategy to address the challenges of today's workplaces. We have done this with the support of the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment and particularly the Minister for Labour Affairs, Tony Killeen, T.D.

The Strategy is also the result of considerable work and enthusiasm of our staff. It follows consultation with the social partners, the general public and sectoral interest groups. Implementation of the strategy will be led by the Acting Chief Executive and senior management.



Jim Lyons  
*Chairman*



Michael Henry  
*Acting Chief Executive Officer*

## 2. STRATEGY SUMMARY

### OUR VISION

A national culture of excellence in workplace safety, health and welfare, where all employees, employers and organisations will commit to the active prevention of accidents, injuries and work related ill health on a long term, permanent and sustainable basis.

The objective of the Health and Safety Authority over the next three years is to make workplace safety, health and welfare an integral part of doing business in every workplace in modern Ireland.

We plan to do this by embedding a culture of workplace safety throughout the country, by identifying and addressing current and future high risk areas and by providing necessary information, advice and training to employees and employers to enable them to avoid accidents and to ensure safety.

Prevention and the principles of prevention are a cornerstone of our strategy and this is given effect across all of our activities, from inspections through to policy formation, technical services, information and guidance.

We will assist workplaces who are committed to these principles. We accept that the requirements may challenge workplaces and we will provide support for those who do their best to provide a safe place of work but who, on occasion, may find some difficulties in coming to terms with requirements, perhaps because of the nature, structure or size of their business.

Wherever a preventive approach is disregarded, we will take legal action to protect workers and to enforce safety in the workplace. If individuals, companies or sectors should choose to flout safety requirements, then they should also be fully aware of the punitive consequences which can result from such neglect.

We are committed to working with employers, employees, individuals, employer and trade union organisations and relevant other groups to provide the fullest possible access to occupational safety, health and welfare information and to promote training and overall awareness around this agenda.

The Minister for Labour Affairs, Tony Killeen, T.D., presided over the introduction of the 2005 Act and has identified specific priorities of Government and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment. These priorities include the need to progress the introduction of regulations and the implementation of specific provisions of the Act which will contribute to prevention.



They include the following:

- The development of prevention and compliance initiatives that are relevant and supportive of micro businesses across many sectors, including farming and fishing.
- The development and application of health and safety Codes of Practice for enterprises with three or less employees.
- The early development of regulations for implementing 'On the Spot Fines'.
- The development of proposals on testing for the use of intoxicants in the working environment.
- The promotion and enforcement of the responsibility of Directors as set out in Section 80 of the 2005 Act.

The Minister has also requested the Authority to support the Government response on combating bullying in the workplace through the revision of the Authority's Code of Practice for this important area.

The Authority has recently been appointed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment as the interim National Competent Authority for the future REACH regulation (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals). This is a new EU-wide chemical safety programme. Parallel to this the Authority shall be responsible for the introduction of the GHS (Globally Harmonised System) for classification and labelling of chemical substances and preparations. In this strategy we address the key imperatives from the programme which must be kept under review and updated as REACH develops.

The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment also appointed the Authority as the competent body in relation to the Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED). In consultation and cooperation with the Department, the Authority will put in place the necessary organisational, financial and staffing arrangements to meet customer service obligations and to comply with our role as Competent Authority.

Each of these activities requires widespread consultation and the involvement of stakeholders and will subsequently be dealt with through our annual work programme in each year over the course of the Strategy.

#### **OUR SIX MAIN GOALS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS ARE TO:**

1. Raise the level of general awareness of occupational safety, health and welfare in the workplace among employers, employees and society in general.
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.
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.
4. Enforce occupational safety, health and welfare legislation through targeted and prioritised inspections and through legal action where necessary.
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.
6. Ensure that the Authority, its staff, resources and facilities deliver on our corporate goals in line with best practice and value for money.



**PREVENTION**

Over the next three years, the Authority will work to make safety and health a priority in every workplace in Ireland through general and focused prevention and education campaigns.

We will seek to have individuals and groups value safe behaviour and to make it part of the culture – “the way we do things” in every workplace.

We will make available simplified, relevant and easily accessible information materials which are regularly reviewed and updated to meet the needs, of the specific sectors and groups.

Our goal of improved safety, health and welfare in the workplace is not one we can attain alone - everyone must play their part. We will ensure that we consult widely and build strategic alliances with our social partners, with relevant voluntary bodies as appropriate and all others who can influence and improve workplace safety, health and welfare across the board.

Throughout our Authority – in prevention services, inspectorate and enforcement – there is a fundamental emphasis on best practice processes that are flexible, relevant and suitable. We will work with each sector and assist those who are willing to implement an integrated robust health and safety management system to meet the needs of their workplace.

**COMPLIANCE**

The publication of our 2007 - 2009 strategy marks a clear signal to all employers and employees that they are duty bound, both in terms of their individual responsibilities and by law, to observe a range of safety and health requirements. They cannot afford to disregard this duty under any circumstances.

Where information, advice, guidance and assistance do not work, we will take all necessary legal action to enforce the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005.

We will engage in widespread consultation on a number of new regulations including a proposed set of regulations providing for on-the-spot fines. The power to impose these immediate fines will significantly increase our armoury in tackling non-compliance and we plan to phase in their introduction throughout the period of the strategy.

Targeted inspections and accident investigations will be carried out. The Authority will publish lists of workplaces which have breached the legislation, taking account of Section 85 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, as well as details of court judgments including messages of general interest for worker protection.

**COMPETENT AUTHORITY REMIT**

There are a number of key activities for which the Authority is the appointed national competent authority. These include:



- REACH (interim Competent Authority)
- Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED)
- Transportation of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)
- SEVESO Major accident hazards
- Classification, packaging, labelling and notification of dangerous substances (Directive 67/548/EEC)
- Classification, packaging/labelling of dangerous preparations (Directive 99/45/EC)
- Marketing and Use Regulations (Directive 76/769/EEC)
- Designated National Authority for Council Regulation No. 304/2003 (Export/Import of Dangerous Chemicals).

For each of these activities, the Authority will fully discharge its remit and have regard to the need for consultation and interaction with those clients who will be impacted by the relevant Directive.

## **EDUCATION**

The Authority is in consultation with the Department of Education & Science and associated key organisations, including the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) on the development and implementation of programmes to mainstream safety and health in curricula. In this way, we will educate and influence the workers of the future.

## **THE PUBLIC SERVICE**

Currently, there are 350,000 people employed in the public sector in Ireland. We plan to encourage and to assist the public sector in the development of models of best practice and we will also work hard to ensure that occupational safety and health become required criteria in public service contract awards.

## **MICRO BUSINESS / SELF-EMPLOYED**

There are 113,000 registered businesses in Ireland with fewer than 10 employees, and most individuals working in construction, agriculture and forestry are self-employed.

These workplaces are least likely to have formal management processes, including basic safety management practices in place. Yet, they may be exposed to greater risk than larger, more formal enterprises where the structures in place mean compliance is better managed.

Statistics show that employers in agriculture, construction, mines and quarries, the chemical sector, those working with vehicles and those involved in manual handling are at particular risk (Summary of Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2004 – 2005 – Health and Safety Authority 2006).

Developing measures that are appropriate to the size, informal structures and needs of small and micro enterprises and of self-employed are therefore important challenges. A key objective for the Authority is to develop sector specific codes of practice for those businesses employing three people or less.



### **HIGH RISK SECTORS**

We will develop new ways to reach the high risk sectors of agriculture, construction, mines and quarries, as well as encouraging groups such as chief executives and company directors to make safety and health a normal component of business performance and one that is synonymous with the success and competitiveness of an enterprise. We will also seek to recognise best practices and demonstrate successful role models which we are aware exist among these sectors.

### **CHEMICAL SAFETY**

Among our priorities for the next three years is the introduction and implementation of the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) regulation. This regulation will fundamentally change the way in which companies manufacture, import and use chemicals. The Government has designated the Authority as the interim national competent authority for REACH. The Authority's overall strategy takes as its starting point the key aims of REACH, namely to ensure a high level of protection of human health and the environment, while enhancing competitiveness and innovation.

The Authority is also charged with the introduction of the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) for classification and labelling of chemical substances and preparations. This new scheme was due to be introduced at the same time as REACH. However, it should be noted that the EU decision making process for REACH was finalised in December 2006, with a commencement date of 1 June 2007.



### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH**

We are working on a national strategy for the Authority in the area of occupational health. An accompanying implementation plan will address occupational health in Ireland over the coming ten years, both for the Authority and partner organisations which have a particular remit in the area. This will be published in 2007.

### **EVIDENCE BASED WORK**

To be effective as a national authority, our actions must be evidence based. High quality data to inform our activities will be obtained through analysis of our own internal database of reported incidents and through a programme of commissioned research studies.

### **OUR STAFF**

The success of our planned work will depend to a very large extent on the commitment and actions of our own staff, the efficiency of our systems and processes and how we allocate available resources. The Authority will work to attract, retain and develop our professional staff and also to develop continuously improving systems and processes while ensuring full compliance with the highest standards of governance and national policies. We must ensure that our staff remain at the cutting edge of professional development in terms of the knowledge and expertise which they require to fulfil the statutory role of the Authority.

We will also develop appropriate linkages with 4th level educational programmes and graduate schools.

### **DECENTRALISATION**

Implementing the Government's decentralisation programme is also one of the challenges facing our Authority in the coming years. We will address the requirement to relocate the Authority's headquarters to Thomastown, Co Kilkenny through consultation with our staff and in a practical manner which maximises our future organisational effectiveness.

### **LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

The Authority will assist the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in the timely preparation of draft legislation, both at national and EU levels. In performing this role we will apply the principles of the Government's "Regulating Better" policy.

We will also prepare regulatory impact assessments and will ensure that employers, employees and representative bodies are consulted during key stages of the development process.

We will also ensure that the Department is kept informed of progress in legislative development and will consult the Department and all other relevant stakeholders in the development of national positions, particularly at EU level where binding directives may be negotiated.

Within its remit, the Authority will also assist the Department and other Government bodies in the transposition of all relevant EU directives relating to workplace safety, health and welfare, so as to establish their legal and regulatory effect in Ireland.

**Our strategy is vital and ambitious and we cannot realise our goals alone. In everything we do, we will be asking everyone - employers, employees, the self-employed, safety practitioners, our own staff and all who shape Irish workplaces to think of the consequences of a serious accident and then to do everything possible to prevent it.**

**In short we are asking everyone to “think the unthinkable” and then act to avoid it happening. It is the only way that we, as a nation, can seriously tackle the issue of workplace safety, health and welfare in Ireland.**

#### **OUR MISSION**

**It is the Mission of the Health & Safety Authority of Ireland to foster a national culture of workplace safety, health and welfare that will be of benefit to every working person and the entire nation. The Authority will achieve this by working in partnership with employers, employees, business and employee representative organisations and Government in the provision of appropriate and effective advice, support, guidance and enforcement relating to all workplace safety, health and welfare matters.**

The Health and Safety Authority is the national authority in Ireland with responsibility for securing safety, health and welfare for all persons at work. It is a state-sponsored body, operating under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and reporting to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

The Authority's functions include the promotion of measures for the safety, health and welfare of all employees and employers throughout Ireland, the monitoring of compliance with the 2005 Act and enforcement, under statutory provisions, where non-compliance occurs.

The Authority provides advice and information on matters relating to safety, health and welfare at work and fosters national and localised co-operation on risk prevention between people and organisations, that represent employees and employers.

The Authority's work programme is led by its senior management team who act in line with Government policy, implement strategy, measure and evaluate operational effectiveness on an ongoing basis and report quarterly to the Board.



### 3. BOARD OF THE AUTHORITY

The Board of the Authority comprises a Chairman and eleven members appointed by the Minister for Labour Affairs. The Minister appoints members nominated by organisations who represent the social partners and other interests associated with occupational safety and health, including employees, employers and other bodies. The Board determines Authority policy.

The membership of the Board is as follows:

#### Chairman

Jim Lyons	Former Chief Executive, County Clare VEC
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#### Employer Nominees

Tony Briscoe	Assistant Director of Social Policy (OHS), IBEC
Peter McCabe	(Vice Chairman), Director of Safety, Environmental and Training Services, Construction Industry Federation (CIF)
Yvonne O'Sullivan	Human Resources Director – Brewing and Packaging, Diageo

#### Employee Nominees

Sylvester Cronin	Head of Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, SIPTU
Louise O'Donnell	National Secretary, Civil Service Division, IMPACT
Fergus Whelan	Industrial Officer, Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)

#### Minister's Nominees

Ann-Marie Hayes	
Pat Kearney	
Martin Lynch	(Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
Christina McEleney	
Rosie Sheerin	



**Chairman**



Jim Lyons

**Employer Nominees**



Tony Briscoe



Peter McCabe



Yvonne O'Sullivan

**Employee Nominees**



Sylvester Cronin



Louise O'Donnell



Fergus Whelan

**Ministerial Nominees**



Ann-Marie Hayes



Pat Kearney



Martin Lynch



Christina McEleney



Rosie Sheerin



## 4. RESOURCES

A brief overview of the resources in terms of budget, personnel, office accommodation, technology and equipment required by the Authority to efficiently and effectively implement its Strategy Statement is detailed below.

The Authority is structured in 4 divisions as set out in the organisational chart below.



### CORPORATE SERVICES

The role of Corporate Services Division is to ensure that the Authority has a robust infrastructure to enable the workplace compliance, advice, chemical and prevention roles to be efficiently and effectively achieved. Corporate Services will have primary responsibility for delivery of our Strategic goals 5 and 6.

**Corporate Services** is comprised of five units:

- Human Resources
- Financial management
- Legislation and Liaison
- Information and Communications Technology
- Research and Statistics



## PREVENTION SERVICES

The role of Prevention Services Division is to facilitate the Irish workforce to achieve an environment in which they can work safely and in support of their own health and well-being.

**Prevention Services Division** is comprised of four units:

- Policy and Technical Services
- Occupational Health
- Education Strategy
- Communications and Customer Service

## WORKPLACE COMPLIANCE

This division enforces the relevant statutory provisions in relation to Occupational Safety and Health and provides expert advice to employers, employees and the self-employed.

**Workplace Compliance Division** is comprised of three units:

- Field Operations
- Compliance Management and Development
- Legal Services

The Field operations staff are located in the Authority's Dublin and regional offices at Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Athlone, Galway, Sligo and Kilkenny.

## CHEMICALS POLICY AND SERVICES

**The Chemicals Policy and Services Division** is responsible for implementation of a range of chemical safety legislation, which aims to protect the population and environment from the harmful effects of dangerous chemicals. As the National Competent Authority, the division has primary responsibility for a wide range of chemical legislation: Marketing and Use, Notification of new chemicals, Existing Substances, Export and Import, Classification, Packaging and Labelling. The Chemicals Division is also developing a comprehensive programme for the implementation of REACH and GHS in Ireland.

## STAFF RESOURCES

The Authority currently has an authorised staffing compliment of 185 staff with a projected staffing level as set out in the table below over the lifetime of the Strategy. The staffing levels have been approved by Government in order to develop the national strategies in key areas such as EU Chemical strategy and Global Harmonisation of Chemicals, execution of Regulatory Impact Assessments.

The staffing levels outlined below are the minimum required by the Authority in order to implement its statement of Strategy during 2007-2009.



Year	Staff No
2006	185
2007	197
2008	215
2009	212

### FINANCIAL AND BUDGETS

In 2006, expenditure by the Authority was €21.1million.

The Authority will work at all times to maximise the beneficial use of its resources in the public interest and to ensure value to the taxpayer.

The Authority will report annually and on an audited basis to the Minister on expenditure and on the progress achieved against the budget.

Year	Budget (€)
2006	20,598,000
2007	22,513,000

### INFORMATION AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

Day to day operations of the Authority are supported by an effective, modern, efficient, secure and resilient Information and Computer Technology network and associated service platforms servicing both customers and staff. This structure incorporates the best of mobile and fixed technology to enable flexibility. Security and resilience of the systems and networks is assured through periodic external audit and review.

### ACCOMMODATION

The Authority currently has a headquarters office in Dublin with regional field offices in Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo, Athlone and Kilkenny. The Authority has secured offices in Kilkenny as an interim location for decentralisation pending completion of the Authority's offices in Thomastown, Co Kilkenny.

## 5. CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES

### LABOUR MARKET OVERVIEW

Over the next three years, the Health and Safety Authority will carry out its work against a backdrop of significant changes to Ireland's workplace environment.

Economic forecasters have predicted that our economic boom will continue for the next 15 years. In the shorter term, the ESRI predict that Ireland can look forward to a growth rate in GNP per head of around 2% a year out to the end of the next decade (ESRI Quarterly Commentary Summer 2006).

The unprecedented growth in the Irish economy has placed more demands on businesses – demand for innovation, increased productivity and faster turnaround times. It is in everyone's interests and of benefit to the economy that businesses should continue to become more competitive. The pressure for results however, must not lead to cutting corners on safety, jeopardising the safety of our workers or taking risks in order to meet demanding deadlines.

Those firms which are exemplary in their management of safety have demonstrated that the safety, health and welfare of their workers is synonymous with success. If safety is integrated into everything an organisation does, then it becomes second nature to those working in that organisation. This message must be conveyed across all sectors. The Authority will vigorously promote the concept of a safety and health management system at the level of the individual firm or organisation.

The growth of the labour force requires new strategies by the Authority in reaching a larger, more diverse and multi-lingual population. In 2005, the labour force reached two million for the first time in the history of the State (FAS Labour Market Review 2005). The ESRI predict that employment will increase by a further 74,000 in 2007, based on a continuing strong rate of immigration. Recent figures from the CSO indicate that there were 148,500 EU and other non-Irish nationals in the Irish labour market in 2003.

The inflow of workers from abroad, with a high level of education, will add to the growth potential of the economy. Forfas has identified sectors and occupations in the Irish economy where there are labour and skill shortages, and concludes that these needs will be met primarily from within the European Economic area with some need for high-skilled immigration from outside the EU.

The internationalisation of Ireland's population and workforce poses a serious challenge in terms of workplace safety. Recent fatality statistics indicate the extent of the problem. In 2005, 10 of the 65 worker fatalities were categorised as non-Irish nationals. In 2006, 7 of the 44 worker fatalities involved non-Irish national victims.



The number of non-fatal accidents involving non-Irish nationals reported to the Authority has increased significantly year on year – from approximately 100 in 2000 to over 800 in 2006.

The Authority will continue to develop and improve measures to assist employers to communicate messages of prevention and control of risks for workers who are not fluent in the routine working language. In addition, we will proactively target these workers directly through information campaigns, education and training measures.

The ESRI identify the housing market as the key driver of growth and employment in the economy. The construction industry – a key sector in the management and control of safety risks – will continue to expand over the next three years, which means that the Authority will implement a continued and persistent focus on this sector and analysis of accident trends to support new measures of control.

Over the coming three years, the Authority will focus resources on sectors and areas in which they are most needed. These include the high-risk construction, agriculture, mining and quarrying industries.

#### **EU CONTEXT**

Following on the 2002 to 2006 EU strategy, there will be a new Community Strategy on Occupational Safety and Health 2007 – 2012. This has yet to be published and ratified but is likely to build on the earlier strategy. The new strategy is expected to provide a clear contribution to the renewed Lisbon strategy. In particular, it will provide a clear link and contribution to the creation of more and better jobs at EU level. Our strategy must reflect this by stepping up measures to mainstream occupational safety and health into wider national policy and promote the link between occupational safety and health and competitiveness.

Ireland has the advantage over many of our EU colleagues in having the most recent legislation with the 2005 Act. This Act reflects many of the requirements of a progressive economy. For example, the challenge is already identified in the 2005 Act of ensuring that legislation is easily understood – particularly for small businesses.



The EU strategy is likely to favour greater targeting and monitoring through setting quantifiable objectives and measuring outcomes. Our strategy addresses the development of reliable base line data to ensure that monitoring and measurement are better. Our strategy has a significant goal of targeting workplaces, on a sectoral and such other basis. This makes information and advice specific to their needs and therefore more easily applied.

Finally Ireland will produce many examples of best practices which we will share and exchange with our EU colleagues.

### **COMPETENT AUTHORITY REMIT**

The Authority is the appointed national competent authority across a range of Directives which have considerable impact on our workplaces and which demand a professional efficient response. The following are the activities for which we have been designated competent authority:

- REACH (interim Competent Authority)
- Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED)
- Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR)
- SEVESO major accident hazards
- Classification, packaging and labelling and notification of dangerous substances (Directive 67/548/EEC)
- Classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous preparations (Directive 99/45/EC)
- Marketing and Use Regulations (Directive 76/769/EEC)
- Designated National Authority for Council Regulation No. 304/2003 (Export/Import of Dangerous Chemicals)

The most recent such appointment is as the REACH (interim) competent authority and we set out below the Authority's plan to implement both REACH and GHS (Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling).

### **COMPETENT AUTHORITY - REACH AND GHS IN IRELAND**

In June 2005, the Government designated the Health and Safety Authority as interim National Competent Authority for the administration and enforcement of the REACH regulation in Ireland. Additional funding and resources were provided to enable the Authority undertake this significant extra role. As the Authority will also be a Competent Authority for GHS (Globally Harmonised System for Classification and Labelling), the strategy deals with both regulations.



As a Competent Authority for REACH, the key functions of the Authority will include:

- Active participation in the REACH Interim Strategy and specific REACH Implementation Projects (RIPs) with the aim to ensure the necessary infrastructure (IT and Agency) and guidance is introduced.
- Provision of a national helpdesk to provide advice to manufacturers, importers and downstream users and all other interested parties on their respective responsibilities and obligations under the Regulations.
- Active co-operation with the European Central Agency and registrants to ensure a transparent and efficient centralised registration system is in place.
- A full and comprehensive evaluation of prioritised chemicals with a view to identifying those chemicals which may require additional measures to adequately address their risks.
- Preparation of restriction proposals on the manufacturing, placing on the market and use of certain substances of high concern.
- Partnership with the European Central Agency to ensure a transparent, efficient and responsive service is provided.
- Submission of harmonized classification and labeling entries for substances that are Carcinogenic, Mutagenic and Toxic to Reproduction (CMRs, Categories 1, 2 and 3) and respiratory sensitizers (R42) to the Classification and Labelling Inventory. This activity is linked to the Competent Authority role under GHS.
- Enforcement. The changed Authority role in REACH will allow a greater level of enforcement thereby contributing to increased levels of protection for human health and the environment.

In developing its strategy, the Authority has taken as its starting point the key objectives of REACH, *namely to ensure a high level of protection for human health and the environment, while enhancing competitiveness and innovation*. To achieve these objectives the Authority aims to:

- Support all stakeholders, through awareness campaigns, provision of information, training and a dedicated helpdesk in order that they can fulfil their obligations under REACH and GHS. This objective will be achieved through consultation and partnership with employers and their representatives, trade unions, consumer and environmental groups and other government departments and agencies. A key focus of this effort will be on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs).
- Partner with Competent Authorities in other Member States to develop an integrated and consistent approach to REACH and GHS implementation.
- Ensure the necessary structures and resources are in place for the Authority to implement and enforce the REACH and GHS regulations.

The EU decision making for REACH was finalised in December 2006, with a commencement date of 1 June 2007. The strategy and milestones will be constantly reviewed to reflect the ongoing discussions at the EU level and as such, milestones are only set for Year 1 and 2.

In addition to REACH and GHS, the Authority has commenced the process to implement our Competent Authority brief for the Transportable Pressure Equipment Directive (TPED). At the commencement of the strategy period, the Unit has been established and is being resourced. The first task is to set out the mechanism through which the Authority will manage TPED including the appointment and set up of structures to deliver to customers for whom this directive has an impact.

The Authority will continue to work in consultation with customers on both these recent competent authority areas and all others under our remit.

### **SMALL AND MICRO BUSINESSES / SELF-EMPLOYED**

Based on information from the Revenue Commissioners for 2005, there are over 113,000 registered businesses in Ireland with fewer than 10 employees, and a further 18,000 businesses with between 10 and 49 employees. In addition, there are 114,000 people working in agriculture and forestry, most of whom are self-employed. These workplaces are least likely to have formal management processes, including basic safety management practices in place. Yet, these workplaces may be exposed to greater risk than larger, more formal enterprises where compliance is better managed within an organisational structure. In addition REACH shall place increased responsibility on these small businesses in the chemical sector, so one of the major goals shall be to increase awareness of this emerging change in this sector.

Accident statistics indicate that small employers in a number of activities and sectors are at particular risk, including:

- Agriculture, construction, mines and quarries, chemical sector
- Vehicle safety
- Manual handling

Small businesses, as well as micro businesses, are a key target area for the Authority over the next three years. We will be working specifically to develop measures that are appropriate to the size, informal structures and needs of small and micro enterprises.

### **PUBLIC SECTOR**

There are 350,000 people employed in the public sector in Ireland today. There is an opportunity to achieve greater involvement of the sector in a manner which provides leadership and role models for good safety, health and welfare management. The challenge to the Authority over the next three years will be to encourage commitment in those areas of the public sector which have the most to gain and scope to influence others to follow. The unique characteristics of the sector (State owned, implementers of Government and national policy, service orientated, large employers, etc.) must be drawn upon to influence the national health and safety agenda.



### **WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESSES**

Based on the most recent European data available, Ireland had the lowest non-fatal accident rate in the EU (the 15 member states prior to the new accessions). However, this non-fatal accident data was more favourable than that for deaths - at which Ireland is about average amongst member states.

In considering the context of a new strategy for the Authority, it is important to recognise the progress that has been made in reducing accident and death rates in Ireland. Much of this progress is attributed to the combined effort of a number of committed partners who, in conjunction with the Authority have, in some cases, enabled a turnaround of a negative trend.

Our experience shows however, that there can be no room for complacency. While a trend can be encouraging, it cannot be taken for granted.

Progress in reducing injuries and illnesses arising from what are perceived as "everyday events" has been slow. Injuries resulting from poor manual handling practices, for example, account for 30% of injuries reported to the Authority. Similarly, slips trips and falls at ground level account for over 15% of reported accidents. These injuries are preventable. There is evidence that where a workplace sets about with determination to eliminate such injuries, results can be dramatic and savings at the level of the individual firm are inevitable.

### **HIGH RISK SECTORS**

The high risk sectors demand solutions that involve not just the Authority but everyone who wields influence, including all social partners as well as the general public. In 2006, 18 people lost their lives on Irish farms. Ten of these were over 65 years of age and two were children.

Despite a decrease in fatalities, from 23 in 2005 to 12 in 2006 the construction sector continues to have the second highest fatality rate, after the agriculture sector.

In the quarrying sector, 5 people lost their lives in 2005 - a significant increase from previous years. There were 2 fatalities in the quarrying sector in 2006.

There is a very clear need for a culture change - in particular in the high risk sectors - and there must be a new emphasis on the obligation for everybody to take responsibility for their own safety not only at employer level but also at employee level. Everyone working in Ireland today has a responsibility for their own safety.



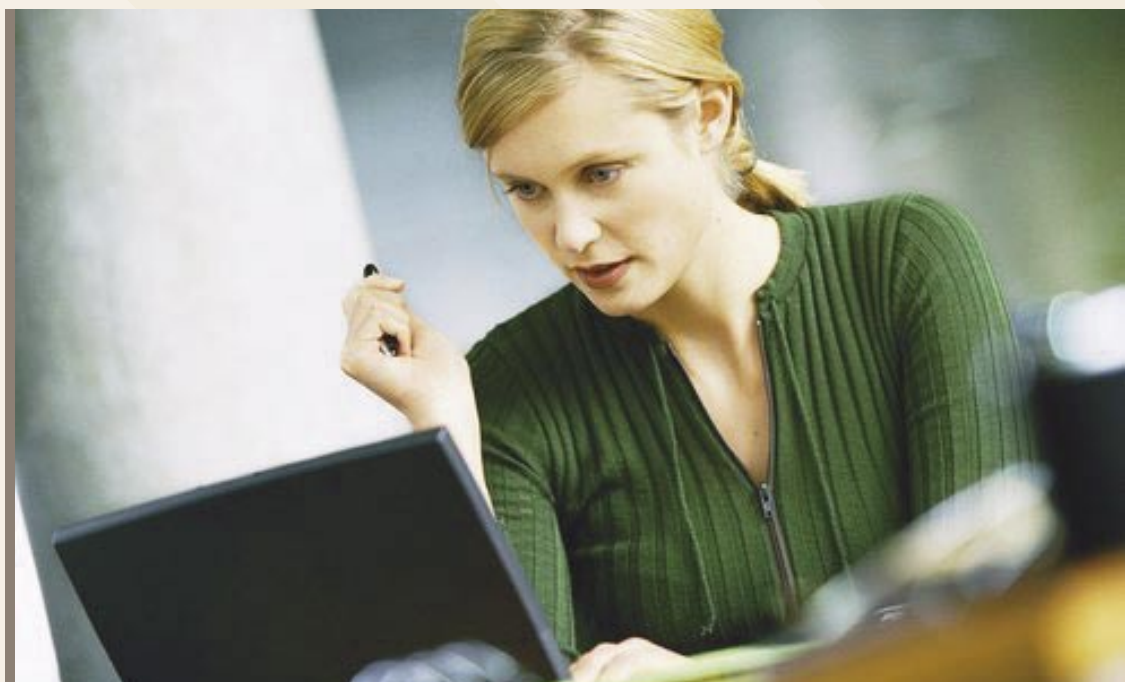
**COMMITMENT FROM THE TOP**

In the experience of the Authority, organisations in which the safety and health of workers is personally valued by the Chief Executive, the owner, manager or the “boss”, are more likely to be successful in preventing accidents.

Our challenge in convincing those at the top of Ireland’s workplaces is assisted by the 2005 Act in which the accountability of directors and senior managers is to the fore. This focus on business leaders will be a prominent and strategic theme in both the promotional and enforcement work of the Authority going forward.

**OUR COMMITMENT**

Throughout the application of this strategy, the Authority will continue to recruit and retain the best and most professional staff and will upskill them to the highest levels necessary in order to achieve our objectives. We will also work in as innovative and flexible a manner as possible to reflect the changing demands of workforces throughout Ireland and to promote their safety, health and welfare in the national interest.



## 6. STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

**The Authority's strategy for the coming three years is based around two key principal objectives:**

- Prevention - focusing on societal and business influencers so as to increase the general acceptance of safe behaviour. It is important that we lay the groundwork for later behaviours in the workplace through early actions in the education process.
- Enforcement - If individuals or sectors choose to ignore our advice and to disregard the law, we will rigorously enforce the 2005 legislation using all the powers at our disposal.

**Following our analysis of the national labour market environment and of our wider consultation, we have identified six strategic goals for the Authority:**

1	Raise the level of general awareness of occupational safety, health and welfare in the workplace among employers, employees and society in general.
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.
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.
4	Enforce occupational safety, health and welfare legislation through targeted and prioritised inspections and through legal action where necessary.
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.
6	Ensure that the Authority, its staff, resources and facilities deliver on our corporate goals in line with best practice and value for money.

### MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

Throughout the three years of the strategy, the Authority will continue to monitor and measure, both qualitatively and quantitatively, the levels of progress made towards achieving each of the outlined goals and the required milestones. Research benchmarking will take place within all goals to be achieved.

In each year, a comprehensive Programme of Work will be developed in line with the objectives of this strategy. This programme will be formally reported upon at each year-end in an annual report which will summarise specific measures taken on a sector by sector basis, together with a statistical analysis concerning the prevalence of work related injuries, accidents or ill health. The Authority will monitor progress on achievement of its strategy and report regularly to the Board. On an annual basis, a strategy review will take account of changes and new demands and the strategy will be updated accordingly.

# Goal 1

**Raise the level of general awareness of occupational safety, health and welfare in the workplace among employers, employees and society in general.**

## RATIONALE

General awareness and acceptance of the moral and practical need for workplace safety, health and welfare is the starting point for prevention. The process of raising awareness must be continuous. For the Authority, this means reaching everyone with messages which are relevant and meaningful. To achieve this goal over the next three years we will:

Actions	Year	Milestones
Design and implement a wide reaching campaign aimed at building and sustaining national awareness of the benefits and challenges in achieving safe and healthy workplaces.	1	Campaign designed and phased; Baseline objectives established by survey; Campaign commenced in 2006.
	2	Implementation continued, monitored and reviewed against objectives.
	3	Overall Campaign effectiveness measured and reported in Strategy Final Review.
Introduce and implement REACH and GHS in Ireland.	1	Awareness campaign and communications plan developed; rollout commenced: REACH Help Desk established. Tripartite initiative commenced with the HSE and HSENI. Participation in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- with Stakeholder Expert Groups (SEGs)</li> <li>- with the REACH-IT efforts at EU level</li> <li>- with development of REACH enforcement processes and methods at EU level;</li> </ul> Plan rolled out for future implementation and enforcement of REACH and GHS.
	2	National Help Desk promoted and further developed; Training seminars and workshops delivered to external stakeholders; Active Participation in Stakeholder Expert Groups (SEGs); Necessary ICT systems (IUCLID5 and REACH-IT) introduced; Preparations for repeal of existing chemical legislation commenced; Midpoint review of REACH/GHS implementation strategy held and programme refined accordingly; Enforcement model for REACH/GHS defined at national and EU level; Contribution made to the nominations process for representatives to the Agency Management Board and committees; Introduction and development of Authority structures and processes for implementation are continued and developed.
	3	Implementation and enforcement commenced.



<p>Encourage and assist Public Sector organisations to be models of best practice in occupational safety and health. Demonstrate substantial progress both in raising awareness and in boosting performance for the sector.</p> <p>Work to ensure that occupational safety and health performance becomes a required criterion in public service contract awards.</p>	1	Public Sector approach set out, scheduled and programme commenced.
	2	Evidence of progress and improved performance in a minimum of three areas.  Criteria agreed for ensuring agenda is absorbed in public sector contracts process.
	3	Initial programme concluded and new programme agreed.
<p>Promote the occupational safety, health and welfare agenda at the highest political levels. Collaborate with national and social partner organisations to achieve combined influence and enhanced national awareness.</p>	1	Campaign designed for promotion at these levels.
	2	Significant exposure at national level achieved.
	3	Exposure sustained; Awareness level measured.
<p>Build alliances and partnerships with organisations, including the voluntary bodies, to embed an effective safety and health culture in all Irish workplaces.</p> <p>Promote local and regional involvement in particular through our Regional Advisory Committees.</p> <p>Encourage the use of joint safety agreements in Irish workplaces based on a model to be agreed by the Authority's Board.</p>	1	Identified strategic alliances and partnerships to impact workplaces. Engaged social partners in planning Safety Agreements approach.
	2	Alliances built with associated work programmes. Best practice committees set up.
	3	Assessed contributions of both approaches. Evidence of successful local and regional activities through Regional Advisory Committees.

**MEASURING OUTCOMES**

The Authority will undertake targeted research and reviews to ascertain the effectiveness of activities within this goal, the target audience being employers, employees and the general public.

At the level of overall general national awareness, an initial measurement process will establish a baseline of existing awareness of the role of the Authority (distinguished from other organisations), the key issues involved in the protection of worker safety, the prevention of accidents and work related illnesses and the accountabilities of key groups.

**We will also follow a quantitative approach in evaluating the impact of this goal. This will include:**

- ■ Number of enquiries to Workplace Contact Unit.
- ■ Effectiveness of advertising – (Television; Press; Radio).
- ■ Number of awareness-raising events, seminars, conferences, etc.
- ■ Tracking of incidents and accidents.

With regard to REACH and GHS, initial success will be measured by an increased level of awareness, coupled with a high attendance at training workshops and seminars, especially with regard to the SME sector. In addition, success will be measured through high level involvement of the Chemicals Policy and Services division in the work of the REACH interim strategy projects and European Chemicals Agency, with substances of high concern identified, evaluated, regulated or substituted, as necessary. Ultimate success will be measured through enforcement levels, combined with levels of industry compliance and awareness of chemical risks and control measures, in accordance with the two Regulations.

To measure success for our public sector/ public services campaign, we will use existing recently gathered data for the key sectors of Local Authorities and Hospitals (A&E Units) and track progress. We will also monitor the uptake of health and safety criteria in public service contracts awards through a baseline evaluation of current status benchmarked against uptake achieved at the conclusion of our strategy implementation.

To evaluate success in achieving national and political collaboration, we will use indicators including recorded instances of the inclusion of safety, health and welfare in high level political and national discussions, agendas and forums and will continuously track this inclusion and influence outcomes, where these may be attributable to our ongoing campaign(s).

Our final measure around alliances, partnerships and regional involvement will be measured quantitatively (numbers of such arrangements and the activities engaged in) and qualitatively including perceptions of progress and behaviour changes resulting from these initiatives.



# 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.**

## **RATIONALE**

We have a long term vision in which the practice of safety should come naturally to workers in Ireland. Our challenge is to influence and change the collective behaviour of all those at work. To achieve such long-term change, the process must start through early intervention in the formal education system. By mainstreaming safety and health at all levels of education, we will be best placed to foster this culture and to create a “safety first” mindset in young people, before they reach the workplace. During the lifetime of this strategy, it will be possible to make progress through a concerted national effort and alliance with the education and training sectors. To achieve this goal over the next three years we will:



Actions	Year	Milestones
Continue to consult with the Department of Education and Science and key organisations to agree ways and means for sustained co-operation between our organisations with regard to the achievement of this goal.	1	Consultations concluded and action plan agreed and initiated.
	2	Structures in place to sustain co-operation; Actions continued.
	3	Actions continued; Evidence of benefits from co-operation.
Develop and implement programmes which contribute to mainstreaming safety and health in education and training curricula.	1	Full plan agreed with key education bodies; Initial pilots implemented; Cross-curricular resources developed.
	2	Major implementation stage to install curriculum in specified areas.
	3	Concluded Phase 1 implementation; Phase 2 designed.
Promote and develop relationships with other organisations to seek to bring about significant landmark learning opportunities for students at all levels in the context of occupational safety and health.	1	Identified potential organisations for collaboration; Plan published to develop safety and health learning opportunities.
	2	Projects and activities implemented and evaluated.
	3	Continuation of activities at local and national level.
Participate in networking, continued professional development seminars and conferences leading to an enhanced profile of the benefits of an occupational safety, health and welfare culture.	1	Planned participation in key activities to raise profile.
	2	Minimum of 3 national level activities with participation by the Authority.
	3	Participation continued. Effectiveness of campaign assessed.
Develop a safety and health management system for use in schools, in order to create a safe whole-school environment.	1	System and audit tool piloted in post-primary schools.
	2	System rolled out in all post-primary schools.
	3	System piloted in primary schools.

### MEASURING OUTCOMES

Quantitative measures will determine the number of courses, the level and type of curriculum in which safety and health is included. These together with other criteria will determine the number and type of cross curricular resources which have been developed. The baseline position will first be established.

The Authority will also evaluate the number of collaborative measures which have been put in place and the number still in existence at the conclusion of the Strategy period.

At a qualitative level, base measures will be taken of general awareness levels among young people. The impact and progress in terms of behaviour change among young people will take many years to assess but early indicators will be sought.

The Authority will audit the extent to which a safety and health management system exists and operates in at least one level of the formal education structure.



# 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.**

## RATIONALE

In tandem with improving the overall national level of awareness and acceptance of the safety concept, it is also necessary to ensure that there is easy access to relevant comprehensible information, which can be used at sector and individual workplace level.

We will:

Actions	Year	Milestones
<p>Analyse specific sectors and groups to determine information and guidance needs and the extent to which needs are currently met.</p> <p>Address gaps with a plan to ensure up to date and relevant information and guidance is available.</p> <p>Review our existing publications to ensure they meet the criterion of comprehensive, simplified, relevant and easily accessed materials which contribute to increasing the level of sectoral compliance. Pay particular attention to language issues in developing new materials.</p>	1	<p>Analysis of sectors completed, gaps identified.</p> <p>Programme developed to address sectoral gaps and programme commenced.</p> <p>Existing publications assessed and programme developed to revise where necessary; action commenced.</p>
	2	<p>Programme continued.</p> <p>Minimum of 33% of existing information revised.</p> <p>New materials published.</p> <p>Evidence of customer satisfaction on quality and accessibility.</p>
	3	Impact of revisions assessed.
<p>Prioritise the needs of micro business to ensure an increased rate of compliance across all sectors.</p>	1	Support programme agreed; Initial roll out commenced.
	2	Major programme to achieve compliance implemented, encompassing information, training and special measures in partnership with other selected providers.
	3	Three year programme concluded. Evaluation of impact of actions.



<p>Prioritise development of communication models aimed at delivering our message clearly, efficiently and cost effectively throughout all Irish workplaces. Regularly review and update this model in line with customer needs.</p>	1	New communications models developed; Current models enhanced; Upgrading of website material implemented.
	2	Further review of communications models in use.
	3	Effectiveness assessed.
<p>Collaborate with key national and EU organisations, social partners and international colleagues to assess changing customer information needs and to explore new ways of addressing these.</p>	1	Collaborator plan drafted; Key areas for co-operation identified to include EU Agency; CION: REACH; SLIC; ILO; AC of EU.
	2	Projects commenced.
	3	Effectiveness assessed.
<p>Publish a national strategy which addresses all relevant issues in occupational health. Develop an associated Implementation Plan which sets out actions for the Authority and relevant partners.</p>	1	Strategy agreed and published.
	2	Implementation Plan agreed and published. Actions commenced.
	3	Actions continued; Review of progress completed and reported.
<p>Collaborate with others to align all relevant safety recognition systems in Ireland (Safe T Cert; OHSAS18, 001 etc) to ensure clarity, consistency and benefit for workplaces.</p> <p>Work in support of an agreed national system of mutual recognition of safety qualifications through a national competent authority (EU and International).</p> <p>Develop guidance on assessment of competence with reference to the 2005 Act.</p>	1	Current Irish recognition systems analysed.  Future National model proposed.  Relevant organisations supported to implement EU recognition system for exchange of qualifications.
	2	Implementation of agreed Irish model commenced.  Guidance developed for a minimum of 10 key activities on assessment of competence.
	3	Recognition of qualifications from abroad in operation for all migrant and visiting workers.  Guidance developed on a further 10 activities on assessment of competence.



### **MEASURING OUTCOMES**

A baseline survey will be taken to identify current effectiveness of these initiatives which will then be benchmarked with findings at the end of the strategy period.

We will monitor the volume and quality of new information, guidance and other support materials and will obtain feedback from all sectors concerning the relevancy and efficacy of these initiatives. We will also seek to correlate compliance levels back to our information and awareness raising campaigns.

Where gaps in sectoral information and guidance activity are identified in the baseline survey, we will seek to have addressed these by the conclusion of the strategy period. Particular attention will be paid towards evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives aimed at the micro-business sector.

By the close of 2008, we will expect to see evidence of enhanced understanding and use of information, guidance and codes of practice issued by the Authority across the multiple sectors with which we engage in this regard.



# Goal 4

**Enforce occupational safety, health and welfare legislation through targeted and prioritised inspections and through legal action where necessary.**

## RATIONALE

The Authority will build on its successes in recent years by ensuring the continued effective enforcement of occupational safety, health and welfare legislation through regular inspections and accident investigations. This will include, where appropriate, issuing enforcement notices, taking prosecutions and seeking High Court injunctions. Through the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 the Authority has expanded powers of enforcement with the potential for on the spot fines and increased penalties. We will achieve higher levels of effective enforcement through targeted inspections focusing on identified high risk and prioritised sectors. The Authority will ensure, in line with Section 85 of the 2005 Act, the protection of every member of the public affected by work activity. To achieve this goal over the next three years we will:

Actions	Year	Milestones
Ensure levels of quality targeted inspections and accident investigation in line with national and international best practice. We will review levels of compliance in prioritised sectors in the areas of specified high risk activity.	1	Review prioritisation criteria approach and the full use of all powers to achieve the most effective use of inspector resources annually. Proactive inspections carried out in line with criteria. Prosecution policy reviewed.
	2	Compliance rates monitored within each sector for targets set out in each year's Programme of Work. Target volume of inspections carried out. Recommendations of prosecution policy review implemented.
	3	Inspections carried out in accordance with targets set in Programme of Work. Compliance rate reviewed in prioritised sectors. Prioritisation approach reviewed and new strategy drafted to reflect revisions.
Devise criteria to determine those workplaces to be inspected.	1	Criteria to assist the planning system in place for each inspector. Specific prioritisation at workplace activity levels.
	2	Planning system revised and further developed based on research.
	3	Prioritising criteria reviewed. Impact assessed.



Seek commitment and support from all employers to return a completed declaration of compliance with the legislation in order to assist the process of inspecting those that need to be inspected.	1	Consult on possible format of declaration process.
	2	Compliance declaration process designed and piloted.
	3	Awareness campaign delivered.
Agree and implement policy on safety for members of the public who could be at risk from accidents in workplaces.	1	Policy agreed by Board.
	2	Annual review of effectiveness.
	3	Proposals made on suggested changes to policy.
Introduce on a phased basis a system of fixed penalties.	1	Regulations developed; System in place.
	2	Effectiveness assessed.
	3	Review conducted to assess impact.
Develop target areas and activity for each regional Inspectorate as part of national programme.	1	Quarterly review of regional targets.
	2	Annual regional targets for annual Programme of Work set by reference to evidence based data.
	3	Effectiveness reviewed.
<p>Publish in line with the 2005 Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ a list of workplaces where a breach of the legislation has occurred.</li> <li>■ details of court judgments including messages of general interest for worker protection.</li> </ul>	1	Designed and agreed publication process for workplace breaches. Published details of court cases.
	2	Regular listing of workplace breaches published.
	3	Impact measured and stakeholders consulted on future management.
Ensure that occupational safety, health and welfare criteria become a required part of all Public Service Contracts.	1	Design guidelines for occupational safety, health and welfare criteria in public service contracts.
	2	Campaign for inclusion of criteria in public service contracts.
	3	Effectiveness surveyed.
Ensure flexibility within the Authority to meet and accommodate issues referred by the Minister/Department.	1	Regular contact with the Minister/Department to consider and review issues referred.
	2	Flexible response to priority changes in place.
	3	Ongoing regular contact with the Minister/Department to consider and review issues referred.
Continue to support the Minister/Department in the development of occupational safety, health and welfare legislation and codes of practice by providing technical expertise for the production of new Regulations and the transposition of European legislation by conducting a regulatory impact assessments process and a public consultation process.	1	Planned assistance to Board, Minister and Department.
	2	Completed programme for legislation agreed with the Board, the Minister and the Department.
	3	Programme completed as agreed.

**MEASURING OUTCOMES**

We will seek higher levels of targeted, intelligence based inspections and accident investigations and will report with statistics in this regard on a year by year basis.

We will expect a 15% increase in compliance levels across sectors.

The results process will depend to a large extent on resources applied, the complexity of inspections required in individual sectors, levels of compliance achieved and general accident rates (bearing in mind that accidents happen on an unplanned basis).

We will specifically monitor the effectiveness of new powers and enforcement methods introduced under the 2005 Act and will also report upon same. We will also monitor the levels of inclusion of health and safety criteria in public service contracts awards.

The Authority will also report on the effectiveness of its support and guidance in the preparation and implementation of national legislation, EU directives and the transposition of directives into regulatory effect in Ireland.



# 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.**

## RATIONALE

To be effective as a National Authority, our strategy must be evidence-based. Anticipating emerging risks, through monitoring and research, is vital for guiding future actions by the Authority. High quality information is available through analysis of our own internal database of reported incidents, and through management of a targeted programme of commissioned research studies. Efforts to increase co-operation and data sharing between interested organisations will increase preventive potential at a national level. There must also be systems to ensure the quality and dissemination of the Authority's statistical and research output.

To achieve this goal over the next three years the Authority plans the following actions:

Actions	Year	Milestones
Develop an ongoing observation system to identify emerging risks, based on systematic collection and analysis of information.	1	Extend and formalise in-house statistical analysis of the Authority's own database to identify emerging risks.
	2	Plan annual Research Programme to examine identified risks in more depth, and to support the Authority's wider campaigns and activities.
	3	Enhance data quality through involvement in ICT projects to develop data audit systems and useful query tools for extracting information from the Authority's database (SAFE).
Formalise the structure and procedures of the research function, so that it is fully integrated within the Authority and can more effectively support and inform strategic decision-making and development activities.	1	Facilitate interaction and information sharing between the research function and other relevant units within the Authority.
	2	Refine the formal procedures of the research function.
	3	Conduct annual assessment of research function.

Collaborate with outside organisations that are involved in collecting health and safety data and conducting research, both nationally and internationally.	1	Identify other agencies with shared interests to establish data sharing systems.
	2	Co-operate in joint research projects. Contributions to joint projects may include funding, co-supervision, data provision.
	3	Develop connections with European institutions involved in health and safety research and data collection.

### MEASURING OUTCOMES

By the conclusion of the strategy period, the Research and Statistics function within the Authority will have:

#### DEVELOPED OBSERVATION SYSTEM:

- Instigated an in-house statistical report series (quarterly).
- Completed three annual programmes of targeted research.
- Year-on-year analysis will be included in the annual Statistical Summaries.
- The efficacy of initiatives and campaigns in specific sectors will be subject to statistical evaluation, to ensure the optimum use of our resources.
- Contributed to the development of audit systems and query tools to extract data from the Authority's database (SAFE).
- Conducted assessment of value added through research and data analysis projects.

#### DEVELOPED INTERNAL PROCEDURES:

- Improved integration of the Research function within the Authority, so that research is being continuously proposed and used to support operational activities.
- Enhanced internal procedures for gathering, prioritising and selecting research proposals. Procedures to be further improved in line with annual evaluations.
- Developed a high quality model for tendering research projects in line with Government best practice guidance, together with a formal system for bid evaluation.

#### DEVELOPED EXTERNAL NETWORK:

- Established links with a selection of other organisations that collect health and safety data. Opportunities for data-sharing and cross-referencing will have been explored.
- Contributed to a range of academic-level research projects.
- Developed a network of high-quality researchers in a range of disciplines to conduct projects on behalf of the Authority.
- Research and statistical data will have been disseminated through press releases, promotional material, journal articles and conferences.
- Be fully compliant with European requirements (EUROSTAT) for annual data submission from Member States.



# Goal 6

Ensure that the Authority, its staff, resources and facilities deliver on our corporate goals in line with best practice and value for money.

## RATIONALE

In order to implement the strategic plan effectively, we are dependent on the capability of our people and the availability and application of other resources. To achieve this objective we will:

Actions	Year	Milestones
Continue to develop and grow our team as professional and motivated experts.	1	Recruitment of staff for REACH strategy in accordance with project timelines. HR self service delivery model installed and operational. Retention of Excellence Through People Standard level. Integration of effective Performance Management Development System (PMDS).
	2	Review and audit of HR self service model. Full Implementation of integrated PMDS model.
	3	Achievement of Excellence Through People Gold standard. Decentralisation Implementation Plan delivered in accordance with Government policy commenced.
Ensure annual grant and revenues are capable of supporting delivery of strategy and work programmes, while being managed with full probity and accountability.	1	Government approval sought for funding matched to programmes of work.
	2	Implemented budget approved in Government estimates.
	3	Financial performance reviewed.
Ensure facilities are available to meet operational needs as part of the Decentralisation Programme.	1	Secured and occupied offices in Athlone, Dublin, Kilkenny and Sligo.
	2	Commencement of building project in Thomastown.
	3	New Head Office in Thomastown completed and occupied.



Continue to develop, manage and support strategic and cost effective ICT systems and services to proactively meet current and future needs of staff and customers.	1	Developed ICT strategy in consultation with users.
	2	Full robust, secure network in place.
	3	Strategy Implementation Plan actioned. Develop ICT infrastructure to support flexible working. Effectiveness assessed and strategy reviewed.
Ensure Value For Money and best practice for governance in the Public Service.	1	Codes of practice for Board and Executive implemented.
	2	Audit adherence assessed and standards met.
	3	Effectiveness of governance models assessed.

### MEASURING OUTCOMES

By the conclusion of the strategy period, the Authority will report on the performance of our initiatives with regard to the following:

- The effective implementation of a performance monitoring system throughout the organisation.
- The achievement of the revised Excellence Through People accreditation at a higher than standard level.
- The delivery of recruitment targets with regard to the resourcing of our new REACH compliance and enforcement department.
- The satisfactory progress of the Government's decentralisation programme as it relates to the Authority.
- The quality and performance of our ICT systems as they relate to the efficient functioning of the organisation and the achievement of goals including user assessment.
- Enhanced corporate governance, measurement and reporting procedures both internally and in respect of our statutory reporting duties.

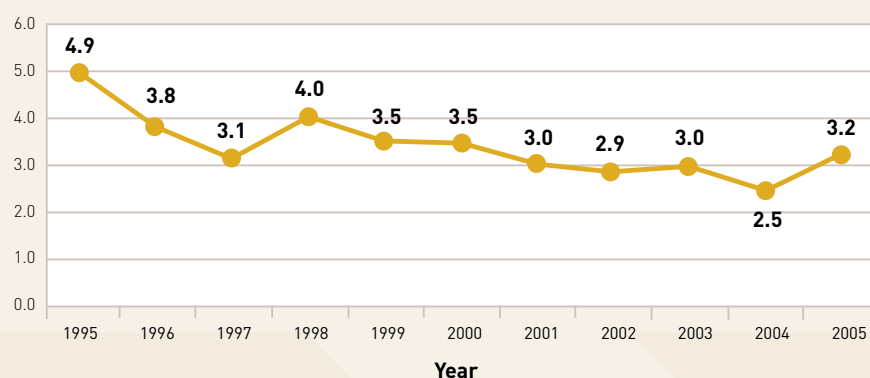
Throughout the implementation of this Strategy, we will work to create a National Culture of Excellence in Workplace Safety, Health and Welfare for Ireland.



## APPENDIX 1: STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF CURRENT HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE IN IRELAND

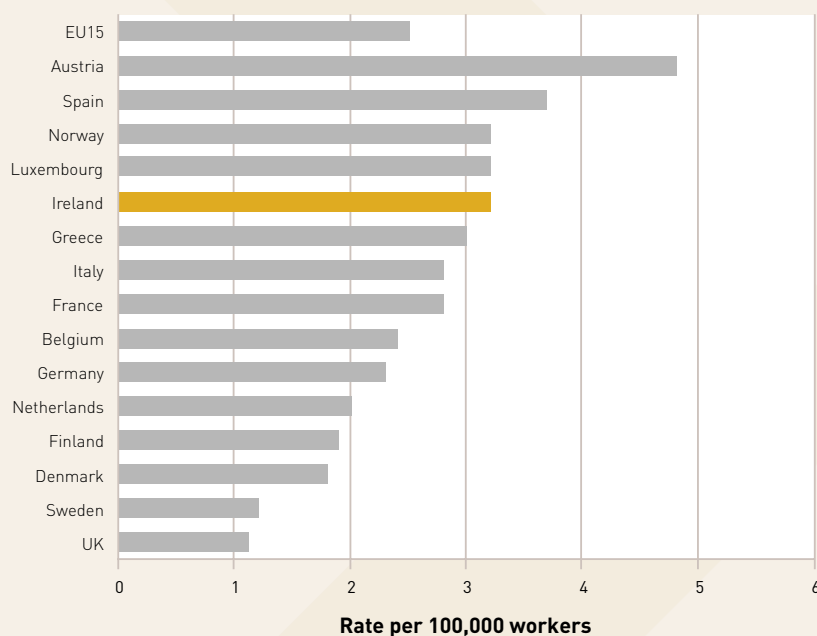


### IRELAND - WORKER FATALITY RATES 1995 - 2005

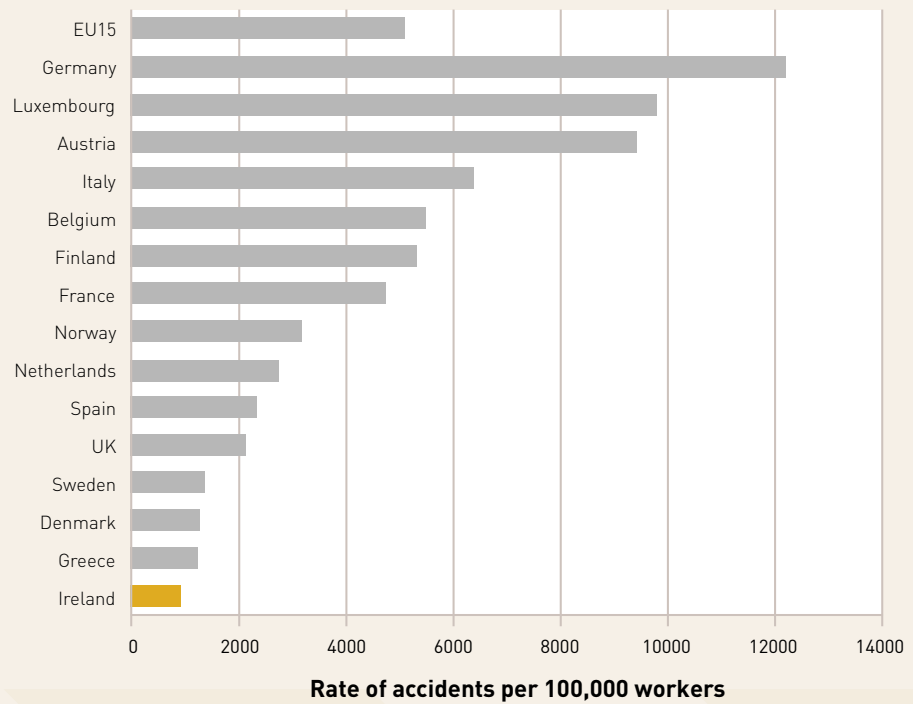


Sources: *Health and Safety Authority (2005), Health and Safety at Work in Ireland 1992-2002*  
*Health and Safety Authority (2006), Summary of Injury, Illness and Fatality Statistics 2004-2005*

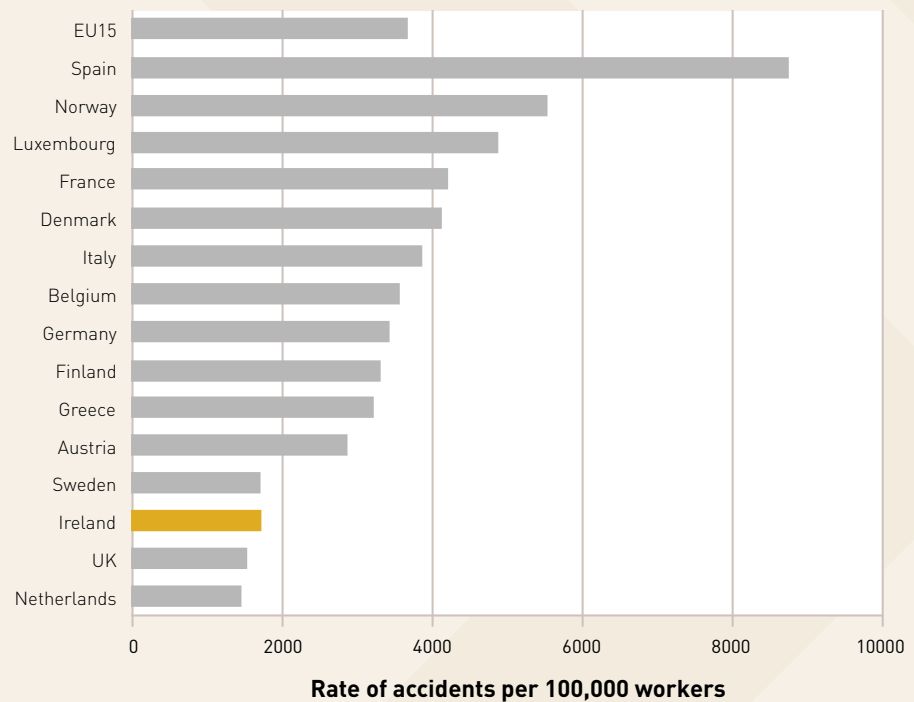
### STANDARDISED FATAL INCIDENCE RATE BY MEMBER STATE 2003



Source: *Population and Social Conditions, EUROSTAT website: <http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int>*

**ACCIDENT RATE BY MEMBER STATE 2003: AGRICULTURE, HUNTING AND FORESTRY**

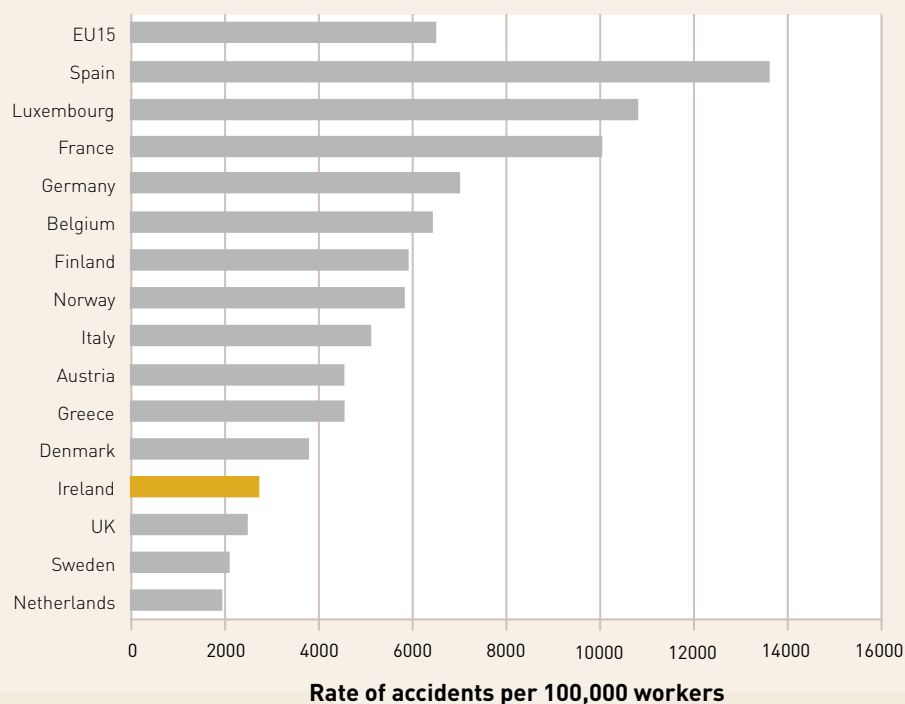
Source: Population and Social Conditions, EUROSTAT website: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int>

**ACCIDENT RATE BY MEMBER STATE 2003: MANUFACTURING**

Source: Population and Social Conditions, EUROSTAT website: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int>



### ACCIDENT RATE BY MEMBER STATE 2003: CONSTRUCTION



Source: Population and Social Conditions, EUROSTAT website: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.eu.int>

Note: There are differences in methodology between member countries in the source and compilation of non fatal accident data.







