

Consultation on revised HSC/E Race Equality Scheme

Summary of feedback to November 2005:

Total Consultation: 324 recipients; 32 responses
Internal Consultation: 145 recipients; 28 responses
External Consultation: 179 recipients; 4 responses

Overview

Feedback to the scheme was broadly positive, though there was a widespread call for:

- clearer English
- more focus on what we will do, as opposed to examination and review of processes

The most challenging criticism has come from HSE's Trade Unions. The Campaign for Racial Equality (CRE) has taken an active interest in the scheme and made a number of suggestions for future cooperation on race equality between HSC/E and CRE.

Trade Union response

HSE's Trade Unions were very critical of the Discussion Document published in August. In particular, they highlighted: the lack of plain English; concentration on process rather than action; and poor progress on eradicating racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity, particularly in relation to its own staff.

The redrafting of the scheme in September was welcomed by the TUs and it was acknowledged that it had been improved, particularly in terms of language. However, they are still concerned that HSC/E is not doing enough to promote racial equality. They believe the scheme is too thin on actions and that HSE needs to look more honestly at the question of institutional racism.

Campaign for Racial Equality response

CRE has made a number of helpful, practical suggestions, which have been addressed either within the Scheme or as separate actions. In particular they were keen to see clearer targets, accountability and leadership and some more detail on what impact assessments will look like.

We will continue to work with CRE and are exploring the possibility of a memorandum of understanding

MAGNET response

MAGNET welcomed the scheme, especially its improved final draft. They are concerned that HSC/E's scheme be dovetailed with the priorities identified in MAGNET's own strategic plan (including top leadership, increasing SCS representation and input to decision making) and that support for staff networks be adequately resourced and clearly defined.

Considerations for future editions of the scheme

The demand for clear English has been successfully met and remains a lesson for future drafts of the scheme.

We can expect significant interest in our action on race. In particular, the requirements that:

- targets and methods of evaluation be transparent and ambitious
- there be honesty and openness about where we need to improve
- we make clear what we will do if we find evidence of inequality
- mechanisms for monitoring progress on race equality be robust
- commitment to action should be clear.

HSE Board Diversity Objectives

Vivienne Dews

As a member of the HSE Board and chair of the diversity subgroup, to stimulate and support HSE in delivering the vision for diversity.

Measures:

- progress towards workforce diversity targets
- staff views on equality of opportunity and unacceptable behaviour in HSE, expressed through the staff survey
- progress in implementing the 2005 race equality scheme

Colin Douglas

To champion HSE's ethnic diversity agenda and to provide support and leadership for MAGNET.

Measures:

- An effective action plan for MAGNET is in place, receiving active support from the Board
- Improving our capacity to deal with diversity issues through the range of communication activities we undertake.

Alex Brett-Holt

To promote diversity within HSE by acting as champion for women by:

- Championing the ambitions of women in HSE issues and promoting the participation of women at all levels in HSE
- Gaining the agreement of the Board to implementing a strategy for improving numbers of applications from women with potential in Bands 1 - 3 who are not currently putting themselves forward for promotion
- Championing that strategy within HSE

Paul Davies

To play an active part in corporate leadership of HSE providing a clear sense of direction and purpose, in particular:

- To guide the work of a working group developing proposals to operationalise the scientist and specialist inspector elements of the new workforce strategy, paying particular attention to diversity

To lead continued changes in behaviour and ways of working and to promote diversity and opportunity, including:

- To promote a culture of good performance management which recognises and celebrates success and tackles unacceptable behaviour wherever it occurs

Mike Weightman

To lead continued changes in behaviours and ways of working and to promote diversity and opportunity, notably:

- through the example of my behaviours and ways of working;
- by coaching direct reports to develop skills;
- by promoting a culture which recognises and celebrates success, encouraging extensive use of new team awards, and encourages behaviours in line with HSE values, and which tackles unacceptable behaviour expeditiously; and
- by championing career development planning across NSD (in collaboration with other parts of HSE and, in particular, so as to address the differing needs of staff from a diverse background), and the diversity of the workforce.

Sandra Caldwell

To ensure the equality of career development of all staff through embedding and further developing new Model FOD and working across HSE to help mould new roles and open up opportunities for all staff to contribute to frontline work;

To diversity-proof our Team Leader Event action plans to ensure these fully reflect and integrate the diversity objectives;

To step up/improve outreach efforts, for example by better targeting regionally, by exploring different working patterns for FOD staff, by taking greater account of ethnic populations in our external communications and proactively seeking opportunities to piggy back on others' initiatives;

To ensure that we discharge our responsibilities under the Race Relations Amendment Act.

Giles Denham

To lead by example in behaviours and ways of working that demonstrate HSE values and promote diversity and opportunity by:

- Raising awareness among Policy Group and other staff of the business benefits of addressing diversity (assessed by number and types of occasions when message has been delivered, evidence of specific consideration of diversity in relevant policy papers).

- Supporting better use of an evidence base for diversity (measured by agreement with CoSAS on a common strategic approach).

I have checked that my SCS directors have similarly specific themes for their diversity objectives.

Jonathan Rees

To lead continued changes in behaviours and ways of working and to promote diversity and opportunity, notably by:

- Coaching direct reports to develop skills, and encouraging at least one “shadow” per month;
- Promoting a culture which recognises and celebrates success, encouraging extensive use of new team awards.
- Acting on results of Policy Group IIP assessment, notably implementing a new strategic development plan; ensuring all in PG etc have updated performance agreements in place by end April 2005, and improving our safety and days lost record.
- Acting as champion for career development planning in Policy Group.
- Supporting an effective work-life balance, an expansion in flexible working, and the efforts of the Women’s and Ethnic Minority Groups.

Jane Willis

External diversity target:

To ensure the Fit3 programme plans include an assessment of their impact to ensure that they will achieve their desired outcomes without having an adverse impact on any under represented group and to take account of diversity in the design and implementation of interventions.

Measure:

- To ensure that a Race Impact Assessment is carried out as part of the project to roll out Workplace Health Direct.

Internal diversity targets:

To raise awareness among Policy Group and other staff of the business benefits of addressing diversity

To lead by example in behaviours and ways of working that demonstrate HSE values and to promote diversity and opportunity by:

- Supporting and coaching direct reports to achieve their development objectives; ongoing mentoring.

- Promoting a culture which recognises and celebrates success and tackles unacceptable behaviour wherever it occurs.
- Championing HSE's policy development training, ensuring that it is fit for purpose and up-to-date and accessible to all new entrants to policy work.

Justin McCracken

To lead by example in behaviours and ways of working that demonstrate HSE values and opportunity notably by:

- Promoting a culture which recognises and celebrates success and good behaviour, encouraging extensive use of new team awards and which tackles unacceptable behaviour wherever it occurs.
- Championing career development planning across Operations Group (in collaboration with other parts of HSE), and continue to improve the diversity of the workforce.

HSE Staff Conference on Race Diversity 'Looking back, looking forward'

by Sharan Bains, chair of MAGNET

To celebrate Black History Month, HSE held a major Race Diversity Conference on 9 November. The event, which also marked the launch of MAGNET, HSE's Race Diversity Network, examined the impact of demographic changes in the labour market across 30 years of HSE's history.

A full capacity audience of over 130 delegates attended the launch which was declared an astounding success. The conference included thought-provoking and entertaining contributions from a range of prominent speakers generating lively and dynamic debate.

Lord Herman Ouseley (former Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality) gave a captivating keynote address focusing on top level commitment as a prerequisite to embedding a successfully diverse culture within organisations.

Shahid Malik (Labour MP for Dewsbury) gave illuminating insights into different dimensions of race and diversity in British society based on his constituency experience.

Alex Goldberg (Board of Deputies of British Jews) presented the Jewish perspective on how race and cultural diversity has influenced the working environment.

Other main contributors included **Zahida Manzoor CBE (Legal Services Complaints Commissioner)**, **Surinder Sharma (NHS Director of Equality and Human Rights)** and **Laurence Gouldbourne (Metropolitan Police Authority)** who spoke about their practical experience of how racial and cultural diversity has impacted on organisations and how they have responded to the challenges they faced.

MAGNET's key aim of the day was to engage HSE staff in helping to shape our future internal and external diversity policies, to ensure race and cultural awareness informs how we regulate and serve the wider community. This was a major step in that process.

Sharan Bains, Chair of the MAGNET team will be evaluating the event and working closely with Colin Douglas, HSE's Board Champion for Race Equality to capture the momentum of the day and the Board's vision for diversity. Important aspects highlighted during the Conference were the need for strong leadership from the top and a determination to concentrate effort on the progression of ethnic minority staff within HSE to senior civil service ranks.

MAGNET will be looking particularly at practical ways of ensuring ethnic minority input to the decision making process at the more senior levels.

HSE staff can hear Mahesh Mahey (HID inspector) explain more about MAGNET on the network's new intranet pages. Further information on the conference, including video highlights, will also be available on the HSE intranet shortly.