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**A scoping study to investigate the feasibility and
potential market for an HSE e-learning tool on
work-related violence**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Better Health at Work (BHAW) Division of HSE asked HSL to conduct a scoping study to investigate the potential market and feasibility of developing an interactive e-learning tool on work-related violence (WRV). The purpose of the e-learning tool would be to raise awareness of the risks and good practices associated with managing violence at work. The tool would be based on existing HSE guidance and could be linked to the HSE web pages. The key sectors that a potential e-learning tool would be aimed at are the five high-risk sectors identified by HSE's stakeholder group on Work Related Violence (POW-V), which are: health and social care, public transport, retail, the protective services (e.g., police, fire and security) and the public sector (e.g., local authorities, local government).

Objectives

In order to explore the potential market and the feasibility of developing an e-learning tool the following four objectives were set:

1. To find out about the experience of others in HSE regarding e-learning tools,
2. To ascertain what non-HSE e-learning packages on work-related violence currently exist,
3. To find out how effective e-learning tools are as devices to raise awareness of health and safety issues and learn about risks and good practice,
4. To find out how end-users in the high-risk sector groups would like to receive HSE information and good practice on work-related violence provided via HSE's website.

Research into these objectives was completed by employing a multi-method approach which included the use of interviews, focus groups and a literature review.

Main Findings

An e-learning tool on WRV is feasible

The research identified that HSE has experience and the expertise to develop an e-learning tool. A relatively small number of non-HSE e-learning packages are available to organisations. Generally, however, these packages are produced outside of the UK (and may not therefore be completely relevant to the UK context) and/or have a cost associated with using them. It is therefore unlikely that HSE would be replicating an existing package if it were to develop an e-learning tool.

However,

A review on the effectiveness of e-learning tools revealed that little evaluation work has been completed on such tools. Also, there is limited research which objectively compares the effectiveness of e-learning tools to other learning and training methods. There are, however, a number of benefits and limitations with e-learning tools which would need to be considered before HSE committed to producing such a package.

There may be a potential market for an e-learning tool on WRV

Potential end-users of an e-learning tool in four of the five high-risk sectors generally suggested that violence is an issue within their industries. However, not all participants felt that training or more information was necessary. Also, other learning media may be more appropriate. Opinions on the format that training or information should adopt varied between participants. Whilst e-learning was proposed by some participants, video was also a popular choice. It appeared that the most popular training method amongst participants (which also received no negative feedback) was the use of face-to-face training. Participants who proposed face-to-face training generally highlighted the benefits of incorporating role-plays and scenarios to act out

and gain high fidelity¹ experience of dealing with WRV. Finally, if an e-learning package or alternative learning media are produced, it is essential that these are well marketed, as very few end-users had viewed the HSE website.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations have been made:

- Firstly, HSE must set clear aims and objectives for any learning tool, including what the overall purpose of a tool would be (e.g. is it simply to disseminate basic information or to help people deal with a violent situation). HSE would need to consider the needs of end-users and differences in preferred learning styles.
- To complete a larger survey of organisations in the target sectors where a WRV tool would be aimed in order to ensure that the findings from this feasibility study are generalisable. Consultation should also include trades union and industry bodies, where appropriate.
- To consider producing training/information materials in various formats (e.g. video and e-learning) in conjunction with information on how organisations could run role-plays, discussion groups and other practical/group exercises on WRV. This method would appeal to a much broader number of end-users, as it considers different learning styles and mimics the practical skills of conflict management that many of the interviewees seemed to want. Research would be needed to identify whether organisations would be able and willing to facilitate role-plays and discussion groups for this method to be successful. Those organisations involved with this research could be contacted again to provide some information on this.
- To include end-users during the design of training or information materials.
- To conduct a pilot study on any training or information materials that are produced to evaluate their uptake and effectiveness. There is little evaluation on the effectiveness of e-learning for dissemination of health and safety information; therefore a pilot study would be essential. Continuous evaluation is also recommended after the development of a tool, in order to ensure that information is kept up to date and to monitor how much it is used.
- Advertising a learning tool would be essential, as this research has identified very limited use of the HSE website.
- Work-related violence and challenging behaviour² are different issues; therefore HSE may need to approach them separately.

¹ A high level of fidelity is attained when the physical, social and environmental factors in training are the same/very similar to those that the trainee is likely to face in reality.

² In the context of this research, 'challenging behaviour' refers to actions of service users in care homes, which (amongst other issues) has the potential to cause harm to care home staff. The term 'challenging behaviour' is used rather than violence, as the individual displaying this behaviour does not usually intend the outcome of their actions to be violent (e.g. the individual may behave this way in order to communicate with staff).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Better Health at Work (BHAW) Division of HSE asked HSL to investigate the potential market and feasibility of developing an interactive e-learning tool on work-related violence (WRV), which could be linked to the HSE web pages. The purpose of the e-learning tool would be to raise awareness of the risks and good practices associated with managing violence at work. The tool would be based on existing HSE guidance.

The intended audience for the e-learning tool would be the five high-risk sectors identified by HSE's stakeholder group on Work Related Violence (POW-V):

- Health and social care
- Public transport
- Retail sector
- Protective services (e.g., police, fire and security)
- Public sector (e.g., local authorities, local government)

The materials should be applicable to all levels of an organisation, helping managers and employers to conduct risk assessments and provide information to front line staff on what they could do in certain situations when faced with the risk of violence.

BHAW are interested in the experiences of others in HSE who have developed e-learning tools, whether tools addressing violence already exist and are available on the Internet and whether they are considered effective in raising awareness about health and safety. BHAW are also interested in the views of potential end-users, in terms of whether they would use a violence e-learning tool and how they would most like to receive electronic information from HSE. Therefore, the work has a number of aims which are clarified below.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

1. To find out about the experience of others in HSE regarding e-learning tools
2. To ascertain what non-HSE e-learning packages on work-related violence currently exist
3. To find out how effective e-learning tools are as devices to raise awareness of health and safety issues and learn about risks and good practice
4. To find out how end-users in high-risk sector groups would like to receive HSE information and good practice on work-related violence provided via HSE's website

1.3 DEFINITION OF E-LEARNING

In order to help provide some context for this research it is useful to have a clear definition of e-learning. Several different terminologies are used to describe technology-based learning and training, including Computer-Based Training (CBT), on-line learning, and web-based learning. Kathawala and Wilgen (2004) unite these terms in their definition of e-learning:

'the delivery of learning materials, packages or content through various forms of electronic media or technology. This includes online learning or web learning as well as the older computer-based training (CBT), which uses earlier multimedia technologies such as CD-ROMS and videos' (p.5.02).

E-learning therefore appears to be a very broad learning method which primarily utilises information technology.

2 METHODOLOGY

The four aims identified in the Introduction were addressed using the following methodology:

1. Identification of relevant HSE staff based, in the first instance, on internal HSL discussions. Telephone discussions with identified staff to ascertain the e-learning tools they have developed, the intended aims and audience for the tools, and any pitfalls, problems and successes.
2. A search of the Internet and other resources and contacts known to HSL in the field of work-related violence prevention.
3. A brief review of relevant literature.
4. A series of one-to-one or small group interviews carried out in each of the occupational settings identified in the table below,³ were used to gather in-depth information on the end-user requirements for an e-learning tool. These groups were chosen following advice from HSE. Existing HSL contacts gathered through previous work in this field were used as a starting point to accessing end-users. The aim was to talk to front line staff and managers in each of the sectors. A number of occupational groups in each sector were targeted as the work and work environment (e.g., access to computers and the Internet) of staff in each sector is so diverse. Data from the following groups of staff was sought:

Sector	Staff group	Number of staff interviewed
Health and social care	Care home staff	4
Public transport	Bus drivers	17
	Train crew and station staff	10
	Taxi drivers	3
Retail	High street retailer	5
Protective services	Fire and Rescue Service	3
Total		42

Table 1: Research sample

Data were generally collected by interviews; however, focus groups were adopted in some cases (for example, when it was more convenient for the assisting organisation for a focus group to be conducted). The data were collected during the course of seven site visits, with one visit for each staff group identified above, with the exception of taxi drivers, where two visits were conducted. Two visits were conducted for taxi drivers, as the interviewees at the first interview suggested that violence was not an issue in the town where they worked, however, they added that violence might be a problem in a different geographical region (e.g. a large city). Another interview was therefore arranged with a taxi organisation in a large city.

A semi-structured question schedule (see Appendix 1) was followed for each interview/focus group in order to ensure consistency and that all key issues were covered. A shorter version of this question schedule (see Appendix 2) was adopted when there were time constraints on the

³Initially the project aim was to focus on the health and social care sector and the public transport sector, but this was modified in order to avoid overlap with other research.

interviewees. Each interview lasted between 10 to 45 minutes depending on interviewees' knowledge, experience and availability⁴. Focus groups tended to last a little longer at just over an hour. The interviews and focus groups were designed to provide insight into a number of relevant areas such as:

- how staff in high-risk groups currently gathered / did not gather information and guidance,
- how staff would like to receive electronic HSE information,
- detail on current access to computers, and,
- what experience staff have of e-learning.

⁴ *Bus drivers were only available for short time periods, generally around 5 minutes.*

3 RESULTS

3.1 AIM 1: THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS IN HSE REGARDING E-LEARNING TOOLS

Note: This aspect of the research was completed in 2005; therefore some of the tools and views expressed may have changed.

3.1.1 Search of HSE website

An initial search of the HSE website revealed the following tools and interactive packages freely available to download from the 'tools' section of the website:

- Agriculture Self Risk Assessment Tool
- Corporate Health and Safety Performance Index (CHaSPI)
- 'Ready Reckoner': Costs of health and safety to business.
- Noise Exposure Calculator
- Manual Handling Assessment Chart (MAC) Tool
- Report an accident website
- Slips Assessment Tool
- SME Health and Safety Performance Indicator
- Management Standards for Work-Related Stress Tools
- Vibration Exposure Calculators

The majority of these tools are available for organisations to conduct risk assessments, rather than for educational/awareness raising purposes. Some key lessons have been learnt in the development of these tools which will be highlighted here.

Following information provided by colleagues, other additional tools were found on the HSE website, for example, a Workplace Transport Tool. This tool aims to help site managers think about health and safety issues on their site. It uses a series of interactive case studies that use virtual reality to show examples of unsafe sites where accidents have taken place, followed by 'safe sites' showing improvements that have been made to make them safer. This tool may be considered more of an 'e-learning' tool as it is about educating managers about risks and how they can control them. This approach may therefore be relevant to HSE when considering an e-learning tool for work-related violence.

3.1.2 Discussions with colleagues in HSE/HSL

A small number of colleagues in HSL/HSE were identified who had been involved in the development of the assessment tools used on HSE's website or had experience in usability/e-learning work. Discussions with these colleagues highlighted a number of issues and learning experiences that the current HSE customer may wish to consider when exploring the development of a work-related violence e-learning tool. However, the discussions also suggested that little work had been done in HSE on properly evaluating the effectiveness or use of any of the tools they had developed, although one colleague believed a questionnaire would soon be 'live' on the website to evaluate the HSE Slips Assessment Tool (SAT).

Some of the issues and key learning points raised by colleagues in HSL or in the information they provided included:

Issues relevant to designing the tool:

- The design of the tool should be influenced by a clear understanding of the purpose of the tool, e.g. whether it is for disseminating information in a more effective way or for training. It is also important to know who the target audience is, e.g. employers of small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs), safety managers, senior managers, employees etc, as this will influence the purpose of the tool, and language used.
- ‘User centred design’, where the user is actively involved in the design processes at every stage, could be used when designing an e-learning tool. User centred design encompasses aspects of screen design, consistency and task focus. Using this approach may involve activities such as task observations of users in their job, participatory design, user involvement in developing initial prototypes and guidelines, and usability testing with products throughout their development. This should improve the usability of any product developed. There are many sources of help available on the Internet and in the literature that offer guidelines on designing and evaluating web-based learning products.
- It would be important to explore what software was compatible with the HSE website. A useful point related to this issue concerned whether users would need to download the software in order to use the tool. If this is the case, then designers should consider whether the download process is likely to be a problem, e.g. if it takes a long time or if people have restrictions on what they can download.

Issues relevant to the content of the tool:

- If the tool is to be used to assess risks of a hazard, HSE may wish to put a disclaimer at the beginning of the programme to avoid any problems in the future if accidents / incidents occur after organisations have used their tool to assess the hazards.
- If learners have not used the tool before, a message should encourage them to look at the training material or instructions when they first log on to the tool.
- If the tool shows products learners could use to minimise hazards or measure risks, HSE may need to be careful that they are not seen to be promoting any one particular product.
- There are ways of forcing learners/users to progress through a series of steps, e.g. only allowing users to move onto the next step if they have completed the previous one. This might be relevant if the work-related violence e-learning tool aids organisations in conducting a risk assessment that would require them to go through a series of steps in a set order.
- Help pages are useful for trouble shooting problems when using the tool.
- Graphics can be very useful in enhancing usability. In addition, if terminology is used, even terms that appear obvious to the designer may need to be explained or demonstrated visually. For example, on the SAT, pictures were used to show the difference between ‘light’ or ‘heavy’ amounts of liquid present on the floor surface. This is because despite being everyday terms, used in this context their meaning could be interpreted differently.
- E-learning tools are about ‘getting the message across’. They therefore need to be user friendly and the content should be easy to understand.

One colleague compared the SAT to the Workplace Transport tool, and suggested that whilst the Workplace Transport Tool had very impressive 3D modelling and graphics compared to the SAT, it was less easy to use. This was because, for example, the instructions were not that clear on the Workplace Transport tool and it did not appear to provide much information to the learner. The colleague argued this highlighted the need for HSE to know what they want from the tool before it is developed, and suggested that often the problem with e-learning tools is that

they are not in an accessible form or written in a way people can understand. Consultation with stakeholders is, therefore, key.

It is also worth noting that another part of HSE was investigating the possibility of a framework they could use for developing e-learning tools. Initially the framework would be used to develop a slips and trips e-learning tool, but in the longer term it could be used to develop other e-learning packages with the same basic framework but with different content, such as an e-learning tool for violence. This may have an impact on costs when considering the development of the e-learning tool.

3.1.3 Discussion with the HSE website team

A discussion with a member of the HSE's website team in 2005 provided a more global view of the provision of 'tools' on HSE's website, although it may be that opinions have changed since then. In this discussion, e-learning was taken to mean learning which involves taking learners through a series of steps, recording their success and filling in any knowledge gaps, provided by a tool on a website. The HSE contact suggested that, as far as he was aware, nothing quite like that had been done on the HSE website before. The website had previously used some interactive packages such as videos, as well as systems to take people through the risk assessment process, but there was nothing that really formed an e-learning interactive package on the website. He suggested the website team were keen to do something like this and would be keen to support the development of a tool, however, to date the team had not found anything that would deliver interactive elements in the way they wanted them to. This was mainly because there had not been a need for this in the past, rather than there not being anything available to do this.

The HSE contact believed that, at the time of the discussion, the HSE website was mainly aimed at consultants; it was adequate at providing guidance material, but limited on providing interactive learning processes. He believed getting people to 'play' with information was essential to 'cementing' knowledge, and this is the main benefit of e-learning packages. He thought an e-learning package on the HSE website would not only be an innovative and exciting thing to develop, it would be relatively easy to do with the information already available on the website, for example, using a video or animation, multiple-choice questions, etc. He noted that mistakes had been made in the past in terms of developing tools for the website, but that these could be learnt from and avoided in this project. For example, when developing a tool, it is essential to liaise with the website team from the beginning, and to ensure any systems fit with the format or branding of the website, otherwise when it comes to putting a tool on the website, major changes may have to be made. He also suggested commitment from the key customer/contact in HSE was essential, as developing the content of the package would require effort, for example, 'working up the message' and proof reading.

He suggested there was no limit on how much information they could put on the website, although the file size of tools/downloadable information should be considered in relation to the capacity of the server. The only limitations for an e-learning tool are that any package must fit with HSE branding, be accessible to all, including disabled people, and HSE should ensure the information is available in other formats. In addition, although he thought this was new territory for HSE, he was keen to back a project like this because he believed it was important to offer information on health and safety in a 'lighter' and more interactive manner to keep people interested in the subject.

Finally, he suggested there were three methods available to evaluate the use of tools on HSE's website:

- Number of 'hits' or people looking on that part of the website

- General feedback from people who have used the tools
- External evaluation by an outside agency

He believed the best form of evaluation was general feedback, as this involved people having to make an effort to report if something was good/bad. However, for this reason it was not always completed by users. 'Hits' could also be a useful judge of the interest in a tool, and he suggested that previous good 'hits' on tools, like HSE's videos, would suggest an interactive e-learning tool would be well received by people using HSE's website.

3.1.4 Summary

- At the time of this phase of the research, risk assessment, but not e-learning tools were already available on HSE's website.
- There are a number of good practice lessons which could be used for any future development of e-learning packages
- The HSE's website team were keen to support the development of e-learning tools as a more interactive and interesting approach to raising awareness about health and safety

3.2 AIM 2: NON-HSE E-LEARNING PACKAGES ON WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE

Note: This part of the research was completed in 2005; therefore e-learning packages that are available may have changed.

Following a search on the Internet and of particular organisations dominant in the field of work-related violence such as the Susy Lamplugh Trust, few e-learning packages on work-related violence were found. In addition, the majority of these packages were not provided by UK based companies, i.e. they were either American or Canadian-based. As such, some of the issues relevant to work-related violence, like causes and effective prevention methods, may be somewhat context-specific; making the tools less relevant for UK-based employers/employees. The majority of the companies found to be providing e-learning training on violence were commercial companies and therefore charged for the use of their tools.

The work-related violence e-learning tools identified had some of the following aims:

- To provide tools and methods to help the manager recognise potentially violent situations,
- To identify how to take positive action to avoid or eliminate potential problems,
- To highlight techniques to help managers use communication, conflict intervention, and interpersonal skills to defuse dangerous situations,
- To outline the manager's role in preventing and handling real and potential violent issues,
- To provide practical information that will help keep the worker and their workplace safe,
- To provide a location specific risk assessment for staff to use to assess the risks of violence in their particular organisation.

The courses ranged from 15 minutes for a tool used to identify how prepared an organisation was to deal effectively with a workplace violence or harassment incident, to between 30 and 45 minutes for employee training and up to 70 minutes for manager training.

One particular commercial tool bought to the attention of the authors was a software-based system (DOVE: Designing Out Violence – Explained[®]: Security Software Solutions), developed for the retail sector, that provided a location specific risk assessment. It uses a simplistic 'tick box' survey, which links recognised risks to existing (and newly created) policy and procedure documentation specific to organisations. The programme combines both a risk assessment tool and an awareness raising tool, as concerns highlighted in the risk assessment can be linked with documentation or training material intended to support and educate the staff member or manager in what they should do. The data gathered from the risk assessments can be sent to interested parties within the organisation for them to take action where required. In addition, the system is designed to produce advice and guidance to support staff or managers once an incident of violence has occurred. For example, the system may provide information on how to record details about the incident or how to recover from the incident. Again, the system can send this information to the appropriate person in the organisation for attention and the incident data are stored in the system and contribute to a changing risk profile for each location. This system appears to be beyond the needs of an e-learning tool for HSE, in that HSE is unlikely to be able to develop a tool for the website that will be able to tailor the information within the system to the same degree for each organisation. In addition, an HSE tool would need to be relevant to the vast range of risks associated with different industry sectors and providing guidance and information on each risk factor would be difficult. However, this tool

demonstrates the level of sophistication possible and the options available to link an e-learning tool into company specific procedures.

Another commercial tool which included the UK within its audience was aimed at workplace violence prevention in the health and social services. It was estimated that this course would take approximately 20 minutes to complete and covered issues such as the economic impact of violence and risk factors involved in workplace violence. As with other commercial products, a fee was associated with the use of this tool.

From the information available on the Internet about the electronic WRV courses, there were some points that may be worth HSE considering if they were to design their own course(s), such as:

- Are different tools needed for managers and employees?
- Should the tool deal with different situations or types of work where employees might be more at risk, or just deal with the risks in general?
- What approach to training will the tool use, e.g. one company used a story-based training approach?
- What forms of workplace violence will the training cover, for example one company included threats and cyber stalking?
- What practical learning points should the course cover and what should users know/be able to do at the end of the course?
- Will there be a test/ form of quiz at the end to assess and ensure learning?
- Should companies using the e-learning tool for their staff be able to customise the tool to make it relevant to their own workplace?

One of the companies provided a document on how to assess this form of training in addition to a description of both the critical components of such training programmes, as well as the most common pitfalls and how to avoid them. (ELT, 2005). However, HSE needs to be clear about the purpose of their tool, what they want users to learn and how users will utilise the tool to do this. For example, an e-learning tool to raise awareness about work-related violence would be very different from an e-learning tool to teach users how to design their workplace to minimise violence or how to use interpersonal skills to defuse potentially dangerous situations. Therefore, documents on how to design e-learning tools are useful, but in order to ensure any tool is effective, other aspects need to be considered such as the potential audience, the aims of the tool, and the approach to learning it will take.

3.2.1 Summary

- The violence e-learning tools currently available vary in their sophistication and aims
- The majority of tools available at the time of this research are not specific to the UK context
- Most of the tools available are provided by commercial organisations and therefore people interested in using the tools have to pay for them
- From the tools available so far, it would appear that an e-learning tool for work-related violence is feasible. However, it is important that HSE decides on the purpose of their tool before progressing with its development

3.3 AIM 3: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-LEARNING TOOLS – A LITERATURE REVIEW

3.3.1 Definition

It is important once again to keep a definition of e-learning in mind whilst reviewing the effectiveness of e-learning tools. To recap on the definition introduced by Kathawala and Wilgen (2004) in the introduction, e-learning will be defined as:

‘the delivery of learning materials, packages or content through various forms of electronic media or technology. This includes online learning or web learning as well as the older computer-based training (CBT), which uses earlier multimedia technologies such as CD-ROMS and videos’ (p.5.02).

Although HSE is primarily concerned with e-learning provided via its web pages, in the search to identify whether e-learning is effective in raising awareness of health and safety issues and to learn more about risks and good practice, it was considered relevant to consider all forms of e-learning discussed in the literature.

However, although all forms of electronic delivery will be considered, there are also different levels of support. E-learning may simply involve a learner, their computer, and learning materials on a CD, their network or the Internet. This is sometimes referred to as ‘self-study’ (Broadbent, 2000). In addition to this, learners may also have access to an instructor or facilitator, this can be classed as ‘leader-led e-learning’, or they may have access to support associated with the software or the work, which can be classed as ‘performance support’ (Broadbent, 2000). The remit of this work does not really cover leader-led e-learning as the provision of a work-related violence e-learning tool would not be accompanied by an HSE instructor. Therefore, literature relating to the effectiveness of this form of e-learning will not be considered as important in establishing the effectiveness of e-learning tools.

3.3.2 Advantages vs. disadvantages of e-learning

In the literature there were several articles that discuss the benefits and drawbacks of e-learning, and there is more information available on this than on the effectiveness of e-learning compared to other learning techniques.

Kathawala and Wilgen (2004) note that not all of the benefits of e-learning are experienced by all individuals or organisations as this can depend on aspects such as the degree of implementation or the learning environment within the organisation. In addition, most of the articles do not provide supporting evidence for the points they raise; however, the following table draws all of the points together to provide a summary of the key advantages and disadvantages of this form of training and learning.

Advantages*	Disadvantages**
<p>Cost effectiveness - E-learning can reduce costs by reducing travelling time and expenses, and instructor's pay. Therefore the more learners use the training, the more cost-effective it becomes. E-learning can be useful to small and medium sized companies which may have limited resources. E-learning can ensure all learners have reached a basic level of understanding before moving on to non computer-based training, meaning workshops etc are more productive.</p>	<p>High initial investment - E-learning programmes need a high initial investment both to develop the course, as well as set up infrastructures and technical support within organisations to support the technology the training uses. E-learning courses should be more than text put on a screen and need careful design and maintenance. Therefore, they are not necessarily a 'cheaper option'.</p>
<p>Improved productivity - This can be true of any form of training as a result of improved employee effectiveness, increased commitment to the organisation and therefore decreased turnover as a result of the opportunity to learn. However, specifically related to e-learning, improved productivity can also be due to reduced training time.</p>	<p>Reliance on self-discipline - E-learning can depend on the motivation and self-discipline of the learner. Often those starting this form of course will not finish it. Managers therefore need to encourage and recognise this to encourage workers to complete it.</p>
<p>Training anytime/anywhere - This can be useful for workers on shifts or dispersed around the country, and can reduce the need to have groups of individuals away from the production schedule at any one time. Learners also do not need to wait for a place on a course to become available.</p>	<p>Not suitable for all types of learner - Some learners are better suited to training delivered physically or audibly rather than visually. Some people who lack computer skills may also find this form of training difficult. Learners may have different training needs depending on their previous knowledge/experience and courses need to take account of this.</p>
<p>Self-paced - This form of training can be done at times suited to the learner and can be useful for learners with different levels of experience, learning abilities or commitments. It can often also be stopped and started whenever needed to allow workers to return to work demands if necessary.</p>	<p>Not suitable for all types of training - It is less suitable for training on 'hands-on' skills, or those with an emphasis on peer-review, collaboration, communication, presentation or social skills, or those dealing with sensitive or emotional issues. A blended or mixed approach using a combination of e-learning and more traditional forms may be more appropriate for these training needs.</p>
<p>Faster learning and better retention - The learner has more control over the learning process and material can be studied in smaller units, therefore there is potentially a faster learning curve and better retention.</p>	<p>Lack of socialising - Traditional classroom training can provide opportunity for discussions and learning with other trainees out of training hours that is not available with e-learning programmes.</p>
<p>More timely, reliable and consistent content - The material can be updated immediately making it more accurate and useful for longer, and it is easier to ensure standards and a consistent quality. Training is not dependent on the experience, approach or energy levels of the trainer at the time.</p>	<p>Access to poor information - The learner may be unable to determine the quality of the material they receive through e-learning courses.</p>
<p>Traceability - Often with this form of training</p>	<p>Course design will need to be able to change</p>

it is possible for organisations to track employees' progress, as well as ensure the training is of a consistent standard. This can be useful for organisations in demonstrating to regulators that staff have undertaken the required training of a suitable standard	- In order to take account of different learning styles and speeds.
Risk free environment - Trainees can make mistakes and try new things away from other trainees.	Privacy - Monitoring a learner for traceability can destroy the benefit of a risk-free environment where learners feel they can make mistakes.
Easy access to other resources - The Internet can provide easy access to further materials and subject experts	Copyright - There may be copyright issues with some of the content used in e-learning programmes.

*Advantages taken from the following references Kathawala and Wilgen (2004); Wallace (2000); Thornbory (2003); Gaspers (2001), Sanders (2000), Groves & Phelps (2002).

**Disadvantages taken from the following references Kathawala and Wilgen (2004); Anonymous (2001a); Thornbory (2003); Hodgkinson (2003); Gardner and Hall (2001); Gaspers (2001), Groves & Phelps (2002), Open University (2001).

Table 2: Advantages and disadvantages of e-learning courses

The key advantages organisations often state for why they value e-learning programmes include availability of the tool, cost savings and the possibility of self-paced learning (Kathawala and Wilgen, 2004). The key disadvantages include problems with the existing technology, cultural resistance and lack of interaction (Kathawala and Wilgen, 2004). However, some of these problems may be overcome through a mixed or blended approach to training.

3.3.3 Effectiveness

Most organisations do not evaluate the effectiveness of their e-learning programmes and the studies that highlight the benefits of e-learning programmes often have an interest in promoting them (Kathawala and Wilgen, 2004). Little research has compared e-learning with other forms of training, in terms of outcomes or learning, and comparisons of cost often focus on costs of training delivery and do not take into account other costs or savings associated with the training. Therefore, Kathawala and Wilgen (2004) argue it is difficult to establish if the benefit of e-learning is just that it provides a more efficient way of training, or whether it offers additional advantages over other forms of training. Interestingly, some sources provide comprehensive lists of questions organisations could ask when evaluating such courses (e.g. Perry, 2003; Wallace, 2000) but if organisations have conducted these evaluations, little has been published about their findings. There is particularly little information about the effectiveness of e-learning courses used for health and safety topics and increasing awareness. This could be because according to Gaspers (2001) there has only been limited use of this form of training for health, safety and environmental issues, and those that do use this form of training tend to be the larger organisations. However, on the other hand, Smith (2002) suggests environmental, health and safety professionals are starting to use this form of training more and plan to increase its use in the future.

Some authors do suggest e-learning is more effective than traditional training methods; for example, Gardner and Hall (2001) refer to findings that suggest multimedia courses result in 38-70% faster learning than in a classroom condition, and that the content of courses can be mastered 60% faster. Groves and Phelps (2002) suggested interactive web-based packages can provide an effective alternative learning mechanism, in the right circumstances, and Sanders (2000) suggested computer-based training or e-learning is most cost-effective when it is used in certain circumstances, for example:

- When the course content is relatively stable and does not need regular revision
- When the content is mainly concerned with knowledge, e.g. procedures
- Where there is a long-term training need
- When trainees are dispersed leading to savings on travel
- When large numbers of employees need to be trained in a short time.

One source reported that there were no particular differences between classroom-based training and e-learning training in terms of learning, but that the key to successful training was follow-up, i.e. that the employer motivated employees to apply what they had learned in the workplace (Starr, 2001).

3.3.4 Ways to improve effectiveness

In addition to taking any measures to minimise the disadvantages described above, such as using a blended approach to training, other sources have suggested a number of ways to improve effectiveness of e-learning programmes. Broadbent (2000), for example, identified a number of behaviours for learners, instructors, designers and administrators that will result in failure. These, therefore, can conversely be used to provide ways to improve effectiveness. The table below highlights examples of behaviours that people in different roles can take to improve the effectiveness of e-learning:

Learners	Instructors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask for help when needed • Do not expect e-learning to be the same as conventional learning • Plan when you will complete the work and participate in activities wherever possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a structure for the course • Do not present the course in the same way as a classroom based course • Provide ways to help students get used to any new technology or software
Designer	Administrator/Service Provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with stakeholders when developing learning materials and test and tweak any training materials • Do not design one-size fits all e-learning materials or just focus on making the material as spectacular as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not use off-the-shelf solutions exclusively or forget about communications • Evaluate any e-learning materials used

(Based on Broadbent's (2000) list of things to make e-learning courses fail)

Table 3: Actions/behaviours people in different roles can take to improve the effectiveness of e-learning

An article on online training suggested the key to effective online courses was the design and the environment of the courses (Anonymous, 2001a). Good design was considered essential, and good design principles included breaking knowledge down and identifying essential, 'nice to know' and 'further information' elements. The need for careful planning and preparation was reiterated by Bradford (2002) who suggested e-learning courses should be well structured, contain presentation outlines, integrate relevant graphics and visuals, and provide regular interaction with instructors and peers.

Groves and Phelps (2002) also highlighted the importance of planning and noted there are several stages to developing multimedia or distance learning projects; these stages include analysing learner needs; writing, designing and developing instructions and multimedia; programming; and testing, evaluating and revising the product based on learner feedback. They

further noted that it is important to have access to a human instructor in order to achieve the goals of training. Environmental factors which should be considered when designing the course included what technology the course required and whether the learner had access to this (such as sound capabilities); whether the learner was likely to be distracted /interrupted when undertaking the course; and whether potential learners knew how to use computers. Hodgkinson (2003) argued systems need to be as user-friendly as possible to encourage up-take of courses, and instructions need to be clear and unambiguous.

Another article (Anonymous, 2001b) suggested there were actions HR managers could take to improve the effectiveness of courses for learners, and broke these down into those HR managers could implement at different stages of course provision. These actions included:

Before the course	During the course	After the course
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know the learners and their goals, so employees see how the e-learning course relates to their needs at work. - Match the learning to the learners values and motives - Use strategies to monitor & inspire learners to complete the course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide an environment conducive to learning - Break the information into segments of 20 minutes or less - Build on beliefs or examples learners can relate to - Give legitimate feedback based on performance. - Provide a social context which pays attention to the cultural demographics of potentially globally dispersed employees, - Incorporate fun into the course through, e.g. challenges & competitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use motivational strategies to transfer learning to the workplace, e.g. by viewing e-learning as a process which includes supplementary modules; e.g. by celebrating course completion e.g. by reinforcing the learning by calling the learners 'experts'

Based on information from Anonymous (2001b).

Table 4. Actions HR managers can take to improve the effectiveness of e-learning courses for learners

The Open University (2001) further highlight the importance of understanding the end-user's work and needs, and in order to do this, it may be necessary to interview some end users. They also emphasise the importance of designing systems with usability principles in mind (Open University, 2001).

Finally, Smith (2002) raises a key point in that although e-learning is becoming more popular, it is not necessarily right for everyone. For example, not everyone will be ready to, or know how to use it and not all companies will know how to support it appropriately.

3.3.5 Theory on learning and learning styles

When considering using a particular media to inform or train people on a topic, it is important to consider differences in learning. For example, Furnham (1997) highlights three theories of learning: classical conditioning (where individuals learn by association); operant conditioning (where individuals learn through rewards and punishments); and observational learning (where an individual learns by modelling others). Individuals are also thought to have different styles of or preferences for learning. Honey and Mumford (1982) identify four learning types:

- Activists – These individuals involve themselves fully in new experiences, and are happy to ‘have a go’.
- Reflectors – These individuals like to stand back and reflect on what they are learning, and tend to be careful and methodical.
- Theorists – These individuals integrate what they are learning into theories, and are often rational and objective.
- Pragmatists – These individuals are keen to try out new ideas and see if they work in practice; they are often practical and down to earth.

How individuals prefer to learn and what they are being required to learn will influence the training medium used. It is also helpful to provide learners/trainees with opportunities for active participation in the learning, feedback on their performance and practice on skills being learned.

3.3.6 Summary

- E-learning can present a beneficial method of training in some training circumstances. However, effort needs to be taken to both minimise the disadvantages and improve the effectiveness of the courses
- It is not totally clear from the evidence available how effective e-learning is in general and how effective an e-learning course would be in raising awareness and teaching workers about good and bad practice related to violence at work. This may depend to a certain extent on the organisations an e-learning tool it is aimed at and the need that exists for this kind of learning within the user population
- Individual differences in preferred learning styles may mean that e-learning is not a favoured method for receiving information/training for all end-users

3.4 AIM 4: FEEDBACK FROM POTENTIAL END-USERS

This section of the report summarises the findings from the interviews and focus groups held with potential end-users of a WRV e-learning tool. Discussions were held with individuals from the health and social care sector, public transport, retail and the protective services.

3.4.1 Health and Social Care Sector: A Care Home

A total of four staff were interviewed at a care home. Staff included the care home manager and three senior support workers.

3.4.1.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

Violence does occur, but it is termed ‘challenging behaviour’. Violent behaviour by service users is not generally intended to be violent. Staff at the care home suggested that ‘challenging behaviour’ could be considered as another mechanism that service users adopt in order to communicate.

3.4.1.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

It was suggested that training would be beneficial, especially if it focussed on educating staff about challenging behaviour, helping people to understand as to why this behaviour occurs.

3.4.1.3 *Past training*

All staff had received some basic training on dealing with challenging behaviour. The manager had received slightly more training. The managers training included: seminars, web training, videos and a health and safety awareness day. It was noted that training on challenging behaviour had been recommended by Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI). It was felt that training can be expensive and in some cases is either too general (i.e. not that relevant to the type of care home) or too specific (i.e. focuses on specific issues such as autism) or focuses solely on restraining people. The manager also identified that it can be difficult to get hold of general information on challenging behaviour.

The manager had experience of training by video, Internet and seminars. It was noted that the video-based training focussed on preventative measures, although it was not felt to be very useful, and tended to ‘market’ the company that produced the video. The Internet training was felt to be more useful as it was more general in its content. Seminars that had been attended by the manager in the past were also noted to be good, as they covered many key issues, but it was added that these could be expensive (£300-£400).

3.4.1.4 *Using the Internet*

The care home manager had viewed the HSE website before for general health and safety information, but not violence/challenging behaviour. Other members of staff were unaware of the HSE website. The care home was acquiring computers for staff to have Internet access in the near future.

3.4.1.5 *Format of the training material*

All of the interviewees at the care home suggested that an e-learning tool would probably be the most useful compared to other training media. Videos could be boring, whilst the Internet is more interactive which helps to keep the user interested. Interviewees also added that with computer-based training, it would be relatively easy to go through a part of the training again if it was not fully understood the first time. It was added that a CD-ROM version of an e-learning tool might be more useful, due to the Internet not always being reliable.

All interviewees noted that they would use an e-learning tool if the information it contained was relevant and useful. The manager and staff identified that one of the primary constraints to using such a tool would be available time. Staff suggested that the material in an e-learning tool could be best split into modules of about 15 to 30 minutes to fit in with spare time.

3.4.1.6 Issues that should be covered

Interviewees suggested that it would be useful to have general information on violence/challenging behaviour. It was added that it might be useful to have a section of the training specific to care homes, as challenging behaviour is relatively specific to this sector. The care home manager also suggested that it would be useful to have a section, which is more specific for managers. It was also felt that highlighting how issues impact on a broader perspective, for example the impact that challenging behaviour/violence has on families and police (e.g. if someone is restrained too much) would be useful. The manager also suggested that information on risk assessments would be helpful. All interviewees suggested that it would be important to explain challenging behaviour, noting why individuals exhibit this type of behaviour. Other suggestions for information to be included were:

- Methods of prevention
- Control measures that are available
- What works and what does not work
- How to calm people down / how to stop issues escalating

The majority of the interviewees also stated that training material should not focus on challenging behaviour as completely negative due to its underlying reasons (i.e. as a method of communicating in some instances). It was suggested that a distinction should be made between violence and challenging behaviour.

3.4.1.7 Other information

Interviewees noted that the training material would need to be written in layman's terms, avoiding jargon. It was suggested that other support would be useful, for example frequently asked questions and an email contact/telephone number. The manager also noted that the training material would need to be geared to all levels of staff, from managers through to senior staff and assistants. It was also suggested that the training method should be piloted before it is rolled out.

3.4.2 Public Transport Sector: Taxi drivers

Three people were interviewed from the taxi driving industry. Two of these interviewees worked in a large town, whilst the other worked in a large city.

3.4.2.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

The taxi drivers in the town location identified that WRV is a problem within the taxi-driving industry, however, it was noted that violence is very rare in the area where they worked. It was also noted that when violence does occur, it is usually on a Friday or Saturday night, and the culprits are usually intoxicated by alcohol. The secretary of a large taxi organisation based in a large city highlighted that WRV is a huge problem for taxi drivers. The interviewee noted that drivers are exposed to physical and verbal abuse, with abuse sometimes being racial in its nature. The interviewee also pointed out that taxi drivers have been killed in violent attacks. This was supported by the PHM (Private Hire Monthly and Taxi) newspaper, which included several articles on violent attacks towards taxi drivers, including one murder.

3.4.2.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

Because violence was viewed as a fairly rare occurrence in the town location it was felt that training would probably not be a great benefit. It was suggested that it might be useful, however, to direct drivers towards it if they were concerned about this issue. The interviewee from the large city location identified that training/more information on violence would be beneficial if the content was right. It was noted that a government-sponsored initiative called 'Go Skills', has not been very useful for taxi drivers. The interviewee highlighted that the Go Skills training covered a variety of issues, of which violence was a small part and covered issues such as 'dealing with a difficult customer'. It was added that conflict management has limited benefit without other relevant support (e.g. from the police).

3.4.2.3 *Past training*

The interviewees at the town location had not completed any training on violence in the past. The interviewee from the city location had completed 'Go Skills' (government-sponsored) training. It was suggested that this was not very helpful. This interviewee suggested that most of his knowledge on violence and dealing with violence had developed from personal experience on the job over the past 20 years and previous experience as a doorman.

3.4.2.4 *What did the training cover?*

It was identified that in relation to violence, the Go Skills training covered 'dealing with a difficult customer', but the interviewee noted that a difficult customer and a violent customer could be very different, which was why the training was not very useful.

3.4.2.5 *Using the Internet*

None of the interviewees had used the HSE website before. It was, however, suggested that if a learning tool was included on the Internet, then staff may use it if they are concerned about WRV. The interviewees noted that most staff tended to have Internet access at home. It was added that generally training would have to be done in employees' own time.

3.4.2.6 *Format of training material*

All interviewees thought that the Internet would probably be the best format for training material compared to other training media. The Internet could then be accessed by those individuals who perceived WRV to be an issue. A modular format was recommended so that drivers could perhaps complete the training a little at a time (e.g. 20 minute modules), for example, during lunch breaks.

3.4.2.7 Issues that should be covered

It was felt to be important to highlight how to defuse a potentially violent situation, as well as deal with violence. It was added that advice on what to do if the violent individual has a weapon would be important to include. The interviewee working in the city location suggested that a set of 'golden rules' would be helpful (i.e. firstly avoiding it, then talking it down/defusing it, then defending oneself as a last resort), including methods and actions that work and those that do not work. The same interviewee noted that it would be useful to include information on racism issues, which was suggested to be an underlying cause of violence in some instances. It was also noted by the other interviewees that disputes over pay can also be an underlying cause of violence or verbal abuse.

The interviewee working in the city location highlighted the following points:

- An attack can occur at any time
- Avoidance is always better than confrontation
- If an attack or threat occurs gather as much information about the person (e.g. clothes, accent etc.)
- Attract attention if you are a victim of violence/attempted violence (e.g. with car horn, whistle, hazard lights etc.)
- Find out what the obligation of the police is with regards to threats/attacks on drivers and customers leaving without paying
- Working at night time is most dangerous
- If threatened, drive towards a brightly lit area if possible
- CCTV cameras are encouraged in taxis, but are expensive
- It is safer to only speak when spoken to
- Drive to a local police station if threatened
- Ensure that drivers have a method of communication (e.g. mobile phones, C.B. radio or an alarm button)

It was suggested by all drivers interviewed that information on risk assessments would not be very useful. The interviewees noted that many drivers are essentially self-employed and do not have time to complete a risk assessment.

3.4.2.8 Other information

It was highlighted that often violence is fuelled by alcohol, and also alcohol and high caffeine and sugar drinks (i.e. people are drunk and high on caffeine and sugar). It was also highlighted that approximately half of attacks occur outside of the taxi itself, whilst the most dangerous time for taxi drivers was suggested to be after 2.00 a.m. (with many female taxi drivers avoiding working late at night).

3.4.3 Public Transport Sector: Railway Industry

A discussion was held with ten people working in the railway industry. The group included a customer services manager, train managers and retail services managers.

3.4.3.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

Violence was noted by interviewees to be a serious problem within the rail industry. It was suggested that problem times included Friday and Saturday nights and that anyone could become violent, from football fans to businessmen (i.e. there is no stereotypical image of a violent individual). In a number of cases it was suggested that alcohol and drugs are underlying factors to violence and verbal abuse.

3.4.3.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

Interviewees had mixed feelings on how beneficial training would be. Some thought that it would be useful, while others thought that it would do little to help. One individual suggested that issues covered in training are forgotten when suddenly confronted with a real violent situation. It was added that more effort is needed to stop violence at a primary level, rather than focussing on how people should deal with it.

3.4.3.3 *Past training*

Training had been received in the past, but interviewees could not remember the content of this training. It was added that violence is also raised during safety briefing meetings which staff are involved in. It was noted that these discussions are useful to find out how colleagues dealt with specific violent or abusive situations. An information booklet on violence was also provided by the organisation for employees.

3.4.3.4 *What did the training cover?*

The training booklet included aspects such as 'controlling risks' and 'handling difficult customers'.

3.4.3.5 *Using the Internet*

Although an Internet facility is available for staff, it was identified that on-board train staff would not use this facility due to the transient nature of the job. Generally staff had not seen or heard of the HSE website. It was suggested that the HSE website would benefit from better advertising. Some individuals also noted that they would not expect to see human factors issues such as violence on the HSE website. They thought it would be focussed on other issues, such as accidents.

3.4.3.6 *Format of training material*

Interviewees generally felt that the best format for training would be face-to-face role-plays, whereby violent/abusive situations would be recreated with colleagues. To increase the fidelity of role-plays, it was suggested that actors could be used if possible. It was also suggested that the use of workshops would be beneficial. Interviewees added that workshops could include having a general discussion with colleagues about their experiences of violence and how they handled violent or abusive situations. It was noted that 'one off' training courses would probably be forgotten, and it was therefore suggested that training would need to be repeated on a regular basis.

Posters were also noted to be potentially useful for raising awareness on WRV issues, and need to 'grab' the individual's attention to be beneficial. The use of video material was discussed, but interviewees generally suggested that nobody would watch them or that people would not pay attention to them.

3.4.3.7 Issues that should be covered

Interviewees felt very strongly that training on the topic of violence should realistically recreate a violent situation and then go through the process of identifying how to deal with that situation.

3.4.3.8 Other information

A number of interviewees highlighted the importance of educating passengers on violence in order to prevent violence at source. One individual suggested that a national TV campaign might be useful in disseminating the notion that violence is unacceptable. It was added that zero tolerance is needed, with more backing from the police. Another interviewee suggested that a leafleting campaign might be beneficial to highlight to customers that violence is unacceptable. It was suggested that this could be trialed for a week or two on board trains and evaluated to identify if it was a successful method of reducing violence.

There was some frustration with staff that when violent/abusive individuals are ‘kicked’ off a train, they then board another train. It was noted that this simply moves the problem from one group of staff to another group of staff and reinforces to the violent individual that they can get away with this type of behaviour.

It was added that when there are hundreds of football fans onboard a train, there should be some police presence. It was also highlighted that some rail companies use ‘mug shot’ type photos of individuals who have been violent in the past to help warn train staff. This was noted to be a good idea to help staff with identifying potentially violent individuals.

3.4.4 Public Transport Sector: Bus Drivers

Sixteen bus drivers and the health and safety manager were interviewed from one bus company depot.

3.4.4.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

Work-related violence was perceived to be a problem by the organisation's health and safety manager and by bus drivers.

3.4.4.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

There were mixed views on how useful formal training would be on WRV. Whilst some interviewees thought training would be beneficial, others were happy with the knowledge and ways of dealing with violence they had developed on the job.

3.4.4.3 *Past training*

Interviewees had not received training on WRV.

3.4.4.4 *Using the Internet*

The health and safety manager had used the HSE website in the past. The health and safety manager also noted that the IOSH magazine was a useful source of information. A number of bus drivers noted that they would not have thought to look at the HSE website for information on violence.

3.4.4.5 *Format of training material*

The health and safety manager suggested a number of training formats that could be utilised, including leaflets, computer-based training, video-based training and a mentoring system. It was noted that leaflets could be included in pay packets. With regards to computer-based training, the health and safety manager said that whilst the organisation had computer facilities that staff could use, it would be unlikely that this could be done in work time. Therefore, it would have to be optional for staff to complete computer-based training in their own time. It was added that a number of staff, especially older staff would not feel comfortable with computer-based training due to a lack of computer literacy.

If computer-based training was developed, the health and safety manager suggested that it could be produced in the form of a presentation. For video-based training the manager suggested that a video could be placed in an area where all staff attend (e.g. where staff collect their duties), which could be repeated on a loop. It was also added by the manager that refresher training would be beneficial, as information is quickly forgotten. Alternatively it was suggested that a mentoring scheme could be used, whereby more experienced staff pass on information to their less experienced colleagues. The health and safety manager also suggested that it may be useful to set up a networking forum across bus companies to allow management to share information on WRV. The interviewee questioned whether HSE would be able to assist with this type of forum.

Bus drivers that were interviewed also suggested methods such as leaflets, computer-based training and video-based training. Other interviewees, however, noted that they would not be likely to use these training methods. Other suggestions included the use of posters on notice boards and a mentoring system, although some interviewees noted that they do not usually pay any attention to the notice boards. Face-to-face training was also raised as an option by some bus drivers along with the use of role-plays. A general presentation to staff was also suggested.

3.4.4.6 *Issues that should be covered*

The health and safety manager suggested that a number of issues that could be covered in the training including: how to prevent violence, generic techniques for dealing with violence, simple steps to take to de-escalate a potentially violent situation, how behave appropriately and what constitutes good customer service.

One issue that drivers noted would be beneficial to include in training was what drivers' rights are (i.e. what they can do in their defence).

3.4.4.7 *Other information*

It was noted that information produced in training materials should not be too wordy as a number of drivers from Eastern Europe are now working as bus drivers and English is not their first language. It was added that it might be useful to use pictures where appropriate.

One driver noted that it was more important that the police take violence against drivers seriously and deal with it quickly rather than focussing on training to deal with violence. Another driver noted that violence is perceived as being a part of the job. It was added that training might be more beneficial for new drivers.

3.4.5 The Retail Sector: A Large High Street Retailer

Five people were interviewed from a large high-street retailer. Included in the interviews were a safety manager, a store manager and three members of staff.

3.4.5.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

Violence was felt to be a serious issue in the retail sector, but it was added that it does depend on the location to some extent. Some geographical areas were noted to experience more violence than others. It was suggested that verbal abuse is more common than physical violence, with threats of physical violence sometimes being made (e.g. *'I'll be waiting for you outside the store'*), not all of which are *'empty'* threats. Violence was noted to be most prevalent with shoplifters. It was also noted that violence is a large risk for staff, in the form of physical injuries and stress, and it was thought that some staff had left stores due to stress caused by this. Some staff noted that they had seen colleagues get upset after they had been victims of verbal abuse.

3.4.5.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

It was noted that more information would be beneficial and that training may be an appropriate way to disseminate information.

3.4.5.3 *Past training*

The store manager had received some training on violence, but other interviewees had not. Staff noted that their knowledge on WRV had developed with experience.

3.4.5.4 *What did the training cover?*

The store manager noted that the training had been a long time ago and most of the content had been forgotten. The key message that the manager had remembered from the training was to remain calm and quiet when dealing with verbal abuse until the customer has made their point.

3.4.5.5 *Using the Internet*

The interviewees had not used the Internet to search the topic of work-related violence, nor had they used any HSE information on violence. The reasons given for this were a lack of awareness of the content of the HSE website and also a lack of time.

3.4.5.6 *Format of training material*

Training methods that were suggested included: video, face-to-face training with role-plays, computer-based training and books. Computer-based training and books were the least popular methods. These were perceived by interviewees to be lacking in interaction. Video and face-to-face training were seen as more fun and interactive, as both methods could be utilised by groups of staff. It was added that scenarios would be useful, so that staff could see real issues and how they develop, along with what can occur if staff take certain actions (including actions that can escalate a situation). It was suggested that video would be a useful method as this could be used at staff inductions and then viewed again on a yearly basis as a refresher. A video length of approximately 20 minutes was noted to be best to maintain the attention of those watching it. Some staff suggested that it might be useful to have discussion points or a short test at the end of a video to ensure that people concentrate whilst watching it. Staff and management also expressed the importance of a practical side to the training to help staff understand what it is really like to be in a violent/aggressive situation. The use of role-plays was noted to be beneficial as these are involving and help to *'keep participants awake'*.

It was also highlighted that it may be beneficial to have different information about WRV for managers, as managers generally deal with more abuse from customers: a situation has usually

escalated by the time the manager is present, because customers usually request the manager when an issue arises (e.g. if a member of staff has informed the customer that a product is not in stock).

One of the management team suggested that one training format alone might not be the best approach. Instead a mixture of methods, such as video and practical training were proposed. A member of staff added that it might be useful to have some written information, which can be taken away after training and referred back to.

3.4.5.7 Issues that should be covered

Staff and management suggested the following issues would be useful to cover in training:

- The 'dos' and 'don'ts' when dealing with abusive/violent customers
- Actual situations in retail
- How to deal with fraudulent refunders
- How to deal with people who are abusive when a product is not in stock
- How to deal with shoplifters (who tend to be the most violent)
- Risk assessments
- How to spot risks and prevent them
- Consequences of violence and available measures
- The general principals of violence
- Theory and psychology (i.e. why people behave like they do)
- What actions drive behaviour (e.g. not taking time with a customer can aggravate them)
- Methods to stay calm and defuse a situation
- Predicting violence with body language/postures
- Defining threatening behaviour
- What to do if things go 'pear shaped' (e.g. escape routes)
- What to do if the aggressor has a weapon
- What the personal rights of staff are
- What staff can and cannot say

3.4.5.8 Other information

Refresher training was generally perceived to be important as it was noted that information is quickly forgotten. Management suggested that a learning tool would probably be used if it was in the right format, although an e-learning tool was probably not the best option. It was also highlighted that the methods and content of training videos would need to be kept up to date.

It was recommended by management that records are kept of WRV so that the issue can be closely monitored.

3.4.6 The Protective Services: The Fire and Rescue Service

Three members of the Fire and Rescue Service were interviewed.

3.4.6.1 *Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?*

It was suggested that WRV could be a problem, but that this can vary according to different geographical regions. It was noted that some members of the public perceive fire fighters negatively. One interviewee noted that fire fighters could be a target of violence and abuse because they wear a uniform, leading people to see them as authority figures. It was added that most incidents consist of 'bricking', spitting and verbal abuse. It was also noted that sometimes police escorts are needed.

3.4.6.2 *Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?*

The majority of the fire fighters interviewed did not believe that training would be beneficial for them. These individuals did add, however, that violence was not a major issue in the regions that they worked, or where violence was an issue, the interviewee was happy with existing training systems on violence. One interviewee suggested that more training on WRV would be beneficial; primarily on effective ways of dealing with people.

3.4.6.3 *Past training*

The fire fighters that were interviewed had generally received little training on WRV. Training that had been received was generally in an informal way from more senior and experienced fire fighters. One interviewee added that they could speak to management about further training if they perceived it to be a problem.

3.4.6.4 *What did the training cover?*

Where training had been received it tended to focus on what to do if attacked. It was added that there was no information on how to defuse a violent situation. Some key issues covered in training which were raised by one individual were:

- Escape strategies and circumstances when to 'get out'.
- Reporting all incidents, even spitting, so that relevant actions can be taken where possible
- How best to deal with a specific area/ type of incident
- How to deal with verbal/physical abuse, stone throwing and when to wear PPE with the visor down

3.4.6.5 *Using the Internet*

Whilst most of the interviewees had access to computers and the Internet, they added that they had generally not used HSE's website. Also, it was added that a large number of staff do not have easy access to the Internet. One interviewee had used the HSE website, but not in relation to violence. All interviewees noted that they would probably not use the HSE website for information. It was highlighted that the Fire Service has a website, which would be accessed if information was needed. One interviewee noted that they associated HSE more with information on slips and trips and manual handling, rather than human factors issues.

In relation to using the Internet, one interviewee added that a number of his Fire Service colleagues were not that keen on using the Internet. Also, lack of time was seen as restricting the potential to use an e-learning tool. One interviewee noted that they would prefer to use CD-ROMs rather than the Internet.

3.4.6.6 Format of training material

Face-to-face training appeared to be a preferred option with interviewees. One interviewee noted that they would use the Internet to get information on where face-to-face training courses were held. It was added that including role-play is a useful way of learning. Another interviewee suggested that a presentation to the whole Watch might be a useful method.

An alternative method of disseminating information that was suggested was the use of posters, which could include contact information, details of courses and websites. One interviewee added that they would like a course that is specific to a fire fighter, rather than general information on violence at work.

It was also noted by one individual that computer-based training would be fine for technical information. It was added, however, that such a method provides no scope to ask questions and that there is no scope for those who do not understand to get further explanations.

3.4.6.7 Issues that should be covered

Some of the key issues that were suggested for inclusion in training materials were:

- How to avoid violent situations
- How to avert potentially violent situations (defusion techniques)
- How individuals might be affected if injured (e.g. the grievance procedure)
- How individuals should conduct themselves appropriately
- How to deal with the stress afterwards
- How to deal with different age groups (e.g. children, youths)
- How to deal with strangers and familiar people
- How to be respectful of different groups
- How to recognise a potentially violent situation
- Personal rights ('Are we going to be sued or arrested if we have to deal with violence?')
- Statistics on the number of incidents and comparisons with different work sectors

3.4.6.8 Other information

It was added that fire fighters, in a sense, are vulnerable because they are expected to be passive. It was also added that information would need to be specific to fire fighters.

3.4.7 Summary of interviews with potential end-users

- Violence is generally perceived to be a big problem, although this can vary according to regions for the different sectors included in the sample
- Previous training received by interviewees on WRV appears fairly minimal and generally focussed at management level
- Access to the Internet is limited for many workers (especially in the public transport sector) and is not present at all in some cases. It also appeared anecdotally that some workers are not comfortable using the Internet
- Various training methods were recommended, including e-learning; but there was certainly not a general consensus for the application of this method. Face-to-face training and video-based training were relatively popular alternative methods. A number of interviewees in the sample felt that training was not necessary
- A large variety of requests were made for information to be included in the content of training, including; how to avoid WRV, how to defuse a situation and what to do if confronted with violence
- Management often identified that they would consider using a learning tool in their organisations (not necessarily e-learning) if the format and content were right

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHERS IN HSE REGARDING E-LEARNING TOOLS

Whilst HSE has developed a number of tools that are available on the Internet for organisations to utilise, it has not produced many which could be considered 'e-learning' tools. At the time of this research (2005), the primary tool produced by HSE, which could be considered similar to e-learning, is a workplace transport tool aimed at educating managers on associated health and safety risks. This highlights industry-related risks by using interactive case studies. At the time of the research HSE had not yet evaluated this tool to identify how effective it was, nor had HSE identified how much online tools are utilised by industry.

HSE and HSL do, however, appear to have the capabilities to develop an e-learning tool, having had some experience in this area to date. Lessons have been learnt which could be applied to an e-learning tool on WRV. Also, HSE's website team are keen to support the development of an e-learning tool as an interactive way to raise awareness on health and safety issues. It would therefore appear that HSE would be able to develop an e-learning tool on WRV if this method was identified as beneficial.

4.2 NON-HSE E-LEARNING PACKAGES ON WORK-RELATED VIOLENCE

At the time of the research in 2005, the research team identified very few e-learning packages that were available from other organisations. Those e-learning packages that were available were largely from countries outside the UK, meaning they may not be specific to the UK context. Also, the tools that were identified were generally produced by commercial organisations, meaning that costs would be incurred by organisations using them. Whilst cost may not be a barrier for large organisations, they may be for Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and may still deter large organisations from utilising commercial e-learning tools. The content of training in existing e-learning packages varied: some aimed to educate and raise awareness about WRV, whilst another identified how prepared an organisation was to deal with WRV. The duration of training varied from as little as 15 minutes, up to 70 minutes. The focus audience for training also varied, with some tools being aimed at employees and others aimed at management.

4.3 THE EFFECTIVENESS OF E-LEARNING TOOLS

The effectiveness of e-learning tools is somewhat unclear. Organisations have not generally evaluated the effectiveness of their e-learning programmes, whilst studies that highlight the benefits of e-learning programmes often have an interest in promoting them (Kathawala and Wilgen, 2004). There is also no clear evaluation work comparing e-learning methods with other training formats. Additionally there is very little information on the effectiveness of e-learning on health and safety issues. Gaspers (2001) suggests that this is because this training method has not been fully utilised in this area.

Some figures on the effectiveness of e-learning claim that this method can result in 38-70% faster learning than in a classroom condition, with content mastered 60% faster (Gardner and Hall, 2001). Sanders (2000) highlights several conditions when e-learning is most cost effective. One of these conditions is when content is mainly concerned with knowledge (e.g. procedures). As the control of WRV can have quite a practical side, whether e-learning would be the best approach must be carefully considered if the aim of the approach is to teach these practical skills. Sanders (2000) does, however, also note that e-learning is beneficial when

employees are dispersed over a number of locations, when course content is relatively stable and when a large number of individuals need to be trained. It may be that the benefits of these other factors outweigh the need for a practical side to the training.

Other advantages and disadvantages of using the e-learning method are summarised in Table 2. For example, e-learning can be cost effective, self-paced and can be completed at various locations and at various times. On the other hand there can be a high initial cost, there is a lack of social contact and the method does not suit all individual learning styles. It is therefore difficult to state whether the advantages of e-learning outweigh the disadvantages or vice-versa. It is likely that these would vary depending on the different organisations using them, the purpose of the e-learning tool, and whether the e-learning approach was combined with other methods.

More evaluation is therefore clearly needed on this issue. Any tool developed by HSE to train individuals on assessing and controlling WRV would certainly benefit from being piloted and evaluated. Another issue that HSE would need to consider is not only whether a WRV training course is effective, but also whether a learning tool would be utilised by enough organisations and employees to make it worthwhile and cost effective to produce. Finally HSE needs to be clear on what the aims and objectives of any e-learning tool would be, and the training/learning needs of the potential end-users. The answers to these questions will inform the decision as to whether e-learning is the most appropriate tool.

4.4 FEEDBACK FROM POTENTIAL END-USERS

4.4.1 Is work-related violence (WRV) a problem?

It was generally recognised by most interviewees working in the sectors included in the sample that WRV is a problem. It is undoubtedly a serious issue, with one interviewee in the taxi-driving sector highlighting an example of violence which resulted in a fatality. Along with physical violence is also the aspect of verbal abuse. It would appear from the sample here that verbal abuse is much more common than physical violence. Interviewees in the retail sector highlighted that verbal abuse and threats of physical violence can lead to staff suffering a great deal of stress. It was thought that some staff had resigned from stores as a result of stress-related illness caused by abuse and threats. It also appears that violence can be very dependent on geographical location: fire fighters and taxi drivers highlighted that whilst violence can be a major issue in some regions, in other regions it is hardly a problem at all.

The care home sector (specifically those caring for individuals with mental disability) perceives violence in a slightly different way. Here, violence from service users is generally termed 'challenging behaviour'. Interviewees in this sector highlighted that violence is not the intention of individuals exhibiting such behaviour; instead, for these individuals this behaviour is a route of alternative communication with staff. Because of this distinction it is unlikely that challenging behaviour in care homes can be considered in the same light as other forms of WRV.

4.4.2 Would training be beneficial to help prevent and manage this behaviour?

There were very mixed views as to how useful training would be to prevent and manage WRV. There were a number of interviewees from all sectors who noted that more information on WRV would be beneficial. Interviewees in some sectors (e.g. rail and taxi) noted, however, that there should be a greater focus on the police effectively dealing with violent individuals, rather than training staff how to deal with violence. Interviewees in the taxi-driving sector also noted that if information is available on WRV, then individuals who perceived the issue to be a

problem could then access the information if required. Interviewees in the Fire and Rescue Service noted that whilst information on WRV may be useful, they were generally happy with the support they already have within their organisation.

4.4.3 Past training

Whilst a number of interviewees had received training in the past, there were more individuals who had not received training on violence. A number of individuals noted that the knowledge and methods of coping with violence that they had developed was from personal experience and from talking to colleagues.

Many interviewees could not recall what issues were covered in past training, generally because the training had been received some time ago. Also, none of the interviewees had received any refresher training on WRV. Some of the issues that had been covered in previous training of interviewees included:

- Dealing with a difficult customer
- Remaining calm when dealing with WRV
- Escape strategies and circumstances when staff should 'get out'.
- Reporting all incidents, even spitting, so that relevant actions can be taken where possible
- How best to deal with a specific area/ type of incident
- How to deal with verbal/physical abuse, stone throwing, when to wear PPE

4.4.4 Using the Internet

It appeared that the majority of the interviewees in the sample were competent and happy to use the Internet as a source of information, although very few of the interviewees were aware of the HSE website. Those interviewees that had used the HSE website had generally viewed broad health and safety information. Also, interviewees noted that they did not generally associate HSE with human factors type issues, such as WRV. One interviewee said that they associated HSE with more general health and safety issues, such as slips and trips and manual handling. It is also important here that many of the interviewees did not have every-day Internet access at work, including taxi drivers, bus drivers, train staff (the public transport sector) and fire fighters. Whilst training facilities (including Internet access) were sometimes available for staff, these would often have to be used in worker's own time (e.g. lunch breaks or outside of work hours). A number of interviewees in the different sectors included in the sample also noted that some of their colleagues were uncomfortable or not confident at using the Internet.

The Internet is therefore not always an appropriate method for communicating information, and is potentially limited as a conduit for delivering training material on WRV.

4.4.5 Format of training material

4.4.5.1 The Internet/e-learning

Interviewees in the care home sector, taxi drivers and the bus drivers suggested that an e-learning tool could be a useful training method. It was suggested by taxi drivers that placing the material on the Internet would probably be best, as individuals could access this in their own time (and at home in many cases) if they desired. It was noted by interviewees in the care home sector that a CD-ROM would probably be more reliable than the Internet and that the training would need to be interactive in order to keep users interested. A number of interviewees in the bus driving sector and the retail sector highlighted that they did not think e-learning was the best format for WRV training. This was due to a lack of interaction with people and lack of interest in using the Internet.

4.4.5.2 Face-to-face training

Interviewees in other sectors (the rail sector, the retail sector, bus drivers and the fire and rescue service) highlighted the importance of face-to-face training and practical exercises, such as role-plays. Interviewees here suggested that violence is a ‘hands on’ issue, requiring ‘hands on’ training/information. Discussion groups were also noted to be beneficial in order for staff to share experiences and to learn from colleagues.

4.4.5.3 Video-based training/information

Some interviewees, primarily in the bus driving and retail sectors, also suggested video-based training. One health and safety manager in particular noted that a video could be put on a loop in busy parts of the organisation. In the retail sector it was noted that video-based training would be useful in the induction of new staff. It was suggested in the retail sector, real life scenarios would be helpful to include in video-based training. The method of video-based training was, however, criticised by interviewees in the rail sector, who suggested that people would probably not pay attention to it.

4.4.5.4 Other media for training/disseminating information

Other forms of media that were suggested for training or the dissemination of information included:

- Posters
- Mentoring
- Presentations, and
- Written information

4.4.5.5 Other media content issues

A large number of interviewees across the different sectors suggested that the training should be in a **modular** format, between 15 and 30 minutes for each part, regardless of the format that was adopted (i.e. whether e-learning or video). It was suggested that this would help users to maintain their attention and would also fit in with available time at work. Many interviewees also noted that **refresher training** would be needed, possibly on a yearly basis, due to the potential for information to be forgotten. Also, some interviewees noted that **mixed methods** of training would be required for the best results. One interviewee noted that books should not be used, as this method would be ‘*too boring*’.

A number of interviewees in management positions noted that training would need a slightly different approach for **managers**. It was added that often verbal abuse/violence has reached an escalated state by the time a manager arrives at the incident.

4.4.6 Summary

In summary, interaction during training seemed key to most people’s training requirements, with passive training methods such as books, being unpopular. There does not appear to be a single training format that appeals right across the board. The sample suggested that some sectors tend to prefer a particular training format (e.g. face-to-face within the rail sector), however, in many instances even individuals working in the same sector would prefer very different training methods. This reflects the differences in training and learning needs/styles across individuals. Bus drivers are a good example of this, where there appears to be no singular preferred training method for those interviewed. It therefore seems that the application of an e-learning format alone would not be an appealing option for all people/organisations.

4.4.7 Issues that should be covered

A number of suggestions were made for inclusion in training material. These included the following:

- How to avoid violent situations
- How to avert potentially violent situations (defusion techniques)
- How individuals might be affected if injured (e.g. the grievance procedure)
- How individuals should conduct themselves appropriately
- How to deal with the stress afterwards
- How to deal with different age groups (e.g. children, youths)
- How to deal with strangers and familiar people
- How to be respectful of different groups
- Personal rights (Are we going to be sued or arrested if we have to deal with violence?)
- Statistics on the number of incidents and comparisons with different work sectors
- Escape strategies and circumstances when to 'get out'.
- Reporting all incidents, even spitting, so that relevant actions can be taken where possible
- What to do if attacked
- The 'dos' and 'don'ts' when dealing with abusive/violent customers
- Sector specific scenarios
- Risk assessments
- How to spot risks and prevent them
- Theory and psychology (i.e. why people behave like they do)
- What actions drive behaviour (e.g. not taking time with a customer can aggravate them)
- Methods to stay calm and defuse a situation
- Predicting violence with body language/postures
- Defining threatening behaviour
- What to do if the aggressor has a weapon
- What staff can and cannot say
- A set of 'golden rules' for dealing with violence

4.5 CONCLUSIONS

The feasibility of an e-learning tool

HSE asked HSL to investigate the potential market and feasibility of an e-learning tool on WRV. This investigation suggests that an e-learning tool is feasible. It appears that HSE has both the experience and the skills to produce an e-learning tool on WRV. With respect to other e-learning tools that are available there may be a niche that HSE could potentially fill without duplicating training/information that already exists on WRV (i.e. at the time of the research a UK specific, industry generic and free WRV e-learning tool was not identified by the research team).

However,

Evaluation on the effectiveness of e-learning is extremely limited. There are indeed strengths and weaknesses of this method which have been highlighted previously in this report. These would need careful consideration before an e-learning tool was developed. Whether an e-learning tool, or other methods are adopted, a pilot and evaluation of the chosen method is strongly recommended. HSE would need to be clear about the objectives of a learning tool and who the tool would be aimed at.

There may be a potential market for a WRV e-learning tool or alternative types of learning media

Potential end-users of training/information on WRV have identified that the control and management of violence is an issue which may benefit from information or training. A distinction would, however, need to be made between ‘challenging behaviour’ and violence for the care home sector. In relation to the format of training, an e-learning tool was not a clear favourite amongst the individuals interviewed here. It appears that various organisations and various individuals prefer different training methods. Face-to-face training was a very popular suggestion, whilst the use of video-based training also received some strong support. Face-to-face training was the only method which was not criticised by any of the interviewees. It is also likely, however, that face-to-face training would be an expensive alternative for organisations and may not be viable for SMEs. Additionally, face-to-face training may not be appropriate for an organisation such as HSE to develop and progress.

It seems that the most viable methods for training and dissemination of information on WRV by HSE that have been identified here are video-based learning and e-learning, although these methods were not embraced by all interviewees. It may, however, be possible to incorporate these methods with other more practical training methods which were strongly praised by interviewees. For example, videos or e-learning could be used to convey key information on risk assessment, provide examples and case studies. Potentially, HSE could also produce information on how organisations could run role-plays, discussion groups or other practical exercises, which could be completed as part of a video or e-learning training course. This would allow organisations to tailor the amount and type of training to their industrial sectors and also allow them to choose methods which they believe are most beneficial for their circumstances. Refresher training should also be encouraged. HSE would also need to consider marketing a WRV learning tool, regardless of the format that was adopted. This would be essential, as very few interviewees had used the HSE website.

Although slightly out of the remit of this work, it is important to note that several interviewees felt that more needs to be done to prevent work-related violence. It may be that engagement with key stakeholders, such as the police would be worthwhile.

A key closing point is that if training on WRV is to be successful, then top-level organisational buy-in is needed. Without commitment from directors and senior managers, organisations will not be willing to devote time to WRV training, and the application of any WRV training method would therefore be likely to have only limited success.

4.6 CAVEATS

This research involved a very small sample of end-users in each of the different sectors, therefore the findings are not necessarily generalisable across each of the industrial sectors.

4.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations have been made:

- Firstly, HSE must set clear aims and objectives for any learning tool, including what the overall purpose of a tool would be (e.g. is it simply to disseminate basic information or to help people deal with a violent situation). HSE would need to consider the needs of end-users and differences in preferred learning styles.
- To complete a larger survey of organisations in the target sectors where a WRV tool would be aimed in order to ensure that the findings from this feasibility study are

generalisable. Consultation should also include trades union and industry bodies, where appropriate.

- To consider producing training/information materials in various formats (e.g. video and e-learning) in conjunction with information on how organisations could run role-plays, discussion groups and other practical/group exercises on WRV. This method would appeal to a much broader number of end-users, as it considers different learning styles and mimics the practical skills of conflict management that many of the interviewees seemed to want. Research would be needed to identify whether organisations would be able and willing to facilitate role-plays and discussion groups for this method to be successful. Those organisations involved with this research could be contacted again to provide some information on this.
- To include end-users during the design of training or information materials.
- To conduct a pilot study on any training or information materials that are produced to evaluate their uptake and effectiveness. There is little evaluation on the effectiveness of e-learning for dissemination of health and safety information; therefore a pilot study would be essential. Continuous evaluation is also recommended after the development of a tool, in order to ensure that information is kept up to date and to monitor how much people use it.
- Advertising a learning tool would be essential, as this research has identified very limited use of the HSE website.
- Work-related violence and challenging behaviour are different issues; therefore HSE may need to approach them separately.

5 APPENDICES

5.1 APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Introduction

- Name, HSL
- **Background:** HSE asked HSL to investigate feasibility of developing e-learning tool for work-related violence, for the HSE web pages.
Purpose: to raise awareness of the risks & good practices associated with managing violence at work. Could be used to help managers conduct risk assessments or provide info to staff on what they could do in certain situations
- No. of stages to study - this stage: exploring views of potential end-users, e.g. would you use such a tool & how would you like to receive info from HSE.
- Interviewing a no. of people in health and social care & public transport sectors.
- Interview should last between 20-30 mins/ 5 mins (Depending on situation)
- Confidentiality: We may report your views in a report to be given to HSE but you will not be identified personally. In fact we won't even write your name down. We may also give some informal feedback to your company on how you find the information they provide on violence.
- Any questions?

Questions

Personal background

1. Role?
2. Age/number of years with company?

Work-related violence & training

1. Do you think work-related violence is a problem in your industry? (*NB you do not need to gather specific examples of cases*)
2. Is this a subject you feel you need training or information on how to prevent and manage the risks of violence?
3. Have you received any training or information on this issue yourself?
4. If yes, what kind of training or information was it? *E.g. classroom based, e-learning, video, self-defence classes*
5. If you can remember, what kind of things did the training teach you? *E.g. how to handle an aggressive customer, what to do if you feel threatened, how to assess the risks of violence etc.*
6. How else do you gather information or guidance on work-related violence? *E.g. booklets, talking to other staff, videos, searching the Internet etc.*
7. How have you found out about managing violence at work?

HSE information on work-related violence

7. Have you ever seen any information from HSE on work-related violence?
8. Have you ever looked on the HSE website for information on work-related violence? Why? Why not?
9. Do you think you would look on the HSE website for information on work-related violence in the future?
10. How would you like to receive electronic HSE information about violence at work?

e.g. by video, on a CD ROM, on the Internet etc?

11. If you were to receive electronic HSE information on violence at work, what would you like information about?
e.g. how to conduct a risk assessment, how to spot the risks and prevent them, the consequences of violence, what measures are available, what works and what does not?
12. If HSE developed an e-learning tool to, for example, (**Managers**) demonstrate how you can conduct a risk assessment for work-related violence, (**or Employees**) teach you about how to manage the risks of work-related violence, do you think you would use it?

Your situation

13. Do you currently have access to computers at work?
14. How often are you able to use these?
15. Have you ever received training delivered by a computer, e.g. over the Internet?
16. If yes, what did you think of it? Were there any particularly good points or anything that was particularly bad about them?

Close

- Thank you for your help.
- We may use the info you have given us in a report to HSE and make some recommendations to them.
- Any questions?

5.2 APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (SHORT VERSION)

Introduction

- Name, HSL
- **Background:** HSE asked HSL to investigate feasibility of developing e-learning tool for work-related violence, for the HSE web pages, which could be used to raise awareness of the risks of violence at work or to help managers conduct risk assessments or provide info to staff on what they could do in certain situations
- No. of stages to study - this stage: exploring views of potential end-users, e.g. would you use such a tool & how would you like to receive info from HSE.
- Interviewing a no. of people in health and social care & public transport sectors.
- Interview should last between 20-30 mins/ 5 mins (Depending on situation)
- Confidentiality: We may report your views in a report to be given to HSE but you will not be identified personally. In fact we won't even write your name down. We may also give some informal feedback to your company on how you find the information they provide on violence.
- Any questions?

Questions

Personal background

3. Role?
4. Age/number of years with company?

Work-related violence & training

3. Is this a subject you feel you need training or info on, on how to prevent & manage the risks of violence?
4. How have you found out about managing violence at work?

HSE information on work-related violence

13. Have you ever looked on HSE's website for info on work-related violence? Why? Why not?
14. Do you think you would look on HSE's website for info on work-related violence in the future?
15. How would you like to receive electronic HSE info about violence at work?
16. If you were to receive electronic HSE info on violence at work, what would you like info about?
17. If HSE developed an e-learning tool to, e.g. to teach you about how to manage the risks of work-related violence, do you think you would use it?

Your situation

17. Do you currently have access to computers at work?

Close

- Thank you for your help.
- We may use the info you have given us in a report to HSE and make some recommendations to them.
- Any questions?

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