
REPORT AUTHOR: HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISER

SUBJECT: SAFETY CLIMATE SURVEY

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Background Papers:

Implications (tick✓):

LEGAL	✓	FINANCIAL	
HUMAN RESOURCES		EQUALITY IMPACT	
ENVIRONMENTAL		POLICY	
CORPORATE RISK	Known	OTHER (please specify)	
	New	HEALTH AND SAFETY	✓
		CORE BRIEF	

Any implications affecting this report are noted at the end of the report.

PURPOSE:

To provide Members with information regarding the safety climate survey taking place from 3 January to 13 February 2017.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members acknowledge the report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the priorities that Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have identified as a corporate objective for 2016 - 17 is to conduct a safety climate survey. This will help to develop a prioritised health, safety and wellbeing plan moving forward.

1.2 There has been a growing body of evidence that suggests that organisations that measure their safety climate and take action to resolve issues that arise have fewer accidents and near misses. A safety climate can indicate where the weaknesses and gaps are in the health and safety management system that might not be observable through conventional audits and observations.

2. Safety Climate

2.1 'Safety climate' describes how people feel about safety, and offers a unique insight into an organisation's safety culture. In turn, safety culture is one of the strongest indicators of organisational health and safety performance so, not only can a positive safety climate have a favourable effect on accident rates; it can also have an impact on better worker involvement, better understanding and control of workplace risks and employee morale.

2.2 With up to 90% of incidents having a human and organisational factor associated with them, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have undertaken to measure their safety climate as a proactive step towards improving their health and safety performance.

3 Measuring Safety Climate

3.1 Measurement of our safety climate will be carried out by using the Health and Safety Laboratories Safety Climate Tool (SCT) which will provide a leading indicator showing how health and safety is viewed at different levels within the organisation. The SCT will enable the organisation to fully understand its safety climate helping us to:

- Benchmark the current safety climate, which will allow comparisons to be made with future climate surveys and measure success;
- Identify areas where we are doing well and where we need to target our future efforts;
- Promote involvement in health and safety across the organisation; and
- Reduce the costs associated with staff absence and loss of productivity.

3.2 Using the SCT may result in the identification of changes that can be made to improve areas of health and safety performance, helping to improve the future safety culture. This will achieve greater engagement and commitment to health and safety from employees, reduce the number of accidents at work, reduce costs and demonstrate better leadership.

4 The Safety Climate Tool

4.1 The SCT is a simple online survey of 40 statements mapped across eight factors:

- Accident and near miss reporting;
- Organisational commitment;
- Health and safety oriented behaviours;
- Health and safety trust;
- Usability of procedures;
- Engagement in health and safety;
- Peer group attitude; and
- Resources for health and safety.

4.2 In addition to the forty statements there are three open questions chosen by the Health and Safety Support Team. The questionnaire is designed for people to rate their responses to the statements on a 1 to 5 point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

4.3 The SCT is purposely designed to seek the views of all levels of the workforce so that their results can be compared. The statements explore an individual's attitudes and perceptions regarding safety. Data is automatically analysed to produce a written report and a series of charts. SCT data can be used as part of a benchmarking service that allows users to compare the safety climate of their own organisation to those organisations of a similar size or within the same industrial sector.

5 The Safety Climate Survey

5.1 The survey opens on the 3 January 2017 and will run for six weeks. It is open to all employees within the organisation and will take between 10 – 15 minutes to complete. Following closure of the survey the summary report will be available to view on the Service intranet. The results will also be fed back to operational personnel through a health and safety roadshow campaign.

6 Implications

6.1 **Legal – Health and Safety:**

6.2 There are legislative requirements regarding employee involvement, management arrangements and competency assurance but not for culture. Although safety culture and its assessment is not a legal requirement, safety culture assessment is recognised as having a direct impact on the safety of employees, contractors and the public.

6.3 This first safety climate survey will provide a benchmark and will allow comparisons to be made with future climate surveys.

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