

REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 25 AUGUST 2014

REPORT ON: HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

REPORT BY: ASSESSOR

REPORT NO: TVJB 19-2014

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present to the Board the Assessor's annual report on Health and Safety matters, in accordance with the Board's Health and Safety Policy Statement.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Board is asked to note the content of the report.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Any implementation costs have been contained within the Assessor's Revenue Budget.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

5 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 At its meeting on 19 August 1996 the Board noted and approved the Tayside Valuation Joint Board General Health and Safety Policy Statement which included an obligation on the Assessor to monitor and evaluate the Health and Safety performance of the Department and prepare an annual report to the Board.

The Annual Report to August 2014 is undernoted at 8 below.

6 DEPARTMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Boards general principles of Health & Safety are contained in the Departmental Health and Safety Policy Statement and are as follows.

In keeping with its overall objectives and in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Tayside Valuation Joint Board will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees and members of the public. A high standard of performance in this respect is one of the Board's principal objectives and an integral part of its approach to service delivery.

The Board aims not only to reduce accident and sickness absence rates but also to promote the well being of its employees and to develop a positive attitude to health and safety throughout the Tayside Valuation Joint Board.

The involvement and co-operation of all employees on both an individual and collective basis are crucial to the achievement of these aims. Accordingly, the Board will ensure by informing, instructing, training and consulting employees that they are aware of their responsibilities and capable of discharging them and that they have an opportunity to contribute to establishing and maintaining effective health and safety practices.

In all its activities the Board acknowledges and will seek to meet its responsibilities for health and safety in respect of those who are not its employees and the environment in which it operates.

The Board will seek to achieve its aim by:-

- a Creating and maintaining a positive health and safety culture which secures the commitment and participation of all employees.
- b Meeting its responsibilities to employees, to other people and to the environment in a way which recognises that legal requirements are only a minimum standard.
- c Adopting a planned and systematic approach to the implementation of the Board's health and safety policy, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:-
 - i the provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are safe and without risk to health;
 - ii arrangements for ensuring safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
 - iii the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees;
 - iv the maintenance of any place of work under the Board's control in a condition that is safe and without risks to health and the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from these places of work that are safe and without such risks, and
 - v the provision and maintenance of a working environment for employees that is safe, without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.
- d Identifying and assessing the risks associated with all activities of the Board with the aim of eliminating or controlling the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- e Allocating resources to meet the requirements of the Board's health and safety policy.
- f Planning for health and safety including the setting of realistic short and long term objectives, deciding priorities and establishing adequate performance standards.
- g Monitoring and reviewing performance on a regular basis.
- h Ensuring appropriate work force consultation and consultation with safety representatives.

7 SIGNIFICANT RISKS FACED BY BOARD EMPLOYEES

Although Assessor's staff operate in a relatively low risk working environment, their Health and Safety remains an important consideration. The main risks to Board employees continue to be the possibility of injury whilst carrying out property inspections and the possibility of a staff member being injured or taking ill whilst they are working alone and remaining undiscovered for a significant time period. In order to mitigate these risks guidance is provided in the form of "Guidance for Working Out of the Office and Lone Working" and a range of Safe Working Arrangements which includes "Property and Site Inspections" and "Work Related Road Safety".

- 1 The Department's Health and Safety Group, under the chairmanship of an Assistant Assessor (Dundee), continues to meet biannually to monitor Health and Safety matters. Proceedings are recorded by minutes which are in turn presented to the Management Team for consideration. Health and Safety is a standing Agenda item for meetings of the Management Team.
- 2 In April 2014 each Division undertook the annual Workplace Self Assessment Checklist which compares their health and safety performance with previous years to ensure that standards are being satisfactorily maintained. Each Division's score had improved in comparison to 2013.
- 3 The Formal Visual Inspection of portable electrical equipment is carried out annually by trained Assessor's staff, however, every third year Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) is undertaken by an outside electrical contractor. This was carried out in each Division during September 2013.
- 4 In all three divisional offices the fire fighting equipment, alarms and emergency lighting are tested on a regular basis.
- 5 In the past year full fire evacuation drills have successfully been carried out and recorded in each office.
- 6 Staff were provided with access to the e-learning courses "Recognising Stress" and "Dealing with Stress" following which a Departmental Stress Survey was undertaken. The results of the survey were analysed and were generally considered to be satisfactory. However, it was found that some individuals considered that staff consultation could be improved. A follow up survey has been carried out and a focus group has been established by the Assistant Assessor (Perth). A number of changes to methods of Staff Consultation have been implemented
- 7 The Assistant Assessor responsible for Health and Safety matters continues to attend the Health and Safety Coordinator Group Meetings arranged by Dundee City Council Health and Safety Section and ensures that any matters affecting the Board are implemented.
- 8 The two First Aiders in Dundee Division successfully completed the refresher course which provides the First Aid qualification required by the Health and Safety Executive.
- 9 Three Divisional Health & Safety Representatives have attended the Incident Investigation Training provided by Dundee City Council.
- 10 The Asbestos Awareness training course delivered by the Health & Safety section of Dundee City Council provides advice on the identification of asbestos products and the care required by those carrying out property inspections. A course was arranged in February and was attended by eight members of staff who had not attended previous courses or required refresher training.
- 11 Routine Health and Safety matters continue to be dealt with locally as they arise.

- 12 The total number of days lost by Tayside Valuation Joint Board staff for 2013-2014 through sickness absence was 309.0 at a cost of £29574.28 in comparison to 2012-2013 when 257.50 days were lost at a cost of £20,998.98. The increase is mainly as a consequence of two long term non work related sickness absences, both of which have since been resolved. The full absence statistics are contained in Appendix.

9 CONCLUSIONS

Health and Safety matters continue to be monitored effectively, through systems and procedures set up within the department. The Health and Safety Group comprises members from each Divisional office and accordingly Board wide issues are addressed and reported appropriately. Action is taken to ensure compliance with statutory and general health and safety requirements, and relevant training provided to staff as required. Additionally, consideration is given annually to ensuring funds are contained in the Assessor's Revenue Budget to cover the cost of complying with all Health and Safety requirements. It is considered that overall arrangements for dealing with Health and Safety matters are satisfactory.

Alastair Kirkwood
Assessor

August 2014

Tayside Valuation Joint Board

Sickness Absence Statistics 2013-2014

DIVISION	Number of Instances	Working Days Lost	Calendar Days Lost	Working Hours Lost	Work Related Absence	Statutory Sick Pay £	Occupational Sick Pay £	Total Sick Pay £
HEADQUARTERS AND I.T.	10	35.5	46	262.7	0	450.84	3472.39	3923.23
DUNDEE DIVISION	30	97	140.5	873.2	0	953.7	11165.74	12119.44
PERTH & KINROSS DIVISION	33	123.5	230	943.5	0	2121.26	8522.86	10644.12
ANGUS DIVISION	16	53	88	373.7	0	138.72	2748.77	2887.49
TOTALS	89	309	504.5	2453.1	0	3664.52	25909.76	29574.28

Sickness Absence Statistics 2012-2013

DIVISION	Number of Instances	Working Days Lost	Calendar Days Lost	Working Hours Lost	Work Related Absence	Statutory Sick Pay £	Occupational Sick Pay £	Total Sick Pay £
HEADQUARTERS AND I.T.	9	22.5	23	166.5	0	51.51	3566.37	3617.88
DUNDEE DIVISION	33	94.5	112	673.4	0	616.42	7945.18	8561.60
PERTH & KINROSS DIVISION	29	75.5	139	558.7	0	1104.60	5269.22	6373.82
ANGUS DIVISION	22	65	104	458.8	0	137.36	2308.32	2445.68
TOTALS	93	257.5	378	1857.4	0	1909.89	19089.09	20998.98