

JOINT HSENI / COUNCIL ENFORCEMENT INITIATIVES	6th December 2016
TO: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE	
FOR INFORMATION	

Linkage to Council Strategy (2015-19)	
Strategic Theme	
Outcome	To advise members of the ongoing Safe Skin initiative and report on activity during 2015/16 on the New to the Job initiative initiative.
Lead Officer	Head of Health & Built Environment
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

1.0 Background

The enforcement of health and safety at work in Northern Ireland is carried out jointly by the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and District Councils. In February 2011 HSENI and District Councils launched a joint strategy for the better regulation of health and safety at work in Northern Ireland. The strategy “Health and safety at work: protecting lives not stopping them”, commits HSENI and district councils to work together to tackle the major causes of accidents and ill health in workplaces in Northern Ireland. A key goal of the strategy is to focus on workplace health issues, including safe skin and to highlight the needs of vulnerable groups, including inexperienced and new recruits.

2.0 Safe Skin Initiative

During the current financial year HSENI and District Councils are focussing on skin safety through contact dermatitis and sun exposure. Work-related dermatitis (sometimes known as eczema) accounts for a significant proportion of work-related ill health. Sun exposure can blister skin and make it peel or in the long term may increase the chance of developing skin cancer.

The majority of work-related skin disease cases are preventable by adopting simple steps to manage risks in the workplace; effective skin care is an important part of any regime, along with applying simple exposure reduction methods.

Inspectors are continuing to visit relevant workplaces as part of the initiative and If safe skin is a potential issue they are seeking effective organisation and arrangements by the business, which include:

- Risk assessment considering Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and sun exposure.
- Information, instruction and supervision, with evidence of management commitment
- Controls adequate to establish a Safe Working Distance between skin and contaminants
- Personal Protective Equipment (including gloves) used
- Skin inspection in place, with records
- Work-related skin issues reported under RIDDOR

This issue affects a number of business sectors appropriate to Council enforcement, including:

- Hairdressers
- Cleaners
- Catering establishments
- Bars
- Gardeners / Golf courses

HSENI and district councils have developed information leaflets that provide useful advice and guidance on sun exposure and dermatitis. The website address is www.hseni.gov.uk/safeskin

Information on the initiative, which runs until the end of March 2017, is included on Council's website.

3.0 New to the Job Initiative

During 2015/16 HSENI and District councils focussed on the health and safety of employees who were new to the job. This was a key goal of the joint strategy as young and inexperienced workers who are new to a workplace are three times more likely to be killed or injured than their experienced workmates who have been there for a year or more.

Environmental Health Officers in the Health and Safety Team wrote to premises to advise of the initiative and carried out 186 visits as part of the initiative across the Borough during 2015/16. The initiative was publicised in the local press and Council's website.

A report on the activity by District Councils and HSENI across Northern Ireland during the New to the Job initiative has been compiled and is attached as appendix.

Recommendation: For information



New to the Job

Joint HSENI and Local Authority initiative

April 2015 to March 2016

Activity Report



Health and safety at work:
protecting lives, not stopping them



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Introduction

According to the HSE, workers are as likely to have an accident in the first six months at a workplace as during the whole of the rest of their working life (table 1).

The extra risk arises due to:

- lack of experience of working in a new industry or workplace
- lack of familiarity with the job and the work environment
- reluctance to raise concerns (or not knowing how to)
- eagerness to impress workmates and managers

Furthermore, accidents involving young and inexperienced workers tend to increase as the economy comes out of recession as emphasised by HSE Chair Judith Hackett in 2014*:

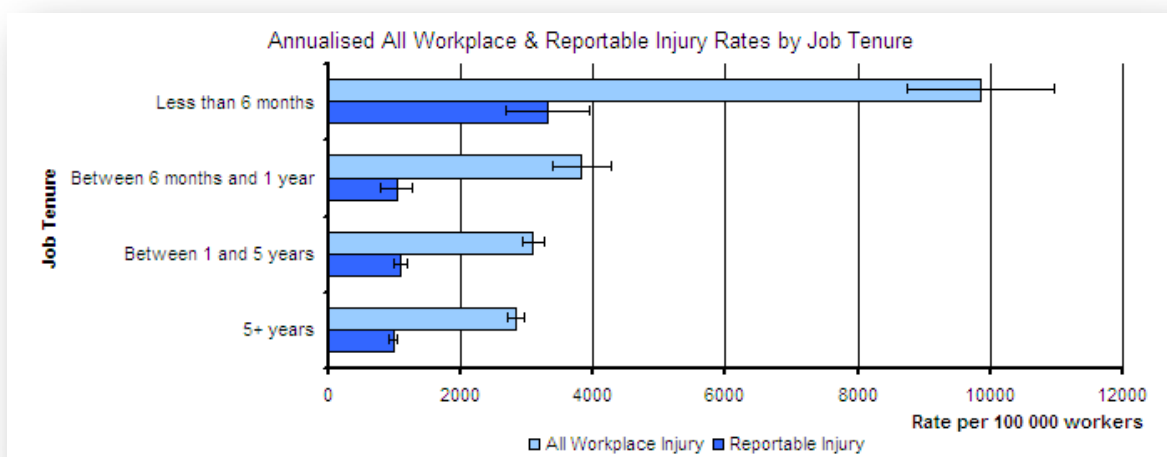
“during a recession when there is very little recruitment safety performance improves, but the recruitment that accompanies recovery has, in the past led to increased injuries as people return to the workplace and the new recruits are the workers most at risk”.

The Planning and Development Group (PDG) agreed that a New to the Job initiative was to be delivered by HSENI and the Local Authorities in 2015/16. This was to be an awareness raising initiative, primarily involving local promotion and inspections.

A New to the Job Working Group was established in 2014 to plan the initiative and oversee delivery.

This document outlines the activity of HSENI and the Local Authorities in relation to the New to the Job initiative (2015/16).

Table 1



* <http://www.hse.gov.uk/news/judith-risk-assessment/cautionary-tale-050214.htm>



Inspection activity

Local Authorities (LA)

LAs undertook to discuss the New to the Job initiative in at least 50% of inspections between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016.

Outputs

- LAs highlighted the campaign and the issue of new and inexperienced employees in 1149 inspections from 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016. This represented approximately 53% of planned inspections
- Some LAs targeted their inspections towards vulnerable groups, for example migrant workers and young workers
- Approximately 10% of inspected premises were required to make improvements following the initial inspection, including; providing better induction training for new or inexperienced employees; implementing a buddy scheme where new recruits are paired with more experienced staff; or providing safety equipment for new recruits

HSENI Activity

HSENI sectors outlined how they would raise the topic of new and inexperienced employees in the HSENI operational plan.

Across all sectors HSENI undertook approximately 2,000 inspections with a focus on new or inexperienced employees. HSENI inspection outputs are outlined below:

- 800 Farm inspections with prominence given to farms where work experience students are placed and farms which provide foster care
- 355 Food production inspections focusing on issues including training of operators (particularly the young and migrant workers)
- 400 Construction inspections where safety of new or inexperienced employees was raised
- 175 General Manufacturing inspections raised issue of new and inexperienced employees and offered guidance, advice and enforcement action where necessary
- 100 Transport and Utilities inspections where safety of new or inexperienced employees was raised
- 75 HSWNI visits covered the topic of new or inexperienced employee safety
- 80 Health and Social Care visits raised the topic of new or inexperienced employees
- HSWNI distributed at least 3,000 copies, including downloads, of the “Be safe when you start” booklet to young people and students entering the workplace or going on work experience for the first time



Engage with relevant groups

During the campaign LAs and HSENI engaged in a range of outreach activities with relevant groups, for example:

- Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council liaised with the Southern Regional College to organise a Health and Safety Training session for beauty therapy and hairdressing students.
- Derry City and Strabane Council highlighted the initiative at a Health and Safety in Hair and Beauty event in the North West Regional College.
- Derry City and Strabane Council attended a BME Health Event where the new to the job initiative was promoted using a range of translated material. The event was organised by the Council's Community Relations, the Public Health Agency and the community sector (photo includes Eamonn Toner, Paul Rafferty from the Council and Aggie Luczak and Maz Petrushkin from NICEM).



HSENI sector groups were encouraged to promote the topic among relevant industry groups. A template letter was developed for this purpose (appendix 1).

Throughout the delivery period HSENI sector groups had contact with the various industry representatives where safety of new and inexperienced employees was raised. Examples of targeted industry groups are outlined below:

- HSENI Agriculture team prepared, delivered and staffed a Young Farmers Clubs of Ulster – Safe Machinery Operation Competition at the 2015 Royal Agricultural Society Annual Show. This event focused upon the health and safety of young farmers in the agricultural industry and promoted the health and safety of young people within the industry.
- Construction team delivered two seminars in partnership with the Construction Industry addressing relevant health and safety topics, including new and inexperienced employees.
- HSWNI exhibited at the campuses of the 6 FE college student freshers fairs to raise awareness and provide health and safety information to students embarking on work placements.
- HSWNI attended the Causeway Business Education Partnership area careers convention in Coleraine.



- HSWNI and Agriculture team delivered 10 health and safety presentations to students studying agriculture or horticulture at CAFRE campuses and attended student fairs at the 3 CAFRE campuses.
- HSWNI delivered 74 health and safety presentations to over 2000 young people in Northern Ireland through the SafeStart initiative.
- HSWNI delivered 62 talks to young and inexperienced employees including 14 Asbestos talks to young construction apprentices and associated trades.



Information for businesses

The New to the Job Working Group was tasked with:

- establishing a body of relevant information for businesses on how to work with new to the job employees
- developing a New to the Job campaign section on the HSENI website with resources and links to pertinent information for businesses

Information for businesses

The working group developed an information leaflet with advice for Employers and Employees (pictured). The leaflet was hosted in pdf format on the HSENI and LA websites. It was translated into a number of languages, including Chinese/Cantonese, Lithuanian, Polish and Romanian.

In addition relevant information from previous initiatives was collated and hosted on the HSENI website, including the “Be Safe When You Start” booklet and the generic “Safety for Migrant Workers” booklet (both pictured).

Website

A New to the Job campaign section was created on the HSENI website. This included a step by step guide on how to protect new and inexperienced workers and links to further information on the HSE website. The website text is included in appendix 2.





Be Safe when you start booklet



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Safety for Migrant Workers Booklet





Encourage local promotion

HSENI released a press release to launch the initiative. The press release is included in Appendix 3.

A promotional pack was developed for LAs and HSENI to use throughout the delivery of the project. This was distributed to LAs in April 2015 and included:

1. Rationale for the initiative (Judith Hackett)
2. Generic press release for local promotion
3. Campaign logo
4. Paragraph for Council website
5. Inspection pro-forma
6. Data Gathering table for Councils
7. Pre Inspection letter
8. Sample Committee report

A number of LAs engaged with the media to promote the campaign locally.

- Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council developed and distributed a press release and had a photograph taken promoting the initiative. The article and accompanying photo appeared in the Banbridge Leader in July 2015
- There was press coverage of the School of Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Early Years event at the NWRC attended by Derry City and Strabane Council (photographed)



Paul Rafferty DCSDC with students and staff of the School of Hairdressing, Beauty Therapy and Early Years at the NWRC



Feedback and learning

- The topic is relevant to many businesses and the timing was appropriate as an improving economic situation is encouraging many businesses to consider recruiting new staff
- Some LAs were able to target activity towards premises with a high staff turnover or those who employ vulnerable groups
- The initiative was relatively straightforward to deliver with expectations for compliance clear and achievable
- Safety of new and inexperienced employees is a topic that businesses are generally happy to support
- The campaign did not involve an introductory seminar for HSENI Inspectors and LA Officers. Although it was acknowledged that a session was not necessary given the relatively straightforward topic some LA Officers highlighted that the opportunity to learn and build relationships with HSENI and LA colleagues was missed
- LAs and HSENI sectors were given autonomy to target businesses and promote the initiative as appropriate. This flexible approach was broadly welcomed as the needs of business sectors differ as do the resources of LAs and HSENI sectors

APPENDIX 1

Dear

At the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, we want to ensure that risks to people's health and safety arising from work activities are effectively controlled. That's why campaigns such as New to the Job are vital to improving the overall safety and wellbeing of the Northern Ireland workforce.

Young and inexperienced recruits who are new to a workplace are three times more likely to be killed or injured than their experienced workmates who have been there for a year or more.

The extra risk arises due to:

- lack of experience of working in a new industry or workplace
- lack of familiarity with the job and the work environment
- reluctance to raise concerns (or not knowing how to)
- eagerness to impress workmates and managers.

The joint HSENI and LA New to the Job initiative, commenced on 1st April 2015 and aims to promote the message that new or inexperienced recruits must be given appropriate information and training to keep them and others safe in the workplace. As part of the New to the Job initiative, HSENI and LAs will focus on raising awareness of this risk directly with businesses during inspections.

I would be grateful if you would help promote the initiative to the businesses you represent. A website has been developed to provide further information www.hseni.gov.uk/newtothejob we would be happy to try to arrange for a HSENI Inspector to present to your organisation or the businesses you represent.

For further information please contact Barry Rooney on 028 90 546943 barry.rooney@hseni.gov.uk

Yours faithfully

APPENDIX 2

New to the job

HSENI and the 11 Councils in Northern Ireland have partnered to deliver a Health and Safety awareness raising initiative focusing on employees who are new to the job.

Commencing in April 2015 the organisations involved will be visiting businesses to ensure new or inexperienced recruits are given appropriate information and training to keep them and others safe in the workplace.

Workers are as likely to have an accident in the first six months at a workplace as during the whole of the rest of their working life.

The extra risk arises due to:

- lack of experience of working in a new industry or workplace
- lack of familiarity with the job and the work environment
- reluctance to raise concerns (or not knowing how to)
- eagerness to impress workmates and managers.
-

This means workers new to a site:

- may not recognise hazards as a potential source of danger
- may not understand 'obvious' rules for use of equipment
- may be unfamiliar with site layout - especially where site hazards may change from day to day
- may ignore warning signs and rules, or cut corners.

Six steps to protect new starters:

1. Capability

Assess the new starter's capabilities. For example:

literacy and numeracy levels

general health

relevant work experience

physical capability to do the job

familiarity with the work being done and the working environment (especially where conditions change rapidly, such as on construction sites).

Don't forget to assess cultural and language issues (grasp of English) too, where relevant - you may need to use visual, non-verbal methods such as pictures, signs or learning materials such as videos/DVDs/CD-ROMs.

2. Induction

Provide an induction. Plan it carefully, including photos of hazards where possible, and use plain, simple language. Take time to walk around the workplace or site with new workers and show them where the main hazards exist (eg falls, slips and transport).

3. Control measures

Make sure the control measures to protect against risk are up to date and are being properly used and maintained:

Involve employees and health and safety representatives in discussions about the risk and how best to make sure new starters are protected.

Emphasise the importance of reporting accidents and near misses.

Make any necessary arrangements for health surveillance.

If required, make sure suitable personal protective equipment is provided and maintained without cost to the workers.

4. Information

Provide relevant information, instruction and training about the risks that new workers may be exposed to and the precautions they will need to take to avoid those risks.

5. Supervision

Provide adequate supervision. Make sure workers know how to raise concerns and supervisors are familiar with the possible problems due to unfamiliarity and inexperience.

6. Check understanding

Check workers have understood the information, instruction and training they need to work safely, and are acting on it, especially during the vital first days/weeks at work. Remember to make sure workers know how and with whom they can raise any concerns about their health and safety and that they know about any emergency arrangements or procedures.

Vulnerable workers

Young people

Young people may lack the experience and maturity at work of their colleagues, so could be more at risk. There are particular factors you need to consider for this group of new starters in the workplace.

For more information visit the HSE website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/risks/index.htm>

Migrant workers

Migrant workers are another group that may be particularly at risk when starting work. You may need to take action to protect them.

For detailed information on protecting migrant workers download this free booklet from HSE

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/migrantworkers/employer/protecting.pdf>

Accident rates by length of time in job

The table below shows how much higher the risk of having an accident is for new starters, compared to those who have been working for longer.

The figures given are the number of RIDDOR-reportable accidents (first column) and the number of accidents of all kinds (second column) expected for every 100 000 workers.

Note: Rates are based on RIDDOR reporting arrangements in place before changes to the legislation effective from April 2012.

Length of time in job	Reportable injury	All workplace injury
Less than 6 months	3 316	9 861
6 to 12 months	1 023	3 821
1 to 5 years	1 084	3 092
Over 5 years	973	2 829

Analysis of investigated accidents to vulnerable migrant/foreign workers (fatal and selected non-fatal) in the construction sector reinforces this evidence:

Eight out of 16 fatal accidents happened during the first ten days on site, half of them on the very first day. Only two of those who died had been in the UK a year or more.

Only five of the 16 migrant workers killed were known to have even limited experience of the UK construction industry - none of the injured was known to have any.

The pattern of accidents (by type) is broadly the same as that for other workers in the sector.

Together with the wider evidence from the Labour Force Survey, this suggests a doubled risk of injury in the first six months of employment.

APPENDIX 3

27 May 2015

'New to the Job' scheme aims to reduce risks for new workers - Young people and migrant workers most vulnerable

Workers are as likely to have a work-related accident in the first six months of a new job as they are during the rest of their working lives.

To address this trend, the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and 11 district councils have joined forces to create the 'New to the Job' scheme.

The scheme urges employers to educate and inform new employees about health and safety procedures from day one and encourages new workers to listen and learn.

Welcoming the scheme, HSENI Chief Executive Keith Morrison said: **"Additional efforts are needed to better inform new recruits about safety issues and to put in place proper procedures to protect workers from the moment they start a new job. Vulnerable employees, such as young and migrant workers, are particularly at risk when starting work and employers need to take specific action to protect them. Sadly, during the year April 2014 to March 2015, three workplace deaths of foreign nationals were reported to HSENI. This is a huge rise from one death over the previous eight years and clearly efforts must be stepped up to prevent more tragedies. I'd urge all employers to make sure that all staff learn and correctly follow health and safety procedures at all times."**

There are a number of reasons why risks increase for those new to the job. For example, workers new to a site may not recognise hazards as a potential source of danger or may not understand what more experienced workers might consider 'obvious rules' for the use of equipment.

Also, they may be unfamiliar with a site's layout - especially where site hazards can change from day to day. In addition, new workers may ignore or not notice warning signs and safety policies, or may be more tempted to cut corners.

Supporting the scheme, Principal Environmental Health Officer at Belfast City Council, Jennifer Murphy, said: **"This year we are focusing on workers from vulnerable groups, such as young people and migrant workers, and we along with District Council colleagues across Northern Ireland will be visiting businesses to remind employers of their legal responsibilities. We'll also be offering advice and guidance on how they can protect the health, safety and well-being of all their employees."**

Employers are being encouraged to follow six steps to help protect 'new to the job' workers:

- Capability – take time to assess the new worker's capabilities
- Induction - provide an induction which is carefully planned
- Control measures - make sure the control measures to protect against risk are up to date and are being properly used and maintained
- Information - provide relevant information, instruction and training
- Supervision - provide adequate supervision to avoid problems due to unfamiliarity and inexperience
- Check understanding - check workers have understood the information, instruction and training

A factsheet with more details about these six steps plus useful information and guidance for employers and employees is available for download: [Factsheet - New to the job](#)

Find out more about the New to the Job scheme by visiting the HSENI website: www.hseni.gov.uk/newtothejob

ENDS///

For media enquires please contact HSENI Press Office on 028 9024 3249 or email: <mailto:media@hseni.gov.uk>

For out of office hours please contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 076 9971 5440 and your call will be returned.

Notes to editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (GB) has produced figures to show the higher risk of having an accident for new starters, compared to those who have been working for longer: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/vulnerable-workers/new-to-the-job.htm>
2. The Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body, sponsored by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.
3. HSENI is the lead body responsible for the promotion and enforcement of health and safety at work standards in Northern Ireland.