

Health and Safety Audit and Report

Officers' Recommendation

That Members note the content of the Health and Safety Report

Background

Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA) recognises its responsibilities for making appropriate provisions and sufficient funds for the Health and Safety of its employees. It is therefore the policy of D&S IFCA to conduct its operations in such a manner as to secure Health and Safety for its employees and to protect members of the public who may be affected. It is the responsibility of D&S IFCA through its employees, to provide and maintain measures which will ensure that every employee can carry out their duties in a safe environment without risk to health. Equally, it is the duty of each employee to co-operate with the management in regard to Health and Safety matters. D&S IFCA expects each employee to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, to prevent accidents and avoid hazards to health.

D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy, and accompanying organisational arrangements, will contribute to D&S IFCA's overall ability to fulfil its duties and responsibilities by reducing injuries and ill health at work, both to employees and to any other persons who may be affected by their employees' acts or omissions. These measures will protect the environment and reduce unnecessary losses and liabilities.

To achieve this, D&S IFCA will:

- i) Set and maintain high standards for Health and Safety by controlling workplace hazards by assessing risks and establishing risk control measures which are suitable and sufficient;
- ii) Ensure that all employees are informed of these standards, by providing adequate and appropriate facilities for communication and consultation;
- iii) Ensure that employees understand their responsibilities at whatever level they operate and discharge them with care; and
- iv) Provide adequate levels of training and instruction to ensure that employees are competent to carry out their duties;

As part of the Health and Safety work of D&S IFCA, the appointment of two key roles was implemented in 2021. The Chief Officer is the Health and Safety Responsible Person, and the Deputy Chief Officer is the Duty Holder.

The Responsible Person bears responsibility for the overall arrangements, and for ensuring that the operations of D&S IFCA are executed at all times in such a manner as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health and Safety at work of all employees and all persons likely to be affected by its operations. The Responsible Person, under D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy, will advise the Authority Members on safety, health and welfare matters and issue an annual report to the Full Authority.

The Duty Holder ensures that all risk assessments and safe working practices are in place to ensure safety of employees, and reviews policies and procedures and ensures that employees are aware of and fulfil their safety responsibilities.

Health and Safety Report 2023/2024

In March 2023 an in-depth Health and Safety Audit was undertaken by Peninsula, D&S IFCA's external provider. The Audit Report from the visit in 2023 showed that all aspects of D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Management, documentation, policies, and procedures were satisfactory. Two areas were actioned within the Audit report, and these related to assessments of radon gas and asbestos in the premises. These two areas are part of the responsibilities of the University of Plymouth, who is the landlord of the Brixham Laboratory site. D&S IFCA did not, at the time of the Audit, have access to these reports and has since been in touch with the University of Plymouth Brixham Laboratory Site Manager who has provided the required documents and proof of the assessments undertaken. The Deputy Chief Officer informed the Health and Safety Auditor that the University of Plymouth has undertaken these assessments and the survey reports for the site are now available to D&S IFCA.

The Annual Health and Safety visit by Peninsula personnel in 2024 gave an opportunity to show that all documentation was in place and a check of all the Health and Safety documentation was undertaken. All processes were reviewed, and the Peninsula personnel applauded the systems in place. The Accident Incident and Near Miss (AINM) reporting system was reviewed and found to be appropriate and comprehensive. A suggestion to add a tick box in the reporting form completed by the Duty Holder to indicate whether the Accident was required to be reported under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) was made and has been implemented. Additional review forms were provided by Peninsula after the Annual Visit which included check lists to review Health and Safety processes internally. These will be reviewed at six monthly intervals. Health and Safety documents are currently reviewed regularly, as and when necessary, and are provided to D&S IFCA's officers. Officers are required to read, sign and notify the Duty Holder that Health and Safety documents have been read and understood. Risk assessments are also reviewed as and when required, and all officers are able to input into these Risk Assessments. All officers must inform the Duty Holder that they have read the Risk Assessments, and an audit spreadsheet is kept and updated. The Risk Assessments are also held on the D&S IFCA's website Members' area so that they can be accessed by officers when out of the office.

Since March 2023 the following Risk Assessments have been reviewed:

- RA6 Towing Trailers and Launching and Recovery of D&S IFCA Vessels
- RA2 Inspection of Vessels and Gear at Port
- RA12 Surveys on Board Fishing Vessels
- RA18 Lone Working Risk Assessment
- RA 20 Fire Risk Assessment

From April 2023 to March 2024 nine AINM have been reported and relevant forms completed. These were all minor in nature, six involving D&S IFCA's assets and three relating to minor scratches to officers' hands. Reporting under RIDDOR was not required. Post AINM investigation debriefs have taken place so that lessons can be learned and where necessary review of procedures and risk assessments have taken place.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers

Health and Safety Audit Report 20th March 2023

D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy v1.4 9th January 2022