



BEST in Horticulture Group
B.E.S.T in Horticulture Limited
The Academy of Practical Horticulture Limited
BEST in Horticulture Education Limited

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Valid from 1st January 2022 – 31st December 2025

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HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The organisation manages health and safety in accordance with the HSE document HSG 65, 'Successful Health and Safety Management' <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg65.htm> and this Health and Safety Policy reflects this.

Any reference to an Act or Regulation contained in this document includes the principle legislation and any relevant amendment

1.0 Health and Safety Policy Statement

B.E.S.T in Horticulture Group consists of three companies, they are:

- **Academy of Practical Horticulture Limited** - Delivering practical skills to gardeners and professional horticulturists



- **B.E.S.T. in Horticulture Limited** - Delivering fully supported distance and blended learning in horticulture



- **B.E.S.T. in Horticulture Education Limited** - Delivering the best in horticultural education and learning.



(Hereafter referred to as the organisation) is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for its learners, lecturing staff and anyone who may be affected by the organisation's activities.

This statement applies to all premises and activities within the control of the organisation. The overall responsibility for Health and Safety lies with the Directors who will ensure that the policy is effectively implemented.

To achieve it aims the organisation has the following objectives:

1. As an absolute minimum, to comply with legislative requirements
2. To identify potential hazards and assess the risks, recording the findings, implement suitable control measures and inform all parties identified at risk
3. To ensure that learners receive appropriate instruction, training and supervision and that activities are carried out without unacceptable risk to themselves or others
4. To consult with the Health and Safety Executive or qualified advisor on all Health and Safety matters beyond the training undertaken by the Directors
5. To promote the involvement of learners and lecturing staff in the identification of hazards and the assessment of risks in connection with all activities undertaken
6. To make arrangements with third parties for the health safety and welfare of all parties on shared premises; in shared facilities or during joint activities

7. To safeguard the environment minimising the impact from all of the organisation's activities wherever reasonably practicable
8. To monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and hazard and risk evaluation and where identified make improvements.

Whilst the Organisation accepts the main responsibility for implementation of this policy it expects as a minimum for individuals to fulfil their obligations under current legislation and to cooperate with those responsible to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment for all.

This Policy is available for inspection upon request. Copies of all Hazard and Risk Assessments are provided to all lecturing staff and are also available at all premises where the Organisation operates.

Signed:

A. N. Davies, Director
Date: 2nd Jan 2022

Signed:

J. M. Prescott, Director
Date: 2nd Jan 2022

2.0 Organisation of Health and Safety Responsibilities

2.1.1 Responsibilities of the Directors

Overall responsibility for Health and Safety resides with the Directors as the most senior members of the Organisation although the duty to manage health and safety is delegated to Lecturers who have responsibility for individual groups of learners.

The Directors are responsible for Health and Safety are responsible for determining the Health and Safety objectives of the Organisation.

The nominated Director is responsible for reviewing the performance of the Organisation's health and safety provision. For the period commencing 1st January 2022 ending 31st December 2025 the nominated Director is **A. N. Davies**.

2.1.2 Responsibilities of all Employees (In this case specifically Lecturers):-

Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act imposes general duties on every employee at work:

- To take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- As regards any duty or requirements imposed on their employer, to co-operate with them so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with'. i.e. to comply with the Companies Health and Safety Policy and Procedures e.g. to report any accidents, illnesses, near misses, hazards and modifiable diseases to the nominated Director

Section 8 of the Health and Safety at Work Act imposes a duty on everyone:

- 'No one shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided on the interests of health, safety or welfare in order to satisfy any of the relevant statutory provisions'.

2.2 Management of Health and Safety

2.2.1 Competence

Competent advice on health & safety matters is available from the HSE or nominated Director

Directors will ensure that their Lecturers are competent, i.e., have the knowledge and experience required to carry out their role safely and without harm to themselves or others.

Lecturer's carrying out specified high risk work activities will be identified and the nominated Director will ensure that such staff are authorised by the Organisation to carry out the activities, before permitting them to be carried out on the Companies behalf.

2.2.2 Control

Appropriate precautionary measures will be taken by the nominated Director to minimise significant risks to the health and safety of Lecturers students and others who could be affected. Lecturers, students and others will not be exposed to sources of imminent danger.

The nominated Director will seek to ensure that statutory requirements are met by the formulation, implementation and development of the policy and procedures, together with the setting of objectives and performance standards.

Risk assessment techniques will be used to confirm that arrangements for risk control are appropriate. Appropriate action will be taken at Director Level to underpin this commitment. The Organisation recognises the contribution that Lecturers and Learners can make to the implementation of the policy by allocating responsibilities and securing commitment.

2.2.3 Co-operation

Under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations the Organisation is required to have arrangements in place to enable the consultation and communication of health and safety issues with its employees.

The Organisation will meet this requirement through appropriate measures including meetings which includes the Directors and representatives of Lecturers and Learners and if necessary, specialist Health and Safety Advisors. The Directors will be proactive in implementing monitoring arrangements e.g., workplace inspections.

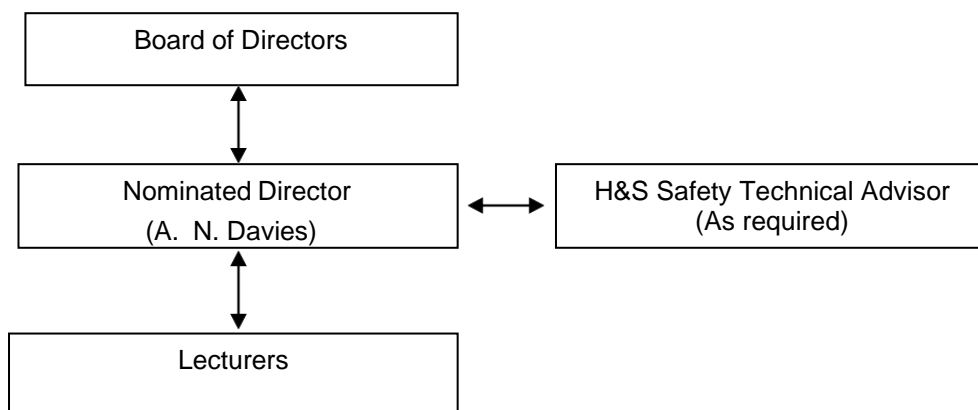
Safe working procedures will be agreed and implemented, following normal consultation, at all levels.

2.2.4 Communication

Health and safety information will be kept current on the Companies computers and copies of all relevant documentation will be placed at all sites where the organisation operate. Paper copies will be made available on request.

Communication is considered a vital part of any efficient health and safety management system. Therefore, any Lecturer or Learner may directly approach the nominated Director on matters relating to health and safety, either directly or via any appropriate means. Hazards may be reported confidentially in writing addressed to the nominated Director at the Registered Office of the Organisation. Incidents should be reported using the appropriate method depending on their severity.

2.2.5 Health and safety management structure



3.0 Arrangements for the Implementation of Health and Safety Policy

3.1 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a statutory requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. Under these Regulations, The Organisation is required to carry out a 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of the significant risks to the health and safety of employees (Lecturing Staff). There is also a requirement to carry out an assessment of the risks to 'others affected by the Organisation's activities' which would include Learners, Visitors and other.

Legislation also requires that the risk assessment process should specifically address risks to discrete groups such as 'women of childbearing age' and 'young persons'.

These requirements are implemented by compliance with the Risk Assessment Guidance and using the specified proforma which can be obtained upon request to the nominated Director

3.0.1 Personal Safety and Lone Working

The hazards associated with the personal safety of individuals will be included within the relevant risk assessments particularly where a significant amount of time is spent lone working or at a distance from the Organisation site(s) Guidance on Personal Safety is available from the nominated Director.

3.0.2 Manual Handling

Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations, there is a statutory requirement to avoid the need for manual handling operations where there is a risk of injury. Therefore the primary consideration of the Organisation is to avoid, if reasonably practicable, manual lifting of loads.

If it is not possible to avoid manual handling, the risk assessment carried out will identify the control measures required to reduce the risk of injury. This may include training and / or the provision of suitable equipment.

3.0.3 Individual Risk Assessment

Risk assessments specific to individual Lecturers and / or Learners will be carried out if the capabilities and / or competence of such staff or students do not meet the criteria for competence / capability under which the generic risk assessment for an activity, was carried out e.g. for staff returning to work following absence owing to injury. For guidance refer to the nominated Director.

As part of an Individual Risk Assessment it may be appropriate to consider specific issues that might arise as a result of a medical issue or a disability, particularly where assistance would be required to evacuate the premises. A Medical Protocol and /or a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan may be required.

a) Medical Protocol

In situations where an individual may require assistance or support as a result of a medical issue it will be appropriate for Lecturers (for Learners) managers to agree with the individual, and perhaps other relevant persons, a medical protocol. Guidance is available from the nominated Director.

b) Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

In situations where an individual may require assistance or support in order to evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency, a plan will be agreed. Guidance is available from the nominated Director.

3.0.4 New and Expectant Mothers

The nominated Director will issue guidance on the hazards that may affect the health and safety of new or expectant mothers. The guidance 'New and Expectant Mothers at Work' available to download from at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg373.pdf> will be used to implement procedures. The nominated Director will carry out the risk assessment which will be made available (with consent) to Lecturing staff responsible for the expectant mother.

3.0.5 Young Persons

Health and safety law defines a 'young person' as anyone under eighteen years of age. Risk assessment for an activity undertaken by a 'young person' must be suitable and sufficient to take into account additional risk as a result of youth eg as a result of lack of experience, competence etc. Guidance is available on the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/law/index.htm>

3.0.6 Workstation Assessment

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, require a risk assessment of the workstations of DSE 'users' to be carried out and appropriate measures put in place to reduce the risks identified in the assessment.

DSE 'users' will be identified at their recruitment to the Organisation and will be provided, by the nominated Director, with a leaflet entitled 'Working with Display Screens - An Employee's Guide' <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>. This leaflet sets out the arrangements for complying with the Regulations. The nominated Director will provide advice on the mechanism for 'users' to obtain their entitlement to eye and eyesight tests and an assessment of their workstation.

3.1 Hazardous Materials

3.1.1 Hazardous Substances

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) Regulations, place a requirement on the Organisation to carry out an assessment of the risks associated with the use of, or contact with, hazardous substances and to implement appropriate risk control measures to reduce or otherwise control the risks to the health of its Lecturers and Learners before any work involving hazardous substances is undertaken. Storage and disposal of hazardous substances is subject to Environment Agency legislation. The Organisation's procedures are available from the nominated Director.

3.1.2 Working Outdoors (Exposure to 'Natural' UV Radiation)

The risks to those Lecturers and Learners who are exposed to high levels of UV radiation from the sun will be taken into account in the risk assessments for such outdoor activities.

3.2 Work Equipment

3.2.1 The selection, use, maintenance and disposal of Work Equipment

Work equipment is classified as any item of equipment used for work and can range from simple tools to very complex machinery.

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) is the most relevant, but not the only legislation applicable, and requires the Organisation to have arrangements in place for the selection of suitable work equipment and for its use and maintenance so that it is safe to use and remains in safe condition.

It is a requirement that those using the equipment are competent to do so and, in some cases, also certificated as competent. The nominated Director has arrangements in place to ensure that Lecturers using work equipment are competent and, where necessary, certificated and authorised by the Organisation to do so.

Some, potentially high risk, items of work equipment / machinery are required, under statute, to undergo periodic inspection by a competent person. Arrangements, managed by the nominated Director, are in place for the statutory inspection of all such items.

Arrangements are in place to ensure, so far as is practicable, the electrical safety of mains powered portable electrical appliances which are tested in accordance with an agreed schedule. Arrangements, managed by nominated Director are in place for the Portable Appliance Testing of all such items by a specialist contractor.

3.2.2 Noise

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations came into force for all industry sectors in Great Britain on 6 April 2006 (except for the music and entertainment sectors where they came into force on 6 April 2008).

The Organisation is required to have arrangements in place to ensure that Lecturers and Learners hearing is protected from excessive noise in their learning environment, which could cause them to lose their hearing and/or to suffer from tinnitus (permanent ringing in the ears).

Through risk assessment, the Organisation has identified activities where there is exposure to significant levels of noise and has put arrangements in place for the protection of the hearing of its Lecturers and Learners who may be affected.

3.2.3 Vibration

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations requires that the Organisation has arrangements in place to protect the health of its Lecturers and Learners from vibration arising from the use of relevant equipment. Through risk assessment, the Organisation has identified the activities where there is a risk of exposure to significant levels of vibration and will put appropriate arrangements in place for the protection of Lecturers and Learners.

3.2.4 Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing (PPE/C)

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations require the Organisation to have arrangements in place for the supply, to Lecturers and Learners of suitable PPE/C. The arrangements also include the maintenance and clean storage of PPE/C and adequate and appropriate information and training in its use.

The Organisation arrangements (including The Selection, Purchase, Use, Maintenance And Replacement Of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).are contained in the Work Equipment Procedures available from the nominated Director.

3.3 First Aid

Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations, the Organisation is required to provideadequate and appropriate equipment and resources for the administration of first aid.

Appropriate first aid kits are kept at all of the Companies' sites.

The Directors and/or Lecturers will assess the level of need in their area of responsibility, for first aid equipment and first aid trained staff and will ensure that there is an adequate level of provision relative to the activities taking place. Guidance on this review process is available from the nominated Director.

First Aid qualified Reception and other staff will provide first aid cover across communal areas of the Centres.

The 'Procedures for First Aid, Accident Reporting and Investigation and other Medical Issues' are available from the nominated Director.

3.4 Accident Reporting and Investigation

Under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR),all accidents must be reported including minor injuries, near-miss accidents, work-related illness and dangerous occurrences. Procedures are in place for the reporting and investigation of accidents. These are available on request from the nominated Director.

Any area of the premises where an injury has occurred will immediately be made safe including controlling access to, or containment of, the scene, as required.

As required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, procedures are also in place for the reporting of specific types of accidents to the Enforcing Authority (i.e. the Health and Safety Executive),

As required under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, reportable accidents are investigated. Other accidents may also be investigated. In both cases the aim of the investigation is to identify the immediate and rootcause in order that the responsible manager can identify and implement actions to preventrecurrence.

Procedures are also in place for the reporting of RIDDOR reportable accidents, and the outcome of the investigation, to the relevant funding body as required by the funding contract and to the Governing Body.

The 'Procedures for First Aid, Accident Reporting and Investigation and other Medical Issues' are available from the nominated Director.

3.5 Premises Management

3.5.1 Fire Risk Assessments

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (FSO) came into effect in October 2006. Under the FSO, the responsible person must carry out a fire safety risk assessment and implement and maintain a fire management plan.

The assessments which have been carried out for Garden Organic are available from the Management Team. Pay particular attention to the provision and maintenance of appropriate fire detection systems, fire fighting equipment and safe means of escape.

The role of the Management Team will be to implement and maintain a fire action plan, to monitor compliance and to ensure that Employees (of Coventry University – the main site), Lecturers and Learners know what action to take in the event of an evacuation.

Procedures for action in the event of emergency evacuation from all sites operated by the Organisation will be communicated to all Lecturers and Learners.

Lecturers working at premises owned or managed by other parties, are asked to ensure that they are aware of the local emergency arrangements.

3.5.2 Smoking

On July 1st 2007, England introduced legislation to make virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England smoke free to ensure a healthier environment, so that everyone can work free from second hand smoke.

The Organisation has designated areas on each of its sites as smoking areas. Lecturers and Learners as well as Visitors are advised of the location of these areas through the distribution of maps and signage. Arrangements are in place to prevent smoking outside these designated areas.

3.5.3 Control of Contractors

The Organisation has procedures in place to ensure that contractors carrying out work on the Organisation's premises are competent to do so. In addition the process ensures they are made aware of hazards to which they may be exposed and the Organisation safety management systems. Directors and or Lecturers who arrange for contractors to carry out work are responsible for ensuring the competence and compliance of the contractors they employ.

The procedures are available from the nominated Director.

3.5.4 Asbestos Management

The Control of Asbestos Regulations requires the owner of the building(s) to have arrangements in place for the identification, management and disposal of Asbestos on its sites. These are the responsibility of the owners in the case of Garden Organic, The Trustees of the Charity.

3.5.5 Water Systems Management

There is a requirement under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to have arrangements in place to effectively manage water systems in order to reduce the likelihood of infection eg by Legionella. These are the responsibility of the owners in the case of Garden Organic, The Trustees of the Charity.

3.5.6 Transport Management

The Procedures relating to the use of Organisation and privately owned vehicles used for work from the nominated Director.

3.5.7 Managing Events and Occupiers Liability

In order to ensure compliance with legislative requirements e.g., those hiring premises are made aware of hazards to which they may be exposed. These are the responsibility of the owners in the case of Coventry University and for garden organic, The Trustees of the Charity.

3.6 Staff Training

Health and Safety training for specific and general health and safety risks, and training for specific Lecturers is provided by the nominated Director upon request.

3.7 Health Surveillance and assessment

Lecturers are requested to provide health information at appointment. The nominated Director will identify any further measures required which may include input by the Occupational Health Service.

3.8 Educational Visits

In addition to the legislative requirements placed on it, the Organisation complies with guidance provided by other authoritative bodies. The Organisation procedures for Educational Visits have been agreed and are available from the nominated Director.

3.8.2 Work Placement and Work-Based Learning

Learners do not undertake a period of work placement as part of the courses offered by the Organisation.

3.9 Measuring Performance

The Organisation's Health and Safety Performance will be measured using a combination of proactive and reactive measures, for example, workplace inspections, safety sampling, safety tours and accident statistics.

3.9.1 Proactive Monitoring

a) Workplace Inspection

An annual schedule of workplace inspections will be agreed to include all high and medium risk areas. The workplace inspection team will include the nominated Director, The Lecturer who has responsibility for the area. In addition, representatives of learners, and The Board of Directors will be invited to participate.

A report will be produced and an action plan, to address any issues of concern, will be agreed and implemented by nominated Director.

Any issues identified which are relevant to other areas that the organisation uses will be discussed by the nominated Director and other stakeholders who will agree what action is required.

b) Hazard reporting

In order to avoid accidents and loss, it is essential that all faults or concerns are reported to the nominated Director in order that action can be taken. Premises and similar faults can be reported to the owners of the building. E.g. premises manager.

c) Environmental Monitoring

A schedule of environmental monitoring to determine levels of noise, dust and fume and vibration has been agreed with the owners of the buildings and is referred to (where appropriate) in the Hazard and Risk Assessments.

3.9.2 Reactive Monitoring

a) Accident Reporting

As part of the monitoring arrangements the nominated Director will be responsible for analysing the information collected via the accident reporting system.

The nominated Director has the responsibility for entering any details into the Accident Statistics Database using the information from the Accident Report Forms and any subsequent investigation in order to:

- enable the reporting of RIDDOR reportable incidents to the Enforcement Authority (HSE) as required.
- monitor and provide information about hazards (unsafe acts or unsafe conditions) which have the potential to cause loss.
- enable the nominated Director or Lecturer responsible to identify and implement corrective or remedial, action in order to prevent future loss.
- carry out reactive monitoring and any Lecturers responsible in order to set targets for reduction.

b) Incident Reporting

There is an obligation to report, investigate and keep a record of incidents causing injury, dangerous occurrences and occupational disease or ill health. The Organisation recognises its responsibilities to introduce effective risk management systems and to implement health & safety legislation. The Organisation accepts that the prompt and accurate reporting of all accidents, incidents and hazards is essential so that it may identify where Learners, Lecturers, Visitors and Contractors are exposed to risk and to plan for their prevention and reduction.

A proforma is available in hard and electronic copy for the reporting of Incidents from the nominated Director.

Hazards can also be reported confidentially using email or in writing. This process ensures investigation and action by the nominated Director.

3.10 Reviewing Performance

The Organisation will use the information obtained through its monitoring procedures to review its arrangements and to set standards to improve Health and Safety Performance.

Learners and Lecturers are encouraged to report unplanned events that indicate shortcomings in risk control. Investigations shall be carried out and action taken to correct unsafe situations and to prevent further unplanned events.

Lecturers will be responsible for reviewing the Health and Safety Performance of their area of responsibility as issues arise, as part of their team meetings and as part of their quality review processes must be reported to the nominated Director.

The Organisation will review the Health and Safety arrangements through the meetings of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors will produce an annual report if there are any reportable accidents. The report will contain: -

- The Health and Safety Improvement Plan and objectives for the coming year.
- A review of Health and Safety Policy implementation and any suggested changes to the policy statement.
- A review of the Organisation's accident statistics for the previous year.
- A review of the Organisation's monitoring activities, for example, workplace inspections and audits over the previous year.
- A review of any major changes to Health and Safety legislation and the likely implications for the Organisation.

3.11 Audit

In addition to the above, the Organisation will undertake an audit of its Health and Safety arrangements periodically. The auditing process will be used to assess the effectiveness of the Organisation's arrangements for health and safety.

3.11.1. Internal audit

Health and safety is subject to a periodic audit on a topic determined by the Board of Directors. Compliance with policy and standards shall be audited and reported against the health & safety management standards.

Appendix 1 – Organisation’s Health and Safety Committee (consisting of the Board of Directors) Terms of Reference

Purpose

The group reviews of all Organisation’s Health and Safety and safeguarding issues:

Review of the relevant arrangements in place to ensure the effective management of health and safety across the Organisation’s premises, including approving safety policies and procedures (arrangements) to:

- **fulfil statutory and legal obligations.**
- **ensure the health and safety of Learners, Lecturers and Visitors whilst on Organisation premises or elsewhere engaged in Organisation activities.**

Monitoring the implementation and review of the arrangements for health and safety and their effectiveness by the examination of:

- **The causes of accidents and incidents which have occurred, making recommendations for changes in policy and procedure as appropriate.**
- **Internal and external inspection and audit reports and ensuring that appropriate actions are being implemented.**
- **Reports and factual information provided by inspectors of enforcing authorities making recommendations for changes in policy and procedure as appropriate.**
- **The causes of ill-health that have occurred**
- **Address causes for concern**
- **Consider other items the Committee considers relevant**

Membership

Director 1 – A. N. Davies

Director 2 – J. M. Prescott

H& S Advisor (as nominated)

One Lecturer

One Learner Representative

Quorum of 5 members required

Note: Legislation does require inclusion of Union Representatives and employee elected representatives, in addition to specific individuals with relevant expertise.

Agenda

1. Update on Policy and Procedures (Nominated Director).
2. Consideration of reports and recommendations (by specialist Advisors).
3. Review process for workplace inspection and environmental monitoring.
4. Monitoring arrangements (report on arrangements and data by Nominated Director) including e.g.
 - Accidents, incidents, incidents of ill health and sickness absence
 - Inspection and audit reports
 - Environmental monitoring
5. Review of the adequacy and effectiveness of Health and Safety Training
6. Nominated Directors report on:
 - changes to working practice e.g. introduction of new course or equipment
 - the outcome of accidents, incidents etc
 - the outcome of Inspection, environmental monitoring or audits
 - Other highlighted Health and Safety Issues
7. Health and Safety Communication
8. Equality & Diversity Impact

Frequency

The Committee will normally meet once a year, only if there has been a reportable accident. However, meetings will be held as necessary to address urgent business.

The Committee meeting will last no more than 1hr

Conduct of meetings

The nominated Director will prepare and submit reports to the Board of Directors and other Stakeholders two weeks prior to the meeting for consideration and response by members.

All stakeholders will submit agenda and associated papers to the Chair for agreement no later than 10am 7 days preceding the meeting.

All papers will be circulated electronically, and any consultation paper will be circulated within a reasonable timescale to facilitate local consultation ahead of consideration at the meeting.

Tabled papers will be permitted where advance circulation is unavoidable.

Extra-ordinary meetings will be convened at the request of the Chair.

Minutes

1. Decisions, key points, and actions will be noted in the minutes
2. The minutes of the meeting shall be approved by the Chair
3. Minutes shall be circulated to all members within two weeks of the meeting.
4. Approved minutes will be made available to staff through the Intranet.

Follow up

The implementation of actions arising from the discussions/decisions shall be the responsibility of the appropriate member of the Board of Directors, who, where necessary, will task individuals to ensure actions are implemented.

At each meeting, progress on decisions and actions will be reported by the responsible member.