

This report may be of interest to: Members of the Health and Safety Forum

EMPLOYEE INCIDENT STATISTICS FOR 1999

Accountable Officer: B Bithell (Head of Human Resources)

Authors: L Piascik (Senior Health and Safety Officer) - MK 253839

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to the Council a brief review of the reported incidents (accidents and other types of incident, such as aggression and violence) relating to employees for the year ending December 1999.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The annual report for 1999 shows an increase of 37% in the number of reported incidents over the previous year. The possible causes of this increase are set out in section 5.1, but it is likely that it is mainly due to under-reporting in the previous year.
- 2.2 The annual incidence rate and number of lost time incidents also increased. However, the total number of working days lost as a result of a work related incident decreased by 6%.
- 2.3 The number of incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting Regulations was 36, an increase of 1 over the previous year.
- 2.4 The most common type of reported incidents were incidents of aggression and violence (308 - 43%). Of these 180 resulted in physical injury to staff , usually of a minor nature
- 2.5 Of the incidents reported, 32% occurred in schools and nurseries.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Health and Safety Team at Saxon Court actively monitors accidents and other incidents involving Council employees. It receives reports, carries out appropriate investigations, records the details and produces statistical information, including an annual summary, relating to these.

The annual summary of incident statistics for 1999 is attached as an **Annex** to this report.

3.2 The corporate performance standard for incident investigations requires all incidents to be investigated within five working days from the receipt of a completed report form. Serious incidents are investigated as soon as possible.

3.3 For all reported incidents, an investigation report is sent to the relevant manager detailing appropriate remedial measures, and giving advice for minimising the risks to staff and improving procedures for the future.

4.0 Review of annual incident statistics

4.1 The number of reported incidents increased by 37% in 1999. The reasons for this are not absolutely clear, but are likely to be one or more of the following:

- (a) more incidents being reported by employees as a result of increasing awareness of Council procedures.
- (b) more incidents occurring; this is the least likely as there has not been a significant change in the Council's undertaking or in the numbers of staff employed.
- (c) poor data management for the year 1998 due to organisational and staff changes within Human Resources and Health and Safety resulting in an underestimate of the figures for 1998.

4.2 The Health and Safety Team actively promotes the reporting of all incidents through publicity and training and will continue to monitor the trends in incident reporting over forthcoming years.

4.3 Considerable efforts have, and continue to be made, to improve the monitoring of Council workplaces to ensure that remedial measures are put in place to minimise the risks to employees and non-employees.

4.4 The cost of incidents to employees, particularly those causing injury and time off work can be significant. However, it is not possible at present to determine these costs in detail. The estimated cost is £17,000, based on the salary costs for the middle of MK5 (spinal point 22) of 1 day off work. It does not include the costs of investigation, equipment/property loss and other consequential costs.

4.5 It is expected that once the Open Door personnel system is in place, accurate information on time off as a result of a work-related injury will be more readily available.

4.6 Of the 308 aggression and violence incidents reported, 180 resulted in physical injury to staff, usually of a minor nature. 1 incident was reportable to the Health and Safety Executive and 21 working days were reported as being lost as a result of such incidents.

- 4.7 A large number of the reported incidents of aggression and violence occur in special schools and residential and day care centres, often caused by a small number of disruptive individuals.
- 4.8 The Health and Safety Team is working with managers to deal with the problem of aggression and violence at work by encouraging the reporting of all incidents and recommending appropriate remedial action. In many cases risk assessments were reviewed, staff were provided with training and counselling, and behaviour strategies put in place.

5.0 Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The Council has a duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions. This includes a duty to minimise the health and safety risks to its employees and to other persons, who are not employees, but who use its premises or may be affected by the way it carries out its undertaking.
- 5.2 The Health and Safety Team will continue to monitor and report on incidents. Regular, six-monthly, reports will be made to Directorate Management Teams and the Business Management Programme Group, highlighting areas where improvement in performance is necessary.
- 5.3 Managers and employees will continue to be supported through training and advice to enable them to fulfil their health and safety obligations.

6.0 Implications

6.1 Environmental

None.

6.2 Equalities

The Council's policy on incident reporting applies to all Council employees.

6.3 Financial

The cost of incidents to employees, particularly those causing injury can be significant.

6.4 Legal

The Council has a duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

The Council has a duty to minimise the health and safety risks to its employees, as well as ensuring the safety of premises within its control.

Background Papers: None notified by the author