



**NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT
RESEARCH COUNCIL**

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTION

Preamble

1. The creation of consultative machinery in the Natural Environment Research Council ("Council") specifically for the discussion of safety matters is in keeping with the spirit of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and complies with the requirements of the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977. This constitution has been drawn up to establish membership, procedures and terms of reference and will be revised from time to time if considered necessary.

Membership

2. The Council Health and Safety Committee (the Committee) shall consist of a maximum of 23 members. A maximum of 13 members may be appointed by Council, which will include the current Council safety adviser, one full-time and one part-time local safety adviser who shall be members ex-officio. The Council members will include a senior manager with special responsibility for safety representing each of the following units: BAS, BGS, CEH, NERC Units, PML, POL, SAMS, NOCS, Swindon Office. A maximum of 10 members may be appointed from amongst union members employed by Council, by trades unions (the Unions) which are recognised independent trades unions as defined by the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1974 and the Employment Protection Act 1975.
3. Council and the Unions may vary their representatives. Casual vacancies may be filled in the same way as the original appointments. Where a representative cannot attend a meeting of the Committee, an accredited deputy may be appointed.
4. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by the Chief Executive of the Council and will normally be the Director of Swindon Office or such other senior executive as he/she may nominate. The Vice-Chair shall be appointed from among members of the Unions.
5. The Chair of the Committee shall appoint a secretary who will not be a member of the Committee.
6. The power to co-opt members to the Committee as considered necessary and appropriate, shall be vested in the Chair and Vice-Chair respectively.

Procedures

7. A quorum shall be four members from each side of the Committee.
8. The Committee shall hold meetings as often as necessary and not less than twice a year. An agenda shall be circulated to all members not less than ten days before the meetings of the Committee.

9. Business not on the agenda shall be taken only with the permission of the Chair and Vice-Chair. A special meeting of the Committee may be called by the Chair on his/her own initiative or at the request of the Vice-Chair. The business to be discussed at such meetings shall be limited to matters stated upon the notice summoning the meeting.

Terms of Reference

10. The Committee's terms of reference shall be:
 - 10.1 to receive and consider regular reports (normally every 6 months) from the Council safety adviser including safety audit reports.
 - 10.2 to review the adequacy of safety training and supervision, and the supply of information
 - 10.3 to consider accident statistics and make recommendations for remedial action where necessary
 - 10.4 to consider the work of the Safety Management Group
 - 10.5 to consider procedures produced by the safety management group and endorse them if found acceptable
11. The Chair of the Committee shall be responsible to the Chief Executive of Council and shall, at the request of the Committee or at such other times as he/she deems necessary, report to the Chief Executive of Council.

Powers

12. The Committee may:
 - 12.1 advise the Chief Executive of Council on matters of safety policy
 - 12.2 examine safety audit reports and make recommendations for remedial action where necessary
 - 12.3 assist in the development of guidance notes, codes of practice and safe systems of work
 - 12.4 provide a link with the inspectorate of the enforcing authorities (the Health and Safety Executive or local authority) by reviewing recommendations in inspectors reports and discussing any Enforcement Notices.
 - 12.5 review safety arrangements
 - 12.6 support the Council safety adviser in carrying out his duties
 - 12.7 set up sub-committees with specific terms of reference. The Committee may appoint to sub-committees persons who are not members of the Committee itself. Any sub-committee set up under the terms of the preceding paragraphs shall have its terms of reference settled by the Committee, to which it will report as directed.

Minutes

- 13. The Committee shall keep minutes of its proceedings. These shall be circulated to all members of the Committee and the chairs of local safety committees, and made available by display for the information of all employees of the Council.

Finances

- 14. The common expenses of the Committee shall be met from official funds.
- 15. Union representatives of the Committee shall be given special leave with pay when attending meetings of the Committee or of any sub-committee set up as described in paragraph 12.7.

Signed:
(Chief Executive of Council)

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(for the safety representatives appointed by recognised Unions)