

Safety Policy Statement

INTRODUCTION TO SOUTHWARK SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Southwark Council is committed to achieving the highest possible levels of performance in the way that health and safety activities are managed.

There are three main reasons why the Council (and all organisations) must strive towards the implementation and maintenance of an effective health and safety management system:

- i) The law imposes on employers the legal duty to provide a Safety Management System (SMS) as best illustrated in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Failure may result in prosecution.
- ii) All employers have a duty of care to their employees, customers, contractors, visitors and others who may be affected by their operations.
- iii) Good health and safety is good business, provides economic benefits and aids service delivery, if approached on a loss control basis.

Southwark Council by developing the Southwark Safety Management System (SSMS) will not only meet its legal duties but also seek to improve management performance and practices resulting in better service delivery to service users and residents.

The key elements of a successful Safety Management System have been identified by the Health and Safety Executive as:

Plan
Do
Check
Act

These key elements provide the framework for the Southwark Safety Management System as contained in the Southwark Safety Reference Manual.

The Manual comprises of the corporate Policy Statement supported by a series of mandatory Safety Directives each of which detail the approach to managing a key health and safety activity. These detail the corporate requirements for all Southwark Council employees to comply with in providing a healthy and safe working environment.

The Safety Directives are supported by Guidance Notes, providing assistance and guidance on how successful compliance may be achieved. Each Department is then required to develop their own Policy Statement(s), processes, procedures and standards to comply with corporate requirements.

A number of Guidance Notes have useful model checklists attached for Managers to customise to local circumstances. The Council's generic accident reporting form is also included.

This structured approach demonstrates Southwark Council's organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety on a cascading basis, through a hierarchy of documents and standards.

Departments developing their own management system, based on corporate requirements, can focus on managing the issues of primary importance to the safe operation of their business and have ownership of the associated risks.

In order to measure improved performance in health and safety management the Council has adopted the Quality Safety Audit (QSA) tool developed by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents. The tool is designed to reflect the Health and Safety Executive approach to successful safety management (HSG 65) and is mirrored in the structure of the Southwark Safety Management System.

Each Department will be audited on a periodic basis using the QSA tool to measure progress made.

E. Kelly
Chief Executive