

North York Moors National Park Authority Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

6 June 2016

Health and Safety

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update Members on accident and near miss statistics for 2015/16.

2. Background

2.1 Both Members and Officers are keen that Health and Safety continues to have a high priority and the following approach was agreed at the February 2014 meeting of this Committee;

- The February meeting of FRASC will be presented with a proposed action plan for the Authority's health and safety activity during the coming year;
- Progress against this action plan would then be presented to the December National Park Authority meeting, thereby enabling all Members to have an input on an annual basis. This meeting would also be provided with data regarding the number of accidents and near misses reported, as well as working days lost as a result of workplace accidents.

2.2 At the November 2015 meeting of this Committee, Members and Officers agreed that this approach would be supported by additional short papers being presented to Members at each FRASC. It was agreed that the June 2016 report should provide a more detailed analysis of the Authority's safety record and sickness absence data.

3. Accident and Near Miss Statistics 2015/16

3.1 Headline information regarding accident and time off statistics is provided in the Performance Indicator paper elsewhere on this agenda. There were 6 accidents and 2 near misses involving staff or volunteers reported in 2015/16. Details are given below;

- June 2015 – near miss when Authority vehicles were parked at the rear of the Moors Centre obscuring a mirror which provides a view of on-coming traffic. Action has been taken to ensure that staff visiting the Moors Centre park vehicles in the car park;
- September 2015 – near miss. Ranger spotted that new winches did not have appropriate kite mark to signify that they were fit for UK use. Winch use stopped until issue resolved;
- October 2015 – Volunteer collapsed while erecting a camping pod at the Moors Centre. Ambulance called to site. Related to a recently developed health condition unknown to NPA staff;
- October 2015 – apprentice discovered 2 ticks on leg after working in Dalby Forest. Previous advice about safe removal, links to NHS information and seeking medical assistance if necessary was repeated via the Health and Safety Group;
- October 2015 – Car Park Warden slipped off steps at Hutton le Hole car park and broke his arm. 52 days absence. Reported to HSE, but no further action taken. Members have previously been updated regarding actions taken by Officers to ensure that there is no repeat of a similar incident

- November 2015 – apprentice sawing a tree stake, applied pressure with final stroke of the saw and cut through trousers. Minor cut to left knee. First aid given, no lost time;
- November 2015 – Volunteer on patrol near the White Horse slipped at the top of a slope, lost footing and cut their lip. First Aid given at Sutton Bank Visitor Centre.
- January 2016 – apprentice cut finger removing packaging from a tree stake. First aid given, no lost time.

3.2 Since the end of March 2016, a further 3 accidents and 1 near miss have been reported. At the time of writing this report the accidents involving apprentices had just been reported. Although the injuries are minor, there will be further investigation into the circumstances.

- April 2016 – volunteer caught left hand in sliding door on minibus as he was shutting it. Minor cut, first aid given.
- April 2016 – near miss when a hired in tracked chipper overturned on soft ground. No injury to staff/volunteers. Incident discussed at Maintenance Ranger meeting and need to walk route looking at potential turning areas emphasised;
- May 2016 – apprentice dropped tree guard while planting and slipped down a slope as he retrieved them. Sore shoulder. 3 days lost time;
- May 2016 – apprentice cutting cable tie on tree guard cut leg. Minor injury, first aid given. No lost time.

3.3 The number of accidents reported over a 14 month period is relatively low (9 accidents) and it is difficult to make sensible judgements from this small size. Having said that, 4 of the accidents involved apprentices either installing or removing tree guards. Discussions have been held with both apprentice supervisors to highlight this trend to ensure that extra care is taken with this task. It was decided at the most recent Directors' meeting to cease use of knives for cutting cable ties on tree guards and find an alternative means of doing this work.

3.4 Targets have been agreed with each Director for the minimum number of spot checks that must be carried out on staff, volunteers and contractors. The purpose of spot checks is to support safe working practice and deal with any areas of concern before they result in an accident.

4. **Sickness Absence**

4.1 Officers are conscious that in discussion of health and safety, there is a tendency to focus on the 'safety' aspect and potentially less consideration is given to the overall health of the work force. The Staffing Update paper on this agenda covers a number of issues relating to health in more detail.

4.2 The one lost time accident in 2015/16 resulted in 52 days off work. When the individual returned to work, they were initially given lighter duties on the advice of their GP as a means of facilitating a full recovery. This didn't result in any significant operational issues and the member of staff is now fully recovered and carrying out the full range of duties associated with his job role.

5. **Comparative Statistics**

5.1 The Health and Safety Executive produces annual statistical analysis <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overall/hssh1415.pdf> in October each year. Again, it is difficult to look at some of these national trends and apply them to the Authority, although it is worth noting that the prevalence of mental health related issues is almost universally reported as the biggest contributor to sickness absence.

6. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

6.1 There are no significant financial or staff issues related to the contents of this report.

7. **Recommendation**

7.1 That Members note the detail regarding the reported accidents and near misses and make any comments on the observations on the actions taken by Officers.

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Background documents to this report

File ref.

NPA Reports, December 2013, 2014, 2015

FRASC Reports 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016

Health and Safety Executive Statistics <http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/overall/hssh1415.pdf>