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To: PPPSG Members

Dear Member

Introduction

This update is intended to bring you up to speed with PSS activity in 2010 and set the scene for 2011. At the end of 2009 the PPPSG was asked if it wished to meet. The members declined a meeting at the time and agreed that if they wished to call a meeting, they would inform PSS.

The main role of the PPPSG has been to help to drive and direct the work programme of PSS. During 2010 we have delivered on the major projects on the PPPSG's radar (see below) as well as starting new and completing additional work. This was achieved whilst maintaining our membership service provision and with a team of only two members of staff for seven months of the year, following the departure of Nigel Parfitt in February.

We have, of course also been working with individual PPPSG member organisations through our project working groups. Where PPPSG members are key stakeholders in a particular project they have been directly involved in the work. For example the HSE and UNITE have been essential partners in the Safety in Ports Guidance project, bringing ideas and content to the work. The UK Harbour Master's Association has participated on the expert panel to revise the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and to develop Harbour Master certificates of competence. Where PPPSG organisations are not direct stakeholders, we have ensured that they were included in consultation phases of projects. Consequently, we have been strongly engaged with the PPPSG in 2010, though not all in the same room at the same time.

Progress Report

The last PPPSG agenda identified eight main work projects and one item concerning the relationship between PSS, Skills for Logistics (SfL) and the Maritime Skills Alliance (MSA¹). Progress on each project is set out below.

1. Safer Ports Initiative 2

This programme was delivered at Milford Haven, Middlesbrough, Plymouth, Inverness, Hull, Aberdeen, Holyhead and Dover. It was agreed by the main stakeholders that SPI2 should be brought to a close in 2010 and a next generation programme be developed and run in 2011 to refresh and enhance the safer ports process. This new programme has the working title 'Thriving Safely in Ports' and will be launched in January.

2. Ports Foundation Degree Framework

This project was delivered and signed off by Foundation Degree Forward in 2010. The framework is publically available and providers can offer port foundation degrees in line with the approved framework.

¹ PSS is one of the founding members of the MSA which brings together port and maritime sector skills interests



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3. Health and Safety in Ports Guidance Project

This project has delivered eight; HSE approved and published sets of guidance:

SiP002	General Cargo Handling
SiP003	Containers Handling
SiP004	Timber Handling
SiP005	Mooring and Workboats
SiP006	Liquid Bulk
SiP007	Dry Bulk Cargo Handling
SiP008	Dry Bulk Cargo Storage
SiP009	Lighting

Three *Workplace Transport* documents are in production, Ports and Terminal Planning; STO-RO and RO-RO Operations and Passenger Operations. These will be delivered by the end of Q1 of 2011. The project team will meet in January to identify future document titles. This project is considered such a success by HSE that it is hosting a national event on 14 January 2011 to promote both strategic partnership working and the quality guidance that it has produced. PPPSG member organisations have been invited to attend this free event and are most welcome. If you would like to attend but have not yet confirmed your place, please contact Sharon on 020 7260 1792 for an invitation.

4. Managing Safely in Ports

The highly successful Managing Safely in Ports (MSiP) course was scheduled for an update in 2010. The update was produced by PSS and port professionals, endorsed and certificated by the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the switch to the new issue delivered according to plan. A briefing session was provided to trainers, completing the change-over programme. Version 5 is now fully operational. To date, over 760 port employees have completed MSiP.

5. Apprenticeship Framework for Port Operations

The apprenticeship framework and a new technical certificate unit were drafted, consulted on and approved. PSS members then also contributed significant assessment material to enable the awarding organisation EAL to create a centre implementation manual; necessary for effective and consistent candidate assessment. The new unit has been entered onto the national qualifications registry the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF). Disappointingly, multiple changes in apprenticeship requirements at a national level held up the approval process. Further delays have been encountered due to problems with the on-line system for loading and approving new frameworks. Completion of this process is necessary to obtain a valid course number that will then make it possible for the apprenticeship to be funded. These problems are not limited to ports and are being experienced across all sectors. PSS does not have the final say in pursuing and delivering this final stage, as government has introduced a number of restrictions on the activities of sector skills organisations. All indications are that overcoming the software problem is the final stage of making a funded port apprenticeship available and it is hoped that this will be achieved in Q1 of 2011.

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6. Sector Qualification Reform Programme (converting to Qualifications and Credit Framework)

The existing qualifications S/NVQ 2 Port Operations and S/NVQ3 Supervision of Port Operations were allowed to be extended beyond their originally expected expiry date and are now expected to be valid until April. Progress has been made in converting the NVQ2 into QCF units and a compliant version is expected to be produced for switch over when the NVQ2 expires. The NVQ3 will be converted after the NVQ2. Based on recent experience with getting qualifications onto the QCF, it is highly likely that there will be delays in getting the new qualifications loaded and accessible.

Note: The take up of SVQ 2 and 3 has been marginal (less than a half dozen in over four years) and this likely means that SQA will not extend the life of the Scottish versions of the qualification. This finding is consistent with that of the 2010 Q1 project to investigate the need for a modern apprenticeship in port operations for Scotland (see item 10 below). Broadly, the view is that the majority of Scottish ports do not find the existing multiple cargo type/generalist syllabus fits their needs. Any future qualification for Scotland will therefore need a more bespoke design approach if it is to be more successful.

7. Sector Qualifications Strategy (SQS)

The Maritime Skills Alliance (MSA) partners contributed to the production of the SQS and four-nation consultation. The SQS and its associated Skills Needs Assessment (formerly Labour Market Assessment) were delivered and signed off by UKCES in the first half of 2010.

8. Skills Network

Very promising initial work has been interrupted by changes in the funding and organisation of the vocational qualification arena. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) a key partner in the project was wound up and a different structure put into place by the previous government. This separated apprenticeships from other occupational qualifications. It also disrupted some of the connections that had been established. The uncertainty generated by public sector cost reduction has not helped to re-start the initiative. The present proposal is that we will seek to engage with the Skills for Logistics 'Academy' network through the proposed strategic relationship between MSA and SfL (see below). At least one PSS member is already involved with the Academy structure and this may provide a model for coordination of skills activity across the industry.

New Projects in 2010

9. National Occupational Standards (NOS) Review

In 2010 it was decided that a programme should be initiated to review the full suite of port NOS (Port Operations, Supervision of Port Operations, Harbour Masters, Pilotage, VTS). This began with Harbour Masters.

a. Harbour Master NOS

The initial work was undertaken by an ex-harbour master contractor and delivered in the summer. The project was overseen by an expert panel that brought together design contributions from a full spectrum of harbour organisations, sizes

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and activities. Further work was undertaken to develop 'evidence criteria' that will be used in the introduction of a Certificate of Competence that will be endorsed by the MCA. A four nation consultation has been completed for both the NOS and the evidence criteria. All PPPSG organisations were invited to participate in this consultation and over 150 port stakeholders contributed. The final version (incorporating the consultation) will be submitted to UKCES for approval in the new year.

b. Pilotage NOS

Following the success of the harbour master project, an expert panel has been set up to review the Pilotage NOS. The first meeting of this team, which includes representation from the UKMPA, will be in January 2011. It is expected that design work will be handled within-industry and that there will not be any external contracted support for this project. PSS will be the focal point for this work.

10. Modern Apprenticeship in Port Operations

PSS successfully bid to fund a study of the demand and needs for a Framework for a modern apprenticeship in port operations in Scotland. The project was delivered on time and concluded that there was no current demand for a modern apprenticeship in Scotland. The main issue was that the current SVQ upon which the MA would be based, did not fit the needs of the Scottish port industry.

11. Accident Statistics

As in previous years, an annual study of RIDDOR reportable accidents was conducted in Q1 of 2010. Additionally, in the summer of 2010 a further half-year study was undertaken. The industry had seen a record low in reportable accident levels in 2009 but was conscious that 2009 had also been a difficult trading year for many. By conducting a first half 2010 survey PSS established that the ongoing trend was still downward, despite an upturn in traffic. Members were able to take account of their own and the national benchmarks to help focus their own approaches and investments in safety. In 2011, a new working group will study the existing level and format of the data that we collect on members' behalf and look for ways of improving its usefulness to them. PSS will also run a pilot study into how to collect and use non-reportable accidents, near misses and unplanned events. The expectation is that this extra data will produce learning that will be of real value in proactively identifying hazardous activity and conditions before they become accidents. All PSS Members will be welcome to participate in this work.

12. Potential Relationship between Skills for Logistics and PSS/MSA

Changes in sector skills organisation arrangements mean that Sector Skills Bodies are no longer able to: draw funding for NOS maintenance; submit NOS to the national database or submit qualifications for approval. These services are currently provided to MSA by Skills for Justice, but that arrangement will expire in April 2011. The present plan is sign a memorandum of understanding between SfL and MSA after April 2011.

Conclusion

2011 will be a significant year for PSS. The major event on 14 January will launch an ambitious programme of work for the unit based around Thriving Safely in Ports,

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updating of qualifications and NOS, production of certificates of competence and improving services to the membership. PSS will continue to champion industry led standards and qualifications. Leading and assisting development and use of best practice safety and skills within UK ports. We look forward to your continued support for a first class, successful industry.

Richard Steele
Head of Port Skills and Safety