

		RSD Internal Guidance		RIG-2010-12	
Excellence in health and safety culture and risk control					
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Summary		This RIG introduces the concept of excellence as applied to health and safety management and risk control. It describes some of the main features of an excellent organisation and explains some of the ways we might measure progress towards excellence. It counters the myth that striving for excellent health and safety management is gold-plating or a drive to go beyond SFAIRP for health and safety reasons. This is because organisations with excellent management deliver legal compliance in an efficient way. The information will help inspectors promote the benefits of striving for excellence when they meet duty holders' senior managers.			
Original consultation		RSD director and deputy directors; John Gillespie, Stanley Hart, Claire Dickinson, Iain Ferguson			

Introduction

Our vision for the long-term success of the railways in terms of health and safety is: *zero workforce and industry caused passenger fatalities, with an ever decreasing overall safety risk. Excellence in health and safety culture and risk control in all parts of the railways* is the key safety goal of our corporate strategy 2009 – 14.

This RGD gives a definition of excellence and expands on its relevance to health and safety risk management, alongside wider industry business risks.

Definition of excellence

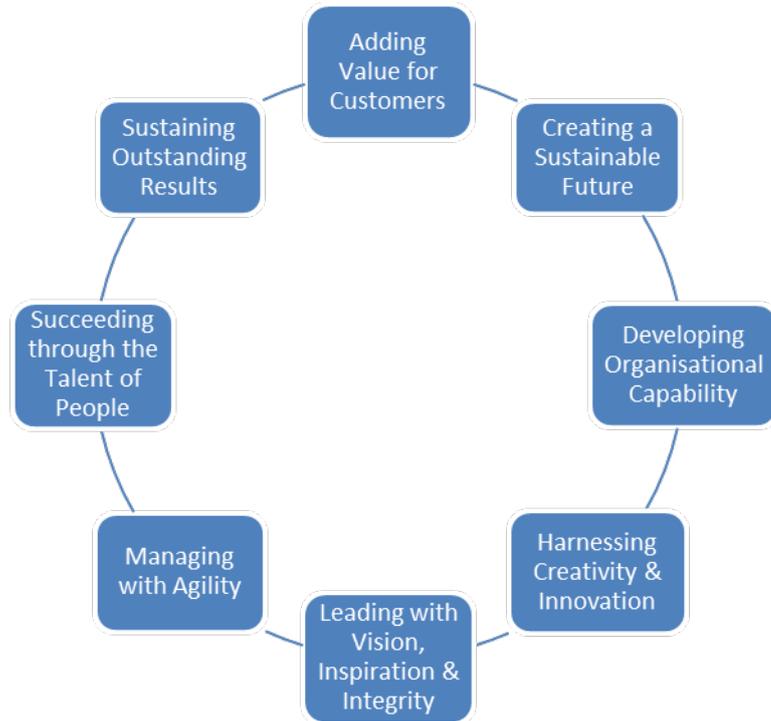
1. Whilst excellence is not a term defined in health and safety legislation, it is a concept used widely in business management. The European Foundation for Quality Management¹ (EFQM) defines truly excellent organisations as those that: *“strive to satisfy their stakeholders by what they achieve, how they achieve it and what they are likely to achieve.”*

2. Excellence relates to the tangible achievements of an organisation: in **what** it does, **how** it does it, the results it gets and the confidence that these results will be **sustained** into the future.

3. For passengers this means that trains run on time, are clean and pleasant to use and take them where they wish to go at reasonable cost: for funders, such as the Department for Transport and Transport Scotland, it might mean that the industry delivers improving services at a decreasing cost to the public purse: and for ORR, all this happens with proactive and effective health and safety culture and risk control, improving efficiency, performance and capacity.

4. EFQM has devised a model showing the main elements of an excellent organisation.

¹ The Fundamental Concepts of Excellence EFQM 2002 ISBN 90-5236-077- 4



Source: [EFQM Fundamental Concepts of Excellence Model 2013](#)

5. The model focuses on the “people” aspects of the business such as customer focus, developing people, leadership and management. These chime with our view of some key elements of health and safety culture.

Excellence in the context of HSWA

6. Excellent organisations deliver legal compliance in an efficient way. It is **how** the organisation achieves effective risk management that defines excellence. The organisation anticipates hazards and assesses risks leading to timely and efficient spend on effective control measures, i.e. doing the right things, in the right way, first time and at the right time.

7. An excellent organisation continuously challenges the status quo and is opportunistic in seeking improvements. It recognises the value of wider benefits to its business from excellent health and safety risk control and views its statutory health and safety duties as part and parcel of managing its total business risks.

8. For an organisation to move towards excellence, its health and safety management system will need to be fully effective. The important components of a management system are shown graphically in Annex 1

9. A key message is that excellence is **not** about gold-plating risk controls, or “safety at any price” by throwing money at risk mitigation that goes beyond what is required by SFAIRP to deliver ever decreasing amounts of risk reduction. It is about delivering legal compliance in an efficient way through an effective management system.

10. Duty holders may decide to spend money on risk controls and mitigation that goes beyond what may be strictly required by SFAIRP or other legal concepts. An organisation with excellent health and safety management would know when they are choosing to do so, and the wider business reasons for their choice.

What things might we notice in an excellent organisation?

11. A range of indicators would provide evidence suggesting excellence, including:

- arrangements to measure safety culture regularly and evidence of action to address areas of weakness;
- a commitment to continuous improvement in both safety culture and risk management;
- evidence that the organisation and its people are encouraged to look beyond the present, such that there is a constant challenge of the status quo, seeking opportunities for continuous innovation and improvement that bring health, safety and efficiency gains;
- a philosophy of getting the best out of its people: exhibiting trust, providing development opportunities and strong two-way communication, including positive industrial relations;
- a philosophy of proactive co-operation with other duty holders and processes that engage the supply chain in striving for the principles of excellence; and
- action to monitor performance using leading and lagging indicators; effective investigation of incident and near misses to identify root causes and evidence of active learning from the findings.

12. It is important to recognise that an excellent organisation will not get it right all the time. There will still be failures of health and safety risk control where we may investigate and take enforcement action. It is how the organisation identifies and reacts to such failures that determines excellence.

How might we measure progress towards excellence?

13. We can measure progress using a number of sources:

- as we gather sufficient information, we will populate the Railways Management Maturity Model (RM3) for companies, assessing their attainment level as they progress towards the goal, i.e. innovating/excellence;
- results from duty holders' own safety culture assessments;
- output measures gathered from published performance data, accident and risk profile information from RSSB's safety risk model (SRM); and
- customer satisfaction, e.g. from the Passenger Focus's biannual survey.

Action Inspectors are asked to note the guidance in this document on the term “excellence” and the benefits for organisations. They are asked to promote the concept of excellence with appropriate management levels in duty holders and be prepared to counter the myth of gold-plating or a drive to go beyond SFAIRP for health and safety reasons.

Annex 1 - The important components of a management system

