



OFFICE OF RAIL REGULATION

Stress risk assessment workshop

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Session overview

- Short introduction
 - Rail industry context
 - What does good stress management look like?
- Structured discussion to explore stress risk assessment
 - How do you know you've got a problem?
 - How do you translate problems into solutions?
 - Practical ideas for change?

Stress.....a problem within rail industry?

- **Stress almost endemic**....with 24/7 demands and labour market changes, challenge across all industry sectors
- **Rail workers** - TUC 2012 biennial survey – 69% reps stress main hazard in transport sector; ASLEF responses – 77% respondents ranked stress top
- **Rail industry** – RSSB 2005 research stress ranked 2nd; 2013 Workforce Health and Wellbeing Project good practice guidance on better health risk assessment, including stress
- **Individual rail duty holders** – more comprehensive mental wellbeing strategies, pockets of excellence
- **ORR** - recognition in health programme

ORR occupational health web pages

ORR stress strategy and guidance

<http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.2497>

ORR occupational health programme update

July 2012



Introduction

This quarterly brief aims to bring you up-to-date on progress with some of the work under ORR [Occupational Health programme 2010-14](#), to help inform discussions on health at liaison meetings with ORR inspectors. We have identified key messages for rail duty holders would welcome [feedback](#).

This issue focuses on:

- Developing front line manager competence on occupational health - new ORR guidance
- Recent changes to the law on management of asbestos, and ORR inspection
- Sharing good practice in occupational health management – more case studies the business benefits of a proactive approach

1. ORR guidance on developing rail manager competence on occupational health

One of the aims of ORR's [Health Programme 2010-14](#) is to encourage excellence in health management by helping the industry to improve its managers' competence on health. Managers and supervisors are on the front line in identifying and managing risk to workers and they need the right level of skills and knowledge to do this. As well as helping to comply with health and safety law, ensuring that front line managers have the right occupational health can deliver real business benefits by increasing productivity, reducing sickness absence and costly insurance claims, and can help rail companies to get the most from specialist occupational health services.

[New ORR guidance](#) seeks to help the rail industry to bridge the gaps in rail manager competence on occupational health by providing clear practical advice on what good practice looks like how to achieve it. We provide good practice guidance on what rail managers need to know occupational health, and advice on how to achieve this. We suggest a number of free training resources for smaller rail companies, as well as training support for larger rail businesses. Of this work we have looked to source a syllabus for occupational health training for rail managers.

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ORR strategy for 2011-14 on work related stress in the rail industry



October 2012



What does good stress management look like?

Hierarchy of control for stress

➤ **Primary - prevention**

- preventing harmful levels stress developing
- ***work centred*** - focus on the work and way it is done

➤ **Secondary - coping skills**

- building coping skills – resilience training, employee assistance, buddying
- focus on the individual

➤ **Tertiary - support for affected**

- support after the event – rehabilitation, staged return to work, counselling and employee support services
- focus on the individual

Where is the rail industry...?

- Pockets of good practice.....ORR web site good practice [case studies](#)
 - Arriva Trains Wales – NICE guidelines on post traumatic stress management = **tertiary** intervention
 - Transport for London – Stress Reduction Groups to build personal resilience = **secondary** intervention
- Need more effort and focus on prevention by looking at way work done = **primary** intervention
- Shift towards organisational approach as well as individual
- [HSE Management Standards](#) approach well tested framework

HSE Management standards approach



Exploring stress risk assessment

Common sense but common practice?

- Apply well tested 5 steps to risk assessment approach to work related stress
- Recognise that cannot eliminate stress and can be complex
- Works best where employees and managers work together, with open and honest communication
- Health and safety reps ideally placed to explain and encourage workforce participation
- Key role in devising solutions and communicating agreed actions

Step 1- Management Standards approach identifies 6 stress risk factors or stress hazards

- **Demands:** workload, work patterns, work environment
- **Control:** How much say the person has in the way they do their work
- **Support:** encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues
- **Relationships:** promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour
- **Role:** Whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles
- **Change:** How organisational change is managed and communicated in the organisation.

Step 2 – Decide who might be harmed and how

- Finding out where there might be a problem
- Look for indicators or early warning signs of stress, in order to identify potential stress hot spots
- Look across the organisation (at job roles, locations, departments) rather than individuals
- Use a range of data, not just sickness absence (more likely to pick up presenteeism)
- Each table take 5 minutes to brainstorm and list on flipchart:
- **What information sources *could* be used to identify stress hot spots or potential problems?**
- 5 minutes to share feedback

Use of data to identify high risk job roles or locations

- **Anonymised information at group level**
- Sickness absence data
- Return to work and exit interviews
- Employee engagement/staff and TU surveys
- Stress risk assessment questionnaire
- Body mapping/risk mapping
- Referrals to OHP and use Employee Assistance
- TUC stress MOT
- Staff turnover and grievances
- Unused annual leave and excessive working hours?
- Staff appraisals – deteriorating performance?

Collecting information to identify stress hot spots

Additional ideas from safety reps' discussion groups

- Performance indicators (delays/PPM, customer service, production deadlines)
- Incident reports (BTP & control logs, accident/incident summaries by department/location)
- Rosters and fatigue index records (workload peaks)
- Trade union legal teams
- Open door 'surgeries'
- Informal, via mess room and noticeboards
- One to one chats
- Overtime worked (or refused)
- Sharing information across companies (between TOCs for example)
- Question and answer session on stress problems

Step 3 Translating problems into solutions – what works?

- Use 6 stress risk factors to explore underlying causes
- Focus groups - directed discussion with managers and workers
- Staff suggestion box/scheme – anonymous or reward/incentive?
- Better use return to work and exit interviews – structure around ‘why’?
- Discuss findings at JSC or H & S committees
- **Develop action plans – use 6 stress risk factors to explore opportunities to change**
- Get commitment to act now – even if small
- Prioritise and be realistic - focus on quick wins first

Achieving change in practice

What *enables* good stress management?

- A Good work-life balance
- B Leadership – senior and middle managers
- C Good physical work environment
- D No-blame culture/trust
- E Some control and flexibility over work
- F Recognition/praise
- G Open communication and willingness to listen
- H Positive promotion of psychological wellbeing – lack of stigma
- I Well trained managers with people skills
- J Time and resources recognised and delivered

Practical changes to enable better management of work related stress ?

- What practical changes might be included in an action plan?
- **Each table to take 5 minutes to identify some basic practical changes, using key enablers as guide, and record on flipchart**
- For example...
 - A. **Work life balance** – managers encourage staff to take breaks and holidays entitled to, and *lead by example*
 - E. **Control and flexibility over work** - *actively encourage* use of telecons rather travel
- **5 minutes to share group findings**

Some examples of practical steps...?

- Reduce need early morning/late evening meetings affecting staff with family/caring responsibilities (A, E)
- Time set aside to prioritise workloads – forward look for peak workloads (E,G)
- Encourage face-to-face/phone communication rather all email (D, E, G)
- Promote sociable working environment – opportunities to get together? (C, F)
- Regular team meetings – involve staff in decision making - regular on-going support for remote workers (E, G, J)
- Clean, light working environment including welfare facilities (C)
- Managers to be available (at agreed times) for staff (B, E, F, G)
- Line managers required to review their own behaviours using [online stress management competency tool](#) (D, G, I)

Delivering better stress management Ideas from TU reps' discussion groups

- **A. Work life balance** – better planning; work smarter (technology); quiet rooms (stress from open plan); stick to contracted hours and better rostering practice
- **B. Leadership** – more visible senior managers; middle managers need education and training, and to lead by example; humane and transparent management
- **C. Work environment** – clean, tidy, well lit rest and welfare facilities; use cab environment working groups; more workplace inspections
- **D. No blame culture** – anonymous suggestion scheme with feedback to workforce; joint training for reps and managers; team bonding (e.g. annual BBQs?); zero tolerance on bullying/victimisation



Delivering better stress management Ideas from TU reps' discussion groups

- **E. Control** – family friendly hours; management and colleagues to be aware of pressures/demands on others
- **F. Recognition** – pat on the back; promotion and advancement; letter of thanks; 'extra mile' awards; CIRAS recognition; needs to work both ways (managers and workforce)
- **G. Open communication** – better access to managers (open door policy; one to one meetings); avoid 'tunnel vision'; joint training of managers and workforce on mental wellbeing/stress; open communication on change (e.g. roster changes)

Delivering better stress management Ideas from TU reps' discussion groups

- **H. Positive promotion of mental wellbeing** – safety reps need to build confidence in mental health issue – TUC learner reps to help?; promote benefits and discuss openly at JSC
- **I. Management skills**- more coaching among managers to build people skills; challenge resource cuts to give managers time to manage
- **J. Time and resources** – better planning to make best use resources; can more people be a hindrance?

What now....?

- Capture your views from discussion groups and cascade
- Report in [ORR's quarterly health update](#) and on [ORR web site](#)
- Encourage to take back to workplace for discussion at JSC or H & S committees?
- Ask about stress risk assessment
- Ask to be actively involved in process - identifying high risk areas and in devising practical solutions



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Thank you for your attention and contributions