2016-17
Health and safety objectives.
Martin Baggs’ message.

My commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of our people is unwavering. This commitment is reflected across all teams within the business, who support the introduction of new initiatives that serve to enhance standards across our organisation. Alongside this, our people continue to challenge unsafe acts and conditions and assist in putting them right, as well as supporting and leading on local health and safety issues and campaigns.

Our alliances and supply chain partners also share our vision of sending everyone home safe and well every day and we continue to see positive results from initiatives supported by the health and safety leadership team, which includes key representatives from across our supply chain.

This booklet reflects on the initiatives that we carried out in 2015 and provides an overview of our health and safety plan for 2016 - 2017. By working together, we can achieve our shared vision of zero incidents, zero harm, zero compromise, every day.
Karl Simons’ message.

2015/16 was the first year in our new asset management period and has historically been a time of turbulence within Thames Water, often leading to a rise in incidents and illness. However, our approach to health and safety continues to bring superb results. In this first year, the introduction of our new alliance partners has served to enhance the focus and transparency of health and safety management and learning, resulting in some real improvement in injury and illness reduction.

In the past year we saw significant improvements in our health and safety performance including a 28% reduction in the lost-time injury rate, 26% reduction in the all-injury rate, a 27% cut in near-miss incidents and a 13% reduction in lost-time illness.

In addition, we’ve also seen a 52% rise in challenges and reports of unsafe acts and conditions – as well as an 8% increase in health and safety training.

2015 key initiatives.

- Following on from our highly successful NEBOSH General Certificate roll-out for all operational managers (of which over 400 have now achieved the qualification), we have introduced the IOSH Managing Safely certificate for all our supervisors or team leaders in a position of responsibility for others.
- The expansion of our drug and alcohol policy to include pre-employment, random and for-cause testing saw around 7,000 tests carried out over the past year – helping us to protect our employees, our sites and our customers.
- We’ve introduced a new lone working system which, in its first eight months, saw more than 100,000 active log-ons – leading to increased visibility and support for our high-risk workers.
- Following research which revealed that those who use phones while driving are four times more likely to crash, we enhanced our safe driver programme by revising our existing driving policy. This set in place a zero compromise approach to phone use while driving on company business.
- Now in its third year, our Water Wellbeing Week continues to raise the profile of health and wellbeing across our organisation and the water industry. This year, we’ve again heard some fantastic stories from our employees, who’ve made lifestyle changes as a result of learning about their health.
- The creation of minimum standards for personal protective equipment (PPE) across our supply chain ensures everyone working for, or on our behalf, has high quality workwear that provides the most appropriate level of protection for the job.
- The continuation and development of our comprehensive personal medical assessments (PMAs) to include, alongside the existing package, eye testing and a comparison with the previous year’s test. Undertaken by specialist medical professionals, the PMAs are available to all our employees and during the year more than 50% of us participated in these confidential tests. A notable outcome from the PMAs is the reduction in levels of dehydration across the business to 29% from 43% on the previous year. This follows campaigns to raise awareness of the health benefits of being well hydrated.

The way to achieve excellent performance is to foster a spirit of openness and collaboration, and to work together across our supply chain. This year we’ve continually challenged our health and safety standards, leading to marginal gains across our many risk areas. This has supported us in continuing to achieve our shared vision of zero incidents, zero harm, zero compromise, sending those who work for us or on our behalf home safe and well, every day.

Karl Simons
Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing
Leadership
Safety, health and wellbeing is a part of every leader’s daily routine.

Policy
We’ll promote good leadership through communicating expectations and responsibilities clearly, and by listening to feedback that supports continuous improvement. We’ll recognise and reward excellence and encourage everyone to make a positive contribution when it comes to enhancing health and safety at work.

Health and safety leadership is not reserved for senior management. We rely on all of our people at every level to help us achieve our health and safety vision of zero incidents, zero harm, zero compromise.

We’ll continue to build on the effectiveness of our senior management visibility, through reviewing and enhancing the SHE7 programme promoting continued education for all senior managers involved in undertaking visits to our operational sites.

Our supervisors and team leaders are critical in providing effective decision-making that fully understands and embraces our health and safety culture. To support all in a position of responsibility, we’ve introduced the IOSH Managing Safely course for all people managers in a position of responsibility.

We’ll support and encourage each business unit to develop and introduce behavioural safety initiatives targeted at all levels within their area of influence.

We’ll also introduce a Thames Water safety maturity model. This will enable organisations to benchmark themselves against a development model, which promotes continual improvement across a wide base of health and safety key performance indicators.

2016-17 objectives

1. Promote and develop safety, health and wellbeing personal leadership skills for all those in a position of responsibility over others.

2. Implementation of a Safety Maturity Model allowing Thames Water and its partner organisations to assess themselves and provide a pathway for further improvement.

3. Support the evolution of the safety culture across the organisation through the development and implementation of safety programmes aimed at influencing the behaviour of employees.
Competence
Everyone has the skills to do their job in a safe and healthy way.

Policy
We’ll provide training and instructions so everyone is able to understand the health and safety risks within their working environment that could affect them. We’ll make sure that everyone has the appropriate skills to carry out the job safely.

A competent workforce, at all levels in our business, is essential in order to achieve a zero compromise culture and a company where all employees and supply chain partners go home safely at the end of every day.

We’ll ensure we set out regular briefings on key risks to enhance continued development.

A new competency management system will be rolled out across the business replacing the existing local organisation arrangement document (LOAD) system – moving the business to a live and dynamic system that can be analysed. A series of new competence programmes will be introduced targeting topical risk areas such as behavioural safety, process safety, catastrophic risk and stress resilience.

We’ll undertake a comprehensive review of mandatory and optional training requirements for critical roles. The controller of premises (COP) is crucial in supporting team compliance for operational sites so we’ll introduce a training course and approval certification to increase visibility and better manage change when recruiting in this role.

2016-17 objectives

1. Directors and senior managers will be briefed on their responsibilities to support continual development of health and safety legislative requirements and changes.

2. Development and implementation of an enhanced Competency Framework, with centralised visibility providing assurance that the organisation is compliant with legislative obligations.

3. Enhance the present statutory and risk-based training course delivery programme to continue the upskilling competence levels across the organisation.
Health and wellbeing

Health and wellbeing are essential to making Thames Water a better place to work.

Policy

We’ll make sure standards which protect everyone from short-term and long-term occupational health conditions are in place and regularly reviewed. We’ll provide everyone with key information which will help achieve our vision of zero harm and enable those who work for us to make lifestyle choices that can lead to long-term health benefits.

We recognise that positive workplace and lifestyle factors lead to healthier, happier employees with fewer health and safety issues.

Our health and wellbeing strategy centres on four distinct areas – worker, workplace, wellbeing and the wider community. We’ll continue to place great importance on the proactive prevention of exposure to risks that can create illness, while fostering an environment where all employees can improve their own health and wellbeing through making informed choices.

We’ll continue the delivery of personal medical assessments and will introduce a mental health awareness campaign focused around critical conversations. Also, to raise the profile of this key area, we’ll introduce a health and wellbeing performance triangle that details specific health performance indicators.

The health and safety leadership team, formed of the operational directors from many of our key supply chain organisations, will lead development of an essential standard outlining the main health and wellbeing expectations for everyone working across Thames Water.

2016-17 objectives

1. The continued provision of condition monitoring, providing employees access to lifestyle assessments for key risks from both work and lifestyle factors.

2. Continue to enhance the visibility and profile of health and wellbeing across the organisation through the escalation of health and wellbeing performance indicators.

3. Enhance visibility of the business health and wellbeing expectations across the supply chain enabling a healthier workforce.
Safe workplace

It’s important to ensure we all have a safe and healthy place to work, whether in an office, on a site or elsewhere in the business.

Policy

We’ll create safe working conditions by ensuring our health and safety standards are met and risks are mitigated and controlled, both across our sites and office-based activities. We’ll provide the right equipment and facilities, as well as supporting health and safety documentation through each phase of our work activities.

We’ll ensure appropriate equipment and facilities are provided and supported by health and safety documentation, to enable safe delivery through each phase of our work activities.

Ease of access to information that everyone working on site requires will be improved through the introduction of touchscreen technology across all sites. This will provide quick access to all relevant health and safety literature and statutory inspection requirements.

We’ll test the resilience levels of our sites and provide feedback to the business to help future training needs.

The corporate, line manager and site induction process will be reviewed to ensure consistency and monthly safety and health focus literature will be provided by each business unit on key topic themes to ensure common hazards are addressed.

To support our commitment to reducing risk in the event of significant incidents we will link with a specialist organisation and the emergency services to create an event that will challenge our resilience and provide learning through feedback and footage for future training needs.

2016-17 objectives

1. Enhance visibility of site health and safety information across all sites providing simplified access to consistent literature.

2. Develop and run a major health and safety event on site to test local and business resilience levels.

3. Review the health and safety induction process at all levels regarding consistency of literature and content.
Engagement
We’re actively engaged with all stakeholders on safety, health and wellbeing.

Policy
We’ll work collaboratively with our stakeholders and contractors, developing and sharing innovative and sustainable solutions that will benefit all parties in achieving our shared triple zero vision. We’ll work together to deliver effective health and safety management across all aspects of work, including planning, design, construction and maintenance of our assets.

We’re passionate about achieving excellence in health and safety through collaboration – minimising and raising awareness of health and safety among our workforce and our suppliers.

Our objective is to work with our employees and supply chain partners to cut out injuries and illness from the workplace through positive change in our culture.

We’ll continue to look for opportunities to improve the techniques we use to give our people the power to challenge on health and safety, free from reprisal.

To ensure risk elimination and reduction is at the forefront of our design process, we’ll encourage all designers to regularly attend site and engage with construction and operations teams. This early involvement intervention will give an opportunity to learn and discuss challenges faced in the construction delivery process of the build.

We’ll encourage the establishment of technical communities for our specialist risk areas. These groups will look for ways to continually challenge the status quo and take ownership of specialist literature that sets standards everyone must work to.

A series of engagement events will be held with all our stakeholders to promote innovation, capturing and communicating our success and sharing knowledge of any concerns that arise. We’ll run our annual health and safety conference and awards events, promoting innovative ideas, influencing strategy and providing feedback while recognising and rewarding excellence in performance from all areas of our organisation.

2016-17 objectives

1. Establish expectations to encourage supply chain designers’ intervention on site.

2. Develop a framework of identified technical specialists for all dynamic and catastrophic risk disciplines, promoting the introduction of technical communities.

3. Enhance the development of engagement sessions across the business units promoting innovative ideas, influencing strategy and providing feedback, as well as recognising and rewarding excellent performance.
Communication
Everyone has the information to look after their own safety, health and wellbeing.

Policy
We’ll put in place strong management systems with the right resources, effective structures and rigorous monitoring. These will set standards and monitor the health and safety performance of our organisation. We’ll also feedback our findings to the business and influence decision-making at all levels.

We work hard on communicating health and safety across the business and this year we’ll continue to improve how we update and inform our employees, by using the latest technology and communications techniques.

We’ll update our essential standards to make sure the messaging is as clear and striking as possible. We’ll also use animated films to highlight serious incidents and significant policy changes and get key health and safety messages over more clearly to our employees.

Our AMP6 engagement model sets out the expectations regarding the forums established to explain two-way risk within the business. The wholesale and retail health and safety forums throughout the year will take opportunities to hold large-scale events that maximise penetration into our tier one to four supply chain base.

Webinars will be introduced to cover a programme of topics over the year and we will develop and promote supply chain category management, to ensure messaging is reaching all of those who work for or on our behalf.

2016-17 objectives

1. Re-brand the Essential Standards to improve the way we get a clear message across Thames Water and the supply chain.

2. Improve the wholesale and retail health and safety engagement process to maximise penetration into all tiers of the supply chain.

3. Produce a programme of topics to be covered throughout the year to provide positive messages.
Performance and Improvement
Striving for excellence in health and safety makes good business sense.

Policy
We’ll create an environment where everyone is encouraged to challenge unsafe situations, or those that can cause harm to health, immediately. People know they can intervene free from reprisal.

Monitoring our performance and sharing what we learn is critical to the continuous improvement of health and safety. We’ll carry on with our monthly dedicated health and safety risk review committees, which review and challenge our performance in all our risk categories.

Over the coming year, we’ll research, develop and introduce personal proximity devices, to support employees working in high-risk areas.

We’ll review the technology used for electronic permits, enhancing their visibility and improving levels of compliance.

Live dashboards will be made available at site level and the safeguard system will be improved, with report-gathering times reduced and reports from business units improved.

2016-17 objectives

1. Provision of intelligent systems for personal proximity protection to improve the control around high risk areas.

2. Using technology to introduce electronic permitting systems that improve the visibility of work authorisation across the business both centrally and locally.

3. Development of safeguard analytics on risk topics providing live dashboards at site.