

GMB

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Don't let it slip through our hands: Making the PABIAC Strategy Happen

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A new strategy building on strong foundations

- The new strategy identifies the 3 key areas for action over the next 4 years
- It builds on decades of improvement
- This is a mature sector with strong tripartite structures
- So what do we need to address to make it happen?
- Here are some thoughts on the key structural challenges



Training

- Inexperienced personnel working unsupervised
- No scheduled training sessions for updating workforce in the use of new techniques / equipment
- Inadequate knowledge or experience / incomplete training



Communication

- Communication systems and processes not fit for purpose (no H&S committee)
 - Method of comms activity not specific to workforce audience (All staff emails, not toolbox talks)
 - Lack of fixed working arrangements creating difficulties in communication
- Home working vs workplace



Management System

- Organisational & professional cultures which induce or tolerate unsafe practices
- No requirement at organisational level to undertake formalised checking procedures
- Reluctance to undertake a formal analysis of adverse events / learn from errors
- Heavy personal workloads / lack of time to undertake thorough assessments



System design & management: Equipment

- Equipment shortages
- Use of inappropriate/inadequate equipment
- Inadequate maintenance of equipment
- Conflict between financial and safety management needs



Cultural Challenges

- Casual attitude to risk / overconfidence – *“we know what we’re dealing with”*
- Incomplete or inadequate briefing and handovers / poor or non-existent debriefing
- Poor or dysfunctional communication – especially between specialist roles
- Failure to follow advice from senior colleagues
- Failure to formulate back-up plans and discuss with workforce
- Lack of clarity in team structures (e.g. in a multidisciplinary team, who is in charge?)



Investigations

- Peer tolerance of poor standards
- Failure to take and document a comprehensive account of the incident
- Failure to request previous training records
- Inadequate checking of relevant procedures/policies
- Creation of a pressured environment to complete the investigation by arbitrary timescales



What skills will be needed?

- Effective communication
- Team working
- Leadership
- Decision making
- Situation awareness
- Stress management



The end goal is a positive organisational safety culture

- All significant incidents, including near misses, should be routinely reported and regularly audited
- Investigations into adverse events should be performed according to best practice to determine if changes need to be made to make the systems safer for the future
- A virtuous circle of positive development and reinforcement can be achieved if incidents are treated as opportunities to learn – this takes resourcing, worker involvement, and an open and honest approach.