

## Answers to revision questions for NGC1 element 2

Answer 1 The full name of 'the safety policy' is 'the general statement of policy'.

Answer 2 The three key elements of a safety policy are generally summarised as:

- general statement of intent, dated and signed by the owner or chief executive
- organisation, details of who is responsible for doing what with regard to health and safety
- arrangements for implementing the policy; in practice these are often divided as follows:
  - » general arrangements
  - » specific arrangements, which apply only to specific employees

(Remember this is the usual 'three element' interpretation of the HASAWA safety policy requirements, one which presumably has received acceptance by HSE as we have never seen any adverse comments from them.) You should be able to give a few examples of both the general and the specific arrangements - check in your element NGC1/2 study material.

Answer 3 As you will appreciate, the following concern the general statement of intent of the policy:

- accept responsibility for the health and safety of employees and others by the identification, elimination and control of hazards
- provide sufficient resources to fulfil the policy
- monitor the application of the policy and revise it as necessary
- provide an authoritative signature
- demonstrate a clear commitment to communicate the contents of the policy to all employees

Answer 4 Factors used to measure the effectiveness of the policy include:

- proactive monitoring (audits, inspections, surveys)
- reactive monitoring (accidents, dangerous occurrences, near misses, ill-health)

As the second part of this question, you should be able to provide a brief explanation of the limitations of reactive statistics of health and injury - why they should never be used as the sole measure of the effectiveness of the safety policy. You should also be able to explain why all companies are bound by law and good practice to fully investigate any accidents and ill-health that do occur.

Answer 5 Self-regulation: HASAWA introduced the concept of self-regulation into the management of health and safety - employers must examine their own organisation in order to identify the health and safety risks and introduce measures to eliminate or control them.

A safety policy is a classic example of self-regulation. As we have stressed, it is crucial that a safety policy is developed internally (with outside assistance if necessary) and not copied from another organisation.

Answer 6 Benchmarking - it will be interesting to see if NEBOSH do ask any questions using this word. As we explained in the study material, standards which define exposure limits to both physical agents such as vibration, noise, ionising radiation (NGC2/8) and to chemical agents (NGC2/7) are in effect limited forms of benchmark and have been used for many decades.

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In the way that 'benchmarking' is now being used (it would perhaps not be wrong to say 'being pushed') in health and safety implies that a range of factors (as per question 4 above) are to be used to give a benchmark measure of the overall state of health of an organisation in much the same way that overall ratings are now being given to hospitals, schools, postal services, transport performance and so on. It is beyond our Certificate needs to make further comment; no doubt you will have ideas of your own, both for and against, the present trend to quantify everything.

**Answer 7 Reviewing the health and safety policy**

The main point we have tried to make is that there can never be a situation (short of the closure of company) in which the policy does not have to be reviewed - for a start, time passes.

Other triggers for review and revision will be:

- organisational changes
- introduction of new processes, new facilities and so on
- legislative changes (something that will be immediately appreciated by those who were involved in company health and safety matters at the time of the introduction of the COSHH legislation in 1988 and the Noise Regulations in 1999)
- results of both pro-active and re-active monitoring exercises

**Answer 8** The company health and safety management system (in NGC1/1 we make the first mention of this subject to which we will frequently return). Above all the information stored and the practical mechanism used for the storage (off-the-shelf computerised record-keeping system, card index system, networked system ...) must be appropriate for the needs of the company; you will no doubt be able to add to:

- health and safety audits, inspections etc
- training records
- accident, ill-health, incident records
- details of equipment testing
  - » in-house testing of portable electrical appliances etc
  - » external expertise required for the testing of lifts, steam boilers
- register of external expertise

**Answer 9** HSG 65 structure and thus a reflection of the structure of elements NGC1/3-5 of the syllabus.

