

Reference	BOT21/SEPT/06
Date	September 2021

## Board of Trustees

# Health and Safety Report

## Report from the Chief Operating Officer

### STANDING ITEM

The Board of Trustees is asked to note and approve the contents of the Health and Safety Report including the following recently updated points: 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 5.8, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 9.0, 9.2, 10.4, 10.5 and 10.6.

## 1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of Trustees of Health and Safety matters across the institute including at all offices, arrangements for remote workers and volunteer activity. It forms part of regular Health and Safety reporting to the Board of Trustees as the first standing agenda item. Any urgent health and safety issues will be reported to Trustees outside of meetings as appropriate.
- 1.2 The institute's Health and Safety Policy is reviewed and amended in accordance with changes to legislation or when relevant changes to processes and infrastructure take place. It is subject to a formal review and approval by the Board of Trustees whenever changes are made or as a minimum every year. The policy was last reviewed and approved by Trustees in May 2021.

## 2 Trustee Responsibilities

- 2.1 RTPI Trustees are responsible for leading the commitment to Health and Safety across the institute. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) define the following essential principles for organisational Boards:

### Strong and active leadership from the top

- a visible, active commitment from the board;
- establishing effective 'downward' communication systems and management structures;
- integration of good health and safety management with business decisions.

### Worker involvement

- engaging the workforce in the promotion and achievement of safe and healthy conditions;
- effective 'upward' communication;
- providing high quality training.

### Assessment and review

- identifying and managing health and safety risks;
- accessing (and following) competent advice;
- monitoring, reporting and reviewing performance.

- 2.2 Everyone in the RTPI is responsible for their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions. However, under section 37 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 individual trustees can be held liable if a Health and Safety offence is committed with the consent or connivance of, or is attributable to any neglect on the part of, any director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the organisation.

### **3 Health and Safety and the Senior Executive Team (SET)**

- 3.1 The Chief Executive and members of SET have overall responsibility for Health and Safety at the RTPI ensuring it is an integral part of the institute's business plan and activities.
- 3.2 Health and Safety is the first standing item on the agenda for all weekly SET meetings.
- 3.3 Health and Safety is also the first standing item at weekly 'All Staff' meetings. It is an opportunity to raise colleague's awareness of Health and Safety responsibilities, like the importance of accident and near miss reporting. It provides an additional opportunity for colleagues to raise any concerns they may have on Health and safety matters.
- 3.4 The RTPI has a Staff Committee. The committee, is made up of representatives nominated and elected from all areas of the institute and Health and Safety is one of the standing agenda items for this committee.
- 3.5 In 2018 a staff engagement survey was started. It includes a question relating to Health and Safety to provide an additional opportunity for feedback. In 2020, 78% (2019 – 78%) of colleagues agreed or strongly agree that Health and Safety provisions at work are good. The survey providers advise that this score is the third highest out of 20 organisations that ask the same question in their surveys.

### **4 The RTPI Health and Safety Policy**

- 4.1 The institute's Health and Safety Policy was last revised in May 2021, presented to the Board of Trustees on May 26<sup>th</sup> (BOT21.MAY.05) and approved. The policy is updated whenever required. Changes to working practices, internal organisation, RTPI personnel, office facilities, legislation or other RTPI policies are examples of events that would initiate a Health and Safety Policy update. All updates require Board of Trustee approval.
- 4.2 The policy was circulated to all RTPI colleagues and updated on the intranet. All new RTPI colleagues receive a copy of the Health and Safety Policy together with a copy of the HSE booklet 'Health and Safety Law – What You Need to Know' in their inductions and staff will receive a periodic reminder.
- 4.3 The Covid-19 health emergency led to temporary changes in work practices in order to comply with new regulations. The institute's Health and Safety Policy has been updated appropriately.
- 4.4 The RTPI London office has re-opened three days per week for a limited number of colleagues with physical distancing measures in place. The government advice for Scotland and Wales is to work from home if possible so the Edinburgh and Cardiff offices remain closed with only essential visits taking place approximately once per week. Both offices are considering

appropriate measures to ensure that a safe working environment is available when the government advice changes.

- 4.5 After careful consideration, the restrictions on travel for work have been removed with the exception of international travel which remains under review.
- 4.6 The 'Gold' business continuity team continues to meet on a weekly basis to consider current government guidance and the RTPI response to emerging news regarding the pandemic. The RTPI continues to take an approach characterised by 'an abundance of caution' regarding the health and safety of our colleagues and volunteers.

## **5 Botolph Lane Systems and Maintenance**

- 5.1 The fire detection system at the Botolph Lane office was updated in 2017 when a new control panel, visual flashing light alarms in the toilets and wireless alarm detectors were installed.
- 5.2 The access control system for Botolph Lane was also upgraded in 2017. New swipe cards were issued. A procedure where all visitors to Botolph Lane must be collected from the reception area by a colleague if access to an office area is required was introduced. New paperless signing in software and hardware has been introduced making it easier to account for colleagues and visitors in the event of an emergency or evacuation. This system is now accessibly through a contactless mobile phone app.
- 5.3 In 2020 work was started to modernise the Botolph Lane office access monitoring system. Additional cameras have been installed and existing equipment updated for improved image capture. Improvements like 24-hour remote monitoring via a mobile app, and better data storage have been implemented. This will improve the safety of colleagues working in the building when the reception is closed and support office services to ensure the office is secure.
- 5.4 In May 2019 the Board of Trustees approved renovation work on the toilet facilities throughout Botolph Lane to rectify safety issues highlighted through accident reporting, improve hygiene and maintain availability of facilities through reduced maintenance. At the same time a new office was created to ensure the IT team had an adequate working area.
- 5.5 The Board of Trustees will considered a paper in the last board meeting regarding proposed maintenance work at the RTPI London Office to ensure that a safe and healthy environment is provided for colleagues when the office re-opens after the COVID pandemic.
- 5.6 A full building condition survey took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 and the results will be considered as part of a specification for future work on the building.
- 5.7 There have been occasions when water has leaked from the roof to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor during periods of heavy rain. These leaks occurred when the building was closed for all but essential access during the pandemic and it has become clear following the building survey that the repairs are not sufficient and a complete overhaul of the roof is required. The Senior Executive Team have immediately taken the decision to close the 4<sup>th</sup> floor until the roof is fully repaired because of the risk that leaks in the roof might disturb the asbestos that was reported to be present. Colleagues' swipe cards no longer allow access to this part of the building without permission from Office Services.

- 5.8 Botolph Lane was due to open for a maximum of 12 colleagues for three days per week from 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The re-opening was postponed until 5<sup>th</sup> August due to the requirement for some colleagues to self isolate. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure the safety of colleagues including: limited access to meeting rooms, hand sanitisers, social distancing, face coverings while moving around the building and a one-way system for the stairwells. Access to the building on the other two days is limited to allow for essential maintenance and contractor access.

## 6 Accidents and Incidents

- 6.1 There have been no RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) accidents or incidents reported since the last Health and Safety report to the Trustees.
- 6.2 There have been no near-miss reported since the last Health and Safety report to the Trustees.
- 6.3 There have been no accidents reported since the last Health and Safety report to the Trustees.
- 6.4 One accident has been reported since the last Health and Safety report to the Trustees.

Date	Location	Summary	Action
28/07/2021	Botolph Lane	<p>Following a report that the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor fire-door was not fully closing, the door was appropriately adjusted. A colleague was not expecting the door to close as quickly and the door vigorously swing onto their right side/hip whilst exiting the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.</p> <p>Some light bruising appeared but no medical assistance was required.</p>	<p>The colleague confirmed that they did not require medical assistance and explained that they had been used to the door not fully closing recently so had been caught unaware by the newly adjusted closing mechanism.</p> <p>It was agreed that no further action was required.</p>

## 7 Training

- 7.1 Online Health and Safety training is part of the induction process for all new colleagues and includes fire safety, Display, Screen Equipment (DSE) safety and risk assessment and manual handling if appropriate. All colleagues complete annual DSE on-line training and this has continued and now includes feedback from home working environments. A new e-learning system was launched in July which provides both 'bite-sized' and in-depth training covering a range of topics including health and safety, data protection and cyber security. Colleagues have been asked to set aside a small amount of time month to complete this training. Initial uptake has been good and progress reports will be provided for line managers.
- 7.2 The HSE recommendation for first aid provision within offices with 25 – 50 employees is at least one first-aider trained in Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW). The institute currently has

a number of EFAW qualified staff and training has been provided for designated individuals to ensure appropriate first aid provision for the reopening of Botolph Lane.

- 7.3 There are trained fire marshals at Botolph Lane, employed by Keil Centre at the Edinburgh Office and employed by Centre Management at the Cardiff Office. Fire marshals are designated for each floor at Botolph Lane every day during the current phase of re-opening. Office Services check that the designated marshal is aware of their responsibilities and provide refresher briefings as necessary.

## 8 Wellbeing and Mental Health

- 8.1 Arrangements are in place to support the well-being of colleagues. A free and confidential telephone and web site advice and support service provided by Health Assured is made available to all colleagues and they are reminded about its availability. Regular advice notes provided by Health Assured are circulated to all colleagues and helpful information and signposting can be found on the Wellbeing Hub on the intranet.
- 8.2 Colleagues and their line managers are reminded about the need to achieve the right work-life balance. Flexibility around working hours is encouraged. Weekend working is discouraged except in exceptional circumstances and time off in lieu offered where weekend working is necessary.
- 8.3 The staff committee is a further forum for colleagues to raise concerns and recommend new ways of working that support wellbeing across the institute. All staff away-days', including the virtual away day in November have had a focus on wellbeing including sessions on mindfulness and managing an appropriate work life balance.
- 8.4 Specific measures were adopted to support colleagues during the pandemic lock down and whilst access to RTPI offices has been restricted.

## 9 Fire Safety

- 9.1 Weekly fire alarm tests have resumed at Botolph Lane.
- 9.2 Emergency evacuation drills take place in all RTPI offices at least on an annual basis. These were suspended due to office closures in the pandemic. Details of the last emergency evacuation drills at RTPI Offices are listed below:

Office	Date
London - Botolph Lane	12/08/21
Edinburgh - Atholl Crescent	27/07/21
Cardiff – Creative Quarter Cardiff	22/11/2019
RTPI - Civic Centre Swinton	26/11/2019

## 10 Health and Safety Audit and Fire Risk Assessment

- 10.1 In April 2018 an independent 'deep dive' Health and Safety Audit and a Fire Risk Assessment was carried out on Botolph Lane by independent consultancy 'Safety for Work'. A number of urgent actions were recommended and these were all completed.
- 10.2 The same auditors repeated this audit in May 2019. A number of recommendations were made but with one exception, all observations were recorded as 'satisfactory' with no action required. A further audit was due to take place in 2020 but has been delayed due to the office closure.
- 10.3 An independent Fire Risk Assessment was conducted by Capital Fire under the 2005 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order in March 2019 on the Botolph Lane office. The assessment concluded the potential consequence of fire was at the lowest level, 'slight harm'. The likelihood of fire was 'medium' ("normal fire hazards for type of occupancy with fire hazard generally subject to appropriate controls"). As a consequence, the risk to life from fire on the premises was assessed as 'tolerable' and no further actions or controls were recommended. A further audit was due to take place in 2020 but has been delayed due to the office closure.
- 10.4 Audits covering health and safety, fire safety and legionella risk took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 performed by 'Safety for Work'. A summary of the results is included below and the full reports can be found under health and safety on the Governance Portal.
- 10.5 The Fire Risk Assessment identified three actions outlined below for immediate attention and 8 'medium' non-urgent actions.
- 1) Attempts have been made to verify the escape route through the adjacent building but occupancy is patchy and contact has been difficult. The auditor confirmed the route was clear and there is no reason to believe this has changed.
  - 2) Fire doors have all been refitted to ensure they close properly.
  - 3) Arrangements have been made to inspect the fire extinguisher in the plant room which is not accessible to users of the building.
- All other actions are being addressed.
- 10.6 The Health and Safety Audit included 51 observations, 31 satisfactory and 18 non-urgent 'medium' actions. All actions are being addressed.

## 11 Support for the Regions

- 11.1 Under the new volunteering strategy activity has started to support the work of colleagues and volunteers in regions. The focus has been the implications for Health and Safety of using third party venues for meetings and events. A risk assessment-reporting tool for venues is now in use by regional teams. Arrangements have been agreed for lone worker reporting procedures to support regional coordinators working outside of normal office hours.
- 11.2 The risk assessment reporting tool for venues has been updated to include measures to ensure that venues are COVID safe once RTP1 in-person events are re-introduced.

## 12 Support for Members

- 12.1 Health and Safety advice for members involved in activity on behalf of the Institute appears in the current Volunteers Handbook guidance like this: "*Volunteers should take reasonable care*

*when travelling to and from volunteering duties, particularly if travelling in the early morning or late evening. Volunteers whose role involves aspects of “lone working” e.g. visiting sites to conduct surveys, should take reasonable care of their own personal safety, act in a professional manner at all times and ensure that site owners are given reasonable notice of their visit in advance”.*

12.2 There is advice on insurance in the Volunteers Handbook and all members attending meetings on behalf of the institute are classed as ‘insured persons’ having the same insurance cover as employees.

12.3 A new risk assessment form has been introduced for members traveling abroad on institute business, with or without an officer. This includes the need to confirm the status of FCO advice for the country being visited and the arrangements with any local partner.

### **13 Resource Implications**

Improvements to building, systems and reporting will result from feedback from all audit activity, accident reporting or colleague observations. Expenditure should be within current operational budgets but there may be unbudgeted costs. Where there are Health and Safety issues that are not in the general budget, the SET will make a request to Trustees for reserves funding.

### **14 Communications Implications**

Internal communication regarding Health and Safety will continue through all channels.

### **15 Governance and Compliance Implications**

This report outlines how RTPI is complying with current Health and Safety legislation, more particularly, the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). Legislation is regularly reviewed and changes addressed.

### **16 Equality and Inclusion Implications**

There are no equality and inclusion implications.

### **17 Corporate Strategy – Climate Action**

The commitment to Climate Action activity will not be taken if there are detrimental implications for Health and Safety.

### **18 Corporate Strategy - GROWPLAN**

There are no GROWPLAN implications.

### **19 Corporate Strategy – Digital Transformation**

Digital Transformation is being used to improve Health and Safety and eliminate risks.