Railway Safety
Good practice guides

1. Assessing and developing the competence of senior management teams in strategic safety management

2. Reviewing and developing the safety performance of managers

Contents

Part 1

Introduction to the good practice

Background

1. Foreword

All directors and senior executives should want to understand and control risks that threaten the ability of their organisations to reach their full potential. Restoring the credibility of the rail industry within society is of paramount importance. We will do this through those who lead and manage railway businesses demonstrating an understanding of the risks they must manage and being visibly intolerant of unsafe acts and conditions. These are essential components of managerial competence in safety management.

Risk is ever present in business. It is created by the actions companies take to achieve their objectives and by changes in their external environments. Changes in the way companies operate, in the technology they use and in the regulatory framework can all be major sources of risk.

Risk management processes are, therefore, of prime importance to all businesses, not least the rail industry. Self-assessment has a very valuable role to play in this. It provides senior management with assurance that risks are managed and controlled as they expect them to be. It also helps senior managers consider what they are not doing that they could and perhaps should be to control the causes of risk.

I recommend this good practice guidance to you. It places safety management in the context of risk management. By doing so, it helps organisations integrate safety with business decision-making and makes it clear that safety is fundamental to the achievement of business objectives. It has been extensively researched, consulted on and piloted with a diverse sample of railway businesses over the last two years. It has been produced for us by Competence Assurance Solutions Ltd (CAS).

Rod Muttram
Chief Executive, Railway Safety

If you would like to discuss the material contained in this document, or suggest any improvements, please contact:

Aidan Nelson
Director, Policy & Standards
Railway Safety
Evergreen House
160 Euston Road
London NW1 2DX
Tel: 020 7904 7518
E-mail comments@railwaysafety.org.uk.

As part of Railway Safety's Safety Research Programme, this autumn we will be releasing a new software tool to support the self-assessment process described in the good practice on Strategic Safety Management. Designed by CAS, it helps organisations to assess different aspects of their safety performance and make comparisons with industry averages.

2. Disclaimer

In issuing this document, Railway Safety makes no warranties, express or implied, that compliance with all or any of the documents published by Railway Safety is sufficient on its own to ensure safe systems of work or operation. Railway Safety has taken trouble to ensure that this document is accurate and useful, but it is only a guide.

Organisations and individual managers are reminded that they have responsibilities to ensure health and safety at work and individual duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other legislation.

3. Introduction

The Health & Safety Executive's (HSE) Assessment Criteria for Railway Safety Cases (Section 6, paragraph 2) state that:

> *In relation to health and safety, competence plays a pivotal role in ensuring that activities are carried out satisfactorily. The necessity for competence extends to both front-line, support (including contractors, consultants and suppliers of health and safety related services) and management personnel. Management competence is frequently overlooked, but managers make important decisions that can have fundamental and wide-ranging effects on health and safety.*

All organisations holding Railway Safety Cases have a responsibility to demonstrate that they meet these requirements. This document is designed to help them achieve this. It contains two good practice guides:

- **Part 2 - Competence in strategic safety management: Assessing and developing senior management teams (SSM good practice).** This supersedes the August 2000 edition of the SSM good practice.

- **Part 3 - Reviewing and developing the safety performance of individual managers (SPR good practice).**

Both have the same structure, as follows:

- an outline of the recommended process.

- detailed guidance on how to implement the process.

- some tools which can be used to support the process.

The good practice is written primarily for directors and managers of organisations in the Railway Group. It is also relevant to the contractors and suppliers on which they rely.

This document has been published outside of the Railway Group Standards framework. The findings from user consultations and research into comparative developments in other sectors confirmed that trying to mandate a fixed approach on the industry was undesirable. Instead, the good practice guides recommend processes that organisations may use to develop and demonstrate the competence of their senior management teams and individual managers.

Where safety is referred to in the document, health and welfare are also implied. Where managers are referred to, we mean managers of all grades including supervisors.

4. First principles

Safety management is treated throughout as one aspect of risk management. Risk management involves identifying and assessing key risks, and then designing and implementing processes by which those risks can be controlled to a level acceptable to the board of directors. It should focus not just on the negative consequences of risk but also on the risk of not taking advantage of opportunities to improve business performance.

Together, the good practice guides are designed to help organisations develop a progressive safety culture and make sure that safety risks in particular are properly understood and under effective control.

The senior management team - be it a board of directors or an executive group - and managers at all levels have specific roles to play in the identification and management of risks. Members of the senior management team have both shared and personal responsibilities for oversight of risk control. Managers at all levels have personal responsibilities for the implementation of control measures.

The achievement of safety objectives and the manner in which this is done are of fundamental importance to the achievement of business objectives. The formulation of safety strategies and the management of safety risks to achieve safety objectives requires relevant information which is accurate, reliable and timely. This is needed to make decisions and monitor actions, and to give senior management early warning of potential problems and assurance that risk management processes are effective. Self-assessment has an important role to play in the provision of this information.

5. The role of good practice

At the industry level, good practice guides have an important role to play in making sure that the industry as a whole learns from its experiences and puts this learning to use in improving safety performance.
The diagram (a) on the next page shows:

- the hierarchy of relationships between individuals, companies and the regulatory framework.

- the role of good practice in transferring knowledge.

- the specific role of the good practice guides in this document which is to develop the ability of organisations to interpret and implement laws, regulations and Railway Group Standards.
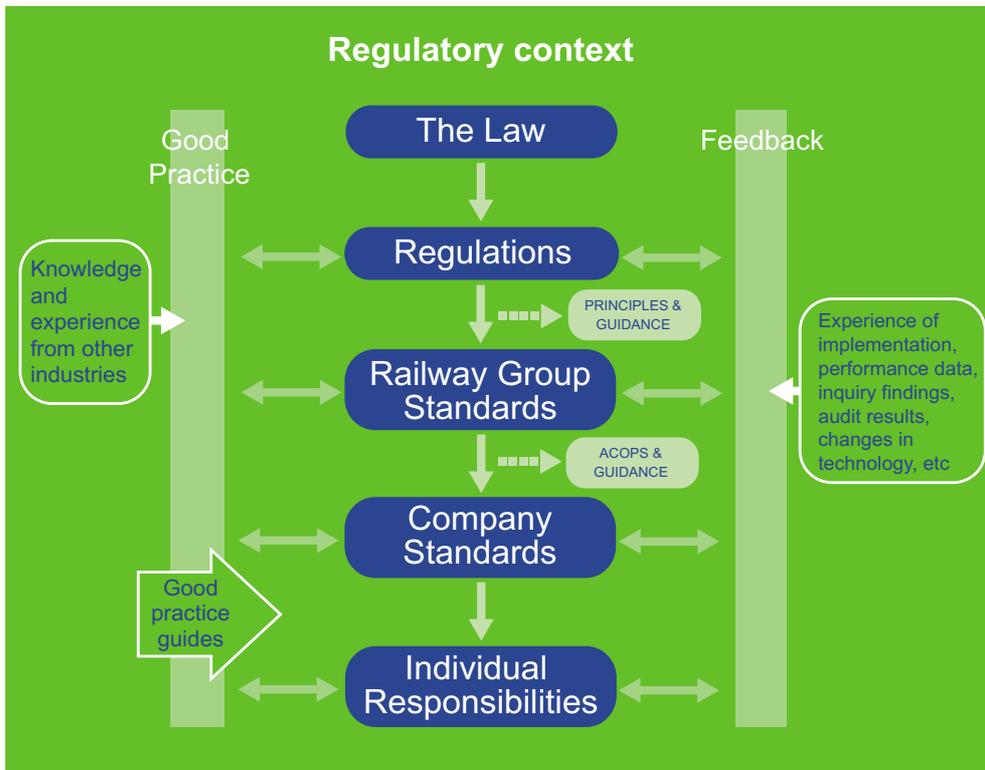
Diagram a

The SSM good practice is designed to assist the senior management team make decisions on strategy and priorities and examine the effectiveness of the processes by which a positive safety culture is developed and safety risks are identified and controlled. The SPR good practice is designed to help senior management teams to develop and review the contributions that managers make to the definition and achievement of organisational objectives. Between them they provide organisations with a means of ensuring the effective direction and use of resources to manage safety risks.

Both sets of good practice draw on a set of general safety management objectives which all organisations in the Railway Group need to achieve. These have been derived from an analysis of Railway Safety Case requirements, principles and guidance issued by the HSE and various reports and studies on safety management. Although the priorities they assign, the methods they use and the progress they make will differ, all organisations need to consider:

- what key teams (such as the senior management team) need to contribute.

- what individuals (such as managers) need to contribute.

- how the organisation needs to be structured and controlled.

These factors are inter-related. For example, individuals may be competent but perform badly because the organisation is badly structured. Likewise, a group of competent individuals may not perform well as a team because the team members do not work well together. The good practice guides address the contributions needed from the senior management teams and individual managers respectively, as shown in diagram (b) opposite.

Relationship between good practice guides:
shared and personal responsibilities

Strategic Safety Management

Safety Review Process

The nature of individual and shared responsibilities depends on who is available

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Organisational objectives place responsibilities on individuals and teams

ORGANISATIONAL SAFETY OBJECTIVES

How a group of individuals combines and interacts to discharge shared responsibilities

TEAM COMPETENCE & PERFORMANCE

PERSONAL COMPETENCE & PERFORMANCE

How individuals meet their responsibilities

Diagram b

6. Glossary

The words below have the following meanings throughout this document.

a. Assessment

Assessment is a process which involves:

- collecting evidence.

- judging evidence of performance against the performance that is expected.

- using the evidence to make decisions about competence and any further actions that need to be taken.

b. Competence

Competence means the ability to undertake responsibilities and to perform activities to a recognised standard on a regular basis.

Competence is a product of practical and thinking skills, experience and knowledge, which is influenced by personal attributes such as attitudes, beliefs and values. The precise combination required depends on what needs to be done, in what circumstances and how well.

A person, a team of people or an organisation is competent when they work consistently to an expected level of performance. Expected levels of performance change over time.

c. Managers with safety responsibilities

People whose work roles and decisions impact on the management of safety risks. This includes supervisors.

d. Moderation

Moderation is the process that guarantees the quality of SSM self-assessments.

e. Performance indicator

A performance indicator is a measure of an important aspect of how well an organisation or individual is carrying out its activities. Lead indicators measure aspects that are likely to predict future outcomes. Lag indicators measure the outcomes of activities.

f. Performance target

A performance target is a goal or objective towards which effort is directed. These targets can used to judge how well a person or organisation is fulfilling his or her responsibilities.

g. Safety climate

Safety climate describes the tangible outputs or indicators of an organisation's health and safety culture as perceived by individuals or work groups at a point in time.

h. Safety culture

The safety culture of an organisation is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competences and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organisation's health and safety management.

i. Safety performance review

The evaluation of individual safety performance against clear requirements to make sure that managers are fulfilling their safety responsibilities. It is desirable that this is part of a wider performance review process.

j. Safety responsibility statement

A documented and agreed set of responsibilities relating to safety for every work role with a safety dimension.

k. Self-assessment

Self-assessment is where a group or individual assess themselves.

l. Senior management team

A senior management team is the team of people in an organisation who are responsible for defining and maintaining its safety strategy.

m. Strategic safety management (SSM)

Strategic safety management (SSM) is the way a senior-management team:

- directs how safety is managed within the business
- sets goals for safety performance.
- sets aside the organisation's resources to achieve these goals.
- controls safety performance.

7. References

British Standard BS8800 – Guide to occupational health and safety management systems, 1996.

HSC: Directors' responsibilities for health and safety, July 2001.

HSC: Railways (Safety Case) Regulations 2000 – Guidance on regulations, 2000.

HSE: Railway Principles and Guidance – Draft Guidance on Competence Management and Assurance.

HSE: Reducing error and influencing behaviour HSG48, 1999.

HSE: Safety Case Assessment Criteria, April 2000.

HSE: Safety Culture Maturity Model, 2001.

HSE: Successful health and safety management HSG65, 1997.

Internal Control; Guidance for directors on the combined code, Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales, 1999.

METO (the National Training Organisation for Management, Enterprise and Commerce) standards.

Railway Group Standard GO/RT3260 (Competence Management for Safety Critical Work).

Railways (Safety Critical Work) Regulations 1994.

Safety Management in the Railway Group, DuPont Safety Resources, 2000.

Safety Tours: A good practice note, Railway Safety, 2001.

Part 2

Competence in Strategic Safety Management: Assessing and developing senior management teams

Contents

Overview

1. Introduction

a. The purpose of Part 2

Part 2 outlines the good practice we recommend for making sure that senior management teams employed by Railway Group companies are competent in strategic safety management (SSM). The guidance and tools sections of Part 2 provide more detail on how to use the good practice.

b. Who Part 2 is aimed at

Part 2 is aimed at members of senior management teams.

c. General approach

The good practice will help senior management teams understand what it means to be competent in strategic safety management and their role in making this happen.

To do this Part 2 provides:

1. An analysis of what organisations need to be able to do so they can understand and control the risks that they create through their everyday activities (SSM Organisational Objectives).

2. A self-assessment process that we recommend organisations use to review their abilities and work out how they can improve. All members of the senior management team need to contribute to the self-assessment process.

2. SSM Organisational Objectives

These objectives describe what a senior management team needs to be able to do to show that the organisation is competent to manage and carry out its work safely.

As shown in the diagram below (c), the overall aim is to *create and manage a progressive safety culture*. Four key objectives have to be met to achieve this. These are broken down into a number of specific objectives (see page 20 for full breakdown of objectives).

Diagram c

The objectives are the starting point for the SSM self-assessment process. They form a framework that you can use to review:

- how effective the organisation's safety management policies and strategies are.

- how well safety management policies and strategies are being implemented.

- the senior management team's performance and development needs.

3. The SSM self-assessment process

We recommend that you use the SSM self-assessment process to validate that your senior management team is competent and identify areas for improvement. The process has been designed to create a continuous cycle of organisational learning and development. Adopting this process will involve carrying out the three stages outlined below and illustrated in the following diagram (d).

SSM Self-assessment Process

Prepare to introduce a
self assessment process

↓

Carry out
self-assessment

↓

Evaluate the
self-assessment process

Diagram d

The self-assessment process needs to meet the specific needs of your organisation. Exactly how you use the process will depend on your organisation, its circumstances, and how these change over time

4. Preparation

a. Identifying the senior management team

You need to identify the people in your senior management team before the self-assessment takes place. The senior team takes overall responsibility for organisational decisions. Identifying the senior team may not be as straightforward as it seems if your organisation is part of a larger one.

b. Assigning roles and resources

For an effective quality-assured assessment process, it is important to assign the following roles.

- **Process sponsor** - the member of the senior team who takes overall responsibility for the self-assessment process, including starting the process and making sure the senior team continue to assess their competence.

- **Process manager** - the person who manages the detail of the self-assessment process and in particular makes sure that assessments are properly carried out and recorded.

- **Moderator** - the person who independently examines the conclusions that have been drawn based on the evidence from the self-assessment results and who feeds back findings to the senior team. This person should not be involved in the self-assessment process and should not be a member of the senior management team.

c. Reviewing current safety arrangements

The senior management team needs to review the current safety arrangements using the SSM Organisational Objectives as a guide.

5. Carrying out self-assessments

The diagram (e) below shows the main stages in the self-assessment cycle.

SSM Self-assessment Process

Select specific requirements

Set targets and select performance indicators

Define and gather evidence

Interpret assessment findings

Take action based on results and evaluate effectiveness
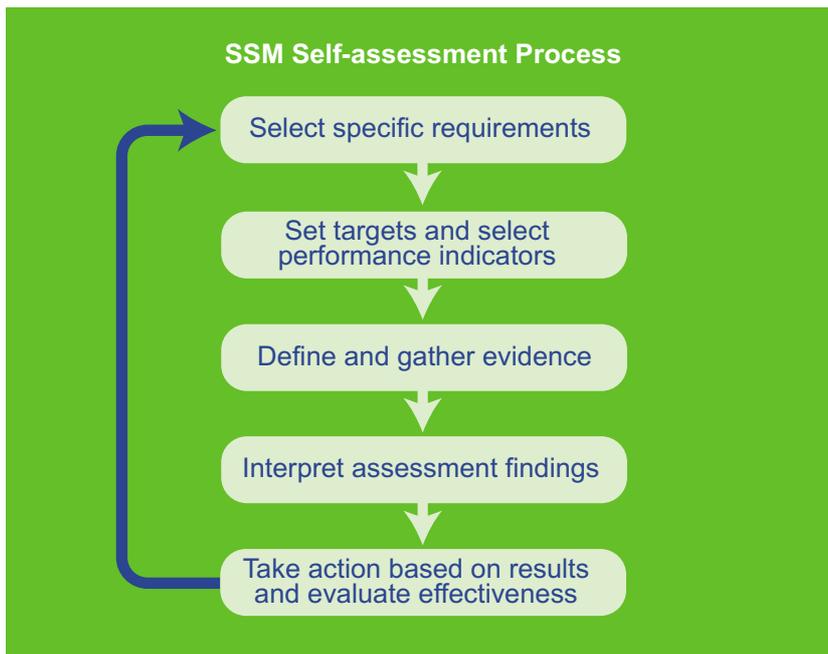
Diagram e

a. Prioritising SSM Organisational Objectives

There are too many SSM Organisational Objectives for the senior management team to review its performance against all of them at once. We recommend that you concentrate on a small number of objectives at any one time.

To decide the priority of SSM Organisational Objectives in the self-assessment, you can use the findings from the review of current safety arrangements and the senior management team's understanding of the risks it needs to control most.

b. Setting targets and selecting performance indicators

Once it has worked out what its priorities are, the senior management team needs to set targets for improving performance in these areas. These targets should relate to the overall safety performance of the organisation and the development of the senior management team itself.

The senior management team needs suitable performance indicators to track its progress against these targets.

c. Defining what evidence is needed

The senior management team has to define what evidence is needed to show how competent the organisation is at achieving the relevant SSM Organisational Objectives.

To define what evidence is needed, you need to identify:

- what type of evidence and how much is needed.

- where it can be found.

d. Gathering evidence

The senior management team needs to make sure that there is a system for collecting all the evidence needed and then reviewing it.

The senior management team is responsible for deciding whether there is enough evidence and whether that evidence is reliable and valid. It may not have to collect a lot of evidence. One accurate piece of evidence might be suitable in the right circumstances.

e. Interpreting assessment findings

The senior management team needs to develop a process for:

- reviewing the evidence that has been gathered.

- reaching conclusions on how important its findings are.

- deciding the implications of the findings.

f. Acting on decisions

It is important that the senior management team:

- uses the results of the self-assessment to work out how the organisation, team or individuals can improve.

- shows that it has taken action to deal with the results of the self-assessment.

g. Evaluating the effectiveness of action taken

There needs to be a process for planning, introducing, tracking and assessing actions, and for including information on the organisation's progress in later self-assessments.

If a number of areas can be improved, the senior management team needs to decide which of these are most important, given the resources that are available. Improvements should be linked to the organisation's business planning and aims.

6. Process evaluation and development

a. Moderating decisions

Moderation assures the quality of the self-assessment. It focuses on how relevant, valid and reliable the evidence used for self-assessment is and aims to answer the question 'would the results of this self-assessment stand up to examination in an inquiry?'

b. External verification

Periodic use of external expertise to provide an independent view of the self-assessment process is advisable.

SSM Organisational Objectives

The following table shows the complete set of specific objectives which underpin the self-assessment process.

Overall Aim	
Create and manage a progressive safety culture	
Key Objectives	**Specific objectives**
1. Make sure that the organisation's safety performance is developed in the medium to long term.	a. Develop strategies and policies for dealing with safety issues. b. Promote a positive safety climate. c. Make sure that performance is consistent with safety strategies and policies. d. Make sure that the organisation learns from experience.
2. Assess how safety risks are being controlled and decide what action needs to be taken.	a. Assess how safety risks will affect the organisation. b. Assess people's behaviour and attitudes to see how they affect safety risks. c. Make sure all the options to control risk have been considered. d. Make sure the decisions about actions to control risk are suitable.
3. Decide what support safety-related activities need and then make sure it is provided.	a. Create effective organisational structures and working groups. b. Make sure staff and contractors receive the training and development they need. c. Motivate staff and contractors to perform safely. d. Make sure the necessary resources are available.
4. Review and direct current safety and health performance.	a. Set targets for improving performance in safety in the short term. b. Direct how safety measures are put into practice. c. Make sure that the organisation meets current safety targets. d. Make sure there is a quick and effective response to safety-related problems.

Toolkit A on page 38 contains notes to help organisations use the SSM Organisational Objectives.

Guidance

7. Introduction

a. Purpose

This section gives guidance on how to put into practice the SSM self-assessment process. It is designed to help organisations in the early stages of introducing the SSM self-assessment process to:

- implement a systematic approach to assessing and developing the competence of their senior management teams.

- tailor the self-assessment process to their own requirements.

b. Who should read the guidance

Members of senior management teams are the main audience for this guidance, especially those who:

- champion and lead the self-assessment process.

- take on the role of Process Manager.

The guidance will also be of value to the person who takes on the role of Moderator, and managers outside the senior management team who are responsible for preparing and approving safety cases, safety management, or supporting senior manager selection and assessment.

c. Summary of approach

The senior management team has a shared responsibility for strategic safety management and should assess how well the team is delivering the organisation's safety objectives and obligations.

The team, as a whole, needs to be competent in strategic safety management, but individual team members do not need to be expert in all aspects of organisational safety.

Self-assessment is regarded as the most appropriate process for gathering evidence to demonstrate competence in strategic safety management, as senior management team members can easily locate evidence and know the context within which they are conducting the assessment. For self-assessment to be effective and a realistic view of the senior team's performance to be formed, it must be systematic, open and objective.

At the heart of the process lie the SSM Organisational Objectives. These describe what every Railway Group company needs to be able to do concerning safety. The self-assessment process is designed to establish whether these objectives are being met. The members of the senior management team, both individually and collectively, should assess how well their team is addressing the objectives. The findings from the self-assessment need to be used to improve the competence of the senior management team in strategic safety management.

Preparation

8. Assigning roles and resources

a. Involving the team

Every member of the senior management team should be involved in the self-assessment process in some way. For example, as part of gathering evidence on the team's performance, team members might be asked to complete a questionnaire or take part in a safety climate or culture survey.

To support the self-assessment process, members of the senior team need to ensure that:

- individual and team development needs arising from self-assessments are met.

- action points on organisational change and development are carried through.

- the effectiveness of these actions is monitored, evaluated and communicated.

The senior management team must also decide whether current arrangements for assessing the competence of existing and new team members are adequate or if they need to be developed or replaced.

b. Key roles

Responsibility for organising self-assessments should be given to the most appropriate members of the senior management team. Preferably two people should be involved, one of whom must be a member of the senior team. This excludes the role of Moderator which is described below.

In the approach recommended here, the assessment must involve a:

- **Process Sponsor** who will champion the process in the organisation. **This person must be a member of the senior team**. In most cases, we would expect this to be the director with lead responsibility for health and safety.

- **Process Manager** who is responsible for managing the assessment process. The Process Manager and the Process Sponsor can be the same person. The Process Manager may delegate part of his or her role to one or more Assessors.

- **Moderator** who is independent of the senior management team and responsible for validating performance indicators, and the reliability and validity of evidence and judgements. **The Moderator must not be a Process Manager or Process Sponsor.**

c. Role of the Process Manager

The role of the Process Manager is to facilitate, control and manage the assessment process. He or she should be able to:

- plan the assessment.

- gather and analyse evidence.

- interpret evidence and judge its authenticity.

- record decisions

- report findings and give feedback to the senior team.

d. Role of the Moderator

The role of the moderator is to examine the evidence used and confirm:

- the completeness of the evidence gathered.

- the appropriateness of the evidence and its interpretation.

- the justifiability of the judgements made.

He or she has a key role to play in provoking discussion and developing understanding of the assessment process and methods.

To function effectively, the moderator needs to:

- have access to the documented evidence and reports from self-assessments.

- discuss results with relevant members of the senior team and other managers as appropriate.

- be in a position to recommend and achieve changes and improvements in the self-assessment reports.

- have a good understanding of the organisation.

9. Reviewing current arrangements

a. Organisational review

The first stage of the self-assessment process is for the senior management team to review the organisation's safety performance and its current arrangements for meeting its safety case commitments.

This can be done using the SSM Organisational Objectives and:

- deciding where and how these are relevant to the organisation.

- identifying whether and how they are being addressed.

- evaluating the extent to which these issues are discussed in senior team meetings.

b. Reviewing senior team responsibilities and effectiveness

As a group, the senior management team needs to review:

- the roles and the level of expertise needed for the senior management team to achieve its objectives.

- how these roles are assigned to team members.

- how they identify people outside the senior team who can supply the extra knowledge, experience and competence necessary for the team to achieve its objectives.

In addition, the team needs to consider factors which affect the effectiveness of a team, namely:

- the competences of individual team members.

- the blend of individuals and personalities in the team.

- the structure and organisation of the team.

Research shows that the structure and organisation of the team is at least as important as individual competence in making a team effective. Teams are known to work better when their members have different strengths and capabilities.

c. Reviewing individual senior team member competences

Effective strategic safety management demands that all members of the senior management team:

- understand their collective and individual legal responsibilities, liabilities and duties.

- know enough about their organisation's safety commitments, risks and accountabilities to be able to help develop strategy and policy.

- are able to interpret safety performance data well enough to help shape strategy and policy whilst fulfilling their own responsibilities.

When deciding on the individual responsibilities and accountabilities of senior team members, as well as the level of competence expected of them, each member will need to consider:

- what aspects of their staff's behaviour and performance they will be held accountable for.

- how they expect to demonstrate to their own staff the importance of safe behaviour and the senior team's commitment to safety.

- how the senior team proposes to cope with the loss of team members, whether temporarily or permanently.

Carrying out self-assessments

10. Prioritising the SSM Organisational Objectives

a. Stages in prioritisation

There are too many issues in the SSM Organisational Objectives to be tackled in one round of self-assessment. Therefore, senior management teams need to decide:

- which objectives to tackle first.
- how much to tackle.
- when the self-assessment should be completed.

b. Focusing self-assessments

The senior management team needs to decide which SSM Organisational Objectives it wishes to give priority to. The initial review of the organisation's safety performance should help with this.

Priorities should not be influenced solely by the organisation's current safety goals. Current goals may be very short term, specific or driven by recent events. SSM self-assessment offers a chance to stand back from immediate concerns and consider the organisation's longer-term safety goals. The senior management team should focus on how it can best improve the organisation's safety culture. This may or may not coincide with current safety goals.

The self-assessment process should be continuous, but the focus will change over time. Once self-assessment of the highest priorities is complete, self-assessment against the next priorities can begin. The senior team should consider all of the SSM Organisational Objectives within a timescale that is relevant to the needs of the business.

The results of self-assessments will reveal strengths and weaknesses in the competence of the senior team and its individual members. The more that is known about the individuals concerned, the more reliable the assessment of the team will be. The senior team will need to assure itself that its members are competent to carry out their specific duties and responsibilities.

11. Performance indicators

a. Performance indicators

Performance indicators are measures of desirable outcomes; based on either historical data or the estimated likelihood of future safety or health incidents. They can be used to:

- get a fix on current performance and likely future performance.

- gauge progress against safety targets both for the company and for the industry as a whole.

- draw comparisons between an organisation and the industry.

Two types of performance indicators have been mapped against the SSM Organisational Objectives - SSM indicators and industry indicators. A list of these can be found in Toolkit B on page 44.

b. SSM indicators

The SSM indicators have been created especially to target senior team performance. These are the performance indicators that:

- an individual organisation may use to provide information on safety performance and how the senior team needs to develop.

- are directly related to the SSM Organisational Objectives.

- apply to individual organisations.

Some of them are versions of the industry indicators, while others are new. They are designed to help organisations get started on their self-assessments and should be amended, replaced or supplemented to suit.

c. Industry indicators

Industry indicators can be used by individual organisations to compare their own performance with the whole industry's performance. These indicators are:

- the published performance indicators that are used to track the safety performance of the rail industry.

- found in various relevant sources, the most important of which are the quarterly and annual Railway Group Safety Performance Reports and the annual Railway Group Safety Plans.

There are two types of industry indicator.

- lead indicators provide information about how the organisation is likely to perform based on the estimated likelihood of future safety or health incidents.

- lag indicators provide information about how the organisation has performed based on historical data.

All the industry indicators are currently used by Railway Safety.

d. Using performance indicators

Performance indicators help focus the gathering and interpretation of evidence. The senior management team needs to decide which indicators are most relevant to the organisation and to keep this under review. Once this decision is made, you need to define the types and sources of evidence needed.

A more powerful and reliable assessment of organisational performance may be gained by combining indicators and evidence from other sources. In combination, different types of evidence are more likely to reveal where to look for root causes. Inconsistencies and mismatches are often discovered while comparing the results of assessments using different sources of evidence. Mismatches may indicate problems such as reduced attention to safety priorities. For example, a train operating company might never have suffered a train crash but find that indicators of unsafe driving, such as speeding or SPADs, have been rising significantly. Such a finding should trigger an in-depth search for contributory causes and solutions.

However, there are limits to the usefulness of performance indicators. They cannot be used to reach explanations of performance or behaviours - that needs a more detailed analysis of root causes and evaluations of safety climate and organisational culture. Indicators can be used to track eventual changes in performance, but this can be dangerous. Many performance indicators are backward rather than forward-looking and single indicators tend to tell only a part of the story, often relying on rare or infrequent events.

e. Selecting performance indicators

When selecting performance indicators:

- select those indicators most suited to the organisation and its activities. The most appropriate indicators are those which best reflect key areas of risk.

- other relevant indicators may be used, if wished. For example, BS8800 Annex E.3 gives a list of general outcome indicators. If any of these are particularly relevant to the organisation, they should be added to the mix of indicators selected.

- for each of the four key objectives in the SSM Organisational Objectives, select at least one indicator, preferably more, to ensure an accurate assessment.

- for each specific objective try to identify one or more indicators. This is important for understanding and keeping track of what is happening at an operational level. The same indicator may apply to several specific objectives and using common indicators is better than having many different indicators.

When selecting indicators bear in mind the following principles:

- the number of performance indicators should be kept to manageable levels.

- performance indicators should be clearly related to the SSM Organisational Objectives.

- performance indicators must take the form of observable outcomes or behaviours.

- the outcomes or behaviours must be capable of being measured accurately.

- performance indicators must relate to outcomes that are attributable to, and under the control of, the senior management team.

SSM and industry indicators are likely to change over time as the industry develops and the needs of the organisation change. So the indicators selected should be reviewed regularly.

12. Planning self-assessments

The senior management team will need to make decisions on the practical aspects of self-assessment.

The team will need to decide:

- the amount of time that should be devoted to self-assessment.

- the best forum for conducting self-assessments and evaluating the results. For example, should it be included on the agenda of executive board meetings or handled in a separate meeting?

- how frequently self-assessment should be on the agenda.

- the organisational and administrative resources that are needed to support the process.

- how decisions at the various stages of self-assessment should be documented.

A senior management team will need to answer these questions for itself but should bear in mind that the effort expended and the quality of the process will be taken into account in safety case audits and approvals.

13. Defining Evidence Requirements

a. Organisational Objectives

The SSM Organisational Objectives identify the areas in which a senior management team should be able to demonstrate its competence. They do not define how well teams or their members should be able to perform - that is left to individual senior management teams to determine.

When defining evidence requirements, you will need to consider what evidence relates to the different objectives and how that should be collected and evaluated.

b. Sources of evidence

A key task early in the self-assessment process is to identify sources of relevant evidence for the objectives under assessment.

One option is to use the diagnostic questions which have been developed for each of the specific objectives (see Toolkit C on page 47). This will involve reviewing the individual diagnostic questions and considering what evidence is required to answer each one.

This may mean asking a series of more detailed questions to get at relevant sources of valid and reliable information. For instance, one of the diagnostic questions is '*How effective are senior team communications on safety goals?*' In order to identify the evidence required to answer this, it may be necessary to ask more specific questions, such as:

- what safety goals are the senior team setting?

- are these current and appropriate?

- are employees and contractors aware of the safety goals?

- what processes are used for measuring staff knowledge of goals and related changes in behaviour?

By proceeding in this way, it should be possible to identify where one source of evidence can be used to answer a number of questions.

Remember that evidence requirements will evolve and should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. Changes may be triggered by the results of the self-assessment process or if the company significantly changes its personnel, activities or structure.

c. Evidence specification

It may be useful to summarise evidence for the objectives under assessment in an evidence specification. This would help as a reference in later assessments and demonstrate good practice to Moderators.

An evidence specification should contain a summary of the relevant sources of evidence, cross-referenced to the SSM Organisational Objectives and the mix of performance indicators you have selected (see Section 11).

14. Gathering evidence

a. Quality of evidence

It is for individual organisations to decide the adequacy of the evidence they use to determine the competence of their senior team. There is no right or wrong volume of evidence. What is important is that the evidence used is valid (accurate) and reliable (consistent). As experience grows, views on what is adequate will change.

The key ways of ensuring validity and reliability are:

Validity

- having more than one person involved in the assessment.

- having evidence from a number of different sources (*eg from industry lead indicators, diagnostic self-assessment, safety culture surveys, etc*), rather than repeated evidence from a single source.

- where possible, using more than one method of assessment (*eg observation, management safety tours, documentary evidence, questioning, surveys*, *etc*)

- using direct evidence in preference to indirect evidence.

Reliability

- reliability can always be increased by collecting more evidence.

- the systematic collection of evidence increases reliability.

b. Efficiency

Evidence gathering should be a continuous process. The first step is to identify information that is readily available and use this where appropriate. Evidence can be re-used. Some may apply to several specific objectives. When reviewing evidence it is useful to refer back to the specific objective against which you are trying to assess performance and ask how the evidence helps you to judge how well the senior team is performing in this area.

One source of evidence may be the collated results of individual safety performance reviews. These are discussed in Part 3.

For many organisations, systematic self-assessment will be a new discipline. So it is unlikely that all the required evidence will be accessible or available on the first attempt at self-assessment. The important thing is to establish a systematic approach to assessing and developing the competence of the senior team so that year-on-year improvements can be achieved.

It is best to schedule the gathering and interpretation of evidence over a reasonable timescale. Doing these things quickly or leaving them to the last minute makes them seem much more daunting and makes it harder to keep to priorities. A sensible approach might be to tackle one or two specific objectives at a time with a month or so between each assessment.

15. Interpreting assessment findings

a. Interpreting evidence

To accurately interpret the evidence gathered, you need to:

- understand how and why evidence relates to the SSM Organisational Objectives.

- understand how to combine evidence from different sources.

- understand how to weigh different sources of evidence.

- be systematic when reviewing evidence.

b. Scoring

At first, most organisations are likely to use a qualitative approach to judging evidence. As they refine their assessments, they may wish to add a quantitative element and begin scoring aspects of their competence. Reasons to consider scoring the competence of the senior management team are that it provides a useful index for tracking progress over time and making internal comparisons between different parts of the organisation, and a useful way of communicating progress.

At different stages organisations may also wish to score different aspects of performance. For example, in the first round of assessment the main concern may be to discover whether appropriate action is being taken. Later, the effectiveness of the action will become more important. Obviously, both aspects can be examined at the same time if that is felt to be appropriate.

Diagnostic questions have been suggested for each specific objective (see Toolkit C on page 47). These can be used to support quantitative scoring if organisations wish to take this approach. To score the diagnostic questions, a response scale will need to be created for each question. Where possible, use a common scale for all the questions - although slight variations of wording, depending on the precise content of the questions, are acceptable. It is best to use a scale with 4 or 6 response options. More response options tend to confuse, while less tend to over-simplify. The response options should be spread evenly across the response scale. For example, most of the diagnostic questions can be answered using the four-point scale shown below, or something very similar:

1	2	3	4
Excellent	**Good**	**Acceptable**	**Poor**

A more sophisticated approach is to use more detailed descriptions to explain each of the points on the scale. This approach is used in the SSM software tool.

Scores for each question can be added together to give total scores for performance against specific objectives, key objectives or overall progress. However, to make proper comparisons, you should calculate the average score per question for each specific objective and/or area of contribution. This will compensate for different numbers of questions being associated with each specific objective.

c. Validating assessments

An organisation may wish to see how its performance compares with the performance of the industry as a whole and whether this supports the interpretation of the evidence.

For example, if the organisation believes it is performing well, but a comparison with industry averages suggests poor performance, then it is advisable to examine the interpretation and relevance of the underlying evidence.

d. Self-assessment results

The interpretation of assessment findings should give results which:

- identify areas of strength, weakness and risk.

- make it easier to decide the priorities for improving performance.

- help the senior management team track changes in organisational performance.

16. Acting on self-assessment results

a. Determining implications

Self-assessment results should be used to identify necessary corrective actions or improvements. Self-assessments may address several aspects of performance. Poor performance may be the result of weaknesses in systems or processes, as well as gaps in personal or team competence. So, for example, self-assessments may identify areas where management information systems or communications need to be enhanced.

b. Organisational response

The following principles can be used to guide the organisation's response to the results of the self-assessment:

- organisations must focus on maintaining and improving safety competence and performance.

- where a number of areas for improvement have been identified, the senior management team needs to decide which of these has the highest priority given the resources available.

- improvement actions should be linked firmly to the organisation's business planning cycle and objectives.

- if resources presently available are judged inadequate, corrective actions may include bringing in specialists on a consultancy or short term contract basis to quickly 'plug' gaps.

c. Team development

The focus for senior teams will be on their collective coverage of competence demands. Assessment results will indicate whether the composition of the senior team fully covers the SSM Organisational Objectives and what its strengths and weaknesses are.

Assessment of the senior management team's competence in relevant specific objectives may help identify team development needs. Teams can develop through group learning programmes, reallocation of safety responsibilities or changes in the way senior managers are selected, etc.

d. Individual development

Development of individual competence in safety issues should be a part of senior managers' continuing professional development (CPD). Individual development needs may be identified by assessing the senior team's competence in each of the key objectives and specific objectives.

Training and development plans for individuals should not just focus on achieving immediate developmental goals. They should also ensure that existing competence does not deteriorate.

Individual development can include open-learning programmes to improve understanding of concepts and principles; short courses to improve specific skills and knowledge; planned work experience and secondments. There should be some means of evaluating training and development options and the effectiveness of their delivery.

e. Range of potential actions

It is important in developing a progressive safety culture that an organisation's goals for development are challenging. Good intentions and wishful thinking are not acceptable as contributions.

The actions decided by the senior management team should:

- have clear timescales for delivery.

- have milestones and deadlines which can be tracked.

- be allocated the resources to allow them to be completed successfully.

- be set in such a way as to personally involve the senior team.

Making sure these steps are taken will give Moderators and any other external parties a good indication that a senior team is really committed to and leading the actions it is taking.

The following list identifies where the senior management team might decide to take action on the basis of self-assessment results.

- **Managerial contributions:** these include both the individual and team development options outlined above. They also include continually clarifying what is expected from managers and/or management teams at all levels in the organisation. These expectations should be stated not only in safety responsibility statements but also in job descriptions and performance appraisals.

- **Systems and Processes:** refers to changes in how safety data is collected and interpreted; how decisions are taken on the basis of such information; and how safety goals and initiatives are communicated and implemented.

- **Organisational Structure:** refers to any changes that may be needed to an organisation's structure to meet safety requirements.

- **Policies and Strategies:** refers to any changes or additions to safety policy and strategy, including changes which affect purchasing and other commercial activities, and how these changes are implemented and followed through.

- **Tools and technologies**: refers to any change or additions in equipment, assets, methods and approaches that may have an impact on the organisation's safety performance.

Process Evaluation and Audit

17. Evaluating actions

The senior team should be concerned with assessing not only the impact actions have had on the organisation's safety performance but also:

- how cost-effective individual actions have been.

- the effectiveness of the contributions of people outside the senior management team.

- how well the actions were implemented and the goals communicated.

- whether there were any secondary gains not directly related to safety.

To conduct an evaluation, the senior team has to identify criteria against which the effectiveness of actions can be judged. The SSM Organisational Objectives form the starting point for identifying these criteria and there are a variety of tools in the public domain which can be used to support this *eg the recently published HSE document, Safety Culture Maturity Model*.

Further guidance on evaluating the effective implementation of actions can be found in BS8800 Annex C.4.

18. Recording and documenting the process

There must be a reliable system for recording evidence and assessment judgements.

Self-assessments need to be traceable so the Moderator can identify:

- who has assessed what.

- when the assessment was carried out.

- the types of evidence and indicators used to evaluate performance against the key objectives.

This does not mean that assessment records must contain detail of all the evidence that has been considered in the self-assessment. Instead, the documentation should contain:

- a concise description of which SSM Organisational Objectives have been addressed in the current period.

- a summary of performance against those objectives, with references to relevant sources of evidence.

- a summary of agreed action points from the current period, covering organisational, senior team and individual actions.

- a summary of progress against previously agreed action points, again with pointers to relevant sources of evidence.

Tools

Introduction

These tools will help you interpret and implement the Strategic Safety Management self-assessment process.

There are three toolkits.

- **Toolkit A** presents supporting notes to accompany the SSM Organisational Objectives. Senior management teams may find these helpful in identifying the nature and scope of actions needed to correct weaknesses or to deliver specific improvements.

- **Toolkit B** shows a number of relevant SSM and Industry indicators which senior management teams can use for evaluating both their own and their organisation's safety performance.

- **Toolkit C** contains sets of questions which senior management teams can use to design their self-assessments. These questions are cross-referenced to the SSM Organisational Objectives.

Remember that the SSM Organisational Objectives describe what organisations need to be able to do. It is left to individual organisations to set targets for how well they need to do these things, mindful of the commitments in their accepted Railway Safety Case and the objectives set out in the Railway Group Safety Plan.

Toolkit A - Annotated SSM Organisational Objectives

KEY OBJECTIVE 1
Make sure the organisation's safety performance is developed in the medium to long term

Specific Objective 1a
Develop strategies and policies for dealing with safety issues.

The senior management team has responsibility for developing policy and strategy. The senior team may draw on the support of other managers and technical experts in the process. The senior team should be concerned with making sure that, as a minimum, the following activities are undertaken effectively. Each one is a potential source of evidence in assessing how well this specific objective is being met.

- Assessing the organisation's safety performance.

- Assessing the implications of changes in safety legislation and regulations.

- Assessing options for controlling safety, commercial and other risks.

- Deciding which safety policy and strategy options to pursue.

- Making sure of the feasibility of safety options and that they are line with other policy and strategic decisions.

- Assessing the likely impact of policy and strategy initiatives.

The senior team will need to understand the issues well enough to evaluate and agree actions.

Specific Objective 1b
Promote a positive safety climate.

Safety culture refers to the values and assumptions reflected in the systems, procedures and behaviours of an organisation. Safety climate describes the workforce's perceptions of the social and managerial aspects of the workplace. By identifying the workforce's views, organisations might better understand the underlying safety culture. Creating a more positive safety climate is therefore a shorter-term objective than developing a progressive safety culture. The senior team should be proactive here. Relevant activities include:

- Showing the senior team's commitment to safety.

- Conducting management safety tours.

- Communicating safety strategy, policy, goals and expectations to all staff.

- Making sure that staff at all levels are involved in designing and implementing safety initiatives.

- Making sure that different groups' safety activities and initiatives are co-ordinated.

●Assessing the impact of safety-related communications and how well they are understood.

Specific Objective 1c
Make sure that performance is consistent with safety strategies and policies.

Senior teams will need to consider how they go about:

●Making sure that responsibilities and accountabilities are assigned in a definite but flexible way.

●Considering whether and how safe performance is specifically recognised.

●Setting policies for dealing with unsafe performance.

●Acting in a manner consistent with the organisation's stated safety policy and strategy.

●Making sure that staff are alert to safety issues.

●Making sure that all staff are encouraged to take personal responsibility for safety.

●Making sure that information on the organisation's safety performance and performance comparisons (historical and with other organisations) are communicated to the whole organisation.

Specific Objective 1d
Make sure that the organisation learns from experience.

The approach an organisation takes to learning from accidents and incidents is usually a good indicator of its safety culture. The senior team should be concerned with:

●Assessing internal incidents and the effectiveness of the organisation's responses to them.

●Assessing the implications of incidents and developments in other organisations.

●Making sure that the results of incident evaluations are communicated to all relevant parties.

●Making sure that there is an 'organisational memory' of incident evaluations.

●Making sure that there is a regular process for considering safety risk assessments.

●Making sure that safety risk assessments are considered when strategy and policy are being formulated.

KEY OBJECTIVE 2
Assess how safety risks are being controlled and decide what action needs to be taken.

Specific Objective 2a
Assess how safety risks will affect the organisation.

This means that the senior team should be:

- Making sure that information on all relevant safety risks is available and reviewed (risks include technical, cultural, human error, latent and precursor).

- Making sure that there are means to translate safety risk data into useful comparative data.

- Assessing the significance of trends, and changes in trends, in safety data.

- Assessing the significance of patterns and relationships amongst lead and lag indicators, risk assessments, latent risks, risk models, etc.

- Setting up measures of the likely business impact of safety risks.

Specific Objective 2b
Assess people's behaviour and attitudes to see how they affect safety risks.

The senior team should be:

- Assessing the quality of staff and their safety performance.

- Assessing the quality of contractors and their safety performance.

- Assessing the effectiveness of the organisation's procedures and systems.

- Assessing the effectiveness of management and supervision in the organisation.

- Assessing the effectiveness of resource provision and support.

- Assessing the quality of work and job design for complexity, stressfulness, efficiency and human factor issues.

- Assessing the effectiveness of communication systems within the organisation.

Specific Objective 2c
Make sure all the options to control risk have been considered.

The senior team should be:

- Making sure that relevant expertise is used when considering and developing options.

- Making sure that there is effective communication between safety working groups and between these groups and the senior management team.

Specific Objective 2d
Make sure the decisions about actions to control risk are suitable.

The senior team should be:

- Making sure that suitable criteria are used when comparing options.

- Making sure that safety risks are properly accounted for in action priorities.

- Making sure that action plans agreed by senior management are based on sufficient understanding of the issues.

- Communicating action priorities to all relevant parties.

KEY OBJECTIVE 3
Decide what support safety related activities need and then make sure it is provided.

Specific Objective 3a
Create effective organisational structures and working groups.

The senior team needs to be committed to a positive safety culture to make it effective. This also applies to individual front line employees and contractors performing safety critical and safety related tasks. Staff attitudes to issues such as risk tend to stem from the perception of the ways people above them in the organisation behave. Management culture, therefore, has a major influence on safety culture. These are the types of activities that will provide sources of evidence for this objective:

- Selecting and developing a safety-conscious senior team.

- Making sure that working groups tackling safety-related issues are high quality.

- Assigning personal responsibilities and accountabilities to senior team members (including attendance and involvement).

- Making sure that personal responsibilities and accountabilities are assigned to staff at all levels in the organisation.

- Making sure that there is effective management and supervision of safety-related tasks.

- Providing for flexible restructuring of the organisation to meet safety demands.

- Making sure that there is co-ordination and communication between safety working groups.

- Making sure there is good communication between senior management and key safety advisors.

Specific Objective 3b
Make sure staff and contractors receive the training and development they need.

For improvements in safety culture and performance to be achieved it is necessary to understand the competence, motivation and perceptions of employees and contractors. As more is asked of people, it is essential that arrangements for assessment and development keep pace. The senior team's role in this should involve:

- Making sure that effective training is provided.

- Making sure that relevant guidance, advice and support are available.

- Making sure that effective assessment and development procedures and arrangements are in place.

- Making sure that feedback is given on performance.

Specific Objective 3c
Motivate staff and contractors to perform safely.

Performance is a product of competence and commitment, so motivation should be a key area of concern for the senior team. Roles for the senior team include:

- Clearly communicating safety goals and expectations to staff.

- Making sure that there are ways to recognise and/or reward safe performance.

- Defining and implementing policies for dealing with unsafe performance.

- Demonstrating that input and/or feedback from staff on safety issues is valued.

Specific Objective 3d
Make sure the necessary resources are available.

The role of the senior team should include:

- Making sure that the equipment and materials necessary for effective performance are provided.

- Allocating budgets which permit effective performance.

- Making sure that working environments encourage effective performance.

KEY OBJECTIVE 4
Review and direct current safety performance.

Specific Objective 4a
Set targets for improving performance in safety in the short term

Senior management must determine the targets most appropriate for their organisation. The following activities should generate potential sources of evidence:

- Interpreting the implications of safety legislation, regulations and obligations for organisational priorities.

- Interpreting the implications of safety performance data for organisational priorities.

- Setting the safety priorities for the organisation.

- Aiming for achievable results within the target timescales.

Specific Objective 4b
Direct how safety measures are put into practice.

This suggests a wide range of relevant activities, including:

- Allocating and/or agreeing budgets in line with safety priorities.

- Making sure that appropriate staff are available and deployed.

- Making sure that effective reporting and communication channels are set up between safety projects and the senior team.

- Agreeing deadlines and schedules for safety action.

- Reviewing and agreeing implementation plans.

Specific Objective 4c
Make sure that the organisation meets current safety targets.

A wide range of relevant activities should include:

- Selecting the most appropriate indicators for assessing progress against safety targets.

- Making sure that progress can be monitored through an effective data collection system.

- Assessing progress against targets.

- Making sure that action is taken to tackle shortfalls.

Specific Objective 4d
Make sure there is a quick and effective response to safety related problems.

This suggests a wide range of relevant activities, including:

- Making sure that relevant safety information can be identified rapidly and can be communicated quickly to responsible staff.

- Making sure that the organisation has the ability to respond rapidly to high priority safety.

- Making sure that the frequency and nature of responses to high priority safety problems are monitored and that any trends or patterns are analysed and addressed.

Toolkit B - Performance indicators

Senior management teams should choose those indicators which suit their organisation and use them to gauge their own performance. They should compare them with the industry's other safety performance goals. They should also consider performance indicators used widely in the industry and those which apply specifically to them.

a. Suggested SSM indicators

KEY OBJECTIVE 1
Make sure the organisation's safety performance is developed in the medium to long term

1a Develop strategies and policies for dealing with safety issues

- The suitability of strategic plans (given organisational and industry targets and identified risks).

- Delivery against appropriate industry lead and lag indicators and targets.

1b Promote a positive safety climate

- Effectiveness of communications indicated by awareness of (and commitment to) strategic safety goals at all levels in the organisation.

- Rate of change in safety behaviour in targeted areas.

- Delivery against appropriate industry lead and lag indicators and targets.

1c Make sure that performance is consistent with safety strategies and policies

- Rate of change in safety behaviour in targeted areas.

- Delivery against appropriate industry lead and lag indicators and targets.

1d Make sure that the organisation learns from experience

- Suitability of strategic plans (given organisational and industry targets and risks).

KEY OBJECTIVE 2
Assess how safety risks are being controlled and decide what action needs to be taken

2a Assess how safety risks will affect the organisation

- Completeness of risk assessments and risk prioritisation.

2b Assess people's behaviour and attitudes to see how they affect safety risks

- Completeness of analysis and prioritisation of human performance factors.

2c Make sure all the options to control risk have been considered

- Completeness of analysis of available options.

2d Make sure the decisions about actions to control risk are suitable

- Rate of change in lag indicators (*eg accidents, incidents, derailments, etc*);

- Rate of change in lead indicators (*eg driver errors, T&RS defects, etc*).

KEY OBJECTIVE 3
Decide what support safety related activities need and then make sure it is provided

3a Create effective organisational structures and working groups

- The extent to which staffing targets, particularly those with safety implications, are being met.

3b Make sure staff and contractors receive the training and development they need

- The extent to which competence throughout the organisation is improving or being maintained at a high level.

3c Motivate staff and contractors to perform safely

- Improvement or maintenance of individual safety performance.

- Improvement or maintenance of team or work group safety performance.

- Improvement or maintenance of organisational lead indicators of safety performance.

3d Make sure the necessary resources are available

- Improvement or maintenance of team or work group safety performance.

- Improvement or maintenance of organisational lead indicators of safety performance.

KEY OBJECTIVE 4
Review and direct current safety performance

4a Set targets for improving performance in safety in the short term

- Suitability of safety targets and their consistency with the Railway Group Safety Plan.

4b Direct how safety measures are put into practice

- Safety priorities are reflected in work planning and scheduling.

4c Make sure that the organisation meets current safety targets

- Safety priorities are reflected in the rate of progress in targeted areas.

4d Make sure there is a quick and effective response to safety-related problems

- Numbers of improvement notices placed on the organisation.

- Numbers of outstanding improvement notices.

b. Suggested Industry indicators

The following indicators are either already used for reporting on industry safety performance or are under development. The senior team should start by considering which apply to their organisation and then determine whether they wish to add their own indicators:

Industry lag indicators

- Number of accidental equivalent fatalities.

- Number of injuries.

- Collisions.

- Derailments.

- Other incidents (*eg dangerous goods*).

- Other damage to assets/equipment.

- Acts of vandalism.

- Assaults and robberies.

- Suicides.

Industry lead indicators

- Driver errors (*SPADs, speeding, etc*)

- Other unsafe acts (*eg by passengers, contractors or other members of the workforce*).

- Asset condition (*eg failure rates*)

- Work irregularities (*eg possession irregularities*).

- Incidence of near misses (*eg at level crossings*).

- Supply chain failures.

Toolkit C – Diagnostic Questions

KEY OBJECTIVE 1
Make sure the organisation's safety performance is developed in the medium to long term

1a Develop strategies and policies for dealing with safety issues

- How adequate are the resources committed to strategic safety issues?

- How good are the safety reports and information supplied to the senior management?

- How effective are the processes for generating strategic safety goals and policy?

- How effective is the process for reviewing and updating safety strategy?

- How thorough is the organisation in establishing root causes and utilising that information in strategic planning?

- How aware are senior team members of their legal and statutory responsibilities?

- ⋆ how resistant is the senior team to cutting corners where safety is concerned?

1b Promote a positive safety climate

- How effective are the organisation's processes for assessing its safety climate?

- How well do staff at all levels understand and accept their role in safety?

- How visible is the senior management team's commitment to safety issues?

- To what extent do staff at different levels in the organisation take part in the design of safety initiatives?

- How effective are senior team communications on safety goals?

- How effective are the organisation's communications in influencing customer and contractor perceptions of safety?

1c Make sure that performance is consistent with safety strategies and policies

- To what extent are personal objectives and performance indicators for safety set for staff?

- How consistent with safety priorities are systems of recognition, reward and sanction for safety performance?

- How do staff attitudes to safety compare with the behaviour expected of them?

- How effective are methods of gathering information from staff on operational experience of safety?

- How well is safety intelligence used to stop poor behaviour and improve it?

- Do senior managers openly show their support for safe performance and their intolerance of unsafe performance?

1d Make sure that the organisation learns from experience

- How good is the senior management team at using the expertise available to it?

- How effective is the senior team at assessing the action plans put forward to tackle poor safety trends and the implications of risk assessments?

- How good is the organisation at maintaining a "corporate memory" of safety issues and responses?

- How much does the senior team take into consideration comparisons with other related organisations and their experience?

- How adequate are the resources committed to risk and performance modelling and assessment?

KEY OBJECTIVE 2
Assess how safety risks are being controlled and decide what action needs to be taken

2a Assess how safety risks will affect the organisation

- How adequate are the resources that have been committed to the task of risk identification?

- How well are the results of risk assessments used in SSM decision-making?

- To what extent do the risk reports to senior management provide the information they need?

- Is enough attention paid to the full range of safety risks facing the organisation (e.g. technical, cultural, latent etc.)?

- How regularly are risk data collected and analysed and presented to senior management (for all the different types of risk)?

2b Assess people's behaviour and attitudes to see how they affect safety risks

- Does the senior team pay enough attention to the full range of potentially detrimental behaviour and human performance factors?

- Have relevant human performance factors been identified and controlled?

- How effective is the organisation's competence management system?

- How regularly is information on relevant human performance factors updated?

- How does the perception of risk amongst the *workforce* compare with actual risk?

2c Make sure all the options to control risk have been considered

- Is it obvious that the senior team uses risk assessment in its prioritisation and evaluation decisions?

- Can the senior team easily access the information necessary for generating and assessing options?

- Does the senior team have a clear understanding of the organisation's most serious risks?

- How effective are the senior team at keeping the organisation's most serious risks under review?

2d Make sure the decisions about actions to control risk are suitable

- How effective are the senior team's methods of evaluating options?

- How consistently is policy applied by the senior team when formulating and assessing courses of action?

- How effectively are decisions about courses of action communicated to relevant staff and other stakeholders?

KEY OBJECTIVE 3
Decide what support safety related activities need and then make sure it is provided

3a Create effective organisational structures and working groups

- How adequate is the provision of manpower to safety functions?

- To what extent are safety functions integrated with business functions?

- How readily can the organisation adapt to changing safety requirements?

- How clear are the senior team about their own personal responsibilities and accountabilities for safety?

- How effectively are responsibilities and accountabilities assigned to staff at all levels?

- To what extent does the structure of the organisation support its safety culture?

- How readily can the senior team access the expertise it requires?

- How well does the senior team understand the safety issues affecting policy and strategy decisions?

- How effective are the senior team's methods to ensure the creation of high quality teams and work groups?

- How clear are the lines of responsibility for managing safety throughout the company?

3b Make sure staff and contractors receive the training and development they need

- How effective are the organisation's training and development processes (for all levels of staff)?

- How well are guidance, support and coaching provided in the workplace?

- How effective are the organisation's safety arrangements and procedures?

- How effectively is the safety performance of staff measured?

- How effectively is the safety performance of contractors managed?

- How well are changes in performance tracked?

3c Motivate staff and contractors to perform safely

- How well are goals and expectations of safety performance communicated to staff?

- How readily can measures of individual, group and organisational safety performance be provided?

- Is safe performance properly recognised throughout the organisation?

- Is safe performance properly rewarded throughout the organisation?

- How effective are the sanctions used to deter unsafe performance?

- How well does the senior team show its degree of commitment to safety?

- To what extent are staff encouraged to participate in safety talks?

- What arrangements are in place to ensure that staff have adequate feedback?

- How effective are the feedback methods?

3d Make sure the necessary resources are available

- Is the senior team given proper information on the condition of equipment, materials, logistics arrangements, etc.?

- Does the organisation support its safety priorities with appropriate levels of investment?

- Does the working environment encourage effective, safe performance?

- How effective is the senior team at making resourcing decisions which affect safety?

KEY OBJECTIVE 4
Review and direct current safety performance

4a Set targets for improving performance in safety in the short term

- How achievable are the targets being set?

- How well communicated and understood are safety targets?

- How effective are the processes used to identify the safety implications of business targets?

- Is relevant data available for each target?

4b Direct how safety measures are put into practice

- How good is the senior team at setting milestones and deadlines for safety targets?

- How adequate are the budgets allocated to achieving safety goals?

- How well established are the communication channels between work teams and the senior team?

- How effective are the processes for revising and refining plans?

- Has the senior team accurately evaluated the impact of safety interventions on the organisation?

- How well is the full range of change management factors considered and planned for safety interventions?

4c Make sure that the organisation meets current safety targets

- How effective are the mechanisms for monitoring progress against safety targets?

- How relevant is the information the senior team uses when assessing progress?

- How adequate are the processes for obtaining and storing data?

- How effective is the senior team at interpreting the results of progress analyses?

- How regularly are progress reports for safety targets considered?

- How rapidly are the results of progress assessments fed back into target setting and the revision of plans?

4d Make sure there is a quick and effective response to safety related problems

- How rapidly does the organisation respond to unpredictable events?

- How many identified safety problems are unresolved?

- How good is the organisation at salvaging situations and maintaining continuity of operations?

- How good are the mechanisms in place for recording actions and their completion?

Part 3

Safety performance: Reviewing and developing managers

Contents

Overview

1. Introduction

a. The purpose of Part 3

Part 3 outlines the good practice we recommend for making sure that:

- the safety performance of managers supports the safety objectives and culture of the organisation.

- managers can consistently achieve the level of performance necessary to carry out their safety responsibilities.

If your organisation does not currently review the performance of managers, this good practice provides an example of how to proceed.

If your organisation is already reviewing the performance of managers, this good practice can be used to evaluate your existing process.

b. Who Part 3 is written for

Part 3 is written for people who design and manage processes for reviewing or developing managers with safety responsibilities.

The document is not aimed at first-line managers who are assessing people whose work is defined as safety critical.

c. General approach

The good practice aims to help organisations to make the safety responsibilities of managers at all levels more explicit and identify suitable safety performance indicators. It is intended to be used as part of an overall approach to reviewing and developing the performance of managers. It is not advisable to review managers' safety performance in isolation.

The good practice in Part 3 provides:

1. A description of what managers with safety responsibilities need to be able to do to control risks created by their organisation's activities.

2. A process for reviewing the safety performance of managers and working out how this can be improved.

The good practice is designed to complement the self-assessment process for senior management teams explained in Part 2. The principles and approach described here can be used to review the performance and development needs of current and potential members of the senior management team.

2. Safety objectives for managers

The safety objectives shown in the diagram (f) below describe what managers need to be able to do to show that they can manage and carry out their work safely. They are derived from the SSM Organisational Objectives (see page 20).

The overall aim for managers is to *contribute to the creation and management of a progressive safety culture*. To achieve this aim four key objectives must be met. Each key objective is broken down into specific objectives which describe in more detail what managers need to be able to do (see page 62 for a full breakdown of objectives).

Diagram f

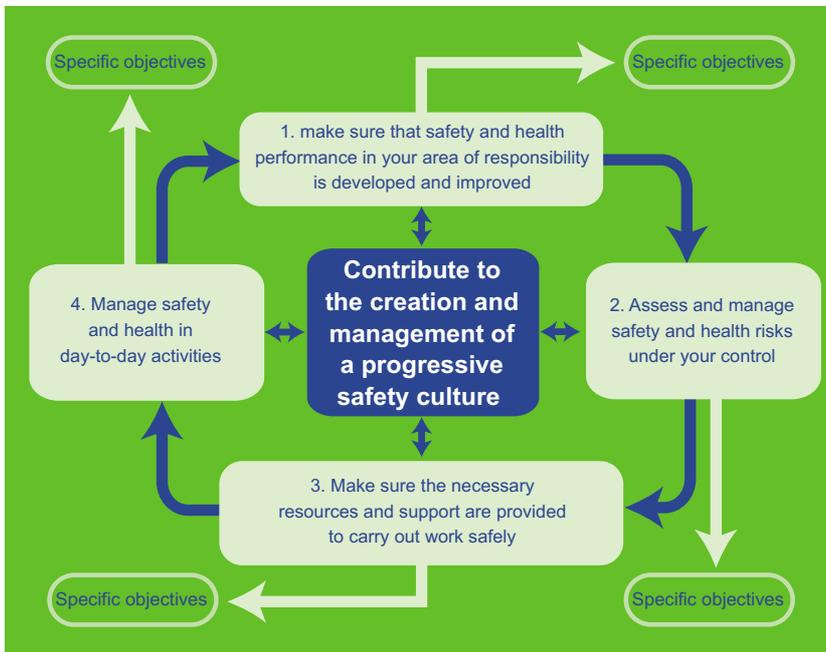The safety objectives for managers are the starting point for reviewing the safety performance of managers. You can use them to:

- define the safety requirements for which an individual manager has responsibility.

- help identify safety targets.

- review safety performance in the light of relevant safety objectives for the individual manager.

- consider how your organisation manages safety through managers.

3. Reviewing safety performance

We recommend that you use the process described in the following pages to review and develop the safety performance of managers with safety responsibilities. The process needs to:

- be part of your organisation's overall approach to reviewing and developing the performance of managers.

- meet your organisation's particular needs - exactly how you develop and use it will depend on your organisation, its circumstances, and how these change over time.

The main stages are:

- prepare to introduce safety as part of performance reviews or assess how safety is covered through your existing performance reviews.

- make sure safety performance is reviewed as part of overall performance reviews for managers.

- evaluate the effectiveness of the process to review safety performance.

4. Preparations

a. Assign roles and resources

The first step in the process is to give appropriate people the following roles.

- **Process sponsor** - a senior manager who will make sure a process for reviewing the safety performance of managers is introduced, maintained and regularly evaluated.

- **Process manager** – a manager who will make sure that the review of safety performance is relevant, high quality and properly recorded.

- **Performance reviewers** - the people who review the safety performance of managers and set their safety performance targets.

You need to make sure that your organisation has enough resources in place to manage the process effectively. This includes enough people to manage the process, carry out performance reviews and evaluate the process, and systems to record the outcomes of performance reviews and monitor their effectiveness over time.

b. Identify managerial roles with safety responsibilities

To do this you need to:

- identify work activities that directly or indirectly affect safety.

- assess the risks associated with this work.

- identify who has responsibility for managing and controlling these risks.

- analyse gaps and overlaps in the management of these risks.

- assign or reassign responsibilities to address gaps and overlaps.

c. Define safety performance requirements

In order to assess managers' safety performance, first you need to define the performance you expect from them. For each managerial role you need to set out:

- what individual managers are expected to do to manage and control risks or hazards.

- how they are expected to behave.

- the level of personal responsibility they have for controlling risks or hazards.

Expected performance may be documented in job descriptions, role profiles, competence standards, or safety responsibility statements. If your organisation has already defined general performance requirements for managers, you may need to review these to make sure safety is included and adequately covered.

If you give specific responsibilities for the control of risks to individual managers, your organisation needs to have a procedure in place to show that individuals have accepted those responsibilities.

d. Evaluate current arrangements for safety performance reviews

If your organisation already has a performance review process (for example an appraisal system or a competence management system) you need to determine how it is helping the organisation and individual managers to improve safety performance. The sorts of criteria you should use include:

- cost effectiveness of safety measures.

- contribution of management actions to achieving safety goals.

- coverage given to organisational safety objectives.

5. Review managers' safety performance

It is not advisable to review managers' safety performance separately from other aspects of their performance.

a. Set safety performance targets

The performance reviewer needs to agree targets for safety performance with each manager. It is best to take targets set for other aspects of performance into account when agreeing safety performance targets. Above all, everyone involved in the safety performance review needs to be satisfied that a manager's safety performance targets are based on the risks that the organisation needs to manage.

Performance reviewers need to monitor individual safety performance targets to make sure they are relevant to organisational objectives.

b. Plan the performance review

Performance reviewers are responsible for making sure that individual performance reviews are effective. In planning reviews, they need to discuss

with the person who is being reviewed when reviews will take place, what level of performance is expected and what evidence will be required.

It is better to treat safety performance as one aspect of overall performance than to deal with it separately. Therefore, it is important that the planning of performance reviews is well co-ordinated to avoid undue or insufficient emphasis on safety.

c. Gather evidence

Your organisation needs to encourage everyone involved in reviewing safety performance to play an active part. Managers need to present evidence that shows they are managing safety as expected. The performance reviewer may also gather evidence and decides whether there is enough evidence which is reliable and valid.

d. Make decisions about safety performance

Performance reviewers need to review the evidence that they, and the manager, have gathered against the safety performance required and targets identified for that person. The reviewer then needs to decide what the evidence shows about the manager's behaviour and performance in relation to safety.

e. Carry out performance reviews which cover safety performance

When all the necessary evidence has been gathered, a meeting is needed between the performance reviewer and manager who is being reviewed. The aim of the meeting is to allow each side to give feedback and discuss next steps.

f. Take appropriate actions

The performance reviewer needs to decide what action, if any, is needed to address any areas of under-performance identified by the review. The performance reviewer's decision needs to take into account any actions arising from the overall performance review.

Actions may affect the individual and organisation. In both cases, the action needs to:

- be appropriate to control the risks involved.

- be prioritised in relation to the risks identified.

- maintain or improve current levels of safety performance.

- be planned, monitored and recorded.

g. Evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken

To judge the effectiveness of any action, success criteria are needed both for the individuals involved and the organisation. These can be derived from the evaluation of current arrangements (see page 59).

6. Process evaluation and development

a. Quality assure decisions about safety performance

Your organisation needs to have a process in place to help maintain the quality of performance reviews. The accuracy of decisions and the consistency of safety performance reviews carried out needs to be independently checked.

b. Keep accurate records

A reliable system is needed for recording details of safety performance reviews. It needs to be consistent throughout the organisation and allow you to produce up-to-date management information relating to safety performance reviews.

c. Using information from safety performance reviews

The overall results of performance reviews can help to:

- identify mismatches between individual responsibilities and organisational objectives.

- target training and development spending and monitor the quality of training.

- identify significant skills gaps and re-evaluate roles if necessary.

- improve succession planning.

- refine recruitment and selection requirements.

d. Evaluate arrangements for safety performance reviews

You need to regularly assess your arrangements for safety performance reviews. The results of your assessment can be analysed along with other information on your organisation's safety performance and the effect of measures to improve safety. This information can be used to identify any improvements required.

You also need to regularly look at the safety performance requirements for managers to make sure they are still accurate and relevant. How often you do this depends on the particular risks your organisation faces, but it is best to reconsider safety performance requirements whenever your organisation's safety plan is revised.

Safety Objectives for Managers

The following table shows the complete set of specific objectives which underpin the key safety objectives for managers.

Overall Objective	
Contribute to the creation and management of a progressive safety culture	
Key objectives	**Specific objectives**
1. Make sure that safety performance in your area of responsibility is developed and improved.	a. Put strategies and policies for dealing with safety issues into practice. b. Contribute to a positive safety climate. c. Make sure that your team's performance is consistent with safety strategies and policies. d. Make sure that your team learns from its experiences.
2. Assess and manage safety risks under your control.	a. Assess how safety risks will affect the team. b. Assess people's behaviour and attitudes to see how they affect safety risks. c. Make sure actions you chose to control risks are suitable.
3. Decide what support safety-related activities need and then make sure it is provided.	a. Manage working groups effectively. b. Make sure staff and contractors receive the training and development they need. c. Motivate staff and contractors to work safely. d. Make sure any necessary resources are available.
4. Review and direct current safety and health performance.	a. Make sure that day-to-day activities are carried out safely. b. Put safety measures into practice. c. Make sure that your team meets current safety targets. d. Make sure there is a quick and effective response to problems related to safety.

Guidance

7. Introduction

a. Purpose of the guidance

The purpose of the guidance is to help organisations put into practice the recommended approach for reviewing and developing the safety performance of managers outlined in the Overview.

It is designed to help organisations:

- set up a process to review and develop the safety performance of managers.

or

- integrate the good practice into an existing performance review process for managers.

b. Who should read the guidance

The main audience for this guidance is people who

- are involved in the design and implementation of processes and systems for reviewing and developing the performance of managers.
- review the safety performance of managers.
- are involved in developing the safety performance of managers.
- take on the role of Process Sponsor or Process Manager.

The document is not designed for use by first-line managers assessing people doing safety critical work.

Preparation

8. Assigning roles and resources

a. Leading roles

The importance of a visible commitment by senior managers to the successful implementation of the review and development of the safety performance of managers cannot be under-estimated.

There are two key roles which need to be assigned:

- the **process sponsor** who has responsibility for ensuring a SPR process for managers is implemented, maintained and evaluated on a regular basis.

- the **process manager** who has responsibility for assuring the quality and relevance of the SPR process by making sure that it is properly carried out and recorded.

The process sponsor needs to be a member of the senior management team. The process manager needs to be familiar with the organisation's safety and risk management policies and current arrangements for reviewing the performance of managers. The process manager needs to play a part in the selection, training and monitoring of performance reviewers. These roles may be assigned to the same person.

b. The performance reviewer

Performance reviewers are the people who carry out reviews of managers' performance. Performance reviews are commonly carried out by line managers because they are generally the most familiar with their staff's behaviour and responsible for motivating them to perform at acceptable levels.

Performance reviewers are responsible for:

- setting and updating safety performance targets (may be called objectives or indicators).

- planning reviews.

- gathering evidence on safety performance against performance requirements before each review meeting.

- deciding whether there is enough evidence to make a decision about safety performance and whether that evidence is reliable and valid.

- leading performance review meetings.

- defining appropriate actions and evaluating their effect.

Performance reviewers are also responsible for encouraging managers to play an active part in the process. Individual managers need to take some responsibility for gathering evidence that shows they are fulfilling their safety responsibilities.

The relationship between the reviewer and the person being reviewed needs to be more than a series of set piece meetings if evidence of the behavioural

aspects and consistency of their performance is to be gathered over time. This is important if the organisation is trying to create a climate of intolerance to unsafe acts and the behaviours likely to lead to them, and to encourage or reinforce safe performance. For example, safety tours can provide an opportunity for the performance reviewer to judge whether the evidence "on the ground" confirms that the manager being reviewed is proving effective in generating the desired safety culture.

Although line managers are most likely to take on the role of reviewer, there are alternatives. Managers may be reviewed by senior managers who are not their line managers (*eg project managers*), by their peers, by their subordinates, by themselves, by customers or by any combination of these people depending upon the focus of the review. Specific guidance on the use of such 360° feedback techniques is available from the British Psychological Society, the Industrial Society and others.

Organisations will need to decide how they wish to review the safety performance of individual managers and by what means. The answers to these questions will depend upon the level of the risk that needs to be controlled, the resources available and the type of work that is being done by the person involved.

c. Developing performance review skills

The ability of the reviewer is known to be key to an effective performance review process. It cannot be assumed that all managers are competent to carry out this role. Poor selection and development of reviewers can be counterproductive. Managers need to be well prepared and trained in order to conduct a fair and accurate evaluation of performance.

Organisations will need to decide how they wish to develop the skills of their performance reviewers. One option is to use the METO (the National Training Organisation for Management, Enterprise and Commerce) standards which contain elements on assessing the performance of teams and individuals (C13.3) and on assessing the development of teams and individuals (C10.5).

d. Integrating safety performance reviews

As explained, reviews of managers' safety performance need to be integrated with more general reviews of performance. Safety is one form of risk. The ability of an organisation to manage its safety risks is likely to depend on its approach to managing business risks in general. Where resources are already devoted to performance reviews, it should not be necessary to allocate additional resources to include a review of safety performance.

e. Other resources

Organisations need to make sure that suitable and sufficient resources are made available to manage the SPR process. Resources include enough people to manage the process, carry out performance reviews and quality assure the process. The responsibilities of everyone involved in the SPR process should be clearly understood and allocated. Sufficient resources also need to be allocated to recording the outcomes of performance reviews and monitoring the

effectiveness of the process. Tools and materials, and appropriate guidance for both performance reviewers and managers being reviewed also need to be considered.

9. Identifying managerial roles with safety responsibilities

a. Identifying managerial and supervisory roles to review

There are three stages in identifying whether it is appropriate to review the safety performance of managers. These are:

- identify and classify managerial activities that have a direct or indirect impact on safety. In many cases, this information will already be available, for example in safety responsibility statements or risk assessments, and will only need to be reviewed to ensure it is up-to-date.

- identify and assess the risks associated with the activities. Again, you can review the outputs of existing risk assessments to identify and prioritise risks.

- identify activities and associated risks where measures to control risks and hazards depend on the competence of managers.

When considering the effectiveness of competence as a control measure, it is advisable to take into account human factors that may have an impact on competence. There are a number of these factors including:

- environmental factors *eg noise, restricted work s*pace.

- organisational factors *eg company culture, poor work planning leading to high work pressure.*

- job factors *eg constant disturbances and interruptions, high workload.*

- human and individual characteristics which influence behaviour at work in a way which can affect health and safety *eg bored or disheartened staff, high level of fatigue, ill-health*

The findings of this review can be used as a basis for tailoring methods for managing the competence of managers with safety responsibilities.

10. Defining safety performance requirements

a. Reviewing existing performance requirements

Many rail organisations are using some form of job description, although these are sometimes called role profiles or job competencies. Their purpose, usually connected with pay and grading, is often separate from that of safety responsibility statements.

Good practice guidance produced by HSE and DuPont, amongst others, recommends that safety performance requirements and safety responsibilities are included in job descriptions, along with other important performance parameters.

They do not advise having descriptions of safety performance requirements and safety responsibilities as attachments.

Therefore the first step is to review the content and structure of existing performance requirements and safety responsibilities and identify where revisions might be necessary. Issues to consider include:

- how responsibilities for the control of risks or hazards are described and integrated with other performance requirements.

- whether what the manager needs to do to support the effective delivery of control measures is clearly described.

- how relevant contributions from the Safety Objectives for Managers are selected for each individual.

- whether there is complete coverage of the full set of Safety Objectives by the organisation.

b. The content of safety performance requirements

Safety performance requirements for managers need to:

- describe the type of contribution expected.

- define the level of responsibility a person has for the control of risks or hazards.

- define the targets a person is expected to meet.

- identify the evidence that will be used to judge whether requirements are being met.

c. Identifying sources of evidence

It is important that the performance review consider:

- **Performance outputs** – where performance is directly related to the control of risks or hazards, the safety performance requirements can be used to identify clear performance outputs and the types and amounts of evidence needed. The mix and type of evidence required will depend on organisational priorities. Sometimes, but not always, the evidence can be translated into performance targets that can be used to track improvements over time.

- **Managers' behaviours** - the way managers behave provides a good indicator of potential risks even where these are not currently identifiable in performance outputs. For example, a manager who behaves inconsistently towards his or her staff could be creating problems for the future such as high staff turnover or resentment of management whilst still achieving short-term safety objectives.

Often it is difficult to identify the impact of managerial actions on safety performance. As a result, safety-specific data may neither be available nor adequate for review purposes. However, the way managers behave and perform in respect of their safety responsibilities is likely to be similar to how they behave and perform in other areas of their work. In these cases, what reviewers should be looking for are patterns or examples of general behaviour which are likely to represent a manager's approach to safety matters. Examples of these include:

- attention to detail.

- willingness to follow procedures.

- tolerance of other people not following procedures.

- preparedness to challenge conventional wisdom.

- recognition of the wider implications of specific decisions or actions.

d. Allocating and agreeing individual responsibilities

For the delegation of safety responsibilities to individual managers to be effective, responsibilities need to be:

- clearly defined.

- compatible with the level of authority the person has.

- agreed and accepted by each individual.

It is important that responsibilities are allocated in such a way as to allow the evaluation of individual effectiveness. If they overlap or are incomplete, then it can be difficult to call upon individuals to explain variances in performance or to decide what actions are needed to improve performance. Lines of report should be clearly understood by all concerned.

The agreement and acceptance of safety responsibilities is a key aspect of the SPR process. Simply allocating responsibilities to people on paper or through briefings is unlikely to achieve ownership or full recognition of the implications involved. People who feel involved in the definition of their responsibilities are more inclined to accept and fulfil them effectively.

e. Ensuring coverage of the Safety Objectives for Managers

The Safety Objectives for Managers describe what managers with safety responsibilities need to be able to do. They serve two purposes:

- they provide a 'menu' of the safety contributions of managers, from which organisations can select those which apply to individual roles.

- they identify the key objectives which organisations need to ensure are covered by their managers.

Simply identifying an individual to cover each area of contribution is unlikely to be sufficient. Coverage will be influenced by the controls required to mitigate risks.

The specific objectives can be used as the basis for safety performance requirements for managers.

11. Assessing current arrangements for reviewing safety performance

a. Assessing the adequacy of current performance review arrangements

The SPR process needs to be part of the organisation's overall process for reviewing performance. Where an organisation already has a performance review process, for example an appraisal system or a competence management system, it will need to assess how well the system addresses safety performance.

The assessment of current arrangements should consider:

- how performance reviews are planned, how the evidence on safety performance is gathered, how decisions are made about safety performance based on the evidence.

- how performance reviews are conducted and how well safety is addressed.

- how decisions are taken and acted upon, and how the impact of actions is evaluated.

The findings from the assessment may lead to enhancement or adaptation of the SPR process. Any changes need to ensure that the review of the safety performance of managers is properly integrated in the review process.

The classic weaknesses of performance review processes include

- managers assess vaguely defined personality traits rather than comparing actual performance against agreed standards or targets.

- staff are unaware of the results of performance reviews except as they affect their pay or lead to sanctions.

- there is no mechanism for recognising or rewarding safe behaviours or performance.

- there is little or no opportunity for staff to discuss their strengths and weaknesses and agree training and development needs.

- performance review reports are not used to identify training and development needs nor to establish the potential for promotion.

- where training and development needs are identified, action is not taken.

- processes are complex and not properly understood by the people involved in them.

Reviewing safety performance

12. Performance targets

a. Using performance targets
The Safety Objectives (see page 62) describe what managers need to be able to do. It is for individual organisations to decide how well they are expected to do them and they may wish to use performance targets for this.

Performance targets - like performance objectives and indicators - are benchmarks against which progress and the quality of performance can be evaluated by both the manager and the performance reviewer. It is advisable that individual managers are set targets for other aspects of their performance as well as safety (see Part 3, Section 10d).

Performance targets need to be:

- realistic but offer some challenge.

- attainable – focused on things that the individual has control over.

- discussed, agreed and accepted by both parties.

- documented..

Managers need to be able to relate their safety targets to those of the organisation, so use organisational or departmental objectives as the basis for individual performance targets.

b. Setting performance targets
Setting targets for every aspect of a manager's performance is a time-consuming, and in most cases unnecessary, task. A more practical approach is to focus on four or five key safety areas where risks are greatest for the organisation and the individual. Setting performance targets is likely to be the responsibility of the performance reviewer. Co-ordinating performance targets is a task for the Process Manager.

When setting performance targets bear in mind the following:

- safety performance targets need to be described in terms of measurable outcomes define the starting point (current level of performance) and what is expected.

- when the target is attained, it must be verifiable in some way, so that the manager and performance reviewer can look at evidence and identify if the target has been met - both parties need to be referring to the same evidence and interpreting this in the same way.

- the targets need to be focused on the individual.

- it is desirable that some performance targets focus on management behaviours.

- in some cases, it may be beneficial for the manager and performance reviewer to jointly work out a plan of action to achieve the target.

Performance targets are not static. They need to be reviewed and, if necessary, updated or new ones developed, in the light of safety performance, current or anticipated risks and organisational circumstances.

13. Preparing for review meetings

a. Planning performance reviews

Where a performance review process is already in place, there is no need carry out a separate planning process for reviewing safety performance since this should be integrated with planning for the overall performance review. However, organisations do need to take safety performance into account when planning general performance reviews.

Planning performance reviews helps to identify opportunities for efficiently collecting evidence and making best use of it.

The steps in planning are described below:

● identify and review available evidence of safety performance, *eg from monitoring, safety data*.

● identify any gaps where there is insufficient or no evidence and plan ways to collect relevant evidence (see Part 3, Section 10d).

● confirm that there will be sufficient evidence to make a decision about manager's performance.

● check and agree the plan with the manager being reviewed so that he/she knows what to expect.

Planning is the responsibility of the performance reviewer.

b. Gathering evidence of safety performance

Evidence gathering should be a continuous process. Leaving evidence gathering to the last minute makes it seem much more daunting and makes it harder to build an accurate picture of overall safety performance. If left to the last minute, then there is a tendency to focus on recent events that are closest to review dates. Reviews that focus on these can be inaccurate because people tend to make more effort during such periods, hoping that any prior failings might be overlooked.

When the performance reviewer is deciding how to gather evidence, he or she needs to make sure the methods used:

● collect evidence on the behaviour of the manager and what he/she has achieved in relation to safety.

● are relevant to the work being assessed.

● enable evidence to be collected effectively and efficiently.

The first step is to identify information that is readily available and use this where appropriate. A variety of sources may be available, depending on the nature of the evidence itself and the work in hand. Evidence can be re-used and

may apply to several specific objectives. When collecting evidence it is advisable to review its relevance to the aspect of safety performance being reviewed.

The evidence gathered needs to be both reliable (consistent) and valid (accurate). When collecting evidence, to improve validity and reliability, it is recommended that:

- evidence is collected from a number of different sources (*eg safety performance reports, attendance at safety briefings, quality of management safety tours, team responses to safety culture surveys, etc*), rather than repeated evidence from a single source;

- more than one method of evidence collection is used (*eg observation, review of documentary evidence, questioning, etc*).

- there is an organised approach to evidence collection.

- more evidence is collected if there are doubts about reliability.

It is useful to think of the review of safety performance as a way of ensuring that there is a good connection between what senior managers in the organisation think should be done and what people on the ground actually do. For this reason, it is advisable to make some use of 360° assessment techniques to capture the views of managers on how their managers and colleagues are performing and behaving.

c. Interpreting evidence

Performance reviewers need to:

- review the evidence in the light of safety performance requirements and targets.

- judge whether there is sufficient evidence to make a decision about the manager's behaviour and performance.

- specify and gather more evidence if required.

14. Leading performance review meetings

a. Before the review

Before the performance review takes place, the performance reviewer needs to consider:

- what will be the most valuable evidence relating to safety performance in the review period, including events, reports, records or other information.

- what was discussed and agreed at the last performance review, including targets set.

- events that have happened since the last review which were not anticipated and may have had an impact on safety performance.

Proactive managers will know their safety responsibilities, understand the relationship between these and organisational safety objectives and recognise the importance of gathering evidence to demonstrate progress against objectives.

b. Introduction

Performance reviews can be uncomfortable and even confrontational, so the first step is to try to help the manager relax. The success of the performance review process may be measured in terms of how willing people are to raise issues or discuss problems either at set-piece review meetings or in a day-to-day context. Performance reviewers need to organise the review meeting so that it will not be interrupted.

The introduction can cover:

- the objectives and structure of the review.

- identifying matters the manager would like to discuss.

- taking notes.

c. Reviewing the evidence

Performance reviewers need to look at the evidence gathered to identify where the manager has performed well in terms of safety. It is best to start by commenting on positive achievements, where progress has been maintained and where improvements have been made, and discussing what the individual has done well. There is no set formula for giving feedback. However, it is recommended that feedback is given selectively on the things that the manager has control over.

Ideally, the manager can review the main facts about their safety performance and as far as possible begin to identify their own solutions to any problems that have arisen. By asking open questions, the performance reviewer can direct the discussion to relevant issues such as the key areas of risk, where safety performance is not as good as it might be and what improvements are possible.

In cases where the manager has not prepared for the performance review, discussion of safety performance can arise naturally from the review of the evidence, and of events and activities in the review period. The main aim is to keep the discussion specific and precise rather than general.

d. Agreeing next steps

The final stage is to summarise what has been agreed, in particular follow-on actions and new safety performance targets/indicators. It is sensible to let the manager summarise first and for the performance reviewer then to focus on any important points that have been left out.

15. Taking action and evaluating effectiveness

a. Identifying appropriate actions

The findings from the review can be used to identify actions to restore or develop safety performance. The performance reviewer can decide what action is needed on the basis of:

- evidence on the type and causes of under-performance.

- an analysis of the circumstances affecting performance (*eg factors related to the team or organisation, or the equipment or systems with which they work*).

- any training or development needs which have already been identified.

- the suitability of the person for further training and development.

- a review of the work environment.

Reviews may identify individual development needs. Individual development can include open-learning programmes to improve understanding of concepts and principles; short courses to improve specific skills and knowledge; planned work experience such as involvement in the investigation of accidents, or secondments to another part of the organisation or another organisation.

The findings may have implications for the organisation, as well as the individual. Poor performance may be the result of weaknesses in systems or gaps in team competence.

b. Making sure things happen

It is important that actions identified as a result of the performance review are implemented. Good intentions and wishful thinking are not acceptable and do not contribute to the development of a progressive safety culture.

It is advisable to draw up a plan to show how actions will be implemented. When drawing up training and development plans for individuals the focus should not be just on achieving immediate developmental goals, but also on ensuring that existing performance does not deteriorate. The plan should be regularly reviewed to monitor how the individual is progressing.

It is also advisable to have a structured process for selecting from training and development options and evaluating the effectiveness of their delivery.

c. Evaluating actions

To evaluate the effectiveness of actions, you first have to decide how this will be judged. The Safety Objectives form the starting point for identifying how you can judge this.

When evaluating how effective actions are or have been, you need to consider:

- the effect of the action on the manager's, team's or organisation's safety performance.

- how cost-effective the action has been.

- how well the action was introduced, and the reasons for communicated.

- whether the action brought about any secondary benefits (or problems) not directly related to safety.

Process evaluation and development

16. Quality assurance

a. Who is involved?

The Process Manager is responsible for assuring the quality and relevance of the SPR process. He/she may delegate part of his or her role to one or more individuals. Those people involved in quality assuring reviews need to be familiar with the organisation's safety and risk management policies and the arrangements for reviewing the performance of managers.

b. What to consider and how

Quality assurance provides an internal check of the SPR process. The quality assurance process should take into account:

- the number of reviews taking place.

- feedback from previous samples.

- the appropriateness and quality of the evidence being reviewed.

- the sufficiency of the time and resources committed to the process.

- the adherence to the agreed process.

- the quality of the administration and record-keeping.

- whether deadlines are met and information is available at the right time.

- the experience of performance reviewers and of the people who have been reviewed.

A sample of performance reviews may be selected to check their quality and consistency and ensure that decisions are valid. When selecting a sample the following factors should be taken into account:

- the number and type of people being reviewed.

- the number of performance reviewers and their experience.

- the range of performance requirements.

- the range of review methods used.

- the number and type of review locations.

c. Using findings

The findings from the quality assurance process should be used to:

- maintain the quality of reviews.

- identify inconsistencies, duplication and waste.

- make recommendations for improvements.

17. Recording

a. Information about the process

At a high level, the Process Manager has overall responsibility for making sure information is kept concerning:

- managerial activities where decisions or actions could introduce risk.

- safety performance requirements for managers.

- decisions and actions arising from safety performance reviews.

- the results of any evaluations of the arrangements for reviewing and developing safety performance.

b. Deciding what to record about individual safety performance

It is up to your organisation to decide what information from the SPR process is recorded, in what format this will be held and who has access to it.

Examples of information commonly held include:

- who was reviewed, their signature and comments.

- who the performance reviewer was, their signature and comments.

- when the review took place.

- references which enable the appropriate evidence to be easily located.

- what safety performance targets were agreed for the next review period.

- actions to be taken as a result of the review.

- a date for the next review.

The important features of this information are that it is up-to-date, easily accessible and that individual records are traceable in the event of audit.

c. Who is involved?

In most organisations, the production of a record of the performance review is the responsibility of the performance reviewer and the individual has the opportunity to comment on the record before it is agreed and signed by both parties. However, organisations may choose to take an alternative approach, such as asking the person whose performance is under review to complete the record.

18. Using Information from the SPR process

For reviews of safety performance to be effective, there must be visible outcomes of the review process. Some of these outcomes will be concerned with individual rewards and sanctions and with personal training and development needs. Other outcomes will be concerned with improving the safety climate of the organisation. In the latter case, managers should consider opportunities arising from safety performance reviews for the following:

- publicly recognising, and thus encouraging, safe performance by individuals

and teams. This can apply to specific instances of behaviour which remove hazards, ideas for improving safety or recognising a high level of safe performance over time.

- stamping out unsafe behaviour by publicly demonstrating that management will not tolerate instances of unsafe behaviour.

- disseminating lessons learned from both safe and unsafe practice and for ensuring that the organisation as a whole learns appropriate lessons from safety-related incidents.

- identifying patterns or trends in both safe and unsafe behaviour across different individuals and work groups and taking action to encourage or discourage such behaviour as appropriate.

- identifying work processes or procedures which hinder safe performance or, indeed, lead directly to unsafe performance.

- generating evidence for the SSM self-assessment.

19. Evaluating the SPR process

The effectiveness of the SPR process needs to be reviewed periodically. The frequency of review will be influenced by the organisation's assessment of risk and changes in the external environment.

The results of the assessment, together with safety and other performance data, can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the SPR process. Aside from obvious matters such as the continued relevance of safety performance requirements and efficiency, the assessment might also consider the wider implications for recruitment and selection, training and development, management systems and organisational culture.

One way of assessing the SPR process is to use the following as criteria for measuring the impact of the process:

- the directness of the relationship between organisational and individual safety goals.

- the improvement in safety performance.

- the coverage of safety responsibilities in the organisation.

- the effectiveness of communications concerning safety strategy, goals and performance.

Tools

20. Connecting organisational and individual targets

a. Top-down Review

As a starting point, you need to identify one, maybe two, organisational safety objectives. For each of these:

- Identify the first/highest layer of management who are responsible for ensuring that this objective is met - specific posts need to be identified here not just grades or broad groups of managers.

- Carefully consider how the organisational safety objective is translated into objectives and/or responsibilities for the posts in question. The way to approach this is to consider the question, 'what does this person need to do play their part in ensuring that the organisational objective is met?' The answers to this question need to be formally captured *eg in job descriptions*.

- Outline processes by which the organisation can ensure acceptance and understanding (of the implications) of objectives and/or responsibilities by individuals, these processes might be briefings, discussion forums and one-to-one sessions. The key is consultation not coercion.

- State how the organisation measures whether responsibilities are fulfilled and objectives are met. These measures need to be specific and measurable. A good system for doing this is SMART (*ie Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound*).

The next step is to take each post above in turn and*:*

- Identify the management reports for this position.

- Describe how the management reports contribute to meeting the safety objectives of their manager (focusing on the manager's objectives which relate to the organisational safety objective).

- Identify if there is anyone else who contributes to meeting these objectives – these can be outside the organisation (such as contractors) or people not working directly for the manager (those in other teams).

- Carefully consider how the safety objectives and/or responsibilities are formally described and captured *eg in job descriptions*.

- Outline processes by which the organisation can ensure acceptance and understanding (of the implications) of objectives and/or responsibilities by individuals. These processes might be briefings, discussion forums and one-to-one sessions.

- State how the organisation measures whether responsibilities are fulfilled and objectives are met, these measures need to specific and measurable.

b. Bottom-up Review

The organisation needs to select a group of first line managers (or supervisors) who have responsibility for the same type of activities or the same type of people *eg maintenance team supervisors*. For this group of individuals you need to:

- Identify the main safety dimensions/responsibilities of the work carried out.

● Describe the processes for setting objectives related to these safety dimensions.

● Carefully consider how the safety objectives and/or responsibilities are formally described and captured *eg in job descriptions*.

● Outline processes by which the organisation ensures acceptance and understanding (of the implications) of objectives and/or responsibilities by individuals.

● State how you measure whether responsibilities are fulfilled and objectives are met.

● Outline how these objectives relate to the objectives of those who manage these people.

● Consider how to identify whether the efforts of individuals and the group are contributing to their manager meeting his objectives.

The final step is to trace the links between the objectives/responsibilities at different levels up through the organisation to the organisational objective. If you have difficulties, consider*:*

● Who would know how to do this, is it that there is a process but it is unknown or unclear, or is it that there is no process?

● How are other objectives managed within the organisation? Can the processes here be translated into how safety objectives are managed?

c. Writing safety performance requirements

Safety performance requirements and safety responsibilities need to cover:

● **Responsibility** – use an appropriate verb to describe the type of contribution that the manager or supervisor needs to make; *eg direct, control, ensure, approve, co-ordinate, contribute, help*.

● **Risk to be managed** – describe the risk(s) that the manager or supervisor has to manage. Risks range from major hazards to deterioration in performance (human and equipment).

● **Size or level of responsibility** - describe the size or complexity of the demands of the task. *Examples include the size of the team being managed, the size of the budget etc*.

● **Standard expected** – define how well the manager is expected to perform in this area.

Examples include:

Reduce the number of days lost to stress related illness by maintenance staff by 20 per cent per annum.

Contribute to the development of a training and assessment programme for all company train drivers, which will reduce SPADs by 50% in the next two years.

The organisation needs to decide the most suitable process and format for describing and communicating safety performance requirements. Options include competence standards, behavioural objectives, job descriptions and role profiles.

21. Suggested performance and behavioural indicators

a. Performance indicators for managers

These are examples of performance indicators or targets for managers. To make use of them, you need to customise them to the needs of your organisation and individual managers.

1. Make sure that safety performance in your area of responsibility is developed and improved.

- Details of developments or changes to safety policy circulated to staff within 1 week of being agreed.

- Attendance at 90% of safety meetings and briefings.

- Number of unsafe acts, incidents and accidents related to failure to follow procedures reduced by 50%.

- Recommendations from incident/accident investigations implemented within 6 months.

- No corrective action requests are outstanding beyond their closure date.

2. Assess and manage safety risks under your control.

- All significant safety related items are reported promptly.

- Validation certificates are awarded with minimal amendment.

- Number of improvement notices reduced by 25%.

- Instances of speeding reduced by 10%.

3. Make sure the necessary resources and support are provided to carry out work safely.

- Staff under your control are provided with equipment that is safe and without risk to health or the environment.

- Staff training needs identified through performance review are met within 6 months.

- Equipment inventories are accurate and up-to-date.

- 99% of equipment passes safety tests.

4. Manage safety in day-to-day activities.

- All staff will have safety responsibilities incorporated into job descriptions within 6 months.

- The average response time is reduced by 10%.

- All worksites are left clear of scrap and waste.

- 95% of staff are available when required.

- There are no non-compliances with regulations or requirements.

- Long hours working is reduced by 25%.

b. Behavioural indicators for managers

These are examples of behaviours that suggest a manager is likely to have a poor approach to safety matters. When reviewing a manager's safety performance, it is important to take a systematic approach and not consider one instance alone.

1. Make sure that safety performance in your area of responsibility is developed and improved.

- Does not act in accordance with the rules imposed on his/her own staff.

- Uses inappropriate communication channels.

- Reluctance to introduce ideas from outside sources.

- Makes no effort to keep abreast of developments in legislation and regulations.

2. Assess and manage safety risks under your control.

- Analyses tend to be superficial and lack attention to detail.

- Ignores evidence of problems rather than findings ways to resolve them.

- Has difficulty recognising unreliable data or assumptions.

- Entirely focused on technical issues to the detriment of other factors.

3. Make sure the necessary resources and support are provided to carry out work safely.

- Doesn't undertake any personal development.

- Slow to deal with requests for additional resources.

- Lets inexperienced staff get on with work without providing adequate supervision.

- Takes little interest in training issues.

4. Manage safety in day-to-day activities.

- Difficult – often not available to his/her own staff.

- Slow to take remedial action to control the progress of a task.

- Accepts slippage in performance as inevitable.

- Tends to move onto the next task before completing current one.

These examples draw on work done by Bombardier, Balfour Beatty, GNER, GTRM, Jarvis and Railtrack.