

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Background

Mental ill health affects 1:4 people in the UK. The construction industry and allied occupational groups are recognised as a more vulnerable group with an increased incidence of suicide. This is attributed to many factors. Not least that it is male dominated sector; (Men are less likely to share their emotional and mental health needs with others and therefore, less likely to seek help from their GP or other health professionals). Highways operatives often work long hours away from home, often in demanding physical environments, remote from their regular wellbeing outlets and disconnected from family and friend networks. These are just some of the factors contributing to poor mental health across the sector, which together we aim to improve with the guidance of this Common Intent Document.

Vision

Our vision is to reduce the incidence of **work related mental ill health** throughout the highways sector. To help create an **open culture** around mental health through promoting **mental health awareness**, encouraging **positive mental health** opportunities and providing **mental health support** across the wider industry.

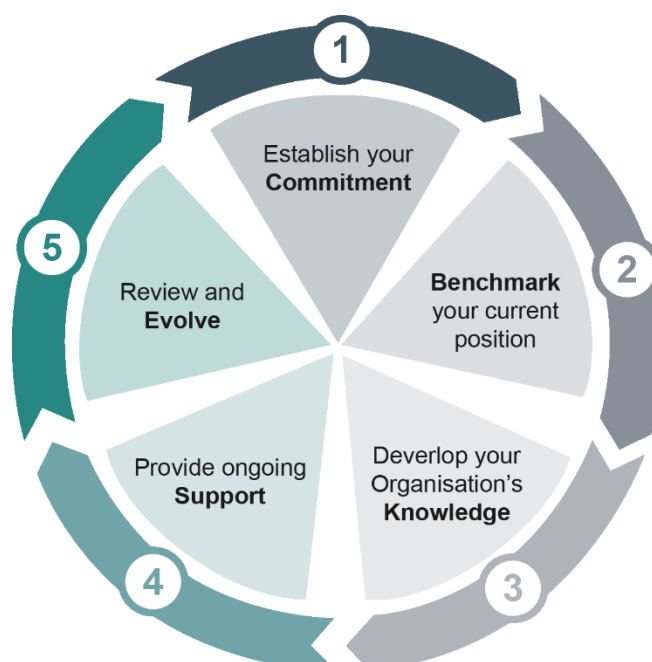
Principles of Approach to be Adopted

Overview

As a supplier community we have agreed to adopt the following approach as a *common standard* intended to provide Highways England and their supply chain with a route map to creating a culture led environment in which all employees can flourish, in order to fulfil the vision.

This common standard follows a five-stage process of;

1. Establishing an organisational **Commitment** to the vision.
2. Establishing a mental health **Benchmark** for your organisation.
3. Build mental health literacy, **Knowledge** and open culture across the organisation & industry.
4. Provide **Support** and proactively promote mental wellbeing.
5. Review your progress and **Evolve** your action plan to suit your organisation's needs.



The principles of this approach are;
1. Establishing an organisational commitment to the vision.

- Appoint authentic, accountable and positive leadership from the organisation to demonstrate your commitment to supporting mental wellbeing.
- Establish your mental wellbeing policy, or mental health charter.
- Demonstrate your commitment further by considering signing up to a nationally recognised commitment that supports mental wellbeing.

2. Establishing a mental health benchmark for your organisation.

- Create a benchmark, that incorporates employee feedback, at the beginning of your mental wellbeing strategy planning. There are recognised tools referenced in the Raising the Bar document (below) or alternatively develop your own maturity matrix approach.
- Monitor your progress against your chosen maturity matrix to show progress of your journey and signpost new initiatives.

3. Build mental health literacy and open culture across the organisation and industry.

- Increase people's understanding of common mental health conditions and where they can find support and resources, through training, campaigns and events.
- Share stories that normalise the language surrounding mental health from across your organisation to increase awareness, reduce stigma and improve understanding.
- Provide training for all managers/supervisors to be role models and demonstrate positive mental health leadership, recognise common mental health conditions within their teams and others and know how to support and signpost for additional help.
- Share the experience of your mental wellbeing programme, this might be your leaders talking at industry/sector events, contributing to articles, hosting events etc.

4. Provide support and proactively promote mental wellbeing.

- Develop an action plan to improve your delivery of positive mental health initiatives. There is online support freely available from many providers to assist in your action plan development, the associated Raising the Bar document (below) provides details of options available.
- Provide early intervention and mental health support through the appointment of mental health ambassadors, Employee Assistance Programme and signposting to other internal or external support.
- Consider the impact of your organisational activity on mental health and proactively work to prevent mental ill health. Such as impact of change, work-life balance and peer and managerial support.

5. Review your progress and evolve your action plan to suit your organisation's needs.

- Invest time in evolving your culture around mental health.
- Review and share within your organisation your progress against your original benchmarking criteria. This will help keep the message alive, retain energy in pursuit of your goal and help refocus your commitments against your vision.
- We urge you to share your successes with this forum, Clients and neighbouring organisations to help our industry thrive.

Additional Documentation/Detailed Guidance

All current **Raising the Bar** documents are available at the following location:

<http://www.highwaysafetyhub.com/>

Document Approval Record

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