

Introduction

This Supply Chain Safety Leadership Group was formed to give focus to improving safety performance across the Highways England road network through collaborative working across the supply chain where common risks exist and provide a unified voice of the sector.

The Group includes representatives from Highways England and its supply chain to encompass major projects, operations and its supply chain. It provides safety leadership and clear strategic direction to the supplier community, overseeing the development and adoption of health, safety and wellbeing improvement activities throughout the Highways England supply chain, aimed at eliminating fatal risks - reducing risks on the network to operatives and road users. It is responsible for raising the quality of conversations between Highways England and the entire supply chain, improving supply chain safety maturity through collaborative working, agreeing key priorities to deliver change at pace and reduce inefficiencies.

The Supply Chain Safety Leadership Group's vision is to create a very clear shift in safety performance to ensure everyone who works with us and everyone who travels on the network gets home safe and well.

To find out more about the activity the Group is undertaking please go to the [Highways England Safety Hub](#) where we are working in collaboration to improve to achieve the vision.

In order to raise the perception of the work the Group is delivering within our own organisations we have commenced a monthly bulletin to help reinforce the messaging and execute the vision.

Safety Moment

Utility strikes continue to trend upwards

This month the group used the video (see below) produced by the Aone+ contract on a recent utility strike to reflect on the shared learnings that can be used to make a clear shift in safety performance.



Since January 2020, the number of utility strikes has continued to rise amongst the Highways England supply chain which is unacceptable to the group.

In May 2020, the Group launched its first [Common Intent](#) document to outline its approach to adopt a common standard to improve the safety performance in Utilities strike avoidance. The Safety Hub will be releasing an update to the Raising the Bar No. 9 to provide interpretation of the Common Intent on how to implement.

Action for Suppliers - We expect all suppliers working on the Highways England network to adopt the principles of the Common Intent documents in their own processes and procedures and to use/contribute to the Guidance contained in the Raising the Bar documents. We urge you to contact your site teams and safety advisors to see what you could do differently to adopt a common standard to reduce utilities strikes.

Trends and Priorities

Significantly high number of suicides in August on our network

The Group reflected on the worst month on record for suicides on the network and discussed how we could make a difference as a supplier community. Next month we will be hearing from the road safety committee lead to see what good work they are doing which we could make more use of within our own organisations.

Seasonal performance trends - Winter is coming!

The Group reflected on the seasonal peaks and troughs which are typically seen in the safety performance of our supply chain and noted that the winter period approaching is a curve we would like to get ahead of. So, we agreed to launch a collective stand down to bring the focus into overturning the statistics and have our safest month yet.

Action for Suppliers – Get involved – we would love to have your feedback on how we could be proactive in addressing these issues.

Highlights

New Member – Alan Shepherd

Alan Shepherd is North West Operations Divisional Director for Highways England and joined the Group for his first meeting on the 14th September. Alan made a significant contribution to his first meeting and strengthens our Operations leadership viewpoint from Highways England.

Raising the Bar with the Safety Hub

Mark Bridges has led the Safety Hub to bring forward the final draft of the update to the raising the bar document for Utilities Strike Avoidance. The Group are looking forward to seeing the conclusion of our first major piece of work in the series and the impact it will have on our supplier community to have a clear shift in safety performance.

Data Insight into Utilities Strikes– AIRSWeb

The Group benefited from an insight into the data from AIRSWeb for utilities strikes across the Highways England supply chain to provide a narrative to elaborate on what the trend is showing us and highlight what we could do differently to prevent reoccurrence.

Highest Safe Speed in roadworks

Highways England have completed an extensive series of trials where a temporary speed restriction of 60mph was implemented through several roadworks schemes. These studies have shown that 60mph speed limits in roadworks can be achieved in a way that manages to maintain the safety of road workers and road users whilst having a positive effect to the road user. The Group continues to support this approach and is working towards adopting a common standard across the supply chain.

Common Intent drafted - Mental Health and Wellbeing

Glennan Blackmore, Highways Sector Director for Skanska has led a working group to reduce the incidence of work related mental ill health throughout the highways sector and to promote mental health awareness and positive mental health opportunities within the wider industry. The Group reviewed the first draft of the common intent document which is due for release soon.

Common Intent drafted – Safe Working with Plant

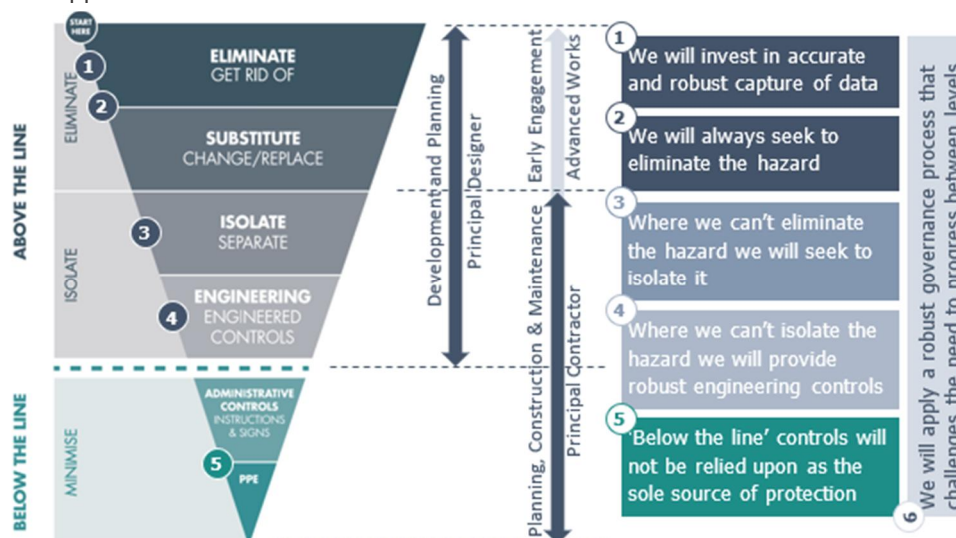
Richard Stuart, Highways Sector Director at Costain has led a working group to maximise the benefits and eliminate the harm associated with deployment of plant. The Group reviewed the first draft of the common intent document which is due for release soon.

Development of our Supervisory Community

The skills that our workforce possess are one of the most valuable assets we have within our industry, especially those skills held by our supervisory employees, who can influence the behaviour of those around them. Consequently, it is important that we continue to develop these employees. Nick Holt of WJ North Limited is leading this workstream and the first step is conducting a survey to help the Group understand the existing level of skills and training available in our sector and the gaps and issues present. From this information we can begin to address these problems and develop training that helps level up our supervisory employees and as a result the performance of our entire industry.

Adopting Common Standards

Overview – As a supplier community we have agreed to adopt a *common standard* to improve safety performance, following the principles of prevention and robustly applying the Hierarchy of Control, from the earliest stages of projects in development, and throughout construction, operation and maintenance, is at the heart of the refreshed approach that we are expecting all suppliers to follow.



The Common Standards - Our approach to defining expectations for methods to be used to improve safety performance across the supply chain includes:

- Common Intent - documents that set expectations of what we “must” all do. These provide clear direction and guiding principles in relation to application of the hierarchy of control that we expect to be considered in the processes and procedures followed by every organisation.
- Raising the bar – documents that provide “interpretation” on how to implement common intent across the whole asset lifecycle, including design, construction, operations and maintenance.

Common Intent and Raising the Bar Documents can all be found on the [Highways Safety Hub](#).

Actions for Suppliers - We expect all suppliers working on the Highways England network to adopt the principles of the Common Intent documents in their own processes and procedures and to use/contribute to the Guidance contained in the Raising the Bar documents.

Working Group Progress

- Utilities Strike Avoidance – released May 2020
 - RTB9 update due in October 2020
- IPV strikes & TM Incursions – released July 2020 – [Article published in Safer Highways](#)
 - RTB27 update being drafted.
- Safety by Design – released August 2020 – [Article published in Safer Highways](#)
 - RTB26 update being drafted.

Actions for Suppliers – Can you all review and cascade down into your teams to ensure the action is taken to adopt the common standards?