

Registers of Scotland**RoS Board****11th June 2024****Annual Health and Safety Report 23/24****Purpose**

1. The purpose of this paper is to present the findings of the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2023/24 to the RoS Board.
2. Please see Annex A- Annual Health and Safety Report 23/24.
3. Please see Annex B- Annual Health and Safety Dashboard 23/24

Recommendation

4. The RoS Board are invited to review this annual report and approve publication.

Background

5. The Health and Safety Annual report 2023/24 contains an overview of the current H+S situation at RoS.
6. The report is produced annually for the RoS Board and wider audiences. Developments in operational practises have radically changed the way RoS functions and works, with many colleagues choosing a hybrid approach to deliver their role.

Health and Safety

7. The main body of this report is an overview of all aspects of H&S within RoS. The report provides an overview of the challenges throughout 2023/24 and the work completed to address these challenges, so that RoS can continue to provide a safe working environment for all colleagues either at home or within the office space.

Conclusion

8. The report concludes that RoS strives to maintain a positive and inclusive H&S environment.
9. The Health and Safety Committee continues to be at the forefront of H&S, with its joint working group of Senior Management, Estates, Wellbeing, HR, and the Trade Union.

Job Title: Head of Procurement and Estates**Directorate: Corporate****Date: May 2024**

Annex A

Purpose

1. This annual Health and Safety report for Registers of Scotland (RoS) covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Where possible, comparisons have been made to previous health and safety data provided. The purpose of this report is to provide colleagues / stakeholders with an understanding of health and safety arrangements at RoS and provide assurance on the adequacy of measures in place.

Executive Summary

2. RoS employs more than 1,200 colleagues who deliver their role within a hybrid working environment. This means working some of their time from home, as well as one of the designated RoS offices: Meadowbank House (MBH) and St Vincent's Plaza (SVP). We place a great importance on pursuing high standards in all our work environments that effectively promote health and safety, support colleagues, visitors and other building users whilst also minimising risks.

3. RoS colleagues enjoy the ability to work in an environment which suits them, whether that is MBH or SVP. They have embraced the hybrid approach and RoS remains committed to maintain the flexible work life balance and the benefit that this provides.

4. A quality health and safety training provision has continued, with a focus on hybrid working. The Home Working e-learning module has been utilised and, with the return of colleagues to a RoS office, this has been used in conjunction with our Display Screen Equipment (DSE) office-based e-learning module to ensure that we provide the best possible working environment for our colleagues.

5. A key focus this year has been the requirement for colleagues to demonstrate that their home working environment is ergonomically viable and meets the minimum equipment standards as defined by RoS. For example, the provision and use of a fully adjustable, 5-star castor base ergonomic chair. A support network of Mental Health First Aiders also remains in place, which is supported by a range of third party resources.

6. MBH and SVP provides a flexible and accessible workspace for all colleagues. It is viewed that colleagues will create their own work patterns that support their role and their team deliverables. Physical space within both buildings has been redesigned to better enable hybrid working. To improve utilisation, RoS has also begun to share space with other SG organisations, in turn generating an economic benefit to the public sector in Scotland.

Health and Safety Management System

7. The Health and Safety Management System (HSMS) remains the cornerstone of all processes relating to health and safety at RoS. The HSMS details the correct processes and procedures and what is expected from colleagues, contactors, and visitors to RoS when undertaking any aspect of work contained within the HSMS.

Health and Safety Analysis

8. Accidents during this reporting period remained very low and continued with the trend of previous years, with only one reported incident in total. To confirm, colleagues are advised to report any accidents or incidents within their homes, if they happen during working hours and are directly attributed to a task that is connected to RoS work.

9. There was one unplanned fire alarm activation and one planned evacuation arranged at MBH. During the same period there was one planned evacuation arranged at SVP. This alarm system continues to be tested on a weekly basis for both buildings. During this period, new Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) guidelines came into operation relating to SFRS attendance in the event of an alarm activation. In the event of a single head activation, visual confirmation that there is a live incident for the activation must be obtained before SFRS will attend. Due to this, new procedures within the Fire Roles and Responsibilities have been devised and the alarm panel now has a silent alarm period built in to allow for any single head activations to be investigated prior to full building evacuation and requesting SFRS attendance.

10. Both RoS buildings continue to be adequately covered with fully trained First Aid volunteers. A full First Aid refresher course was undertaken in early 2024 and all security staff have been first aid trained to provide MBH with extra support and cover. There was one reported first aid incident during 2023/24 which was attended by a RoS First Aider.

Hybrid Working Support and Training

11. RoS continues to support hybrid working for colleagues, ensuring that they are provided with a range of choices to ensure their home environment is of an appropriate standard as required by RoS. The RoS Health and Safety Adviser and wider Estates team were made available to assist colleagues with these assessments. This includes continued support of colleagues with reasonable adjustments from home or in the office. As part of RoS commitment to continuous learning, the annual Homeworkers e-learning module was rolled out in September 23. This is a mandatory module for all permanent RoS colleagues who work within their home at any time during their working week. The completion rate of eligible colleagues was close to 100%.

Mental Health Support

12. RoS is aware that hybrid working can present a mental health risk. RoS continues to provide support and resources for colleagues to access guidance related to mental health. An established network of fully accredited Mental Health First Aiders are available to enable colleagues to seek support, guidance, and information on how to access professional help if required through the Mental Health Resource Page via RoSNow.

13. Mental Health coffee mornings have been introduced at both MBH and SVP to allow colleagues to reconnect with others and for a general wellbeing aspect. Coffee roulette is also very popular and again allows colleagues to talk to other RoS colleagues that they may not know due to the randomised pairing that is in place.

Open to all

14. Both MBH and SVP continue to be open for all colleagues who wish to use the office as a workspace, whether as a permanent work environment or utilising the hybrid blend of home and office space.

15. Teams are encouraged to arrange in person days at one of our buildings. This promotes teams coming together for work purposes or to focus on upcoming events / issues. There is a wellbeing aspect to this to, facilitating members of the same team to reconnect with others.

16. The Concierge Service has also developed further this year, from its early incarnation it has continued to grow and provides inductions for new starters, support to in house teams to create onsite events, and arranging for other third parties to access and utilise the spaces at MBH and SVP. Concierge also continues to work with building tenants at both MBH and SVP, providing meeting spaces and catering advice through our dedicated contracts.

Building Dependent Teams at MBH

17. Chancery and Judicial Registers (CAJR) remain mainly office dependent, due to their processes being largely paper based. During this period, the team was relocated to 0 West and a full refurbishment prior to their move was undertaken. The 4 West case bag storage area, which contained circa 48,000 old cases was also completed during 2023/24.

18. A re-exit plan remains in place as a live document. This re-exit plan details the actions, resources and procedures required to ensure that, in the event of a local or national situation or restrictions instructed by UK or Scottish Government, RoS buildings could remain open and operate at the most acceptable level possible. This plan is continually reviewed and updated.

Reorganisation of the interior of RoS buildings

19. RoS continues to evaluate and reorganise office space to meet the changing demands placed upon its built environment. This has led to RoS now only occupying floors 0-3 at MBH as dedicated work areas. Within the SVP floor plate, RoS shares its space with other SG Organisation also and actively promotes further space sharing.

20. Within MBH, the internal lighting of office space has been upgraded from the older, fluorescent style lighting to LED lighting in line with our Sustainability Strategy. Internal workstation layouts within wings continue to be adapted to operational requirements. RoS are committed to design spaces in line with a comfort factor for colleagues and other building users, which is $\geq 10\text{m}^2$ per person. We have also been creating different work areas and zones for individuals and teams to work together in a way that best suits their requirements.

21. Onsite Support teams have continued to maintain increased cleaning procedures in occupied building areas, as first introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Support team are regularly audited, and findings are shared between the supplier and RoS to help identify any areas of concern or introduce new measures.

Sharing our Buildings with other Organisations

22. RoS continues to identify opportunities to share the available space with other SG organisations. Within MBH and SVP, there are seven other SG Organisations that share our space and facilities. The Memorandum of Terms of Understanding (MOTU) framework continues to underpin and define the agreements in place for each tenant

at RoS who shares the building space in MBH or SVP. Within these agreements, roles and responsibilities for health and safety management are made clear and regular Management Group meetings are held monthly between RoS and the building tenants to discuss these and any specific issues that may have arisen.

Regulator Building Inspections and Visits

23. Neither the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), nor any other regulatory body, have visited one of our buildings during this period.

Wellbeing

24. Staff wellbeing will be presented to the board in a separate paper.

Union Consultation

25. Consultation between Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) and RoS management continues to provide an effective relationship on health and safety matters. The Health and Safety Committee (HSC) is active in driving forward health and safety policy and for addressing the concerns of either party. The HSC meets on a regular quarterly cycle and has continued with its wider scope and input from Wellbeing and HR, who have added context in relation to the information that is presented via the dashboard presented at each HSC meeting. This expanded group has allowed for a wider insight on issues, which benefits from a larger pool of data resource.

Conclusion

26. The overall safety culture within RoS is a positive one. This is driven by a senior management team who are focused on maintaining and developing health and safety within RoS and see health and safety as a central core of good management rather than a stand-alone system.

27. The commitment of the EMT and senior management to provide the best possible working environment, hybrid or building dedicated, can be witnessed by the efforts made to ensure that all colleagues have the equipment, training and support they need. Commitment can also be seen in their willingness to lead and drive forward with the continued participation of the Health and Safety Committee and placing this at the heart of health and safety at RoS.

28. New technologies and working practises continue to be adopted by RoS, this has seen an increase in more ergonomic focused workstations through the introduction of more height adjustable desks and a focus on raising awareness of the importance of posture. Working practises continue to evolve and consultation with PCS and colleagues on how RoS can best support colleagues, as the traditional scope of work and where we do it, changes at a pace.

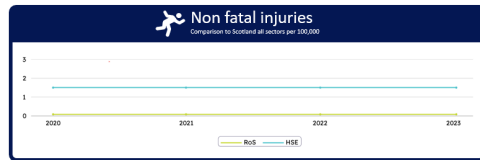
29. RoS continues to champion equalities and diversity, maintaining a focus here will further enhance the working environment for all colleagues. Mental health support continues to be a primary focus, ensuring colleagues can access internal and external networks for support.

Head of Procurement & Estates
May 2024

Annex B

Registers of Scotland Health and Safety 23/24

Non fatal Injuries



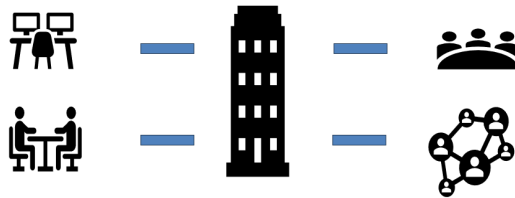
Sharing our space with other SG Orgs



Inspections

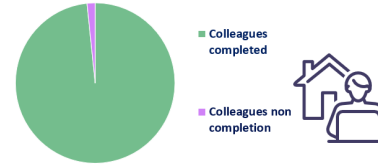


Adapting our buildings



Colleague Hybrid Training

Homeworkers training rolled out in Sept 23



External Inspections



Internal Audits



Supporting Hybrid

