

## **Occupational Safety and Health Adviser (OSHA)**

### **Draft Annual Report for 2020**

#### **1. Context**

The coronavirus (covid-19) pandemic was having a very significant and serious effect on the normal operation on the PDNPA at the time this report was completed. This retrospective report is primarily concerned with OSH performance during 2020 throughout which the pandemic caused many alternative working arrangements to be adopted. Consequently, this report focuses on the special arrangements put in place to maintain the safety and health of our staff and those others who may be affected by our operations during this period.

This report will, in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Policy, Part III, Governance Arrangements, be submitted to the Health & Safety Committee, Management Team and Programmes & Resources Committee.

The purpose of this report is to provide evidence that OSH performance is satisfactory and continuously improving.

This report includes

- An overall appraisal of OSH performance for the PDNPA for the previous year with particular reference to corporate initiatives making further significant improvements and to performance indicators
- Accident and incident data and analysis for the year 2020 for staff and for visitors including near-miss reporting
- A report on OSH services provided to other National Parks
- Recommendations for further action through 2021

#### **2. Health & Safety performance**

Overall, a good OSH culture exists at PDNPA. Employees understand the importance of OSH management both for their own and for others safety and well-being. During 2020 the profile of OSH and particularly of risk assessment has been raised significantly further due to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic (hereafter referred to as COVID).

Qualitative OSH performance indicators were introduced from 2019 and are now routinely reported in Quarters 1 and 4.

**Table 1 Quarter 4 OSH performance indicators summary results**

| Indicator  | Target | Q4 result | Comment   |
|--|--------|-----------|---|
| Senior managers (SLT and HoS) completing IOSH <i>Leading Safely</i> within last 3 years <sup>1</sup> | 100%   | 87%       | A new Safety Leadership course is being promoted for all NPAs for delivery in 2021                              |
| Team Managers completing IOSH <i>Managing Safely</i> within last 3 years <sup>2</sup>                | 100%   | 84%       | PDNPA has developed a course specifically for NPAs. First delivered in February 2020 <sup>3</sup>               |
| Staff have completed <i>Introduction to Health and Safety</i> course                                 | 100%   | 86%(tbc)  | Further OSH E-learning courses were added in 2020 including for fire safety, work at height and manual handling |
| Number of near-miss reports received as a proportion of total reports received                       | 50%    | 24%       | This indicator will be further developed with NPA benchmarks in 2020  |
| Generic risk assessments are available for all key NPA OSH matters                                   | 100%   | 100%      | The list of 'key NPA OSH matters' will be annually reviewed and agreed  |

- Notes: 1. A new half-day course for senior managers/leaders was originally intended for delivery in 2020 – held up by COVID this will now be offered for remote 'live' delivery in 2021.
2. There have been significant organisational change at PD and a review of training needs for new/redesignated managers will be completed to identify candidates for IOSH Managing Safely for NPAs in 2021. The first course may be delivered as soon as May 2021.
3. Since the delivery of the first IOSH Managing Safely for NPAs course, live at the Yorkshire Dales NPA in February 2020 the programme has been held up by COVID. A new remote 'live' version of the course is now prepared for delivery in 2021.
- 4.

Normally, the OSHA performs a continuous, rolling programme of visits to PDNPA premises and staff at work. During this programme, the OSHA provides a monitoring and mentoring role including opportunities to recognise and endorse good practice, respond to instances where some improvements are necessary and to further coach staff. Interventions typically include enhancing competence to manage a wide range of OSH matters, improving the use of available resources and promoting the constant review and improvement of risk management controls. For 2020, due to COVID and the exceptional working arrangements for many staff the programme has been provided differently.

The OSHA, like many staff, has worked from home for much of the time. A constant stream of official guidance and the publication of Regulations passing many restrictions and requirements for COVID into law, have been monitored, digested and where necessary, transposed into risk assessments and other guidance for NPA operations. Throughout 2020, most NPAs have shared information and interpretation of the rules and guidance to assist and support staff at work.

With many staff working from home, guidance on setting up home based workstations and other support, particularly about maintaining communications and considering good mental-health and wellbeing have been priorities. Staff surveys have been used to identify individual staff concerns and common problems and these have been addressed on a case-by-case basis.

As COVID restrictions changed during 2020 and different operations either reopened/recommenced or closed and ceased risk assessments and work arrangements for those operations was reviewed and reissued. Staff returning to workplaces or operations were routinely briefed on their return. The OSHA has also maintained a regular visit schedule to all workplaces that have been operational throughout the different stages of lockdown, tier restrictions and reopening. During these visits questions have been answered, important messages about the restrictions reinforced and staff competence and confidence enhanced. This has included a weekly presence at Aldern House. This continues into 2021.

### **The risk/action 'escalator'**

Where a serious health or safety related matter is identified that requires 'escalation' to senior management for further investigation and/or action, this will be identified. Apart from COVID, which is well covered in this report, there has, for 2020 been no other such incident.

### **3. Key OSH management system developments during 2020**

#### **3.1 OSH management system – documentation**

Good documentation is an essential component part of any safety management system. Knowledge, understanding and use of documented systems are key to our overall success in implementing, maintaining and demonstrating good OSH management. Key documents include OSH Policy, risk assessments (and where indicated safe work procedures), incident and near-miss reports (and any follow-up investigation reports). All key documents are regularly reviewed and updated by the OSHA.

Changes in 2020 include

- An annually reviewed OSH Policy, revised and adopted from 1 January 2020
- A reviewed and updated set of key-topic, generic risk-assessments\*
- A reviewed and modified Business Continuity Plan (BCP), which has been widely considered in respect of COVID and 'lessons learned'. (This work is being completed at the time of compiling this report).

Many of these documents are shared with other NPAs to foster a more consistent standard and approach to managing key OSH matters within the NPA family.

\*Generic COVID risk assessments have been produced and regularly updated throughout 2020. These are also regularly shared with other NPAs.

#### **3.2 OSH management system - resources**

In conjunction with servicing continuing SLAs for OSH advice to other NPAs the OSHA resource at PDNPA, is maintained at 30 hours per week since April 2019.

Representation of all services at the Health and Safety Committee together with Union and Staff Committee representation continues. The H&S Committee has continued to meet remotely during COVID.

#### **3.3 OSH management system - training**

Day-to-day, routine management of OSH matters is the responsibility of all employees. All line managers have particular responsibility for ensuring that OSH requirements are properly understood and complied with. A significant component of this responsibility is ensuring that suitable and sufficient levels of information, training, qualification and supervision are provided and maintained. This has continued, supported as necessary by the OSHA during COVID restrictions through 2020.

Globally recognised *gold-standard* IOSH accredited OSH management training was introduced in 2019 and all managers were recruited.

Following the IOSH courses provided by an external trainer for PDNPA staff in 2019 it was determined that a more bespoke course designed specifically for NPAs would provide additional benefits. The PDNPA OSHA has pursued this and the PDNPA became an approved IOSH training provider for Managing Safely in November 2019. The OSHA has developed a specialised version of the IOSH course and the first *Managing Safely for National Parks* IOSH accredited course was delivered at the Yorkshire Dales NPA in February 2020. Further courses have been interrupted by COVID and work has been completed to provide the courses remotely. These will recommence in early 2021/22.

Bespoke PDNPA versions of *Introduction to Health and Safety* and *Fire Safety* are mandatory for all staff. Further ELMS modules including *Manual Handling* and *Working at Height*, have been customised for PDNPA use with embedded links to PDNPA documents. These are available for all staff and line managers are required to identify which of their staff should complete particular modules. Review of existing modules and identification of further OSH modules will be completed in 2021.

Occupational safety and health matters are now an established item included in all Staff Briefings. COVID has had a generally positive effect in encouraging the further engagement of all colleagues in the management of OSH. This is likely to improve and reinforce our safety-culture. We can expect this to foster improved awareness of OSH matters in general; enhance competence to manage them properly and subsequent continuous improvements in OSH management performance.

#### **4. Accidents and incidents data and analysis for 2020**

##### **4.1 Staff and Volunteers**

The PDNPA, in common with other NPAs, continues to enjoy a low accident rate. Causes of accidents are familiar and only minor injuries have been experienced. There is no identified significant increase in the number or pattern of minor incidents reported for 2020.

There were 11 accidents reported by staff and 2 by volunteers.

Since 2019, efforts have been made to increase the number of near-misses reported to identify matters that might be addressed before accidents happen. In 2019, a performance target was set for 50% of all report to be near-misses. This target was exceeded in 2019 but for 2020 has dropped to 24%. It is difficult to be sure of the reasons for this but this may have been, at least in part, because many staff have been working from home for long periods during 2020. The target will remain at 50% and near-miss reporting will continue to be encouraged.



Figure 1 Staff and Volunteer accidents by type 2020

Following measures to increase and improve accident and near-miss reporting through 2019 the overall number of reports increased. This number has declined in 2020 but as discussed, this may be due to the exceptional working arrangements during the COVID pandemic.

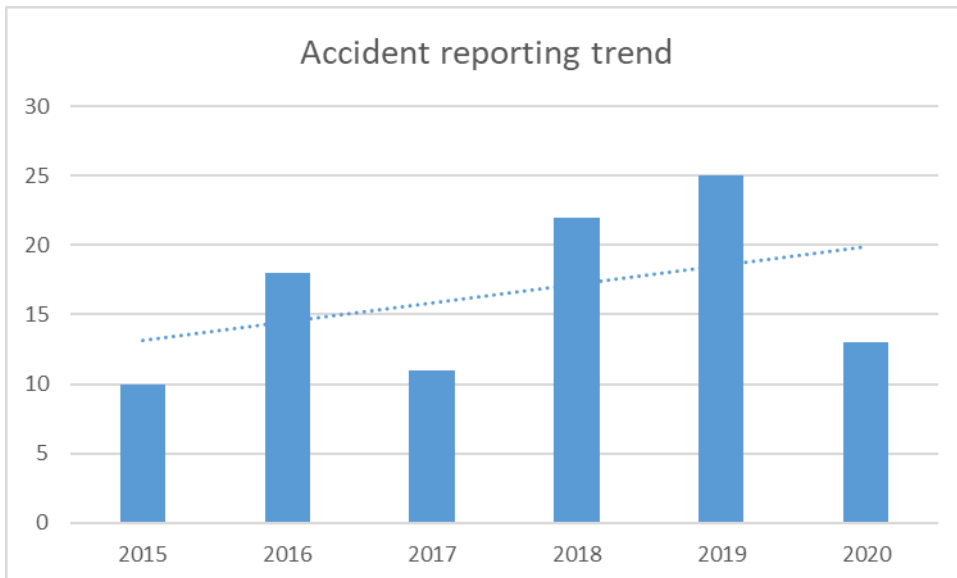


Figure 2 Trend in the number of incident reports received since 2015

The proportion of incident reports that indicate minor incidents and near-misses is used as a performance indicator. The target for near-misses, as a proportion of all reports is 50%. For 2020, 24% of reports were classified as near-misses.

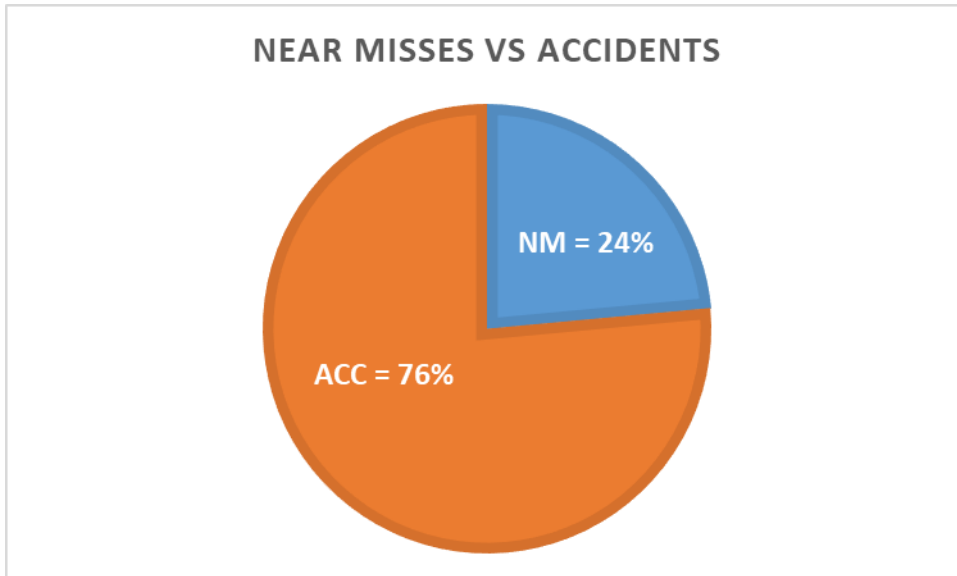


Figure 4 Near-miss reports as a percentage of total reports 2020

#### 4.2 Visitors

Accidents and incidents involving visitors include familiar themes. Slips, trips and falls (often involving first aid) and cycling related incidents account for all incidents reported in 2020. The number and type of incidents reported are consistent with previous years. All incidents involving children, young people and visitors on an organised PDNPA event are fully investigated.



Figure 5 Visitor incident reports received 2020

#### 5. OSHA services to other NPAs

The OSHA continues to provide professional OSH advice to other NPAs through both formal Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and more informally. Since November 2019, the PDNPA has qualified as an approved training

provider for IOSH managing safely training. The OSHA has during 2020 prepared to deliver a remote 'live' *Managing Safely for National Parks* course and these will commence during 2021. The new course, which allows a broad range of OSH management system components, suitable for NPA-wide use, to be shared, is eagerly anticipated and will provide a further income stream for PDNPA. The value of sharing solutions to common problems and of setting consistent targets and measures of compliance (benchmarking) is included in the course.

A further, one half-day course for senior managers at NPAs *National Parks Leadership Safety Training* is now being prepared for remote 'live' delivery. In the same way as *Managing Safely for the National Parks*, this course focuses on key safety management issues for the NPAs and allows senior managers to rehearse their actions in response to a fictitious, serious safety-incident. Unsurprisingly, COVID will feature quite significantly in this new course.

Several NPAs have registered their interest in receiving both courses during 2021.

## **6. Priorities and actions for 2021**

The OSHA will continue to perform a rolling programme of workplace visits, audits and inspections and provide OSH advice to all staff at work. These visits will be prioritised on staff continuing and returning to work during the lifting of COVID restrictions.

Specific OSH priorities for 2021 include

- Continue to support staff during COVID restrictions, including staff working from home and at PD workplaces
- Consolidate learning from working during COVID and maintain benefits and improvements in work methods as work returns to normal
- Introduce workplace COVID testing for asymptomatic people
- Review the use of OSH Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with the introduction of new and challenging targets for reporting during 2021
- Complete an overhaul of topic-specific OSH management arrangements for a range of property and task related matters in collaboration with other NPA managers
- Consolidate the position of PDNPA as a provider of essential OSH training for the NPA family

## **7. Recommendations**

- The work, summarised in this report, to deliver good and continuously improving OSH management at PDNPA throughout 2020, is recognised
- Proposals for priorities to be addressed from 2021 are endorsed

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OSHA March 2021