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Our Ref: P1/16

New Royal Mail Group Stress Risk Assessment Process and Guidance – Royal Mail Stress Toolkit: (Motion 37(2015)):

**To: All Postal Branches
All Regional Health & Safety Forums
All Area Health & Safety Reps**

Dear Colleagues,

Further to LTB 166/16 dated 15 March 2016, negotiations between Royal Mail Group, the CWU Health, Safety & Environment department and Postal department have jointly continued to a satisfactory conclusion.

On World Mental Health Day 10th October, with follow up in the run up to EU Health and Safety Week, Royal Mail Group, the CWU and Unite CMA are jointly launching the new Royal Mail Group Stress Risk Assessment process and the new Royal Mail Stress Toolkit. The CWU will therefore once again be supporting World Mental Health Day and on this occasion with the launch of the new RMG Stress Risk Assessment process as a positive component to creating a healthy and safe working environment for all RMG employees, recognizing the mental, as well as the physical, wellbeing of the workforce.

The CWU has been working with Royal Mail Group on introducing revised Guidance for employees on Stress. This is a key tool to ensure our members can get early support if they are overwhelmed and in distress which can prevent them becoming well, which is good for CWU Members and good for the RMG. Through this new approach the CWU & RMG recognise work-related stressors as a potential hazard to health and are jointly committed to managing work related stress in a proactive manner to reduce the personal impact on RMG employees.

There is a Stress Toolkit on a new specially constructed Intranet Stress page of the Royal Mail Group Health and Wellbeing intranet site where all the documents will sit and it forms the basis for the Online Stress Tool.

The Stress Toolkit:

- Preventing and Managing Stress Guide.
- Stress Flow Chart.
- Guided Conversation for Stress (individual stress risk assessment).
- Online Stress Tool (through the Feeling First Class website using the HSE Stress Management Standards Risk Assessment Indicator Tool).

The 'Two-Level' Stress Approach:

The approach being jointly launched is very much focused on the 'two level' stress approach: -

- The individual stress risk assessment called the 'Guided Conversation for Stress' and
- The 'Online Stress Tool' using the full HSE Stress Management Standards Risk Assessment Indicator tool questionnaire to be used to measure 'population based stressors' when we assess all the staff in a workplace e.g. a Mail Processing Centre, a Delivery Office or a Distribution Centre etc., for example.

This two-level Stress Risk Assessment process is supported by a helpline and a website offering advice and OHS guidance called 'Feeling First Class'.

The CWU very much welcomes this positive initiative which we helped shape through positive involvement and consultation at every stage.

I can report that the new RMG SHE Stress Risk Assessment and associated documentation has been finalised and after a joint presentation to the PEC was cleared.

Pilot Sites:

Ten sites were invited to participate in the pilot of the Stress Guidance as follows with Feedback still coming in for consideration:

1. HWDC
2. Nuneaton DO
3. South Midlands MC
4. Coventry Hub (Parcelforce)
5. NDC
6. Tonbridge MPU
7. YDC
8. Lincoln DO
9. Edinburgh LD (Parcelforce)
10. Plymouth Customer Service Call Centre

The Launch Timetable:

Following the pilots and further discussions, the documentation was finalised in advance of the following launch timetable being finalised.

- Monday 10th October – World Mental Health Day – RMTV Joint RMG/CWU Media Launch.
- Wednesday 12th October – Article in RM Wellbeing Weekly and launch of e-learning on RM success factors intranet site.
- Monday 17th October - New Stress Risk Assessment Process Documents; Preventing & Managing Workplace Stress, Guided Conversation For stress, HSE Stress Risk Assessment
- Online Stress Tool and The Preventing and Managing Stress Flowchart go live on the RMG Feeling First Class (FFC) Website.
- Tuesday 18th October – RMG SHE Joint Event with CWU and Unite CMA ASRs – Official Launch of the new RMG Stress Risk Assessment Process.

Once launched RMG and CWU and Unite/CMA intend to work jointly on both raising awareness and building confidence in the process, as well as achieving compliance. The process will be reviewed and monitored jointly ongoing with a full annual review.

First Class Support & Feeling First Class:

It is important that the workforce is aware of the support available to them for mental wellbeing through First Class Support (0800 6888 777) or wellbeing advice on Feeling First Class (www.feelingfirstclass.co.uk use the code FFC1 to register). We will be encouraging members to sign up to Feeling First Class and complete the Lifestyle Questionnaire and Online

Stress Tool – by completing these questions they will get tips and ideas on improving their wellbeing and where to go for help.

Attachments:

- The presentation of Judith Grant RMG Head of Health to CWU ASRs.
- The Preventing and Managing Stress Guide.
- Guided Conversation for Stress.
- Online HSE Stress Tool (paper version).
- Preventing and Managing Stress Flowchart

The Preventing and Managing Stress Guide:

This outlines roles and responsibility in Royal Mail for stress.

- Provides advice on signs and symptoms.
 - Gives directions for carrying out a Stress Risk Assessment using the HSE principles.
 - Provides guidance on when each of the risk assessments should be used:
1. The Guided Conversation for Stress – for individual acute cases of stress.
 2. The Online HSE Stress Tool – proactive, engagement, assessment tool to support the business in understanding group/workplace wide stressors. Questions are set by the HSE.

The Law:

All employers have legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees. Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and of others who may be affected by their actions. There are lots of ways of doing this but can include having a structured safety programme, a workplace wellbeing programme and by carrying out Stress Risk Assessments.

HSE Guidance On Stress – Stress Risk Assessment:

To help workplaces work together to address stress the HSE has identified six key areas (or 'risk factors') that can be causes of work related stress. These are:

- the **demands** of your job;
- your **control** over your work;
- the **support** you receive from managers and colleagues;
- your **relationships** at work;
- your **role** in the organisation;
- **change** and how it's managed.

The Stress Risk Assessment looks at these areas and the detail.

Support:

For Managers not sure how to use the Risk Assessment Toolkit or have a conversation on stress?

- A number of Presentation sessions were delivered by the RMG Head of Occupational Health and Wellbeing.
- 4 Stress Guidance bite-size eLearning modules can be watched.
- Managers can attend the Mental Health Awareness course (can be booked on RM Success Factors).
- Film 3 entitled 'Supporting Someone' can be viewed on Feeling First Class website, H&W intranet, Success Factors or Content on Demand.
- Advice on body language and supportive listening.

- Call First Class Support on 0800 6888 777. The counselling team have been briefed on the new Stress Guidance.
- Call HR Services Advice and Support. The advisors have all been briefed on the new process and can advise on any specific HR issues that may arise in the course of the Guided Conversation for Stress.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer