Ministerial Task Force report

This Circular draws your attention to a Ministerial Task Force report entitled 'The Well Managed Organisation - Guidelines for Boards'.

Issued by:
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Addressed to:
The Chair of the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Chief Executive of the County Council
The Clerk to the Fire and Rescue Authority
The Clerk to the Combined Fire and Rescue Authority
The Commissioner of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority
The Chief Fire Officer

Please forward to:
Heads of Human Resources

Summary
This Circular draws your attention to a Ministerial Task Force on Health, Safety and Productivity report entitled 'The Well Managed Organisation'

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1.0 **Introduction**

1.1 Communities and Local Government, working in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE), has commissioned a study of sickness absence in the Fire and Rescue Service, looking at notable practice and possible barriers. This study was prompted, in part, by the Ministerial Task Force (MTF) on Health, Safety and Productivity and its objective for the public sector to contribute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's drive to improve service delivery through reducing the current levels of sickness absence. In the review of "Managing Sickness Absence in the Public Sector" the Ministerial Task Force for Health, Safety and Productivity invited the Work Foundation to undertake a joint project with HSE to develop a profile for the "Well Managed Organisation". Its objective was to promote board level leadership and to ensure that the public sector was in a position to lead by example on attendance management, health and well-being in the modern workplace. Top level leadership remains a key factor in making sure that these issues are addressed.

1.2 The Work Foundation produced a suite of three products aimed at different levels of the management chain:

- Guidelines for Boards
- Guidelines for HR Directors and Senior Managers of Business Units
- Diagnostics Tools for Handling Sickness Absence

1.3 All three documents (along with further explanation) are available on the HSE website at [http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/wellmanaged.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/wellmanaged.htm) for downloading.

1.4 The Diagnostic Tools for Handling Sickness Absence are intended to be downloaded for use by practitioners.

1.5 The purpose of this report is to help the public sector, including fire and rescue services, to lead by example in offering healthy workplaces and good quality jobs to well motivated staff by providing guidelines for management Boards and HR professionals.

Linda Hurford

**Fire and Resilience Directorate**
MINISTERIAL TASK FORCE ON HEALTH, SAFETY AND PRODUCTIVITY - "THE WELL MANAGED ORGANISATION"

You will be aware that Communities and Local Government, working in partnership with the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE), has commissioned a study of sickness absence in the Fire and Rescue Service, looking at notable practice and possible barriers.

The Fire and Rescue National Framework 2006-08 also advised that we would be looking at Fire and Rescue Service sickness absence to help the Service identify areas where sickness absence management needed to improve and where good practice could be identified and shared. This study was prompted, in part, by the Ministerial Task Force (MTF) on Health, Safety and Productivity and its objective for the public sector to contribute to the Chancellor of the Exchequer’s drive to improve service delivery through reducing the current levels of sickness absence. It is expected that the study will report in autumn 2007.

I am now writing to draw your attention to a Ministerial Task Force for Health, Safety and Productivity suite of documents entitled 'The Well Managed Organisation which is available on the HSE website at [http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/wellmanaged.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/wellmanaged.htm) for downloading. The guidelines are intended to support organisations as they address sickness absence and promote a healthy workplace. The approach focuses on understanding information about absence, managing sickness absence when it happens, tackling the underlying causes and promoting a culture that encourages attendance. Tackling these issues will help us to attract, retain and develop high performing staff that can contribute to the delivery of high quality service to the public and have an impact on individuals in the workplace; their health, well-being and motivation.

I hope that you will find these guidelines useful in helping you continue your good work in this area.