

LTB 100/25

21st May 2025

Dear Colleagues,

SHE Dispute Resolution Process – Lines of Contact Postal Department

Branches and Representatives will recall LTB 031/25, which confirmed the core areas of responsibility for Health and Safety matters within the Postal Department following the decisions at last year's Annual Conference concerning the former Health, Safety and Environment Department.

Since then, we have continued to receive enquiries, in particular, from our Area Safety Reps concerning the application of the SHE Dispute Resolution Process and lines of national escalation.

The purpose of this LTB is to confirm that the SHE Dispute Process remains unchanged currently, but that escalation to national level should be directed and addressed to the following relevant Officers/Departments at CWU headquarters, with any cross-functional or across-department matters being directed to the DGS (Postal) Department in the first instance:

Areas of Responsibility and SHE Dispute Escalation Line	Relevant Officer/Department at CWU HQ
Delivery Collections	Tony Bouch Assistant Secretary Email: tbouch@cwu.org
Parcelforce Logistics Distribution Processing (including Mail Centre engineers) International Eurest	Davie Robertson Assistant Secretary Email: drobertson@cwu.org
POL Capita Admin MDEC & Customer Experience HR Finance, Stamps & Collectables	Andy Furey Assistant Secretary Email: afurey@cwu.org

Fleet Engineering RMPFSL	Bobby Weatherall Assistant Secretary (Act) Email: bweatherall@cwu.org
Any H&S workplace matters which are cross-functional or across the outlined areas of responsibility should in the first instance be directed to the DGS (Postal) Department.	Martin Walsh Deputy General Secretary (Postal) Email: mwalsh@cwu.org

In setting out the above, it can be reported that we remain in talks with Royal Mail on seeking to update the current SHE Dispute Resolution Process to reflect these changes in the CWU national roles on Safety. Additionally, we are seeking to further amend the SHE Dispute process to include a new tier of escalation at ROD & Divisional Reps level, which is aimed at seeking to speed up dispute resolutions and further embed safety compliance without the need for national referral.


In the meantime, and until we can confirm and communicate any agreed changes to the SHE Dispute Resolution Process, it is hoped that this clarification on the lines of escalation to national level is helpful.

Finally, and for ease of reference, please find attached the following documents: -

SHE Committee and Dispute Resolution Guidance Document v3.0
SHE Dispute Resolution Record Template v1.1
SHE Dispute Resolution Flowchart v5.0

Any enquiries to this LTB should be addressed to the DGS(P) department.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Walsh
Deputy General Secretary (Postal)

**Royal Mail Group
Safety, Health and
Environment**



**SHE Instruction 2.3
SHE Committee Meeting and Dispute
Resolution
Guidance Document**

SHE Committee and Dispute Resolution Guidance

Contents

Introduction	2
Guidance:	
Committee Meetings	2
Committee Meeting Remit	3
Meeting Attendees	3
Meeting Frequency	3
SHE Engagement Forums	4
Sharing Outputs of Meetings	4
Dispute Resolution	4-6
Feedback	6
Dispute Resolution Tracker	6
References	6

Introduction

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to supplement the information provided in SHE Instruction 2.3 Consultation and Participation which includes the Dispute Resolution process and various associated appendices. The Guidance explains the arrangements for conducting SHE Committees between Royal Mail Group (RMG) Management and the corresponding representatives of CMA/Unite and CWU as is outlined in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977. The Guidance also explains in detail the procedure for handling SHE disputes to ensure they can be resolved at an early stage and to avoid, where possible, the need to raise those issues at SHE Committee Meetings. The primary objective of the Standard and this Guidance is to promote effective partnership working at all levels throughout the business on SHE related subjects. A sample Agenda has been produced, see SHE Committee Meeting Agenda Template (Appendix 3) which details the subjects that the committees should consider focusing on. This will help guide those chairing the committees below Group level towards a consistent approach and ensure that they cover the most appropriate subjects. However, this should not be seen as restricting the local committees where other pressing SHE issues need to be discussed. SHE committees should not be seen as an opportunity to raise disputes because a dispute should be raised at the time it occurs and not some weeks later, however the committee meeting does provide an opportunity to monitor progress against actions resulting from the disputes to ensure they are being addressed and action taken in a timely manner and at the most appropriate level in the organisation.

Guidance

1.1 Committee Meetings

The Safety Committee structure within RMG is intended to align to its organisational structure and provide for a consistent approach across the Business. They provide an opportunity to establish and maintain clear protocols, with effective consultation and clarity. The SHE Committee Structure & Suggested Attendees (Appendix 1) that is associated with Standard 5.1 SHE Committee Meetings helps to explain the Safety Committee structure in more detail. The following paragraphs provide more detail as to how they should function.

1.2.1 Committee Meeting Remit

The meetings in the committee meeting structure have very specific objectives as described in the table below.

Level	Meeting	Remit:
Group	SHE Strategic Involvement Meeting (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review current business performance in line with the agreed SHE KPI's and leading SHE performance indicators to identify any improvement opportunities.Discuss any persistent group, field or union SHE risks, issues or disputes to identify appropriate solutions.
	SHE Field Engagement Meeting (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Issue resolution over the deployment of SHE Instructions and associated programmes.Consider escalated issues that arise in a Business Unit or Support Function under the Dispute Resolution process.
	SHE Programme Engagement Meeting (Quarterly):	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Update the Unite CMA and CWU union's National Safety Officers on the development of and updates to the SHE Management System (SHEMS) and associated SHE instructions, programmes and procedures.Consider issues and concerns raised by the National Safety Officers and provide clarification where they relate to the SHEMS and associated SHE Instructions, programmes and procedures.
Business Unit or Support Function Level	SHE Committees (Quarterly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To provide specific Business Unit or Support Function oversight of SHE Plans and support the consistent deployment and implementation of SHE Instructions and associated programmes.Control innovation ensuring knowledge is shared so that initiatives can be reviewed and developed for the benefit of all Business Units and Support Functions.
Local	SHE Committees (Monthly, Excluding December)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct and review inspections, audits, investigations (including risk management), contributing to deployment and implementation of systems, processes and equipment (including training).Develop a clear protocol locally to detail effective SHE committee operation.Become a forum for sharing captured SHE knowledge, driving SHE promotions and increasing the SHE focus in front-line operations.
NOTE: SHE Committees should become forums for sharing captured safety knowledge for central consideration; driving safety promotions and increasing the safety focus in front line operations.		

1.2.2 Meeting Attendees

The suggested attendees are provided in the SHE Committee Structure & Suggested Attendees (Appendix 1) although the number of attendees will be agreed locally by the SHE Committee meeting members. As a general principle, for each operational line manager attending a SHE Committee meeting there will be an equivalent number of CWU Area Safety Representatives (ASR's). There will be a minimum of one Unite CMA ASR per meeting, excluding at the smaller Units, such as Delivery Office where attendance will be by local agreement.

1.2.3 Meeting Frequency

The frequency for any SHE Committee meeting will be a minimum of not less than once a quarter per annum. The minimum frequency for the following SHE Committees has been set as follows:

- Group, Business Unit, Region or Support Function level not less than once a quarter
- Sector, Area & Unit level not less than once a month (excluding December)

The frequency can however be reduced on the agreement of all SHE Committee meeting members.

The meetings will be scheduled to allow cascade of information up and down the structure, and to ensure that key issues are addressed.

1.2.4 SHE Engagement Forums

It is outside the Committee meeting structure but is seen as business best practice to hold SHE Engagement forums. These forums or discussions will be informal with the aim of maintaining a safe, healthy & environmentally friendly workplace through joint working on SHE related matters. Locally SHE engagement forums or discussions are encouraged for promoting SHE on a day to day basis and should be agreed locally with the relevant Workplace Safety Representatives (WSRs) these can be through informal day to day discussions and more formal project work, for example on the deployment of a new SHE programme. At a Business Unit, Region and Support Function level SHE Engagement forums should be used to encourage involvement and improve working relationships. These will ordinarily be through working groups where such things as programme deployments can be discussed. At a Group level SHE Engagement forums should also be used to encourage involvement and improve working relationships and should be agreed with the CWU or Unite CMA National Safety Officer. These will ordinarily be through community based events where the SHE teams and the CWU or Unite CMA ASR's meet to discuss future programmes. The membership of the groups is not the most important element and can involve any combination of managers and/or safety reps and/or safety advisors and/or employees, the focus should be on the beneficial outputs.

1.2.5 Sharing Outputs of Meetings

At each Committee meeting a record should be maintained of the date, time and location of the meeting, the attendees, the points discussed, agreed actions and who is responsible for each action and the timescale for completion. Actions which are not completed from a previous meeting should be carried forward to the next, and recorded again.

Where appropriate the outputs from Committee meetings, in the form of notes or actions, must be brought to the attention of those who would benefit from the information. The approach to this cascade will be a decision of the Committee but with the regular recipients of the cascade being formalised by the Committee. Wherever required due to the subject content the cascade should allow for additional recipients to be identified on a meeting by meeting basis. At a local level the notes or actions from a local SHE Committee must be displayed on the safety notice board in line with SHE Instruction 2.2 Communications

1.2.6 Dispute Resolution

In the event a SHE issue arises that cannot be resolved at Unit level the SHE Dispute Resolution Process detailed in the Flowchart (Appendix 2) must be followed. Disputes raised at a local level must reach resolution within 2 weeks of the issue first being raised at that level. A dispute subsequently raised through to the SHE Strategic Business Partner must be resolved within one month of it first being raised. Feedback on the outcome being supplied to those raising the dispute. The relevant SHE Strategic Business Partner's decision will be final. However, where the dispute has a national impact across RMG the CWU or Unite CMA National Safety Officer can raise the dispute with the Head of Post and Parcels Field SHE Operations the target being for resolution within a further calendar month.

However, there may be occasions where this isn't practical. In such instances a dispute or a complaint related to a SHE matter can be escalated through the following two processes:

- The Grievance Policy – which sets out the process where employees can raise a genuine concern, problem or complaint about their work or employment, it includes serious health and safety breaches.
- Speak Up Policy – which sets out the process for individuals to raise reasonably held concerns relating to wrongdoing where they believe this to be in the public interest, it includes where there is a belief that the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be at risk.'

This Dispute Resolution Process will not be used to intervene in other official business procedures, such as disciplinary action. Related disputes and appeals must be heard within the relevant business framework.

Business Unit, Region or Support Function SHE Disputes

When a SHE issue is raised by an employee or Workplace Safety Representative (WSR) with a Work Area Manager (WAM) the issue should be resolved amicably and without any unreasonable delay. If this is possible there is no need to follow this procedure. However, if the issue cannot be resolved then the Employee or WSR should raise the issue as a dispute with the WAM, Unit Manager or Shift Manager (or equivalent). If the dispute still cannot be resolved and the employee or WSR is unsatisfied with the outcome they should escalate it to the CWU or Unite Area Safety Representative (ASR) within one week of the issue first being highlighted. If it would be beneficial to resolving the issue the ASR can be involved earlier.

As a guide the following are examples of disputes that it would be inappropriate to escalated beyond Unit level:

- Fire exits or emergency escape routes repeatedly blocked
- Fire drills not taking place or not being effectively recorded
- Employees failing to adhere to SHE Standards, rules, SSOW etc.

These should be within the scope of the Unit Managers or those asked to consider the dispute to resolve without further intervention.

In the event a SHE dispute arises that cannot be resolved at the local level the Dispute Resolution process shown in the Flowchart (Appendix 2), associated with this Guidance must be followed.

Where a SHE dispute is raised by the CWU or Unite CMA ASR they should escalate the matter to the local SHE Business Partner and either the Delivery Sector Manager or Mail Centre Manager or Regional Distribution Manager or Area Manager or Area General Manager or Head of Hubs (or equivalent) for resolution within two weeks of the issue first being raised at this level. Where it would assist in identification of a solution the SHE Business Partner should seek advice from their SHE Strategic Business Manager.

It is expected that most issues will be resolved at this level. As a guide the following are examples of disputes that it would be inappropriate to escalated beyond Sector / Area level:

- Incident investigations not being carried out
- Safety Representatives not being consulted during an investigation
- Risk Assessments not being completed
- Control measures identified by the manager during an investigation not being implemented

These should be within the scope of the managers and ASR's asked to consider the dispute to resolve without further intervention. In the event a SHE dispute arises that cannot be resolved at this level the Dispute Resolution process shown in the Flowchart (Appendix 2) must be followed.

Where a dispute still can't be resolved the CWU or Unite CMA ASR escalates the dispute with the CWU or Unite CMA National Safety Officer and the relevant Head of SHE in the Field team so that the dispute can be concluded within one month of the dispute first being raised. The relevant SHE Strategic Business Partner will ensure a decision is reached for all disputes that are local to the Business Unit, Region or Support Function they support. As a result the SHE Strategic Business Partner's decision is final.

The SHE Strategic Business Partner will access each case against the following questions:

- What have you done to try and resolve the issue so far?
- Is what you have done appropriate and sufficient?
- What else could you have done to proactively support a resolution?
- What do you expect as an outcome to the escalation of the dispute?

The SHE Strategic Business Partner can challenge any disputes they consider to be inappropriate and that they feel should have been resolved at an earlier stage.

Group Level Dispute Resolution

Where it can be shown by the CWU or Unite CMA National Safety Officer that a case has national implications across RMG and would as such have an impact on the RMG SHE Strategy it can be raised by the CWU or Unite CMA National Safety Officer with the Head of Post and Parcels Field SHE Operations. The target for resolution is within one additional calendar month of it first being raised. The Head of Post and Parcels Field SHE Operations decision is final.

1.27 Feedback

On conclusion of a dispute feedback should be provided by the person adjudicating on the dispute to those involved. This includes where a person adjudicating on a dispute deems it was inappropriate for escalation. The person adjudicating should explain the outcome and the reasons for coming to the conclusion, especially if they believe a dispute should have been resolved earlier. In addition, they should whenever possible provide appropriate guidance, to those escalating the dispute, on how to handle future cases.

1.2.8 Dispute Resolution Tracker

Where a dispute progresses beyond the Sector / Area level it must be captured by the Safety Advisor on the Dispute Resolution Tracker (Appendix 5) through to its resolution. This will provide an opportunity for learning within the safety community on the issues raised and the solutions identified so that future disputes can be more easily concluded.

References

- SHE Instruction 2.3 Consultation and Participation
- SHE Committee Meeting Structure & Suggested Attendees (Appendix 1)
- SHE Dispute Resolution Flowchart (Appendix 2)
- SHE Committee Meeting Agenda Template (Appendix 3)
- SHE Dispute Resolution Tracker (Appendix 5)
- Standard 4.4 Statutory Notices and Notice Boards
- The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977

Version No.	Date of Change	Author	Element Owner	Description of change	Review Date
3.0	22/03/19	J Cannon	J Cannon	Change of template and alignment with SHEMS re-structure	22/03/21

..

Royal Mail Group

SHE Dispute Resolution Record Template

Where a SHE dispute arises that cannot be resolved at Unit level the following Dispute Resolution record must be made before it can be forwarded for consideration and resolution outside the Unit.

UNIT LEVEL		
Date initially raised by Employee or Manager	Unit	Unit Manager
Employee or Manager raising the dispute	Details of Dispute	
CWU Area Safety Rep &/or Unite CMA Area Safety Rep(s)		
Management Decision		
SECTOR / AREA LEVEL		
Date raised:		
Raised by:		
Reason for raising dispute:		
Raised with:	Local SHE Business Partner	
	Senior (Second Line) Manager	
Outcome Satisfactory	Yes / No	
Senior (Second Line) Manager Decision		

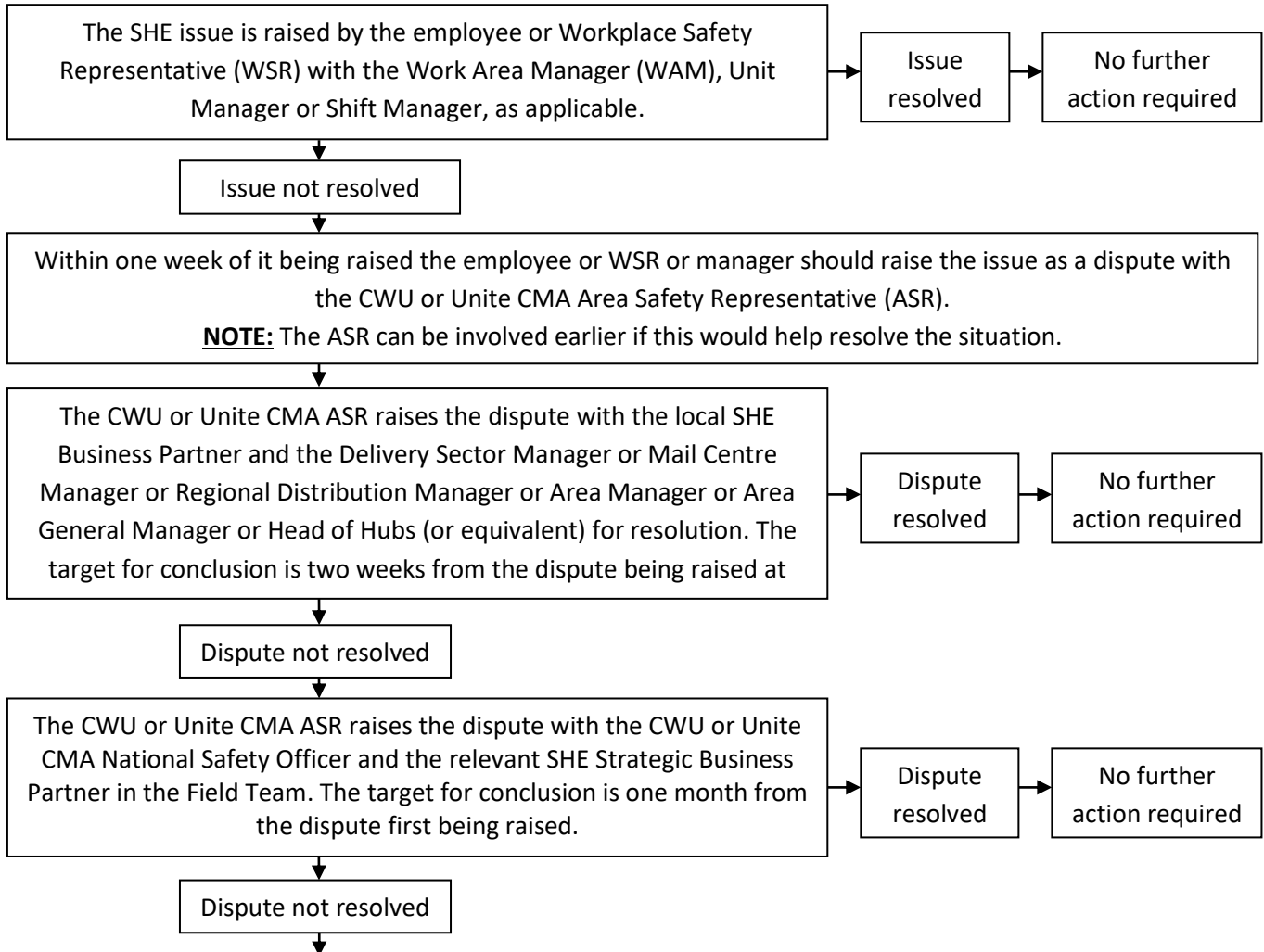
BUSINESS UNIT / REGION / SUPPORT FUNCTION	
Date raised:	
Raised by:	
Reason for raising dispute:	
Raised with relevant SHE Strategic Business Partner in Field Team	
Outcome Satisfactory	Yes / No
SHE Strategic Business Partner Decision	
GROUP	
Date raised by CWU &/or Unite CMA National Safety Officer	
Reason for raising dispute:	
Outcome Satisfactory	Yes / No
Head of UKPIL SHE Field Operations Decision (This decision is final)	
<p>NOTE: On conclusion of the Dispute Resolution process if it is believed there is a need to review a 'point of principle' or resolve a legal interpretation this can be raising for discussion at the Strategic Involvement meeting chaired by the Global Director Safety, Health, Wellbeing & Sustainability. However, this approach cannot be used to challenge the Head of UKPIL SHE Field Operations decision.</p>	

Royal Mail Group

Safety, Health & Environment (SHE) Dispute Resolution Flowchart (Appendix 2).

Where a safety, health or environment dispute arises that cannot be resolved at Unit level the following Dispute Resolution process should be followed. However this does not stop employees from using the 'Grievance' or 'Speak Up' procedures where applicable, as described in the associated guidance.

BUSINESS UNIT, REGION or SUPPORT FUNCTION SHE DISPUTES



GROUP LEVEL DISPUTES SHE DISPUTES

