

# Strategic Priority four

› Effectively execute our strategy by doing what we say, on budget and on time





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## WHAT WE HAVE DONE

Operational plans translating strategy into action have been developed to guide our industry engagement, the commercialisation of IRL's R&D, and business development activities.

Workshops, under the leadership of the CEO and senior management, have been held with the six science and engineering groups to develop operational plans that meet IRL's overall strategy.

A review of internal communications has resulted in:

- implementation of processes to ensure the flow of information up and down the company structure and ensure messages to staff are consistent
- emphasis on comprehensive and changing content on the IRL Intranet to ensure staff have all the information they need to do their job, understand the company's policies, processes and overall strategy and are aware of what is going on across the company on a day-to-day basis.

Videoconferencing has been introduced in multiple meeting rooms to encourage more frequent communication between the three sites without the need to travel.

Regular weekly seminar sessions allow the various science and engineering groups to share information on their work, providing opportunities for collaborations across the company.

Our focus has been on raising awareness within IRL of individual responsibility in managing health and safety in the workplace in order to reinforce a culture where every employee treats safety as a personal obligation and challenge.

Compliance with legislation is seen as a minimum standard and our training courses emphasise risk minimisation and effective hazard management rather than simple compliance with the rules.

A Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Champions Award has been instigated to recognise individual achievement in health and safety management.

A fully qualified occupational health nurse is employed full-time in Wellington and provides health assessments for all staff joining the company, along with regular health monitoring for staff exposed to occupational hazards. A specialist occupational health physician provides support for the occupational health nurse.

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## Engaging effectively with industry

One of the key operational plans in delivering the IRL strategy has been the Industry Engagement Plan. Its objective has been to ensure we pursue our goals of transferring and/or commercialising our technology in a co-ordinated and targeted way. It also highlights any areas where we need to concentrate our business development activity and highlight where we might need to establish key partnerships. Recognising that this is a dynamic space, the plan is regularly reviewed and updated in response to changes in the market. At present, we have identified six industrial areas that are a match with our R&D. They are: specialty manufacturing, both industrial and medical; communications technologies, especially for hardware and firmware; bio-manufacturing, which includes translational medicine and advanced ingredients; specialty food processing; construction and engineering; and energy production and distribution. We have also developed a market plan to cover Māori industry development – reflecting the importance to Māori of R&D to increase the returns on their assets, particularly in the primary sector.

## Improving internal communications

A regular Team Briefing process has been introduced to ensure better communication from the management level of the company to all staff and vice versa. A Core Management Brief is prepared after every management meeting to be passed on to all employees at their Team Briefing Meeting. Team leaders and supervisors are also required to provide their line management with a written brief of issues that have been raised by their team that is then available to Management. Its introduction has been well received by staff.

While the Team Briefing model has been valuable in fostering a culture of open communication and developing a shared sense of mission and vision, the Intranet is a significant day-to-day internal communication tool and the emphasis in the current financial year has been on continuing to ensure a regular supply of news stories about the company and the continuing review of policy and process documents to ensure staff have all the information they need to carry out their job and understand the strategic direction of the company.

As part of the major overhaul of IRL's information technology systems, IRL invested in videoconferencing suites to enable

virtual meetings within IRL across the three sites and also with external partners. Auckland and Christchurch each have one endpoint while five endpoints were installed in Wellington. The installation of up-to-date videoconferencing has contributed to costs savings through reductions in travel and has also enabled significantly improved collaboration with scientists and commercial partners both in New Zealand and internationally.

Responses to the Staff Climate Survey questions on communication show an improvement on previous surveys with a clear majority saying they felt informed about the company and an increase in the respondents who believed knowledge and ideas are freely shared around the organisation.

## A safer workplace

At IRL, we are committed to maintaining the health and safety of all employees, contractors and visitors, recognising that health and safety are important for wellbeing, morale, productivity and quality of work. We ensure all work areas comply with the relevant legislation, provide appropriate safety equipment and have in place safe operating standards. Our strategy, however, is that compliance with legislation is the minimum standard, and it is the responsibility of all employees, contractors and visitors to prevent accidents and eliminate hazardous situations that may result in personal injury, occupational illnesses, and property and/or environmental damage.

To reinforce this culture of proactive health and safety management at the individual level, all employees must demonstrate a personal commitment to achieving agreed HSE objectives in their performance assessments. Our training courses for work area managers emphasise their leadership role in helping instil this approach among their staff. Processes are in place covering hazard identification, assessment and control, incident investigation, safety inspection and compliance auditing techniques to further help staff manage health and safety in their work area. All accidents and incidents must be reported and are investigated, but we also encourage reporting of near misses, as an instrument in improving workplace safety. We also have in place guidelines for IRL staff undertaking field work at remote locations.

During the financial year, improvements have been made



in our procedures for handling liquid nitrogen on site with the introduction of small, wheeled cryogenic vessels. These units will be filled by the supplier, which will obviate the necessity for a bulk liquid nitrogen installation. We have also formed an Electrical Safety Sub-committee in recognition of the fact that much of our work involves the design, building and use of electrical appliances. The committee's role is to ensure electrical safety policies and processes are effectively implemented on all three IRL sites. We also continue to emphasise training in electrical safety and during the year the number of employees eligible to be registered as electrical service technicians, grade A, increased from 40 to 47. Four other employees raised their level of competence in electrical work by becoming eligible to work on three-phase electrical equipment.

Our initiatives and policies on health and safety management saw IRL move from secondary to tertiary level accreditation during the year under ACC New Zealand's Partnership Programme. Companies meeting this audit standard have been found to have made continuous improvement and have in place a best practice framework for safety in all areas of the workplace.

## Workplace incidents

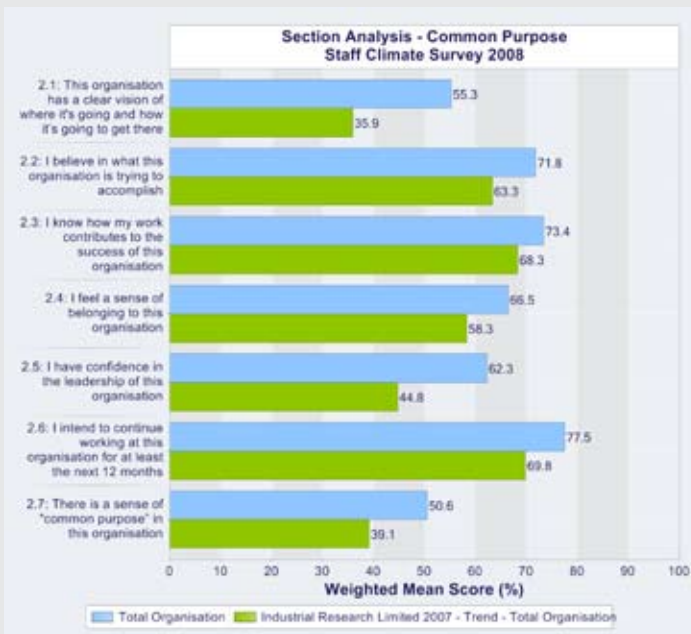
During 2008/09, there were five cases recorded where employees were absent, placed on restricted work or required medical treatment as a result of a workplace injury. The time lost (using the Lost Time Injury Frequency Severity Index) was 57 hours per 100,000 hours – equivalent to 16 days lost for the year. There were no cases recorded where employees were absent, placed on restricted work or required medical treatment as a result of a workplace injury during the previous year.

## HSE Champions

Four people were named as HSE Champions during the year. They were: Alan Johnston, site manager for IRL Auckland and Christchurch; research engineer Rod Badcock of HTS Group; Susanne Woodfield, logistics co-ordinator at GlycoSyn; and Edward Pilbrow, research engineer in Christchurch.

## Pandemic Plan activated

Our Pandemic Plan was activated during the course of the year in response to Ministry of Health directions on the containment, and latterly management, of Influenza A (H1N1) virus.



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