

The HSE's cost-recovery scheme, Fee for Intervention (FFI), came into force on 1 October.

Information gained under the Freedom of Information Act shows that the HSE have set a budget whilst works out at £12 million per year for fees gained by this route.

Whilst I don't have a problem with the concept that companies who are found to be at fault should pay the costs rather than the taxpayer, there is something wrong with this budget. At the FFI rate of £124 per hour, £12 million requires 96,000 hours or about 55 man years per year. Or, if we take a guess and say that each intervention takes an average of 5 hours, then there needs to be 19,200 interventions per year.

Whilst the HSE are never going to hit this budget, it is reasonable to expect that inspectors will be set targets and will change from being proactive to escalating the levels of problems they see. This will kill off the concept of reducing the health and safety burden on industry.

The HSE has now published a full downloadable guide to the FFI scheme on its website at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse47.pdf>

Details on what the Executive identifies as the most basic safety mistakes in the workplace can also be viewed at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/fee-for-intervention/basic-safety-mistakes/index.htm>