

# Employees

Over the last year, our Human Resources team has been working alongside representatives from our business to enhance and develop our structure of employee performance review, development and reward. We also worked to establish improved routes of employee consultation to better inform business decisions and practices.

Our Human Resources Integrated Framework is structured around four main areas:

- Company pay structure
- Career development
- Recruitment and retention
- Employee rewards

Our Human Resources Integrated Framework team has been formally established since February 2003. We support them in their work via a steering group. A number of working groups considered specific project areas within the overall framework over the last year. Full details on the framework development to date are published for our employees on our company intranet. We introduced new employee rewards over the year in the form of the Lifestyle package. This offers a range of discounts on goods and services. In 2003-2004 these included travel, health and leisure clubs and activities. Over the period between October 2003 and February 2004, employees saved over £98,000 through use of Lifestyle offers, compared to the actual cost without Lifestyle benefits.

Business Involvement Groups (BIGs) are now established across our business functions. Elected employee representatives meet with management in functional groups quarterly. The wider regional group, incorporating representatives from each function, meet to discuss company-wide issues. Minutes of meetings held and dates of future meetings are available on our

company intranet. We have a formal constitution for the BIGs and this is also published in full on our company intranet.

## Employee Health and Safety, training and skillsharing

Development of our Health and Safety Management System continued. Our company intranet now shows team performance via the health and safety monitoring system. Our active participation in the European Week of Health and Safety was recognised by the Health and Safety Commission. We worked with Water UK's Clearwater 2010 initiative by assisting to produce industry guidance on occupational stress.

In 2003, we conducted a Health and Safety Culture Survey of employee perceptions. A total of 1,100 employees were sent surveys and there was a 41% return rate. The survey contained 70 structured statements against which employees could comment. We analysed the results against those received from a similar survey in 2000. We presented the collated results back to our employees at all levels of the business.



### CASE STUDY

## Modern Apprenticeships

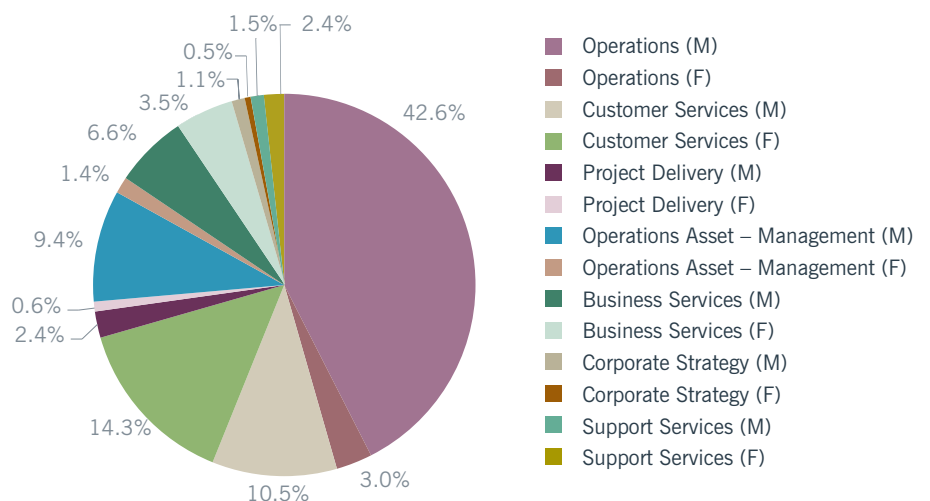
Our Modern Apprenticeship Schemes are aimed at school leavers offering hands on experience alongside experienced people in our industry. As well as offering practical knowledge within job roles, apprentices can work towards recognised qualifications including NVQs and/or BTEC. Due to the mobile nature of many of our working roles, we offer assistance with learning to drive. Our internal mentoring scheme provides access to support and guidance, while independent advisors monitor the progress of our apprentices to ensure the quality of training we provide.

The Electrical Apprenticeship scheme is one of our Modern Apprenticeships. This scheme is divided into seven phases of training and development over a four-year period. It includes a combination of full-time residential study at a training establishment, day release to achieve relevant qualifications and practical workplace experience.

## Background

- Total of 2,134 fixed term and permanent employees at March 2004
- Average employee turnover rate has reduced to 6.8% for the financial year 2003-2004 compared to 8% for the previous year
- 41% of employees responded to our 2003 Health and Safety culture survey

## Employees by function and gender



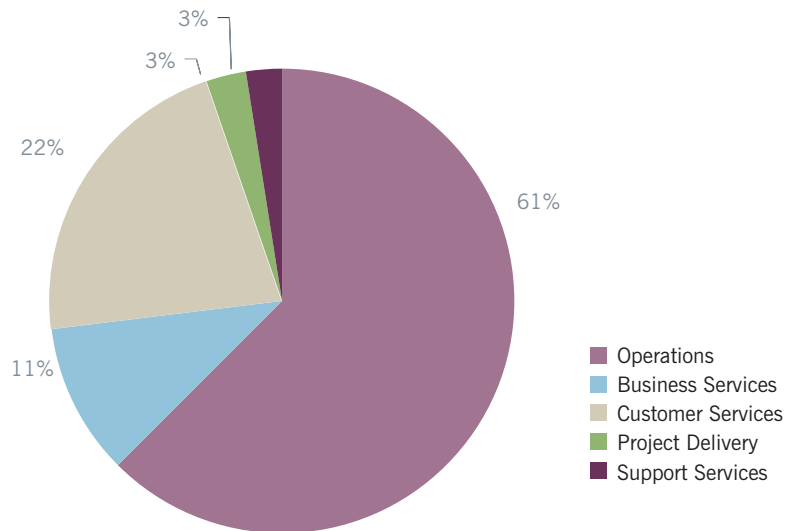
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Our stress awareness programme continues with regular updates available via our company intranet. We used monthly messages to raise awareness of support and advice available. We offered employee support through a confidential counselling service and complimentary physiotherapy treatments available to all our employees. New occupational health providers reviewed our health surveillance process over the last year based on a job risk analysis.

Formal Health and Safety training was provided on specific subjects to appropriate members of staff as assessed by line managers. We plan to develop the range of courses delivered. Informal health and safety training continued through monthly team meetings across the business. This included promotion of safe driving messages through our latest health and safety video *Driving and Vehicle Safety*.

We made details of our employee induction programme available to employees on our intranet as an electronic welcome pack. Our Employee Handbook includes our commitment to sustainable development and environmental management. We aim to introduce our sustainability and environmental policies to new employees via induction training from 2004. We also aim to develop training packages focussing on working-role related environmental management issues for delivery through our Open Learning facility. Employee awareness of our organisational commitments

## Annual spread of formal Health and Safety training

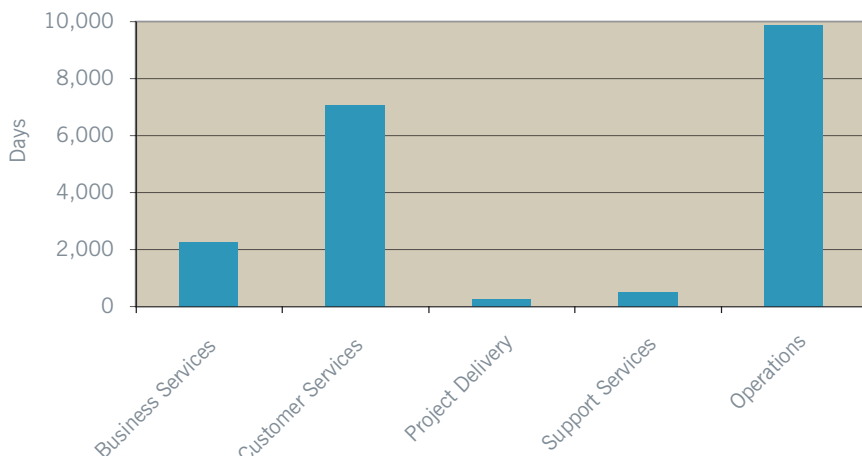


in these areas will be gauged through our forthcoming employee survey.

Our Open Learning programme is available to our employees and their families. In addition to employee training, the programme offers practical, vocational or personal development courses free of charge. Learning can take place at dedicated centres or at distance from home via computer. We introduced blended learning over the last year, which gives employees the opportunity to benefit from workshop-style training as well as interactive electronic media.

Over the last year, each employee personal development plan was individually reviewed to identify Open Learning courses appropriate to training needs. Uptake of training through Open Learning was monitored over the year. Results were compared against needs identified from employee personal development plans. This year our Integrated Competency Framework was developed to establish clear links between training available in Open Learning and employee competency assessment categories. We use these

## Lost time (sickness and accidents)



Employee time lost through sickness was significantly greater than through any accident-related events.

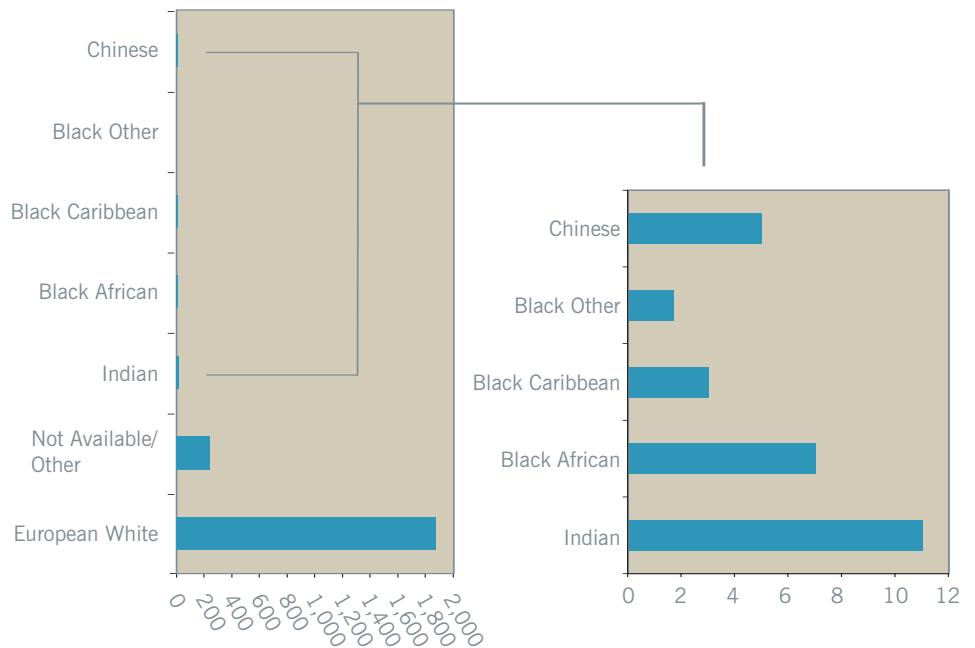
assessment categories in our annual employee personal development planning process. This linking aimed to aid managers and employees in matching their needs to appropriate training packages easily available to them through Open Learning.

This year we are introducing a new training programme for wastewater process operators. The programme consists of 17 different technical components. These are planned for delivery at 13 sites across our region to ensure easy access for all our operators. The training will support our employees in our commitment to manage environmental risks and meet our compliance targets.

Our latest New Deal training programme for Trainee Leakage Inspectors commenced in January 2004. The programme involves a nine-month contract with seven modules of training and work experience incorporating City & Guilds Utilities Operations Certification Scheme.

Our skillseeker programme offers young people the opportunity to gain work experience and study towards a qualification at the same time. The programme includes regular progress monitoring.

### Ethnic origin



2003-2004 target	Progress against target	2004-2005 target
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>		
To establish a company-wide Business Involvement Group to consider issues that go across the business by June 2003.	Target met.	Maintain BIGS process.
Implement the new Human Resources Integrated Framework for employees.	Various aspects introduced throughout the year with more planned.	Continue to implement framework for employees.
100% team managers completing informal H&S training updates.	97% team managers confirmed completion.	Maintain target.
<b>2003 target</b>		
100% delivery and 95% delegate attendance rate of Health & Safety (H&S) training as a percentage of formal training identified in the annual company training plan.	87% delegate attendance rate of H&S training as a percentage of delegates proposed to attend.	100% Training delivered as a percentage of training identified in the Annual Training Plan.
100% site safety/workplace inspections of total planned by department manager.	Target met.	95% Training attended as a percentage of total delegates proposed to attend.
<b>2004 target</b>		
		Maintain target.

KEY: Target met In progress Target not met