

## Hickory's Quality Management Policy Statement

At Hickory we pride ourselves on delivering the highest levels of service to all of our clients and recognises the importance of maintaining strict quality assurance standards. Hickory endeavours to provide a quality service that meets, and where possible exceeds, the needs and objectives of all our clients. Continuous improvement and feedback are essential to the development of our quality processes, and are documented and retained to ensure that quality management principles are rigorously enforced.

To meet this commitment, we recognise the importance of involving all levels of the workforce in the development, management and review of the Quality Management System and the business improvement plans. In order to achieve this the senior management is to ensure that the Quality Policy is communicated to all those working on behalf of Hickory. Additionally, we are committed to ensuring that all employees are competent to fulfil their role in meeting the objectives of this policy.

We are also committed to meeting the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 and to seek to achieve continual improvement in all areas of our business activity through the use of objectives and improvement plans.

While ultimate responsibility for quality matters within Hickory rests with me, Directors and senior managers are to ensure that their business regions are managed and adequately resourced, with adequate welfare facilities and appropriate human, financial and equipment resources available to ensure that a quality service can be provided.

I am committed to the continual improvement of our quality management and performance, which is being achieved through the development of objectives and performance indicators. Additionally, it needs the involvement of all employees; I therefore encourage a culture of open communication where employees can freely raise ideas and concerns. Managers and supervisors are to ensure that they treat the concerns of employees seriously and respond accordingly.

The Quality policy is to be reviewed annually and any revisions will be brought to the attention of all persons working under the control of Hickory along with their obligations. It is also available to clients, suppliers and associates upon request.

Adam Davies

Operations and Quality Manager

6<sup>th</sup> April 2016

## Hickory's Quality Management Policy

### Aim

It is the overriding aim of Hickory to supply our clients with a high quality service. We aim to satisfy our customers' requirements in every respect. This policy applies to all who work for Hickory, whether as permanent or temporary employees.

This quality policy document sets out general quality standards. As events and contracts vary considerably, specific quality standards will be agreed with GH associates for each event/contract within these general guidelines.

The areas that are most critical to our clients, and the quality standards required, are set out below. These are:

- **Customer Focus**
- **Leadership**
- **Continuous Improvement**
- **Quality of work and quality assessment**
- **Timing and communication**
- **Client Responsiveness**
- **Integrity - Professional Quality Standards**
- **Supervision, Compliance and Monitoring**

### Customer focus

Hickory has a customer journey model which outlines each and every step of how and when we engage with our client. This model is used as our service excellence standard and outlines the touch points at each step of the customer's interaction from Customer Research through to customer satisfaction improvement. Our Key performance indicator for customer service is 98% and above.

### Leadership

Hickory communicates its vision to all employees, clients and stakeholders and our values are communicated to staff in the handbook. Our Senior Management Team work with our teams to ensure that all resources committed to a contract/event are sufficient for the task, and to encourage creativity and responsibility within the workplace.

## **Continuous improvement**

Hickory conducts customer feedback via a short survey questionnaire which is coordinated weekly by the Customer Quality Coordinator and given to the SMT to review and monitor, and where necessary make changes for improvement. Hickory also uses feedback gathered from client meetings.

## **Quality of Work and Quality Assessment**

All Hickory associates are required to deliver the standard of work agreed on all contracts/events.

We view an initial briefing meeting, and subsequent client meetings (either face to face or over the phone), as important mechanisms for ensuring effective quality control throughout any contract/event. This is supported with a documented approval from the client, on the final event order to ensure all details are correct.

Where appropriate and acceptable to the client, we also seek a final review meeting in order to identify how we might improve our service and operating efficiency in future.

In addition to ongoing communication with clients on quality issues and progress during each event/contract we seek clients' formal assessment of our performance through a short client feedback form.

## **Timing and Communications**

All Hickory associates are required to deliver to the timescales as set out in the event order, and adhere to the Hickory on brand style, tone and professional conduct. SLA's are agreed with venue partners and clients where required.

## **Client Responsiveness**

It is the aim of Hickory to provide a high and consistent level of customer service and to respond to all enquires by telephone within 24 hours in the first instance for the purpose of qualifying the enquiry and inviting for a consultation.

Our team of dedicated event sales planners will contact all clients and will apply their expert skills and experience in handling sales enquiries.

## **Integrity – Professional Quality Standards**

We will act with the highest standards of integrity, respecting commercial confidentiality, intellectual copyright and reference sources where appropriate.

## **Supervision, Compliance and Monitoring**

Adam Davies, Operations and Quality Manager, is responsible for overseeing the quality of all work by Hickory. The Senior Management Team support the Operations and Quality Manager to supervise, monitor quality of work and ensure compliance standards are met.

Hickory will endeavour to maintain strict quality assurance standards within the workforce in order to meet the above aims.

## **Organising for Quality**

Good management and positive leadership are necessary to realise a high standard of quality awareness. To achieve this it is necessary to detail the organisation within which quality issues will be managed and specify the responsibilities for quality management that exist. This section of the Quality policy details how Hickory will manage these aspects.

## **Responsibilities**

The Operations and Quality Manager with responsibility for quality matters is Adam Davies and he has accepted his role in providing quality leadership within Hickory. He is to establish effective policies and procedures for the management of quality throughout Hickory. He is to ensure that Directors and where applicable Senior Managers establish and maintain an effective integrated management system.

## **Operations and Quality Manager is to ensure the following:**

- Set an example in safe behaviour, good management and positive leadership.
- That adequate resources in terms of time, finance and personnel are available to implement and manage quality
- That quality performance is monitored and reviewed on a regular basis
- Monitoring the effectiveness of business quality policies and recommending improvements where appropriate.
- Annual review the business quality policy
- Annual production of a quality improvement plan that outlines targets and objectives to be achieved to reduce incidents and occupational ill health in the business, minimise or reduce our negative impacts on the environment and reduce any negative aspects of our service provision in support of Group targets and objectives.

- Assist and advise Directors and Senior Managers in meeting their responsibilities for quality matters and ensure that they are kept aware of their legal and management responsibilities
- Ensure that the requirements of this policy and management systems are appropriately communicated to all employees and that they are, as far as possible followed.
- Carry out periodic inspections and audits of quality performance across a representative sample of their sites/contracts on a periodic basis.
- Report any failings in quality performance to the relevant Director/Senior Manager
- Submit quality performance reports to their relevant Department Manager
- Ensure that they maintain their professional knowledge in order to fulfil their role in a competent manner.
- Ensure management are made aware of changes to internal and external requirements, procedures and standards,

#### **Board of Directors and Senior Managers are to ensure the following:**

- Set an example in safe behaviour, good management and positive leadership
- Ensure that the appropriate human, financial and equipment resources are available for the management of quality, health, safety and environmental matters.
- Implement the requirements of the business quality policy and where necessary supplement this to ensure safe working
- Ensure Managers and Supervisors are aware of their responsibilities concerning quality management and those they receive appropriate training to meet this requirement
- Ensure all employees have the appropriate level of competence to work safely.
- Develop awareness of the quality requirements amongst all their employees by the provision of formal and informal training.
- Monitor the quality performance of the business by periodic review of incident data, internal audits and non-conformances and to ensure that all activities receive a periodic safety audit.
- Establish effective means to ensure the involvement of employees in the management of quality matters.
- Ensure that quality responsibilities are clearly annotated in all job descriptions.

#### **Managers/Supervisors/Coordinators are to ensure the following:**

- Ensure they are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the management of quality matters in their respective businesses.

- Set an example in safe behaviour, good management and positive leadership.
- Identify and meet the quality training and development needs of employees under their control to ensure competency.
- Ensure the reporting of incidents, occupational ill health, non-injury incidents and environmental incidents in accordance with Group procedures. Where appropriate ensure that an investigation is carried out.
- Monitor the Quality performance of the business by periodic review of non-conformances and to ensure that all complaints are dealt with in an efficient and timely manner in accordance with the business Control of Non-conformities, corrective and preventive action procedure.
- Allocate appropriate quality responsibilities to line management, ensuring they are understood and effectively implemented.
- Develop and apply the appropriate risk control systems and work place precautions to eliminate or minimise risk.
- Involve and consult with employees on all issues concerning quality enabling two-way communication on such matters
- Identify quality deficiencies within contracts or projects and take appropriate remedial action. Ensure the Operations and Quality Manager are informed of the deficiency.
- Monitor the quality performance of employees and contractors by conducting site and contract audits and inspections.
- Assist the Business in improving performance through consultation, co-operation and communication.

## **HR Managers/Line Managers are to ensure the following:**

- Ensure that new staff members receive a relevant induction that covers quality awareness.
- Ensure that all formal and informal quality training is appropriately recorded in an employee's training record.

## **Quality, Health, Safety and Environmental Performance Objectives**

In order to achieve continual improvement in our quality performance, the Operations and Quality Manager will, on an annual basis, carry out a review of the overall quality, safety and environmental performance of Hickory and set objectives for performance improvement. The objectives will be documented and appropriately communicated for action and implementation.

These objectives will be set to assist the Business objectives wherever possible. All objectives will be realistic and achievable and fit with the overall business plans and based on data generated from performance review and internal audit results.

## **Performance Monitoring**

Performance monitoring is required across all companies to ensure compliance with Business and legislative requirements quality management. The Business will institute a system of internal audit that addresses all aspects of quality management on a yearly basis.

On an annual basis, the Operations and Quality Manager is to provide a report to the Board of Directors with regard to the performance of all Quality activities within the business. These reports will be used to inform the Board of progress in improving the Business's quality performance. The contents of the report will be set by the Operations and Quality Manager.