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Your Ref:
Our Ref: HSS (PPM) 1/2005

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Chief Executives, HSS Boards
Chief Executives, HSS Trusts
Chief Executive, CSA
Chief Executives, HSS Special Agencies
Chief Officers, HSS Councils (for information)
Chief Executives, NDPBs (for information)

GOVERNANCE IN THE HPSS: REPORTING ON COMPLIANCE WITH CONTROLS ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR 2004/05

1. The purpose of this circular is to set out the requirements for HPSS organisations to report on their compliance with controls assurance standards issued for 2004/05.

Controls Assurance Standards

2. Circular HSS (PPM) 5/2003 formally introduced HPSS controls assurance standards and advised HPSS bodies that they would be required to assess and report their levels of compliance with controls assurance standards on an annual basis, in support of the wider Statement on Internal Control (SIC). Fourteen standards were formally issued to the HPSS for 2004/05: three core standards of governance, financial management and risk management and eleven non-core standards of buildings, land, plant and non-medical equipment, decontamination of medical devices, environmental management, fire safety, health and safety, human resources, infection control, information and communication technology, medical devices and equipment, medicines management and waste management.

Self-Assessment

3. Guidance on applicability, expected levels of compliance and the assessment process may be accessed through the governance website: www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss/governance/index.asp. The underlying principle is that the assessment of compliance is based only on the aspects of a standard that apply to a particular organisation. Where standards, or criteria within standards, do not apply, this should be clearly stated in the

assessment and supported by comment.

Timetable and Reporting Mechanisms

4. In support of their Accountable Officers' SIC, individual organisations will have already begun the self-assessment process for 2004/05 compliance. To meet the timetable for the Accounting Officer's SIC in the Departmental Resource Accounts, formal self-assessment returns for the 2004/05 year must be made by 27 May 2005.
5. Returns in respect of the fourteen controls assurance standards should be made and submitted electronically on a spreadsheet via the governance website. A single hard copy, endorsed by the Chief Executive, should also be forwarded to Robert Haworth at the above address. The Department will notify HPSS bodies by e-mail when the spreadsheet becomes available for use.
6. If you have any queries about the content of this circular, please contact Elaine Lawson on 028 90523112.

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