





customer service

The people who work in our stores are central to the delivery of our business goals. It is the skills, flair and enthusiasm of our people that ensure success. This is reflected in the investment we are making in training and development.



**Fiona Bailey,
Director for Culture.**

Fiona's aim is to make Safeway a more fun, open and participative place to work. We want our people to enjoy what they do, feel they are personally contributing to our success and be rewarded for their achievements.



**Jim White,
Human Resources
Director.**

We employ 89,000 people in our stores, depots and offices across the UK. Jim is in charge of recruiting, developing and rewarding these individuals.



Fresh Food Skills

Training opportunities have been provided across the breadth of the store, but the most significant changes have focused on the development of our fresh food skills. From "Career Route" induction training for new employees to the offer of NVQs for the experienced operator, we are providing opportunities for personal development, growth and achievement.

We have worked with suppliers and industry lead bodies to provide innovative and comprehensive training solutions for all our traditional fresh food crafts – produce, meat, fish and bakery. Each programme recognises the importance of product knowledge and a broad understanding of the retail trade in delivering excellent customer service. In addition to learning new skills, the opportunity to gain a recognised qualification is very much appreciated by all those who participate.

100 members of our store Bakery teams have achieved or are working towards an NVQ in Craft Baking, and another 200 are set to join the programme in the next few months. 250 Greengrocers are currently working towards an NVQ in Retail Operations with additional candidates joining the programme in the first half of the current year. Our Meat and Fish programmes have also been launched, with in-store learning complemented by off-site courses approved by the Sea Fish Authority, the Meat Training Council and the Meat & Livestock Commission. Each course provides the opportunity to gain a relevant vocational qualification.

Training Centres

Another important development is the introduction of our Safeway Training Centres – fully equipped training facilities to provide hands-on craft training. Two centres have opened successfully since the start of this



calendar year. The first centre is at Marr Foods in Hull where we are training our Fishmongers. The training centre is equipped to the Safeway specification and provides an area dedicated to fish preparation and display, a training room and a separate kitchen for cookery demonstrations and tastings. Meanwhile, at our Head Office in Hayes, we have created a "Fresh to Go" training centre which enables us to develop the culinary skills of our "Fresh to Go" teams. We have installed equipment for pasta making, pizza tossing, coffee making, made-to-order sandwiches and a hot wok noodle bar. Both centres provide the opportunity to learn and practise skills in a "safe" environment away from the day-to-day pressures of the workplace. More training centres are already in the pipeline.

Star Service

It is essential that our store teams have the necessary knowledge and technical skills, but of equal importance is self-confidence and a personality that shines. New recruitment methods are being used to attract mature workers and to select those who can deliver our own unique brand of "retainmentment" and excellent customer service. Our Customer Service training, pioneered in the St Katharine Docks store in London, is now at the heart of our refit programme, helping to transform our culture as well as our stores. Working with a group of professionally trained actors, we are developing our own Star Service team to facilitate the change that will bring the theatre in our stores to life. This has now been introduced in the refitted stores in London and the South East and will be extended to other stores as part of our on-going investment programme.

Performance Bonuses

Bonuses are an important part of our remuneration policy. Our new-style bonus plan for our stores is designed to reward



Left bottom, Steve Tanner, wine advisor, on hand to give expert advice to customers.

Left centre, trainees learn the art of fresh pasta-making at the second Safeway Training Centre.

Left top, Karen O'Connell, part of the "Fresh to Go" team, serving freshly prepared sandwiches.

Top, James Foster, one of our fully trained butchers, advises on both what to buy and how to cook it.

Above, Nick Edwards, customer services controller, at our store at St Katharine Docks.

exceptional performance by store managers and their teams. The maximum store manager bonus is potentially 100% of salary. During the year 80% of our store managers and their management teams received bonuses amounting to £14.5 million.

We have also introduced our Bonus for Everyone, in which all our non-managerial colleagues from stores, distribution and our central support functions participate. The targets are challenging and designed to support our business goals. The maximum bonus payment for store staff (excluding

managers) is £500 per annum, which is higher than any comparable cash incentive scheme in food retailing. The results are monitored and rewarded either quarterly or half yearly.

It is a critical part of our culture that our colleagues feel motivated to deliver the highest standards of service and are rewarded for their achievement. A total of £25 million was paid out in bonuses to Safeway people at all levels of the business, an increase of 55% on the previous year.