HEALTH AND SAFETY
SAFETY POLICY & ARRANGEMENTS

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Subject: **Working Alone Safely**

Introduction

This document forms part of the National Ice Centre's organisational written safety policy arrangements.

Departments, services or teams may consider it appropriate to develop additional guidance and systems of work on specific work related activities.

Where proposals, additional guidance or changes to systems of work will have an impact on health, safety and welfare, this will be discussed and agreed at the Health & Safety Committee.

If you have any questions or require further information or support on the contents of this document, please contact The NIC Health & Safety Advisor or Corporate Safety Advice.

Overview Of Management & Colleague Responsibilities

Manager Responsibilities

Below is an overview of the responsibilities which is intended to support managers in identifying their key duties that need to be taken to comply with the requirements of this document and the safety management systems of The National Ice Centre.

- Managers must where it is reasonably practicable to avoid potentially hazardous lone working, consider this as the principal control measure. Where this is not possible, lone working controls must be put in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Managers must ensure that lone working risks have been covered by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, undertaken by a competent person.
- Managers must ensure that the lone worker risk assessment template is used for all assessments concerning lone working.
- Managers need to communicate the detail of risk assessments and ensure that they are understood by colleagues whose work is covered by the assessment.
- Managers must ensure that the risk assessment has been reviewed and revised as necessary when changes occur to the demands of the post to ensure that it remains valid.
- Managers must ensure that their staff are able to access the information contained within the violence database. For those without access to the intranet arrangements must to be made for the database to be checked on their behalf.
- Managers need to ensure that lone working procedures are formalised and communicated to all affected staff.
- Managers must know the whereabouts of their colleagues whilst they are working and must have identified an appropriate system to be able to locate and/or communicate with them.
- Managers must ensure that any incident occurring to a member of staff is reported correctly and that a full investigation has been completed.

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Employee Responsibilities

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 section 7 requires all employees to consider their own health & safety and the safety of others.

As an employee of the National Ice Centre, if you have concerns in relation to health & safety that is likely to cause you or someone else, injury or ill health then you must ensure that the concern is communicated to your manager immediately.

You are also required to co-operate with the management of the National Ice Centre to ensure compliance with the health & safety arrangements, policies and procedures and work to the requirements identified within this document.

Legal Requirements For Lone Working

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as:

"those who work by themselves without close supervision"

Lone working covers activities that are specifically intended to be carried out unaccompanied or without immediate access to another person for assistance or supervision.

This lone work definition does not include a colleague who finds that they are on their own when they are the person who arrives first or leaves last within a building, or a colleague who goes into a storage area, unaccompanied.

Managers and employees need to appreciate that there is no general prohibition on working alone but appropriate controls need to be in place to maintain the safety of colleagues who do lone work.

Managers must also ensure that where their activity involves young people undergoing training, there are additional legal requirements on the standards of supervision required to maintain the safety of the young person.

It is also important to recognise that certain activities may be subject to specific statutory requirement to ensure that people do not work alone; e.g. working in confined spaces, working on ladders (that cannot be secured), fumigation or works with other hazardous chemicals, erection of scaffolding etc.

Lone Worker Risk Assessment

Whilst there is no specific legal prohibition on working alone, the general duties of the Health and Safety legislation require employers to consider the safety of employees and others.

This will require managers to identify hazards, assessment of risks and implementation of control measures in relation to lone working and prior to lone working being accepted as a work practice, ensure a suitable risk assessment is in place.

Where the risk assessment process identifies that it is not possible for the work to be carried out safely by one person working alone, alternative arrangements for backup or support must be provided that ensure that this does not occur.

Managers must ensure that the assessment identifies who is working alone and where appropriate, involvement of those colleagues in the assessment process.

Managers must ensure that all risk assessors have received appropriate training on risk assessments and their completion.

This training is available from Corporate Safety Advice section of the Learning Zone.

Managers must ensure that all formal lone working risk assessments are fed back to the colleagues that are involved with the activity so that they are clear on what is expected of them and the controls that are in place to maintain their safety.

The assessment must also consider the systems that are in place to maintain colleagues safety in relation to lone working whilst undertaking the task.

Colleagues Who Might Work Alone

Due to the diverse nature of the activities within the NIC and the implementation of home working / smarter ways of working, it is considered that a majority of colleagues may work alone at some point.

These roles could include colleagues who:
- Home working;
- are based in premises alone;
- may work separately from others (Event Sites);
- work outside normal hours;
- regularly work away from their normal base;
- are not in direct contact with other NIC.

Home Work / Smarter Ways Of Working

With the HSE definition for lone working to consider colleagues who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, This will also include colleagues that they are working within their own home.

This is also presents additional risks for colleagues where they may be required to undertake visits or other activities that will require them to leave their home.

In these circumstances, managers are required to identify appropriate system and implement controls to ensure that enable them to know where their colleagues are going to, and that they are safe upon their return in a similar way that this check would occur if the person was based within an office or other workplace.

To address the above, each service where home working is taking place must complete a risk assessment for their workers to identify how they will be supervised and also implement an agreed lone working procedure for their colleagues which identifies any good practice to deal with their safe return to their home.

Factors That Impact Lone Working

Managers need to ensure that solitary workers are not exposed to significantly more risk than other colleagues in the course of their work.

Due to the diverse nature of work the NIC is involved in, it is not appropriate to have a single organisational lone working assessment, however, to make this process easier, a lone worker risk assessment template is available for managers to complete.

Managers of colleagues who lone work need to consider the roles being completed and the potential risks that may be present from lone working including the potential risks from certain activities related to home working.

Lone working factors that managers may need to be considered include:
- Does the work have to be undertaken by a colleague working alone;
- Does the colleagues work present an additional risk due to being alone;
- Does the working environment present risks or is it a new or unknown environment;
- Can one person safely handle any equipment for the task;
- Will cash be handled;
- Is there a significant or increased risk of violence due to being alone;
- Does the person have a medical condition that might impact on their ability to work alone;
- Has the person received adequate training;
- Are there any specific precautions required to deal with an identified disability or condition (e.g. visual impairment / deafness / pregnancy);

- What supervision is required;
- What happens if a person falls ill or has an accident, or if there is an emergency.

Control Measures For Lone Working

Managers should use information within the lone working risk assessment and other related documentation to identify specific controls that are available to minimise the risks from lone working.

Due to the varied nature of locations and work activities that the NIC operates, a generic lone working risk assessment that covers all city council activities is not feasible.

It is important for the manager of colleagues to ensure, where appropriate, a specific lone working risk assessment is undertaken.

There are a variety of control measures that could be implemented by managers before any colleague is allowed to work alone.

Training
Managers need to ensure that there is access to adequate and appropriate training, which may include training on violence to staff, available from Corporate Safety Advice as well as other training, such as disengagement skills from a physical attack which is available from outside agencies.

A risk assessment would identify the need for this training to be accessed.

Communication
Managers need to provide access to adequate and appropriate information on the risks and controls that may be in place to protect them.
This can be achieved by managers ensuring the following is in place where appropriate and reasonable to do so:
- Adequate information, instruction, training and supervision for new employees
- Access to means of effective communication
- Access to automatic warning devices or alarms; personal alarms and the more advanced lone monitoring devices.
- A booking in/out system which includes locations to be visited, times at each location, expected time back in office and starts from home or site finish stated;
- Avoidance of starting and finishing on site and only with the Managers prior agreement;
- Mechanisms to ensure mobile staff contact the office, preferably throughout and at least at the end of each working day
- Designated rotas to ensure cover is available at the office base, to receive calls from mobile staff at least between normal office hours;
- Procedures for staff to contact a designated manager out of hours including at the end of shift to advise they are safe.
- Mechanisms to ensure staff are contacted by designated persons during the day or at home when they have not reported back in;
- Mechanisms to ensure a designated senior officer (team leader or above) has responsibility for contacting relevant authorities (e.g. police, hospitals) and/or visiting site as necessary to check when staff have not reported back as expected / cannot be contacted.

Procedures
Managers need to consider the implementation where appropriate of the following procedures
- Arrangements for working in pairs when required, (particularly when known assailants with violent history are identified on the database or where statutory requirements exist e.g. working in confined spaces) – for further information on this, contact Corporate Safety Advice directly;
- Clear procedure to abort visits that appear to be dangerous;
- Consideration of appropriate transport arrangements;
- Clear written procedures for all staff;
- Established emergency procedures;

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- Adequate preparation for visits and accessing of relevant and up to date information

Clothing/Equipment

Where identified through risk assessment;

- Provision of adequate protective clothing e.g. footwear and hard hats;
- Provision of adequate equipment e.g. torches
- Access to first aid kits

Further Information & References

The following information and reference material is in place to assist managers to understand their responsibilities and duties.

NCC Documentation and Links

- Lone Worker Risk assessment Template

External References

- INDG 73 - 'Working Alone In Safety - Controlling the risks of Solitary Work' (HSE)
- http://www.suzylamplugh.org/

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