

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY POLICY & ARRANGEMENTS



Date: **October 2023**

Issue: **No. 4**

Subject: **Assessment & Management of Stress at Work**

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 need to understand what stressors may exist within the working environments that they manage and how that may create potential stress for colleagues
- Manager must ensure that when stress becomes a potential issue, it is assessed correctly using the appropriate stress assessment template.
- Managers need to complete where applicable relevant stress risk assessments to minimise and reduce the potential for stress to occur
- Managers need to contact Corporate Safety Advice, Occupational Health or HR If you have concerns regarding stress management to your colleagues or completion of stress assessments.
- Managers need to ensure that any potentially stressful work matters to be implemented such as strategic choices or significant work re-alignment is considered and assessed appropriately. It is important that in these situations, the organisations policies for effective consultation and communication with colleagues is implemented effectively.

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.

What Is Defined As Stress

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) define stress as:

“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”.

This statement makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly and stress which can be detrimental to health.



Legal Framework For Stress Management

The Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places a duty of care on employers to provide and maintain safe systems of work and a working environment which is, as far as is reasonably practical, safe and without risks to health.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 place a duty of care to assess significant risks to health & safety and, where these risks cannot be eliminated, implement control measures to minimise or reduce risks.

This duty extends would be considered to include the identification of stress hazards and the subsequent assessment of risks, implementation of control measures in relation to stress at work (where they exist) and ensuring that appropriate controls have been implemented.

Process For Managing Stress

Managers need to understand that the purpose of this policy document is to ensure that there is a formalised process for management to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of stress when it has been identified.

To support managers, 2 assessment templates have been developed to work in conjunction with the stress policy and guidance located within the people Management handbook.

The 2 primary risk assessment templates that can be found within the Corporate Safety Manual are:

- Team Stress Risk Assessment
- Individual stress Action Plan.

Team Stress Assessment

The 'Team Stress Risk Assessment' needs to be completed by the Manager following suitable training, in conjunction with the other colleagues within the affected team.

The findings of this assessment can be used by line management to identify and address potential stress related issues within their area of control.

This assessment form helps to ensure that line managers review current issues and address concerns.

The Team Stress Risk Assessment may be completed as a result of:

- The manager having concerns due to increased sickness levels, symptoms of stress, trends, feedback from team meetings
- When more than 1 member of a team has completed an Individual Stress Action Plan.

The NIC Health & Safety Advisor will be able to offer support on the process of completing this form.

The team stress assessment can then identify additional controls that may be required to remove or reduce the potential for stress within that team.

Individual Stress Action Plan

The 'Individual Stress Action Plan' is the method by which an employee and their manager or an alternative representative can consider the issues around personal stress.

This document may then be used to identify potential solutions.

The form, when completed by the employee identifies the issues which are causing them stress and assists the manager in addressing the concerns and creating an action plan.

An Individual stress action plan will be completed by the employee as a result of:

- The manager identifying that an individual is showing symptoms of stress
- Where the manager considers the work may present an additional or high risk of stress
- Where individual concerns are identified in the 'Team Stress Risk Assessment'.
- The individual reports stress and completes their side of the 'Personal Accident Report Form'

All individual stress action plans must be discussed by the employee and the Line Manager, where an individual requires a colleague or other support, this can be an option.

Feedback must be given to the employee, so it is clear what is expected of the employee and the systems that are in place to maintain their safety.

The documents will be held with the individual, the line manager and / or Human Resources.

It is important to recognise that where the employee is not at work, but has identified stress as a cause of absence, arrangements must be made to get the individual to complete the individual stress action plan.

If in the event the employee does not accept the manager's viewpoint of symptoms of stress, a manager should proceed to complete the form as they have a duty of care to the individual.

The manager must keep a copy on file that the individual does not agree, but actions can still be addressed in relation to changes in working practices.

A copy of the completed form must be given to the individual for their information and the matter must be referred to Human Resources or Employee Health & Wellbeing for further advice and assistance.

Training

To assist in the completion of both the team and individual stress assessment, training on how to undertake and complete these documents is necessary.

It is a requirement that all managers have received training or advice prior to completing either stress assessment template.

Both the formal training and advice is available from the NIC Health & Safety Advisor & Corporate Safety Advice.

Reporting Stress

Where stress is attributed to work or has an impact on work, it must be reported in line with the National Ice Centre's current incident reporting process.

Where the cause is identified as a working activity, you must follow the online accident reporting system, the injury must be identified as 'Stress – Work Related' and the Injury location as 'Non Physical Injury'.

Where the cause of stress follows a violent incident, it must be reported using the current National Ice Centre's violence reporting system.

Please note that any incident recorded using either the accident or violence reporting systems will be removed and the injured person will be informed and they will be directed to report the incident using the grievance procedure for action.

Reporting Stress Incidents under RIDDOR

Managers must understand that stress is currently **not** reportable to the Health & Safety Executive under RIDDOR even where the employee has been off work for over 7 days.

Further Information & References

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

NIC Documentation

- Stress Assessment Flowchart
- Stress Assessment Templates

External References

- HSG218 – ‘Managing the Causes of Work Related Stress’ (HSE)
- INDG 430 – ‘How to Tackle Work-Related Stress’