



## **LONE WORKING POLICY 2019**

### **1.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

The Association takes extremely seriously the health, safety and welfare of all its employees.

In relation to Lone Working, the Association aims to limit this where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, we will take all reasonable steps to make sure employees are safe while working for us.

Within Health & Safety (H & S) law, employees should not be put at any greater risk if they are lone working compared to someone who is not. We have a duty to assess lone working risks and take any reasonable, practical measures to reduce and where possible, eliminate these. Employees have a duty of care to co-operate, provide us with relevant information and abide with the measures that have been put in place.

The purpose of this policy is to enable the Association to meet its obligation to protect employees so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

### **2.0 SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees including temporary and agency staff, volunteers, students and those on work experience. It forms an integral part of the Association's Health and Safety policy and applies along with specific separate guidance and procedures on lone working. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our employees.

### **3.0 DEFINITION OF LONE WORKERS**

The Association defines lone workers as:

***'employees whose working activities involve being in situations where they are either working alone or working in an environment where there is no close or direct supervision by other members of staff'.***

Various situations exist where lone working can be applicable:

- ✓ *Working outside normal office hours, even on a one-off basis.*
- ✓ *Working with the public on your own or away from colleagues.*
- ✓ *Working on your own, in an office, at some other location or when driving alone as part of your job.*
- ✓ *Working in other's homes or premises.*

- ✓ *Working in the reception area alone, and isolated from the rest of the organisation.*
- ✓ *Working in the office but, away from colleagues.*

#### **4.0 POLICY AIMS**

This policy aims to:

- ✓ increase employees awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- ✓ make sure that the risk of working alone is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable;
- ✓ make sure that appropriate training is available to employees in all areas, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;
- ✓ make sure that appropriate support is available to employees who have to work alone;
- ✓ encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working; and
- ✓ reduce the number of incidents, near misses and injuries to employees related to lone working.

#### **5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

Lone working environments present a unique health and safety problem.

Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974*, and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, as amended*, the Association must organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

The Chief Executive is responsible for:

- ✓ Making sure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly (or as and when required).
- ✓ Providing procedures for working safely based on the risks identified in the risk assessment.
- ✓ Making sure employees are provided with appropriate and relevant training.
- ✓ Having reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
- ✓ Reporting near misses/incidents on behalf of employees if the employee who is affected is unable to do this.
- ✓ Reviewing near misses/incidents, this will include a review of the risk assessment and working procedures.
- ✓ Informing HSE using RIDDOR procedures (if required).
- ✓ Making sure employees have appropriate supervision.
- ✓ Providing employees with appropriate aftercare and support (in the event of any incident).
- ✓ Making sure employees are issued with a copy of this policy.
- ✓ Reviewing this policy and update it as is appropriate.
- ✓ Involving employees when considering potential risks and control measures.

Departmental Managers are responsible (within their own department) for:

- ✓ making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- ✓ putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- ✓ making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary;
- ✓ making sure that appropriate support is given to employees involved in any incident (or near miss) and
- ✓ managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.

Employee responsibilities are to:

- ✓ Acting responsibly in their work with us at all times.
- ✓ Not intentionally provoke or inflame a potentially aggressive situation.
- ✓ Not knowingly put themselves at risk.
- ✓ Remove themselves from any situation they do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.
- ✓ Report all incidents and near misses, by following the Association's reporting procedures.
- ✓ Complete the near miss/incident form, (if they are able to do so).
- ✓ Attend training when this is provided.
- ✓ Take part in the formal risk assessment process.
- ✓ Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
- ✓ Speak to their line manager if they are unsure of anything.
- ✓ Ensure their emergency contact person details are provided in line with organisational procedures.

## 6.0 **ASSESSING RISK**

Lone workers should not face any more risks than other employees within the organisation.

Setting up safe working arrangements for lone workers is no different to organising the safety of other employees so the Association must follow the general principles of risk assessment. If a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, other arrangements must be put in place.

Risk assessment should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, illness and accidents. The risk assessment process is summarised below, separated into five distinct stages and action points to support effective assessment of the risks involved in lone working.

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Action point</b>
1	Identifying lone workers	<i>Establish and identify lone workers for each work area.</i>
2	Identifying associated hazards	<i>Isolate the range of dangers associated with whole work areas of work and/or work processes.</i>

		<i>Review a generic risk assessment to make sure you have included these issues.</i>
3	Assessing the degree of risk for generic or individual situations	<i>Review the generic risk assessments and complete individual or local risk assessments if necessary. Then prioritise the level of associated risk.</i>
4	Putting control measures in place, and developing safe systems of work	<i>Assess how effective the existing control measures are and update them if appropriate. Develop local procedures or action plans if necessary.</i>
5	Evaluating and review	<i>Evaluate and record how effective the control measures are. Review when the assessments or controls are no longer required.</i>

Risk assessments must be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to employees. The risk assessment will involve identifying all potential dangers and the risks associated with specific work tasks or activities.

It should identify who will be affected and how, and the control measures which are needed to get rid of or reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably possible. Risk assessment should be carried out by competent people and should be recorded and shared with relevant others.

Those at most risk should be involved in the risk assessment as they will be best placed to recognise the risk and contribute to effective control measures.

Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- ✓ Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- ✓ Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- ✓ Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- ✓ What training is needed to make sure the employee is competent in safety matters?
- ✓ Have employees received the training which is necessary to allow them to work alone?
- ✓ How will the person be supervised?
- ✓ Is there a risk of violence?
- ✓ Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they work alone?
- ✓ Are new or inexperienced employees especially at risk if they work alone?
- ✓ What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
- ✓ Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded and should include:

- ✓ the extent and nature of the risks;
- ✓ factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific tasks and activities; and
- ✓ the safe systems of work to be followed to eliminate or reduce the risk.

Information from the risk assessment should be passed to employees. Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated each year (or sooner should circumstances change).

## **7.0 MANAGING RISK**

The purpose of risk management is to identify, eliminate, reduce, and / or control risks.

This means:

- 1) Where possible, eliminate risks and/or hazards or the likelihood of them occurring;
- 2) Reduce the effects of the risks as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate.
- 3) Isolate the risk or hazard.
- 4) Control the working practice, through appropriate measures.

There is a formal risk assessment process in place for the different operations / activities we perform as a business. Further specific risk assessments are carried out depending on the job function.

The risk assessment will:

- ✓ Adequately assess the H & S risk to employees.
- ✓ Identify what tasks/roles results in a lone worker.
- ✓ Identify what hazards lone workers could face.
- ✓ Assess/discuss the level of severity against and likelihood of each risk.
- ✓ Assist in implementing appropriate and proportional risk control measures.
- ✓ Establish appropriate procedures for serious and imminent danger, including emergency response procedures.
- ✓ Provide information to you on risks and control procedures.
- ✓ Highlight any particular groups at risk.
- ✓ Provide for an opportunity for information to be shared to assist in continuing to control and reduce risks.

The risk which lone workers face should be reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable.

Using safe systems of work depends largely on local circumstances, and local procedures or protocols should be in place that provides specific guidance for employees in relation to lone working and the associated risk reduction. Issues to consider in developing safe systems of work include:

- ✓ joint working with others for high-risk activities;
- ✓ improvements to security arrangements in buildings;
- ✓ security lighting in parking areas;
- ✓ using checking-in and monitoring systems;
- ✓ communications systems for sharing information on risk with colleagues in other disciplines and agencies; and

- ✓ using personal protective equipment or mobile phones and personal alarms.

Each type of lone-working situation will need to be assessed and, where necessary, take account of local circumstances. Arrangements for managing risk should include:

- ✓ guidance for lone workers on assessing risk;
- ✓ details of when to stop and get advice; and
- ✓ the procedures to be followed in the event of an incident or emergency. All employees must be familiar with these local protocols and procedures.

There may also need to be detailed guidance to tackle specific areas of risk such as:

- ✓ lone workers travelling alone on work-related business;
- ✓ home visits and
- ✓ working out with normal office hours

## **8.0 NEAR MISS AND INCIDENT REPORTING**

It is vital that employees report any near miss situations or actual incidents as soon as it has occurred to the Chief Executive, departmental manager or the H & S Administrator.

If it is not possible to report immediately, it must be reported at the earliest possible opportunity and certainly within 2 working days.

The H & S Administrator will make sure the appropriate steps are taken to share this information throughout the Association and that the risk assessment is updated if appropriate.

All near miss and incident information must be reported to the H & S Administrator through completion of a near miss / incident report form.

When an incident or near miss is reported the following will happen:

- ✓ The departmental manager will have an informal, private discussion with the relevant members of staff and discuss any support where appropriate.
- ✓ The near miss/incident form will be reviewed. If it is not possible for the affected member of staff to complete this, the departmental manager will complete this with input from the affected employees.
- ✓ The H & S Administrator will share any appropriate information with the organisation and any governing bodies, if required, and advise whether the risk assessment should be reviewed.
- ✓ A review of the control measures will take place.
- ✓ Any updated information will be issued to relevant members of employees.

## **9.0 EMPLOYEES TRAINING**

The Association will provide training where required (and where reasonably practicable) to allow lone working. The training will be based on the needs identified in the risk assessment.

## **10.0 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS**

The Association will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Privacy Policy.

Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for your data is provided in the Associations employee Privacy Notice.

## **11.0 MONITORING AND REVIEWING**

The Association will monitor and review this policy at least every 3 years to make sure that the aims are being achieved. This will be done in conjunction with the Associations Health and Safety Administrator.

The review processes will include:

- ✓ collecting and monitoring all reported incidents by the Health and Safety Administrator;
- ✓ reporting, to the HSEHR Committee quarterly,
  - incident statistics and safety improvement measures which have been introduced;
  - the outcomes of risk assessments.

George Tainsh  
Chief Executive

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

### **Policy Review & Consultation Process**

Considered by the Management Team on	3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2019
Considered by the HSEHR Committee on	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
<b>Approved by the Management Committee on</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> September 2019</b>
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>September 2022</b>