

HSP 03 Lone working

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Briefings

Having read this procedure all key points must be communicated to staff that are likely to complete lone working activities.

If you require any further assistance in the development of the team talk please contact your Safety, Health, Environment & Quality Manager.

1. Introduction

It is a manager's responsibility to ensure that all persons on the premise are adequately protected from significant hazards. Many people spend some time working alone due to the activities they complete and these lone workers face particular problems which need to be addressed.

2. Identifying lone workers

These are persons who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Managers must check to see if any members of your team work alone.

Activities which can involve periods of lone working can include:

- Working in the grounds of the home as a gardener.
- Maintenance work.
- Visiting a residents private home.
- 'Home' based personnel who visit different sites.

3. What the Regulations require?

There are no legal requirements indicating that lone working must not happen. The emphasis is on identifying the hazards via risk assessment and putting measures in place to reduce the risks to lone workers.

There is also a duty to ensure that contractors working on EFHL sites employ safe working arrangements.

4. Assessing the risk

The risk assessment should address two main features:

- Can a lone person do the work safely? If the answer is no the correct level of supervision/ backup should be employed before the activity is started.
- What arrangements are necessary to ensure that the lone worker is at no more risk than employees working together? This may be communications or personal protective equipment.

Managers are responsible for identifying lone working activities and ensuring that the appropriate controls are in place. The risk assessment guidelines for lone working and the appropriate controls can be seen in RAG 03.

5. General advice on controls

Line Managers should set limits on what can and cannot be done while working alone referring to prohibited activities below.

Competence

Competence is particularly important where there is limited supervision. Lone workers should be sufficiently experienced to fully understand the risks and precautions required to complete the activity and be able to deal with any unusual or new circumstances.

Communications & equipment

Effective means of communications are vital when individuals work alone. Managers should agree suitable intervals of regular contact with the lone worker – using either face to face

contact, phones, radios or emails.

For visits to assess residents in their homes there should be a record left of the location to be visited and a system to ensure a lone worker has returned to base or home once task is completed.

Lone workers should be capable of responding correctly to an emergency and the access or provision of a first aid kit should be considered.

Medical conditions

You must ensure that lone workers have no medical conditions that make them unsuitable for working alone. They will take into account both routine work and foreseeable emergencies that may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual. Employees must disclose any medical condition that may impact lone working to their manager.

6. Working in isolation – prohibited activities

The following activities are regarded as prohibited, unless the person carrying them out is accompanied for the purpose specified or is being monitored in case of accident.

- Using portable ladders that need to be footed by a person at the base.
- Lifting loads in excess of a person's capability.
- Working in confined spaces.

7. Associated documents

- RAG 03 Lone working

8. A Summary of the main points

Check that:

- Managers are aware of any lone working activities.
- Lone working risk assessment RAG 03 is signed by any lone workers.
- Lone working activities have been assessed and any controls put in place.

9. Document history

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Issue	Date	Author	Reason
1.0	30/03/2016	Steve Andrews	New document – replaces old document HSP24.
2.0	03/01/2018	Steve Andrews	Full review – no changes

3.0	06/01/2021	Steve Andrews	Full document review – corrected references to RAG 03
4.0	20/01/2024	Steve Andrews	Full document review – added Section 7 (Associated documents).
4.0	27/02/2024	Steve Andrews	Banner updated, no other changes, issue number kept same.