S18 – Opening Statement

Lone Working

Many people routinely work by themselves, or at a location some distance away from direct supervision. There will be many occasions where people are working early or late in offices, factories or other places of work. It may not be practicable for the employer to implement a general rule that people must not work alone.

There are bound to be occasions where lone working is unavoidable. Someone has to be the first or last person to arrive or depart at the start and end of the working day.

This procedure will help you determine what tasks are allowed to be completed when employees work alone. It gives guidance on what to consider when undertaking a risk assessment and guidance on possible control measures.

S18 – Lone Working

What is this?

This is a written procedure which covers the risks and controls associated with lone working.

The person responsible for implementing this procedure is:

_____

What is a lone worker?

A lone worker is someone who works by himself without direct or close supervision and can be found within various situations:

People in fixed establishments where:

➔   Only one person works on the premises;

➔   They work in separate departments/areas of the premises; **and**

➔   Work is undertaken outside normal working hours.

People who are mobile and work away from their fixed base:

➔   Travelling across an area/region by any mode of transport.

What does the responsible manager need to do?

The responsible manager must:

➔   Through a risk assessment, identify all lone working activities that may pose a risk to a person's health and safety;

➔   Consult with employees and their representatives on the findings of the risk assessment and the potential consequences; and

➔   Implement suitable control measures to minimize the risk to someone identified as a lone worker.

Risk assessment

Items to consider when undertaking a risk assessment:

➔   Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?

➔   Does the workplace pose a significant risk to the lone worker?

➔   Can the person have good access and egress from the workplace?

➔   Is there a risk of non-consensual violence?

➔   Are women or young persons especially at risk from lone working?

➔   Is the person medically fit and able to work alone?

➔ Has the right training and information been issued to the lone worker?

➔ Is supervision required?

➔ How will the person raise the alarm in an emergency?

Control measures

Control measures that may be implemented for lone working:

➔ Eliminate the need for lone working and ensure that at least two people are available at any one time.

➔ Reduce the amount of time that a person has to spend working alone.

➔ If possible, ensure that the person is protected by restricting the areas he/she works in, therefore isolating his/her exposure to potential risks.

➔ Provide an emergency panic alarm within the workplace for the lone worker which is directed to the emergency services.

➔ Provide an individual alarm for persons who are mobile.

➔ Issue lone workers with suitable communication devices (i.e. radios and mobile phones).

➔ Issue lone workers with immobility alarms that are linked to an external monitoring process.

➔ Provide periodic supervision whereby a second person visits the site at regular intervals.

➔ Develop a lone working procedure for employees and contractors to follow.

Legislation

➔ Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999