



DORSET & WILTSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

HS 3 - Lone Working Procedure

To be used in conjunction with the [Health & Safety Policy Statement](#)

Health & Safety (HS)

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Ref No:	HS 3	FRS:	DWFRS
Date of Issue:	06/04/2020	Review Due:	01/11/2022
Version No:	V3.0	Review Completed:	DD/MM/YYYY

1. Purpose & Definition

- 1.1. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service (DWFRS) to 'ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, so far as reasonable practicable'. This duty applies to all members of staff when at work, regardless of when or where they are working. Therefore,

when members of staff are working alone, it is important that appropriate 'lone working' arrangements are in place to monitor their safety and wellbeing.

2. Procedure Principles

- 2.1. Due to the diversity of 'lone working' situations it is not possible to have a prescriptive procedure which dictates exactly what to do in each case. Therefore, this is a generic procedure which outlines the principles of arrangements and controls that should be put in place for members of staff who are required to work alone. It is the responsibility of line managers to make sure local arrangements are in place to monitor the safety and wellbeing of their members of staff.
- 2.2. A lone worker can be defined as a member of staff:
- who works by themselves without close or direct supervision
 - who work in an isolated location, or part of the premises
 - whose ability to summon assistance is compromised if they become injured or involved in an accident.
- 2.3. To make sure appropriate controls are put in place to safeguard the lone worker, a risk assessment must be completed to identify the specific hazards associated with the lone working location and situation. The risk assessment must be completed according to the DWFRS [HS 8 - Risk Assessment Procedure](#).
- 2.4. The risk assessment should take in to account the following factors:

Factor	Consideration
Individual factors	Does the persons age, sex, health condition, training/knowledge/competence affect their ability to work alone?
Working Environment	Will the environment pose a hazard with extreme temperatures or adverse weather?
Interaction with public or contractors	Is there a potential risk of violence or aggression directed towards the member of staff?
Communication	How will communication be maintained with the lone worker, in both normal and emergency situations?
Work activities	Will hazardous work activities be undertaken (for example; working at height, confined spaces, heavy lifting tasks)?
Rest/Welfare	Is the lone worker able to take breaks as required, are adequate welfare facilities provided?
Emergency situations	Are first aid procedures adequate? Are fire arrangements satisfactory?

- 2.5. Once the risk assessment has been completed it should have highlighted the significant hazards presented by the lone working situation, and in turn identified the control measures required. This risk assessment can now be used to form the basis of the lone working procedure, or safe system of work for the lone worker or work process.

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- 2.6. The table below gives lone working control examples that can be used to safeguard lone workers:

Control Measure	Explanation
Communication	Providing communication to the lone worker (such as; telephone or radio) so help can be called if required.
Regular checks	Recorded regular checks with the lone worker (such as; on arrival and departure, or hourly). Actions taken if the lone worker does not check in.
Man down alarms	Where an alarm is triggered if the lone worker remains static for a period of time.
GPS tracker	A tracker which enables a control room to monitor the location of the lone worker.
Emergency Beacon	Normally a discreet button pressed which alerts another member of staff that the lone worker is in difficulty (usually also combined with a GPS tracking device).
Rest Breaks	Lone worker relieved by another person to enable welfare breaks.
Control of work tasks	Some hazardous tasks may be prohibited, for example; no working at height, confined space or some manual handling tasks are not to be completed alone.
Training	Providing training on the work tasks and emergency procedures to be followed when working alone (such as; how radio, or emergency beacon works).
Individual factors	Preventing any person which may have a condition which affects their suitability to work alone is not selected for the task (for example; expectant mothers in late stages of pregnancy).

- 2.7. The above control measures can be used alone, or in a combination to create the most suitable lone working control measures. The lone worker(s) should be consulted and included within the creation and implementation of the lone working procedure.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. The table below gives some current examples of lone workers within Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Services (DWFRS) for which risk assessments and procedures must be in place.

Staff Group	Lone Working Activities
Fire Safety Officers	Inspection visits to complete fire inspections or investigations.
Workshop Staff	Working within isolated parts of workshop, or lone working with workshop buildings. Out of hours working.

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Safe and Well	Safe and well visits to members of the public.
Hydrant Technicians	Hydrant inspections alone, possibly with isolated or remote locations.

3.2. The following members of staff have specific responsibilities highlighted within this procedure:

- All Members of Staff/Lone Workers
- Line Managers
- Department Heads
- Fleet Workshop Staff
- Safe and Well Advisors
- Fire Safety Advisors
- Health and Safety Department.

3.3. All Members of Staff/Lone Workers

3.3.1. All members of staff have the following responsibilities within this procedure.

- Assisting with the risk assessment, where required, to provide information to make sure the assessment is suitable and sufficient.
- To raise concerns or suggestions to your line manager to continually improve the safe working procedures when working alone.
- To follow the controls within the risk assessment or lone working procedure.
- To look after your own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions in the workplace.
- To use equipment that has been provided in the interests of your safety in line with any training received.

3.4. Line Managers

3.4.1. All line managers have the following responsibilities within this procedure.

- Be aware if you are responsible for any lone workers, or if a lone working situation may occur as part of your working processes, even if this could be a one off situation.
- To complete a risk assessment on identified lone workers.
- To develop a lone working procedure to provide a monitoring process and make sure the safety and welfare of the lone workers.
- To include the lone workers as part of the risk assessment and lone working procedure development and implementation process.
- Monitor the effectiveness of lone worker control measures through accident investigations or proactive inspections/audits.
- Make sure lone workers are adequately trained in the work tasks they are required to complete, and also in the lone working procedures designed to safeguard them.

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- Where identified by risk assessment, provide equipment to the lone worker to monitor their welling, or to be used to summon assistance in an emergency.
- When recruiting new members of staff and volunteers, any lone working implications should be made clear to the applicant as not everyone is suited to, or capable of, working alone.
- Be aware that some tasks are not suitable to be carried out alone, and to make sure members of staff are not requested to complete unsuitable tasks alone.

3.5. Department Heads

3.5.1. Department Heads have the following responsibilities within this procedure.

- Liaise with department line managers to make sure appropriate lone working arrangements are in place where required.
- Provide support, where required, with the implementation of lone working procedures though the provision of budget allocation for training or equipment requirements.

3.6. Fleet Workshop Members of Staff

3.6.1. Due to the nature of the tasks completed by workshop staff, members of staff maybe required to:

- work in isolated parts of the workshop
- be called out to a roadside recovery
- complete work alone on a retained fire station: or
- be required to complete some level of manual handling, or use of equipment with a potential to cause injury.

3.6.2. Therefore, the following actions must be taken to ensure their safety.

- Complete risk assessments for the job roles of the workshop mechanics
- Investigate lone working systems to provide a way for staff to summon assistance if required, or for the location of the mechanic to be identified in an emergency.
- Workshop staff to receive training in the lone working procedure implemented.

3.7. Safe and Well Advisors

3.7.1. Due to the nature of the job role of the Safe and Well Advisors there is a large degree of lone working, and interaction with members of the public within their own homes.

3.7.2. It is the responsibility of the Safe and Well Manager to ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place. Furthermore, all Safe and Well Advisors must all receive training on the lone working safety devices and procedures that have been provided for use.

3.8. Fire Safety Advisors

3.8.1. In a similar way as the Safe and Well Advisors, DWFRS Fire Safety Advisors are required to work alone, and meet with members of the public within their own premises. This may be to carryout a fire safety inspection or follow up visit after

an enforcement action (for example, improvement notice). This may lead to a potential hostile or aggressive environment in some circumstances.

- 3.8.2. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the fire safety department to ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place for the role of the advisor, and that suitable and robust procedures are in place which allows protection of the fire safety advisors while on site.

3.9. Health & Safety Department

- 3.9.1. The health and safety department have the following responsibilities within this procedure.

- Provide advice and guidance to line managers in the production of risk assessment and lone working procedures.
- Monitor the Adverse Occurrence Records (AOR) database and make sure that suitable investigations are completed when lone working has been identified as a causal factor for an injury or incident at work.
- Monitor the [HS 8 - Risk Assessment procedure](#), and provide support in the completion of risk assessments on the DWFRS risk assessment database.

4. Monitoring & Assurance

4.1. Procedure Management

- 4.1.1. The health and safety department will monitor this procedure through the following methods:

- Risk assessments are completed to make sure that hazards posed to lone workers are adequately considered and controlled.
- All AORs that identify injuries or near misses which have resulted from lone working are fully investigated and actions taken to prevent further possible occurrence, and to make sure compliance with this procedure.

4.2. Learning and Development

- 4.2.1. Line managers must make sure their members of staff are competent and able to work alone.

- 4.2.2. Where required, or identified by risk assessment line managers must provide adequate information and instruction on the lone working procedure, and any equipment that has been provided to the lone worker.

5. Document Reference

5.1. Forms to complete

All risk assessments must be completed using the DWFRS [risk assessment database](#).

5.2. Document References

[HS 8 – Risk Assessment Procedure](#)

[HS 26 – Accident and Investigation Procedure](#)

5.3. Supporting Information

[INDG 73 'Working Alone: H&S guidance on the risks of working along'](#)

[Example Lone Working Procedure Flowchart](#)

[Safe and Well Lone Working Alarm Presentation](#)

6. Document Management

Policy Statement Reference: [Health & Safety](#)

Owner	Review Date	Author	Status
Head of Health & Safety	01/11/2022	John Towner	Published

6.1. Version Control:

Version	Page & Par Ref	Date	Changes Made	Authorised By
V3.0	Entire document	02/04/2020	Updated links within Relevant Document section to point from BrigadeHQ3 to http://pandp.dwfire.org.uk . No other changes made.	Nikki Vickery
V2.0	Page 1 & 7	12/06/2018	Updated Policy reference in accordance to new framework. No other changes made.	Tonya Saben
V1.0	Entire Document	27/11/2017	Checked links and formatting prior to publishing	Tonya Saben
V0.2	Entire document	08/11/2017	Accepted TS suggestions. Inserted para 3.5 – 3.12	John Towner
TCV	Entire document	12/09/2017	Formatting and Plain English suggestions	Tonya Saben
V0.1	Whole document	19/06/2017	Document creation	John Towner

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