

1. POLICY STATEMENT



- 1.1 To detail the arrangements and procedures necessary to ensure that those RNLI Volunteers and Employees whose working environment and conditions define them as 'Lone Workers'.

To establish that they get the correct level of advice, support and supervision to ensure they work in safe working conditions.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 Lone working in itself is not against the law; however the RNLI as employers have a responsibility for the safety, health and welfare of their Volunteers and Employees whilst at work.



For many Volunteers and Employees, lone working is part of their normal daily routine. However, a person who normally works under supervision or with other colleagues, but is unusually left alone, is equally considered to be a lone worker and will be treated accordingly by line managers.



Homeworking has its own RNLI policy and checklist (Working at home policy) that should be undertaken before a manager agrees to a member of Volunteers and Employees becoming a homeworker.

Occasional homeworking is not considered within the scope of this policy.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Lone Worker**
Any person who routinely works alone without direct or close supervision.
- 4.2 **Systems**
Cover procedures that we or outside contractors will put in place to implement a safe system of work regarding lone working.
- 4.3 **Training**
Covers training that we or outside contractors will put in place to reduce the risk from lone working.
- 4.4 **Devices**
Covers the use of devices that we or outside contractors will purchase or develop that can be used to reduce the risk from lone working.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 - General



Working alone is specifically prohibited by law in certain dangerous situations, such as working on live electrical equipment and entry into confined spaces, but the vast majority of lone working situations will be managed by the application of the risk assessment process.



All Volunteers and Employees have the right to refuse to work in lone working situations if they consider that it may cause them harm.

5.2 - Risk assessment



The risk assessment should identify foreseeable events, and safe working procedures should be established as part of the control process with Volunteers and Employees involved in the development and ultimate engagement with them.

All risk assessments should be reviewed at regular intervals, at least once a year, or whenever there is any reason to believe that the existing assessment is no longer valid or a significant change occurs.

Hazards fall under the three categories known as PET's:

- The PERSON you are dealing with
- The ENVIRONMENT you are working in
- The TASK you are doing

Examples are given below under each category:-

Person

- Is there a risk of violence?
- Visiting people in their own homes;
- Enforcing a rule people might disagree with;
- Does the person working alone have a health issue?
- Issue of stress from working on their own;
- If the lone worker's first language is not English, are suitable arrangements in place to ensure clear communications, especially in an emergency?

Environment

- Volunteers and Employees leaving their workplace by way of dark corridors or stairways;
- Those remote from the central office including abroad;
- Fire in the property;
- Working over or near water;
- Slips, trips or falls.

Task

- If working outside of normal hours;
- Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- Repairing machinery because of the possibility of contact with dangerous parts;
- Those who travel as part of their job;
- Working at height;
- Driving long distances with lack of regular breaks;
- Carry money during fundraising activities.

This list is not exhaustive and in the context of the RNLI, the factors affecting lone working need to be specifically evaluated in each individual case. To ensure this, we will involve Volunteers and Employees when considering potential risks and the measures to control them.

5.3 - Controls

We will ensure that we have put in controls to reduce the risk from harm occurring from the hazards identified within the risk assessment. The control measure will look at ways to eliminate, isolate, and reduce the risk.

However, whilst the type and degree of control measure will vary, a method of regular communication should always be agreed to help ensure the safety of the lone worker and prevent long periods without external contact. This will also reduce the chance of an injured person remaining untreated for a protracted period.

The level of supervision needed is a management decision, which should be based on the findings of a risk assessment, i.e. the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they need assistance.

Line managers should also ensure that risk control measures are implemented fully, Volunteers and Employees are properly trained and adequately supervised e.g. by regular contact via phone with the supervisor/line manager to minimise identified risks.



All managers should look to eliminate the need for Volunteers and Employees to work on their own and only after this has been considered should additional controls be implemented.

These controls will fall into the categories of **Systems, Training** and **Devices**. The solution to the lone working issue is likely to be a combination of a number of controls rather than a specific control.

5.3.1 - Systems

5.3.1.1 Support System

We will ensure systems are in place to ensure that should a lone working alarm device (see below under Devices) be activated (including false alarms), that an appropriate response will be initiated.



Line managers must ensure that they or another (nominated manager or organisation) is contactable when Volunteers and Employees are lone working.

Contingency plans specifying the escalation action to be taken (should a pre-arranged contact not be made, or an alarm device activated), should be included as part of the lone workers safe system of work.

The escalation process should include identification of contact points at appropriate stages, including a line manager, senior manager and, ultimately, the police. Any individual nominated as an escalation point should be fully aware of their role and its responsibilities.



5.3.1.2 Monitoring

We will ensure that a procedure is in place where we can ensure that a lone worker can indicate, where appropriate and subject to a risk assessment:

- What task they are undertaking,
- That they are at risk,
- That they have completed a task and are progressing to the next task,
- Have returned to their base or home on completion of a task.

5.3.1.3 **Identification of known problem locations and people**

We will use historical incident and near miss / hazard observation reports as well as local knowledge and information provided by third parties to create a list of known problem locations and people. This information will be used to inform the risk assessment process and Volunteers and Employees briefed as appropriate.



This information is confidential to us and will be stored and handled in conjunction with the RNLI's Data Protection Policy and Procedure.

5.3.2. **Examples of potential support systems the line manager and lone worker can choose from are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list and line managers can adopt local systems of work as they see fit.**

5.3.2.1 **In and Out Wipe boards**

5.3.2.2 **Buddy / call in**

5.3.2.3 **Working process**

5.3.2.4 **Employee assistance program**

5.3.3 - Training

5.3.3.1 Competence is something that is measured by experience, knowledge, training and by an individual's skill level. When people are alone, they can behave differently to how they might if they were accompanied. This includes the risks they take.

5.3.3.2 **Task specific risk assessment training**

5.3.3.3 **Dynamic risk assessment training**

5.3.3.4 **Conflict resolution**

5.3.3.5 **Breakaway techniques**

5.3.4 - Devices

5.3.4.3 **Office / shop based fixed alarms**

5.3.4.4 **Alert device**

5.3.4.5 **Man down device**

5.3.4.6 **Mobile Phone Applications**

5.3.4.7 **Tracking device**

5.3.4.8 **Personal audible alarms**

5.3.4.9 **Digital radios**

9. **APPENDICES**



9.1 Appendix 1 – Flowchart for managers