

# **Lone Working: Policy, Procedures and Practice Guidance**

2019-2020

## **1. Policy Statement**

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require employees and contractors to work alone, both the individual staff member and managers have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

## **2. Purpose**

This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures, which will minimise such risks.

## **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

## **4. Context**

Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their work. Within QSC UK & Ireland Ltd overall policy relating to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part, and the same principles apply, particularly:

- a commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- recognising and reducing risk
- a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff a clear understanding of responsibilities
- the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
- Equipment such as mobile phones for QSC employees are made available as appropriate.
- 'Office Risk Assessment' is in place to address risks and control measures.

## **5. Definitions**

A lone worker is an employee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision. Such staff may be exposed to risk because there is no one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required.

## 6. Mandatory Procedures

### Personal Safety

- Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager
- Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following a visit rather than returning to their base. Additionally this should be fulfilled by making sure their Outlook calendar is up to date and made available to view.
- Non-QSC employees using QSC UK & Ireland Ltd facilities, who work to a pre-planned programme of visits, must inform their line manager if they deviate from the programme and use their own local safety measures for lone working. QSC UK & Ireland Ltd should only be notified about issues that arise related to their premises.
- Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team. Issues to take into account include:
  - staffing levels and availability
  - measures in place to reduce risks
- Where employees work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.
- Lone working employees should be issued a mobile phone; they are responsible for checking that it is charged, in working order and with the relevant provider.
- Landline made available for emergency calls. UK emergency help line: 999

### Assessment of risk

'Office risk assessment' in place- please refer to information within.

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues have been considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- the environment – location, security, access
- the context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk history – any previous incidents in similar situations
- any other special circumstances

- All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary
- Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.
- While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.

## **Planning**

- Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk if any, as well as the task itself.
- Communication, personal calendar updates and fallback arrangements must be in place.
- The team manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements; these should be tailored to the operating conditions affecting the team.

## **Reporting**

- Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing should follow standard company guidance, which can be found in staff handbook for QSC UK & Ireland Ltd employees.  
Contractors will be briefed on findings and expected to follow up and action internally if required.
- The identified person should debrief in the first instance; if this is not the staff member's line manager, that manager should be informed as soon as practicable, and continue the process.

## **Lone worker devices**

- It is the line manager's duty to ensure that each member of the team is issued with a lone worker device-mobile, if appropriate to his or her role.
- The manager should ensure that device users receive adequate training and are competent in the use of their devices.
- Employees are responsible for keeping their devices in good working order, reporting any problems with devices and for ensuring that device batteries are fully charged before working alone.

## **7. Known Risks and Procedures**

*There are no known risks and procedures in place at present.*

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through the supervision process.
- Any employees with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their supervisor or with the whole team, as appropriate.
- The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

## **9. Support – Internal and External**

- **Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**