

2 Military and civilian workplace safety

This chapter is split into two parts:

Part 1: Directive. This part provides the direction that **must** be followed to help you comply with (keep to) health and safety law, Defence policy and Government policy.

Part 2: Guidance. This part provides the guidance and good practice that **should** be followed and will help you to keep to this policy.

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Amendment record

This chapter has been reviewed by the Directorate of Defence Safety (DDS) together with relevant subject matter experts and key safety stakeholders. Any suggestions for amendments **should** be sent to COO-DDS-GroupMailbox@mod.gov.uk.

Version No	Date of publication	Text Affected	Authority
1.2	Oct 20	Interim update post-handover of policy from DSA to Dir HS&EP.	Dir HS&EP
1.3	Jan 22	Updated to remove reference to maturity and bring the definition of a competent person in line with the HSE1 definition of competence	Dir HS&EP

1.4	May 22	Updated to incorporate DAN 15 (COVID-19 safer working) into Annex A.	Dir HS&EP
1.5	Aug 22	Updated to include a note reminding personnel of their responsibility to wear prescribed medical aids when carryout safety critical duties.	Dir HS&EP
1.6	17 April 24	Review and update and release of two-part structure.	DDS

Terms and definitions

The following table sets out definitions of some of the terms used in this chapter. General safety terms and definitions are provided in the [Master Glossary of Safety Terms and Definitions](#), which can also be accessed on the [Gov.UK](#) website.

Accountable Person (AP)	The person whose terms of reference state that they are responsible for making sure there are suitable and sufficient systems in place to control health and safety risks in their unit, estate (site) or platform. This term is used in place of CO, HoE, OC, Station Commander and so on, or as decreed by the Defence organisations.
Commander	Generally a military person responsible for planning activities, supervising activities, and making sure that personnel under their area of responsibility are safe. This term refers to a role rather than the rank of Commander, and it can be a permanent or temporary role (for example, lasting for the duration of a training exercise). In parts of Defence this person could be referred to as a 'responsible person'.
Competent person	A person who has the training, skills, experience, and knowledge necessary to perform a task safely, and is able to apply them. Other factors, such as attitude and physical ability, can also affect someone's competence. See www.hse.gov.uk/competence/what-is-competence.htm for information on competence.
Facilities	A place, amenity, or piece of equipment provided for a particular purpose.
Key health and safety role	An appointment that is required to provide competent specialist advice and guidance for a particular hazard or hazards.
Manager	A person responsible for managing or supervising staff, planning activities and making sure that personnel under their area of responsibility are safe. This could be a permanent or temporary role, and in parts of Defence this person could be referred to as a 'line manager', a 'responsible person' or a 'delivery manager'.

Must and should

Where this chapter says '**must**', this means that the action is a compulsory requirement.

Where this chapter says '**should**', this means that the action is not a compulsory requirement but is considered good practice.

Scope

The policy contained within this chapter:

- a. applies to all those employed by Defence (military and civilian) including those under the age of 18 (for example recruits and apprentices);
- b. applies to all those working on behalf of, or under the supervision of Defence (for example, contractors or visitors);
- c. applies to all Defence activities carried out in any location (UK or overseas) and at all times of the year; and
- d. is not written for young persons in the cadet forces, Defence-run schools, nurseries and so on; those organisations **must** maintain their own safety policies and governance and **must** provide statutory compliant infrastructure and appropriate safe systems of work. They may use material from this chapter as a reference point, but where appropriate their respective policies **should** be adapted to meet the needs of young persons and to follow any applicable Department for Education guidelines or legislation.

Assurance

The application of the policy contained within this Chapter **must** be assured (that is, its use **must** be guaranteed). As part of their overall assurance activity, the commander, manager, or accountable person (AP) **must** make sure that this policy is followed and put into practice effectively. Assurance **must** be carried out in accordance with JSP 815 (Defence Safety Management System) Volume 2, Element 12 – Assurance.

Alternative acceptable means of compliance

This policy is mandatory across Defence and the only acceptable means of compliance (AMC) is attained by following the directive set out in this chapter. However, there may be circumstances where a small number of military units may be permanently unable to comply with (keep to) parts of the policy. In such circumstances an alternative AMC is set out in the [JSP 375 Directive and Guidance](#).

Part 1: Directive

Introduction

1. This chapter provides Defence policy and guidance on military and civilian workplace safety and details workplace safety requirements in accordance with the [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#) and the [Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#).
2. In accordance with the [Secretary of State for Defence policy statement on health, safety and environmental protection](#); overseas, we will comply with the laws of Host States, where they apply to us, and in circumstances where such requirements fall short of UK requirements, we will apply UK standards so far as is reasonably practicable to do so.
3. Many workplaces, including offices, can be regarded as low risk environments. However, they all contain hazards which can expose Defence personnel, contractors and visitors to work related accidents and / or ill health. There are also some workplaces where it is more difficult to control issues such as temperature, lighting and so on, especially military environments and workplaces. However, APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure a safe system of work is employed in these workplaces and risks are reduced As Low As is Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).
4. Not all risks come from new or even complex technology, many accidents are caused by slips, trips and falls; spilt substances (including hot drinks or food); being struck by or striking objects; manual handling; and cuts or puncture wounds from sharp objects. Repetitive minor events can have a lasting effect on occupational health. Ill health may be caused by stress; presence of pathogens or dust; exposure to hazardous substances; repetitive strains from bad lay-out, poor job specification, or incorrect setting up and or use of workstations.
5. In exceptional circumstances an external hazard not directly related to a work activity, such as a pandemic, might have an impact on Defence ways of working. These hazards will also need effective management in accordance with this chapter. Annex A – Defence Health and Safety Pandemic Management provides direction and guidance on such a hazard.

Policy Statements

6. Defence has established the following policy statements to provide direction on the managing of military and civilian workplace safety, which **must** be followed.
 - a. **Policy Statement 1.**

A Defence organisation's most senior leader **must** make sure that the infrastructure and equipment within their organisation complies with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy, management of this responsibility may be delegated where appropriate to a delivery agent, an accountable person, commander or manager.

b. **Policy Statement 2.**

Commanders and managers **must** make sure that all Defence activities, within their area of responsibility, comply with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy.

c. **Policy Statement 3.**

Accountable persons, commanders and managers **must** have effective organisational structures and management arrangements in place, within their area of responsibility, for discharging health and safety duties in accordance with the Defence and organisation Safety Management Systems.

d. **Policy Statement 4.**

Accountable persons **must** make sure that competent persons are appointed to key health and safety roles to help safeguard the health and safety of the personnel, the work activities (and those who may be affected by the work activities), the equipment, the infrastructure, and the work environment under their area of responsibility.

e. **Policy Statement 5.**

Personnel **must** make sure that they comply with all safety control measures and bring any health and safety concerns that they may have about the work activities or the workplace to the attention of their accountable person, commander or manager.

Policy Statement 1

A Defence organisation's most senior leader **must** make sure that the infrastructure and equipment within their organisation complies with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy, management of this responsibility may be delegated where appropriate to a delivery agent, an accountable person, commander or manager.

7. Defence organisations **must** clearly define and communicate the roles and responsibilities for managing safety within their organisation, for example the delivery agent, accountable person (AP), commander or manager **must** have a clear understanding of their responsibilities for health and safety for the work activities or the facilities that they manage or use on a temporary or permanent basis.

8. Defence organisations **must** provide and maintain facilities that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health. This is to be achieved through compliance with applicable UK legislation (including legislation giving effect to the UK's international obligations) and where necessary relevant 'Host State' standards. Further guidance on health and safety responsibilities can be found in [JSP 815 \(Defence Safety Management System\) Vol 2 Annex D \(HoE Responsibilities\)](#).

9. Many Defence workplaces can generally be regarded as low risk environments. However, there are still health and safety requirements that **must** be met, these include:

a. **A safe workplace**

To keep the workplace safe, APs, commanders and managers **must**:

- (1) maintain premises and work equipment;
- (2) keep floors and traffic routes free of obstructions;
- (3) have windows, where applicable, that can be opened and cleaned safely; and
- (4) make sure that any transparent (such as glass) doors or walls are protected or made of safety material.

b. **A healthy working environment**

To have a healthy working environment, APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure there is:

- (1) good [ventilation](#) with a supply of fresh, clean air drawn from outside or a ventilation system;
- (2) a reasonable working [temperature](#) so it is comfortable to work (usually at least 16°C, or 13°C for strenuous work, unless other laws require lower temperatures);
- (3) lighting suitable for the work being carried out;
- (4) enough room space and suitable workstations and seating; and
- (5) a clean workplace with appropriate waste containers.

c. **Welfare facilities**

APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure personnel have access to:

- (1) toilets and hand basins, with soap and towels or a hand-dryer;
- (2) drinking water;
- (3) a place to store clothing (and somewhere to change if special clothing is worn for work); and
- (4) somewhere to rest and eat meals.

10. JSP 375 Vol 1 provides direction, guidance and good practice for various work activities, facilities and hazards that will assist APs to comply with UK health and safety legislation and provides the minimum standard when operating in a host nation.

Policy Statement 2

Commanders and managers **must** make sure that all Defence activities, within their area of responsibility, comply with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy.

11. Commanders and managers are responsible for making sure that all activities under their control are conducted safely. They **must** make sure that all hazards that are reasonably foreseeable (could reasonably be expected) associated with the activities under their command or supervision, are identified and suitably risk assessed (see [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 8 \(Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work\)](#)).

12. Compliance with the direction, guidance and good practice provided in JSP 375 Vol 1 will make sure commanders and managers meet the requirements of UK health and safety legislation.

Policy Statement 3

Accountable persons, commanders and managers **must** have effective organisational structures and management arrangements in place, within their area of responsibility, for discharging health and safety duties in accordance with Defence and Organisation Safety Management Systems.

13. The attitude and behaviour displayed by APs, commanders and managers will set the tone and importance that staff place on health and safety; leadership is therefore essential. The delivery of safety management **must** be implemented via the Chain of Command and line management and treated as part of normal business.

14. Organisational structures and management arrangements for discharging duties in accordance with Defence and Organisation Safety Management Systems, including identifying hazards and controlling potential risks **must** be put in place. Processes for monitoring the effectiveness of such arrangements **must** also be put in place.

15. APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure that health and safety tasks such as assessing risks, inspecting workplaces and the co-ordination of team or branch health and safety issues are conducted by competent persons.

16. In addition to any task specific training, instruction and supervision, APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure that induction training covering emergency procedures, local risks and so on, is provided to Defence personnel, contractors and visitors under their control. APs, commanders and managers **must** make sure personnel are fully informed of the foreseeable risks associated with the work activities and the work environment they will be exposed to.

Policy Statement 4

Accountable persons **must** make sure that competent persons are appointed to key health and safety roles to help safeguard the health and safety of the personnel, the work activities (and those who may be affected by the work activities), equipment, infrastructure, and the work environment under their area of responsibility.

17. To safeguard the health and safety of Defence personnel and others who may be affected by work activities, equipment, infrastructure and the work environment under their control, APs **must** make sure competent persons are appointed to key health and safety roles, where required.

18. The identification of key health and safety roles, such as health and safety advisers, radiation protection officers, and so on, **must** be part of the risk assessment process and will be dependent on the work activities being conducted, the hazards personnel are exposed to and the level of risk they will encounter.

19. The persons appointed to these key health and safety roles **must** be competent and provided with the resources necessary to undertake the role effectively.

Policy Statement 5

Personnel **must** make sure that they comply with all safety control measures and bring any health and safety concerns that they may have about the work activities, equipment, infrastructure or the work environment to the attention of their accountable person, commander or manager.

20. Personnel **must** take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst undertaking work activities. All personnel **must**:

- a. make themselves aware of their organisation's health, safety and welfare procedures and arrangements;
- b. comply with local health and safety procedures and arrangements;
- c. co-operate with their commanders and managers as necessary to allow compliance with health and safety legislation and policy requirements;
- d. undertake induction training programmes and other training, as required;
- e. be made aware of who the safety personnel are and how to make contact, for example, local health and safety advisers, fire officers and first aid staff;
- f. co-operate with their commanders and managers by carrying out their duties in accordance with the training, information and instruction received;
- g. comply with the local Emergency and Disaster Plan and the actions to be taken;
- h. inform their AP, commander or manager of any health, safety or welfare concerns without delay;

- i. inform their AP, commander or manager of any change in circumstances that may affect their ability to perform their tasks (for example, pregnancy, physical injury, medical condition);
- j. only operate equipment they are authorised (and where appropriate trained, or under supervision if in training) to use;
- k. visually inspect equipment prior to use and report damaged, missing or misuse of safety equipment and unsafe practices;
- l. not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided within the work environment for health, safety and welfare purposes;
- m. correctly use, maintain and store the personal protective equipment provided;
- n. wear appropriate clothing (such as, no loose clothing or jewellery) and have long hair held or tied back whilst operating dangerous equipment (such as shredders, lathes and so on) to avoid entanglement and entrapment hazards;
- o. wear any 'prescribed medical aids', such as, corrective lenses (glasses or contact lenses), hearing aids, and so on, to carry out safety critical duties; and
- p. comply with the local occurrence reporting procedures and where applicable the requirements contained in [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 16 \(Safety occurrence reporting and investigation\)](#).

Part 2: Guidance

This part provides the guidance and good practice that **should** be followed using the Plan, Do, Check, Act approach and will help you to keep to this policy.

PLAN – identify problems and opportunities

Policy Statement 1. A Defence organisation's most senior leader **must** make sure that the infrastructure and equipment within their organisation complies with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy, management of this responsibility may be delegated where appropriate to a delivery agent, an accountable person, commander or manager.

1. The first step in identifying compliance with health and safety legislation and Defence policy is achieved by conducting a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of all work activities and facilities in accordance with [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 8 \(Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work\)](#). Other chapters in JSP 375 Vol 1 **should** also be consulted to obtain the Defence direction, guidance and good practice related to the specific hazards associated with the work activities or facilities.
2. Co-operation and co-ordination in a shared workplace, including temporary workplaces, is a requirement under UK health and safety legislation. Therefore, where the infrastructure is managed by a Maintenance Management Organisation, equipment is owned, maintained and or operated by a third-party organisation, whether a Defence contractor or a non-Defence tenant, the AP **should** make sure that the point of demarcation and responsibility is agreed, clearly defined and documented. Through effective regular communications and collaboration, assurances **should** be given and received that services or equipment are regularly inspected and maintained as appropriate; common procedures are adhered to, and that the activities undertaken by all stakeholders do not have an undue adverse impact on the health or safety of personnel. This exchange of documentation **should** be a continual process.
3. It can sometimes be difficult to make facilities comfortable for all occupants, however, APs are required to make sure workrooms are well ventilated, maintained at a comfortable temperature and adequately lit. This can sometimes be difficult to achieve due to people's different requirements and perceptions. Therefore, where there are difficulties, APs **should** seek the guidance of their health and safety adviser and Trade Union (TU) representatives to help identify requirements and resolve any issues.

Policy Statement 2. Commanders and managers **must** make sure that all Defence activities, within their area of responsibility, comply with all applicable health and safety legislation and Defence policy.

4. Risk assessment of the work activities **should** help make sure that the health and safety legislation and policy requirements are identified and met.
5. Although some safety hazards are easy to identify, some hazards can be less obvious. For example, commanders and managers **should** be aware of the potential health impact on Defence personnel from different working patterns and practices. This may require an allowance for personnel to take regular breaks and the encouragement of them to be taken. Where possible commanders and managers **should** empower personnel to manage their own workload, activities and practices to help reduce the potential for work related illness, such as stress.
6. Other common hazards that might be low risk but still require control include, the use of display screen equipment, workplace and furniture set-up to meet the abilities and needs of an individual and so on. Commanders and managers **should** consult their health and safety adviser for advice if there is any uncertainty regarding what is required.
7. Commanders and managers **should** regularly check workplace activities to make sure they remain compliant with health and safety legislation and Defence policy. Defence direction and guidance on workplace inspections is provided in [JSP 375 Volume 1 Chapter 4](#).

DO – implement potential solutions

Policy Statement 3. Accountable persons, commanders and managers **must** have effective organisational structures and management arrangements in place, within their area of responsibility, for discharging health and safety duties in accordance with Defence and organisation Safety Management Systems.

8. APs, commanders and managers **should** make sure Defence personnel, contractors and visitors have access to information that describes the health and safety organisational structures and management arrangements used within their area of responsibility. This **should** include emergency arrangements, accident reporting procedures, identification of key safety personnel and so on.
9. APs **should** make sure that sufficient resources are made available for the management of health and safety which are proportionate with the risk profile of their area of responsibility.

Policy Statement 4. Accountable persons **must** make sure that competent persons are appointed to key health and safety roles to help safeguard the health and safety of the personnel, the work activities (and those who may be affected by the work activities), equipment, infrastructure, and the work environment under their area of responsibility.

10. Organisational safety accountability, roles and responsibilities **should** be identified in the Organisation's Safety Management System. However, APs may need to identify key health and safety roles at a more local level. Following risk assessment, APs **should** be able to identify where key health and safety roles are required within their area of responsibility.

11. The types of work often requiring the identification of a key health and safety role include, radiation protection, vehicle safety, explosive safety and so on. General health and safety may also require the appointment of a competent person to provide advice and direction.

12. Where key health and safety roles have been identified, checks are required to make sure those appointed are competent to undertake the task. In addition, suitable arrangements **should** be put in place to cover the role during periods of absence.

Policy Statement 5. Personnel **must** make sure that they comply with all safety control measures and bring any health and safety concerns that they may have about the work activities, equipment, infrastructure or the work environment to the attention of their accountable person, commander or manager.

13. Personnel are required to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst undertaking work activities. This will include making sure they comply with the safety control measures put in place by their commander or manager.

14. To help compliance with health and safety measures; commanders, managers, and the personnel conducting the work activity, **should** have regular conversations about work activities and the work environment. This **should** help commanders, and managers to identify where further health and safety controls are required and provide an opportunity for personnel to raise any concerns they may have regarding safety and welfare.

CHECK – assess the results

15. Safety checks are an effective way of making sure the control measures identified by the risk assessment are being suitably implemented and are working to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. [JSP 375 Volume 1 Chapter 4 \(Workplace Inspections\)](#) provides direction and guidance on what needs to be checked and how.

ACT – implement improved solutions

16. Where safety improvements are identified, either through inspection, communication with those conducting the activity, changes to legislation or policy, changes in available equipment, technologies or following an accident or incident, commanders and managers need to review and update their risk assessment control measures at the earliest possible time.

Retention of records

17. Records, including risk assessments **must** be retained in accordance with [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 39 \(Retention of Records\)](#).

Related documents

18. The following documents are related to this chapter:

a. **JSP 375, Volume 1;**

- (1) Chapter 4 – Workplace inspections;
- (2) Chapter 5 – First aid;
- (3) Chapter 8 – Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work;
- (4) Chapter 10 – Manual handling;
- (5) Chapter 11 – Management of hazardous substances;
- (6) Chapter 12 – Display Screen Equipment (DSE);
- (7) Chapter 16 – Safety occurrence reporting and investigation;
- (8) Chapter 17 – Stress in the workplace;
- (9) Chapter 18 – Lone working;
- (10) Chapter 21 – Managing staff remotely;
- (11) Chapter 23 – Electrical safety;
- (12) Chapter 34 – 4C system: management of visiting workers and contractors; and
- (13) Chapter 39 – Retention of records.

b. **Other Defence Publications;**

- (1) JSP 815 – Defence Safety Management System;
- (2) JSP 892 – Risk Management; and
- (3) JSP 426 Defence Fire Safety & Fire Risk Management Policy, Guidance and Information

c. **Legislation and Guidance;**

- (1) [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 \(HSWA\)](#);
- (2) [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#);
- (3) [HSE Approved Code of practice \(ACop\) L5 - Control of substances hazardous to health 2023](#);
- (4) [HSE ACoP L22 - Safe use of work equipment. 1998.](#)
- (5) [HSE ACoP L23 - Manual handling. Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Guidance on Regulations](#);
- (6) [HSE ACoP L24 - Workplace health, safety and welfare. Workplace \(Health, Safety and Welfare\) Regulations 1992](#);
- (7) [HSE ACoP L26 - Work with display screen equipment 2023](#);
- (8) [HSE HSG60 - Upper limb disorders in the workplace 2023](#);
- (9) [HSE HSG263 - Involving your workforce in health and safety 2015](#);
- (10) [HSE INDG36 - Working with display screen equipment \(DSE\) 2013.](#)

Defence Health and Safety Pandemic Management

1. Defence has an obligation to maintain a safe working environment for its personnel. This obligation **must** be balanced with the need to achieve Defence outputs. APs **must** balance pandemic risks just like any other in the JSP 892 Risk Management Framework.
2. Where a pandemic is identified, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the hazard **must** be conducted, maintained and retained in accordance with [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 8 \(Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work\)](#). Where available, the pandemic risk assessment and its safety control measures **should** be incorporated into the 'site risk assessment'. In addition, Defence organisations **should** conduct regular pandemic planning exercises to test the effectiveness of the risk assessment and the safety control measures identified.
3. Any changes to workplace pandemic-secure measures **should** be done in consultation with local Trade Unions (TU) and Health and Safety (H&S) Representatives¹ and informed by a risk assessment and other relevant Government guidance. Where risks cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, these **must** be noted in the risk assessment and where necessary, escalated through the Chain of Command.
4. APs **must** follow Government guidance to conduct and record a risk assessment using the appropriate form for all workplace activities in each business area. These **should** be subject to consultation with relevant Trade Union(s) and Health and Safety Representatives. APs **should** consult the guidance when considering the range of mitigations that can be utilised to manage the risk.
5. The risk assessment **should** be:
 - a. Undertaken in accordance with [JSP 375 Vol 1 Chapter 8 \(Safety risk assessment and safe systems of work\)](#) and recorded on [MOD Form 5010](#) or a suitable alternative.
 - b. Completed in every AP's, commander's or manager's area where people are attending the workplace and before any new activity is undertaken by military, Defence civilian and contractor personnel at the workplace;
 - c. Repeated either whenever circumstances change (for example, when new government guidelines are published or when Defence activities change) or overall assessment of the pandemic risk changes based on new clinical information; and
 - d. Retained locally for at least 3 years following completion.
6. Any member of staff who has health and safety concerns **should** contact and inform their AP, commander or manager.

¹ Where it is unclear who the local TU H&S Reps may be, or none are available, the matter **should** be referred to the relevant TU representatives at Defence organisation level. The term, "other" in this context refers to those staff not able to join a recognised TU, such as those represented by the MOD Police Federation.

7. Where there has been prolonged shutdown or facilities have been closed, the risk assessment **should** take in to account any additional hazards such as ventilation, air conditioning and hygiene requirements to provide a secure workplace. In such instances it may also be useful to consult Defence Infrastructure Organisation guidance for the safe and efficient design, use and maintenance of services, equipment and infrastructure on the Defence estate.