



HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN DEFENCE

Policy Statement by the Secretary of State for Defence

1. I make the following Policy Statement for all health, safety and environmental protection (HS&EP) matters in Defence because, as Secretary of State, I am answerable to Parliament for such matters and to comply with a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act. In doing so, I emphasise the importance which I attach to the health and safety of those who deliver Defence activities (including the Armed Forces, MOD civilians and contractors where Defence owes a legal Duty of Care) and those who may be affected by Defence activities and to the protection of the environment. **This Policy Statement is a commitment of my personal leadership in this area and I rely on all those also in leadership roles to ensure my policy is applied throughout Defence.**

GENERAL DUTIES

2. I require that:
- a. We minimise work-related fatalities, injuries, ill-health and adverse effects on the environment, and we reduce health and safety risks so that they are as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP).
 - b. Within the United Kingdom (UK) we comply with all applicable HS&EP legislation.
 - c. Overseas we apply our UK standards and arrangements where reasonably practicable and, in addition, respond to host nations' relevant HS&EP expectations.
 - d. Where Defence has exemptions, derogations or dis-applications from HS&EP legislation, we maintain Departmental arrangements that produce outcomes that are, so far as reasonably practicable, at least as good as those required by UK legislation.
 - e. Those of us in positions of management or command, from the Defence Board downwards, lead by example on HS&EP by giving it the priority it deserves and maintain a climate that promotes a safety culture where everyone is empowered to contribute to HS&EP objectives.
 - f. We take reasonable care of the health and safety of ourselves and others who may be affected by our acts or omissions at work, we protect the environment and we co-operate with arrangements that are in place to enable us to discharge the duties placed on us.

GOVERNANCE

3. As the Department's most senior official for HS&EP matters, the Permanent Secretary (Perm Sec) is to ensure that effective management arrangements are in place to achieve compliance with this Policy Statement, which may be amplified as appropriate, drawing on advice as necessary from across the Department. The Perm Sec is to include HS&EP performance in the Department's holding-to-account process.

4. I appoint Director General Defence Safety Authority (DG DSA) by Charter to provide me with independent assurance that my policy is being promoted and implemented in the conduct of Defence activities. This is achieved through 3 distinct functions; as Regulator of compliance with my policy where Defence has authority; Investigator of safety-related accidents, incidents and near misses; and, as Defence Authority in setting policy and assuring standards. In this respect, I require DG DSA to produce an Annual Assurance Report (AAR) for my consideration and by the Defence Board.

5. I require each the Top Level Budget Holder (TLBH) or Chief Executive of a Defence Executive Agency (CDEA) to set down and implement HS&EP management arrangements through a Safety and Environment Management System (SEMS) for activities in his/her Area of responsibility (AoR) and ensure that commanding officers and managers to whom he/she may delegate HS&EP authority are competent and have adequate resources at their disposal.

6. Where a Defence activity leads to a Risk to Life that requires management through enhanced safety management arrangements, I require the TLBH or CDEA to be appointed as the Senior Duty Holder (SDH), in addition to his/her legal HS&EP responsibilities. If an SDH considers that a risk from a Defence activity cannot be mitigated so that it is ALARP, he/she is to refer it to me.

7. Any TLBH or CDEA proposing organisational change, where there is potential for significant impact on HS&EP standards and performance, is to ensure that, before being implemented, the impacts of the proposed change are properly assessed through an Organisational Safety Assessment (OSA) in order to demonstrate that any detriment to these standards and performance are mitigated to ALARP.

8. The detailed organisation and arrangements that amplify this Policy Statement are to be set out in policy requirements, Defence Regulations and guidance produced by DG DSA.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

9. This policy remains in effect through any changes of the Secretary of State, PS or DG DSA. I require DG DSA to maintain my policy's alignment to any relevant changes in legislation or Defence governance arrangements. He/she may propose amendments at any time, consulting with the Perm Sec and Defence Safety Committee (DSC). I will review this policy at least every fifth year.



SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

20 June 2018