



Ministry  
of Defence

# **INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT AND STRESS REDUCTION TOOL**

**Version 1.0**  
**30 September 2013**



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## Individual Assessment & Stress Reduction Tool

MOD actively promotes wellbeing in the workplace and is committed to taking steps to reduce workplace stress.

This tool, which is based on information from the Health and Safety Executive website, is designed to help assess the risks of work-related stress within a job role and identify any areas of concern.

It can be used when a member of staff, diagnosed with stress-related illness such as anxiety or depression, returns to work **OR** when a member of staff makes it known that they are experiencing stress in the workplace, but it hasn't got to the stage where absence from work has resulted.

**It strongly advised that you do not complete this form on your own. Ask someone you are comfortable with to go through the questions with you. This can be your Line Manager, a colleague, a Trade Union representative or a friend.**

To guide you in identifying and recording the major causes of stress, please look at the sets of statements under each of the 6 Management Standards. Circle the score in the box that most accurately reflects how you feel at the moment. Calculate the total for the figures you have circled for each stressor. You will end up with a score for each Risk Factor which will fall within a minimum to maximum range for that area. A higher score will indicate the possibility (but not guarantee) of higher stress levels.

It is important to bear in mind that some jobs may carry a higher likelihood of stress levels for very sound reasons. In these instances, management and staff working in that area must be aware of the implications of sustained levels of stress and do what they can to mitigate against them.

Once this form has been completed, please note that you will need to discuss your results with your Line Management to ensure that you reach a common understanding of any issues and receive appropriate support in tackling those issues. If you do not share this information with your Line Management, they will be unable to address your concerns.

| Stressor Areas  | Stressor intensity |        |           |              |        | Possible Solutions   |
|---|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|--------|--|
|   | Never              | Seldom | Sometimes | Often        | Always |  |
| <b>Demands</b>  |                    |        |           |              |        | <p>Look at job design and working practices. Are there any unnecessary tasks that could be dropped?</p> <p>Develop regular team meetings to discuss workloads and resources to ensure sufficient timescales to plan work.</p> <p>Adjust work patterns to be able to cope with busy periods and staff absences</p> <p>Review working patterns. Consider flexible working to help cope with external pressures.</p> <p>Check training needs have been met.</p> |
| Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I have unachievable deadlines   | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I have to work very intensively   | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do              | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I am unable to take sufficient breaks                                   | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I am pressured to work long hours                                       | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I have to work very fast  | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| I have unrealistic time pressures                                       | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4            | 5      |  |
| <b>Low Risk 8, Average Risk 24, High Risk 40</b>                        |                    |        |           | <b>Total</b> |        |  |
| <b>Control</b>  |                    |        |           |              |        | <p>Check leave is being taken over the year.</p> <p>Discuss objectives and set realistic deadlines. Investigate alternative ways of achieving the same result.</p> <p>Agree responsibility to take work forward with opportunities to input during planning stages,</p>  |
| I can decide when to take a break                                       | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I have a say in my own work speed                                       | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I have a choice in deciding how I do my work                            | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I have a choice in deciding what I do at work                           | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I have some say over the way I work                                     | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| My working time can be flexible   | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| <b>Low Risk 6, Average Risk 18, High Risk 30</b>                        |                    |        |           | <b>Total</b> |        |  |
| <b>Role</b>   |                    |        |           |              |        | <p>Regular PARs including clear identification of the role and objectives.</p> <p>Hold team meetings to enable staff to clarify roles and responsibilities and discuss possible conflict.</p> <p>Agree specific standards for work and review at regular intervals.</p> <p>Check whether an induction process is in place for new members of staff.</p>  |
| I am clear what is expected of me at work                               | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I know how to go about getting my job done                              | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I am clear what my duties/responsibilities are                          | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I am clear about the goals and objectives for my department             | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organisation  | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2            | 1      |  |
| <b>Low Risk 5, Average Risk 15, High Risk 25</b>                        |                    |        |           | <b>Total</b> |        |  |

| Stressor Areas   | Stressor intensity |        |           |       |              | Possible Solutions   |
|--|--------------------|--------|-----------|-------|--------------|--|
|  | Never              | Seldom | Sometimes | Often | Always       |  |
| <b>Relationships</b>   |                    |        |           |       |              | <p>Check the Department Policy for tackling Bullying and Harassment.</p> <p>Encourage constructive and positive communications between staff.</p> <p>Consider using the mediation service.</p> <p>If criticism of work quality is a problem, consider what training is appropriate to address any concerns.</p>  |
| I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour       | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4     | 5            |  |
| There is friction or anger between colleagues                                      | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4     | 5            |  |
| I am subject to bullying at work   | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4     | 5            |  |
| Relationships at work are strained   | 1                  | 2      | 3         | 4     | 5            |  |
| <b>Low Risk 4, Average Risk 12, High Risk 20</b>                                   |                    |        |           |       | <b>Total</b> |  |
| <b>Support</b>   |                    |        |           |       |              | <p>Hold regular one to one sessions to discuss issues, pressures and achievements.</p> <p>Ensure both core and any functional competencies are up to date and correct training received to enable tools to carry out a function.</p> <p>Consider a support system e.g. supervision, shadowing, shared objectives.</p> <p>Hold regular team meetings to discuss Departmental pressures.</p> |
| <b>Management support:</b>   | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I am given supportive feedback on the work I do                                    | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I can rely on my line manager to help me out with a work problem                   | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I can talk to my line manager about something that has upset or annoyed me at work | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I am supported through emotionally demanding work                                  | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| My line manager encourages me at work  | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| <b>Peer support:</b>   | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| If work gets difficult, my colleagues will help me                                 | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I get help and support I need from colleagues                                      | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| I receive the respect at work I deserve from my colleagues                         | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| My colleagues are willing to listen to my work-related problems                    | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| <b>Low Risk 9, Average Risk 27, High Risk 45</b>                                   |                    |        |           |       | <b>Total</b> |  |
| <b>Change</b>  |                    |        |           |       |              | <p>Plan ahead so change doesn't come out of the blue.</p> <p>Agree methods of communication (e.g. meetings, newsletters) and frequency of any methods of communication.</p> <p>Develop a system to provide the opportunity to ask questions before, during and after the change.</p>   |
| I have sufficient opportunities to question managers about change at work          | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| Staff are always consulted about change at work                                    | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice       | 5                  | 4      | 3         | 2     | 1            |  |
| <b>Low Risk 3, Average Risk 9, High Risk 15</b>                                    |                    |        |           |       | <b>Total</b> |  |

## Next Steps:

If you have identified any areas of concern and need support in tackling these, you must now share this with your Line Management and ask for a discussion to reach a common understanding of any issues and to determine what actions are appropriate to deal with them. If you do not share this information with your Line Management, they will be unable to address your concerns.

You may take a colleague or a Trade Union representative with you if you like.

Your Line Management will go over your scoring with you and may wish to comment against any issues or areas of concern. The discussion will need to focus on the findings of this assessment, resolving any differences of opinion/perspective, and on what actions can be agreed to resolve any issues. These need to be completed on the separate Action Plan and a copy will need to be retained by anyone who has an active role to play in the procedures.

You may need more than one page and must ensure the total number of pages required to complete the Action Plan are clearly marked.

Once completed the document should be treated as "PROTECT-STAFF" and stored in line with Department rules.

## Stress Reduction Action Plan:

List any measures currently in place and note the decided action plan in the relevant areas.

The action plan should be clear about **what** needs to be done and **by whom**. It may be useful to set a review date(s), to monitor progress.

This Action Plan forms part of the statutory risk assessment process and the actions must follow in the hierarchy of controls set out in Schedule 1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

At the review describe what actions and support have been taken, pending, as well as any new ones agreed. Be clear on whether previously identified stressors have been resolved or are still outstanding.

A copy of the plan should be kept by anyone who has an active role to play in the implementation and progression of the noted actions.

# Individual Stress Reduction Action Plan

|                              |                                     |                              |   |                           |                |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Employee's name</b>       |                                     |                              | <b>Signature</b>                              |                           |                |
| <b>Manager's* name</b>       |                                     |                              | <b>Signature</b>                              |                           |                |
| <b>Date</b>                  |                                     |                              |   |                           | <b>Page</b> of |
| <b>Issue/Area of Concern</b> | <b>Manager's* Response/Comments</b> | <b>Measurements in Place</b> | <b>Action to be taken/ By Whom/ Timescale</b> | <b>Progress on Review</b> |                |
|                              |                                     |                              |   |                           |                |
|                              |                                     |                              |   |                           |                |
|                              |                                     |                              |   |                           |                |

\* or person mentioned in Action Plan