



Ministry
of Defence

JSP 815

Element 12: Assurance



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Amendment record

JSP 815 has been updated as a part of Defence Reform and will be subject to further scheduled reviews and updated as required.

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

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1.0	Dec 22	BETA version for consultation	Dir HS&EP
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1.2	10 Sep 24	Annual revision and combined Element and assurance framework	DDS
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Terms and definitions

The term 'Defence Area' refers to one of the four top level areas of Defence: Department of State (DOS), Armed Forces (MSHQ and Military Commands), National Armaments Director (NAD) Group and the Defence Nuclear Enterprise (DNE). Within Defence Safety Policy (JSP 815, JSP 375 and JSP 376), reference to a 'Defence Area' responsibility applies to the top-level Defence Area however, for the Armed Forces it also applies to their component Military Commands (Army, Air, Navy and CSOC).

General safety terms and definitions are provided in the [Master Glossary of Safety Terms and Definitions](#) which can also be accessed on [GOV.UK](#).

Must and should

Where this Element says must, this means that the action is a compulsory requirement.

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

Introduction

1. This Element provides the direction that must be followed and the guidance and good practice that should be followed which will assist users to comply with the expectations for assurance that are set out in this Element.
2. Responsibility for the management of health and safety, is derived from the Secretary of State for Defence's (SofS) Policy Statement for Health and Safety. The SofS Policy Statement sets out the requirement for Defence Areas' senior leaders to ensure that safety policy and regulations are complied with in their areas of responsibility and that their Defence activities are delivered in line with the Defence Safety Management System (SMS) and their own Defence Area's safety management arrangements.

Purpose and expectations

3. The purpose of this Element is to assist the Defence Areas to put in place assurance mechanisms to identify strengths and weaknesses in their safety management arrangements and drive continual improvement. Assurance activity should be planned to cover all business activities and linked to a risk-based assurance plan.
4. Defence Areas have the freedom to use other assurance and audit methodologies that are appropriate to their business and activities, however they must provide evidence of compliance with safety legislation, Defence policy and regulation in line with the three Lines of Defence approach set out in this Element.

General assurance process

5. In the [Orange Book - Management of Risk - Principles and Concepts](#), His Majesty's Treasury (HMT) defines assurance as:

"A general term for the confidence that can be derived from objective examination of information over the successful conduct of activities, the efficient and effective design and operation of internal control, compliance with internal and external requirements, and the production of insightful and credible information to support decision-making. Confidence diminishes when there are uncertainties around the integrity of information, or of underlying processes."

6. In Defence, assurance is about providing adequate confidence and evidence, through due process, that safety requirements have been met. It is also about monitoring performance and checking how well risks are being controlled. It is less about assurance as a 'tick box exercise' and more about identifying problems and providing objective information to decision makers so remedial action can be taken.
7. The Health and Safety Executive guidance (HSG) [Managing for health and safety \(HSG\) 65](#) provides additional advice to those who need to put in place or oversee their organisation's health and safety arrangements.

Risk-based approach

8. A risk-based approach means focussing assurance effort on the activities and controls which give rise to the most significant safety risks that may impact upon the successful delivery of the Defence Area's objectives. It can also include focussing assurance in areas where the most benefit will be derived from the effort. This means a high-level prioritisation approach to identifying, assessing, reporting, and assuring the effectiveness of a Defence Area's safety management arrangements.

Assurance methods

9. Defence Areas need to demonstrate and provide assurance that their safety management arrangements meet the requirements of the SofS Policy Statement and aligns with this JSP 815, which is based on ISO 45001 - International standard for occupational health and safety, a useful comparison between JSP 815 and ISO 45001 can be found in [Annex F](#).

10. A Defence Area's assurance process should provide an objective examination of evidence that demonstrates an independent, objective assessment of risk management, and control or governance processes.

11. There are a range of assurance methods that can be used to provide confidence in safety management. Below are some examples of different assurance methods. More details can be found in ISO 19011¹ (an international standard that provides guidelines for auditing management systems).

Oversight / surveillance

12. Oversight involves monitoring safety performance, verifying that activities comply with policies and reviewing processes and documents. Surveillance can be undertaken by observing work performed.

Workplace inspection

13. On-site safety inspections can measure the management of safety at a workplace level and help identify if improvements are needed. An inspection can help to identify hazards, processes or accessibility issues that are not working efficiently.

14. In addition, inspections can be used to confirm the safe condition of equipment or workplaces. For example, the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998](#) (PUWER) states the requirement to inspect workplace equipment. This ensures that equipment is maintained, safe to operate and any deterioration can be detected and corrected in good time. Compliance checks on firefighting equipment or first aid kits would also be an example of a focused workplace inspection.

¹ ISO 19011 Annex B describes Interviews, checklists, questionnaires, document reviews, sampling, observations etc as potential aspects of Audits.

Safety visits

15. Safety visits provide the Defence Area's management with the opportunity to explore the effectiveness of risk control measures through planned visits to workplaces to observe tasks and discuss controls. They also provide Defence Area's management with the opportunity to show their commitment to safety and to communicate with personnel.

Sampling

16. Sampling is the selection of a representative amount or group of items, people, and areas, which are examined to establish compliance and used to indicate the standard of compliance for the wider group. Sampling is required when it is not practical or cost effective to examine all available information; for example, records are too numerous or too dispersed geographically to justify the examination of every item.

Surveys

17. Surveys are where a set of questions (computer or paper based) are asked of a targeted audience to gain a general view from that audience on a given topic. A safety culture survey would be an example of this.

Audits

18. An audit is a significant part of the assurance process and is an essential tool used for checking that a Defence Area's safety processes are in place and are being followed. The purpose of an audit is to determine the level of adequacy and compliance against a set of agreed standards, policies, procedures, or requirements.

19. An audit looks at the compliance towards components of a Defence Area's safety management arrangements with the audit criteria set out in this JSP and the Defence safety policy and regulations appropriate to the Defence Area's activities.

20. The Defence safety audit process is the recommended process to ensure compliance with the Defence SMS and is based on the ISO 19011 – Guideline for auditing management systems. Further detail on the Defence safety audit process is set out in [Annex H](#) - Audit Manual.

Activity assurance and function assurance

21. Assurance is required for the activity undertaken by Defence Areas and separately for the Defence Safety Function, they are defined as:

- a. **Activity** - a Defence activity is defined as an 'activity delivered by a person(s) employed by Defence (military and civilian) or working on behalf of, or under the supervision of Defence (for example, contractors) with the intention of providing benefit to Defence.' Examples of activities that will require assurance are military training² and exercises, live firing, maintaining equipment and so on, all of which require a safe system of work to be put in place (which includes safe people, safe equipment, safe place, and safe practices).

² [JSP 822 - Defence Training and Education Policy and Guidance](#)

- b. **Activity assurance** – is required to provide Defence Area leaders, and in turn the Defence Safety Committee (DSC) and Defence Board, with confidence that the safe systems of work are in place for that activity, are being followed and provide evidence that safety legislation, Defence safety policy and regulations are being complied with (understood and being followed).
- c. **Function** - the Defence Safety Function has been established to ‘support Defence in achieving a proactive safety culture that protects our people, enhances operational capability, and strengthens national security.’ It does this by setting policy for the safe delivery of Defence business (JSP 375 and 376), including the Defence SMS (JSP 815), providing direction on; training, competency, leadership, governance arrangements, coherent digital enablers, safety function risks and insights, and monitoring of safety function performance across Defence.
- d. **Function assurance** – is required to provide the Safety Function Owner, and in turn the DSC and Defence Board, with the confidence that Defence Areas have effective safety management arrangements in place. Function assurance must be carried out in order to provide evidence that the Defence Area’s safety management arrangements, controls, and processes comply with safety legislation and the Defence safety policy owned by the Function.

Three Lines of Defence model

22. To understand better who is responsible for what assurance activity, Defence uses the three Lines of Defence (LOD) approach for ease of delineating roles and responsibilities. Figure 2 illustrates how the LOD approach is applied to activity and function assurance.

LOD	Function Assurance	Activity Assurance
1LOD	Defence Area	Defence Area
2LOD	DDSS	
3LOD	GIAA	DSA

Figure 2: Function and activity assurance model

First Line of Defence (1LOD) assurance

23. First Line of Defence (1LOD) is for the Defence Area to identify, assess, own, and manage its own risks. The Defence Area is responsible for designing, implementing, and maintaining its own control measures, monitoring its adherence, and implementing corrective actions to address deficiencies.

24. The Defence Area must make sure that 1LOD assurance is undertaken that is appropriate to its scale and complexity and must have mechanisms in place to enable 2LOD and 3LOD assurance and support external assurance.

25. The Defence Area's assurance at 1LOD should have a defined and proportionate risk-based approach, so that the methodology for assurance is applied effectively and appropriately. Defence Areas can tailor their internal assurance arrangements (1LOD) to suit their requirements. However, the 1LOD assurance process must provide assurance that the Defence Area's safety management arrangements are effective and that they are compliant, understood and follow relevant safety legislation, Defence safety policy, and regulation.

26. Leaders are responsible for ensuring that their Defence Area designs, operates, and improves their policies and processes to provide compliance and performance against legislation, Defence safety policies, and regulations. There should be adequate managerial and supervisory controls in place to ensure compliance and to highlight ineffective control measures. Where possible this should be supported by relevant and timely management information.

27. The Defence Area's leadership must formally review the effectiveness of their safety management arrangements in meeting their organisational objectives based on assurance activity undertaken. The Defence Area's Safety Centres (or equivalent) are responsible for tracking non-compliance resolution, reporting the progress and putting mechanisms in place to ensure close out of the corrective actions taken to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement provisions.

28. Where remedial activity has been undertaken at 1LOD to address deficiencies, the progress and the effectiveness of the control measures should be reported up through the Defence Area chain of command (CoC).

1LOD activity assurance

29. Defence Areas must make sure that 1LOD activity assurance is undertaken, and this must be provided by those managing the delivery of activities (normally at unit, estate, establishment, or platform level). The 1LOD activity assurance comes directly from those responsible for delivering specific activities, objectives, or processes. It may lack independence, but its value comes from those who know the business, culture, and day-to-day challenges.

30. The 1LOD activity assurance process must provide assurance that the activities undertaken are in compliance with relevant safety legislation, Defence safety policy and regulation (including policy and regulation at all levels of the Defence Area).

31. The 1LOD activity assurance process must provide assurance that the activities being undertaken follow a safe system of work which includes; safe people, safe equipment, safe place, and safe practices. As part of the safe people 1LOD assurance Defence Areas must make sure that personnel are appropriately trained and are issued with suitably accessible instructions and information to enable them to carry out their roles safely.

32. In a military context, a Safe Systems of Training (SST) is a component of the Safe System of Work that recognises trainees are not yet competent and therefore require clear instructions, close supervision, and appropriate information throughout training. It establishes the necessary conditions to deliver training safely, ensuring risks are kept ALARP while preparing personnel effectively for operational roles and meeting the military training imperative. Further information on this can be found in JSP 375, Volume 1, [Chapter 8](#) (Safety Risk Assessment and Safe Systems of Work).

33. The 1LOD activity assurance process must provide assurance that all necessary risk assessments are being carried out, recorded and reviewed and that any necessary control measures have been implemented, communicated in an accessible manner to personnel conducting the activity and are effective.

1LOD function assurance

34. Defence Areas must make sure that 1LOD function assurance is undertaken and this should be conducted by those that specialise in safety management and assurance, within the Defence Area such as the Safety Centres, Chief Environment and Safety Officer (CESO) teams (or equivalent), or function specialists on behalf of the Safety Centres.

35. The 1LOD function assurance needs to focus on building the confidence (through evidence) that Defence safety policy is understood and being followed. For example:

- a. A risk-informed programme of assurance deep dives, reviewing both safety management arrangements and the implementation of Defence safety policy.
- b. Monitoring Defence Area wide safety performance, including analysis of data sourced through platforms such as MySafety and interpreted by Defence Statistics.

36. 1LOD function assurance is what Defence Areas must make sure is undertaken to assess those delivering specific activities, to provide assurance that the safety management of their Defence Area component organisation is compliant with legislation and Defence safety policies.

Second Line of Defence (2LOD) assurance

2LOD activity assurance

37. 2LOD assurance should be achieved within the Defence Area's component organisation by those that specialise in safety management and assurance, such as the Defence Area's Safety Centres, Chief Environment and Safety Officer (CESO) teams (or equivalent), or specialists on behalf of the Safety Centres.

38. Defence Areas must make sure that 2LOD activity assurance is undertaken separately from the 1LOD activity assurance undertaken by those responsible for delivering and managing the activity but not independent of the Defence Area's management chain.

39. As part of the 2LOD activity assurance, the safety professionals in the Defence Area's Safety Centres, CESO teams (or equivalent), must undertake an annual assessment of their organisation against the JSP 815 - Defence Safety Management System (SMS). This is provided to the organisational leadership to identify opportunities for improvement and help inform and lead in the production of the Annual Assurance Report (AAR) submission.

40. The AAR is to be submitted to the Defence Safety Authority (DSA) and the Directorate of Defence Safety & Support (DDSS) in order to help inform and generate their respective assurance products.

41. To assist in the Defence Area's self-assessment, a safety self-assessment toolkit has been created at [Annex G](#) of this JSP (the use of this self-assessment is not mandatory, but if used this would satisfy the minimum assessment standard required to provide assurance against JSP 815).

Directorate of Defence Safety & Support (DDSS)

42. The Director Defence Safety & Support (Dir-DSS) is the department's senior appointed, formally safety qualified, competent person on all safety policy matters, as required by Regulation 7 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

43. For safety in Defence, the Dir-DSS is responsible for the Defence Safety Function Strategy, the Defence Safety Function Operating Model, and the overarching Defence SMS (JSP 815) against which safety assurance is conducted.

2LOD function assurance

44. The DDSS provides 2LOD function assurance, which is the oversight of a Defence Area's safety management organisation and arrangements and provides assurance that Defence Areas are compliant with legislation and Defence safety policies.

45. 2LOD function assurance of Defence Areas should be undertaken by DDSS, or by those that specialise in safety management and assurance³ on behalf of / assisting DDSS.

46. The DDSS does not undertake 2LOD assurance of Defence activity as this is conducted by the relevant Defence Area.

47. DDSS is responsible for:

- a. Providing the templates, minimum standards, or annual cycle for 1LOD through to 2LOD assurance (as set out in Annexes G and H of this JSP).
- b. Providing 2LOD function assurance to the DSC and the Defence Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (DARAC) that the SofS Policy Statement on Health and Safety in Defence is being implemented and the effectiveness of Defence Areas' safety management arrangements, through:
 - 1) A risk-informed programme of assurance deep dives, reviewing both safety management arrangements and the implementation of Defence safety policy.
 - 2) Monitoring Defence-wide safety performance, including analysis of data sourced through reporting systems such as MySafety and interpreted by Defence Statistics.
 - 3) Commissioning and collating 1LOD assessments from the four Areas. These are integrated with the Directorate's own 2LOD findings to produce the Safety Function Assurance Report, providing a consolidated view of Defence's safety function position.
 - 4) Monitoring safety performance including data provided by MySafety and analysed by Defence Statistics, to identify any trends and determine where more in-depth themed assurance is required.
 - 5) Defining a 'minimum competence standard' for personnel undertaking safety assurance across Defence by providing functional training.

³ These functional or technical specialists may or may not be part of the Defence Area.

- 6) Reviewing and cohering 1LOD and 2LOD findings to support safety function assurance reporting.
- c. Providing 2LOD function risk management oversight across Defence by:
 - 1) Collating enterprise safety function strategic risks to establish a coherent Defence safety function risk picture.
 - 2) Cohering strategic risks linked to the safety function's artefacts, systems, and corporate frameworks, aligning them under the relevant Principal Risks. Undertaking this activity on behalf of the Principal Risk Owner (PUS for Safety), enabling informed discussion and decision-making at the Defence Board.

Third Line of Defence (3LOD) assurance

48. 3LOD assurance provides an 'internal audit' capability and is carried out by an organisation (for example the Defence Safety Authority (DSA)) that is operationally independent of the Defence Area whose activities are being audited. Through its operational independence, an internal audit function will provide an objective assurance of how effectively a Defence Area assesses and manages its risks. It includes an evaluation of the design and effectiveness of the operation of the 1LOD and 2LOD assurance activity. It often does this by taking a risk-based approach, by evaluating all parts of the risk management framework.

49. An effective and holistic internal audit function delivered by many Defence Areas, may also enhance the assurance picture of the management of cross-Defence Area risks, thereby supporting the sharing of good practice between Defence Areas.

Defence Safety Authority (DSA)

50. The DSA sits outside of the Safety Function but within the Department of State for administrative purposes. It has operational independence from the delivery of Defence activity, as set out in the DSA Charter.

51. The DSA leads on Defence safety regulations and to protect its independence, the DSA is not involved in day-to-day management of safety delivery, safety risk management or risk policy, but may make observations or assessments as part of its assurance role.

52. The DSA provides the independent audit role within 3LOD for regulated activity and provides assurance through the Defence Safety Committee (DSC) to the Secretary of State (SofS) and the Department that the Secretary of State's policy on Health and Safety is being implemented in the conduct of Defence activities. This is achieved through proportionate and appropriate evidence-based assessment of Defence regulated activities. It is empowered through its Charter, on behalf of the SofS for Defence, for its roles as the independent regulator, investigator, and assurer of activity safety within Defence.

53. The DSA is responsible for:

- a. Preparing an Annual Assurance Report including a summary of regulatory compliance for consideration by the Permanent Under Secretary, the Defence Board, and onward consideration by the SofS for Defence.

- b. Ensuring that, within each regulatory area, Defence Regulators plan and conduct their own risk-based assurance activity, maintain, promulgate, assure compliance with, and when necessary, enforce Defence regulations; and to promote an engaged safety culture.
- c. Ensuring that there is an effective appeals process to review enforcement action if it is challenged by those to whom it applies, to include escalation through the relevant chain of command, up to the Secretary of State if necessary.
- d. Ensuring that all safety related fatalities, serious injuries, significant and major capability losses are appropriately investigated to identify lessons, make recommendations, promote continuous improvement, and minimise the risk of reoccurrence.
- e. Ensuring that, in any circumstances where the Director General judges safety concerns are not being satisfactorily addressed through normal Departmental processes, they retain the right of direct access to the Secretary of State to raise those concerns, while ensuring that the Permanent Secretary (PUS) is kept informed.

Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA)

- 54. The GIAA Internal Auditing service for Defence will provide assurance to Defence's Accounting Officer (the PUS) and the DARAC, a subcommittee of the Defence Board. Internal Audit is a key part of the Department's assurance framework and in many ways is unique due to its scope across the whole department.
- 55. The GIAA provide an independent third line (3LOD) assurance role to provide independent and objective assurance of the Safety Function and provide advice and insight over the risk management, governance, and internal control processes within Defence.
- 56. With the exception of military operations, all business systems, processes, functions, and activities within Defence may be subject to internal audit work. The GIAA Defence annual risk-based audit plan defines what activities will be reviewed by them and is formally approved by the DARAC. Further information on the GIAA can be found at [Government Internal Audit Agency](#).

External assurance

- 57. External assurance can be provided by organisations, statutory and regulatory bodies that sit outside the immediate Department boundary. These organisations / bodies can form an important part of the wider risk management framework and Defence Areas should work closely with them and provide them with timely information and access when requested.
- 58. Examples of external organisations, statutory and regulatory bodies are:
 - a. the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which is the UK statutory authority responsible for regulating workplace health and safety. The HSE is not a formal assurance provider however, it provides independent regulatory assurance through inspections, investigations, and enforcement to verify compliance with UK health and safety legislation;
 - b. the HM Treasury / Cabinet Office / who support and review approval processes;

- c. the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), who provide independent expert assurance reviews of major government projects including business case appraisal and consideration of H&S risks;
- d. external system accreditation / certification reviewers (for example, International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)); and
- e. external auditors, primarily the National Audit Office (NAO), who have a statutory responsibility for financial statements and risk management impact including to safety.

59. Defence Areas should also familiarise themselves with the Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the MOD and the HSE, other Statutory Regulators and the devolved HSE agency in Northern Ireland. When dealing with these bodies, the Defence Areas may wish to consult their legal department for further advice and guidance. Dir-DSS should be informed of Defence Area engagement with these bodies.

Element assurance framework

60. The focus of this Element requires that the Defence Area has assurance mechanisms in place to identify strengths and weaknesses in its safety management arrangements, and it drives continual improvement. Assurance activity is planned to cover all business activities and is linked to having a risk-based assurance plan.

61. The expectations and performance statements for this Element are set out in the following pages.

Element 12: Assurance

The Expectations in this Element are:

E12.1 The Defence Area has mechanisms in place and conducts a risk-based 1st Line of Defence (1LOD) assurance that is appropriate to its scale and complexity.

E12.2 The Defence Area conducts 1LOD and has mechanisms in place to enable 2LOD and 3LOD assurance and supports external assurance.

E12.3 The Defence Area conducts an annual self-assessment against the elements of the Defence SMS and provides this to organisational leadership to identify opportunities for improvement and help inform the generation of the annual assurance report submission.

E12.4 The Defence Area's leadership formally reviews the effectiveness of their safety management arrangements in meeting organisational objectives based on assurance activity undertaken.

E12.5 The Defence Area has mechanisms in place to ensure that corrective action is taken to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions.

Documents often associated with this Element:

- 1LOD assurance reports
- Agenda and minutes of the safety committee meetings (Strategic, Tactical and Working)
- Annual Assurance plan
- Assurance mapping and gap analysis of risk and control measures
- Continual Improvement (CI) logs
- Corrective action plans
- Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions procedures
- Defence Area business plans
- Defence Area Operating Model
- Defence Area safety management arrangements
- List of enforcement actions received

Expectation 12.1 The Defence Area has mechanisms in place and conducts a risk-based 1st Line of Defence (1LOD) assurance (appropriate to its scale and complexity).

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that the Defence organisation conducts 1LOD risk-based assurance activities.	- The Defence Area conducts 1LOD assurance activity. There is some, but not enough evidence this is risk-based formal schedule. - The Defence Area has insufficient resources and competency in place to conduct 1LOD assurance. - The 1LOD assurance identifies non-conformance but does not identify corrective actions.	- There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area conducts 1LOD assurance activity, using a risk-based formal schedule. - The Defence Area has sufficient resources in place to conduct 1LOD assurance. - The 1LOD assurance identifies non-conformance and corrective actions. - There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area routinely review its risk-based formal schedule. There is some but could be improved evidence that it is not agile in re-prioritising its assurance activity.	- There is robust evidence that the Defence Area conducts 1LOD assurance activity, identifies non-conformance, corrective actions and manages these through to resolution with a formal management and review process. - There is robust evidence that the Defence Area uses the findings from its 1LOD assurance activity to review and update its safety management arrangements. - There is robust evidence that the Defence Area routinely reviews its risk-based formal schedule and is agile in re-prioritising its assurance activity in response to emerging risks.

Expectation 12.2 The Defence Area conducts 1LOD assurance, has mechanisms in place to enable 2LOD and 3LOD assurance and support external assurance.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that the Defence Area have mechanisms in place to conduct 1LOD assurance and enable 2LOD and 3LOD assurance and support external assurance activity.	- There is some, but not enough evidence that the Defence Area is able to fully support the full range of Defence 1LOD, 2LOD and 3LOD activities including external assurance because of resourcing and organisational constraints. - There is some, but not enough evidence that the Defence Area understand the similarities and differences for 1LOD, 2LOD, 3LOD and external assurance processes, arrangements, and requirements.	- There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area conducts 1LOD assurance and has mechanisms in place to enable 2LOD and 3LOD activities and external assurance. - There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area consistently collate the findings from 1LOD, 2LOD, 3LOD and external assurance activities, or fully incorporate them into the management and review process. - The Defence Area can demonstrate how it intends to reach substantial assurance.	- There is robust evidence that the Defence Area proactively conducts 1LOD assurance and have robust mechanisms in place to enable 2LOD and 3LOD assurance and fully supports external assurance. - There is robust evidence that the Defence Area routinely collates the findings from 1LOD, 2LOD, 3LOD and external assurance activities, and fully incorporates them into the management and review process. - The Defence Area can demonstrate how it intends to maintain substantial assurance.

Expectation 12.3 The Defence Area conducts an annual self-assessment against the Elements of the Defence SMS and provides this to organisational leadership to identify opportunities for improvement and help inform the generation of the annual assurance report submission.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that the Defence Area conduct an annual self-assessment against the elements of the Defence SMS to inform the annual assurance report.	- There is some, but not enough evidence that the Defence Area formally conducts an annual self-assessment against the elements of the Defence SMS. - Improvement opportunities are identified however these are not implemented by leadership. - An annual assurance report submission is produced; however, it does not provide sufficient detail as to safety performance.	- There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area formally conducts an annual self-assessment against the elements of the Defence SMS. - Improvement opportunities are identified during the self-assessment and are used by leadership to enable continual improvement. - An annual assurance report submission is produced and provides sufficient detail relating to safety performance.	- There is robust evidence that the Defence Area formally conducts an annual self-assessment against the elements of the Defence SMS. - Improvement opportunities are identified during the self-assessment and passed onto leadership to enable continual improvement, with a formal plan for improvement and clear actions taken in response. - Previous annual assurance report submissions are reviewed to allow for year-on-year trending of safety performance.

Expectation 12.4 The Defence Area's leadership formally review the effectiveness of their safety management arrangements in meeting organisational objectives based on assurance activity undertaken.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
• There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that leadership is evaluating the outputs of Defence Area assurance. • There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that leadership is reviewing its safety management arrangements and their effectiveness on the Defence Area objectives.	• There is some, but not enough evidence that leadership is evaluating the outputs of organisational assurance. There is some, but not enough evidence, that this is planned, scheduled, and documented. • Leadership reviews effectiveness of their safety management arrangements in meeting the Defence Area's objectives. • There is however some, but not enough evidence, that this is it is done consistently.	• There is some but could be improved evidence that leadership evaluates the outputs of Defence Area assurance; the process is well documented and routinely undertaken. • There is some but could be improved evidence that leadership regularly reviews the effectiveness of their safety management arrangements in meeting the Defence Area's objectives.	• There is robust evidence that leadership promotes continual improvement in safety based on learning from formal reviews of assurance activity and the effectiveness of their safety management arrangements.

Expectation 12.5 The Defence Area has mechanisms in place to ensure that corrective action is taken to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions.

Unsatisfactory	Limited	Moderate	Substantial
There is little or no evidence to demonstrate that the Defence Area have mechanisms in place to take corrective action to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions.	- There is some, but not enough evidence that the Defence Area has mechanisms in place to take corrective actions to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions. There is some, but not enough evidence, that this is formally documented or consistently applied. - Actions are not complied with within the timescale set by the regulator.	- There is some but could be improved evidence that the Defence Area has mechanisms in place to take corrective actions to address Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions, and these are formally documented and consistently applied. - Actions are complied with within the timescale set by the regulator.	There is robust evidence that actions taken to comply with Defence and statutory regulator enforcement actions are shared across Defence for the benefit of the learning lessons and prevent recurrence.