



London Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust

Lone Worker Policy

DOCUMENT PROFILE and CONTROL.

Purpose of the document: This policy details the processes by which the London Ambulance Service will effectively manage lone working across its activities

Sponsor Department: Health, Safety and Risk

Author/Reviewer: Local Security Management Specialist. To be reviewed by June 2015.

Document Status: Final

Amendment History			
Date	*Version	Author/Contributor	Amendment Details
23/07/12	2.1	IG Manager	Removed S2.2, formatting, and Document Profile & Control update.
01/06/12	1.10	Local Security Management Specialist	Additions to S2.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5.8. Added S2.2.
25/08/11	1.9	Local Security Management Specialist	Minor –review and update original policy
09/11/09	1.8	Snr. Health & Safety Advisor	Added scope
16/06/09	1.7	Snr. Health & Safety Advisor; Assistant Director - Employee Support Services	Revised document
23/03/09	1.6	Snr. Health & Safety Advisor	Amended audit date in monitoring section
20/01/09	1.5	Head of Records Management	Minor monitoring details
28/11/08	1.4	Head of Records Management	Minor comments added
16/06/08	1.3	Snr. Health & Safety Advisor	Paragraph one amended to risks 'may be' identified
12/06/08	1.2	Records Manager	reformatted
12/06/08	1.1	Snr. Health & Safety Advisor / Local Security Management Specialist/ Assistant Director Employee Support Services	Minor amendments

***Version Control Note:** All documents in development are indicated by minor versions i.e. 0.1; 0.2 etc. The first version of a document to be approved for release is given major version 1.0. Upon review the first version of a revised document is given the designation 1.1,

the second 1.2 etc. until the revised version is approved, whereupon it becomes version 2.0. The system continues in numerical order each time a document is reviewed and approved.

For Approval By:	Date Approved	Version
ADG	27/06/12	2.0
Chief Executive	May 2005	1.0
Ratified by Trust Board (If appropriate):		

Published on:	Date	By	Dept
The Pulse	24/07/12	Governance Co-ordinator	G & C
LAS Website	24/07/12	Governance Co-ordinator	G & C
Announced on:	Date	By	Dept
The RIB	24/07/12	IG Manager	G& C

Equality Analysis completed on	By
20/09/11	Safety & Risk team
Staffside reviewed on	By

Links to Related documents or references providing additional information		
Ref. No.	Title	Version

Document Status: This is a controlled record as are the document(s) to which it relates. Whilst all or any part of it may be printed, the electronic version maintained in P&P-File remains the controlled master copy. Any printed copies are not controlled nor substantive.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 London Ambulance Service NHS Trust (LAS) takes the health, safety and welfare of all staff extremely seriously. It recognises that violence towards staff is unacceptable and that staff have the right to be able to perform their duties without fear of abuse or violent acts. No member of staff should consider violence or abuse to be an acceptable part of their job.
- 1.2 The Trust defines a Lone Worker as ‘any individual who, in the process of carrying out their duties on behalf of the Trust, may find themselves working alone or in an area isolated from colleagues’. The LAS recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and at any time of the day or night. Working alone can bring risks to the work activity and the dangers of lone working cannot always be foreseen or avoided. The purpose of this policy is to protect staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the risks of lone working.
- 1.3 There are many different situations where staff are required to work alone, and it would be impractical to address each situation individually. This policy has been designed to be as wide ranging as possible, but still assist managers and staff to minimise the risks of lone working.
- 1.4 The Policy takes into account the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service (now renamed as NHS Protect - NHSP) directions on protecting “Health Staff” and the options available to take action against those who abuse or assault them.
- 1.5 The LAS also recognises it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999). For the health, safety and welfare at work of its staff Manual Handling Regulation 1992, *Personnel Protection Equipment at work regulations 1992 and Work Related Stress (HSE Management Standards)* These responsibilities equally apply to those staff who for whatever reason work alone. They require the Trust to identify hazards, assess the risks and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks. It is the policy of the LAS to carry out Risk Assessments for all lone workers to reduce identified risk to an acceptable level.
- 1.6 Generally, working alone should not present any greater danger to staff than working with colleagues. However, the LAS recognises that there are certain risks associated with lone working, and where risks are identified, extra control measures will be provided to reduce the risk.

2. Scope

- 2.1** This Policy applies to all LAS staff, who, as individuals, 'in the process of carrying out their duties on behalf of the Trust, may find themselves working alone or in an area isolated from colleagues'. It does not include staff who may work from home at any time since the Trust does not employ home workers. However, the Trust recognises that there are occasions when managers may work from home on an ad hoc / interim basis in agreement with their own line manager and in agreeing such short-term arrangements there is the opportunity for both the line manager and individual concerned to discuss and record relevant requirements or concerns and any mitigating provision. Additionally, staff who may work alone in an office environment have a responsibility for their own safety and should discuss their working arrangements with their line manager, highlighting any concerns that they may have.

3. Objectives

- 3.1** The aim of this document is to help achieve the vision of the LAS by facilitating the delivery of a safe working environment for lone workers who work for the Trust, so that the highest possible standard of clinical care can be made available.
- 3.2** Trust objectives are:
- 3.3** To protect staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the risks of lone working;
- 3.4** To require that risk assessments are undertaken on a generic and individual basis for all staff required to work alone;
- 3.5** To require that the risk of working alone is assessed in a systematic and ongoing manner, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to eliminate risks to staff working alone or to reduce those risks to the lowest practicable level; reducing identified risks of lone working to a minimum;
- 3.6** That suitable methods of communication are available and systems of monitoring undertaken;
- 3.7** To increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- 3.8** That appropriate training is available to staff in their areas of employment by the Trust, that equips them to recognise risk and provide practical advice on safety when working alone and to provide additional training and guidance as required where the risk assessment identifies that staff working alone are placed at a higher risk;

- 3.9 That appropriate support is available to staff who work alone;
- 3.10 To encourage full reporting and recording of all accidents/incidents relating to lone working;
- 3.11 To reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working;
- 3.12 To ensure that the Trust complies with relevant health and safety legislation, best practice and relevant Secretary of State for Health directions, regarding Security Management.
- 3.13 This policy will also complement and add supporting information to policies for specific types of lone worker – such as the Fast Response Units (FRU) Procedure .

4. Responsibilities

Lone working environments present unique Health and Safety challenges. Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, *Personal Protective Equipment at work regulations 1992* and *Work Related Stress (HSE Management Standards)* the Trust must organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

4.1 Trust Board -

Corporate responsibility for the Trust's system of internal control and for robust risk management. The Trust Board is responsible for setting the strategic direction and corporate objectives for the Trust. It discharges its functions through a delegated structure designed to ensure effective risk management (see TP/005 Risk Management Policy and Strategy).

4.2 Chief Executive -

As Accountable Officer, the Chief Executive is ultimately accountable for Risk Management within the LAS and implementation of this policy and has delegated this responsibility to the Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development as the Trust director responsible for Health and Safety.

4.3 Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development –

Responsible for Health and Safety and the implementation of the Lone Worker policy.

4.4 All Managers-

4.4.1. The operational management of health and safety in their services/ localities;

4.4.2. Identifying staff in their services who are Lone Workers;

4.4.3. Carrying out risk assessments, or ensuring they are carried out. Ensuring risk assessments are reviewed regularly, as defined in The Risk Management Policy.

4.4.4. Assessing the need for working alone;

4.4.5. Ensuring that staff are made aware of the risks of lone working, and the arrangements/ protocols in place locally to reduce risks to Lone Workers. Awareness will be achieved through training events, the intranet, posters and publications;

4.4.6. Putting procedures, devices and/ or safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;

4.4.7. To arrange for additional training supervision and equipment to be provided as a result of the Risk Assessment.

4.5 All staff-

4.5.1. Take all reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions or omissions;

4.5.2. Familiarise themselves and follow LAS policies and procedures;

4.5.3. Co-operate by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;

4.5.4. Consider and assess potential risks to their health and safety;

4.5.5. Familiarise themselves with role so to understand the risks and precautions to safely fulfil their role;

4.5.6. Ensure a dynamic risk assessment is carried out by individual workers where the working practice or environment makes them vulnerable. This includes all staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as operational staff whose work takes them into the community.

4.5.7. Report all incidents, difficulties or risks raised from lone working, however minor, to their manager. Failure to report an incident may put others at risk;

4.5.8. Attend all training designed to meet the requirements of the policy;

4.5.9. Do not interfere or misuse anything provided for their, or others', safety.

4.5.10. Have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are exposed;

4.5.11. Be familiar with the processes to follow in the circumstances of any type of adverse event or incident; and

4.5.12. That EOC or their Manager knows their whereabouts, what they are doing and when they are due back.

4.6 Safety & Risk Advisors –

4.6.1. Undertake generic Risk Assessments in conjunction with Operational Managers.

4.6.2. Keep records of Generic Risk Assessments.

4.6.3. Periodically review and advise on extra precautions to protect lone workers.

5. Definitions

5.1. The Trust recognises that any member of staff may spend a limited amount of their working time 'alone' and defines a Lone Worker as 'any individual who, in the process of carrying out their duties on behalf of the Trust, may find themselves working alone or in an area isolated from colleagues'.

5.2. The work of the Trust requires staff to be out of a controlled environment working with the public in a variety of locations, eg peoples' homes, public houses and clubs, trains, buses, public spaces.

5.3. There are some circumstances where staff are required by law not to work alone. Situations relevant to Ambulance staff are:

5.3.1. People who work in confined spaces - it must be borne in mind that a confined space means **Any** place, which by virtue of its enclosed nature creates a reasonably foreseeable specified risk. This means that anywhere where there is lack of oxygen is a confined space, examples may be a sewer, trench, cellar, boiler room, hold of a boat, garage workshop, lift shaft and other examples as stated by the Health and Safety in Confined Spaces Regulations 1997

5.3.2. Persons who work at or near electrical conductors as defined by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

5.4. The Trust recognises those who are regular Lone Workers include:

- Ambulance Single Responders
- Community Single Responders
- Motorcycle Responders

- Some Lone Worker Patient Transfer Service Staff
- Some Managers
- Some Support Services Staff
- Some Domestic staff

5.5. Staff who work alone face the same hazards in their daily work as other workers. However, for Lone Workers, the risk of harm is often greater. Hazards facing Lone Workers include:

5.5.1. Violence and personal safety - the nature of the work of the Trust often involves staff visiting patients in their home, which can lead to an increased risk to personal safety;

5.5.2. Fire – it may be difficult for an isolated worker to evacuate a building when the fire alarm activates;

5.5.3. Moving and handling – moving and handling tasks may pose more risk to an individual member of staff;

5.5.4. Isolated areas - undertaking work within isolated areas;

5.5.5. High risk areas - undertaking work within known high risk areas;

5.5.6. Violence and/ or aggression - working with people who may threaten staff;

5.5.7. Carrying medication, equipment or valuables;

5.5.8. Travelling alone, when identifiable as an employee of the London Ambulance Service - between site / home / offices / meetings;

5.5.9. Handling cash and/ or banking;

5.5.10. False allegations.

6. Intention of document

6.1. The Trust takes the health, safety and welfare of all staff extremely seriously and it recognizes that it must comply with relevant health and safety legislation, and seek to adopt best practice and recommendations from NHSP.

6.2. The Trust will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff and others who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risk to their health and safety. Measures will also be adopted to protect anyone else affected by lone working.

6.3. It also recognises, that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, or in isolated work areas throughout the 24 hour period, seven days a week.

6.4. There are many different situations where staff are required to work alone, and it would be impractical to address each situation individually. This policy has been designed to be as wide ranging as possible, but still assist managers and staff to minimise the risks of lone working.

6.5. The Trust recognises that a lone worker should be at no greater risk than any other employee and that precautionary measures should be put in place to account for normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as illness, accidents and becoming the victim of crime.

6.6. This policy should be read with reference to the Risk Management Policy and Strategy (TP/005), the Risk Reporting and Assessment Procedure (TP/035), the Health and Safety Organisation Policy Statement (HS-001) and all other policies, procedures and guidance produced in relation to staff safety.

7. Incidents

7.1. All incidents, no matter how small, are to be reported via an incident report form (LA277 for violence and aggression, LA52 for all other incidents). By reporting all such incidents, necessary action can be taken, lessons learnt and future risks managed, avoided or reduced.

8. Risk Assessments

8.1. When carrying out Risk Assessments for lone workers, managers should take in to consideration the following issues: -

8.1.1. Where the member of staff is required to work,

8.1.2. What level of supervision the staff member will receive,

8.1.3. Ability to deal with emergency situations,

8.1.4. What training the lone-worker has received to allow them to work safely,

8.1.5. Whether there is a risk of violence,

8.1.6. Whether the workplace presents a greater risk to the lone worker,

Ref. HS/017	Title: Lone Worker Policy	Page 10 of 12
-------------	---------------------------	---------------

8.1.7. Methods of communications.

8.2. The Risk Assessment should be carried out in accordance with the LAS Risk Reporting and Assessment Procedure (TP / 035).

8.3. Risk will be reported, recorded and reviewed in accordance with the detail described within TP/005 the Risk Management and Policy and Strategy.

9. Effectiveness

9.1. A key part of the monitoring and auditing process is the role of information obtained from the Trust's Incident Reporting procedure.

9.2. The Trust will examine all incidents including “near misses” that are recorded on the Incident Reporting system. This should highlight concerns and emerging trends, which will enable procedures and practices to be introduced or changed where necessary to improve the security environment of the Trust.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	
Intended Audience	All LAS Staff
Dissemination	Available to all staff on the Pulse and to the public on the LAS website.
Communications	Policy to be announced in the RIB and a link provided to the document.
Training	The LAS may make provision for all staff to receive instruction and training to allow them to carry out their duties without risk of injury. (Such training will include but will not necessarily be limited to: manual handling, fire safety, personal safety, conflict resolution and general health and safety training and refresher training).
Monitoring	<p>In order to measure security performance the Trust will implement auditing systems. Issues to be addressed in Audits will include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Numbers and types of incidents and trends ▪ Issues raised at Corporate Health and Safety Group meeting ▪ Specific incidents relating to Fleet/Estates/Operations/Contractors etc. ▪ Premises inspections and lone worker risk assessments <p>The Trust will encourage staff involvement in the monitoring process. This may take the form of staff surveys and ride outs with crews, to discussions with staff and managers around lone working concerns.</p> <p>The ongoing appraisal and review of policy procedures and guidance arrangements will take place, to ensure the continual improvements in lone working safety throughout the organisation.</p>