

## WORKING ALONE

Working alone can bring additional risks to an individual's normal working activities. It is important that if you are working alone you are fully aware of all the hazards and risks to which you could be exposed, that you know what to do and who to contact if something goes wrong, and that your organisation or Line Manager is aware of your whereabouts and what activities you could be undertaking.

Health and Safety Legislation, specifically the management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, requires that your employer, through your Manager, undertakes a Risk Assessment to ensure that if you are working alone this work is undertaken safely. This Risk Assessment must review your means of entry to the workplace and your means of leaving the workplace, the equipment that you may be required to use, the exact tasks that you are required to undertake, any substances you are required to handle, the environment and atmosphere in which you are working and any people or clients with whom you are required to interact.

Particular consideration must be given to the following:-

- The remoteness or isolation of the workplace;
- Any problems with communication;
- The mode of communication – whether electronic, visual or oral;
- The possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other people;
- The nature of any particular potential injury or damage to health that could be anticipated.

It is important that you follow correctly any safe working practices that have been devised by your employer. This should include, where necessary, the provision of first aid, communication procedures and the awareness of emergency protocols. Further, it is important that you cooperate with your employer's efforts to ensure your own safe working and that of colleagues and the general public.

If you are working alone you should feel fit to do so, both psychologically and physically. You should not feel frightened, you should be confident with regards to the equipment that you have been given, you should be happy with the environment, the lighting, heating, etc, you should be able to summon help, raise the alarm, be aware of the location of a first aid kit, fire fighting equipment and rescue equipment. If you are a trainee or new recruit you must be confirmed as competent to work alone before supervision is relaxed. If in doubt ask a Supervisor.

In certain circumstances, particularly when the risks are considered high or where specific legal requirement exists, you may be required to obtain a written permit to work. This will be determined on your health, fitness, training and competence. If specific consideration is given to a particular environment and the wearing of personal protective equipment, finishing times

or maximum exposure times, these must not be disregarded and any equipment that you are issued with is your responsibility to store and maintain appropriately.

