

## **VOLUNTEER CORNWALL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT 2024**

### **Introduction**

The basis of British health and safety law is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which places duties in respect of Health and Safety on employers and employees, and on each person who has to any extent control of Volunteer Cornwall premises. The Management of the Health and Safety Regulations 1999 extend these duties in various respects and generally make more explicit what employers are required to do to manage health and safety.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Act 2005 became effective on 1 October 2006, replacing most fire safety legislation with one order.

The Volunteer Cornwall Board of Directors, together with the Chief Executive and the Senior Management Team, are committed to the successful implementation of this Health and Safety policy document throughout the organisation and require the co-operation of all employees for that purpose.

The policy is the direct concern of managers and supervisors at all levels in the organisation, and all employees are charged under the Act with the duty of care for their own safety, the safety of fellow workers and of any other person within the work area. Consequently, all staff of Volunteer Cornwall must be responsible for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and must co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters.

In Volunteer Cornwall the Board of Directors will have the ultimate responsibility to take all measures within their power to make sure that the premises are safe and without risks to the health of staff and members of the public. In practice, the Chief Executive will ensure that the appropriate measures are carried out. The Accounts and Administration Manager will co-ordinate health and safety policy and practice in Volunteer Cornwall as a whole, and the Senior Managers will, in turn, be responsible for Health and Safety within their respective areas and reporting any shortfalls/omissions to the Chief Executive.

The Board of Directors will provide working conditions that comply with the relevant statutory requirements and officially approved codes of practice.

The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if new legislation necessitates a review.

Throughout this policy the term staff or employee includes volunteers and temporary workers.

### **Overall Objectives**

The Board of Directors is committed to:

- ◆ Ensuring that Volunteer Cornwall provides a healthy and safe environment for staff.
- ◆ Establishing and maintaining healthy and safe working procedures and practices and promoting the observance of all relevant statutory provision by all employees through the provision of appropriate information, training, and supervision
- ◆ Ensuring that all codes of practice and supplementary health and safety information are notified to employees and adhered to by them.
- ◆ Developing and maintaining a sense of safety awareness and responsible attitudes in all employees

- ◆ Ensuring, where possible, joint consultation with employees in the achievement of the aims of Volunteer Cornwall Safety Policy
- ◆ Monitoring the effectiveness of the Policy in achieving the aim of maintaining a high standard of health, safety, and welfare throughout the organisation
- ◆ Updating and supplementing this statement as necessary
- ◆ Reviewing and revising this policy statement annually.

## **Organisation**

### **Board of Directors**

Overall responsibility for health and safety in Volunteer Cornwall rests with the Board of Directors, this includes:

- ◆ Leadership on health and safety matters always both as a group and as individuals.
- ◆ Appointing a “Health and Safety Manager” to oversee fulfilment of the Board’s health and safety responsibilities listed below.
- ◆ Reviewing the health and safety policy at least annually, on the advice of the Accounts and Administration Manager.
- ◆ Reviewing health and safety performance at least six monthly by receiving reports of the annual health and safety audit and other performance measures.
- ◆ Agreeing health and safety targets and objectives for the company and monitoring their implementation.
- ◆ Receiving investigation reports of serious untoward incidents/work related ill health and responding effectively to those reports.
- ◆ Reviewing the effectiveness of measures to consult with and involve the workforce I health and safety.
- ◆ Considering the health and safety implications of introducing new processes, new working practices, new personnel, or other significant business change, at the planning stage and taking the action necessary to mitigate any increased risk.
- ◆ Ensuring that no significant changes to the business are introduced without dedicating sufficient resources for health and safety purposes and managing the change effectively.
- ◆ Ensuring that there are arrangements in place for the Board to receive reports on the impact on health and safety performance following the introduction of significant changes.
- ◆ Ensuring that the company has access to competent advice on health, safety and fire safety matters including access to specialist advisors where necessary.
- ◆ Considering health and safety needs when deciding senior management appointments.
- ◆ Ensuring board members receive a briefing on health and safety requirements from a competent health and safety advisor, on appointment as a director.
- ◆ Receiving regular update briefings on new and changed legal requirements and other external developments and ensuring that action is initiated to make any necessary internal changes.

This overall responsibility is delegated to the Chief Executive who is tasked with reporting back to the Board of Directors.

### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive has final and overall responsibility for all health and safety matters within Volunteer Cornwall and for ensuring that the terms of this policy are implemented. These duties are undertaken in consultation with the Health and Safety Committee. The day-to-day administration of health and safety matters is delegated to the Accounts and Administration Manager.

### **Health and Safety Committee**

There is no separate Health and Safety Committee within Volunteer Cornwall, however all issues of this nature need to be referred either to one of the line management team, who will refer onto a member of the Senior Management Team, or directly to the Senior Management Team.

It will be the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure compliance with legislation, and to action and resolve any points raised in a timely manner. This is a standing item on the Senior Management Team monthly meeting, but any urgent issue need be reviewed and resolved prior to the next meeting, if necessary.

### **Accounts and Administration Manager**

The Accounts and Administration Manager is responsible for the day-to-day administration of health and safety. This will include:

- ◆ take a leadership role on health and safety matters by setting a good example and acting promptly where deficiencies are identified.
- ◆ allocate adequate resources to implement the Health and Safety Policy
- ◆ ensure that the Health and Safety content of Board meeting agendas meets the policy requirements detailed above.
- ◆ keep the Board of Directors and Chief Executive informed of:
- ◆ accidents, incidents, and work-related ill health issues which caused or had the potential to cause serious injury or ill health.
- ◆ any proposed changes to the premises, activities, or management structure
- ◆ any new hazards not already identified within risk assessments which have been brought to his attention.
- ◆ any visits by, or correspondence with, enforcing authorities.
- ◆ any difficulties or delays in implementing advice provided by the Advisors.
- ◆ review the health and safety standards and practices of the company on an ongoing basis.
- ◆ investigate serious accidents, incidents and cases of ill health that are alleged to be work related, seeking assistance from the Health and Safety Advisor where necessary and ensuring that statutory reports are made for serious incidents in accordance with the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)*
- ◆ ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for the selection and training of employees, considering health and safety competence and attitude requirements.
- ◆ ensure that supervisory staff are aware of the importance of enforcing health and safety rules and leading by example by following the rules themselves  
oversee the purchase of equipment and materials to ensure that safety requirements are met and that relevant information such as instructions and safety data sheets are supplied.
- ◆ ensure that for equipment or materials purchased from outside the EU and the Company is the 'importer', arrangements are made to ensure that EU product safety legislation and material labelling requirements are met.

- ◆ ensure that there are suitable control measures in place for compliance with the *Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015*
- ◆ Carrying out a formal risk assessment of Volunteer Cornwall on an annual basis and providing a formal report to the Board of Directors.
- ◆ Carrying out a formal fire risk assessment and providing a formal report to the Board of Directors.
- ◆ Evaluating and assessing the requirements of new legislation.
- ◆ Undertaking any relevant and on-going training to stay up to date with relevant legislation.
- ◆ Liaison with outside organisations on health and safety matters.
- ◆ Providing advice on health and safety matters to staff.
- ◆ Reviewing the Health and Safety Policy on at least an annual basis.
- ◆ Raising awareness of health and safety amongst staff.
- ◆ Chairing the Health and Safety Committee on a quarterly basis.

Part of the remit is included the monitoring and implementation of legislation throughout the business, which includes, but is not exclusive to:

- ◆ every five years, arrange for the testing and inspection of the fixed electrical installation and highlight to the Chief Executive any remedial actions required.
- ◆ arrange for the testing of portable electrical equipment using internal or external electricians according to an agreed schedule.
- ◆ ensure the fire extinguishers are serviced annually by a specialist contractor.
- ◆ monitor daily that high standards of housekeeping are maintained, with gangways and exits remaining clear and unobstructed and kitchens/toilets in a clean condition.
- ◆ test the fire alarm on a regular basis, record the outcome and instigate any remedial action required.
- ◆ implement fire safety measures specified in the fire safety risk assessment.
- ◆ ensure that the no smoking policy is strictly applied.
- ◆ conduct a monthly activation test of emergency lighting and ensure that an electrician conducts an annual inspection of the lighting and full discharge test.
- ◆ ensure that the building fabric and services are maintained in good condition and effective working order.
- ◆ ensure that records are maintained of all the above premise checks, testing and maintenance activities.
- ◆ report to Chief Executive any health and safety concerns which they are not able to resolve.
- ◆ complete a regular health and safety checklist covering the health and safety arrangements described in this policy and the condition of the premises and in liaison with Health and Safety Committee determine any actions to be taken.
- ◆ in accordance with the outcome of the 'Assessment of First Aid Needs', coordinate arrangements for the provision of first aid equipment and trained first aiders or appointed persons, with arrangements for refresher training.
- ◆ check the contents of the first aid kit/s on a regular basis and replenish supplies as necessary.
- ◆ ensure that staff understand procedures for fire emergencies including arrangements for calling the fire brigade and that fire drills are conducted six monthly.

- ◆ ensure that sufficient fire marshals are appointed and trained and that their names are displayed.

### **Human Resources Manager**

The Human Resources Manager has been allocated specific responsibilities to:

- ◆ assist the Accounts and Administration Manager in providing health and safety induction training for new starters.
- ◆ ensure that employers liability insurance is maintained and that the current certificate is displayed.
- ◆ retain training records for all skills and health and safety training undertaken in the business.
- ◆ carry out an annual check of the original driving licence of all staff that drive on company business and the insurance arrangements for private cars used on company business .
- ◆ ensure that all company vehicles are insured for business use and for those authorised to drive them.
- ◆ maintain arrangements for providing eye and eyesight tests for regular users of display screen equipment and ensure that relevant employees are made aware of this.
- ◆ ensure that management practices are consistent with statutory requirements in relation to working hours, employment of children, young persons, pregnant employees, and new mothers at work.
- ◆ in liaison with the Accounts and Administration Manager, ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for work undertaken by new and expectant mothers and that display screen workstations are assessed for new starters and whenever there has been a significant change in a job role or the working environment.
- ◆ report to the Accounts and Administration Manager any health and safety concerns which they have not able to resolve.

### **Senior Managers/Supervisors**

Senior managers have responsibility for the health and safety of their staff, and for ensuring that the health and safety policy is carried out by their staff. They are to:

- ◆ Ensure that members of staff are aware of Health and Safety matters and of the need to make sure that their work areas are safe and without risks to the health of staff and members of the public.
- ◆ Ensure that staff and visitors know that they have a legal responsibility to take care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of others who may be affected by them.
- ◆ Provide written evacuation/emergency procedures, considering all disabilities, for all offices/work areas.
- ◆ Ensure that all staff and visitors are aware of Volunteer Cornwall fire and emergency procedures and to check that the appropriate notices are displayed, and that Fire Fighting equipment is available, and any defects reported.
- ◆ Ensure that the staff and visitors are aware of Volunteer Cornwall First Aid arrangements, check that notices are displayed and not covered over, and First Aid boxes are kept in appropriate positions.
- ◆ Ensure that all the staff are aware of Volunteer Cornwall procedures for the reporting of accidents, injuries, and dangerous occurrences.

- ◆ Ensure that proper precautions are taken in the use of all electrical equipment and gas apparatus and equipment.
- ◆ Ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken when potential risks or hazards are identified/reported to them.
- ◆ Confirm to the Chief Executive and Accounts and Administration Manager that all action points identified in Volunteer Cornwall's risk assessment have been implemented.
- ◆ Report to the Chief Executive and Accounts and Administration Manager any defects in equipment or the fabric of Volunteer Cornwall's buildings, particularly where these might give rise to Health and Safety concerns.
- ◆ take a leadership role on health and safety matters by setting a good example and acting promptly where deficiencies are identified.
- ◆ Attend quarterly health and Safety Committee meetings or to delegate attendance to members of their team.
- ◆ plan the work of staff to avoid dangerously excessive working or driving hours and to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations
- ◆ in the selection of employees, consider the health and safety competence requirements including attitude to health and safety matters and fitness for work.
- ◆ provide appropriate skills/health and safety training to employees on starting employment and when their job role or work activities change, reviewing training needs during annual appraisals.
- ◆ in the purchase of equipment and materials, ensure that safety requirements are met and that relevant information such as instructions and safety data sheets, are supplied.
- ◆ ensure that work equipment, vehicles and personal protective equipment are suitable for purpose, supplied where necessary and properly maintained.
- ◆ work with the Accounts and Administration Manager to ensure that risk assessments are undertaken to cover general hazards, fire safety, the use of hazardous and dangerous substances, manual handling, noise, the use of computers, first aid needs, personal protective equipment, work or work experience involving under 18-year-olds and the needs of new and expectant mothers at work
- ◆ report to the Accounts and Administration Manager any health and safety concerns which they are not able to resolve.

### **All Staff**

All staff are legally required to cooperate with the Chief Executive, Accounts and Administration Manager and their immediate senior managers/supervisors to ensure that Volunteer Cornwall's health and safety responsibilities are effectively implemented and operated.

All staff are required to:

- ◆ Take reasonable care in the matter of responsibility for their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- ◆ follow the safety rules and their training for the work activity and the location.
- ◆ know the emergency procedures for the location at which they are working.
- ◆ use vehicles, equipment, materials, or substances in accordance with information, instruction and training provided by the Company.
- ◆ not use defective equipment or misuse equipment
- ◆ report any safety problems, accidents or near misses to their supervisor.

- ◆ not working under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ◆ Notify their senior manager/supervisor of any health and safety problems immediately they arise.
- ◆ Ensure that any 'hazardous' materials with which they are in contact are used, stored, and disposed of correctly and safely.
- ◆ Be aware of, and comply with, Volunteer Cornwall Fire Alarm and emergency or escape procedures.
- ◆ Be aware of, and comply with, Volunteer Cornwall First Aid arrangements.
- ◆ Be aware of, and comply with, Volunteer Cornwall procedures for the reporting of accidents, injuries, and dangerous occurrences.

**No Director, Manager, or employee of the Company may undertake or authorise any activity which places employees, or others, in danger, or is in breach of legal requirements with respect to health and safety.**

### **Volunteers and Non-Employees**

Volunteer Cornwall is aware of its duties to ensure so far, as is reasonably practicable that persons not in its employment who may be affected by its undertakings or activities are not exposed to health and safety risks.

All volunteers or other non-employees will be expected to adhere to the requirements of this policy. Individual senior managers/supervisors are responsible for monitoring volunteers and other non-employees working on the premises about health and safety issues.

### **Reporting**

Health and Safety is to be a standing item on Board, SMT, Staff and team meetings to ensure that there is a continued awareness of health and safety issues throughout the organisation.

As detailed earlier, senior managers have the day-to-day responsibility for health and safety matters within their own departments. Where practicable they are to resolve any health and safety issues in a timely manner. If they are unable to resolve the issue advice should be sought from the Accounts and Administration Manager. In any case the Accounts and Administration Manager is to be kept informed of all health and safety issues and the relevant action taken. If necessary, the Accounts and Administration Manager will inform the Chief Executive and Board of Directors of any health and safety issues that cannot be resolved.

The Accounts and Administration Manager will present an annual Health and Safety Fire and Risk Assessment to the Board of Directors who will ask the Chief Executive to report back to the Board issues within the assessments have been resolved. The Chief Executive's report will, as a minimum, provide detail about the Health and Safety Committee, issues, and actions, work related areas, fire practices and related training.

Quarterly the Accounts and Administration Manager will report to the Board any matters that they need to be made aware of.

## Arrangements

### Introduction

#### Policy and Standards

The Chief Executive has signed a statement of health and safety policy. The company's policy and all actions taken in relation to health and safety are based on legislation, established industry standards, nationally issued guidance, and codes of practice.

#### Organisation

The responsibilities for the implementation of our health and safety policy are set out in the preceding 'Organisation' section. All parts of this policy, including the organisation section are approved by the Chief Executive and reviewed annually, or more frequently if required. All persons working for the company have clear responsibilities for health and safety and their success in fulfilling those responsibilities are measured during annual appraisals and during periodic audits.

Competent health and safety advice is provided in support of our managers by the Accounts and Administration Manager. We also intend to make use of other specialist advisors and services if, and when required.

The arrangements detailed in this policy document satisfy the requirements under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to Volunteer Cornwall's staff and volunteers.

#### Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002

A hazardous substance is most simply defined as any substance capable of causing an adverse health effect. The COSHH Regulations require an assessment to be made of all substances that may be hazardous to health, and appropriate records and procedures developed concerning their storage, use and disposal. All staff concerned are to be aware of, and comply with, the current COSHH regulations.

COSHH contains specific definitions of hazardous substances as being:

Harmful or irritant



Corrosive



Toxic or very Toxic



All the warning labels are an orange square with an appropriate black symbol and should be clearly displayed on containers.

COSHH applies to all substances where exposure could lead to an adverse effect on health, i.e., cause illness. These substances could include photocopying toner, office-cleaning materials such as bleach and certain paints, varnishes, and solvents. Staff may also be exposed to hazardous substances because of the work activity such as fumes from photocopying machines.

Substances that represent a danger to safety, i.e., that can cause injury as opposed to illness, because of their flammability are excluded from COSHH.

In most situations, the quantities of the substances used in Volunteer Cornwall and the process and method of use will be such that adequate control of exposure can be easily ensured.

Senior Managers are to regularly review all office machinery within their departments to ensure that all operators are aware of the safe use of harmful substances and that adequate control measures are in place.

Where hazardous substances are already in use, senior managers will, with technical advice where necessary, inform employees/volunteers/trainees of the risks associated with the use of the substances and the precautions that should be followed, including the use of protective clothing. Senior managers are to ensure that adequate control measures are in place.

### **Accident and Work Related, Health Reporting and Investigation**

It is our policy that all injury accidents, however minor, are recorded in the accident book. Staff are instructed in this policy, on starting work with the company.

All accidents and incidents are investigated to determine the causes and any actions necessary to prevent a recurrence. Where the accident caused, or had the potential to cause, serious injury, the investigation is conducted by the Senior Manager with the assistance of our Accounts and Administration Manager.

If an employee informs a manager of ill health which the employee believes to be work related, it is investigated in a similar way as other untoward incidents, with occupational health advice being obtained as necessary.

Accounts and Administration Manager is responsible for recording and reporting incidents which fall within the recording and/ or reporting requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). All such incidents and any other incidents of a similarly serious nature are also reported to our insurers.

All accident records and associated information are filed confidentially and retained for ten years.

Accident trends, learning points and the outcome of investigations of serious incidents are discussed at the Senior Management Team meetings and referred to the next available Board Meeting for information.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) require certain specified accidents and dangerous occurrences to be reported to the enforcing officer for the premises. For reporting purposes, work related accidents are accidents that arise from or relate to:

- ◆ The way the work is conducted.
- ◆ The use of any substances or equipment at work.
- ◆ The condition of the work premises.
- ◆ Acts of physical violence against employees.
- ◆ Suicides associated with specified transport systems.

The following accidents and occurrences must be reported:

- ◆ Any fatality (to employees and non-employees).
- ◆ Major injuries to employees.
- ◆ Major injuries to non-employees that require the person to be taken directly to hospital for treatment.
- ◆ Specified dangerous occurrences.
- ◆ Accidents causing more than seven consecutive days' incapacity for work (excluding the day of the accident).

### **First-Aid Arrangements**

Volunteer Cornwall will provide adequate first-aid equipment and facilities for employees if they are injured or become ill at work and ensure adequate provision of qualified first aider to render first aid to employees if they are injured or become ill at work.

In the absence of a first aider an appointed person shall take charge of first aid equipment, facilities and any situation relating to an injured or ill employee who will need help from a medical practitioner or nurse.

First aid treatment is only to be administered by staff who have completed an approved training course – this is usually a First Aid at Work course approved by the Health and Safety Executive – and, where relevant, have attended necessary refresher training. Senior managers are to ensure that First aiders are to be always available when employees or volunteers are at work, and alternative arrangements should be made for first aiders taking holidays or long-term sick leave. Employees chosen, or who volunteer, to become designated first aiders should meet a few basic suitability criteria, i.e., they should be:

- ◆ Able to leave their work immediately when required.
- ◆ Calm, especially in pressured situations.
- ◆ Reliable and able to communicate.
- ◆ Able to cope with any injuries or ill health likely to occur in their workplace.

The only exceptions to having a trained first aider are in very low risk workplaces, in which case there should be an “appointed person” responsible for calling medical assistance, and, if he or she has been trained to do so, to administer emergency first aid.

Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that an appropriate level of first aid cover and first aid equipment is provided in all their departmental locations.

Notices indicating first aid arrangements will be posted on the notice boards throughout Volunteer Cornwall.

### **Fire Procedures**

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 all companies with 5 or more employees are legally required to have a comprehensive, documented, and site-specific fire risk assessment carried out and regularly reviewed. Negligence of this law is a criminal offence.

This legislation is designed to protect people at work from the effects of fire and requires employers to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and make sure people can safely escape if there is a fire. Volunteer Cornwall will therefore be required to:

- ◆ Carry out a fire risk assessment identifying any possible dangers and risks.
- ◆ Consider who may be especially at risk.

- ◆ Get rid of or reduce the risk from fire as far as is reasonably possible and provide general fire precautions to deal with any possible risk left.
- ◆ Take other measures to make sure there is protection if flammable or explosive materials are used or stored.
- ◆ Create a plan to deal with any emergency and, in most cases, keep a record of the findings; and
- ◆ Review the findings when necessary.

Volunteer Cornwall will therefore provide general fire precautions, including training, fire warnings systems, fire-fighting equipment and means of escape.

It will also ensure that instruction in fire safety is given by competent persons to staff and volunteers during induction to ensure that they understand the fire precautions and the action to be taken in the event of fire.

In addition, notices setting out procedures to be followed in case of an outbreak of fire will be posted throughout Volunteer Cornwall. Fire practices will be held at least quarterly, and details recorded.

The person with overall responsibility for fire safety in our premises is the Accounts and Administration Manager.

Senior managers are to ensure that all means of escape are clearly marked, at high level if signs at a lower level will be obstructed, with signs which comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. Escape routes are to be always kept unobstructed, including the exit points to the outside of the building. All staff are to ensure they know the escape routes from their workplaces and any other area where they may be present, including the "Fire Assembly Points".

Fire exits must open in the direction of travel and be operated by a "one-action" mechanism, e.g., push bar systems – they should not be locked.

Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that all their staff know:

- ◆ The fire hazards in their workplace and how fire can be prevented.
- ◆ The action to be taken on discovering a fire.
- ◆ What the alarm signal is.
- ◆ What to do when the alarm is heard.
- ◆ Where the fire assembly points are.
- ◆ The fire escape routes and exits.
- ◆ Their responsibilities, and the evacuation procedures to follow in an emergency.
- ◆ The different types of fire extinguisher and when they should be used.
- ◆ How to call the fire brigade.

In addition, they are to ensure that:

- ◆ Written evacuation/emergency procedures are given to each employee and posted on notice boards.
- ◆ Contingency plans are in place to enable work to re-commence with the minimum of delay in the event of a fire occurring.

- ◆ Alarms are checked regularly.
- ◆ Fire fighting equipment is checked regularly and kept in the same known place.
- ◆ Fire exits are kept unlocked and clear while the premises are occupied.
- ◆ Clear access to fire extinguishers, alarms and exits is always maintained.
- ◆ Fire-check doors are kept closed.
- ◆ Fire exit signs are in place and not covered up.

### **Alarm System**

- ◆ Our premises are covered by a comprehensive fire alarm system incorporating automatic fire and smoke detection and manual call points.
- ◆ The alarm system is serviced routinely on a six-month basis.
- ◆ The alarm system is tested by IT Officer on a regular basis by activating a different alarm call point each time in rotation. During the alarm test, we take the opportunity to check audibility of the alarm throughout the premises.
- ◆ The results of alarm testing and servicing are recorded and held in the transport office.

### **Emergency Lighting**

We have installed an emergency lighting system incorporating battery backup, which activates on failure of the lighting circuit. The system is subject to a monthly activation test and an annual full discharge test by the IT Officer. The results of emergency lighting tests are recorded and held in the transport office.

### **Signage**

Directional fire escape signs are displayed throughout the building to indicate the location of emergency exits. These signs are designed to glow in the dark.

Signs are also displayed:

- ◆ to describe the type and function of fire extinguishers
- ◆ *to describe the correct operation of exit door hardware [i.e., 'push bar to open', 'turn to exit', break to exit.*

All signs comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996. As part of our routine checks IT Officer checks that safety signs are in place and clearly visible. The results of these checks are recorded and held in the transport office.

### **Escape Routes and Exits**

Daily all senior managers check that all escape routes are clear, that exit doors are functioning correctly and that fire doors are either kept shut and kept clear.

The results of escape route and fire door checks are recorded and held in the transport office.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

We have selected suitable numbers and types of fire extinguishers and located these in accordance with the findings of the fire safety risk assessment.

There are CO2 and foam extinguishers on both floors of the building. Our fire marshal has been trained in the practical use of extinguishers and the circumstances when they can be safely used and when they should not be used.

Fire extinguishers are subject to an annual servicing contract.

On a regular basis the IT Officer checks that fire extinguishers are correctly located and appear to be in good condition. The results of these checks are recorded in a book held in the transport room.

## **Fire Procedure**

### **Action on discovering a fire**

1. raise the alarm by operating one of the manual call points
2. attempt to tackle the fire only if trained and if it is safe to do so (small fire, clear escape, only discharge one extinguisher)
3. leave by the nearest available exit to the assembly point at the trees at the front of the building.

### **Action on hearing the alarm – all persons except for Fire Marshall**

1. do not stop to collect personal belongings.
2. close windows and doors if it does not cause undue delay
3. escort any visitors and leave by the nearest available exit and go to the assembly point by the trees at the front of the building.
4. If a senior manager, check that someone has called the Fire Brigade by dialing 999, if not done, please do so immediately.
5. do not return to the building until given the all clear by the Fire Brigade.

### **Action on hearing the alarm – Fire Marshall/Senior Manager**

Call the fire brigade immediately to every fire or on suspicion of fire.

Dial from the reception phone if safe but if in doubt, dial from a mobile phone from the assembly point.

1. dial 999 from reception or 999 from a mobile
2. give operator your telephone number 01872 265305 and ask for FIRE
3. when the fire brigade replies give details: Fire at

**Volunteer Cornwall  
Acorn House  
Heron Way  
Newham  
Truro  
TR1 2XN**

4. do not replace receiver until address has been repeated by the fire brigade.

#### **Action for Fire Marshalls on hearing the alarm**

1. check which zone has been activated by viewing the alarm panel.
2. so far as possible without taking risks, check that all areas of the floor are clear of people including stores, toilets, and kitchen. If there are two fire marshals on duty, divide the search between you if the opportunity arises.
3. shut off machinery if safe to do so
4. once the building is clear, go to the assembly point closing doors behind you.
5. meet the Fire Brigade and report any persons who remain in the building, report on areas not able to be checked, any signs of fire observed, and the zone indicated on the panel
6. prevent people from reentering the building.
7. once the Fire Brigade announce that the building is safe, tell assembled staff that they may return to the building.

#### **Disabled Persons and Others Requiring Assistance**

In the event a person requires assistance due to disability or any other reason, this is the responsibility of the line manager to advise them of whom will be available to help them in the event of a fire.

#### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are carried out at least every six months.

A proportion of drills are undertaken whilst simulating the lack of availability of at least one exit.

Records of drills are held in the transport office.

#### **Training for all Staff**

New starters are provided with information on emergency procedures on their first day of employment including the location of escape routes, the sound of the alarm and the location of the assembly point.

All staff receive annual refresher training in fire safety and fire procedures. Those with fire safety roles such as the fire marshal and Accounts and Administration Manager are provided with instruction in their responsibilities.

Records of all training are held with HR records.

### **Competence and Training**

At recruitment, we assess the skills, experience, and previous training of the applicant to appoint the most suitable person for the job.

Training needs are reviewed at recruitment of new starters and then formally on an annual basis during appraisals. Training needs are also identified on an ongoing basis for example: because of risk assessments or accident investigations; through site inspections or audits; and arising from changed legislation or standards.

All employees are inducted in the contents of this policy with particular emphasis on their personal responsibilities. All new employees also receive basic induction training on general health and safety matters, including:

- ◆ their legal duties, as set down in both criminal and civil law.
- ◆ the findings of risk assessments
- ◆ arrangements for first aid.
- ◆ fire, evacuation drills and other relevant emergency procedures
- ◆ expected standards of behaviour and housekeeping
- ◆ how to report accidents, incidents and 'near-misses'
- ◆ how to report unsafe conditions or other safety concerns
- ◆ any special hazards and control arrangements affecting the workplace.

The general safety induction is carried out by line managers using a checklist which is kept as a signed and dated record that the training took place.

Where an individual takes on specific health and safety responsibilities, they will receive relevant health and safety training in their responsibilities, for example this applies to directors, managers, and supervisors, and specific training for specialist roles such as fire marshals and first aiders.

Training will also be provided at the introduction of new equipment, new technology or work procedures. Young workers i.e., those under 18 years old, will receive additional training and supervision as required, according to the outcome of an individual assessment.

All health and safety training are provided by competent instructors and takes place during paid working hours. The identification of training needs is a line management function.

The effectiveness of training is evaluated by management reviews. Records of training including the date, and details and contents of the course, are held by the HR Manager.

Where we do not have the necessary in-house competence to undertake a specific task or specialist work, we will utilise specialist contractors who have been assessed for their competence.

## Electrical Safety

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 and for new works, the standards applied follow current requirements of BS7671 (the IEE Regulations for Electrical Installations) and the current Building Regulations place a duty on Volunteer Cornwall and its employees and volunteers to ensure that electrical items are only used for their intended purpose in a safe and proper manner.

Our staff are clearly instructed that they are not permitted to undertake any electrical repairs. All work on electrical equipment and installations is carried out by NICEIC or SELECT registered electrical contractors.

Staff or volunteers should report any of the following to their senior manager immediately:

- ◆ Worn, frayed or exposed wires.
- ◆ Cracked or damaged casings.
- ◆ Equipment that appears to be overheating.
- ◆ Defective or sloppy fitting sockets, plugs, connectors, or switches.
- ◆ Equipment that has been dropped or damaged.
- ◆ Trailing cables that present a tripping hazard.

Staff should never:

- ◆ Attempt to tamper with any electrical equipment.
- ◆ Change plugs or fuses without prior permission from their line manager.
- ◆ Provide additional power point outlets by linking multi-blocks and extension leads.
- ◆ Bring into the office or use any equipment or appliance that has not been officially provided.

Approximately 25% of all reportable electrical accidents involve portable appliances. Most of these accidents are caused by electric shock, but others result in burns from arcing or fire. Portable electrical appliances can be defined as electrical equipment with a plug and lead that can be easily moved around, although this does extend to items such as computers, and photocopiers which are less easily moveable.

Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that all portable electrical equipment is to be subject to an annual examination by a competent electrician every 3-5 years, and a record made of the examination. A visual examination is to be carried out by a competent person on an annual basis.

## Manual Handling

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 cover the moving of objects by hand or bodily force. Most employees will, at some time, be required to lift and carry loads. This is not normally a problem if the individual can comfortably lift/carry the load and it is only for a short period or distance. **All manual handling activities that involve a risk of injury are to be avoided. If there is any doubt whatsoever staff are not to carry or lift loads.**

Volunteer Cornwall does not expect staff/volunteers to lift or carry loads more than their ability. As everybody has a different perception of how heavy a load, they can comfortably lift/carry, each person will need to determine if they are able to lift/carry the load without causing themselves injury.

Staff/volunteers who have to carry/lift loads in the normal course of their duties are to receive appropriate training. This may well be the case with some volunteer drivers. Office workers may be required to carry or move boxes of stationery, furniture, or equipment.

It is the responsibility of the Transport Officer to assess the requirement for, and provision of, manual handling training for volunteer drivers. The assessment of the training requirement for other staff/volunteers is the responsibility of respective senior managers.

### **Noise**

Noise is not considered to be a problem within Volunteer Cornwall. However, if staff consider the noise levels capable of causing them harm, they should inform their senior manager immediately. Generally, noise levels are becoming high if normal speech cannot be heard clearly from about 2 metres.

### **Terrorist Activity**

Due to the increased risk of terrorist activity in the UK, all staff are to remain vigilant to the threat posed by active terrorists operating within the UK. Staff should not assume that Cornwall is exempt from such activity because of its location and lack of major cities; the tourist industry is always a high-profile target for terrorists. In the event of staff or volunteers noticing anything suspicious the police should always be informed as a matter of urgency.

If a bomb threat is received against Volunteer Cornwall premises, the building should be evacuated, building cleared, and police called. If the threat is by telephone as much detail as possible must be recorded, for example:

- ◆ Codewords. Many terrorists use codewords that are recognised by the authorities as genuine threats.
- ◆ Location of the bomb.
- ◆ Time of detonation.
- ◆ Time threat made.
- ◆ Accent of caller.
- ◆ Any other relevant information.

Whilst it will be useful for the authorities for the above information to be recorded, it is of the utmost importance that lives are not endangered and therefore buildings must be evacuated, and the police informed as a matter of urgency.

### **Suspicious Mail/Parcels**

Items received though the post should be treated as suspicious (or dangerous!) if they are more than 3mm (1/8 ") thick with no indication of the sender and any of the following apply:

- ◆ Imperfect address.
- ◆ Excessively heavy for its size.
- ◆ Has a lopsided balance.
- ◆ Greasy marks on the package (explosives can sweat).
- ◆ Protruding wires.
- ◆ Unusual holes in the packaging.
- ◆ Smells of almonds or marzipan.

If such a package is received it should be carefully put down on a flat surface with all-round access. The room should be evacuated, building cleared, and police called. On no account should the package be carried anywhere. It should not be put in water or covered in sand.

### **Display Screen Equipment**

Senior managers are to take all reasonable steps to secure the health and safety of employees who work with display screen equipment.

Suitable furniture is provided for our office staff, including adjustable chairs at computer workstations. Sufficient space is provided for the needs of each user including the provision of storage space away from the desk where necessary.

Desks are sited so far as is possible so that glare, reflections and extremes of light and shade do not cause discomfort. Window blinds are also provided to assist in the control of these hazards.

Our work environment has been designed for the comfort of display screen users considering the need to control nuisance noise, temperature, humidity, and lighting. Software is selected for its suitability for the task and ease of use. Users have access to IT support via the IT officer.

Senior Managers are to carry out an analysis of all workstations for the purpose of assessing risks such as Musculo-skeletal discomfort, visual disturbance, and mental stress. Senior managers are to ensure that any risks identified during this analysis are remedied as soon as possible.

Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff receive appropriate training before they begin to work on display screen equipment and whenever the task significantly changes, or the workstation is substantially modified. They are also to ensure that they give sufficient information, instruction, and training as is necessary to safeguard the health and safety of employees that use display screen equipment.

All regular users of display equipment are entitled to an eye and eyesight test at intervals recommended by their optician. Where an employee experiences visual difficulties and has reason to believe that these may be caused by work with display screen equipment, Volunteer Cornwall will offer an eye and eyesight test. **The costs of eye and eyesight tests will be met by Volunteer Cornwall, provided line managers have given their prior approval for the test to be carried out.**

Employees are to take adequate breaks away from display screen equipment, the purpose of which is to prevent the onset of fatigue. To achieve this, senior managers, supervisors, and users are to try to incorporate changes of activity into the working day. There is no prescribed frequency or duration of breaks from display screen equipment, however, where possible, users are to be given the discretion to decide the timing and extent of off-screen tasks. As a guide 5- to-10-minute breaks should be taken from display screen work every hour.

Any employee who believes that their workload does not permit adequate breaks away from display screen equipment should bring this to the attention of their senior manager. Users of display equipment are encouraged, and will be expected, to take the opportunities for breaks.

Senior managers are to ensure that all IT users carry out an annual VDU risk assessment of their workstation. Any required improvements will be agreed and put into effect by the relevant

senior manager, and a copy of the risk assessment is to be forwarded to the Accounts and Administration Manager.

Display screen equipment has made a significant contribution to working life and can be used in complete safety where a few common-sense measures are taken. The three most important steps are to:

- ◆ Adjust furniture and equipment to suit your needs – do not adjust your own posture to suit the workstation.
- ◆ Avoid adopting a static posture and avoid prolonged display screen equipment work without a change of activity.
- ◆ Always report problems with your furniture, equipment, or health as soon as they arise.

Staff using mobile devices including laptops, tablets, smart phones etc. whilst on the move, are encouraged to work as ergonomically as possible and made aware that intense and prolonged screen work is best carried out at a permanent workstation.

Remember these provisions also apply to the use of laptops and to persons not in direct employment such as temporary staff and volunteers.

### **Drug and Alcohol Misuse**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 emphasise the duty of employers to assess the risks of substance abuse to the health and safety of employees. It is not the policy of Volunteer Cornwall to intrude upon the privacy of members of staff or volunteers, particularly in health matters, where their condition does not affect their conduct or performance. Volunteer Cornwall must, however, be concerned where health or behaviour impairs the conduct or work performance of its staff. It recognises that alcohol is a common cause of such impairment. It also recognises that different approaches to disciplinary procedures are needed to reflect the different legal position on the possession and supply of drugs. Guidance on alcohol and drug abuse is at Appendix C.

### **Consultation**

The company is committed to a partnership approach to risk management involving all managers and employees. The company will consult with staff on:

- ◆ any changes at the workplace that may substantially affect their health and safety, for example, changes in systems of work.
- ◆ the arrangements for competent advice on health and safety matters
- ◆ the information to be given to employees about risks to health and safety and preventative measures.
- ◆ the planning and organising of health and safety training.
- ◆ the health and safety consequences of introducing new technology.

Any consultation is done via staff meetings held by a member of the Senior Management Team, and the feedback from these meetings are taken back to the monthly Senior Management Team monthly meetings.

### **Premises**

Safety issues requiring immediate attention should be reported directly to senior managers.

Concerns relating to non-urgent hazards or requests for minor repairs and maintenance should also be reported to senior managers.

Periodic risks assessments of the whole organisation will be arranged by the Accounts and Administration Manager and the conclusions written down in accordance with the requirements of the 1999 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

### **Asbestos**

Our buildings are known to be free of asbestos containing materials, as advised in a Cornwall Council premises report.

### **Building Maintenance and Alteration**

When planning maintenance work and minor alterations work is scheduled, where possible to avoid risks to staff and others who would normally be present in the area. Where an area, includes hazardous equipment or activities either on a permanent or temporary basis, we ensure that physical barriers are utilised including locks and signage where necessary, to prevent access by unauthorised persons.

If work is likely to compromise an occupied building's fire escape routes or fire protection facilities, and it has been determined that it is safe to continue, we put in place temporary arrangements and provide additional instruction as required to ensure that building users can still use the building safely.

Where work is carried out which involves breaking through walls, floors, or ceilings, we check whether the work is likely to compromise fire compartments and make repairs with suitable materials to return the structure to the designed level of fire resistance.

We recognise the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations and Accounts and Administration Manager takes the lead in ensuring that we are compliant. This includes identifying when projects are likely to exceed 30 working days or more than 500 person days of construction work, and therefore fall within the additional requirements described in Part 3 of the regulations.

The general safety of plant and service areas is a priority for the organisation, and these are kept clean, tidy, free from the build-up of combustible materials and with clear access to all control mechanisms and switches.

A planned preventative maintenance programme has been devised to identify all the routine maintenance and inspection activities required to maintain our premises and equipment in good order. Records are kept of inspections, maintenance, repairs, and servicing activities.

### **Dogs in the Workplace - Assistance Dogs**

Assistance dogs (officially trained and certified by appropriate paperwork) may accompany the person they are assisting into any area the person would normally have access to as part of their enrolment or employment.

No other dogs are permitted into the workplace.

Volunteer Cornwall and the owner of the assistance dog will agree appropriate relief areas and disposal arrangements for faecal matter.

Assistance dogs must be always under the control of its owner whilst on the company premises. The care and supervision of the assistance dog is solely the responsibility of its owner.

### **Penalties for Disregarding this Policy**

Disregard of this policy will be handled at the discretion of the company and may result in temporary or permanent prohibition of the animal from our premises.

### **Safety Signs, Signals and Notices**

Statutory health and safety notices are displayed. Health and Safety Law poster and the current Employers Liability Compulsory Insurance certificate.

Employees who do not attend the premises regularly are provided with a copy of the leaflet 'Health and Safety Law – What You Should Know' and a copy of the employer's liability insurance certificate.

Signage is also displayed to indicate fire escape routes, fire actions, fire extinguisher locations, first aid details and traffic safety instructions. Safety signs are also displayed where a risk assessment indicates that there are residual risks which cannot be adequately controlled by other means and are used to give warnings, prohibit certain actions, and communicate mandatory safety rules.

Signs comply with the colour way and pictogram requirements of the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations.

We check that the signs remain in place, visible and in good condition through our regular fire monitoring.

Audible signals such as the fire alarm and burglar alarm are tested periodically to ensure that they are clearly audible in relevant areas and that staff are familiar with the sound.

Employees are instructed in the meaning of safety signs and signals which they find in our workplace.

### **Slips, Trips and Falls**

The prevention of slip and trip accidents in the workplace relies on the involvement of all staff and everyone is encouraged to deal with hazards when noticed. Staffs are instructed in the importance of storing equipment in designated locations and in particular keeping walkways free from obstructions and trailing cables. They are also encouraged to report hazards, seeking assistance with any which they cannot personally resolve.

We ensure that storage areas are of sufficient capacity, are well managed and are under the control of an identified person.

Steps and stairs are equipped with handrails.

When specifying hard flooring, we ensure that it meets the surface roughness requirements

suitable for the activities taking place and, as part of our risk assessment process we undertake assessments of the slip risk from hard floored areas in line with HSE guidance taking specific account of the use of the area.

Cleaning regimes are designed to ensure that dust, grease, and other slip hazards are well controlled, with all hard flooring cleaned at least once per week. If there is a spillage, staff are responsible for ensuring that it is cleaned up promptly and any wet floor is clearly highlighted.

Wet floor signs are used where floors remain wet after cleaning or because of other causes such as wet weather. However, floors which people are expected to use whilst wet, will be dried so far as is reasonably practicable.

Cleaning staff also remove waste on a weekly basis to ensure that it does not accumulate and cause a trip hazard.

Staffs are encouraged to wear sensible footwear. Please note that flip flops are not acceptable as office footwear.

Suitable and sufficient lighting is provided for normal tasks, and emergency lighting is provided to aid escape in case of lighting failure. All lighting is routinely checked.

Arrangements are in place for dealing with ice, snow, and the accumulation of leaves on a timely basis to reduce the slipping risk in our external areas.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted within our building/s and company vehicles.

Smoking is also not permitted in any private vehicle when used on company business if it is being used to carry passengers.

All staff and sub-contractors are prohibited from smoking within any customer premises or within any place where “no smoking” signs are displayed.

### **Welfare Facilities**

We have evaluated the welfare facilities required for our business to comply with the *Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992* and have confirmed that the existing facilities meet or exceed the minimum requirements.

Well-equipped sanitary and washing facilities are provided in sufficient numbers for the staff using them.

Facilities are also provided for staff to obtain drinking water, for heating water and heating food.

Staff can rest and eat their food in the staff room, which is located downstairs next to the kitchenette.

All the welfare facilities are ventilated, well-lit and designed to be easily cleaned.

### **Winter Conditions**

Whilst we make every effort to ensure that temperatures within internal work areas are reasonable, it is foreseeable that heating systems may fail due to breakdown or power disruption. Should this occur, staff should utilise the portable heaters where possible and put on additional clothing as a temporary measure whilst a solution is sought. Where the temperature in the work areas falls below 16 degrees Celsius for a prolonged period, managers will authorise staff to use portable heaters.

In the event of snowfall within the commuting routes of employees, managers will monitor weather conditions and release staff early if necessary to avoid them being trapped at work. Managers will also contact staff if the workplace is to be closed and/or they not expected to come to work e.g., during a period of prolonged freezing conditions.

Unless directed by management not to attend, employees are expected to make reasonable efforts to come to work without taking personal risks. Travel warnings should be heeded.

It may become necessary for staff to work from home if they comply with the guidance on home working.

Line managers are responsible for ensuring that additional communications and other precautions are taken as necessary to safeguard those who are lone working.

If due to low staff numbers, our first aiders are not available, the most senior manager present will take the role of appointed person i.e., for the purpose of managing any first aid incident and obtaining medical treatment.

Procedures will be implemented in accordance with our slips trips and falls policy to control the additional slipping hazards presented by the weather. All external walkways and steps on our premises will be regular cleared of snow and gritted to reduce ice. We will follow the government's snow code in our approach to clearing snow and ice.

We will also pay particular attention to building entrance areas to minimise the risks from wet floors. Employees will be encouraged to wear footwear with a good tread when walking outside e.g., between the car park and the buildings.

### **Young Persons**

A young person is someone who has not reached 18 years of age. A child is someone who has not reached compulsory school leaving age.

Volunteer Cornwall is aware of the additional risks that may follow a consequence of the employment of young persons and senior managers are to take all measures necessary to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Senior managers are to assess and document the additional risks and measures provided to ensure the health and safety of young persons.

Senior managers are to ensure that they are aware of the statutory restrictions imposed upon work undertaken by young persons and they are to comply with these restrictions. Senior managers are responsible for ensuring that young persons are given the raised level of information, instruction, training, and supervision required to enable them to work safely.

If any employee has concerns regarding young persons in the workplace, they are to inform their senior manager immediately. These concerns are to be investigated by senior managers as a matter of urgency.

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that training, coupled with proper supervision, is particularly important for young persons because of their relative immaturity and unfamiliarity with the working environment.

Senior managers are to ensure that an assessment is made of the young person's ability and knowledge prior to training in order that training is provided to bring that young person up to an appropriate and acceptable level of suitable competence.

Senior managers are therefore to implement the following procedures to ensure the safety of young persons:

- ◆ Risk assessments undertaken on any process or procedure when performed by experienced adults should be reassessed in the light of the lack of experience of the young person.
- ◆ Additional training, instruction and supervision should be provided until the young person has demonstrated a satisfactory degree of competence.
- ◆ The young person should pay careful attention to the training provided and to the work they are required to carry out. Careful regard should be taken of any restrictions placed on the type of work that may be undertaken. All young persons should be always supervised when carrying out such work.

Senior managers are to maintain the following records with relation to young persons:

- ◆ Risk assessment records for the specific assessments relating to young people within Volunteer Cornwall.
- ◆ Training and information given to young people with a record of the attainment of a satisfactory degree of competence.
- ◆ In the case of a young person under the minimum school leaving age, a record of the information should ideally be communicated to the parents.

### **Disabled Persons Including temporarily disabled – Staff, Volunteers and Learners**

Volunteer Cornwall is committed to employing disabled people on an open and fair basis because of the qualities and skills that they contribute to the workplace and workforce.

Most disabled employees, volunteers and learners neither need nor seek safety systems beyond those in place for the workforce generally. The Employment Medical Advisory Service of the Health and Safety Executive will assess and advise on health and safety concerns relating to individual employees where more complex problems arise.

In practice, Volunteer Cornwall's duty of care extends to ensuring that disabled people are not exposed to workplace environments that are hazardous because of their disability.

The Equality Act 2010 requires that where the employer makes any arrangements or where any physical feature of the premises places the disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared to persons who are not disabled, the employer has a duty to take steps that are "reasonable in the circumstances" to prevent that physical feature or those arrangements having a particular effect.

The company's health and safety policy has been prepared to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all employees. It recognises that those employees who require extra equipment, facility, or assistance, both routinely and in an emergency, will have such needs met.

Senior managers are to ensure those newly appointed disabled employees and employees who become disabled receive specific information and training on all relevant matters of health and safety.

In the case of temporary disability such as a broken limb, it may be necessary to exclude the individual from our workplace if adaptations are not reasonably practicable in the short timescales involved. When individuals have been issued with a fit note by a doctor, they are not permitted to work unless either the date to which they have been signed as unfit to work has been reached or, if the fit note indicates they may be fit to work subject to conditions, that those conditions have been assessed and relevant changes have been made to meet them, if necessary using occupational health advice.

As a matter of good practice, Volunteer Cornwall will ensure that the workforce generally is advised of any relevant health and safety issue that affects an individual disabled employee.

Volunteer Cornwall will meet the health and safety needs of disabled person's by ensuring:

- ◆ The actual implications of the disability in the workplace have been assessed and understood.
- ◆ safety implications arising from employing a disabled person.

The workforce is encouraged and trained to recognise and respond to any health and safety issues. We ensure that the needs of disabled staff are taken account of within risk assessments and if necessary, undertake an individual risk assessment for the work of the employee, considering their abilities and disabilities. The risk assessment covers not only the risks to the individual but also any additional risks which may be identified.

We also develop a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) to cover any other office-based emergencies.

Relevant risk assessments [*and the PEEP*] will be reviewed at frequencies which take account of any change in the person's health condition.

### **Work Placement**

Volunteer Cornwall staff placing project clients or volunteers with an employer or organisation for placement or work experience will always carry out an assessment of the employer/host organisation to ensure that the following standards are met:

- ◆ Trainees/volunteers are supervised during On-The-Job Training and at placement.
- ◆ Trainees/volunteers are issued with any necessary protective clothing and equipment.
- ◆ Placement Providers/organisations have the relevant Health and Safety policies as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- ◆ Safety of Premises, plant, equipment, and practices are managed to meet all legal requirements and steps are taken to monitor these standards on a regular basis.
- ◆ Accidents are notified in accordance with the requirement of the Health and Safety Executive.

- ◆ Contractors, Sub-Contractors, Organisations and Employer Placement Providers have insurance cover in accordance with the Employers (Compulsory Insurance) Act of 1969.
- ◆ Health and Safety Literature is issued to all trainees/volunteers when appropriate.

If an Employer, Host Organisation or Placement Provider does not match the criteria for Health and Safety as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Volunteer Cornwall **will not use** that Employer or Placement Provider. However, Volunteer Cornwall will work with the provider to ensure that these legal requirements are met.

Further details can be seen on appendix D

### **Homeworking**

The company defines home workers as employees which have contractually agreed in writing that their working base is their home.

The agreement needs to be made with your line manager based on your job and working practices, assuming that they are conducive to working at home unsupervised.

We ensure that home workers can work safely by undertaking a home working risk assessment asking staff to photograph their proposed working space from several angles to ensure that it complies with health and safety guidance.

We ensure that the home worker has ready access to their line manager, HR Manager, and IT support. Regular communications take place with the line manager and colleagues.

We ensure that contractual and insurance arrangements account for the work taking place in the home including the risks which may be introduced by the company's electrical equipment.

### **New and Expectant Mothers at Work**

If an employee notifies us that she is pregnant, and on return to work following birth, we undertake a specific risk assessment of her work considering HSE guidance and any information which the employee has provided. For employees involved in anything other than low risk office work, this risk assessment is undertaken with input from Occupational Health. Recommendations arising from the assessment are implemented promptly and the assessment is reviewed every 3 months.

We provide rest facilities for new and expectant mothers as detailed within the welfare section of this policy.

## **Event Safety**

### **Introduction**

Volunteer Cornwall may from time to time hold and/ or organise events such as open days or celebration events.

We recognise that when organising, setting up, running, and breaking down events; we hold the prime responsibility for ensuring the safety of:

- ◆ Our employees.
- ◆ Our volunteers.
- ◆ Our pupils/students.
- ◆ Members of the public/visitors to the event.
- ◆ Contractors working for us and/or providing services at the event; and
- ◆ Any other person who may be affected by the event.

Some of the events are set up and planned by Volunteer Cornwall, with involvement from third parties. In these instances, it is very important that specific responsibilities are clearly defined, and that these are stated in the event risk assessment. Ultimately, all parties need to know and agree on who is responsible for what, including who holds the overall responsibility for planning and managing the event.

### **Planning/Organising an Event**

Good planning and management are fundamental to the success of any event. Effective planning and consultation will assist us ensuring that those involved in setting up, running, breaking down, and/or attending the event are not exposed to health and safety risks. The level of detail in our planning will be proportionate to the scale of the event and degree of risk.

We will ensure that each event has a designated Event Manager in place, who will hold overall responsibility for planning, running, monitoring, and breaking down the event.

Specific responsibilities of the Event Manager will include:

- ◆ Completing a thorough investigation of the proposed site/venue to ensure suitability.
- ◆ Preparing an Event Safety Plan.
- ◆ Having appropriate health and safety arrangements in place to protect employees and others.
- ◆ Completing and recording a systematic assessment of the risks (i.e., an event risk assessment).
- ◆ Implementing control measures identified by the risk assessment and identifying who will be responsible for carrying them out.
- ◆ Putting appropriate monitoring arrangements in place to ensure compliance through all stages of the event.
- ◆ Seeking competent health and safety advice where necessary.
- ◆ Liaising with emergency services and other interested parties.
- ◆ Reviewing the event risk assessment and health and safety arrangements as often as required.
- ◆ Ensuring co-operation and proper co-ordination of work activities.
- ◆ Providing employees and others with relevant information on any risks to their health and safety; and

- ◆ Ensuring that those involved (including staff, volunteers, pupils/students, third parties, and contractors) are competent to perform their duties safely.

To determine the resources and facilities required, the Event Manager should identify:

- ◆ Location(s) of the event.
- ◆ Scale, type, and scope of the event.
- ◆ Event activities.
- ◆ Profile and number of attendees.
- ◆ Duration of the event.
- ◆ Time of day and year that the event will be held.
- ◆ Access and transportation; and
- ◆ Infrastructure.

The Event Manager will select staff and volunteers and allocate specific health and safety duties accordingly (e.g., facilities/estates staff, transport staff, cleaning staff, catering staff, venue staff, first aiders, fire marshals, event marshals, security staff etc.); and will involve staff and volunteers at all stages of the planning process where possible.

The Event Manager must ensure that the relevant permissions have been gained (for example, a Temporary Event Notice may be required) and that adequate insurance cover is in place prior to the event.

The Event Manager is responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is carried out and recorded to cover all aspects of the event using the Event Risk Assessment form as a guide and ensure that it is communicated to all members of the event team (including all staff, volunteers, pupils/students, and third parties/contractors involved), together with the event safety plan where relevant. The aim of the risk assessment is to ensure that any hazards likely to be presented by the event are either eliminated, or where they cannot be eliminated, reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. All phases of the event including the site/venue, preparation, running, and event breakdown should be considered.

Examples of the areas that should be considered as part of the planning and risk assessment process include:

- ◆ Insurance/licensing
- ◆ Access/egress to the event
- ◆ Parking
- ◆ Event traffic/vehicle movement around site
- ◆ Provision of/access to welfare facilities
- ◆ First aid/medical provision
- ◆ Fire and other emergencies
- ◆ Procedures for reporting and recording of accidents/incidents/near misses.
- ◆ Manual handling
- ◆ Electricity
- ◆ Work at height
- ◆ Hazardous substances
- ◆ Slips/trips/falls
- ◆ Sound and noise
- ◆ Machinery/equipment

- ◆ Food, drink, and water (including food hygiene)
- ◆ Temporary structures (such as marquees or gazebos)
- ◆ Inclement weather
- ◆ Crowd management
- ◆ Waste management and cleaning
- ◆ Lone/remote working
- ◆ Security
- ◆ Provision for vulnerable groups – i.e., the elderly, children, young persons, disabled persons etc.
- ◆ Safeguarding
- ◆ Information/training for third parties/contractors, event staff, volunteers, and attendees
- ◆ Third parties providing services (e.g., theatre set installers, stalls, food vans, bouncy castles, fairground rides etc.)
- ◆ Length and timing of the event; and
- ◆ Pyrotechnics.

Where relevant, the Event Manager must liaise with the venue owner/manager, emergency services, and/or local authority for advice and information relevant to the planning and risk assessment, including obtaining appropriate event licenses (e.g. Temporary Event Notice etc.) where required (information on licensing is available at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/faqs.htm#q1>).

The need for any license should be identified early in the planning process, as they can take time to process and therefore any delay may prevent the event from running. If you are in any doubt as to whether you require a license and/ or what type of licenses you require, you should contact the relevant licensing authority for advice.

For services provided by third parties, the Event Manager must request and retain copies of their:

- ◆ Public Liability insurance details (ensuring that the amount of cover is appropriate to the level of risk).
- ◆ Risk assessments/method statements; and
- ◆ Food business registration details and rating (for those carrying out food operations).

Considerations such as road closures, provision of temporary welfare facilities, infrastructure required, and waste facilities need to be made in a timely manner, to ensure that these are in place for the event.

Where necessary, the Event Manager should seek competent health and safety advice to assist with the event safety plan and/or risk assessment.

### **Planning for Incidents/ Emergencies**

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that it needs to have plans in place to respond effectively to health and safety incidents and other emergencies that might occur at an event, and that such plans need to be in proportion to the level of risk presented by event activities and the potential extent and severity of the incident.

Where relevant, the Event Manager should ensure that emergency procedures are drawn up and agreed for:

- ◆ Fire.
- ◆ Accidents/injuries (i.e., first aid and medical assistance);
- ◆ Lost child.
- ◆ Other emergency evacuation.
- ◆ Security.
- ◆ Event cancellation; and/or
- ◆ Severe weather.

These procedures will form part of the event safety plan and risk assessment and staff and volunteers should be allocated with (and trained on) their specific roles where necessary.

The Event Manager should ensure that all staff/volunteers/pupils/students/contractors etc. involved in setting up, running, and/or breaking down the event are briefed on the emergency procedures and that drills are completed where appropriate. The audience should also be briefed where relevant (i.e., briefing the audience on fire procedures prior to a theatre performance).

For large scale events, the Event Manager should discuss the plans with the emergency services.

Emergency arrangements should also take into consideration persons with a disability, limited mobility, and children in prams etc.

### **Inclusion for People with a Disability**

Volunteer Cornwall will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where possible to ensure that people with a disability are able to participate in the event.

The following aspects will be considered: [*N.B. this is not an exhaustive list.*]

Mobility:

- ◆ Access to and egress from the event.
- ◆ Sufficient space for the movement of wheelchairs/walking aids.
- ◆ Surfaces around the event site suitable for wheelchairs/walking aids.
- ◆ Provision of accessible welfare facilities (i.e., disabled toilets).

Visual impairment:

- ◆ Pathways clear, no unnecessary obstacles; and
- ◆ Large print/audible displays available.

Hearing impairment:

- ◆ Loop system in place.
- ◆ Written notes available or a sign language interpreter; and
- ◆ Persons can be positioned close enough to be able to lip read or see the sign language interpreter easily.

Medical conditions:

- ◆ Seating provided for those who cannot stand for long periods of time.
- ◆ Notices/labelling regarding food allergies etc.; and
- ◆ Warning for any flashing/strobe lighting.

Hidden disabilities:

- ◆ Areas for people to go who struggle with large crowds; and
- ◆ Clear signs and information given in advance to reduce undue stress.

### **During the Event**

Once the physical activity starts at the event site, the focus of the Event Manager will need to move away from the planning and documentation to the effective management and monitoring of the event.

The Event Manager will need to ensure:

- ◆ That appropriate management systems are in place for each stage of the event (i.e., set up, running, and breakdown. For example, if many contractors are expected on site, then it may be necessary to plan a phased set up).
- ◆ Co-ordination and communication between all parties.
- ◆ Periodic monitoring throughout (for example, pre-event safety checklists could be devised and issued to event staff to ensure that all necessary safety measures are in place).
- ◆ Provision of information to staff, volunteers, pupils/students, third parties, and contractors etc. (e.g., an event safety induction/briefing); and
- ◆ That arrangements are in place for competent supervision.

In addition, the Event Manager will need to dynamically risk assess the event as it is taking place and ensure that additional control measures are implemented where required and that emergency procedures are executed where necessary (e.g., following a sudden change in the weather etc.).

All staff, volunteers, pupils/students, third parties, and contractors will be given an event safety induction before the event (where this is identified as necessary – e.g., for large scale/complex events etc.) on the following matters:

- ◆ Event running order.
- ◆ Organisational chart and key contacts.
- ◆ Communications protocols.
- ◆ Reporting procedures for accidents/incidents/near misses.
- ◆ Site hazards and agreed control measures.
- ◆ Site specific instructions – speed limits, loading/unloading, parking areas etc.
- ◆ Location of welfare and first aid facilities.
- ◆ Emergency arrangements (including contingency plans); and
- ◆ Other specific training for certain groups such as traffic marshals, event marshals, etc.

### **After an Event**

Where possible, the Event Manager should hold a debrief after the event with all involved to determine:

- ◆ Lessons learned (i.e., is there anything that we could do better for the next event in terms of health and safety?).

- ◆ Whether the staff/volunteers had any accidents/incidents/near misses reported to them.
- ◆ Whether there were any complaints.
- ◆ Whether the event is likely to be repeated.
- ◆ Whether the event safety plan/risk assessment was adequate; and

Whether the staff and others followed their briefings/training and adhered to the risk control measures.

### **Violence**

This is a risk that is on the increase. The need for an emergency procedure is to be considered whenever staff deal with the public.

Although easier said than done, it is important that, as far as possible, staff/volunteers try to prevent dangerous situations developing and recognise the warning signs of things getting out of hand. Most importantly, staff are not expected to put themselves at risk.

Lone workers may be more at risk from violence than other staff but, as far as possible, all staff should avoid creating or becoming involved in a violent situation by following some simple precautions such as:

- ◆ Always use a helpful, understanding, and sympathetic approach, even if you are giving bad news.
- ◆ Never deal alone with a person known to be aggressive; always have a colleague nearby.
- ◆ Staff working alone on, for example, a home visit or interviewing, should try to plan for periodic contact with colleagues, so they will know if they are alright or overdue, or arrange the visit in a public place or take a colleague with them.

Staff who feel under threat of violence should speak in short sentences, avoid eye contact, and try to remove themselves from the danger zone as quickly as possible, preferably to a place with other people around, and use their personal alarm, if held.

### **Working Alone**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as ‘those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

As with its entire staff Volunteer Cornwall has a responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare at work of staff and volunteers who work alone. It is the **senior manager’s duty** to assess the risks to lone workers within their departments, and to take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary. **Similarly lone workers have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves** and to co-operate with their senior managers in controlling the risk of solitary work.

Volunteer Cornwall’s detailed guidelines for personal protection and working alone are at Appendix A.

Once senior managers have identified the risks to lone workers, it is important that appropriate control measures are put in place to minimise those risks. Control measures may include instruction, training, and supervision. Senior managers are to check that control measures put in place are used and review the risks to lone workers on a regular basis to ensure the control measures are still adequate.

Lone workers should not give lifts or transport volunteers or clients in their own cars.

When the risk assessment for lone workers shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help or back-up should be put in place by senior managers.

The HSE leaflet Working Alone in Safety should be given to all lone workers.

### **Road Risk**

With the large number of volunteers drivers carrying out driving duties for Volunteer Cornwall and staff using their own cars for business travel it is important that road risk is well managed.

It is imperative therefore that volunteer's and employee's own vehicles, ***if used on Volunteer Cornwall business***, should meet several criteria and senior managers are to ensure that as a minimum the following are complied with:

- ◆ The vehicle is roadworthy.
- ◆ The vehicle has a current MOT certificate (if required).
- ◆ It is insured for business use.
- ◆ It is regularly serviced.
- ◆ Tyre tread depths are within legal limits.
- ◆ The driver is licensed to drive.
- ◆ The volunteer/employee carries out basic maintenance checks.
- ◆ The volunteer/employee is encouraged to become a member of a roadside recovery organisation.
- ◆ Volunteers/employees should be encouraged to turn off mobile phones when driving. However, it is already Volunteer Cornwall policy that directors, staff, and volunteers are prohibited from using mobile phones whilst driving on Volunteer Cornwall business, this also includes the use of hands-free equipment whilst driving.

Driving and working hours are monitored to ensure compliance with Working Time Regulations. In our work planning process, our managers avoid the need for staff to drive at the end of excessively long working days by as appropriate, providing overnight accommodation, arranging for driver sharing or using public transport. Managers also consider when scheduling work, the need to discourage speeding and to include within journey times, sufficient time for suitable rest breaks.

In any case we expect employees to avoid driving when tired or unwell and will normally reimburse them for additional rest breaks and unplanned overnight stays where required. This is also the case if journey times are unexpectedly extended, e.g., due to traffic, adverse weather etc., and it is not safe for the driver to complete their journey as planned.

If an employee believes that the amount of driving, they need to do as part of their work increases their risk, they are encouraged to speak to their Line Manager regarding their concerns.

Employees are required to inform their Line Manager if they are suffering from any health condition or taking any medication (prescribed and/or over the counter) which could affect their ability to drive safely.

Employees are expected to report any vehicle accidents at work, and these are recorded and investigated in the same way as other work-related incidents, and improvements made to our policy as necessary to avoid a recurrence.

If an employee who drives for work receives a driving conviction during their employment, they must notify the HR Manager immediately.

### **Stress**

Stress is defined as ‘the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them’. We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that stress is likely to be a problem for staff because of heavy workloads, nature of the work and the constant uncertainty over Volunteer Cornwall’s future. It further recognises its obligations to prevent or minimise these stress levels. It is the responsibility of senior managers to identify stress and take appropriate action, wherever possible.

We encourage a supportive culture where colleagues assist each other to ease peaks in workload. The nature of our work demands regular communication between managers and staff and plenty of opportunities for staff to share problems and seek additional support if needed. The company discourages staff from working excessive working hours and has implemented HR procedures to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations.

Senior managers are to review the Health and Safety Executive’s Management Standards Approach to tackling stress.

Volunteer Cornwall’s detailed guidelines for managing stress are at Appendix B. These guidelines cover in detail the causes, symptoms, danger signals and measures to prevent stress.

Senior managers are responsible for monitoring stress levels in their departments and are to ensure that the Chief Executive is kept informed of any actual or potential stress related problems. The Chief Executive is responsible for assessing the need and frequency of formal stress audits.

We intend that all staff will be properly resourced and trained to undertake their role. Our thorough selection processes assist us in matching individuals to the demands of each job function. Through ongoing management reviews, new starter induction procedures and annual staff appraisals, we identify and manage training and development needs. We believe in offering developmental opportunities to staff where possible and where the member of staff desires it.

Management and supervisory staff receive training in good staff management practices. If the business is intending to implement organisational or procedural changes, we ensure that managers communicate and consult with staff at an early stage.

Poor performance and attendance are actively managed to identify causes and solutions, including providing additional training or moving individuals to more suitable roles where necessary and possible. This approach also reduces the burden on other staff who would

otherwise have an additional workload.

Bullying, harassment, and discrimination are not tolerated, and the company has HR policies in place in respect of these issues together with a grievance policy. All these policies have been publicised to employees.

Stress is not an illness, but it can cause serious illness if it is not addressed, and stress will affect all staff in some way at some time during their working lives. By closely monitoring stress levels and implementing appropriate preventative measures and strategy Volunteer Cornwall will minimise the effects of stress on the organisation and its employees.

### **Mobile Phones**

The Road Traffic Act 1988 prohibits, with effect from 1 December 2003, the use of hand-held mobile phones by anyone driving a motor vehicle. A person may be regarded as “driving” a vehicle whilst the engine is running, and the vehicle is stationary. It is an offence to:

- ◆ Speak or listen to a phone call.
- ◆ Use a device interactively for accessing any sort of data, including the internet.
- ◆ Send or receive text messages or other images if the device used is held in the driver’s hand during at least part of the period of its operation.

The regulation does not prevent a driver carrying a hand-held phone in a vehicle or require the phone to be switched off. It is possible therefore to use a hand-held mobile phone to receive data when it is in a vehicle, provided that the driver is not holding it. Hands-free mobile phones, which are not held at any time during use, are not included in the new regulation.

Passengers can use a hand-held mobile phone but must not be holding it for the driver. Those accompanying learner drivers are viewed as being in control of the vehicle and are covered by the offence.

**In view of this legislation, it is Volunteer Cornwall policy that directors, staff, and volunteers are prohibited from using mobile phones whilst driving on Volunteer Cornwall business, this also includes the use of hands-free equipment whilst driving.**

Senior managers are to ensure that all current and new staff and volunteers are aware of this policy.

### **Health and Safety Law**

In accordance with the Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989, Volunteer Cornwall will issue to every member of staff a copy of the leaflet “Health and Safety Law – What You Should Know”, which sets out basic information on health and safety law in an easily understandable form. Posters are also to be displayed in all premises telling employees what they need to know about health and safety.

**Monitoring and Review**

The Health and Safety Committee, in conjunction with the Chief Executive and Senior Management Team, will monitor and implement Volunteer Cornwall’s Health and Safety Policy and issues will be brought to the Board of Directors, through the Health and Safety Committee for consideration.

There will be an annual review of the Health and Safety Policy and amendments will be submitted for approval to the Board of Directors, through the Health and Safety Committee, for incorporation into the Policy.

Failure to comply with this policy may constitute gross misconduct leading to dismissal.

Volunteer Cornwall will collect and use personal data to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its staff and others.

Signed:

Date:

Ian Jones  
Chief Executive  
On behalf of Volunteer Cornwall

Review Date: 04/27

## **Guidelines for Personal Protection and Working Alone**

### **General**

As with its entire staff Volunteer Cornwall has a responsibility for the health, safety, and welfare at work of staff who work alone. It is the senior manager's duty to assess the risks to lone workers within their departments, and to take steps to avoid or control the risk where necessary. Similarly lone workers have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and to co-operate with their senior managers in controlling the risk of solitary work.

These guidelines are suggestions about how we can help ourselves to make the workplace safer. They are not intended to make workers fearful but to help them take control in their working situations.

**Be aware of safety at work but try not to let it take you over.**

### **Planning Work Arrangements**

Lone workers should not be more at risk than other employees. However, lone workers do face problems. Some of the issues that senior managers and lone workers should consider when planning safe working arrangements are as follows:

- ◆ Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- ◆ Is there a safe way in and out for one person?
- ◆ Is there a risk of violence?
- ◆ Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- ◆ Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?
- ◆ Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- ◆ What training is required to ensure competency in, for example, safety matters?
- ◆ How will the person be supervised?
- ◆ What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?

### **Safe Procedures for Working Alone**

Senior managers are to put procedures in place to monitor lone workers to ensure that they remain safe. These may include:

- ◆ Managers regularly visiting and observing people working alone.
- ◆ Regular contact between lone workers and managers using telephones. Methods of raising the alarm if pre-planned contact is not made by the lone worker.
- ◆ Other methods of raising the alarm in the event of an emergency.
- ◆ Checks that a lone worker has returned to their office or home on completion of a task.
- ◆ Procedures to ensure that lone workers can respond correctly to emergencies. This may involve, for example, training in first aid.

- ◆ All lone workers should have access to adequate first aid facilities and mobile workers should carry a first aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

### **The Workplace**

Suggestions on how the workplace can be made a safer environment are as follows:

- ◆ Have a visitors' and/or workers' book in each department to be completed by people coming into the workplace or going out on a visit. The visitor's book should ideally include name, car registration, purpose of visit, length of visit and signature. The workers' book should include where you are going, whom you are visiting, expected time of arrival and return, and a contact number.
- ◆ Liaise with other users or departments in the same building to share concerns and overcome problems, for example having joint visitors' book.
- ◆ Challenge unfamiliar people in the building, for example "can I help you?"
- ◆ If you see anything suspicious inform your senior manager immediately.
- ◆ Contact your senior manager or health and safety representative if you have any concerns over safety.
- ◆ Review your working environment and take safety into account when arranging desks, cabinets, reception areas etc., for example don't have your back to the door.
- ◆ Report missing locks, faulty locks etc. Don't rely on someone else to do it.

### **Working Alone**

**The HSE leaflet Working Alone in Safety should be given to all lone workers. However, staff can minimise the risks associated with working alone by taking a few common-sense precautions:**

- ◆ When working alone close windows, lock doors, ensure lighting is "normal" in corridors etc. If you work on the ground floor close blinds or put posters in the windows to avoid people looking in if there are no blinds.
- ◆ Always let someone know where you are going, when you will be back, timetable of visits and contact telephone numbers.
- ◆ When interviewing alone, keep the door open if there is no alarm and ensure colleagues know where you are and whom you are with unless by doing so you are breaking confidentiality. Try never to put a client between you and a door.
- ◆ Always carry a personal alarm and make sure it is easily accessible.
- ◆ Vary your routines.

## Travel

Taking the time to follow some basic guidelines will reduce the risk of travelling alone:

- ◆ Wherever possible travel with a colleague.
- ◆ When travelling to a meeting always let someone know where you are going, a contact name and telephone number and the time you will return.
- ◆ Keep your car well maintained and serviced regularly.
- ◆ If you are travelling by car, before you begin your journey:
  - ◆ Check that your back seat and windows are clear.
  - ◆ Keep your rear doors and boot locked.
  - ◆ Check that you have enough fuel to complete the journey.
  - ◆ Check your headlights, tyres, oil etc.
- ◆ Know your route. If it is a regular journey, vary your route.
- ◆ Don't give lifts.
- ◆ Make yourself a sign indicating you need help/police. Leave it in your car all the time so that it is handy when you need it.
- ◆ If you should break down, stay in your car with the doors locked, except on a motorway when you should lock all doors except the passenger door and stand on the verge.
- ◆ Consider joining a breakdown service and when you report a breakdown make it clear that you are a woman alone (unless you are a man!).
- ◆ Keep small change with you at all times.
- ◆ Have a torch in your car.
- ◆ Keep a pair of trainers in the car so that you can run/walk comfortably.
- ◆ Try to look confident.
- ◆ Don't stop if you are on your own for any incident, accident, people flashing you etc. Instead go to a safe, well-lit place and ring for assistance if necessary.
- ◆ Always Park in a well-lit area. Check in daylight for the safest areas. Avoid trees and bushes.
- ◆ Always Park with the vehicle ready to drive out from its parking bay, to allow for a quick exit from a site, if needed.

## Reducing the Risk of Violence

This is a risk that is on the increase. The need for an emergency procedure is to be considered whenever staff deal with the public. Although easier said than done, it is important that, as far as possible, staff/volunteers try to prevent dangerous situations developing and recognise the warning signs of things getting out of hand. Most importantly, staff are not expected to put themselves at risk.

Lone workers may be more at risk from violence than other staff but, as far as possible, all staff should avoid creating or becoming involved in a violent situation by following some simple precautions such as:

- ◆ Always use a helpful, understanding, and sympathetic approach, even if you are giving bad news.
- ◆ Never deal alone with a person known to be aggressive; always have a colleague nearby.
- ◆ Staff working alone on, for example, a home visit or interviewing, should try to plan for periodic contact with colleagues, so they will know if they are alright or overdue.

Staff who feel under threat of violence should speak in short sentences, avoid eye contact, and try to remove themselves from the danger zone as quickly as possible, preferably to a place with other people around, and use their personal alarm, if held.

## Guidelines for Managing Stress

### General

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) estimate that stress is the second most common cause of work-related illness. According to the Department of Health, an estimated 270,000 people in the UK are absent from work each day due to workplace stress. The Association of Insurance and Risk Managers state that employee stress is the main emerging risk to UK organisations. An Institute of Management survey found that over 80% of managers experience symptoms of stress.

Its causes include overwork, unreasonable deadlines, office politics, and an imbalance between personal and professional lives. The adverse effects, apart from high absenteeism, include reduced productivity, blocked creativity, and loss of morale.

Employers who do not safeguard the well-being of their staff face problems of poor morale, high levels of absenteeism, high levels of staff turnover, lost productivity and a lack of creativity and innovation. They can also face substantial claims for damages for failing in their common law duty to provide a safe workplace.

### Recognising Stress

Volunteer Cornwall recognises that stress is likely to be a common problem for staff because of heavy workloads, nature of the work and the constant uncertainty over Volunteer Cornwall's future. It further recognises its obligations to prevent or minimise these stress levels. It is the responsibility of Senior Managers to identify stress and take appropriate action, wherever possible.

It is important to understand that stress is essential to life and that there are different types of stress. Stress can sometimes act as a spur; responsibility for the well being of others focuses concentration, a tight deadline may increase energy and drive. This may be termed "positive stress". However, when pressures become over intense or too numerous, we may begin to suffer "negative stress". If this is unremitting, it can lead to emotional problems and mental and physical illness.

Stress can be simply explained as the pressures on you as a person and the way you react to them. Any activities that require effort create stress – even pleasurable ones like gaining promotion or going on holiday. Harmful stress arises when there is an unresolved mismatch, between the perceived pressures of the work situation and an individual's ability to cope.

Harmful stress has been a taboo subject and because of this many people still deny or conceal its existence. They think that to admit being stressed is to admit failure and weakness. It is not. Stress is a fact of life for all of us and unless we are prepared to discuss it openly, we will fail to address the problems it causes us. As well as damaging us as people, stress is costly to Volunteer Cornwall both in human and financial terms. It is directly responsible for poor working relationships, low morale, reduced quality of service and absenteeism.

### Identifying the Causes of Occupational Stress

Stress can be caused by too much pressure in our lives or by not enough. It can affect those with too much work to do and those who have low-grade work that does not stimulate or challenge them. It can affect those dealing with difficult clients on a regular basis.

Stress can be caused by both the everyday ups and downs of life, and by major changes and crises. Change is part of all our lives, but the following major life changes are especially stressful:

- ◆ Marriage/separation/divorce/birth/bereavement/moving/job change.

It shouldn't be assumed that stress is only caused by situations in the employee's personal life. Work can exacerbate difficulties and crises and provide additional stresses as well. Factors creating stress at work may include:

- ◆ Overwork
- ◆ Your work environment
- ◆ Your work demands.
- ◆ Your own expectations
- ◆ Role ambiguity
- ◆ Unreasonable deadlines
- ◆ Office politics
- ◆ Poor working/personal relationships with colleagues
- ◆ Unaware of company policy on a particular matter
- ◆ Lack of recognition
- ◆ Lack of development and advancement
- ◆ Conflicting demands of family and organisation.

It is also important to realise that not all people are stressed by the same things. What might stress one person, such as an unreasonable deadline, might motivate another to outstanding effort. Rivalry with a colleague might stimulate one person and demotivate another. The effects of stress are individual and levels of tolerance to various stress factors differ.

### Recognising the Symptoms of Stress

The symptoms most often mentioned are:

- ◆ Difficulty in thinking rationally and seeing all aspects of a problem.
- ◆ Rigidity of views, prejudice
- ◆ Irritability and aggressiveness
- ◆ Anxiety, irrational fear
- ◆ Withdrawal from relationships
- ◆ Inability to relax and sleeping difficulties.
- ◆ Excessive drinking, excessive smoking, and dependence on drugs.

Look for the following stress indicators. These are the danger signs that alert us to the build up of harmful stress in others or ourselves:

- ◆ Behavioural:
  - loss of interest in work
  - absenteeism, poor timekeeping
  - overworking and failure to delegate
  - reduced concentration.
  - difficulty in making straightforward decisions.

- decrease in work performance.
  - short temper
  - heavier drinking, smoking, or use of drugs.
- ◆ Physical:
- loss of appetite
  - sleeplessness
  - constant tiredness
  - headaches, backaches, indigestion, nausea
  - muscle tension
  - sweating and trembling
- ◆ Emotional or mental:
- depression
  - irritability, anger
  - low self esteem
  - apathy
  - anxiety
  - forgetfulness
  - overactive brain
  - obsession with trivia
  - feeling of guilt

Everyone experiences one or more of these symptoms at one time or another in their lives. It is therefore important not to get them out of proportion. However, if unchecked, these symptoms can lead to severe chronic stress. This may manifest itself as exhaustion, nervous or mental breakdown, ulcers, hypertension, heart disease, etc.

Although the long-term physical effects of stress are still being debated, stress has been linked to high blood pressure and coronary heart disease. The medical profession in general believes there is a strong link between experience of stress and premature death.

In the end, everyone succumbs to unremitting pressure, although individuals vary as to when they start to suffer and the symptoms they display.

If you believe you are suffering from any of the stress indicators shown you should, in the first instance, seek advice from your senior manager. If you do not feel that this is appropriate, you are to contact the Chief Executive direct. If symptoms persist you should, of course, consult your GP. Volunteer Cornwall may provide confidential counselling if required.

### **Monitoring Stress**

Several specialist organisations provide health screening to employers. This includes carrying out stress audits. The Chief Executive with the Senior Managers will be responsible for assessing the need and frequency of formal stress audits.

There are also organisations providing Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) which provide confidential support for employees suffering from stress or worried by personal problems. EAPs are not just a counselling service. They can also deal with strategic issues and support the organisation as much as the individuals. They can identify significant causes of stress in the organisation and propose how these can be remedied.

Senior Managers are responsible for monitoring stress levels within their departments and are to ensure that the Chief Executive is kept informed of any actual or potential stress related problems.

Monitoring the health of employees and providing good support services makes sound economic sense.

### **Prevention of Stress**

Stress does not arise overnight, so it is usually possible to anticipate the consequences of a stressful situation and deal with it before it becomes a problem. This is where stress audits are particularly useful.

Some simple preventative measures are as follows:

- ◆ Senior Managers are to closely monitoring stress levels within their departments to identify potential stressful situations and implement appropriate strategy to minimise the impact of stress.
- ◆ Where possible avoid creating stressful situations. If someone is clearly overworked (e.g., by regularly working overtime to complete their normal duties), Senior Managers must reassign some tasks or redesign the job.
- ◆ Make sure everyone understands his or her role and responsibilities.
- ◆ Ensure that company policy is clear.
- ◆ Try and get regular exercise and fresh air, even if it is a short walk at lunchtime.
- ◆ Train managers to be sensitive to stress and watch for obvious symptoms.
- ◆ Develop a positive attitude towards stress. You may find it helpful to write down the main factors in your personal or working life which cause stress and what you (and other people) can do to address these. The personal stress audit will help you to recognise the warning signs and do something about the problems that underlie them. You may also wish to discuss these with your family, friends, colleagues, and your senior manager. In the audit try to identify:
  - what you can control yourself
  - what you can get help with
  - what is beyond your control.

Stress is a very real illness that will affect all of us in some way at some time during our working lives. By closely monitoring stress levels and implementing appropriate preventative measures and strategy Volunteer Cornwall will minimise the effects of stress on the organisation and its employees.

## **Guidelines for Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

### **General**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 emphasise the duty of employers to assess the risks of substance abuse to the health and safety of employees. It is not the policy of Volunteer Cornwall to intrude upon the privacy of members of staff or volunteers, particularly in health matters, where their condition does not affect their conduct or performance. Volunteer Cornwall must, however, be concerned where health or behaviour impairs the conduct or work performance of its staff. It recognises that alcohol is a common cause of such impairment. It also recognises that different approaches to disciplinary procedures are needed to reflect the different legal position on the possession and supply of drugs.

As a guiding principle, Volunteer Cornwall recognises that individuals may be capable of treatment to achieve the restoration of acceptable standards of conduct and performance. Volunteer Cornwall will, wherever possible, offer support to assist a member of staff to cease their use and, while it is satisfied that the member of staff concerned is supporting this action, it will make available guidance and withhold disciplinary action if possible. However, Volunteer Cornwall's responsibilities to others, such as clients, volunteers, and workplace colleagues, and for the general performance of its functions, will occasionally give cause for a member of staff's case to be considered under the disciplinary procedures.

In the case of drugs, problems do not solely arise from the use of prohibited substances. Experience elsewhere has shown that other prescribed drugs, such as tranquillisers, etc., can cause difficulties with performance at work and can themselves create dependency problems.

### **Education and Counselling**

Alcohol and drug abuse can have both physical and psychological effects, including cirrhosis (permanent scarring of the liver), psychiatric disorders including depression, sexual difficulties, irreparable brain damage, high blood pressure and obesity. Many of these are cumulative in effect and may develop undetected over many years. Effects on the workplace may include:

- Poor performance and decision making.
- Disruption in the running of departments.
- Increased absenteeism.
- Increased risk of accidents.

Volunteer Cornwall is prepared, through appropriate agencies, to arrange personal counselling and medical advice to those who wish it, or to offer it to those whose situation would seem to require it.

### **Drinking at Work**

The consumption of alcohol at the place of work during working hours is not permitted other than on special occasions such as a reception for visitors, presentations, or seasonal gatherings when the prior permission of the Chief Executive must be obtained. On such occasions the provision of alcohol should be moderate and non-alcoholic alternatives made available. Consumption of alcohol at recognised rest breaks is not permitted and consumption of alcohol at lunchtime should not be encouraged. Staff must always at work stay strictly within legal drink-driving limits.

### **Signs of Drug or Alcohol Abuse**

Some of the signs associated with drug or alcohol abuse may be caused, or aggravated, by other factors such as stress, and should be regarded only as indications that staff may have drug or alcohol problems. Signs of possible drug or alcohol abuse include:

- Sudden change in behaviour pattern.
- Memory lapses and tendency to become confused.
- Irritability and possibly violence.
- Abnormal fluctuations in mood and energy.
- Impaired job performance.
- Poor timekeeping.
- Increase in short-term sickness absence.
- Deterioration in relationships with other people.
- Physical deterioration.

### **Action by the Individual**

Individuals who know or suspect that they have an alcohol or drug-related problem are encouraged to seek help voluntarily. Inside Volunteer Cornwall they should seek help from their Senior Manager or the Chief Executive. Outside Volunteer Cornwall help can be sought from their General Practitioner or other suitable agency.

### **Action by Colleagues**

It is likely that a problem drinker or a member of staff with a drug-related problem will come to the notice of colleagues through indications of inadequate or deteriorating work performance. It is in the interests of a member of staff with alcohol or drug-related problems to be offered help as soon as possible, as prompt help carries the best hope of successful treatment.

The first approach should normally be for colleagues to encourage the member of staff to recognise the problem and to seek advice from, for example, their GP. If this fails colleagues are encouraged to alert their Senior Manager to the situation so that more formal action may be taken.

A reluctance by colleagues to take such an initiative is understandable. However, covering for neglected duties is not a kindness, and serves only to delay, or worse to prevent, a successful outcome.

### **Action by the Senior Manager**

If the Senior Manager becomes aware of the alcohol or drug-related problems of a member of staff, he/she should invite the person concerned for interview on a confidential basis. The opportunity should be taken to record concern for the health and possible predicament of the member of staff concerned, to highlight the support available and to urge the member of staff to seek help as soon as possible. The Senior Manager is to monitor the situation in case further action is required.

### **Sources of Help**

The main facilities for the medical treatment of a member of staff will be available through the National Health Service, either from their GP or by referral to hospital. The assistance required may not always be solely medical, and guidance, counselling and moral support by voluntary agencies and other such organisations may be important. Information and advice on how to approach these organisations should be available from their GP.

### **Sick Leave**

If it is considered that medical treatment or some other programme of help will be useful to a member of staff, Volunteer Cornwall is willing to authorise a period of sick leave to allow such a treatment to be followed. Requests for sick leave under these circumstances will be as authorised by the F&GP Committee.

### **Disciplinary Action**

The levels of misconduct and failure in performance which may result from alcohol or drug abuse extend over a considerable range. Where Volunteer Cornwall is aware that alcohol or drugs may be a contributory factor, and where there is a willingness on behalf of the member of staff concerned to correct their situation, Volunteer Cornwall will normally be willing to suspend the introduction of disciplinary procedures to allow treatment.

If a member of staff refuses to accept that they have a problem which, in the opinion of Volunteer Cornwall, has its cause in alcohol or drug abuse, or is unwilling to follow the course of treatment recommended, or discontinues the recommended treatment, or there is a recurrence of lack of performance or misconduct, the matter should be brought to the attention of the F&GP Committee for discussion of possible further action which could include disciplinary action.

Any reversion of behaviour, which occurs following a substantial period of satisfactory performance, should be treated according to the circumstances of the case.

### **Agencies**

Frank Helpline 0300 123 6600

This service is available 24 hours a day, seven days per week, and offers confidential information, advice, and support for anyone concerned about alcohol and illegal drugs.

## **Providing Work Experience Placements**

### **Introduction**

This policy relates to all incoming work experience placements that are hosted by Volunteer Cornwall, including project work and administration. Much of our work experience placement are students and school children.

Volunteer Cornwall's priority is to ensure that those on work experience are kept safe, and we recognise our responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of those on work experience placements with our organisation. We also recognise that whilst the placement holder is carrying out their work experience, that they are regarded as our employees for purposes of health, safety, and insurance.

### **Procedure**

Requests for work experience placements will usually be received in writing or by email and approved (or not rejected) by the HR Manager. If the proposed work experience placement is accepted, then a Placement Supervisor will be assigned who will be responsible for completing the processes for the placement.

### **Booking Forms/Gathering Information**

The Placement Supervisor will be responsible for the collection of all documentation necessary, and the completion of the paperwork for the school or college.

### **Working Hours**

Young workers have special rights under the Working Time Regulations 1999 (as amended), and these must be adhered to for persons on work experience placements and will therefore need to be considered when agreeing hours of work for each placement. The rights of young workers – those over the minimum school leaving age but under 18, and those under the minimum school leaving age on approved work experience schemes – differ from adults in the following ways:

- ◆ A limit of eight hours working time a day and 40 hours a week.
- ◆ Not to work either between 10pm and 6am or between 11pm and 7am.
- ◆ 12 hours' rest between each working day; and
- ◆ Two days' weekly rest and a 30-minute in-work rest break when working longer than four and a half hours.

### **Safeguarding / Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)**

If the work experience placement is going to involve the person working with children or young persons (i.e., those under the age of 18) and/or adults at risk, it may also be necessary for them to have a DBS Check. If in doubt, contact the HR Manager who will advise you of their expectations. If a DBS check is required, it is the responsibility of the Placement Supervisor to ensure that the person obtains a DBS check prior to commencement of the work experience placement. Therefore, it is essential the need for one is identified early as this may delay approval of the incoming work experience placement.

## Risk Assessments

Once approval has been granted for the work experience placement to go ahead, it is the responsibility of the Placement Supervisor to complete a risk assessment. If there are any risks identified by the risk assessment, they will either be controlled so far as is reasonably practicable, or the work experience placement holder may be prohibited from entering certain areas and/or engaging in certain activities during their work experience placement to eliminate the risk.

If the work experience placement holder is classed as a child (i.e. they have not yet reached the official minimum school leaving age – pupils will reach this in the school year in which they turn 18), a copy of the risk assessment will be provided to their parents/guardians with the key findings, and we would ask that the partner/guardian signs to confirm acknowledgement of the potential risks.

Risk assessments are kept on file for a minimum of 3 years.

Children are prohibited from undertaking certain activities. These include:

- Activities that are **beyond** their physical or psychological capacity;
- Activities that involve harmful exposure to substances that are toxic, can cause cancer, can damage or harm an unborn child, or can chronically affect human health in any other way;
- Activities that involve **harmful** exposure to radiation;
- Activities that involve the risk of accidents **that cannot reasonably be recognised or avoided** by young people due to their insufficient attention to safety or lack of experience or training; and
- Activities that have a risk to health from **extreme** cold, heat, noise or vibration.

Young persons (i.e., those age 16 or 17) may carry out activities if they carry the above risks, if it is:

- Necessary for training purposes;
- They are supervised by a competent person; and
- The risks are reduced to the lowest level, as far as reasonably practicable.

## Work Experience Induction Checklist

It is the Placement Supervisors responsibility to complete a Work Experience Induction Checklist with the person on their first day of placement. This will cover the following aspects as a minimum:

- ◆ Tour of the premises.
- ◆ Location of facilities (e.g., toilets, handwashing facilities, drinking water, etc.).
- ◆ The Organisation's legal responsibilities and duty of care.
- ◆ The person's legal responsibilities to themselves and others.
- ◆ The Organisation's Health and Safety Policy, and arrangements.
- ◆ Name of designated Placement Supervisor and supervision arrangements.
- ◆ Significant risks and control measures.
- ◆ Prohibitions (e.g., areas, activities) and Health & Safety rules.
- ◆ Emergency and fire arrangements (e.g., how to raise the alarm, location of fire exits, fire assembly point(s) etc.);
- ◆ Location of first aid box(es) and Name(s) of First Aider(s).
- ◆ How to report an accident.
- ◆ Ill health and incident reporting.
- ◆ Manual handling hazards and protective measures.

- ◆ Personal protective equipment and clothing (e.g., how and when to wear it);
- ◆ Safe use of equipment and machinery.
- ◆ Rest break arrangements.
- ◆ Uniform/dress code.

The Placement Supervisor must ensure that the original signed copy of the Work Experience Induction Checklist is kept on file for a minimum of 3 years.

### **Responsibilities**

The following people will have an involvement in the implementation of this procedure, as follows:

#### **Placement Supervisors/HR Manager**

Are responsible for:

- ◆ Agreeing the placement verbally in the first instance.
- ◆ Ensuring that all paperwork has been completed and signed by the person requesting the work experience placement, the Placement Supervisor, and the relevant Director/Manager.
- ◆ Ensuring that a Risk Assessment and where necessary, a DBS check has been completed.
- ◆ Completing a Work Experience Induction Checklist with the person on the first day of their placement, and ensuring that this is signed; and
- ◆ Ensuring that the work experience placement employee is adequately supervised by a competent person throughout their placement. Where work experience placement employees are placed under the supervision of a member of staff that is not their Placement Supervisor, it is the responsibility of the Placement Supervisor to brief that member of staff on key information e.g., any agreed prohibitions, medical conditions etc.
- ◆ Working with Placement Supervisors/HR Manager to carry out a Risk Assessment for each person wishing to undertake a work experience placement on the organisation's premises.
- ◆ providing advice on the protection of children and vulnerable adults, including whether a DBS check is required etc.

#### **Staff**

Upon a verbal or written request for an incoming work experience placement, it is the responsibility of staff to refer the request to the HR Manager for approval.

#### **Work Experience Placement Employees (i.e., Persons Undertaking Work Experience Placements)**

Persons undertaking work experience placements have a responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:

- ◆ To take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- ◆ To co-operate with their employer in complying with their legal duties; and
- ◆ Not to interfere with intentionally or recklessly or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety, or welfare (e.g., fire extinguishers).

Persons undertaking work experience placements are also responsible for notifying their Placement Supervisor:

- ◆ Of any existing medical conditions, or any medical conditions that may arise during the work experience placement (including pregnancy);
- ◆ Of any work-related accidents and/or ill-health; and/or of any health and safety concerns/issues that may arise.