



Service Procedure

HEALTH AND SAFETY - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Abstract:

The purpose of this guidance is to outline the health & safety duties, functions and responsibilities of those within the Service, and the management arrangements that exist to assist them to secure the objectives.

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1. AIM OF SERVICE PROCEDURE

- (1) All employees of the Police Service, both police officers and police staff, and secondees to the police and others to whom the Police Service would appear to be the host employer have a role to play in securing the objectives of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (the Police Service) Health and Safety Policy.
- (2) The following management arrangements outline the duties, functions and responsibilities of those within the Service and the arrangements that exist to assist them to secure the objectives.

2. INTRODUCTION

- (1) The general purpose of the over-arching Health & Safety Policy (Policy Directive 14/06) is to secure the health, safety and welfare of persons at work, including an aim to involve everyone and make them aware of the importance of these matters. This will improve both frontline and support staff safety, which will in turn, ensure the availability of resources to fulfil the Chief Constable's policing functions and the policing objectives of the NIPB.
- (2) The Policy itself is aimed at all levels of the organisation and applies to all full-time and part-time police officers; members of police staff, including agency staff; student officers, secondees to the Police Service and others to whom the Police Service would appear to be the host employer (collectively referred to as the Police Service staff).

3. APPLICATION

(1) Northern Ireland Policing Board

- (a) The primary function of the Policing Board is to ensure the maintenance of an efficient and effective Police Service.
- (b) The Policing Board are the employer of the Support Staff, but such staff remain under the direction and control of the Chief Constable.
- (c) Under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 the Policing Board, as legal employer, owes a duty of care for the health and safety of police staff and a similar duty to non-employees. This duty is discharged through the health and safety management system of the Police Service and by oversight through corporate governance processes.
- (d) The Policing Board also has a duty to ensure that premises within the Police estate owned by the Policing Board are safe, which it discharges through the safety management system and through its oversight of the Police Services management of the police estate.
- (e) Whilst the Policing Board will hold him to account, the Chief Constable is responsible for the delivery of policing services in a safe manner.

(2) The Chief Constable

- (a) Ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety within the Police Service rests with the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable and the Policing Board are responsible for ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to meet the Service's obligations under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and the Service's Health and Safety Policy.
- (b) The Chief Constable has delegated the day-to-day management and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy to the Deputy Chief Constable and the Director of Human Resources.

(3) The Deputy Chief Constable

As the person with delegated responsibility for health and safety, the Deputy Chief Constable has the following responsibilities:

- (a) Through each Chief Officer put the Health and Safety Policy into effect and support those who use and enforce it;
- (b) Through each Chief Officer ensure all staff who have responsibilities under the Health and Safety legislation receive suitable and adequate training commensurate with their responsibilities and duties;
- (c) Through each Chief Officer, ensure that each Area Coordinator, District Commander and Head of Branch or Department is aware of their responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978.

(4) The Director of Human Resources will:

- (a) Chair the PSNI Executive Health and Safety Committee (EHSC) and support Local Health and Safety Committees.
- (b) Monitor the Health and Safety performance of the Service and recommend any changes deemed necessary to the Policing Plan.
- (c) Ensure the Service provides a competent Health and Safety advisory service and Occupational Health and Well-being Service (OHW).

(5) Chief Officers, Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches or Departments

- (a) Chief Officers, Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches or Departments are accountable to the Deputy Chief Constable through their respective command/line management structures for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy within their area of responsibility. They are responsible for the health and safety of their staff while on duty and for others who may be affected by their work activities.
- (b) Chief Officers etc may delegate key health and safety duties or functions to nominated individuals within their area of responsibility. Such appointments must be in writing and must clearly identify the duties being assigned to the personnel concerned. The nominated individual must be competent to perform their delegated role and must be allocated adequate time, resources and training. It is important to note that responsibility and accountability cannot be delegated to these persons.
- (c) The general health and safety duties of Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches and Departments are as follows:
 - (i) To ensure that the Service and other specific Health and Safety policies and instructions are complied with;
 - (ii) To introduce and maintain local Health and Safety policies where considered necessary and periodically review the adequacy of same;
 - (iii) To issue 'local' instructions to their own staff in relation to health and safety matters and ensure these instructions are followed by personnel;
 - (iv) To ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out and recorded within all areas under their responsibility; risk assessments are required to cover vulnerable

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groups such as individuals who are covered by Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), pregnant workers, young persons and children. This list is not exhaustive.

- (v) To ensure that the contents of the risk assessments are brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel;
- (vi) To ensure that risk assessments are reviewed on a regular basis and amended when necessary;
- (vii) To ensure that there is appropriate liaison arrangements with contractors to consider the risks associated with each others work activities and agreement on control measures to be used.
- (viii) To ensure that sufficient resources, including equipment, supervisors and staff are allocated to each task to ensure a safe system of work can be maintained;
- (ix) To ensure that all staff, including those newly appointed or transferred, have the necessary information, instruction and training and that they are competent to carry out their work safely;
- (x) To ensure that all staff newly appointed to their area of responsibility are informed of the local Health and Safety policies and arrangements for health and safety. Copies of same should be readily available;
- (xi) To ensure that in their absence a named deputy is fully aware of their duties with regard to health and safety;
- (xii) To ensure that arrangements are established and maintained to manage fire safety and that contingency plans exist to cope effectively with emergencies, ie fire, bomb, serious injury. The relevant arrangements must be communicated to all staff within the premises;
- (xiii) To ensure that there is adequate first aid cover and welfare facilities and that these are properly equipped and maintained;
- (xiv) To ensure that all accidents and incidents are fully investigated and that Form e23/10 (available via eServices), is submitted within seven days in compliance with [Procedures for accident/incident reporting \(electronic 23/10\)](#);
- (xv) To ensure that all major injuries and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Branch within 24 hours by fax or email on Form 23/10(b). This must be followed up by an e23/10 within seven days.
- (xvi) To ensure that the Staff Association/Trade Unions Local Safety Representatives are informed of all incidents, accidents (including near misses) or hazards to enable them to discharge their functions;
- (xvii) To keep themselves informed of all incidents, accidents (including near misses) or hazards within their area of responsibility and ensure that the necessary remedial action is taken to prevent recurrence;
- (xviii) To ensure that safety inspections of premises and equipment are carried out on a quarterly basis (as a minimum);
- (xix) To examine reports of safety inspections and investigations and to arrange for shortcomings and defects in the existing safety measures and arrangements to be rectified as soon as reasonably practicable;

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- (xx) To make themselves available to receive staff representatives and hold meetings at local level as necessary;
- (xxi) To keep under review the necessity for further safety measures, instructions and training to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons affected by police activities, including persons in custody;
- (xxii) To retain copies of inspection reports, risk assessments, and local instructions and make them available for inspection by the Health and Safety Branch and staff representatives on request;
- (xxiii) To facilitate the Health and Safety Branch undertaking Police Health and Safety Audits and at local level to act upon recommendations from the Audit for the improvement of local health and safety management systems.
- (xxiv) To complete the annual PSNI Health and Safety certificate of assurance in respect of their area of responsibility.

(6) Officers in Charge and Other Supervisory Grades

- (a) Officers in Charge and other Supervisory Grades are responsible to the Area Coordinators, District Commander, Head of Department or Branch for the implementation of the Health and Safety policy in their area of responsibility.
- (b) The Officer/Supervisor will:
 - (i) Be familiar with Service and local policies/instructions affecting their health and safety at work and endeavour to ensure compliance;
 - (ii) Carry out and review risk assessments as required. The Officer/Supervisor may enlist the assistance of a risk assessor;
 - (iii) Instruct personnel in their area of control of:
 - (A) their responsibilities in relation to the health and safety of themselves and of others;
 - (B) hazards and risks that may be encountered in the course of their work and precautions necessary to safeguard their health and safety. Reference should be made to the appropriate risk assessment;
 - (C) safe working methods and to ensure that persons who are appointed to use plant, machinery or equipment have had sufficient training, information and instruction in order to operate them safely.
 - (iv) Ensure that protective clothing and equipment is issued when required, and that so far as is reasonably practicable, the clothing is worn and the equipment used. Relevant instruction regarding storage and maintenance must be provided at the time of issue;
 - (v) Set a personal example to those under their control by fully complying with Service procedures, safe systems of work and risk assessments at all times;
 - (vi) With the approval of the senior manager, institute or initiate as appropriate, additional health and safety measures. Ensure that any buildings/structural remedial measures deemed necessary are arranged in consultation with the Premises Officer;
 - (vii) Maintain arrangements within contingency plans i.e. fire, bomb, serious injury;

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- (viii) Regularly inspect their area of responsibility in order to ensure that safety measures are being maintained and safety instructions and safe practices are being observed;
- (ix) Report any apparent shortcomings in the organisation's arrangements for health and safety to their line manager;
- (x) Ensure that adequate and suitable arrangements exist to enable their place of work to be maintained in a clean and tidy state. Report to their line manager, Premises Officer or another designated individual any defect in machinery, fittings or structures that could adversely affect the safety of personnel;
- (xi) Ensure that all accidents and incidents in their area of responsibility are fully investigated and remedial action taken where applicable to prevent recurrence. When necessary copies of the investigative report must be forwarded to the Health and Safety Branch, Area Coordinators, District Commander and Head of Branch or Department;
- (xii) Make themselves reasonably available to receive and discuss safety matters raised by staff within their area of responsibility;
- (xiii) Encourage staff under their control to make suggestions to improve health and safety arrangements;
- (xiv) Action reports and recommendations made by the Health and Safety Branch.

(7) All Police Officers, Police Staff and Seconded to the Police and Others to whom The Police Service would appear to be Host Employer

- (a) Everyone, irrespective of rank or grade, have duties and responsibilities to secure compliance with Health and Safety legislation and the Service Health and Safety Policy. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action. Individual employees may also be subject to criminal proceedings for breaching their legislative responsibilities.
- (b) Everyone shall:
 - (i) Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by our work;
 - (ii) Make themselves familiar with, and conform to, the Service and Local Health and Safety policies;
 - (iii) Conform to all Health and Safety instructions and safe systems of work;
 - (iv) Use the appropriate safety equipment and devices provided;
 - (v) Use, maintain and store all equipment, including tools and personal protective equipment as per instructions. Report all hazards and defects to their supervisor and if desired the Staff Association representative;
 - (vi) Never use or operate any equipment belonging to or under the control of any outside contractor without prior approval and the permission of your immediate supervisor;
 - (vii) Report all accidents, damage and unsafe practices at the workplace to their supervisors and if desired the Staff Associations, whether staff are injured or not (including but not exclusively via Form e23/10 on e-services);
 - (viii) Undertake training as required, such as specified courses or awareness training via E-Learning, including refresher;

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- (ix) When appropriate, make suggestions regarding safety improvements to their line manager and if desired the Staff Association representative;
- (x) Seek clarification regarding health and safety issues where necessary.

(8) Officers in Charge of Premises

- (a) An officer shall be assigned overall responsibility for each premises. In many cases the highest-ranking person (e.g. District Commander) will also be the Officer in Charge of Premises.
- (b) The Officer must be of sufficient rank/grade to ensure that all persons within the premises comply with the regulations.
- (c) The Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the General Policy Statement of the Health and Safety Policy Directive in relation to the following:
 - (i) The fabric of the building and surrounding grounds within the site;
 - (ii) Installations within the site e.g. electricity supply, water supply, heating, boilers etc;
 - (iii) Security of the premises;
 - (iv) Fire safety;
 - (v) Site traffic including marking, signage etc;
 - (vi) Services provided e.g. cleaning, groundstaff etc;
 - (vii) Contractors on site;
 - (viii) Enforcement of the 'No Smoking' policy;
 - (ix) Provision of adequate welfare facilities i.e. sanitary and rest facilities;
 - (x) Manage any asbestos on site in accordance with the 'ESBU Procedure for the Management of Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's) within the PSNI Estate' [Service Procedure 4/09](#) refers.
- (d) The duties relating to the above may be delegated by the Officer in Charge of the Premises to nominated individuals. Any nominations must be made in writing and the Officer in Charge must ensure that the nominated person has been given sufficient information, instruction and/or training to carry out the tasks. Nominated individuals should attend training as designated by ESBU and Health and Safety Branch.
- (e) Overall legal responsibility for compliance remains with the assigned Officer in Charge.

(9) Fire Precautions Officer

- (a) The Officer in Charge of Premises has ultimate responsibility for managing fire safety at each location under their control. They may delegate the duties by nominating in writing a Fire Precautions Officer.
- (b) The Fire Precautions Officer shall:

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- (i) Ensure that a current copy of the Fire Risk Assessment (or Certificate, were required) is held at the premises along with the Fire Safety Manual and that the conditions laid down in the Fire Risk Assessment/Fire Certificate are observed;
- (ii) Ensure that all equipment provided in relation to fire safety (e.g. alarms, extinguishers, emergency lights) is maintained in good working order, is available for use if needed, and any defect discovered is reported to the Premises Officer, Officer in Charge or any other designated individual as appropriate;
- (iii) Ensure that registers relating to such equipment are kept up to date;
- (iv) Co-ordinate the training of staff on the premises concerning fire-fighting and emergency evacuation procedures;
- (v) Organise and manage fire evacuation drills twice a year or more frequently if required;
- (vi) Co-ordinate the activities of fire wardens (where appointed);
- (vii) Liaise with the Premises Officer regarding alterations that may affect the fire certificate or other fire safety management arrangements.

(10) Chief Health and Safety Adviser

- (a) The Chief Health and Safety Adviser is responsible to the Director of Human Resources for monitoring the application of the Health and Safety Policy and for providing health and safety, training, advice and assistance to police and police staff.
- (b) The Health and Safety Branch shall be the focal point for all reports and information concerning accidents, hazards or potential hazards.
- (c) The Health and Safety Branch, under the direction of the Chief Health and Safety Adviser, is responsible for the following:
 - (i) Assisting with the development and implementation of all Health and Safety policy within the organisation;
 - (ii) Assisting with revising and redrafting of Service instructions and policies with any health and safety implications;
 - (iii) Advising management and staff at all levels on matters pertaining to health and safety, relevant regulations, standards and codes of practice;
 - (iv) Facilitating, advising on, and promoting both Health and Safety training and accident prevention;
 - (v) Promoting within the organisation an understanding that management of health and safety is an integral part of a manager's role;
 - (vi) Acting as Service liaison with the Health and Safety Executive (NI) and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) when necessary accompanying their inspectors during visits to sites/premises;
 - (vii) Liaising with other health and safety professionals and relevant outside agencies to improve health and safety within the organisation;
 - (viii) Distributing health and safety information and instructions to all interested parties;

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- (ix) Conducting inspections at police premises and operational locations. Making recommendations with a view to ensuring health and safety standards are maintained or improved for the benefit of all;
- (x) Receiving reports of all accidents (injury and non-injury), hazards and potential hazards and where considered necessary carrying out further investigations and/or advising on remedial measures;
- (xi) Organising and carrying out a programme of audits of Areas, Districts, Departments, Branches and specialist areas health and safety management systems, and preparing follow-up reports for the attention of local management;
- (xii) Keeping the Service Health and Safety Policy under regular review and advising the Deputy Chief Constable accordingly;
- (xiii) Providing data and reports to the EHSC and ensuring all actions from recommendations are carried out.
- (xiv) Provide a summary of the compliance and results of the annual PSNI Health and Safety Certificate of Assurance to the Director of Human Resources to inform the Chief Constable's Stewardship Statement to the Department of Justice.

(11) The Chief Medical Adviser

The Chief Medical Adviser shall be responsible for the provision and advice to police and police staff on matters relating to occupational health issues. The Chief Medical Adviser shall be responsible for ensuring that any necessary occupational health surveillance is carried out as deemed appropriate on the basis of best occupational health practice and as required by relevant legislation.

(12) Staff Associations

- (a) It is essential that there is close co-operation between Staff Associations/Trade Unions and management at all levels regarding health and safety and for the fullest of consultation to take place.
- (b) Provision shall be made for appointed Staff Association/Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives to be present at meetings of the Executive and Local Health and Safety Committees.
- (c) Full details of their roles and functions can be found on the HSENI website, <http://www.hseni.gov.uk> or the GB HSE Website, <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg232.pdf>
- (d) A summary function of local Staff Association/Trade Union representatives is as follows:
 - (i) Investigate members' complaints, relative to health, safety and welfare at work;
 - (ii) Make representations to Police on matters relative to health, safety and welfare;
 - (iii) Investigate locally, potential hazards and dangerous occurrences and examine the causes of accidents;
 - (iv) Following reasonable notification to local management, carry out local safety inspections. Police representatives may be present during an inspection;
 - (v) Inspect the workplace following a substantial change in the conditions of work;
 - (vi) Attend meetings of the Local Health and Safety Committees;

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- (vii) To represent groups of employees in consultation with Inspectors appointed under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 (HSENI) and receive information from them.

4. LEGAL BASIS

The Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 provides a legislative framework to promote, stimulate and encourage high standards of health and safety at work. This is further developed by Regulations made under the Order. Health and Safety legislation was extended to police officers through the introduction of the Police (Health and Safety) (NI) Order 1997.

5. PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE

(1) Executive Health and Safety Committee

- (a) This Committee will oversee the development and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy throughout the organisation. The Committee will meet at least three times each year and comprise the following:
 - (i) Director of Human Resources (chairperson);
 - (ii) Chief Medical Adviser;
 - (iii) Head of Estate Services;
 - (iv) Chief Health and Safety Adviser;
 - (v) Head of Transport Services;
 - (vi) ICS;
 - (vii) Legal Services;
 - (viii) Head of Business Services (representative);
 - (ix) HR Operations Manager;
 - (x) Technical Research (PaLS);
 - (xi) Police College (COT);
 - (xii) Staff Association/Trade Union Representatives;
 - (xiii) Regional Representatives;
 - (xiv) Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB).
- (b) The chairperson may invite any individual whose attendance at a specific meeting would be considered beneficial.
- (c) The core functions of the committee are:
 - (i) Considering proposals for implementing health and safety legislation;
 - (ii) Monitoring the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and compliance with requirements;
 - (iii) Identify competency training needs for management and staff;

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- (iv) Monitoring the effectiveness of health and safety communication and publicity;
- (v) Monitoring the work of any project team or working party established under the EHSC;
- (vi) Considering accident and occupational ill-health statistics with a view to recommending appropriate preventative action;
- (vii) Considering reports submitted by safety representatives;
- (viii) Considering reports or information submitted by health and safety enforcement authorities;
- (ix) Considering special reports or issues raised by Local Health and Safety Committees;
- (x) Considering investigative reports prepared by the Health and Safety Accident Investigator;
- (d) The Committee may also consider issues that cannot be readily resolved at local level, via local Health and Safety Committees.
- (e) The Chief Health and Safety Adviser will provide a short report to the committee, updating the members on any emerging aspects of the management of health and safety matters.

(2) Local Health and Safety Committees

- (a) These will be established and maintained in Headquarters locations, Areas and Districts. Membership of the committees may be drawn from stations, departments, branches, offices and workshops etc, as considered necessary and are of whatever rank or grade as appropriate.
- (b) The Committee will act in a co-coordinating, advisory and monitoring role in relation to all local aspects of health and safety.
- (c) As a minimum the Committee shall meet quarterly. Additional meetings can be held as and when required.
- (d) Membership of the Local Health and Safety Committees shall include:
 - (i) Chairperson (The Senior Person in the Area, District/HQ Department/Branch or site: i.e. District Commander, Head of Department/Branch, person in charge of site);
 - (ii) Officers and police staff as required e.g. Head of Business Services/ NPT and LPT Supervisor, District Support Teams, Events Planning etc;
 - (iii) Local Fire Precautions Officer;
 - (iv) Staff Representatives;
 - (v) Health and Safety Adviser (co-opted) to attend a minimum of two meetings per year;
 - (vi) Premises Officer/Buildings Administrator.
- (e) With regard to the management of Local Health and Safety Committees the following points should be borne in mind:
 - (i) Sufficient time should be allowed for the full volume of business;
 - (ii) Meetings should not be cancelled or postponed - except in exceptional circumstances;
 - (iii) Meetings must be scheduled to allow all members to attend;

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- (iv) Copies of the agenda should be forwarded in advance of the meeting to all members of the committee;
- (v) Agreed minutes of the meeting should be forwarded to each member and a copy to the Health and Safety Branch no later than 14 days after the meeting;
- (vi) Important issues that cannot be resolved locally may be raised with the EHSC through one of the EHSC standing members, at the discretion of the EHSC chairperson.
- (f) A list of suggested agenda items for Local Health and Safety Committees is available on PoliceNet Health and Safety Branch pages.
- (g) Local District Command may instigate additional safety committees as considered necessary if it assists with Health and Safety management.

(3) Establishing and Reviewing Policies

- (a) Personnel establishing and reviewing policies shall ensure that health and safety is a key criteria when prioritising resources.
- (b) The EHSC will oversee the implementation of these health and safety management procedures throughout the organisation, and meet at least three times each year and will be comprised the membership at Paragraph 5.

(4) Service Reference Documents

The Police Service Health and Safety Policy, arrangements and the following health and safety documents can be accessed through PoliceNet. These can be found under Human Resources at the following links:

[Health and Safety Bulletins/Safety Alert Notices;](#)

[Police Service Generic Risk Assessments;](#)

[Home Office Generic Risk Assessments;](#)

[Premises Officer Guide;](#)

[Information and Guidance for Commanders and Managers;](#)

[Fire Safety Manual;](#)

[Fire Procedures and Management Guidance.](#)

6. INTERNAL LINKS

- (1) This Service Procedure should be read in conjunction with:
[Policy Directive 14/06: Health & Safety](#)
- (2) Many other Service Procedures make reference to Health and Safety legislation with regard to police activities and in particular the need for specific risk assessments and consultation during decision-making processes.