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Health and Safety – Roles and Responsibilities

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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 Health and Safety Policy.

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.

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1. Introduction

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Health & Safety policy secures the health, safety and welfare of persons at work. It involves everyone making them aware of the importance of these matters. This will improve the safety of both frontline and support which will, in turn, ensure the availability of resources to fulfil the Chief Constable's policing functions and the policing objectives of the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB).

The policy 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).

2. Roles

2.1 Northern Ireland Policing Board

The primary function of the Policing Board is to ensure the maintenance of an efficient and effective Police Service.

The Policing Board are the employer of the Police Staff, but such staff remain under the direction and control of the Chief Constable.

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 PSNI and by oversight through corporate governance processes.

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.

Whilst the Policing Board will hold him to account, the Chief Constable is responsible for the delivery of policing services in a safe manner.

2.2 The Chief Constable

Ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety within the PSNI 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 PSNI obligations under the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and the PSNI Health and Safety Policy.

The Chief Constable has delegated the day-to-day management and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy to the Chief Operating Officer and the Assistant Chief Officer's (ACO) People & Organisational Development. The Deputy Chief Constable will, on behalf of the Chief Constable, chair the PSNI Executive Health and Safety Committee (EHSC) and support Local Health and Safety Committees.

2.3 The Chief Operating Officer

As the person with delegated responsibility for health and safety, the Chief Operating Officer 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.

2.4 The ACO People & Organisational Development

The ACO People & Organisational Development will:

- Monitor the Health and Safety performance of the Service and recommend any changes deemed necessary to the Policing Plan;
- Ensure the PSNI provides a competent Health and Safety advisory service and Occupational Health and Well-being Service (OHW).

2.5 Chief Officers, Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches or Departments

Chief Officers, Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches or Departments are accountable to the Chief

Operating Officer 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.

They must ensure that in their absence a named deputy is fully aware of their duties with regard to health and safety;

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.

Along with those specified in '**Officers in Charge and All Supervisory Grades**', the general health and safety duties of Area Coordinators, District Commanders, Heads of Branches and Departments are as follows:

- a) To introduce and maintain local Health and Safety policies and instructions, where considered necessary and periodically review the adequacy and compliance of same;
- b) To ensure the timely implementation and review of risk control measures, monitor these for effectiveness and amend where appropriate, updating risk assessments as necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all persons affected by police activities, including persons in custody; i.e. that sufficient resources, including equipment, supervisors and staff are allocated to each task to ensure a safe system of work can be maintained;
- c) To ensure that there is appropriate liaison arrangements with contractors to consider the risks associated with each other's work activities and agreement on control measures to be used;
- d) To ensure that arrangements are established and maintained to manage fire safety and that contingency plans exist to cope effectively with emergencies, i.e. fire, bomb, and serious injury. The relevant

arrangements must be communicated to all staff within the premises/Branch;

- e) To ensure that there is adequate first aid cover and welfare facilities and that these are properly equipped and maintained;
- f) To ensure that the Staff Association/Trade Unions Local Safety Representatives are informed of incidents, accidents (including near misses) or hazards to enable them to discharge their functions. This may be via the local Health & Safety Committee or other appropriate means;
- g) To ensure that safety inspections of premises and equipment are carried out three times per year (as a minimum);
- h) To examine reports of safety inspections and investigations and to arrange for accepted shortcomings and defects in the existing safety measures and arrangements to be rectified as soon as reasonably practicable;
- i) To retain copies of inspection reports, risk assessments and local instructions, in line with the PSNI Review, Retention

and Disposal Schedule SI04/19 Records Management refers (Please see [Corporate Policy Homepage](#) under Service Instructions) and make them available for inspection by the appropriate enforcing authorities, Health and Safety Branch and staff representatives on request;

- j) 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;
- k) To complete the annual PSNI Health and Safety certificate of assurance in respect of their area of responsibility.

2.6 Officers in Charge and All Supervisory Grades

Officers in Charge and all Supervisory Grades are responsible to their respective manager/supervisor (i.e. the Area Coordinators, District Commander, Head of Department or Branch) for the implementation of the Health and Safety policy in their area of responsibility.

The Officer/Supervisor will:

- a) Be familiar with and ensure that the Service and local policies/instructions as a result of their activities affecting their health and safety at work and endeavour to ensure compliance;
 - work and precautions necessary to safeguard their health and safety. Reference should be made to the appropriate risk assessment and safe systems of work;
- b) Carry out and record suitable and sufficient risk assessments within all areas under their responsibility and brought to the attention of appropriate personnel; risk assessments are required to cover vulnerable groups such as individuals who are covered by Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), pregnant workers, young persons and children. This list is not exhaustive;
- c) Review risk assessments and safe systems of work as required. The Officer/Supervisor may enlist the assistance of a risk assessor;
- d) Instruct personnel in their area of control of:
 - i. Their responsibilities in relation to the health and safety of themselves and of others;
 - ii. Hazards and risks that may be encountered in the course of their
- e) Ensure that all staff, including those newly appointed or transferred, have the necessary information, instruction, training, supervision and that they are competent to carry out their work safely;
- f) Ensure that all requisite plant, machinery and protective clothing and equipment is issued when required, and that so far as is reasonably practicable, the clothing is worn and the equipment used. It must be issued, used, inspected, maintained, stored and where required disposed of in accordance with Service instruction;
- g) Set a personal example to those under their control by fully complying with Service Instructions, safe systems of work and risk assessments at all times;
- h) 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;

- i) Maintain arrangements within contingency plans i.e. fire, bomb and serious injury;
- j) Report any apparent shortcomings in the organisation's arrangements for health and safety to their line manager;
- k) Ensure that police officers and staff under their control maintain their place of work 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;
- l) To ensure that all accidents and incidents are fully investigated and that Form e23/10, is submitted within seven days in compliance with procedures for accident/incident reporting (electronic 23/10);
- m) To ensure that all major injuries and dangerous occurrences are reported to the Health and Safety Branch within 24 hours by telephone, fax or email on Form 23/10(b). This must be followed up by an e23/10 within seven days;
- n) To keep themselves informed of all incidents, accidents (including near misses) or hazards in their area of responsibility and ensure remedial action is 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;
- o) Make themselves reasonably available to receive and discuss safety matters raised by staff (including staff representatives) within their area of responsibility, encouraging staff under their control to make suggestions to improve health and safety arrangements;
- p) Action reports and recommendations made by the Health and Safety Branch.

2.7 All Police Officers, Police Staff and Secondees to the Police and Others to whom the Police Service would appear to be Host Employer

Everyone, irrespective of rank or grade, has 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.

Everyone shall:

- a) Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by our work;
- b) Make themselves familiar with, and comply with, the PSNI and Local Health and Safety policies;
- c) Comply with all Health and Safety instructions and safe systems of work;
- d) Use the appropriate safety equipment and devices provided;
- e) Do not interfere with or misuse anything provided for the purposes of health and safety;
- f) 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;
- g) Never use or operate any equipment belonging to or under the control of any outside contractor or PSNI, unless trained or instructed and authorised without prior approval and the permission of your immediate supervisor;
- h) Report all accidents, (including work related injuries and ill health), 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);
- i) Undertake training as required, such as specified courses or awareness training via E-Learning, including refresher;

- j) When appropriate, make suggestions regarding safety improvements to their line manager and if desired the Staff Association representative (specifically perceived serious and immediate danger or potential shortcomings in existing arrangements);
- k) Seek clarification regarding health and safety issues where necessary.

2.8 Officers in Charge or Premises/Sites

An officer shall be assigned overall responsibility for each premises/sites. The highest-ranking person (e.g. District Commander/designated Head of Branch) will also be the Officer in Charge of Premises/Site, unless otherwise documented as a local arrangement.

The Officer must be of sufficient rank/grade to ensure that all persons within the premises comply with the health and safety legislation, policies, guidance and procedures.

The Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the General Policy Statement of the Health and Safety Service Policy document in relation to the following:

- a) The fabric of the building and surrounding grounds within the site;
- b) Installations within the site e.g. electricity supply, water supply, heating, boilers etc.;
- c) Security of the premises;
- d) Fire safety;
- e) Site traffic including marking, signage etc.;
- f) Services provided e.g. cleaning, ground staff etc.;
- g) Contractors on site;
- h) Enforcement of the 'No Smoking' policy;
- i) Provision of adequate welfare facilities i.e. sanitary and rest facilities;
- j) Manage any asbestos on site in accordance with the '**ESBU Corporate Asbestos Management Plan**'

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. Overall legal responsibility for compliance remains with the assigned Officer in Charge.

2.9 Fire Precautions Officer

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.

The Fire Precautions Officer duties are detailed in the PSNI Fire Safety Manual.

2.10 Chief Health and Safety Adviser

The Chief Health and Safety Adviser is responsible to the ACO People & Organisational Development 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.

The Health and Safety Branch shall be the focal point for collating all reports and information concerning accidents, hazards or potential hazards.

The Health and Safety Branch, under the direction of the Chief Health and Safety Adviser, is responsible for the following:

- a) Assisting with the development and implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety policy and associated guidance within the organisation;
- b) Assisting with revising and redrafting of Service instructions and policies with any health and safety implications;
- c) Advising management and staff at all levels on matters pertaining to health and safety, relevant regulations, standards and codes of practice;
- d) Facilitating, advising on, and promoting both Health and Safety training and accident prevention;
- e) Promoting within the organisation an understanding that management of health and safety is an integral part of a manager's role;

- f) Acting as Service liaison with the Health and Safety Executive (NI) and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) and when necessary accompanying their inspectors during visits to sites/premises;
- g) Liaising with other health and safety professionals and relevant outside agencies to improve health and safety within the organisation;
- h) Distributing health and safety information and instructions to all interested parties;
- i) As required, conducting inspections at police premises, operational locations and operational activities. Making recommendations with a view to ensuring health and safety standards are maintained or improved for the benefit of all;
- j) 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, in line with the Accident Investigation Protocol;
- k) Organising and carrying out a programme of audits which may include Areas, Districts, Departments, Branches and specialist areas health and safety management systems, and preparing follow-up reports for the attention of local management;
- l) Keeping the Service Health and Safety Policy under regular review and advising the Deputy Chief Constable accordingly;
- m) Providing data and relevant updates to the Executive Health & Safety Committee;
- n) Provide a summary of the compliance and results of the annual PSNI Health and Safety Certificate of Assurance to the Deputy Chief Constable and the ACO People & Organisational Development to inform the Chief Constable's Stewardship Statement to the Department of Justice.

2.11 The Chief Medical Adviser

The Chief Medical Adviser (or nominated Deputy) shall be responsible for the provision and advice to police service staff on matters relating to occupational health and wellbeing issues. The Chief Medical

Officer 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.

2.12 Staff Associations

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.

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.

Full details of their roles and functions can be found on the [HSENI website](#).

A summary function of local Staff Association/Trade Union representatives is as follows:

a) Investigate members' complaints, relative to health, safety and welfare at work;

- b) Make representations to the PSNI on matters relative to health, safety and welfare;
- c) Investigate locally, potential hazards and dangerous occurrences and examine the causes of accidents;
- d) Following reasonable notification to local management, carry out local safety inspections. Police representatives may be present during an inspection;
- e) Inspect the workplace following a substantial change in the conditions of work;
- f) Attend meetings of the Local Health and Safety Committees;
- g) 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.

3. 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](#).

4. Procedure and Guidance

4.1 Executive Health and Safety Committee

This Committee will oversee the development and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy throughout the organisation.

The Committee forms part of the PSNI Corporate Governance arrangements. PSNI achieves the assurance of effective corporate governance through three governance committees which are supported by the Strategic Management Board, the Service Performance Board, the Service Transformation Board, the Service Investment Board, the Strategic Tasking and Co-ordinating Group, Your Voice, the Executive Health & Safety Committee and six Delivery Groups as outlined in the Governance Framework schematic.

Full terms of reference for the Executive Health and Safety Committee can be found on the Executive Business Support pages on Po!nt.

The Committee will meet at least four times each year and comprise the following:

- Deputy Chief Constable (chairperson);
- Chief Medical Adviser;
- Head of Estate Services;
- Chief Health and Safety Adviser;
- Head of Transport Services;
- Director of Information & Communications Services (ICS);
- Legal Services;
- Finance Business Services Branch Representative;
- Head of HR;
- Head of PaLs;
- Head of Police College;
- C/Supt's of Local Policing Areas
 - North, South, Belfast, Derry & Strabane
- C/Supt Justice
- C/Supt Crime

- C/Supt Ops Support
- Staff Association/Trade Union Representatives;
- Strategic Communications and Engagement Department representative;

The chairperson may invite any individual whose attendance at a specific meeting would be considered beneficial.

The Key Responsibilities of the committee are:

- a) Consider proposals for implementing health and safety legislation;
- b) Monitor the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy and compliance with requirements;
- c) Monitor audit, assurance and compliance of health and safety related matters;
- d) Identify competency training needs for management and staff;
- e) Monitor the effectiveness of health and safety communication and publicity;
- f) Monitor the work of any project team or working party established under the Committee;

- g) Consider accident and occupational ill-health statistics with a view to recommending appropriate preventative action;
- h) Consider reports submitted by safety representatives;
- i) Consider reports or information submitted by health and safety enforcement authorities;
- j) Consider special reports or issues raised by Local Health and Safety Committees;
- k) Consider relevant investigative reports received by the Health and Safety Branch;

The Committee may also consider issues that cannot be readily resolved at local level, via local Health and Safety Committees.

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.

4.2 Local Health and Safety Committees

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.

The Committee will act in a co-ordinating, advisory and monitoring role in relation to all local aspects of health and safety.

As a minimum the Committee shall meet quarterly. Additional meetings can be held as and when required.

Membership of the Local Health and Safety Committees shall include:

- a) 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);
- b) Officers and police staff as required e.g. District Support/ NPT and LPT Supervisor, District Support Teams, Events Planning etc.;
- c) Local Fire Precautions Officer (where applicable);

- d) Staff Representatives;
- e) Health and Safety Adviser (co-opted) to attend as required, meeting the demands of the local function;
- f) Premises Officer/Buildings Administrator (where applicable).

With regard to the management of Local Health and Safety Committees the following points should be borne in mind:

- a) Sufficient time should be allowed for the full volume of business;
- b) Meetings should not be cancelled or postponed - except in exceptional circumstances;
- c) Meetings must be scheduled to allow all members to attend;
- d) Copies of the agenda should be forwarded in advance of the meeting to all members of the committee;
- e) 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;

f) Important issues that cannot be resolved locally may be raised with the Executive Health & Safety Committee through one of the Executive Health & Safety Committee standing members, at the discretion of the Executive Health & Safety Committee chairperson.

A list of suggested agenda items for Local Health and Safety Committees is available on Po!nt Health and Safety Branch pages.

Local District Command may instigate additional safety committees as considered necessary if it assists with Health and Safety management.

Where local command can provide suitable justification and rationale for not holding discrete health and safety meetings this must be evidenced and incorporated into other local Command or Management forums.

4.3 Establishing and Reviewing Policies

Personnel establishing and reviewing policies shall ensure that health and safety is a key criteria when prioritising resources.

The EHSC will oversee the implementation of these health and safety management

procedures throughout the organisation, and meet at least four times each year and will be comprised the membership at [Paragraph 4.1](#).

Service Reference Documents

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

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.

Appendix A Contact Us

Branch Email

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