

Risk Assessment (Health and Safety)

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Policy Statement

Summary

West Yorkshire Police have a duty to identify where risk assessments are required and has established a procedure that details the process undertaken to complete them.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Explain how risk assessments must be conducted, and by who;
 - Provide a scoring matrix; and
 - Inform those involved in the process of their responsibilities.
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Scope

This policy applies to all police officers and police staff.

This policy covers all risk assessment requirements excluding those specific to chemical or activity that is primarily manual handling.

Principles

Types of risk assessment

- The risk assessment process is a structured method of identifying hazards, who may be harmed and appropriate control measures. Often the process includes some form of quantification to assist with prioritisation.
 - In Force, all roles have a Generic Risk Assessment that covers their activity and identifies control measures that are common throughout the Force.
 - For some individuals, these will not reflect the specific risk to themselves and individual assessments will be documented to reflect the circumstances, e.g. ill health, pregnancy.
 - Other health and safety risk assessments are made as part of the National Decision Making (NDM) process, which often incorporates other areas of risk.
 - Dynamic Risk Assessments are undertaken when the circumstances are not as planned and a response to control a hazard is required without the opportunity to record the decision. These are more common in the operational roles and best practice is to record the assessment at the earliest opportunity, e.g. pocket notebook, Samsung device.
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Scope

The risk assessment process is required to be suitable and sufficient and, to achieve this standard, must consider:

- All those who may be affected including those at work and others who may be affected, e.g. visitors;

- Hazards associated to the use of materials, substances, machinery and equipment; and
- Hazards associated to the locations and any foreseeable emergencies.

Risk assessment scoring matrix

- To assist in the prioritisation of risk controls, the Force adopts a scoring matrix which considers both the severity and likelihood of harm occurring.
- Where the activity is currently undertaken, these are considered with the existing control measures in place.

Ratings

Severity rating

- It is recognised that the severity of an incident can vary considerably, e.g. a slip on an icy pavement could result in a death, sprained ankle or a bruise.
- The severity rating considers the most likely level of harm that will occur from such an incident.
- This is categorised as follows:
 - **High**
Death (major injury or serious illness likely to occur);
 - **Medium**
Serious injuries or ill health are likely to occur. E.g. people may be off work for more than seven days as a result (but not hospitalised); and
 - **Low**
Where other less serious injuries could arise. E.g. where injuries may not necessitate time off work or may involve time off work for up to seven days.

Likelihood rating

- The likelihood of an incident must only be considered once the severity rating has been assessed, as the rating will now reflect the likelihood of the incident occurring and causing the identified severity rating.
- This is categorised as follows:
 - **High** – where it is more likely or near certain that harm will occur;
 - **Medium** – where harm is possible/likely to occur; or
 - **Low** – where harm is unlikely/highly unlikely and will seldom occur. E.g. slipping on ice is highly unlikely (*low likelihood*) to cause death (*high severity*), but is likely (*medium likelihood*) to cause a bruise (*low severity*).

Overall risk level

- The values obtained for the severity and likelihood are then used in the matrix below to give an overall risk level:

Likelihood	Severity
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	LOW Slightly harmful	MEDIUM Moderately harmful	HIGH Extremely harmful
LOW Highly unlikely/unlikely	LOW RISK Trivial	LOW RISK Acceptable	MEDIUM RISK Moderate
MEDIUM Likely/possible	LOW RISK Acceptable	MEDIUM RISK Moderate	HIGH RISK Substantial
HIGH More likely/near certain	MEDIUM RISK Moderate	HIGH RISK Substantial	HIGH RISK Intolerable

Potential output This matrix has five potential outputs for each identified hazard, which are as follows:

- *Low (Trivial), Low (Acceptable), Medium (Moderate) and High (Substantial):*
A Safe System of Work (SSW) must be written. This must be a documented procedure, which details how the task must be completed safely. Existing documented procedures may already fulfil the requirements of a SSW; and
- *High (Intolerable):*
Only to be undertaken with the express permission of the Chief Constable, as this implies that it is highly likely that a fatality will occur as a result of the activity.

Control measures

- A control measure can be any action or activity that can be used to prevent or eliminate a safety hazard, or reduce it to an acceptable level.
- These must be prioritised based on the hierarchy of controls and can include:
 - Elimination – avoidance of task, e.g. asbestos removal is outsourced to specialist organisations.
 - Substitution – replace with a safer alternative, e.g. using lower risk cleaning product instead of bleach.
 - Engineering controls – use of equipment, e.g. the use of a wheeled cart to move heavy objects around.
 - Administrative controls – procedural changes, e.g. providing signage for hazardous areas, limiting exposure time, training etc.
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE) – only used as a last resort.
- Where documented procedure/best practices are followed, the risk assessment must refer to the reference document as there is no need to repeat the content of the document on the risk assessment.

Responsibilities

Force Health and Safety

- The Force Health and Safety team will maintain a database of current risk assessments, which are OFFICIAL, and will instigate the review of any risk

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assessment contained on the database.

- They will advise on the most appropriate way for risk assessments to be undertaken.

Local managers

Local managers will ensure that:

- All tasks involving significant risk undertaken by them or their staff are covered by a relevant risk assessment. If it is not, they must contact the Force Health and Safety team;
- Staff are informed of the significant findings from any risk assessments affecting them and that the appropriate control measures are implemented; and
- Individual risk assessments are completed where required. See Risk Assessments for Individuals and New and Expectant Mothers.

Risk Assessments

Type of assessment

- There are a wide range of generic risk assessments used throughout the Force which can be categorised in the following manner:
 1. Risk assessments containing content that has a GSC marking of OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE or above.
 2. **Forcewide generics** cover tasks that are undertaken by more than two district/departments and where the content of the risk assessment is OFFICIAL (see process flowchart).
 3. **Operational risk assessments** address the specific issues associated with a particular operation and will usually form part of the operational order.
 4. **Local generics** cover tasks that are only undertaken by one district/department, e.g. mounted search.
 5. **Regional working** cover tasks where direction and control is stipulated in a collaborative agreement.

Responsibility

- Depending on the type of risk assessments (as numbered above), the responsibility for reviewing, publishing and communicating risk assessments changes.
- The below table indicates who will lead on various activities:

Type	Instigate review	Review	Publish	Communicate
1	Force Health and Safety	Local managers	Force H&S publish contact details only	Local managers
2		Force H&S		

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3	N/A	N/A	N/A	Via operational briefing
4	Force H&S	Local managers	Force H&S	Local managers
5	Subject to an arrangement by lead Force			

Developing or reviewing generic risk assessments

When a new task is identified, or a current risk assessment requires review, the following process must be followed:

- Confirm that the task is not covered by any of the current published risk assessments;
- Identify any national guidance/best practice that covers the task, including any benchmarking from other sectors;
- Obtain any relevant information associated to the task including accident data; and
- Using the information gathered, document a draft risk assessment for consultation.

See Manager's Flowchart – What regular activities do I need to risk assess, Guide to Developing Forcewide Generic Assessments and Is the Task Suitable for a Forcewide Generic Risk Assessment.

Consultation process

- As part of the process to develop a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, it is important that all relevant parties are involved. This will include staff representatives and may also involve:
 - Officers/staff undertaking the role;
 - Supervisors of the role; or
 - Specialist advisors.
- The form that this consultation takes will vary depending on the number of people involved and the complexity of the assessment. This may include:
 - Meetings;
 - One-to-one discussions; or
 - Circulating documents for comment.
- Feedback must be provided to those who make comments that are not subsequently included in the final documents.

Communication of risk assessments

- All non-operation specific risk assessments that contain only OFFICIAL content will be published by the Force Health and Safety team on the intranet.
- Where non-operation specific risk assessments are completed, but the content is OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE or above, the person/department responsible for the document will also be identified.

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Review and retention

- Risk assessments must be reviewed following any significant change to the activity or environment to ensure they remain relevant. In addition to this, they must be subject to a planned review where new activities are reviewed at one year and two years, and subsequently every two years following this.
 - Superseded assessments must be kept available for reference for six years.
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Specific Considerations

Young people, volunteers and temporary workers

- Young people are classed to be those under the age of 18 years, including those that are on work experience.
 - The risk assessment for them must include:
 - Their inexperience of work;
 - Lack of awareness of risks/immaturity with regards to the use of work equipment; and
 - Exposure to physical, biological and chemical agents.
 - Young people, volunteers and temporary workers must be provided with information on any health assessment required for the role and any information they may need to carry out their work safely.
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Findings of a Risk Assessment

Further work

- Depending on the findings of a risk assessment, further work may be required to ensure that the risk is controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.
 - In these circumstances, this must clearly identify who is responsible for implementing these.
 - Where a manual handling risk has an overall risk level of medium or high, the Health and Safety team must be contacted to undertake a detailed manual handling assessment to confirm the level of risk and any additional control measures that are required.
 - Where a chemical risk is identified, the Health and Safety team must be contacted to undertake an assessment under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH).
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Risk Assessments for Individuals

Principles

- There are a number of different reasons why an individual risk assessment may be required, but the most common is where an individual has either a temporary or permanent medical condition.
 - The risk assessment process has five stages and must involve both the line manager, the individual and, if requested, their trade union representative.
 - The assessment must make reference to any reports that have been requested from Occupational Health or a similar organisation.
 - Note: Where stress is an issue, refer to guidance available on the Occupational Health website.
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Stages A-E

A – Hazard severity

- Referring to the generic risk assessment for the role, the line manager must consider whether any of the hazards (severity ratings) are increased due to the particular circumstances of the individual.
- For example, the hazard rating with regards to lifting and carrying may increase if the individual has suffered from a back injury.

B – Hazard likelihood

- Individuals must consider if there are any hazards where the likelihood rating will increase. This aims to identify how often the hazard is likely to cause harm.
- For example, there would be an increased risk of broken bones for somebody who has brittle bone disorder.

C – Individual specific risks

- This stage looks to identify any risks to the individual that are not significant for other employees carrying out the same role.
- For example, if the individual suffered from deep vein thrombosis, sitting in a fixed position for long periods of time could result in blood clots. This is not a significant risk for all staff.

D – Control measures

- Having identified the additional risks in the first three stages, the line manager must consider whether any additional control measures are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

E – Outcome

- There are a number of possible outcomes from the process that include the condition presenting:
 - No additional significant risk in the current role. There must be no change in action.
 - Additional risks in the current role that can be controlled by minor additional measures. Individuals must implement control measures.
 - Additional risks in the current role that can be controlled by major

additional measures. If control measures are reasonable, then they must be implemented. If not, individuals must consider alternative roles.

- Additional risks in the current role that cannot be controlled by additional measures. Individuals must consider alternative roles on a temporary or permanent basis based on likely duration of condition.

Recording

- The risk assessment must be recorded on the standard risk assessment form (form 68) or on any other suitable format.
 - When complete, a copy must be forwarded to People Services for placement on the individual's personnel file.
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Concerns

- If individuals have concerns over the findings of a risk assessment that they are unable to resolve with their line manager, these must be raised through the line management structure.
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Updating

- There are no time-based requirements to review an individual risk assessment, however where the condition or role is likely to, or does, change significantly, a review must be undertaken.
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New and Expectant Mothers

Principles

- A risk assessment form 68a for new and expectant mothers must be completed as soon as the individual notifies the Force.
 - The form is available as a template on Force Forms (General > Health and Safety).
 - See Health and Safety Executive's guide to employers for further information.
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Additional Information

Compliance

This policy complies with the following legislation, policy and guidance:

- Data Protection Act 2018
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Further Information

Further guidance in relation to this policy can be sought from:

- Manager's Flowchart – What regular activities do I need to risk assess
 - Guide to developing Forcewide generic assessments
 - Is the task suitable for a Forcewide Generic Risk Assessment
 - HSE Risk – Controlling Risk in the Workplace
 - Risk Assessment library
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