LONE WORKER POLICY

1.   Introduction

Advanced Engineering Solutions Limited recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves both on and off site without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours (including lone workers).   Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, AES has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves, and of other people affected by their work.

2.   Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of AES staff. 'Lone workers' include:

Those working at their main place of work where:
- only one person is working on the premises,
- people work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations,
- people working outside normal hours
- working from home

Those working away from their fixed base where:
- a driver is collecting or delivering goods

3.   Aims of the Policy

The aim of the policy is to:
- increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working,
- ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far is reasonably practicable,
- ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone,
- encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working,
- reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff that are related to lone working.

4.   Responsibilities

The Senior Management Team is responsible for providing resources for putting the policy into practice, and ensuring that:

- there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working,
- there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and regularly reviewing the effectiveness of this policy,
- all staff are aware of the policy,
- all possible steps are taken to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees,
- situations where people work alone are identified and deciding whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own,
- risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly,
- procedures and safe systems of work that are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone, are put into practice,

- staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training (this includes induction, updating and refreshing training as necessary),
- the effectiveness of preventative measures are managed through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents,
- appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident,
- where available, a mobile telephone, and other personal safety equipment, are available and used.

Employees are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions,
- following guidance and procedures designed for safe working,
- reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate,
- taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy,
- reporting identified potential dangers or any concerns related to working alone.

5. Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working

- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Is any known risk attached to a client(s)?
- Has safe travelling between the normal Workplace and installation sites been arranged?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

6. Good Practice for Lone Workers

- During working hours, staff leaving the Workplace should leave details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back at the Workplace.
- If, in the course of a trip away from the Workplace, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.
- Telephone contact between the lone worker and the line manager or a colleague, may also be advisable.
- Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities and drivers should carry a first-aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.
- Lone workers should have access to a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary.
- Occasionally risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need training in first aid.

7. Monitoring safety issues

- Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents and near misses, including all incidents where they feel threatened, or suffer verbal abuse, on an accident form.
- During supervision, managers will ask people working on their own whether there are any safety concerns that are not being addressed. Lone workers are encouraged to seek help and advice if any safety concerns arise.

Simon Holden
General Manager
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