

Welcome to another edition of 'Astute Safety Thinking' In this month's edition:

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Lone Working- Toolbox Talk

Working alone (being a lone worker) means working by yourself without close or direct supervision and where there are no other workers present. There is no set duration that establishes someone as a lone worker; a person can be a lone worker for any period of time.

Such people tend to be those who are:

- Working alone on site – for all or just some of the time, both regularly and/or permanently.
- Working away from their normal workplace – e.g. contractors, district nurses.
- Homeworkers – persons working from home for an employer (except in low-risk office type work at home).

Some tasks are too difficult or dangerous to be carried out by an unaccompanied worker and a risk assessment would identify this. For example: diving, fumigation, transport of explosives, some types of live electrical work and working in confined spaces where rescue arrangements are needed.

In contrast, some lone working activities may present low risk, and these include:

- Cleaning duties as part of a team
- Static security work, for example monitoring a CCTV system
- Working alone out of hours in an office situation
- Homeworking

Working safely

- Consider working in pairs (buddy system).
- Carry appropriate means of contact, e.g. a mobile phone.
- Carry an alarm or lone worker monitoring device.
- Do not carry valuables.
- Ensure someone knows where you are.
- Park in a well-lit place.
- Tell someone if you alter your plans.
- Be familiar with health and safety procedures.
- Tell your employer if your medical history, level of fitness or pregnancy makes it inappropriate for you to work alone.
- Know what to do in an emergency.
- Report problems/incidents that occur while you are working alone.
- Stop the practice of working alone if the risks become too great.
- When meeting people you do not know, do it in a public place.

Remember: If you do not feel safe working alone, then speak to your supervisor or safety representative.



Lone Working- Toolbox Talk Continued

It is important to monitor working procedures to ensure lone workers remain safe and that working alone continues to be an acceptable practice. Working procedures should be reviewed in light of work changes and any incidents that occur.

Potential hazard - Manual handling

Control measures:

- Lone workers must be able to seek assistance from others, as required.
- Provision of lifting and handling aids.

Potential hazard - Violence against the person

Control measures:

- Training in diffusing confrontation, negotiation etc.
- Reducing the need for cash handling.
- Varying driving routes for vehicles carrying cash.
- Provision of personal alarms and effective means of two-way communication.
- Panic buttons in confidential interview rooms.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) e.g. stab-proof vests (where relevant).

Potential hazard - Breaking down in a vehicle

Control measures:

- Provision of reliable and well-maintained vehicles.
- Membership of a road-side rescue organisation.
- Carrying a mobile phone.

Potential hazard - Fire

Control measures:

- Fire precautions must be sufficient for the job.

Why Astute Safety Consulting?

Safety Management

You need a team that can work with you to ensure you comply with UK Health and Safety legislation.

Let us take care of your safety needs and lead and produce your:

- Risk assessments
- Safe Methods of work
- Safety Procedures
- Workplace assessments
- Safety Audits
- Accident investigation
- Safety Management systems

Legal

Can you risk legal action over a preventable accident? The UK's penalties for breaching safety laws have intensified.

Even without an accident, non-compliance can lead to inspection fees and potential prosecution. Let us guide you in managing safety to minimize risks in your business.

Why Astute Safety Consulting?

Online learning

We've teamed up with Video Tile Learning to offer you the latest online learning resources, designed to improve you and your team's safety awareness and knowledge. You choose the subjects and learn at your own pace.



Stress Management

Stress is a real problem for both organisations and their employees. It accounts for a significant proportion of work-related illness each year. Being aware of the signs of stress, some of the triggers and how to manage them can make a real difference to your wellbeing and that of people around you. This course will cover an introduction to stress and why it is a problem, some of the causes of stress and some ways to minimise the risk of stress.

CPD Units: 2
Approved by CPD & IIRSM
30 mins



Asbestos Awareness

As well as informing you about the risks of working with asbestos, the course will deliver a lot more information about: Recognising asbestos, where it is used, minimising the risks and the legislation about working with asbestos.

CPD Units: 3
Approved by CPD & IIRSM
65 mins



Supervising Mental Health at Work

This course will look at supervising stress and mental health at work and show you how to create a good mental health culture in your workplace.

CPD Units: 2
Approved by CPD & IIRSM
25 mins



Level 1 health and Safety in a Construction Environment (leading to CSC Card

Health & Safety is crucial. Everyone must actively reduce workplace accidents. Not adhering to regulations can result in severe consequences.

This introductory course targets newcomers to construction, covering vital health and safety practices on sites. Pair it with the accredited exam for a recognised qualification essential for your CSC card application.

Approved by ETA Awards

BROWSE OUR TRAINING MODULES



Regulator News: Working Minds Targets HGV Driver Stress.

- Road Haulage Association (RHA) becomes a fresh partner in the Working Minds campaign.
- BeAMate provides 24/7 free, confidential text support for HGV drivers grappling with mental health issues.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has identified a mounting concern over stress amongst Britain's lorry drivers. Notable stressors include lengthy hours, tight delivery schedules, and sparse access to basic amenities.

Elizabeth Goodwill from the HSE's Stress and Mental Health Policy Team emphasises the employers' legal duty to integrate stress and mental health risks into their assessments.



Michelle Upson, a seasoned lorry driver, expresses her worries for the mental welfare of her peers. She highlights the predominance of males in the industry and the strain on drivers staying away from home for extended periods. She's convinced that championing mental health is crucial and advocates for managerial training to spot and tackle signs of deteriorating mental health. Given the increasing prominence of work-related stress, depression, and anxiety, especially within the transport and storage sectors, proactive interventions are indispensable.

Sarah Meek, from Mates in Mind, affirms their organisation's dedication to bolstering mental health support in the transport sector. Their anonymous text service is proving invaluable, particularly for lorry drivers on the move.

For immediate support, text "BeAMate" to 85258.

For the full article and a full understanding of the initiative and support on offer, visit [HSE](#).



Construction firm fined £90,000 after exposing public to asbestos

Warrington-based company, Esskay Construction Ltd, has been fined after exposing individuals to asbestos during a Stoke-on-Trent renovation. Despite its absence at Staffordshire Magistrates' Court on 24 August 2023, the firm was found guilty.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) had received a tip-off about asbestos disturbance during the company's refurbishment project in Brunswick Street, Hanley. Local authorities found asbestos debris at the site and its vicinity. Consequently, HSE issued two Prohibition Notices, halting all operations until rectified by a licensed asbestos removal contractor.

An HSE investigation revealed the company's negligence in assessing the site for asbestos before commencement. This oversight exposed workers and the public to harmful asbestos fibres. The firm was fined for breaching multiple asbestos regulations and ordered to cover associated costs and surcharges.

HSE's Will Gretton stressed the dire consequences of asbestos exposure, highlighting its link to severe health conditions. He emphasised the need for proper site assessments before renovations and warned against violations of asbestos regulations.

For the detailed account, visit [HSE's official site](#).

£535,000 fine for oil and gas firm after man injured on North Sea Platform.

Repsol Sinopec Resources UK Limited faced a £535,000 fine after a crane's uncontrolled collapse on the Fulmar Alpha North Sea platform in 2017 injured two workers. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found lapses in risk assessment and crane maintenance. HSE emphasised the gravity of the oversight in such a hazardous setting.

Read the full article [here](#)



Farm fined after dad electrocuted

A farm has been fined £60,000 following the death of a father-of-three who was electrocuted by an overhead power line.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) highlighted the farm's oversight in assessing the dangers of working near overhead power lines. The incident underscores rising concerns about larger farm machinery's risk of contacting power lines.

For the detailed account, visit [HSE's official site](#).

Halloween Safety: 31st October 2023

For those that celebrate Halloween, it is full of fun but can be daunting for some. Keep kids safe, especially with higher accident risks.

Quick Tips:

- **Visibility:** Use glow sticks, flashlights, and reflective tape.
- **Groups:** Supervise kids. Visit familiar houses; look for pumpkins.
- **Roads:** Teach kids road safety. Drivers, be extra vigilant.
- **Costumes:** Use flame-resistant outfits and face paint instead of masks.
- **Health:** If ill, stay home. Examine treats before eating.

Stay safe and enjoy responsibly!

