



PARLIAMENTARY AND HEALTH SERVICE OMBUDSMAN

Health & Safety Policy

[updated June 2014]

1. Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent

1.1.1. PHSO aims to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all our employees, visitors and contractors during the course of their work for us.

1.1.2. We will do this by ensuring that we comply with the requirements of all appropriate health & safety legislation, following good practice and by creating a culture whereby everyone takes an active interest in their environment and work practices.

1.2. Purpose and scope

1.2.1. This document sets out our policy, arrangements and organisation for health & safety, from which all health & safety controls, guidance, procedures, advice and education are drawn.

1.2.2. This policy applies to our employees, visitors and contractors working in our offices. It also applies to employees while off site on official business or working from home.

1.3. Principles

1.3.1. We will provide appropriate information, guidance, training and supervision to ensure that everyone is able to carry out their work safely.

1.3.2. We will ensure that we provide the opportunity for consultation with employee representatives on health & safety issues, through regular dialogue and meetings.

1.3.3. We will ensure there are appropriate standards, systems and reviews in relation to health & safety within our sites, when our employees are working off site, including home working and will carry out and record risk assessments as appropriate.

1.3.4. We will record and investigate accidents, near misses and work-related illnesses to enable us to monitor trends and to constantly seek to reduce and minimise the risks to our employees, visitors and contractors.

1.4. Outcomes

1.4.1. The outcomes of this policy are that:

- our work is carried out safely and with minimum risk of accident or injury to our employees, visitors and contractors;
- we act in compliance with all appropriate health & safety legislation;
- we have an established governance framework for managing health & safety;
- our employees, visitors and contractors have a clear understanding of health & safety issues and their personal and collective responsibilities;
- we have effective controls in place to ensure our employees, visitors and contractors are adequately protected;
- we have effective monitoring, reporting and review of health & safety risks and issues.

Signed:

Date:

Managing Director

2. Organisation for Health and Safety

2.1. General Responsibilities

- 2.1.1. The effective management of health & safety is vital to the well-being of our employees, visitors and contractors; has a role to play in enhancing our reputation and helps us achieve our business objectives.
- 2.1.2. Consequently, health & safety is the collective responsibility of all employees, visitors and contractors. They need to understand the relevant requirements and responsibilities within the policy and guidance, including the need to report any accidents or near misses and cooperate with managers on health & safety matters. Employees managing contractors must ensure that they also comply when delivering goods and services to us.

2.2. Ombudsman

- 2.2.1. The ultimate responsibility for health & safety lies with the Ombudsman.
- 2.2.2. The Ombudsman, whilst retaining full accountability, delegates the corporate responsibility for health & safety to the Managing Director; and functional responsibility to the Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT.

2.3. Managing Director & Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT

- 2.3.1. The Managing Director is corporately accountable to the Ombudsman for the adequacy and implementation of the health & safety policy and guidance and ensuring that effective organisational arrangements are in place for creating the culture and behaviour required to comply with PHSO's responsibilities and commitments.
- 2.3.2. The Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT has functional responsibility for health and safety matters including ensuring:
- our policy and guidance remain up-to-date and comprehensively covers the needs of PHSO;
 - our compliance with this policy, guidance and legislative requirements;
 - sufficient resource is allocated to meet health & safety requirements;
 - appropriate guidance, information and training on health & safety are available to all employees, visitors and contractors;
 - an appropriately trained Facilities Team is appointed;
 - Health and Safety Committee meetings are held twice a year and chaired by the Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT and that actions required from these meetings are properly implemented; and
 - an annual Statement of Assurance on health & safety is made to the Ombudsman.

2.4. Head of Estates & Procurement and Facilities Management roles

2.5. The Head of Estates & Procurement and Facilities Managers are responsible to the Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT for:

- developing and implementing the health & safety policy and guidance;
- making sure arrangements exist to bring the health & safety policy and guidance to the attention of all employees, visitors and contractors;
- preparing the annual Statement of Assurance on health & safety;
- issuing competent advice, guidance and information;
- arranging risk assessments and audits;
- liaising with the Trade Union's health & safety representatives;
- taking or arranging for remedial action as appropriate;
- maintaining health & safety records;
- day to day delivery of health & safety services;
- conducting and coordinating training, to include manual handling, workstation assessments, evacuation chair operation and any other health and safety training needed by the Facilities team or employees in general;
- ensuring that other staff with health & safety duties (e.g. fire wardens; first aiders etc) are appointed and properly trained.

2.6. Health & Safety Committee

2.6.1. The Health and Safety Committee is the means by which we formally maintain full and effective consultation with employees and PHSO recognised Trade Unions on all health & safety matters. The Health and Safety Committee meets twice a year. PHSO encourages the appointment of safety representatives by the Trade Unions and full support is given to employees with Health and Safety duties.

2.6.2. The Committee is responsible for assisting in the development, implementation and monitoring of the health & safety policy and guidance.

2.6.3. Membership of the committee is by invitation from the Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT, but normally includes:

- Director of Finance, Facilities and ICT (Chair);
- Union Representative(s) (from PHSO's recognised Trade Unions);
- Head of Estates & Procurement;
- Facilities Team representatives; and
- HR Representative(s).

2.7. Line Managers

2.7.1. Health & safety is a key part of all line managers' responsibilities and they are expected to set an example to their staff. They must:

- understand the policy and guidance and apply it in all areas for which they are responsible;
- ensure that employees responsible to them, operate in accordance with the policy and guidance and are competent and trained for their roles;

- ensure that they and their staff, particularly people new to PHSO, are familiar with (and if necessary trained in) all emergency procedures necessary for health & safety;
- ensure that employees with particular health & safety responsibilities (such as Trade Union Health & Safety representative, Fire Wardens and First Aiders) are given time and support to carry out this function; and
- ensure their staff are appropriately trained in the operation of any equipment necessary for them to carry out their duties.

2.8. Staff

2.8.1. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that all employees have responsibility for their own safety at work and for the effect their behaviour may have on the safety of colleagues. Every employee must:

- participate in the health & safety induction event as part of the employee induction process when joining PHSO;
- familiarise themselves with the health & safety policy and guidance, in particular with those sections which directly relate to their own work;
- take reasonable care for their own health & safety and that of others;
- co-operate with us on health & safety;
- correctly use work items provided by us, in accordance with training or instructions;
- not interfere with or misuse anything provided for their health, safety or welfare; and
- report all accidents or near misses.

2.9. Responsibilities for our visitors

2.9.1. All visitors should adhere to our health & safety policy and guidance and be made aware of appropriate parts of it by those they are visiting. For example, the host or meeting chairperson should explain fire and bomb evacuation procedures and routes to visitors at the beginning of the meeting along with the type and location of welfare facilities. Visitors should not be left unaccompanied.

2.10. Responsibilities for our contractors

2.10.1. All contractors should adhere to our health & safety policy and guidance when on site and be supplied with an abridged copy as part of their contract and asked to acknowledge receipt.

3. Arrangements for Health and Safety

3.1. Guidance

3.1.1. Full details on the arrangements for health and safety are included in the Health and Safety Guidance.

3.1.2. This guidance provides details of how health and safety is implemented in PHSO and describes the procedures to be followed, including for fire and bomb alerts and risk assessments.

3.2. Health & Safety Inspections

- 3.2.1. The Facilities Team are required to conduct regular inspections of our sites at least once per quarter. The Trade Union health & safety representative of the site to be inspected accompany the Facilities Team member during the inspection and they will jointly complete a log with details of the inspection and any matters that need further agreed action.
- 3.2.2. The Facilities Manager will agree the forward programme of inspections in advance and forward the programme to the Health and Safety Committee, representatives of which can be invited to attend one or more of the inspections as necessary. On completion, all inspection actions are to be recorded and signed by both the Facilities Team and Trade Union health & safety representative. The record of inspection is to be kept by the Facilities Team and is on the Agenda for discussion at Health & Safety Committee meetings.

3.3. Reporting of Health & Safety issues

- 3.3.1. Reporting accidents, near misses and ill health at work is a legal requirement and this information enables us to identify where and how risks arise and to investigate serious work-related accidents, near misses and illness. All line managers are responsible for ensuring accident and near misses are reported to the Facilities Team; and that work related illness (in addition to the normal sick leave reporting arrangements) is reported to HR, People & Talent. All employees are responsible for reporting potential hazards to their line manager and the Facilities Team.
- 3.3.2. The Facilities Manager is responsible for the provision of the Accident Book and making it accessible to employees, contractors and visitors.

3.4. Monitoring and review of this Policy

- 3.4.1. Facilities will review this policy every three years or more frequently if there are legislative or organisational changes in consultation with HR, People & Talent and the Trade Unions.
- 3.4.2. Facilities will monitor reports of accidents and near misses and report as appropriate to the regulatory authorities (e.g. Health and Safety Executive and Local Authority).
- 3.4.3. HR, People & Talent will monitor reports of work-related illnesses through sick leave monitoring arrangements and welfare services and will report as appropriate to the regulatory authorities (e.g. Health and Safety Executive and Local Authority).
- 3.4.4. Facilities will provide an Annual Statement of Assurance on health & safety to the Ombudsman. This will be presented to and approved by the Executive Team.
- 3.4.5. If there are any concerns arising from the monitoring process, we will review and amend this policy as necessary.