



SAFETY ASSESSMENT  
FEDERATION

# Guidance

## Lone Working

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974,  
The Management of Health and Safety at  
Work Regulations, HSE INDG73, SAFed  
Passport Module 5

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**CONTENTS**

- 1. Lone Working..... 1
- 2. SAFed Member Company Responsibilities..... 1
- 3. Engineer Surveyor Responsibilities..... 1
- 4. Client/User/Owner Responsibilities ..... 1

## 1. Lone Working

An Engineer Surveyor who performs an activity in isolation from others without close or direct supervision could be categorised as a lone worker, (this is based on the HSE’s definition that states lone workers are “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”). As such a duty of care exists for both the employer and site owner/occupier to fully assess any areas of risk associated with lone working to ascertain if the task is too difficult or dangerous to be carried out alone, and whether the workplace itself presents a risk to the lone worker.

SAFed member companies have processes in place for the assessment of such risks and where appropriate control measures to reduce those risks, including mechanisms to monitor, supervise and communicate with lone workers, including the authority for an Engineer Surveyor to abandon a task if they feel their continued safety may be compromised. SAFed member companies ensure that the individual has suitable training and experience to work alone in a safe manner.

Compliance with such processes will require the support and co-operation of the client, user/site owner and/or others wherever so appropriate such as the provision of additional monitoring and assistance being local to the deployment of the Engineer Surveyor.

## 2. SAFed Member Company Responsibilities

SAFed member companies, as the employer, have a responsibility and duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc, Act 1974 section 2, to ensure the safety of their employees.

## 3. Engineer Surveyor Responsibilities

SAFed Engineers Surveyors, as do all employees, have a responsibility under section 7 to take reasonable care of themselves and should highlight to their employer and the client/user/owner of any unacceptable hazards/risks that they encounter during their inspection activities, this will include any hazard/risks associated with lone working, (This would also include advising of any medical condition that may affect their work activities).

## 4. Client/User/Owner Responsibilities

Client/user/owner of premises have a responsibility and duty under sections 3 and 4 to ensure the safety of persons visiting their site that are not employees.

Lone workers should not be put at more risk than other employees. To ensure such, suitable planning and safe working arrangements should be discussed between the client/user/owner and the Engineer Surveyor and, where required, additional safety measures implemented.

The Client/User/Owner has a responsibility to support the Engineer Surveyor in identifying all known issues/hazards and associated risk that may affect his/her inspection activity, which should be accounted for in a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Necessary arrangements should be agreed for the provision of a

responsible person acting on behalf of the client/user/owner for the duration of the inspection activity on site to assist with this process. Such can include:

The identification of any client/user/owner identified specific hazard that present a risk to the lone worker, for example due to equipment use designed for more than one person, the use of equipment designed for more than one operator or the work process being too difficult or dangerous to conduct alone.

- Are chemicals or hazardous substances present on the site which hold the potential to pose a particular risk to the lone worker?
- Identification where knowledge of the potential risk of violence and/or aggression exists?
- Where the Engineer Surveyor is working in a Confined Space.
- Are there any reasons why the individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone?
- Are there any language/communication issues on the site which may affect a lone worker (e.g. signage not in a known language)?

The Client/User/Owner must identify to the Engineer Surveyor any implemented/controlled means used to register the presence of the Engineer Surveyor on the site. Such may include register, permit, time-card or security badge. Where such is not present the Engineer Surveyor shall risk assess the situation and where suitable implement a suitable control measure(s).

The Engineer Surveyor's assessment of the lone working hazard may identify control measures which rely upon support from the client/user/owner's responsible person on site, other additional controls may include:

- Provision of communication device (e.g. radios) (some radios include for man-down system)
- Regular pre-agreed check ins and identification of working location
- Use of clients permit to work system
- Use of technology in man-down / lone working alarm software / badges / apps

The clients/user/owner's responsible person on site, prior to granting access to the Engineer Surveyor, must discuss the means by which they will communicate emergency situations (whether they are planned or unplanned events, for example a situation involving the emergency services or a situation that may involve a utility provider) to the lone worker. Such may include details of sirens / alarms and measures to be taken in such an event. This process can be covered in a suitable site induction process.

Such additional hazards may include:

1. Dangerous substances
2. Risk of Fire
3. Confined spaces
4. Falls from height / rescue from height

The risk assessment for such hazards may be included in specific SAFED guidance documents.