

## Occupational stress

|  |       |     |      |
|--|-------|-----|------|
| Site: Any  | Date: |     |      |
| <p><b>Main work activities:</b> Any</p> <p><b>NB</b> This is a generic assessment to be used as a starting point for the assessment of occupational stress. Where a more specific concern is identified, a discrete risk assessment <u>must</u> also be completed.</p>   |       |     |      |
| <p><b>Maximum number of people exposed:</b> Typically 1 may be more</p> <p><b>Category, (skilled, visitor, trainee etc.):</b> All</p> <p><b>Age range:</b> All</p> <p><b>Frequency and duration of exposure:</b> As per work routine</p>   |       |     |      |
| <p><b>Hazards/risks identified:</b></p> <p>Ill-health effects of excessive work-related pressures ('stress') typically associated with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excessive/unreasonable demands on an individual</li> <li>2. Lack of control over the work</li> <li>3. Lack of information/support</li> <li>4. Unacceptable behaviours (others)/poor relationships</li> <li>5. Lack of understanding about role/expectations</li> <li>6. Response to change (uncontrolled)</li> </ol>  |       |     |      |
| <p><b>Current action taken to reduce the risk (if any):</b> <i>further information overleaf</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sufficient checks in place to ensure all can cope adequately</li> <li>2. All have sufficient say in their work</li> <li>3. Adequate information and support is always given and confirmed</li> <li>4. All agree they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour</li> <li>5. All understand and agree their responsibilities</li> <li>6. All indicate they are consulted with and informed of change</li> </ol> <p><b>Risk assessment (taking account of existing controls):</b></p> <p><i>Delete as appropriate (see notes overleaf)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A serious risk remains requiring immediate action as detailed below</li> <li>2. A significant risk remains and will be further dealt with as detailed below</li> <li>3. This is considered a low/acceptable risk that is currently sufficiently well controlled</li> </ol> |       |     |      |
| Agreed new/additional control measures:  | When  | Who | Done |
|  |       |     |      |

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## General Guidance

### Notes on risk assessment and completion of this form

1. *This form should be used to specify the controls that are in place to deal with any identified hazard where some significant risk of harm/damage or loss is identified.*
2. *A judgement of significant risk may be made through experience of previous incidents, official guidance on risks associated with certain activities or through individual expertise and advice.*
3. *A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm/damage or loss. Examples include: electricity, vehicles, anything very hot or very cold, any sharp or pointed instrument or object, something very heavy/awkward that must be moved, something toxic or caustic, flammable or dangerous substances.*
4. *The risk calculation is a subjective process to determine whether those with responsibility are satisfied that the controls in place, with respect to a particular hazard, are sufficient to avoid an incident or to make an incident sufficiently unlikely. In certain cases reference to statutory requirements may be necessary.*
5. *Those carrying out the risk assessment should be competent to do so. Competence is the ability to profile the risks in operational activities and then apply the right measures to control and manage those risks. In case of doubt, advice should be sought from the Safety Officer or others as appropriate.*

## Specific Guidance

### Guidance on conducting a stress risk assessment

There are generally six areas of concern to consider:

1. **Demand** – *this may be about workload, work pattern and/or the work environment. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all employees indicate they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs. Any identified mismatch in meeting this standard will indicate some action should be taken. This may include redesigning/defining jobs, reassessing skills/abilities, providing additional support, information and/or training.*
2. **Control** – *this is about how much say individuals have in their work. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all agree that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work. This may need to be encouraged or facilitated through good communication/consultation. Employee development is an important consideration in enhancing control.*
3. **Support** – *this is about encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the authority, line management and colleagues. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all agree that they receive adequate information and support from colleagues and managers.*
4. **Relationships** – *this is about promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all indicate they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour such as bullying at work.*
5. **Role** – *this is about whether people understand their role within the authority and whether the authority ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all agree that they fully understand their role and responsibilities.*
6. **Change** – *this is about how organisational change, large or small, is managed and communicated in the authority. The ‘standard’ to be met is that all indicate that the authority engages them appropriately when undergoing organisational change.*

**For all of the above, suitable systems must be put in place to respond to any individual/specific concerns**

**A stress assessment tool (use is optional) to assist in identifying specific individual stressors follows**

## Stress Risk Assessment Tool

Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Name:

Role:

| Cause of stress          | Question  | Y/N | Is this a problem for you? Y/N |
|--------------------------|---|-----|--------------------------------|
| <b>Demands</b>           | Do different people at work demand things from you that are hard to combine?                |     |                                |
|                          | Do you have unachievable deadlines?   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you have to work very intensively?   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you have to neglect some tasks because you have too much to do?                          |     |                                |
|                          | Are you unable to take sufficient breaks?   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel pressured to work long hours?   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you have to work very fast?   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you have unrealistic time pressures?   |     |                                |
| <b>Control</b>           | Can you decide when to take a break?  |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you have a say in your work speed?  |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you have a choice in deciding how you do your work?                             |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you have choice in deciding what you do at work?                                |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you have some say over the way you do your work?                                |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel your time can be flexible?  |     |                                |
| <b>Support (Manager)</b> | Does your manager give you enough supportive feedback on the work you do?                   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you can rely on your manager to help you with a work problem?                   |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel you can talk to your manager about something that upsets or annoys you at work? |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel your manager supports you through any emotionally demanding work?               |     |                                |
|                          | Do you feel your manager encourages you enough at work?                                     |     |                                |

| Causes of stress       | Question   | Y/N | Is this a problem for you? Y/N |
|------------------------|--|-----|--------------------------------|
| <b>Support (Peers)</b> | Do you feel your colleagues will help you if work becomes difficult?   |     |                                |
|                        | Do you get the help and support you need from your colleagues?   |     |                                |
|                        | Do you get the respect at work you deserve from your colleagues?   |     |                                |
|                        | Are your colleagues willing to listen to your work-related problems?   |     |                                |
| <b>Relationships</b>   | Are you personally harassed, in the form of unkind words or behaviour?   |     |                                |
|                        | Do you feel there is friction or anger between colleagues?   |     |                                |
|                        | Are you bullied at work?   |     |                                |
|                        | Are relationships strained at work?  |     |                                |
| <b>Role</b>            | Are you clear about what is expected of you at work?   |     |                                |
|                        | Do you know how to go about getting your job done?   |     |                                |
|                        | Are you clear about what your duties and responsibilities are?   |     |                                |
|                        | Are you clear about the goals and objectives of this department?   |     |                                |
|                        | Do you understand how your work fits into the overall aim of the organisation?   |     |                                |
| <b>Change</b>          | Do you have enough opportunities to question managers about change at work?  |     |                                |
|                        | Do you feel consulted about change at work?  |     |                                |
|                        | When changes are made at work, are you clear about how they will work out in practice?   |     |                                |
| <b>Other issues</b>    | Is there anything else that is a source of stress for you, at work or at home, that contributes to your feelings of work-related stress? |     |                                |