

Book

Personal Safety at Work Suzy Lamplugh Trust

Content ★★★★★ Presentation ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★

AT THE start of this year, the HSE published the latest Violence at Work report as part of its responsibility for developing and implementing policy on work-related violence.

This latest report again showed that the number of violent incidents at work in England and Wales had increased from the previous year. So there is no better time to review the updated version of this guide.

The aim of this 74-page manual is to help you embed a simple, but effective process to manage the personal safety risks in your organisation. It begins by highlighting the legal, financial and moral arguments about why an organisation should manage work-related violence and aggression. It also gives useful definitions of some of the key terms including "personal safety", "stopping rules" and "violence and aggression at work", and explains just why you need a shared understanding of these terms.

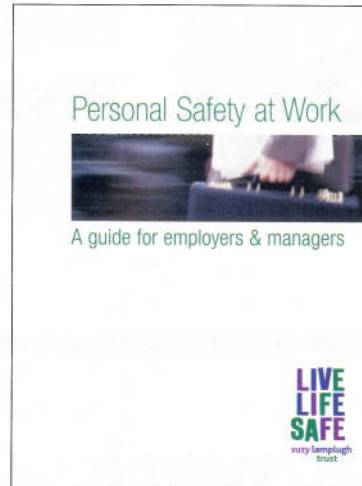
Publisher Suzy Lamplugh Trust has a multi-phase process model for managing personal safety at work, with communication at the heart of each phase. The main part of the book takes you through each of

these steps and clearly sets out the actions you need to take to ensure personal safety.

Each chapter follows the same format, beginning by clearly identifying what your goals should be. These are always shown in a bright purple box and it is worth noting that good use is made of both purple box-outs and green bubble-shaped panels throughout the guide, to highlight key questions and points plus useful hints and tips.

As you would expect, there is also a logical progression to the recommended process. The starting point is identifying the personal safety issues, or, more importantly, how you might go about collecting information that will enable you to identify the issues. You then progress to the formal risk assessment phase, which uses traditional risk assessment methodology.

The next phase is all about producing policies, procedures and safer working guidelines and helps the reader by explaining what a policy is, what a procedure does, and the part that safer-working guidelines can play. This chapter also touches on the importance and use



of lone worker systems and violence warning markers.

Training and information is obviously critical in any workplace environment and the book considers the training that may be needed, the various methods of providing training, and why you should always evaluate the effectiveness of the training you offer.

It makes the point well that managing violence and work-related aggression is an ongoing process, not a one-off task, so you must remember to monitor and evaluate the systems you set up.

Phase six is probably where the reader really starts to understand what an important issue personal

safety is. It is headed Respond, Support and Review and gives very strong guidance on what you should be doing if an incident of violence or aggression has occurred. What will the first 24 hours look like, who needs to be informed, what support should you be providing to the member of staff who has suffered such an incident, what do you need to do differently to make sure it doesn't happen again? It does make you think.

The final phase is all about the importance of communication across the organisation. The guide leaves the reader in no doubt that communication is central to the whole process and gives detailed examples of the necessity and benefits of communication at each phase of the process.

The book concludes with a summary of how you make personal safety part of your work culture and includes some useful appendices, such as lone worker devices and tracing systems, and templates for confidential incident reports.

If your company has yet to focus on personal safety issues, I would strongly suggest you obtain a copy of this book and start doing something about it now.

Donald Muir

Personal Safety At Work costs £29 and is available via www.shop.suzylamplugh.org

Audiovisual

Working at Heights – The Facts Safetymedia

Content ★★★★★ Presentation ★★★★★ Value ★★★★★

FALLS from height are still the biggest single cause of workplace fatality in the UK and work at height can only be carried out safely with proper risk assessment, planning, supervision and the use of the right equipment.

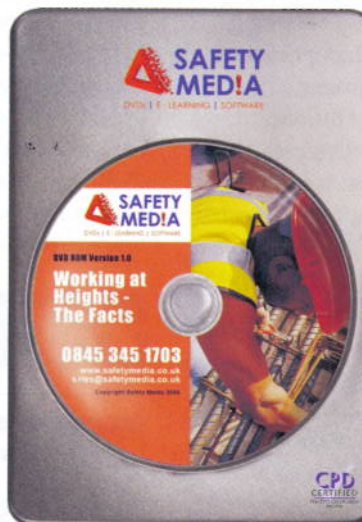
After defining work at height, the programme in Safety Media's DVD on the subject is split into five main sections covering how fatal falls are caused (stressing both low and high falls), safe place of work — including the law, risk assessment and incident reporting and featuring examples from office, construction site and factory environments, planning and organising — including the hierarchy of control, ladders scaffolds and mobile platforms), safe use of working platforms and ladders and finally fall protection, which also

mentions prevention of injury from falling objects.

The DVD ends with a punchy summary of its key points underlining that "no job is so important that it cannot be done safely".

First impressions are that a great deal of valuable material has been packed into a package lasting just over half an hour, and the explanation of what is meant by a hierarchy of control is absolutely excellent, even though it departs slightly from the hierarchy as it is actually set out in the Work at Height Regulations.

The footage is also generally excellent, with examples to which people from many different types of workplace will relate, but is quite repetitive; the same scene is used more than once to illustrate several different points,



and there is an occasional mismatch between what's said in the voiceover and what's shown on the screen.

What's not quite so positive is the treatment of ladders, which did not explain clearly to me when a ladder can be used as a workplace. Nor did I understand the example of a worker using a safety harness when standing

on what appeared to be a perfectly sound, fully boarded, guard-railed and toe-boarded scaffold platform.

As is usual with Safety Media, the DVD comes well presented with excellent little booklets that can be used as handouts in a training session. These include a simple multiple choice test that can be used to check understanding and reinforce the learning. The DVD also includes a work at height risk assessment form that can be downloaded and printed, though most companies will already have their own and will probably include work at height as part of a general risk assessment, rather than having a specific assessment for this hazard.

Overall this is a good value-for-money package that deals with a serious hazard and packs a lot of content into its half-hour running time.

Kate Smith

Working at Heights The Facts costs £99 plus £7.50 P&P plus VAT, email sales@safetymedia.co.uk