Scottish Ambulance Service

H&S: 023 Stress Management and Wellbeing Policy & Guidance

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1. Policy Statement and Purpose

Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

The purpose of this policy is to maintain staff's health and wellbeing through recognising and managing work related stress

This Policy applies to all Scottish Ambulance Service staff and has the full commitment of Senior Management within the Service. This Policy is integral to the Service's Health and Safety Policy.

It is important that all staff are aware of the factors that can give rise to stress so that the impact is minimised.

Our aim is to concentrate on understanding and preventing foreseeable health risks through raising and securing good management practice. This policy will ensure that this is effectively managed and that continual excessive demands are not placed upon employees.

The aim of this policy is not to resolve all work related difficulties or to prevent staff being placed under pressure during a working day. It is accepted that there may be times where unusually heavy demands will be placed on staff.

Stress at work is recognised as a contributor to staff ill health and sickness absence. As an employer, Scottish Ambulance Service has a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure the health of staff and that of others affected by our work activities is considered. This includes the risk to health through excessive and sustained levels of stress arising from the way work is organised, the way people relate to each other at work or from the day-to-day demands placed on our workforce.

This policy should be read in conjunction with several other Service policies, including; Health and Safety Policies, Violence & Aggression Policy, No Smoking Policy, Dignity at Work, Absence Management, Organisational change policy, management of capability and management of employee conduct policy.

The Service is committed to providing a healthy workplace for its workforce and actively promotes measures to improve the physical and mental health of its employees.

The Service:

a) Acknowledges that any staff member can experience stress, and that seeking help and support should be encouraged by managers and fellow colleagues. Stress should not be seen as an admission of weakness.

Some staff may feel isolated and unable to share their problems. The Service will create a supportive culture, which can help eliminate these feelings of isolation and support staff to cope with stress

b) Recognises that stress has many causes, both outside and within the workplace and that domestic issues such as housing, family problems and bereavement may also add to levels of stress experienced by their staff within their work
c) Is committed to identifying work place stressors and conducting Risk Assessments to eliminate or control the risks from stress

2. Compliance

Health & Safety at Work etc Act

Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations

HSE Management Standards

3. Definition of Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”.

This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress that can be detrimental to health. Therefore it is important to recognise that people react differently to pressure: for some it can be a positive driver and for others it is something which leads to ill health.

4. Policy Arrangements and Responsibilities

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for Health, Safety & Welfare for the Service. The lead responsibility is [devolved] to the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development who has responsibility for ensuring that there are effective arrangements for Health & Safety within the Service and for meeting all statutory requirements.

4.1 The Service will:

- Identify workplace stressors and conduct Risk Assessments to eliminate or control the risks from stress. The risk assessments will be reviewed regularly.

- Consult with Managers, Staff Representatives and staff on proposed action relating to workplace stress.
- Provide an understanding of stress to staff and managers as a means of helping them cope with the problem and promote a positive attitude to physical and mental health in general.
- Provide education and training for all managers and staff in good management practices including mental health.
- Provide and maintain confidential counselling for all staff affected by stress caused by either work of external factors and ensure they are aware of what support is available and how to access it.
- Ensure that adequate resources to enable managers to implement the Stress management and Wellbeing policy are available.
- Promote Stress awareness.
- Ensure staff feedback is obtained on a regular basis to identify areas of concern
- Ensure all management information is analysed to identify any areas of potential risk.
- Ensure it has policies and procedures in place that adequately support staff.
- Considers the implications for staff well being of any procedural & operational changes to working practices, ways of working, work location, new policies or procedures, and the need for good communication, appropriate support and training
- Manage its responsibilities in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and The HSE Management Standards
- Issue this policy to all staff and post it on the Services Intranet Site @SAS.
- Carry out an organisational stress audit every 3 years and make appropriate organisational changes were necessary

4.2 Managers Responsibilities

- Conduct & implement recommendations of a risk assessment and be prepared to talk and discuss with staff in confidence, open and honest way, without stigma.
- Ensuring that all new staff receive an appropriate induction, outlining lines of responsibility, accountability, reporting and training for their job, including reference to support services such as Personnel, Welfare, and The Occupational Health Service.
- Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained and competent to discharge their duties and roles.
- Provide staff with meaningful development opportunities
- Monitor workloads, working hours and overtime to ensure that the Working

Time Directive are not contravened and staff are not overworked.

- Ensure that bullying & harassment is not tolerated within their area of responsibility.
- Attend and [where appropriate] delivering any education/training programme on stress, risk assessment/awareness in Good Management practice in Health, Safety & Welfare as required by the Service
- Provide support to individuals who are experiencing the negative effects of stress and can advise them and their line managers
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work
- Support staff who are not on sick leave but are suffering from stress
- Provide mechanisms to rehabilitate sufferers on return to work from illness in consultation with Occupational Health providers and Human Resources
- Ensure that absence is managed in line with the Services Absence Management Policy, including the reporting of absences from work due to Work related stress,
- Ensure that poor performance is identified and managed in a supportive framework in line with good practice.
- Ensure that the Substance Abuse Policy and other relevant policies are applied where appropriate.
- Ensure that individuals are referred to Occupational Health Service where appropriate to do so.
- Carry out risk assessments with support from the Health and Safety Department where a work activity is identified that may cause excessive Work related stress.
- Recognise that the appraisal process is aimed at promoting effectiveness at work and reviewing regularly an individual's work and performance. It is an opportunity for individuals to discuss with their manager any concerns they have and to make suggestions for improvements as well as managers recognising the contribution made by staff members.
- Ensure that all staff have an annual appraisal and that agreed objectives are clear and achievable and measurable

4.3 Occupational Health

- Support the policy and provide specialist advice and support to managers
- Provide specialist support and advice to individuals who are experiencing the negative effects of stress
- Support managers in implementing stress risk assessments
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress and advice them and their managers on a planned return to work
- Refer staff to workplace councillors or specialists agencies where appropriate and as required
- Advise managers and staff on occupational stressors and the risk assessment process

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of measures to reduce stress
- Inform the Service of any developments in the field of stress at work, including the National Health & Safety Committee
- Develop & deliver an education/training programme on stress risk assessment/awareness

4.4 Directorate of Human Resources and Organisational Development

- Health and Safety team to issue maintain and provide guidance on this policy.
- Provide support and guidance to line managers.
- Assist in monitoring the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics and other relevant data
- Provide continuing support to managers and individuals in a changing environment and encourage referrals to occupational health where appropriate
- Ensure any reported case is properly handled.
- Ensure jobs are designed to be within staff capabilities
- Ensure people skills are matched to the job demands
- H&S Team to proactively publicise and encourage healthy living to all staff
- Ensure training is provided for all people managers in good management practices including mental health
- Head of Health and Safety to ensure a confidential counselling service is provided and that all staff are aware of what support is available and how to access it.
- Ensure the service promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness
- Ensure staff have a forum to share relevant information with each other
- Ensure the service has policies and procedures to prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviours and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviours
- Ensure the responsibilities the service places upon staff do not conflict with each other
- Ensure systems are in place to enable staff to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they may have in their role or responsibilities
- Ensure the service provides sufficient information to ensure staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Ensure staff have access to relevant support during changes
- Ensure managers support staff through significant periods of change
- Ensure systems are in place to recognise the contribution of staff

4.5. Staff responsibilities

- Complete all relevant training in relation to their role including e-learning
- Recognise the signs and symptoms in themselves and others that could indicate that they feel unable to cope.
- Report and record their concerns with their line manager, OH or staff safety representative if they feel that they or others are unable to cope with the demands placed upon them at work and/or are experiencing any adverse health effects which they feel are related to their work.
- Ensure that they comply with any control measures that are in place to help manage work related stress and make use of the resources available to them, including following the company's safe system of work for Mental health risks associated with working, seeking support or counselling from Occupational Health, HR or their Trade Union/Professional Organisation
- Provide feedback on potential improvements and better ways of working to their manager.
- Attend all reviews and meetings designed to improve communication between them and their line manager
- Supporting their colleagues if they are experiencing stress and encouraging them to talk to their manager, Occupational Health, Personnel or their Trade Union/Professional Organisation
- Speaking to their GP if they are worried about health issues
- Discussing with their manager whether it is possible to adjust their job in any way [temporarily or permanently] in order to alleviate their stress
- Recognising that stress is not a weakness
- Being actively involved in Risk Assessment process
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended

4.6 Trade Unions/Professional Organisations/Health & Safety Committee will:

- Be consulted on any changes to work practices or work design that could precipitate stress
- Consult with members on the issue of stress including conducting any workplace surveys
- Investigate potential hazards and complaints from their members, receiving information they need from employers to protect members' health and safety
- Be involved in the Risk Assessment process
- Be provided with paid time away from normal duties to attend education/training on workplace stress
- The Safety Committee will perform a pivotal role in ensuring that this policy is implemented
- The Safety Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the policy and other measures to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety

Compliance Audit Tool

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
What is stress				
Do staff know how to access EAP				
Do staff know what to do if they feel they are under undue stress				
What is TIS				
Do staff know what to do if they think a colleague is suffering from stress or TIS				
What are the symptoms of stress				
What are the causes of stress				
Are staff aware of the local stress reduction plans				

Appendix [A]

Signs of Stress in the Workplace

Some of the most common signs and symptoms of stress are noted. However, experiencing any of these for a short period of time does not necessarily mean that an individual is suffering from stress. This is likely to be indicated only when one or more of these signs linger and you have some difficulty making adjustments to cope.

Managers should be aware that stress in the workplace can affect operational efficiency. Possible indicators are;

Work Performance

- An increase in sickness absence [especially in recurring short term absence]
- Lack of concentration
- Unusually quiet and withdrawn or unsociable
- Lack of concentration
- Poor time management
- Difficulty in personal & everyday relationships both at home and work
- Prone to tearful episodes
- Deterioration in standard of work
- Increased accidents/incidents
- Deterioration or breakdown of interpersonal relationships
- Irritability
- Aggression

Behaviour

- Mood swings
- Over eating or loss of appetite
- Increased smoking or drinking
- Increased dependence on drugs

Causes

Anyone may experience stress – it is not a sign of personal weakness. Stress might arise from;

- Excessive workload and responsibilities
- Regularly working excessive hours
- Harassment or bullying
- Experience of violence
- Lack of clarity in the job role
- External pressures

- Excessive noise, poor lighting, uncomfortable temperatures or working in a hazardous environment may cause stress
- Excessive workloads, very mundane or very complex tasks are some of the demands that may cause stress in an individual.
- Expectations - unrealistic job or career expectations.
- Confrontational relationships with managers, colleagues, subordinates, and patients

.

There are a number of areas within the work place that normally would not cause stress amongst staff, but on occasion an individual may exhibit symptoms as a result of these factors.

Prolonged periods of stress can exacerbate existing medical conditions/health problems, e.g. hypertension, heart disease, anxiety and long-term depression.

Appendix[B]

Traumatic Incident Stress [TIS]

It is recognised that the nature of the work that operational staff undertake can, on occasion, lead to Traumatic Incident Stress [TIS], or Post Trauma Stress Disorder. [PTSD]

Essentially, TIS is a negative and unusual reaction, following exposure to events outside the normal range of human experience. Not all operational staff will suffer from TIS, and not everyone who does will suffer in the same way. However, what should be appreciated is that some reaction is quite normal, and does not necessarily constitute a clinical problem.

Signs of TIS vary both in nature and timescale, but could include the following:-

- A feeling that something unusually horrible has happened.
- A “shell-shocked” look.
- Numbness.
- Withdrawal or unusual silence.
- Outbursts.
- Tearfulness.
- Brooding or preoccupation with the event.
- Uncharacteristic behaviour.

The important thing to appreciate is that the behaviour, in whatever form, will not be the usual behaviour for the individual. The immediate line manager, who knows and works closely with the individual members of staff, will be in the best position to identify such abnormal behaviour and the presence of TIS. The manager is also likely to have experience themselves of such stress, and will, therefore, be in a good position to understand how the staff member is feeling.

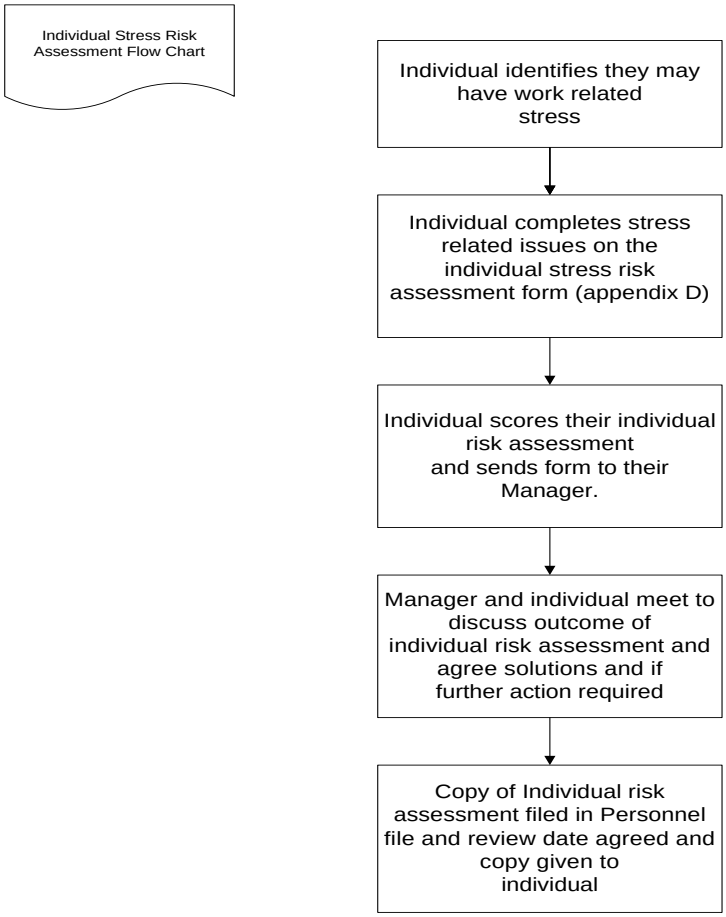
Should a manager have any concerns that a member of their staff may be experiencing TIS, then they should try to organise an informal “debriefing” session, including the staff member concerned. This, however, will not be a formal “counselling” exercise [i.e. the manager will not be trying to enable an individual or individuals to seek solutions or overcome their problems themselves, but merely to get them to talk through how they are feeling]. It is recommended that the debrief should not take place until at least 6 hours after the incident has taken place.

By asking open questions to the group and allowing individual’s time to express their personal feelings and emotions, an environment will be created which may well be all that is necessary for individuals to unburden themselves following a traumatic incident and so alleviate any TIS. However, it must be emphasised that, although some operational details may emerge during it, this

informal “group chat” should not be considered a substitute for a formal operational debrief.

Mangers need to decide after the group debrief whether further assistance and help should be sought for any individual. In deciding whether this is necessary the manager should speak to the employee personally, and then make a judgement. Referral for professional help may be necessary. If the manager feels that it is, involving the Divisional Personnel Manager, if necessary.

Appendix C


Individual Stress Risk Assessment Flow Chart
Individual identifies they may have work related stress
Individual completes stress related issues on the individual stress risk assessment form (appendix D)
Individual scores their individual risk assessment and sends form to their Manager.
Manager and individual meet to discuss outcome of individual risk assessment and agree solutions and if further action required
Copy of Individual risk assessment filed in Personnel file and review date agreed and copy given to individual

Appendix D

Sample individual risk assessment

Name:		**Designation:**		**Station:**	
Manager's Name:		**HR Officer:**		**Date Completed:**	
Hazard/Work Characteristic	Employees comments/Current Situation	Risk Rating (employee)	Solution/Control measure by employee	Solution/Control Measure by employer	Risk Rating
Culture					
Demands					
Control					
Relationships at work					

Change					
Role					
Support & training					

Appendix E

Index

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1. STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 There is no specific legislation in the UK on controlling stress at work. **The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974** places a general duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees. Under the **Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999** employers are obliged to assess the nature and scale of risks to health in their workplace (Reg. 3), apply the principles of prevention (Reg. 4) and to ensure employees' capability and provide training (Reg. 13).

1.2 There is pressure in most jobs. Some pressures can, in fact, be a good thing. The challenges at work can keep us motivated and are key to job satisfaction. Excessive work pressure and the stress to which it can lead can be harmful to individuals and the employer.

1.3 Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.

1.4 Stress can involve:

Physical effects, such as raised heart rate, increased sweating, headache, dizziness, blurred vision, muscle aches, skin rashes and a lowering of resistance to infection;
Behavioural effects, such a tendency to drink more alcohol and smoke more, overeating and overuse of medication/drugs;
Emotional effects, such as increased anxiety and irritability, difficulty sleeping, poor concentration, low mood and mood swings, fear, anger, hopelessness and an inability to deal calmly with everyday tasks and situations.

1.5 Work-related stress is not an illness, but ill health resulting from stress at work must be treated in the same way as ill health due to other physical causes present in the workplace. This means that employers do have a legal duty to take reasonable care to ensure that health is not placed at risk through excessive and sustained levels of stress, arising for example from the way work is organised, the way people deal with each other at their work, or from the day-to-day demands placed on their workforce.

1.6 Risk assessment and risk management are essentially management and health and safety responsibilities.

1.7 Information from risk assessment will be of use to Managers and Human Resources. Senior management have an important role to play as practical organisational issues must be addressed by them.

1.8 Further information is available in the HSE publications 'Tackling Work-related Stress' *(ISBN 0-7176-2050-6) and Real Solutions, Real People (ISBN 0 7176* 9

2767 5), and on the HSE website*: www.hse.gov.uk.* Guidance has also been produced by trade unions and professional associations and by the European Community *(Stress at work: causes, effects and prevention. A guide for small and medium sized enterprises: ISBN 92-826-8594-2)*.

2. RISK ASSESSMENT

2.1 The process of risk assessment as described in the Management Regulations has six key components:

1. Identification of hazards;
2. Identify who might be harmed and how;
3. Evaluate the risk from the identified hazards;
4. Formally record the risk assessment;
5. Implement further action to reduce risks;
6. Review and revise the assessment at regular intervals.

2.2 Steps (1) through (6) are recurring and describe a cycle of activities, which ensure the continuous improvement of occupational health and safety in relation to hazards in the workplace. Further information on risk assessment is available on the HSE website.

2.3 There is no single way of preventing harmful levels of work-related stress. Managers at all levels require to consider the factors noted in the following sections and consider these within the context of the 'culture' of the Partnership or Division, and working practices.

3. MEASUREMENT OF STRESS

3.1 The measurement of stress should include self-reporting measures which focus on the workers' perceptions of the demands on them, their ability to cope with such demands, their needs and the extent to which they are fulfilled by work, the control they have over their work and the support they receive in relation to their work.

3.2 Self-reports are only part of the information that should be analysed. Other evidence should be sought including:
a) an audit of the work environment including both its physical and psychosocial aspects; and
b) evidence of poor housekeeping, accident rates and causes, sickness absence rates and causes, and observations of how effectively work is performed.

3.3 Line managers should note specific hazards such as noise and also recognise the perceived risk relating to dealing with abusive patients.

3.4 HSE has categorised aspects of work. These are listed in the following table:

Stressful Characteristics of Work

Work Characteristics Demands	Conditions Defining Hazard Conditions	Support Offered
Culture	Poor task environment & lack of definition of objectives Poor problem solving environment Poor development environment Poor communication Non-supportive culture	
Demands	Work overload Capability and capacity of the individual Work underload Physical environment Psychological environment	
Control	Low participation in decision making Lack of control over work Little decision making in work	
Relationships at Work	Social or physical isolation Poor relationships with superiors Interpersonal conflict and violence Lack of social support	
Change	Restructuring Introduction of new technology Introduction of new ways of working	
Role	Role ambiguity and/or role conflict Role insufficiency High responsibility for people (including patients)	
Support and training	Insufficient training Lack of skills/competence Lack of support	
Home/Work interface	Conflicting demands of home and work Low social or practical support at home Dual career problems	

3.5 Psychosocial characteristics are included in the risk assessment. As stress is closely related to control, it is important to involve employees in the assessment from the very beginning. Employees have expertise on their own work situation and work organisation. Recognising this

will be of benefit to the workers and the organisation. Managers may meet staff individually and in Focus Groups to discuss work pressures and identify solutions where necessary.
Meetings can be repeated at intervals to monitor the effectiveness of any changes. HSE have produced guidance – *How to Organise and Run Focus Groups* – which can be accessed on their website.

3.6 Information on sickness absence, ill-health retiral, backlogs in taking days off, changes in productivity and accidents/incidents can be analysed for an organisation and each Partnership, Directorate or Department. This should identify areas where action is required.

3.7 If risk assessment indicates problems exist within a specific area, a questionnaire, the HSE Indicator Tool for Work Related Stress can be distributed to all staff in a department for completion. The questionnaires should be completed every 3 years or earlier if there are indications that there is deterioration in any of the indicators.

3.8 The data collected from such questionnaires should be analysed and the results made available quickly and clearly. The confidentiality of responses to questionnaires on health complaints/stress at work must be ensured. The Occupational Health Service can advise and assist with these tasks.

3.9 Findings from assessment of risk should be recorded and an action plan developed and displayed. There is no firm guidance on how often the risk assessment should be undertaken but it should be considered on an annual basis or when there have been significant changes to circumstances in the workplace.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 The Health and Safety Executive in liaison with industry has developed a number of Management Standards which can be found in Appendix 2. It is important that employers, including the NHS, attempt to achieve these standards by demonstrating adequate risk assessment and control measures.

5. PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS

5.1 HSE has also suggested a number of ways of reducing stress in an organisation. These can be classed under similar headings to those in the Table at section **3.4.** and can be found at Appendix 3.

5.2 Reference to the list in Appendix 3, and the results of analysis of administrative data, checklists and questionnaires will identify areas where good practice exists and also areas for improvement.

5.3 The organisation must ensure that the problem is understood and taken seriously; that excessive stress is not seen as a personal problem but an issue which managers, staff and the

organisation as a whole are committed to addressing. Managers will receive training on the organisational aspects of stress as part of their continuing training programme.

Individual stress risk assessment

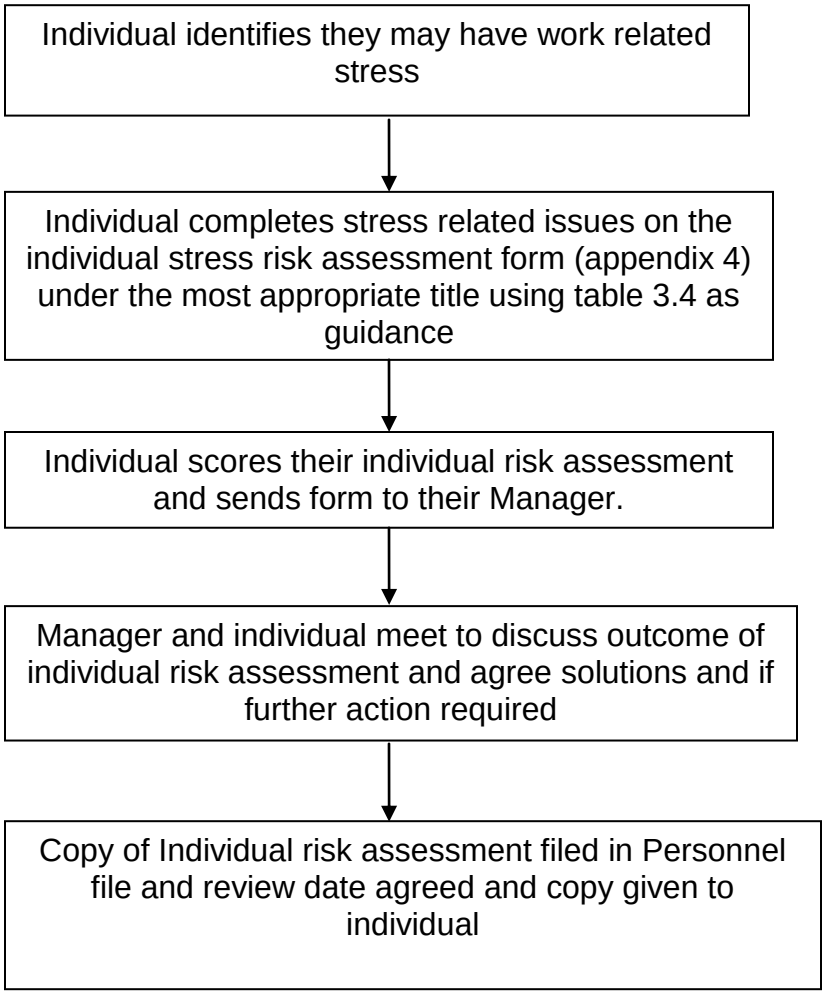
5.4 There may still be occasions when staff are, or likely to be, affected by pressure or stress. Training on stress awareness and management courses can benefit the individual. Training is one aspect of the control cycle.

5.5 Where problems have developed, line managers should provide support and, where necessary, refer the person on for further help. Scottish Ambulance Service has a contract with the Employee Assistance Programme HELP, telephone number: 0800 587 5670
Website: www.sg.helpeap.com
To provide support to staff who can attend voluntarily or as result of a management referral. The Occupational Health Service and Human Resources Department can facilitate such help. In addition, trade unions have counselling services for members.

Employees can also self refer to the Occupational Health Service to discuss their issues and if appropriate can be referred onto the “Living Life” service telephone self help or Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)

5.6 Individual stress risk assessments can be arranged with the manager using the table in section 3 to highlight demands, conditions and support on individual, conditions. The Manager will be able to score the support offered after discussing the individual risk assessment with the person into low, medium or high risk. The Manager is then able to address and high risk areas. The risk assessment is held in the individuals personnel file and reviewed as required. The Occupational Health Service only require to assess the individual when a medical condition is affecting the individuals work performance and a management referral should be discussed with the employee.

Process flow chart for Individual stress risk assessment



5. 7 How to conduct an individual stress risk assessment:

1. Using the table below and the guidance in this document, the individual completes their perception of the cause of their stress under the column conditions/ defining hazards.
2. If any particular part is not applicable the individual should put n/a (not applicable) in the box.
3. The individual should score their stress risk from 1 – 5. The higher the score the higher the perceived risk is.

Scoring

1 = Never
2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes
4 = Often
5= Always

The individual then discusses risk assessment with the Manager.

4. The individual and their Manager should then discuss and record the support/ solutions in control measures/ support row.
5. After control measure/ support has been discussed the Manager and the Individual score the risk and record results in the last column.
6. It is recommended that the Stress risk assessment is reviewed to ensure that action to reduce the stress has been implemented and is effective. If not further action / support needs to be actioned.
7. The stress risk assessment should be filed in the individual's personnel record and the individual should have a copy for their reference.

5.7 Sample individual risk assessment **(Appendix 1)**

Name:		**Designation:**		**Station:**	
Manager's Name:		**HR Business Partner:**		**Date Completed:**	
Hazard/Work Characteristic	Employees comments/Current Situation	Risk Rating (employee)	Solution/Control measure by employee	Solution/Control Measure by employer	Risk Rating
Culture					
Demands					
Control					
Relationships at work					

Change					
Role					
Support & training					
Home/work interface					

APPENDIX 2 -

HSE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS –ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Demands

Includes issues like workload, work patterns, and the work environment.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides employees with adequate and achievable demands in relation to the agreed hours of work
- People's skills and abilities are matched to the job demands;
- Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees; and
- Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed.

Control

How much say the person has in the way they do their work.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- Where possible, employees have control over their pace of work;
- Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work;
- Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work;
- The organisation encourages employees to develop their skills;
- Employees have a say over when breaks can be taken; and
- Employees are consulted over their work patterns.

Support

Includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors; and that risk assessment has addressed concerns.
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation has policies and procedures to adequately support employees;
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support their staff
- Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support their colleagues;
- Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it;
- Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job; and
- Employees receive regular and constructive feedback.

Relationships

Includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, e.g. bullying at work;
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation promotes positive behaviours at work to avoid conflict and ensure fairness;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- Employees share information relevant to their work;
- The organisation provides information to enable employees to understand their role and responsibilities;
- The organisation ensures that, as far as possible, the requirements it places upon employees are clear; and
  Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts they have in their role and responsibilities.

Change

How organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

The standard is that:

- Employees indicate that the organisation engages them frequently when undergoing an organisational change; and
- Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns.

What should be happening/states to be achieved:

- The organisation provides employees with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes;
- The organisation ensures adequate employee consultation on changes and provides opportunities for employees to influence proposals;
- Employees are aware of the probable impact of any changes to their jobs. If necessary, employees are given training to support any changes in their jobs;
- Employees are aware of timetables for changes;
- Employees have access to relevant support during changes.

APPENDIX 3

PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Culture

- Communicate regularly with your staff, particularly those working remotely and/or from home, and be open and honest about what is happening at work and how this may affect them;
- Adopt partnership approaches in the workplace to encourage staff to work with you to tackle work-related stress or any emerging business problems. Encourage people to talk to you at an early stage about work-related stress, mental health issues, and their concerns about work. Create an environment where these issues do not carry stigma;
- Try to involve your staff in the planning process so that they understand how their work 'fits in';
- Offer internal support. This could be practical things, like coaching, or it could be emotional support, e.g. when personal crises such as illness and bereavement, financial worries etc affect your staff.

Demands

- Ensure there are sufficient resources to do the work allocated;
- If there are insufficient resources, seek guidance from management about priorities;
- Support your staff by helping them prioritise, or renegotiate deadlines;
- Cover workloads during staff absences;
- If people are underloaded, think about giving them more responsibility, but make sure they have been adequately trained;
- Strike a balance between ensuring that employees are interested and busy, but not underloaded, overloaded, or confused about the job;
- Train staff so they are able to do their jobs;
- Encourage staff to talk to you at an early stage if they feel they cannot cope
- Talk to your team regularly about what needs to be done, because this can help you understand the challenges the team are currently facing and any pressures they are under;
- Find ways of sharing out the work sensibly and agreeing the way forward with the team;
- Gain team cohesion and commitment to the work you have planned – if the whole team is aware of what needs to be done and by when, they are likely to be more responsive to you. Allocating more work to a stretched team without explanation is not helpful;
- Ensure shift work systems are agreed with staff and that the shifts are fair in terms of workload;

- Help you manage any unexpected absences or losses to the team – everyone knows the key stages of the project and what each other's role is;
- Lead by example;
- Have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to control the physical hazards and risks;
- Assess the risk of physical violence and verbal abuse and take appropriate steps to deal with it.

Control

- Give more control to staff by enabling them to plan their own work, make decisions about how that work should be completed and how problems should be tackled;
- Enrich jobs by ensuring that staff are able to use various skills to get tasks completed, and that staff can understand how their work fits in with the wider aims of the organisation;
- Only monitor employees' output if this is essential. Regular meetings with staff could be arranged to see how things are going. At these meetings managers could provide advice and support where necessary, and ensure that staff are coping;
- A supportive environment is crucial. Staff need to know that managers will support them, even if things go wrong or if they find that they are unable to cope with added pressures.

Relationships

- Work in partnership with staff to ensure that bullying and harassment never emerge as an issue. One way of doing this is by having procedures in place, such as disciplinary and grievance procedures, to deal with instances of unacceptable behaviour;
- In consultation with staff and trade unions, draw up effective policies to reduce or eliminate harassment and bullying;
- Communicate the policies and make it clear that senior management fully supports them;
- Communicate the consequences of breaching the policies;
- Create a culture where members of the team trust each other and can be themselves while they are at work;
- Encourage your staff to recognise the individual contributions of other team members and the benefits of the whole team pulling together.

Change

- Explain what the organisation wants to achieve and why it is essential that the change takes place – explain the timetable for action and what the first steps are going to be. Talk about what the change will mean in terms of day-to-day activity and discuss whether there are any new training needs;
- Communicate new developments quickly to avoid the spread of rumours in the organisation. If the organisation is planning a major change your

staff are likely to be discussing job security, whether they will need to relocate, and whether their terms and conditions will change;
- Face-to-face communication is generally best so that people have the opportunity to ask questions and say what they feel, but any means, e.g. paper or electronic, would be helpful;
- Have an 'open door' policy where staff can talk to you about their concerns or any suggestions they have for improving the way the change is managed;
- Give staff the opportunity to comment and ask questions before, during, and after the change;
- Involve staff in discussions about how jobs might be developed and changed and in generating ways of solving problems;
- Supporting your staff is crucial during a change;
- After the change, think about revising work objectives to avoid role conflict and role ambiguity which can cause work-related stress;
- Revise your risk assessment to see if any changes, e.g. a decrease in staff numbers, have resulted in increased risks to staff. Remember that social changes (e.g. if staff are now working with a completely different group of people) may have more of an impact on the individual than technological or geographical changes.

Role

- Make sure your staff have a clearly defined role, e.g. through a personal work plan which enables them to understand exactly what their roles and responsibilities are;
- Encourage your staff to talk to you at an early stage if they are not clear about priorities or the nature of the task to be undertaken;
- Talk to all your staff regularly to make sure that they are completely clear about the current job, what it entails, what you expect of them and what they can expect from you;
- Make sure that new members of staff receive a comprehensive induction to your organisation;
- If your organisation has gone through change, check with members of your team to make sure they understand their new roles and are comfortable with them.

Support and Training

- Give support and encouragement to staff, even when things go wrong;
- Listen to your staff and agree a course of action for tackling any problems – it is important for staff to feel that the contribution they make at work is valued;
- Involve your staff – they need to 'do their bit' to identify problems and work towards agreed solutions;
- Encourage staff to share their concerns about work-related stress at an early stage;
- Provide your staff with suitable and sufficient training to do their jobs;
- Give new staff a proper induction into the department and organisation;

- Take into account that people's skills and the way they approach the work will differ;
- Value diversity – don't discriminate against people on grounds of race, sex or disability, or other irrelevant reasons;
- Encourage a healthy 'work-life balance';
- Encourage staff to take their annual leave entitlement and their meal breaks.
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HSE indicator Tool for Work Related Stress for departments/ areas to use.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1 I am clear what is expected of me at work					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
2 I can decide when to take a break					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
3 Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
4 I know how to go about getting my job done					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
5 I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
6 I have unachievable deadlines					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
7 If work gets difficult my colleagues will help me					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
8 I am given supportive feedback on the work I do					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
9 I have to work very intensively					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
10 I have a say in my own work speed					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
11 I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
12 I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do					

Worked example of Individual stress risk assessment- not every box needs to have an issue. Put in most appropriate box. Risk score once discussion with Manager should be less than Employees original concern. If not needs to be addressed again.
Under control box by Employer – Review date for action can be added but it may not be required.
1= Low Risk Rating 5 = High Risk Rating

Name: Michael Mouse		**Designation:**		**Location:**	
Manager's Name: An Other		**HR Business Partner:**		**Date Completed:**	
Hazard/Work Characteristic	Employees comments/Current Situation	Risk Rating (employee)	Solution/Control measure by employee	Solution/Control Measure by employer	Risk Rating
Culture	Not getting time to do PDP and KSF	3	Time to do this	Agree protected time to do self directed learning, update policy and procedures.	1
Demands	Stressed due to workload at busy times	5	Reduce hours at busy times, not wanting to work some shifts	Due to service needs cannot reduce hours at busy times but solution would be to offer additional training / support To address how to a manage workload effectively and develop coping strategies for busy times. Discuss contract of employment and needs of service- may need to consider if job suits them?	2
Control	Is currently under capability/ performance issue process	5	Feels stressed at coaching / supervision programme as it making them more nervous.	Coaching programme agreed with Manager and employee and encouragement to complete as soon as possible and opportunity to discuss concerns. To highlight to person the positive side of coaching etc.	2

Relationships at work	Allegation of bullying by Team Leader	4	Feels Team leader treating them unfairly by monitoring break lengths. Unwilling to discuss with team leader	Given information on confidential contact and PPC counselling details by another team leader/ CSM. Opportunity to discuss the employees perspective and discuss if the employee wishes to use formal route or would consider mediation/ discussion with own Team Leader. Has employee read dignity at work policy, employee conduct policy etc.	2
Change	Change of team	3	Asked to move team due to rota change	Arrange for the individual to meet new team leader and allow a period of settling in to team.	1
Role	Due to Organisational change on redeployment/ displacement register	5	Nervous/ stressed about new position offered don't know who to ask.	Arrange for training needs to be addressed. Arrange for new manager to meet and discuss role expectations, skills gaps and any concerns individual may have	1
Support & training					
Home/work interface	Domestic issues ongoing affecting ability to attend work. E.g. child care issue, caring for dependants	4	Domestic situation causing stress and unable to attend work on a regular basis. Wants to change rota or reduce hours.	Discuss if person has support system emplace for home situation and investigate why change of hours / shift would help them. Refer to Occupational health if Manager feels appropriate to arrange support for individual. Discuss which HR policy may be helpful for guidance.	1

	Reason for review and brief description of changes made	Effective Date
1	Initial Issue	18/09/06
2	Complete re write following review	Aug 08
3	Reviewed GBD no changes Other than addition of compliance audit questions	May 11
4	Reviewed and re-written to update policy responsibilities and add Individual Risk Assessment Guidance	Apr 2016