

مركز أبوظبي للصحة المهنية
ABU DHABI OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH CENTER

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Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health System Framework

(OSHAD-SF)

Code of Practice

CoP 30.0 – Lone Working and/or in Remote Locations

Version 3.0

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ABU DHABI PUBLIC
HEALTH CENTRE

مركز أبوظبي
للصحة العامة



Important Note:

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1. Introduction

- (a) This Code of Practice (CoP) applies to all employers within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. This CoP is designed to incorporate requirements set by UAE and Abu Dhabi regulatory authorities. If requirements of this document conflict with requirements set by another regulatory authority, employers are required to follow the more stringent requirement.
- (b) Lone working is defined as those who work by themselves without close supervision or direct supervision. There are many situations where people can find themselves “working alone”, some examples are set out below:
- (i) People in fixed establishments where:
1. only one person works on the premises, e.g. in small workshops, petrol stations, kiosks, shops and also home employees;
 2. people work separately from others, e.g. in factories, warehouses, some research and training establishments and leisure centres; and
 3. people work outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners, security, special production, maintenance or repair staff etc.
- (ii) Mobile employees working away from their fixed base:
1. on construction, plant installation, maintenance and cleaning work, electrical repairs, lift repairs, painting and decorating, vehicle recovery etc; and
 2. agricultural employees; service employees, e.g. postal/Courier staff, home help/domestic staff, pest control employees, drivers, engineers, architects, estate agents, sales representatives and similar professionals visiting domestic and commercial premises.

2. Training and Competency

- (a) Employers shall ensure that OSH training complies with the requirements of:
 - (i) *OSHAD-SF – Element 5 – Training, Awareness and Competency;*
 - (ii) *OSHAD-SF – Mechanism 7.0 – OSH Professional Entity Registration; and*
 - (iii) *OSHAD-SF – Mechanism 8.0 – OSH Practitioner Registration.*
- (b) Employers shall ensure that specific training is provided in relation to the tasks being undertaken.
- (c) Training shall encompass any hazards that are identified due to lone working.
- (d) Training shall be conducted in a language appropriate for the workforce.
- (e) Training shall include a test of competency and employees shall demonstrate an understanding of the training delivered. Employees unable to demonstrate a sound understanding of the training provided shall not be permitted to undertake the relevant tasks until appropriate retraining has been undertaken.
- (f) Training shall be refreshed at appropriate intervals.
- (g) Employers shall maintain a record of the required training that contains the following:
 - (i) Employee name and ID Number;
 - (ii) Emirates ID number;
 - (iii) Identification of training received;
 - (iv) date(s) of training; and
 - (v) person providing the training.

3. Requirements

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1.1 Employers

- (a) Employers shall undertake their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the general requirements of *OSHAD-SF – Element 1 – Roles, Responsibilities and Self-Regulation* Section 3.2.5.
- (b) Employers shall ensure that all persons who are at an increased risk due to working alone are identified and appropriate control measures are implemented to reduce the risk.
- (c) Employers shall provide appropriate welfare facilities, in compliance with the requirements of, but not limited to:
 - (i) *Article 101 of Federal Law No. 8, for 1980, Regulation of Labour Relations;*
 - (ii) *OSHAD-SF– CoP 4.0 – First Aid and Medical Treatment;*
 - (iii) *OSHAD-SF – Element 6 – Emergency Management;*
 - (iv) *OSHAD-SF – CoP 8.0 – General Workplace Amenities; and*
 - (v) *OSHAD-SF – CoP 11.0 – Safety in the Heat.*
- (d) Employers shall ensure that such persons are fully aware and compliant with any specific legislation that applies to lone working, examples could include occupational diving or certain chemical works.

3.1.2 Employees

- (a) Employees shall undertake their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the general requirements of *OSHAD-SF – Element 1 – Roles, Responsibilities and Self-Regulation* Section 3.2.7.
- (b) Employees shall ensure they follow all the rules and regulation set by the employer with regards to lone working.
- (c) Employees shall ensure that they immediately report any hazard or information that may affect, adversely or otherwise, the works being undertaken.

3.2 Planning and Assessment

- (a) Employers shall evaluate each site or operation to determine if hazards are present and the workplace shall be assessed using risk management practices as required by *OSHAD-SF – Element 2 – Risk Management.*
- (b) Where lone working has been identified, the employer shall ensure, as part of their risk management program, a full risk assessment is undertaken. The risk assessment shall be developed in line with the requirements of *OSHAD-SF – Element 2 – Risk Management.*

(c) Employers shall ensure the following:

- (i) an assessment of the various risks is undertaken and systems of work are established which are safe to all parties involved or affected including the public;
- (ii) that effective procedures and control measures are in place, which are implemented in order to manage activities safely and without risk to health;
- (iii) that for the Building and Construction Sector the management of working alone and/or in remote locations requirements are included in the Pre-Tender Safety and Health Plan in accordance with *OSHAD-SF – CoP 53.0 – OSH Management During Construction Work*; and
- (iv) that associated safe systems of work, and site rules are included in the Safety and Health Construction Management Plan (OSH-CMP) in the case of the Building and Construction Sector in accordance with *OSHAD-SF – CoP 53.0 – OSH Management During Construction Work*.

3.3 Assessing the Risk

(a) Lone employees shall not be at more risk than other employees. This may require extra risk control measures. Precautions shall take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and incidents. Employers shall identify situations where people work alone and consider the issues below.

3.3.1 Length of Time the Person will be Working Alone

- (a) What is a reasonable length of time for the person to be alone?
- (b) Is it reasonable for the person to be alone at all?
- (c) How long will the person be alone to finish the job?
- (d) Is it legal for the person to be alone while doing certain activities? (For example: working alone in a confined space or during lock-out / tag-out operations).
- (e) What time of the day will the person be alone?

3.3.2 Remoteness and Isolation

- (a) When employees are working in remote locations, the employer shall consider whether:
 - (i) the emergency services can approach close enough (if necessary);
 - (ii) there is a clear understanding about how long the work should take;
 - (iii) there is appropriate access to first aid, or provision for mobile employees to carry a first aid kit; and
 - (iv) transport arrangements to and from the workplace are appropriate.

3.3.3 Location of the Work

- (a) Is the work in a remote or isolated location? (Remember that a remote location does not have to be far away. Storage rooms that are rarely used can be considered remote or isolated).
- (b) Is transportation necessary to get there? What kind of transportation is needed?
- (c) Is the vehicle equipped with emergency supplies such as food and drinking water, as well as a first aid kit?
- (d) Will the person need to carry some or all of the emergency supplies with them when they leave the vehicle?
- (e) Does the person need training to be able to use the first aid equipment?
- (f) What are the consequences if the vehicle breaks down?
- (g) Will the person have to leave the vehicle for long periods of time?

3.3.4 Condition of the Workplace

- (a) Employers shall ensure a safe means of entry and exit to the workplace.
- (b) Employer shall ensure that there is appropriate workplace amenities (eg. lighting, drinking water, food storage, preparation and eating facilities, washing facilities), in compliance with the requirements of *OSHAD-SF – CoP 8.0 – General Workplace Amenities and OSHAD-SF – CoP 19.0 – Occupational Food Handling and Food Preparation Areas*.

3.3.5 Communication

- (a) Employers shall consider whether communication is appropriate, and in particular:
 - (i) has the lone employee been equipped with a system for maintaining contact, such as two-way means of communication or a personal alarm?
 - (ii) is there a closed circuit television (CCTV) system available, and will it be monitored?
 - (iii) what forms of communication are available?
 - (iv) is it necessary to "see" the person, or is voice communication appropriate?
 - (v) will emergency communication systems work appropriately in all situations?
 - (vi) if the communication systems are located in a vehicle, are alternative arrangements required to cover the person when they are away from the vehicle?

3.3.6 Personal Assault

- (a) Employees who are thought to be carrying cash, or who can be seen in possession of valuables, such as laptop computers, pharmaceuticals, hand tools, mobile phones, etc. may be at risk from robbery or attack.
- (b) Persons with criminal intent may also pose a risk if they find out an employee's address.

3.3.7 Emergency Procedures

- (a) In case of emergency, consideration shall be given to:
- (i) whether appropriate preparation has been made to cope with the emergency, eg. fire, illness or incident, and have appropriate procedures have been established?;
 - (ii) what provisions are in place to make the workplace secure if it must be left unattended. Solitary employees shall be capable of responding correctly to emergency situations; and
 - (iii) emergency procedures and control measures are in compliance with the requirements of *OSHAD-SF – Element 6 – Emergency Management*.

3.3.8 Supervision

- (a) Although solitary employees cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still the employer's duty to provide appropriate control of the work. Supervision complements information, instruction and training and helps to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are carried out. It can also provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.
- (b) The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the proficiency and experience of the employee to identify and handle safety issues.
- (c) Employees new to the job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first.
- (d) The extent of supervision required is a management decision. It shall not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance. Safety supervision can generally be carried out when visits are made to check the progress and quality of the work and may take the form of periodic site visits coupled with discussions in which safety issues are assessed.
- (e) Therefore given the relative lack of supervision, extra care shall be taken to ensure that the lone employee is competent to both carry out the task and to deal with foreseeable problems.

3.3.9 Medical Fitness

- (a) Issues that shall be discussed in relation to medical fitness include:
- (i) do the circumstances of working alone place additional requirements on employees in terms of their physical or mental stamina?
 - (ii) is there a medical condition that makes them inappropriate for working alone?
 - (iii) would a pre-employment questionnaire or medical examination be helpful under the circumstances?

3.3.10 Tools and Equipment

- (a) Where machinery or power tools are being used, consideration of the electrical safety, guarding and fire precautions required are paramount. In compliance with the requirements of *OSHAD-SF – CoP 15.0 – Electrical Safety, CoP 35.0 – Portable Power Tools and CoP 36.0 – Plant and Equipment*.
- (b) The use of flammable, explosive or toxic chemicals shall be fully assessed. The presence of automatic fire protection (flood) systems e.g. carbon dioxide gas may pose special risks, in compliance with the requirements of *OSHAD-SF – CoP 1.0 – Hazardous Materials*.
- (c) Access equipment that is appropriate for handling by one person alone may be required, and all lifting operations shall be performed in an appropriate and safe manner. Consideration shall be given to supplying appropriate personal protective equipment, bearing in mind the limited possibilities for supervision.

3.3.11 Type or Nature of Work

- (a) Is there appropriate personal protective equipment available? Is it in good working order?
- (b) What machinery, tools or equipment will be used?
- (c) Is there a high risk activity involved?
 - (i) at heights;
 - (ii) confined spaces (such as tanks, grain bins or elevators, culverts, etc.);
 - (iii) with electricity;
 - (iv) with hazardous substances or materials;
 - (v) with hazardous equipment such as chainsaws or firearms;
 - (vi) with materials at great pressure; and/or
 - (vii) with the public, where there is a potential for violence.
- (d) Is fatigue a reasonably foreseeable to be a factor?
- (e) Are there extremes of temperature?
- (f) Is there risk of an animal attack, insect bite (poisonous, or allergic reaction), etc.?
- (g) If the person is working inside a locked building, how will emergency services be able to get in? (e.g. a night cleaner in a secure office building)
- (h) Does the work involve working with money or other valuables?
- (i) Does the work involve seizing property or goods (such as repossession, recovering stolen property, etc)?

3.3.12 Personal Alarm Systems

- (a) There are a number of portable alarm systems available, of varying degrees of sophistication. Some can be bought off the shelf, while others can be made up to a company's own specification. There are also alarm systems that are set up to monitor remote plant and equipment. These systems shall be able to detect failure or malfunction that may put a lone employee at risk, and are often integrated with a complete security package including CCTV, fire detection etc.
- (b) The system most appropriate shall depend on the circumstances it is to be used for, but there is one common basic feature to all systems. It shall ensure that vulnerable individuals can raise an instant alarm, or be located precisely, so that immediate assistance can be sent.

3.4 Lone Working Procedures

- (a) Where lone working and / or working in remote locations has been identified, the employer shall develop a procedure that incorporates the specific instructions employees are to undertake in the event of working alone. The employer may incorporate these instructions into a general procedure that is task specific.
- (b) Where persons will be working alone and/or in remote locations, the employer shall prepare a procedure for the employee to check in on a regular basis. The check in procedure shall include the following items:
 - (i) a daily work plan so it is known where the lone employee will be and when;
 - (ii) Identify one main person to be the contact at the office, plus a backup;
 - (iii) define under what circumstances the lone employee will check in and how often;
 - (iv) stick to the visual check or call-in schedule. You may wish to have a written log of contact;
 - (v) have the contact person call or visit the lone employee periodically to make sure he or she is okay;
 - (vi) pick out a code word to be used to identify or confirm that help is needed;
 - (vii) develop an emergency action plan to be followed if the lone employee does not check-in when they are supposed to; and
 - (viii) each procedure shall be individual to each employee who will be lone working and shall be updated on a regular basis.

4. References

- *OSHAD-SF– Element 1 – Roles, Responsibilities and Self-Regulation*
- *OSHAD-SF– Element 2 – Risk Management*
- *OSHAD-SF - Element 6 – Emergency Management*
- *OSHAD-SF – CoP 1.0 – Hazardous Substances*
- *OSHAD-SF – CoP 4.0 – First Aid and Medical Treatment*
- *OSHAD-SF– CoP 8.0 – General Workplace Amenities*
- *OSHAD-SF– CoP 11.0 – Safety in the Heat*
- *OSHAD-SF– CoP 15.0 – Electrical Safety*
- *OSHAD-SF – CoP 19.0 – Occupational Food Handling and Preparation Areas*
- *OSHAD-SF – CoP 35.0 – Portable Power Tools*
- *OSHAD-SF – CoP 36.0 – Plant and Equipment*
- *Article 101 of Federal Law No. 8, for 1980, Regulation of Labour Relations;*
- *INDG73 – Working Alone in Safety (rev1) – HSE Books ISBN 9780717663712*

5. Document Amendment Record

Version	Revision Date	Description of Amendment	Page/s Affected
3.0	1 st July 2016	Change of Logo	All
		Change from AD EHS Center to OSHAD	throughout
		Change of document title: AD EHSMS RF to OSHAD-SF	Throughout
		Acknowledgements deleted	2/3
		Preface Deleted	4
		EHS changes to OSH	throughout

