

# BCSC Lone Working Policy

## Policy Statement

Where the various Club roles and duties require BCSC members and volunteers to work alone, or they choose to do so, both the individual staff member and BCSC have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

## Purpose

This policy is designed to alert members and volunteers to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

## Scope

This policy applies to all members who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

## Context

Whilst not affecting BCSC directly many services are increasingly being offered on a twenty-four hour, seven-day basis. With this comes the consequence that some people may be angry, frightened, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. So communication may be difficult with these individuals, due to impairment or emotional state, if they enter BCSC premises when our doors are open for whatever reason

Therefore support for lone workers is an essential part, and principles apply, particularly: a commitment to supporting members both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices, recognising and reducing risk, a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff, a clear understanding of responsibilities, the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property, a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff

## Definition

Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where volunteers find themselves working alone

### Security of buildings

- Officers are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- Alarm systems must be tested regularly.
- Staff working alone must ensure they are familiar with the exits and alarms. There must be access to a telephone and first aid equipment for staff working alone.
- If there is any indication that a building has been broken into, a staff member must not enter alone, but raise the alarm and must wait for back-up.

### Personal safety

- Members must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.

- Everyone should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the bar manager/Rear Commodore/Vice Commodore/Commodore
- Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the volunteer.

#### Assessment of risk

- In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances: the environment – location, security, access the context – nature of the task, any special circumstances the individuals concerned – any previous incidents in similar situations any other special circumstances
- All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary
- Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.
- While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.

#### Planning

- Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk as well as the task itself.
- Communication, checking-in and fallback arrangements must be in place.
- The Bar Manager/Rear Commodore/Vice Commodore is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the operating conditions affecting the team.

#### Reporting

- Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing should follow as below
- The identified person should debrief in the first instance to the bar manager/Rear or Vice Commodore in the first instance
- This should then be followed up with the Commodore

#### Practice Guidance

- The agreed plan for contact or emergency response may be a standard one for the team or specific to the individual situation. It should be recorded and readily accessible by the identified person, and up-dated as necessary. It may be appropriate to agree a code word or phrase to indicate that assistance is required.
- Managers should be particularly aware of the importance of such arrangements for staff who live alone.

#### Assessment of risk

- ‘Special circumstances’ may include the most recent events and the person’s response, the indication of alcohol or substance use, the presence of a dog, or any other factors specific to the situation which might affect the assessment.

#### Monitoring and Review

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored under a review process.
- Lone working and risk assessment will be regular agenda items for team meetings.
- Any member with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with a Club Officer as appropriate

- The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

## **Appendix 1**

### Personal Safety

- It is not wise to rely on alarm systems or breakaway techniques to get you out of trouble – there are a number of things you can do to avoid trouble in the first place. BCSC has a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of volunteers, but volunteers also have a duty to take reasonable care themselves.
- Be aware of the environment
- Know what measures are in place where you work: check out alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aid supplies.
- Make sure your mobile phone is in good working order, and that electrical and other mechanical equipment is safe to use.
- Check the instructions for use and ensure that faults are reported /dealt with.
- Try to maintain a comfortable level of heating and lighting in the clubhouse.
- Be aware of yourself
- Think about your body language. What messages are you giving?
- Think about your tone of voice and choice of words. Avoid anything which could be seen as sarcastic or patronising.
- Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable for the task? Does it hamper your movement? What signals does it send out?
- In a potentially risky situation, does a scarf or tie offer an opportunity to an assailant? Be aware of your own triggers.

### **Risk Assessment**

#### Illness or injury/ accident

- No access to medication/ assistance
  - Alert team members if able to
  - Ensure access to phone
  - Take prescribed medication as directed or as needed
  - Consider back up arrangements where mobile phone coverage is poor

#### Contact with difficult service users

- Assault Verbal abuse/Threats
  - Mobile phone
  - Safer Working Practice
  - Pre -planned Briefing/ risk assessment
  - Conflict awareness training
  - Joint Techniques to avoid conflict
  - Be aware of own responses
  - Volunteer briefings and sharing information

#### Manual handling

- Back injury
- Slip, trip or fall
  - Minimise manual handling

- Do not attempt alone if beyond capabilities
- Wear appropriate footwear
- Assess floor conditions (slippery, wet, rugs etc);
- Don't lift if in doubt
- Manual handling training
- Undertake specific Moving & Handling risk assessments
- Use lifting aids

#### Attack by dog or other animal

- Bites
  - Contracting illness
  - Shock
  - Avoid contact with animals
  - Seek local advice
  - Appropriate behaviour near animals – avoid alarming them, e.g. sudden movements
  - Working in office/premises alone

#### Fire

- Burns Smoke inhalation
  - Trapped in building
  - Fire detection system
  - Fire alarm call points
  - Fire action: safety notices/information
  - Extinguishers
  - Fire doors kept shut
  - Training for staff;
  - Fire exits kept clear
  - Planned inspections
  - Hazard reporting and correction
  - Adequate cleaning/ waste disposal
  - Electrical safety inc PAT testing
  - No smoking, or controlled smoking environment

#### Intruder: -

- Attack Verbal abuse
  - Theft of property
  - Arson Controlled access to building e.g. through key fobs
  - On -site security
  - Challenging unknown visitors where safe or reporting/requesting assistance from security
  - Access to phone
  - Co -operation of building users
  - Keep valuables locked up
  - Fire precautions
  - Post incident support