

SAFE WORKING PROCEDURE

Control of Vibration at Work

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY | VERSION 1.04 | July 2023

STATEMENT:

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the council must make sure that:

- All work involving the use of vibrating equipment must have a risk assessment covering each individual piece of equipment. This will include the maximum amount of time this piece of equipment can be used by an individual employee in a 24 hour period.
- All vibrating equipment must be correctly maintained and serviced.
- Employees must be trained in the correct use of the equipment.
- Employees must have regular health surveillance where a requirement has been identified by assessment.

SCOPE:

This Safe Working Procedure applies to:

- All managers including head teachers referred to as managers herein.
- All employees of Southampton City Council.

1. Responsibilities

Service Lead/Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring:

- 1.1. Task based and equipment specific risk assessments have been undertaken and appropriate controls in place to manage hazards at source in line with the hierarchy of risk controls (see [SWP Risk Assessment](#)).

Managers/supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance with the SWP and must:

- 1.2. Ensure all work involving the use of vibrating equipment has a risk assessment covering each individual piece of equipment as per [SWP Risk Assessment](#). This will include the maximum amount of time this piece of equipment can be used by an individual employee in a 24 hour period.
- 1.3. Ensure all vibrating equipment is correctly maintained and serviced as per manufacturers' instructions.
- 1.4. Find out from their employees which processes, if any, involve regular exposure to whole body vibration (WBV) or hand arm vibration (HAV).
- 1.5. Ensure their employees are trained in the correct use of the equipment and that they fully understand the level of risk they may be exposed to and the possible health effects.
- 1.6. Ask your employees if they have any of the WBV or HAV symptoms and whether the equipment being used produces high levels of vibration or places uncomfortable strains on backs, hands and arms.
- 1.7. Monitor employees' daily HAV exposure using the Employee Daily HAV/Noise Exposure sheet ([Health and safety forms](#)) as this will be the true record of employees' exposure to HAV. This information can be used to check if an employee needs to be subjected to health surveillance or the risk assessment needs to be amended
- 1.8. Ensure employees' have regular health surveillance if there is a risk to their health; refer to [Appendix 2 - Guidance on providing HAV health surveillance for further advice](#). (Also see [Safe working procedures SWP Health Surveillance](#)).
- 1.9. Have a purchasing policy for replacing old equipment and tools so far as is reasonably practicable, which are suitable for the work, efficient and of lower vibration.

Employees must:

- 1.10. Ensure they follow the controls identified by the risk assessment covering each piece of equipment. This will include the maximum amount of time this piece of equipment can be used by an individual employee in a 24 hour period.
- 1.11. Inform their supervisor which, if any, processes involves regular exposure to vibration.
- 1.12. Complete Employee daily HAV/noise exposure sheet when requested so vibration exposure levels can be monitored. This information will be used to check if an employee needs to be subjected to health surveillance or their risk assessment needs to be amended.
- 1.13. Follow any training that ensures the correct use of the equipment.
- 1.14. Inform their supervisor if they have any of the WBV or HAVS symptoms, and whether the equipment being used produces high levels of vibration or uncomfortable strains on hands and arms.
- 1.15. Report any problems with their equipment such as unusually high vibration levels.
- 1.16. Attend any health surveillance that is arranged.

2. Procedures

The Health and Safety Executive have provided free downloadable guidance to the regulations (link below). There is also separate HSE guidance on Whole body (WBV) and Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) (links below). Managers should use these guides and other information detailed below to help inform the risk assessment process and management of whole body and hand arm vibration required by this procedure:

2.1 Marking of equipment with vibration levels to workout employee daily exposure level

Equipment will need to be marked using a points system but the maximum number of points/day marked on the equipment tags should be 400 as this will alert employees to their maximum exposure. Managers should still however take whatever steps are reasonably practicable to keep exposure as low as reasonably practicable and ideally below 2.5 m/s² (100 points).

- 2.1.1 Once a piece of equipment has been accepted into service that has a vibration level above 2.5m/s² A(8), it will be tagged with a vibration exposure label (see example of the type of tag and information that the label should contain in [Appendix 1](#) - know the vibration exposure label poster). Other systems are commercially available.
- 2.1.2 This label contains the daily vibration level for a 5 minute trigger time when the piece of equipment is actually used by the employee. Each 5 minute trigger time is added together at the end of the working day to work out the daily vibration level.
- 2.1.3 If the following points levels are exceeded then managers must take action to reduce their employees exposure to HAV:
 - 2.1.3.1 Above 100 points then the employee must be subject to a scheme of health surveillance.
 - 2.1.3.2 If 400 points is exceeded and then employee's exposure must be immediately reduced, at least to below the limit value.

This means that for employees who are exposed to 100 points per day more than occasionally the requirements of this SWP will need to be complied with including the provision of health surveillance.

2.2 Health Surveillance required by employees exposed to vibration

The authority's procedure on health surveillance for its employees is contained in [Safe working procedures](#) (SWP Health Surveillance)

2.3 Reporting of Injuries Diseases Dangerous Occurrence Regulation reporting

- 2.3.1. The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) places a duty on the authority as an employer to report any cases of HAVS arising from certain work activities or of carpal tunnel syndrome associated with exposure to vibration. The duty comes into effect when the manager and Corporate Health and Safety Service (CH&SS) receive a formal written diagnosis from the Occupational Health Service doctor confirming that the employee has either of these conditions and that there is reason to believe that the disease is likely to have an occupational origin.
- 2.3.2. Before reporting HAVS to the Health and Safety Executive, CH&SS will check that the employee is currently doing a job involving one of the specific activities listed in Schedule 3 of RIDDOR.
- 2.3.3. See [SWP Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation](#) for the council's policy for reporting such occurrences.

3. Safe Working Procedures Relevant to This Document

- 3.1 [Risk Assessment](#)
- 3.2 [Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation](#)
- 3.3 [Health Surveillance](#)
- 3.4 [Safety Representatives](#)
- 3.5 [Noise at Work](#)
- 3.6 [Work Equipment](#)

Note: Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs. An A-Z is available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#).

4. Main Legislation Relevant to This Document

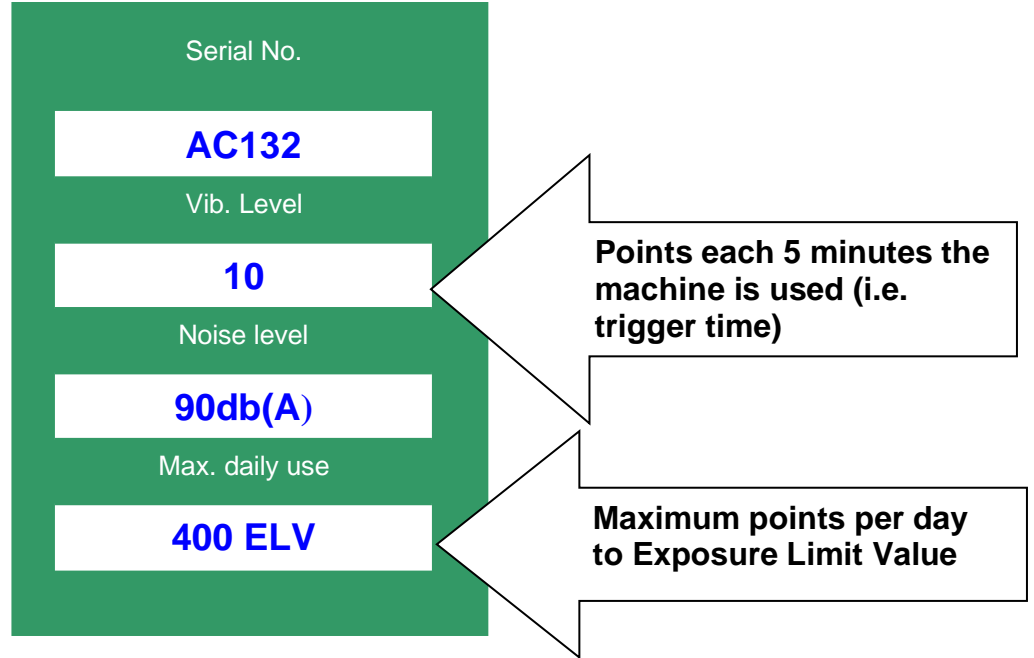
- 4.1 [Health and Safety at Work etc Act](#)
- 4.2 [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations](#)
- 4.3 [Control of Vibration at Work Regulations](#)
- 4.4 [The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations](#)
- 4.5 [The Supply of Machinery \(Safety\) Regulations](#)
- 4.6 [The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations](#)
- 4.7 [The Health and Safety \(Safety Signs and Signals\) Regulations](#)
- 4.8 [The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences regulations](#)

5. Contact Address's and Guidance Links

- 5.1 Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
 - 5.1.1. [HSE vibration microsite](#)
 - 5.1.2. [Control back-pain risks from whole-body vibration: Advice for employers](#)
 - 5.1.3. [Drive away bad backs indg404.pdf](#)
 - 5.1.4. [Whole Body Vibration Calculator.xls](#)
 - 5.1.5. [HSE Information Sheet Whole-body Vibration in Agriculture AIS20 \(revision\)](#)
 - 5.1.6. L140 – [Hand-arm vibration](#)
 - 5.1.7. INDG175 – [Control of Vibration at Work](#)
 - 5.1.8. INDG296 – [Hand-arm vibration Advice for Employees](#)
 - 5.1.9. HSG170 – [Vibration solutions](#)
 - 5.1.10. [Hand Arm Vibration calculator](#)
 - 5.1.11. [Hand Arm Vibration ready-reckoner](#)
- 5.2 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
<https://www.rospa.com/>
- 5.3 Institute of Occupational Safety and Health
www.iosh.co.uk/
- 5.4 Corporate Health and Safety Service
[Health and Safety Intranet](#)

For full contact address visit the health and safety intranet [Useful Contacts](#).

KNOW THE VIBRATION EXPOSURE LABEL POSTER



Your daily points total should not exceed 400



= 10 pts each 5mins used (trigger time)

Use this drill for 60 minutes trigger time and you have used up 120 points.



= 20 pts each 5mins used (trigger time)

Use this grinder for 70 minutes trigger time and you have used up 280 points.



= 400 points

Use them both for this time in one day and you should be exposed to no more vibration that day.

Guidance on providing HAV health surveillance

To provide health surveillance to employees involves working through a number of stages (Tiers). Briefly, this 'tiered' system works as follows:

Tier 1 is a short **initial or baseline screening questionnaire** ([Hand-arm vibration - L140](#) - Appendix 2) used as a first check for new employees or employees moving into jobs involving exposure to vibration. The replies to the questionnaire will indicate whether they need to be referred to Tier 3 for a HAVS health assessment.

Tier 2 is a short **annual screening questionnaire** ([Hand-arm vibration - L140](#) – Appendix 3) that managers can issue once a year to employees exposed to vibration risks to check whether they need to be referred to Tier 3 for a HAVS health assessment (the questionnaires need to be returned to Occupational Health Service for assessment)

Tier 3 involves a HAVS health assessment by an occupational health nurse. If the assessment shows that the employee has HAVS, the employee Tier 4 will apply.

Tier 4 involves a formal diagnosis and is carried out by a doctor qualified in occupational health. The doctor will advise managers on the employee's fitness for work.

Tier 5 is optional and involves referral of the employee for certain tests for HAVS. The results may help the doctor assess fitness for work. It may help you keep costs down if you adopt this approach.

If you have any positive responses at Tier 1 or 2 which means moving on to Tier 3, you will need to use Occupational Health Service but it is not necessary for each employee to be referred to them. In this tiered approach, most appointments with Occupational Health Service will be limited to cases where symptoms that may be suggestive of HAVS have been reported.