



Ryland Communications Ltd

Occupational Health and Mental Health Policy

Approved by: Lisa Settle

Job Role: Director

Signed: *Lisa Settle*

Date:

This policy must be reviewed by the following date: Feb 14, 2027

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Statement of Intent

Ryland Communications Ltd commit to ensuring the ongoing health of employees physical and mental wellbeing. This policy aims to ensure that no employee will be adversely effected by their duties and that support is available where required.

We recognise that we have a duty of care to our staff and that we will do everything reasonably practicable to support their health, safety and wellbeing. We will

- Make sure the working environment is safe
- Protect staff from discrimination
- Carry out risk assessments and safety critical functions

The organisation shall strive to improve the mental health environment and culture of the organisation by identifying, eliminating, or minimising all harmful tasks, procedures and behaviours that may cause psychological harm or illness to its employees.

Mental Health

We are committed to ensuring the all company operatives have an open door to discuss any potential mental health issues with company supervisors and managers, who will be trained to deal with these issues appropriately. Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability.

Just like physical health, we all have mental health. Sometimes we might experience damage to our mental health, which can last days, weeks, months or years. Our mental health may change over time, just like our physical health. We encourage you to talk about your mental health, to let you know what we can do to support you, and to give you information of where you can go for further help.

Mental health problems can:

- Happen suddenly, because of a specific event in someone's life
- Build up gradually over time
- Be hard to spot because everyone has different signs and signals
- Be hidden because many people find it difficult to talk about their mental health
- Change over time which means that an employee's ability to cope with the demands of the job might change

We will

- Listen to you should you raise a mental health concern
- Treat you with confidentiality and respect

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- Support you through experiencing mental health issues, making reasonable adjustments where needed
- Give information, instruction and training to all employees on mental health, stress and fatigue
- Treat any issues of bullying and harassment in relation to mental health issues seriously
- Communicate this policy on a regular basis so that it is understood by all within the business
- Train managers to deal with concerns appropriately
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well

If you tell your manager about your mental health concerns, they'll keep this confidential and won't share this information unless you have agreed to this. There may be an exception if we have serious concerns for your safety or that of others

Not everyone will show obvious signs of poor mental health and it's important that no one within the business makes assumptions.

Some possible signs at work include:

- Appearing tired, anxious or withdrawn
- Increase in sickness absence or being late to work
- Changes in the standard of their work or focus on tasks
- Being less interested in tasks they previously enjoyed
- Changes in usual behaviour, mood or how the person behaves with the people they work with

Reasonable Adjustments for Mental Health Concerns

If you think you might need a change to your working pattern to help you cope with your mental health issue, talk to your manager as soon as possible. We will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to your work should you have a mental health concern. These may include

- Increased frequency of meetings with your supervisor / manager to ensure effective communication
- Change communication to what suits you better (In person or in writing, whichever is your preference)
- Make changes to your duties if possible to do so
- Change your break time, start times or finish times if it would be beneficial and possible for the business to do so

If you feel you require further support and resources regarding your mental health, please raise your concerns with your manager

Fatigue Management

The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended) (WTR) lay down the minimum legal requirements on how to organise working time. Some workers in certain sectors, such as the aviation industry and mobile workers in road and

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sea transport, are currently exempt from WTR and are subject to specific legislation that relates to working time. Ryland Communications Ltd shall attempt to plan work during standard daytime hours where practicable. According to HSG256, standard daytime hours are considered as "A work schedule involving an activity during the day, commonly for a period of eight hours between 7.00 am and 7.00 pm. There are usually two periods of work, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon, separated by a lunchtime break".

Fatigue is the decline in mental and/or physical performance that results from prolonged exertion, lack of quality sleep or disruption of the internal body clock. The degree to which a worker is prone to fatigue is also related to the workload. For example, work that is machine paced, requires constant attention, complex or monotonous will increase the risk of fatigue

To ensure that all workers and sub-contractors can maintain an acceptable level of concentration

Ryland Communications Ltd shall comply with the Working time directive. In general, the Working Time Regulations provide rights to:

- A limit of an average 48 hours a week on the hours a worker can be required to work, though individuals may choose to work longer by "opting out".
- Paid annual leave of 5.6 weeks' a year (Only applicable to PAYE Employees).
- 11 consecutive hours' rest in any 24-hour period.
- A 20-minute rest break if the working day is longer than six hours.
- One day off each week.
- A limit on the normal working hours of night workers to an average eight hours in any 24-hour period, and an entitlement for night workers to receive regular health assessments.

There are special regulations for young workers, which restrict their working hours to 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week. The rest break is 30 minutes if their work lasts more than 4.5 hours. They are also entitled to two days off each week.

Ryland Communications Ltd shall:

- Ensure that adequate opportunity is available for employees, contractors and visitors to rest sufficiently before commencing work.
- Monitor and control working hours, including overtime, to provide time arrangements that do not require excessive periods of time at work.
- Identify, develop and implement a fatigue management plan with control strategies to address fatigue-related risks within the workplace in consultation with the employees.
- Provide training to employees and contractors to develop a common understanding of fatigue management.
- Develop a culture of shared responsibility for fatigue management within the Company.
- Implement an appropriate employee assistance program to assist in managing fatigue.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle, both at work and at home.

Stress

Stress is defined as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed upon

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them". Stress is not an illness in itself, but if prolonged or particularly intense, it can lead to increased problems with ill health, poor productivity and human error. There is a clear distinction between pressure, which can create a 'buzz' and be a motivational force, and stress, which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive. Workplace stress exists where people reasonably perceive that they cannot cope with what is being asked of them at work.

To ensure that all our work activities are undertaken with due regard for the health, safety and welfare of all our employees so far as is reasonably practicable and that our policy concerning stress is clearly understood throughout the company, we will;

- Regularly review productivity data, sickness absence records, staff turnover or other relevant information to find out whether there may be work-related stress issues;
- Undertake a detailed risk assessment to find out whether work-related stress is a problem;
- Provide information, training and support to managers on good management practices, and encourage the early referral of any employees who may benefit, to an occupational health service or employee assistance provider;
- Provide information to employees to increase their awareness of the causes and symptoms of stress, and the various areas of support available to them;
- Offer a confidential counselling service to managers and employees affected by work-related stress;
- Consider offering confidential counselling service to managers and employees affected by stress if caused by external factors;
- Provide return to work support for employees when returning from stress-related illness or any other enforced absence, and
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy and any other measures we have in place to reduce stress and promote workplace health and safety.

Health Surveillance

This procedure underpins the measures that managers and employees of Ryland Communications Ltd need to take in the prevention of work-related ill health by implementing the appropriate control measures necessary to protect staff and effective health surveillance required where there is any residual risk to the employee's health and wellbeing.

Health surveillance is about putting in place systematic, regular and appropriate procedures to detect early signs of work-related ill health among workers who are exposed to certain health risks and acting on the results. Health surveillance information is particularly important where there is an identifiable disease or adverse health condition associated with the work, where there are valid techniques to detect indications of the disease or condition and a reasonable likelihood that this disease or condition might develop under the conditions at work. This procedure applies to all employees.

Ryland Communications Ltd's responsibility to provide health surveillance is specifically limited to employees; however, it is acknowledged that this causes some difficulties where Apprentices / trainees etc. may work jointly on projects and be exposed to the same risks; therefore the same provision should be extended to non-employees.

Health surveillance is a term used for any activity which involves routinely seeking information about any employee's

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state of health in relation to their work. The purpose of health surveillance is to:

- Detect adverse health conditions at an early stage.
- Check the effectiveness of the control measures in place.
- Provide feedback on the accuracy of the risk assessments.
- Identifying and protecting individuals at risk.

The means of determining when health surveillance is necessary is via risk assessment. The risk assessment process should identify if health surveillance is necessary, and this must be identified and recorded as a health risk control system.

Occupational health is a distinct branch of medicine concerned with how a worker's health can affect his or her ability to do the job and how the work environment can affect an employee's health and wellbeing.

Initial Employment

Where required, a pre-employment screening questionnaire may be issued to an Employee following an assessment of previous work undertaken by the Employee. The requirement to provide pre-employment screening will be at the discretion of Ryland Communications Ltd and based on verbal discussions with the new Employee.

While the contents of pre-employment questionnaires are regarded as relevant aspects may need to be discussed with the nominated 3rd party specialist to ensure the safety of the individual concerned and to make necessary adaptations to the tasks/workplace.

Confidential information includes:

- Any occupational health questionnaire completed by the individual but excluding any information that the individual agreed at the time could be made available to specified members of Ryland Communications Ltd , e.g. health surveillance and manual handling assessment forms submitted following discussion with Supervisors.
- Any other clinical information.
- Details of clinical examination.

Non-confidential information includes:

- Basic information relating to employment.
- Any history of reported exposure to specific hazards.
- Relevant information relating to types and dates of immunisation, diagnostic tests, an accident at work and environmental monitoring data.
- Health surveillance survey information provided following discussion with Supervisors or management.

Annual Health Surveillance Checks

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Annual health surveillance checks shall be undertaken for the following:

- Display Screen Equipment Eye Screening Programmes
- General health surveillance questionnaires covering the following topics:
 - Skin condition
 - Lead exposure (Where Applicable)
 - Vibration including hand-arm vibration and whole-body vibration
 - Respiratory performance
 - Noise exposure
- Immunisation Programmes for the following staff as required
 - Cleaners and caretakers
 - Those staff who are required to travel abroad as part of their duties
 - First Aiders for hepatitis B injections.

The risk assessment programme is available to identify what the health risks are and to establish the relevant aspects of health management, including:

- Monitoring (sampling) to characterise levels of exposure to health hazards
- Specifications of safe and healthy working practices and environments,
- Identification of opportunities for improvement addressing diversity – young persons, pregnant women, female night workers, disabilities, etc.
- Specific risk assessment - addressing the specific requirements to manage health risks, for example, in workers who are not working on-site, e.g. those that visit foreign countries.

The health surveillance for stress management is managed by the Company Director with a holistic approach in supporting staff and offering them staff development in the areas of mentoring, coaching, mediation, etc. to actively promote positive wellbeing for all staff.

The Occupational Health Adviser writes to the employee and personnel, indicating whether the employee is fit for work with or without adjustments or additional follow up.

If the employee is fit for work with no adjustments or additional follow up, no further action is required. The Occupational Health Adviser sets the employee up into the health surveillance check process and will contact the employee when the next surveillance programme is scheduled.

If the employee is unfit to undertake the duties of their current role, the individual will be assessed by an Occupational health specialist where restrictions on duties will be advised depending on the severity of the conditions. The findings shall be shared with the employees via the Company Director

Hand Arm Vibration

Hand-arm vibration (HAV) is vibration transmitted into the hands and arms when using hand-held, powered, work equipment. Excessive exposure to HAV can cause hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) and carpal tunnel syndrome. HAVS affects nerves, blood vessels, muscles and the joints of the hand, wrist and arm: it includes vibration white

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finger, which can cause severe pain in the affected fingers. If ignored, HAVS can become disabling.

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations have laid down key limits to vibration exposure. They are as follows:

- The exposure action value (EAV) for hand-arm vibration - a daily exposure of 2.5 m/s²
- The exposure limit value (ELV) for hand-arm vibration - a daily exposure of 5 m/s².

These values represent a high risk above which employees should not be exposed.

To ensure that we prevent or reduce risks to health and safety from hand-arm vibration and that our policy will be clearly understood throughout the company, we will:

- Identify work processes, tasks, activities and machinery that could expose our employees to risks caused by hand-arm vibration;
- Carry out an initial hand-arm vibration survey
- Ensure that the risks to employees from exposure to hand-arm vibration are assessed by a competent person, where we have identified a potential problem;
- Take the necessary action to reduce the exposure to hand-arm vibration that produces these risks, ensuring that the legal limits of hand-arm vibration exposure are not exceeded;
- Ensure that all work equipment provided is regularly maintained and tested under statutory requirements or manufacturers' instructions, where applicable, using competent contractors, where necessary;
- Provide suitable and sufficient information and training for employees;
- Provide employees with suitable hand-arm vibration protection (see the personal protective equipment policy) where vibration exposure cannot be reduced enough by the selection of low vibration equipment or through the use of engineering control techniques;
- Provide appropriate health surveillance where the risk assessment indicates that there is a risk to the health of employees; and
- Review, and amend as necessary, assessments on an annual basis, when a competent reviewer considers a change in circumstances in the workplace will affect hand-arm vibration exposure levels, when other significant changes or accidents occur or when we have any reason to believe the assessment is no longer valid.

Noise at Work

Noise at work can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss. People often experience temporary deafness after leaving a noisy place, but usually, recover their hearing within a few hours. Permanent hearing damage can be caused immediately by sudden, loud, explosive noises, for example, from guns or cartridge-operated machines, but hearing loss is usually gradual due to prolonged exposure to noise. People may only realise how deaf they have become when damage, caused over the years by noise, combines with hearing loss due to ageing. Hearing loss is not the only problem. People may develop tinnitus (ringing in the ears), a distressing condition that can lead to disturbed sleep.

The Control of Noise at Work Regulations have laid down key limits to noise exposure. These are:

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Lower exposure action values:

- Daily or weekly exposure of 80 dB(A)

Upper exposure action values:

- Daily or weekly exposure of 85 dB(A)
- Peak sound pressure of 137 dB(C).

There are also levels of noise exposure which must not be exceeded. These are called exposure limit values:

- Daily or weekly exposure of 87 dB(A)
- Peak sound pressure of 140 dB(C)

To ensure that we prevent or reduce risks to health and safety from exposure to noise at work and that our policy will be clearly understood throughout the company, we will:

- Identify all operations within the business where there is a noise risk and who is likely to be affected;
- Carry out an initial noise survey;
- Ensure that the risks to employees from noise at work are assessed by a competent person, where we have identified a potential problem;
- Take the necessary action to reduce the noise exposure that produces these risks, ensuring that the legal limits of noise exposure are not exceeded;
- Provide employees with suitable hearing protection (see the personal protective equipment (PPE) policy) where noise exposure cannot be reduced enough by using noise control techniques;
- Provide our employees with adequate information, instruction and training in order to understand the noise risks that they may be exposed to and how to use noise control techniques and the hearing protection provided;
- Carry out health surveillance where the noise risk assessment has identified there is a risk to health; and
- Review, and amend as necessary, the noise risk assessment on an annual basis, when significant changes or accidents occur or when we have any reason to believe the assessment is no longer valid.

Record Keeping

A health record must be kept for all employees under health surveillance.

Records are important because they allow links to be made between exposure and any health effects. Health records, or a copy, should be kept in a suitable form for at least 40 years from the date of last entry because often there is a long period between exposure and onset of ill health.

Employee details should include:

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- Surname
- Forename(s)
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Permanent address, including postcode
- National Insurance number
- Date present employment started

Recorded details of each health surveillance check should include the:

- Date they were carried out and by whom
- Outcome of the test/check
- Decision made by the occupational health professional in terms of fitness for the task and any restrictions required. This should be factual and only relate to the employee's functional ability and fitness for specific work, with any advised restrictions.

The record should be kept in a format that it can be linked with other information (e.g., with any workplace exposure measurements).

Sign Off & Approval

Approved by: Lisa Settle

Job Role: Director

Signed: *Lisa Settle*

Date:

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