

**ESSENTIAL  
STANDARD  
no.22**

# **Managing Occupational Health & Wellbeing**



# KEY MESSAGES

- Tier 1 companies to have an occupational health approach that at least meet the minimum standards of our Health and Wellbeing Maturity Model and they constantly improve their position through recorded action plans
- All supply chain and delivery partners have a legally-compliant approach to health surveillance to ensure fitness for work
- Safety, health and wellbeing must all be equally promoted within the organisation

## 1. Introduction

Occupational illness accounts for more lost time days than workplace injury incidents, however, it's given less attention due to illnesses or diseases only showing effects at a much later stage.

The Thames Water health and wellbeing strategy helps ensure we meet our legal obligations to health, safety and welfare, as well as improve our employees' fitness for work and home lives.



## 2. Ill Health Prevention

All Thames Water partners must have processes and procedures that aim to:

- Eliminate health hazards during design, planning and implementation of work
- Mitigate workplace risk
- Achieve healthy behaviour
- Train managers in risk management for health and safety
- Engage the workforce about health (similar as with safety)
- Share good practices and celebrate success

## 3. Health and Wellbeing Maturity Model

In order for companies to work on our behalf, and meet the minimum health and wellbeing requirements, they must complete a **self-assessment** as set out in our Health and Wellbeing Maturity Model.

The easy-to-complete tool will help the organisation to see what's already in place and what improvements still need to be done.

Businesses are expected to achieve a minimum standard, which consist largely of normal legal requirements under health and safety law, before we consider working with them.

| Thames Water<br>Health & Wellbeing Maturity Model - 2015/16 |  |   |  |  |  |                      | Zero incidents<br>Zero harm<br>Zero compromise<br>Keeping you healthy and safe, every day at work | Thames Water |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|----------------------|---|--------------|
| Category  | Infancy  | Developing  | Evident  | Established  | Integrated   | Percentage Score (%) |   |              |
| <b>Health Performance Indicators (HPIs)</b>                 | Minimum standards of OH risk management and well being set to be achieved in a number of areas                                       | Mostly compliant occupational health risk management and well being with plans to achieve minimum standards   | Can evidence full compliance with minimum OH risk management and well being  | Evidence of OH risk management at all levels and throughout the supply chain   | Evidence of strategic OH management at all levels extended to partner groups and the local community   |                      |   |              |
| <b>WORKPLACE</b>  | Unified awareness of practical health risk management  | Meeting minimum standards in most areas   | Health is considered in all aspects of safety  | OH prevents strategy integration with business operations and supply chain   | Evidence of an existing health and well being strategy throughout the culture and management systems of the business   |                      |   |              |
| 1   | Health Risk Assessment<br>Health risk assessments identified in all environments including COSHH, Manufacture/Installation locations | Health risks included in all OH assessments including COSHH and control implemented for general health risk e.g. respiratory, vibration, noise, etc. etc. | Psychological health risks are also included in risk assessments and effective controls are in place   | Physical and psychological health risks are considered as part of operational changes e.g. shift patterns, work rotation, experimental working etc.  | Controlled health hazards considered for the management of supply chain and are subject to assessment, compliance and assurance  |                      |   |              |
| 2   | Minimality of control (prevention or personal)   | Individuals provided with PPE, but usability not checked  | Individuals provided with the correct PPE that incorporates correct fit, use and maintenance and relevant other personal protection  | OH evidence includes evidence of personal protection   | Designs & equipment are actively engaged in minimising individual health when risk specific health hazards exist in their work and personal life. Evidence of action plan and control plan       |                      |   |              |
| 3   | Health Surveillance<br>Unified statutory health surveillance programme in place  | Health surveillance implemented but only major illness reported to HR and management  | Comprehensive health surveillance in place for all at risk of illness  | OH evidence from health surveillance needs are used to measure effectiveness of control measures   | Health surveillance needs used in nature of management plan  |                      |   |              |
| 4   | Health Auditing<br>OH audits do not include health   | Health is included in H&S audits  | The performance measures include health topics   | Health performance indicators (HPIs) used to measure business activities   | Health performance measures used to measure business activities  |                      |   |              |
| <b>WORKER</b>   | No assessment of fitness to work   | Developing fitness to work programme  | No evidence of 'Fitness to work' programme   | Clear evidence of an established fitness to work programme including clear measurement and performance review  | Strategic approach to continuous improvement including all supply chain engagement   |                      |   |              |
| 5   | Fitness to work<br>No formal process for assessing fitness to work   | The physical responsibilities for fitness to work are defined. This may include 'with the correct drug & alcohol'.  | Physical responsibilities for fitness to work are defined. This may include 'with the correct drug & alcohol'.   | Physical responsibilities for fitness to work are defined. This may include 'with the correct drug & alcohol'.   | Physical responsibilities for fitness to work are defined. This may include 'with the correct drug & alcohol'.   |                      |   |              |
| 6   | Attendance Management<br>Attendance Management/Performance absence management policy in place  | Attendance management/Performance absence management policy in place  | Attendance management/Performance absence management policy in place   | Attendance management/Performance absence management policy in place   | Attendance management/Performance absence management policy in place   |                      |   |              |
| 7   | Management of ill health<br>Selected ill health issues are individually managed  | Single incidents or common symptoms to management of selected ill health issues e.g. work related or long term illness                                    | Common but will require response approach will involve health team   | Common but will require response approach will involve health team   | Common but will require response approach will involve health team   |                      |   |              |
| <b>WELLBEING</b>  | None if any wellbeing initiatives undertaken   | Occupational wellbeing initiatives and campaigns underway   | Evidence of regular wellbeing activities that integrate occupational and general health improvement  | Well being initiatives available to organisation and supply chain  | The majority of workers are considered ambassadors for health and well being strategies within the workplace and wider community   |                      |   |              |
| 8   | Health Promotion<br>No wellbeing activities undertaken, i.e. wellness days, stress campaigns   | At least 1 wellbeing activity/programme delivered per year  | At least 2 wellbeing activities/programmes delivered per year  | At least 2 wellbeing activities/programmes delivered per year  | At least 2 wellbeing activities/programmes delivered per year  |                      |   |              |
| 9   | Health Education & Training<br>No relevant education programme, wellbeing not included in any H&S training                           | Relevant education programme in place but it is not integrated with other or local level only   | Relevant education programme in place with co-ordination as a priority with local, learning, changes in global, evidence that health practices such as safety, using evidence to bring awareness | Relevant education programme in place with co-ordination as a priority with local, learning, changes in global, evidence that health practices such as safety, using evidence to bring awareness | Relevant education programme in place with co-ordination as a priority with local, learning, changes in global, evidence that health practices such as safety, using evidence to bring awareness |                      |   |              |

For more information, please visit: [www.healthandsafetyhub.co.uk](http://www.healthandsafetyhub.co.uk)



## 4. Worker

Employees who experience ill health, physically or mentally, must be supported to help manage their condition and recovery so they can remain at work or return early from time off.

This can be done through:

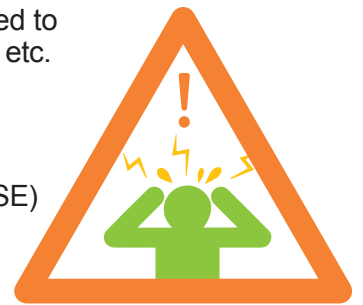
- **Early referral** to an occupational health service
- **Early intervention** as appropriate from specialist services such as physiotherapy and counselling
- **Training and support** for managers to improve their skills managing cases of employee ill health
- **Tailored advice** to managers to support individual employees returning to work



## 5. Workplace

To help prevent employees becoming ill, as a result of their work, provide:

- **Health surveillance** programmes to monitor employees exposed to specific workplace hazards such as noise, vibration, chemicals, etc.
- Periodic **medical assessments** to ensure employees are fit to perform specified job roles
- **Employee training** on managing moving and handling risks associated with their role and using display screen equipment(DSE)
- **Resilience training** so managers and their teams can better deal with their job demands and recognise early signs of stress-related ill health
- **Stress-level management** and the importance of reporting any symptoms of ill health early



## 6. Wellbeing



Actively encourage employees to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing. For example:

- Provide and **promote good workplace practices** – such as when working with hazardous substances or processes (noise, vibration, manual handling, etc.)
- Provide **regular health promotion campaigns** that follow government initiatives on topics such as obesity, heart disease, strokes, etc.



## 7. Wider Community

Initiatives should benefit our employees and their friends and families, the wider community and other organisations directly or indirectly connected to the work we do. We can do this by:

- Engaging in the Thames Water **health and safety forums** that aim to improve workplace conditions and worker wellbeing
- **Sharing information** about our own initiatives and making materials available to use or follow on the Health and Safety Hub
- Encouraging our workforce to support charities involved in promoting health and wellbeing

