

# FACTSHEET NO 4

## 5 Steps to Safer Working – A basic Guide to Health & Safety Issues

### Introduction

Firstly, don't panic, Health & Safety always seem such a specialist subject that many people simply shy away or pretend it doesn't exist.

So what do you need to do, well organisations with under 5 employees do not need a written H & S policy and most VCS fall into this category, but every organisation has a duty of care towards its people no matter if they are Employees or Volunteers. Here are 5 steps that will help you through the maze.

### STEP 1 – SET YOUR POLICY

Although not obligatory for organisations under 5 people a short written statement of your policy shows your Volunteers and anyone else that hazards \* have been identified and risks have been assessed and controlled.

*\*A **Hazard** is something with potential to cause harm. **Risk** is the likelihood of that potential being realised.*

### STEP 2 – ORGANISE YOUR PEOPLE

Make sure everyone involved in your organisation is committed to safety. Remember the 4 'C's

- **Competence:** recruitment, training and advisory support.
- **Control:** allocating responsibilities and gaining commitment.
- **Co-operation:** between individuals and groups
- **Communication:** verbal, written & visible

### STEP 3 – PLAN & SET STANDARDS

Planning is the key to ensuring your health & safety efforts really work. You need to:

- Comply with the health & safety laws that apply to your organisation.
- Identify hazards and assess risks and decided how to control or eliminate them.

**Standards help to build a positive culture and should apply to:**

- Your places of operation i.e. Transporting Passengers.
- Training. (For information on training contact us at BCA)

Standards must be **measurable, achievable & realistic.**

### STEP 4 – MEASURE YOUR PERFORMANCE

You need to know:

- where you are
- where you want to be

- what is the difference – and why

There are two ways to monitor your performance:

**Active Monitoring** (before things go wrong) make sure you are working within the standards you have set to prevent accidents, injuries etc.

**Reactive Monitoring** (after things go wrong) involves learning from your mistakes no matter if they are serious or near misses.

You need to make sure that information from both types of monitoring is used to identify situations that create risks and **DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM.**

#### **STEP 5 – LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE**

Learn to review the effectiveness of your health & safety work. Ask your self:

- How do you learn from your mistakes
- Do you regularly review
- What action is taken
- How often do you review your policy & performance? (This could be one for the AGM)

#### **REMEMBER**

- Use common sense, where risks are low it will not take much effort to be effective. Accidents do happen but the Health & Safety measures you take for your organisation need to be matched to the levels of risk.
- Ask the right questions.
- Handling and lifting are a major cause of injuries, is this a problem for your Volunteers?
- Are you volunteers at risk from violence when transporting passengers?

**For help & guidance on Health & Safety Issues**

**Please contact;**

**Liz Baker**

**Voluntary Car Scheme Project Officer**

**C/O Manor House**

**Bierton Road**

**AYLESBURY**

**Bucks**

**HP20 1EG**

**Telephone: 01296 421036**

**E-mail [liz@bucks-comm-action.org.uk](mailto:liz@bucks-comm-action.org.uk)**