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Provision of lone worker services — Code of practice

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Summary of pages

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Foreword

Publishing information

This British Standard is published by BSI Standards Limited, under licence from The British Standards Institution, and came into effect on 31 March 2022. It was prepared by Subcommittee GW/1/-/2, *Protection of lone workers*, under the authority of Technical Committee GW/1, *Electronic security systems and products*. A list of organizations represented on these committees can be obtained on request to the committee manager.

Supersession

This British Standard supersedes [BS 8484:2016](#), which will be withdrawn on 31 March 2023.

Relationship with other publications

During the review of this British Standard, alignment to [BS 10800:2020](#) was considered. Due to [BS 10800:2020](#) predominantly relating to the security services sector and its content not applying to the provision of lone worker services, alignment to [BS 10800:2020](#) was not appropriate to this revision.

At the time of publication, there are several standards for alarm receiving centres (ARCs) available:

- the BS EN 50518 series;
- BS 9518/BS 8591; and
- [BS 5979:2007](#).

As a result of the publication of the BS EN 50518 series, [BS 5979:2007](#) was withdrawn, but suppliers might choose to continue using ARCs which conform to [BS 5979:2007](#).

Information about this document

This is a full revision of the standard, and introduces the following principal changes:

- acknowledgement that pairs or small groups of workers might also be considered “at risk” and so the use of a lone worker service (LWS) might be beneficial;
- home workers now included as potential beneficiaries of an LWS as well as pairs or small groups;
- acknowledgment that those working from home are also to be considered as lone workers and therefore understanding their risks and the possible use of an LWS might be beneficial;
- content updated to assume that the method used to transfer an audio call from a lone worker (LW) might be via a data call rather than a traditional call;
- improvement to integrity with the addition that all staff involved in LWS delivery are to be screened in accordance with [BS 7858](#); and
- removal of most of the recommendations in [Clause 7](#) (Alarm Receiving Centre) and acknowledgement that this is now covered in BS 9518.

This publication can be withdrawn, revised, partially superseded or superseded. Information regarding the status of this publication can be found in the Standards Catalogue on the BSI website at bsigroup.com/standards, or by contacting the Customer Services team.

Where websites and webpages have been cited, they are provided for ease of reference and are correct at the time of publication. The location of a webpage or website, or its contents, cannot be guaranteed.

Use of this document

As a code of practice, this British Standard takes the form of recommendations and guidance. It is not to be quoted as if it were a specification. Users are expected to ensure that claims of compliance are not misleading.

Users may substitute any of the recommendations in this British Standard with practices of equivalent or better outcome. Any user claiming compliance with this British Standard is expected to be able to justify any course of action that deviates from its recommendations.

Presentational conventions

The provisions of this standard are presented in roman (i.e. upright) type. Its recommendations are expressed in sentences in which the principal auxiliary verb is “should”.

Commentary, explanation and general informative material is presented in smaller italic type, and does not constitute a normative element.

The word “should” is used to express recommendations of this standard. The word “may” is used in the text to express permissibility, e.g. as an alternative to the primary recommendation of the clause. The word “can” is used to express possibility, e.g. a consequence of an action or an event.

Notes and commentaries are provided throughout the text of this standard. Notes give references and additional information that are important but do not form part of the recommendations. Commentaries give background information.

Where words have alternative spellings, the preferred spelling of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary is used (e.g. “organization” rather than “organisation”).

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The recipient is advised to consider seeking professional guidance with respect to its use of this publication.

This publication is not intended to constitute a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

In particular, attention is drawn to the following specific regulations and documents:

- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 [1];
- the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 [2];
- the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) Security Systems Policy [3];
- INDG73, *Protecting lone workers – How to manage the risks of working alone* [4]; and
- the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 [5].

0 Introduction

0.1 General

This British Standard provides recommendations for lone worker services (LWSs) for customers who have identified a level of risk to their lone workers (LWs). In addition to individuals working alone, customers can consider the provision of LWS to pairs of individuals or small groups working away from other colleagues. This British Standard recognizes two broad categories of risk that affect LWS: environmental risk (see [3.1.5](#)); and people risk (see [3.1.13](#)).

0.2 Overview of lone worker protection

Considering employee safety, wellbeing and security at a strategic level leads to a culture of safety at work at the operational level. LW protection might be a consideration for both safety and security strategies. It contributes to the organization's governance, management of risk and compliance with both company policies and legal obligations.

NOTE 1 Attention is drawn to the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 [2].

Matters for consideration in LW employee protection strategies can include:

- a) how to establish a culture of safety so that employee protection becomes an integral part of daily operational activities;
- b) assessing risk, both anticipated risk and dynamic risk; and
- c) creating and reviewing LW protection policy, including management responsibilities.

A policy can include:

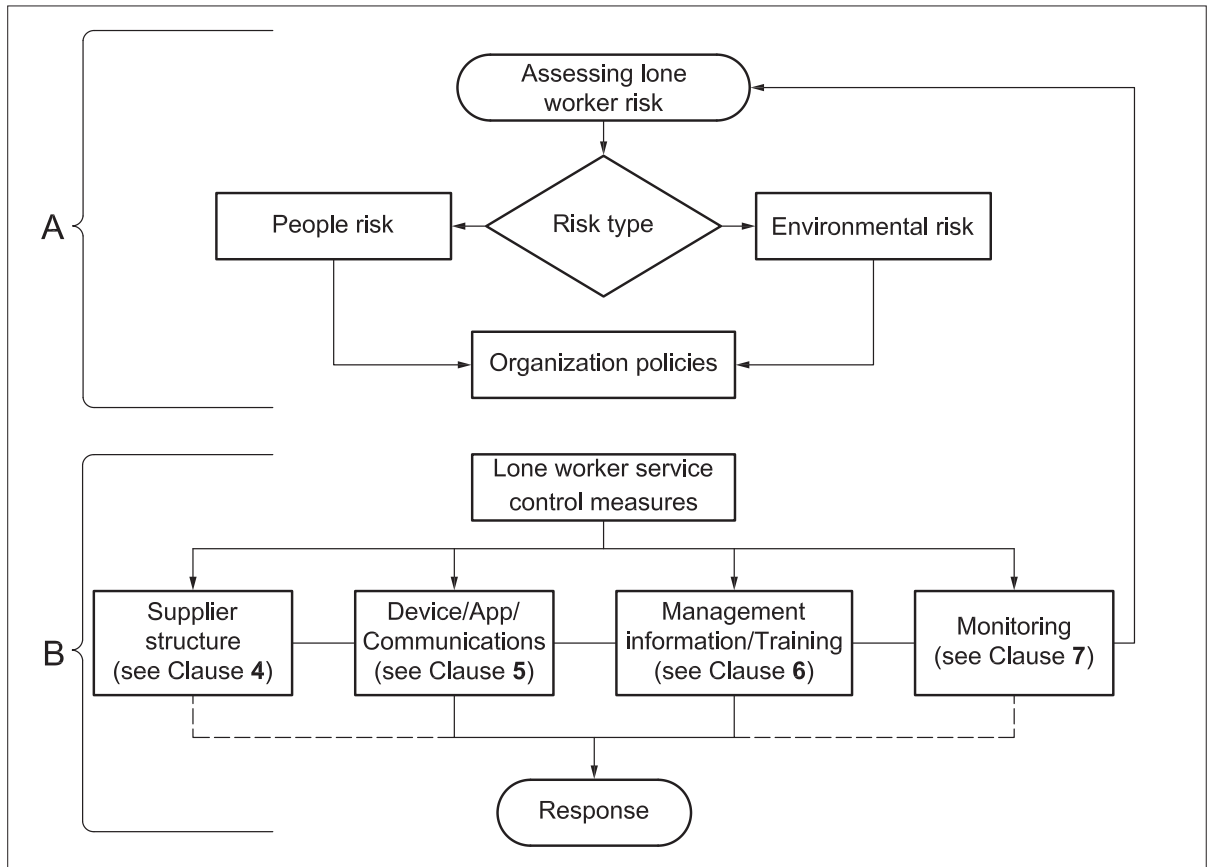
- 1) establishing which employees are LWS, either occasionally or for the majority of their employment;
- 2) conferring with LWS;
- 3) devising appropriate procedures to protect employees when they are away from direct supervision; and
- 4) the pro-active consideration of risks and sharing that risk knowledge with LWS, where appropriate.

These procedures are directed towards:

- i) avoiding incidents (dynamic risk assessments);
- ii) managing incidents;
- iii) calling for help when necessary;
- iv) training; and
- v) management of LWS.

Implementing such procedures results in embedding LW safety in an organization's operations.

NOTE 2 [Figure 1](#) gives an overview of the process of protecting LW employees where control measures include an LWS. Part A shows how an organization's LW policy can be developed, and part B shows the contribution of the LWS.

Figure 1 — Overview of lone worker protection including a lone worker service

The supplier provides management information to the customer to aid compliance with the customer's LW policy. Recommendations are given in [Clause 6](#).

A lone worker device (LWD)/lone worker application (LWA) encourages and forms part of an LW dynamic risk assessment. In the event of an incident, it enables the LW to transmit their identity and location easily and discreetly in order to request assistance when they feel threatened or at risk. Recommendations are given in [Clause 5](#) and [Clause 6](#).

Recommendations for training for the customer, LW and supplier's employees are given in [Clause 6](#).

ARCs establish and verify the severity and nature of the incident and pass on all relevant information to the appropriate response services. Recommendations are given in [Clause 7](#).

The types of response available are shown in [Clause 8](#).

The lone worker alarm activation process is shown in [Annex A](#).

1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations for the provision of safety and security for employees in a lone working scenario where the customer's risk profile identifies the need for an LWS.

This British Standard gives recommendations for the provision of LWSs to help control and manage identified LW risks. Such services consist of an LWD and/or an LWA, monitoring, training, management information and response options.

This British Standard also gives recommendations for the following:

- a) minimizing false alarms;
- b) managing low level genuine incidents that do not require an immediate physical response such that they are treated accordingly; and
- c) maximizing continual engagement from customers and lone workers of the LWS.

This British Standard provides a customer with recommendations and a benchmark when seeking a solution to reduce and/or eliminate the risk to staff operating in situations where colleagues are unable to provide direct or immediate assistance. In such circumstances, an LWS solution provides a proportional response, including, where required, a response from the police and/or other response services.

The monitoring of LWSs is excluded from the scope as this is covered in BS 9518.

This British Standard is applicable to both suppliers and customers procuring LWSs.

NOTE See [Figure 1](#) for an example of how an LWS fits into an LW policy.

2 Normative references

The following documents, in whole or in part, are normatively referenced in this document and are indispensable for its application.¹⁾ For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

[BS 7858](#), *Screening of individuals working in a secure environment – Code of practice*

[BS 7984-2](#), *Keyholding and response services – Part 2: Lone worker response services*

BS 9518, *Processing of alarm signals by an alarm receiving centre – Code of practice*

[BS EN ISO/IEC 27001](#), *Information technology – Security techniques – Information security management systems – Requirements*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 General terms and definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1.1 accurate location

area of space, typically to within 10 m of the LWD/LWA, in the horizontal and vertical plane

NOTE For example, this might be a satellite location and/or a pre-activation message providing location information within a multi-storey building.

3.1.2 alarm receiving centre (ARC)

continuously staffed remote centre which receives alarm activation messages/calls and engages in communications with LWs and response services

NOTE See [Clause 7](#) for further information on ARCs.

3.1.3 customer

organization, employer and/or individual who contracts for the provision of LWSs

NOTE A customer who subcontracts LWD/LWAs, monitoring and/or response separately to provide the LWS for its own LWs takes on the role of supplier as defined in [3.1.18](#).

¹⁾ Documents that are referred to solely in an informative manner are listed in the Bibliography.