The Prevention & Management of Workplace Stress

Council of Ministers

July 2010

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY

CONTENTS

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to help all staff understand work place stress and put in place both preventative and reactive measures to assist in its management.

SCOPE

The document is designed as a minimum standard to which Departments, Offices and Statutory Boards should be working. The information within the document is designed to address the needs of all public sector staff (on whatever terms and conditions they are employed), whether they have a management role or not, and sets out responsibilities for everyone.

DEFINITIONS

HSE – Health & Safety Executive (UK)
TUC – Trade Union Congress (UK)

REFERENCES

HSE Management Standards for tackling work related stress
HSE Documentation from www.hse.gov.uk/stress
Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974, as applied to the Isle of Man
The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 2003
TUC Documentation from www.tuc.org.uk
IOM Government Department of Education – Stress Policy

APPENDICES

Appendix I – The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements
Appendix II – Prevention & Management of Stress Action Plan Form
Appendix III – Contacts for Information and Support
Appendix IV – Managing Workplace Pressure
Appendix V – Competencies for Managers

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

There is a legal requirement on employers to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that work activities are managed appropriately and do not impact on the health, safety and welfare of staff. Where staff are exposed to risk, suitable and sufficient assessments of that risk need to be undertaken and appropriate controls put in place. Staff that are affected by stress may develop health problems and/or may have their decision making skills affected which may put their and other peoples safety at risk. The main legislation which is relevant to this subject is the Health and Safety at Work, Etc Act 1974, as applied to the Isle of Man, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2003.

ISLE OF MAN GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

POLICY STATEMENT

Government recognises that its staff are its most valuable asset, and that only through their personal and professional development, in a healthy and safe working environment, can they be encouraged to contribute fully to the delivery of our objectives and our wish to continuously improve.

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY

Whilst Government has no control over external factors, as a good employer it wishes to promote the physical, psychological and social well-being of all its staff. It is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that no employee is subjected to an excessive and sustained level of reasonably foreseeable workplace stress that is detrimental to their health.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

To provide a framework for the prevention and management of workplace stress which includes guidance and advice on:-

- Promoting a culture of encouragement, participation and open communication

- Increasing awareness of the phenomenon of workplace stress and the methods available to combat this.

- Assisting staff with managing stress in themselves and others

- Providing appropriate and confidential support for those who are experiencing stress

- Assessing the adequacy of current arrangements and the impact on individuals and the organisation

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone has a responsibility with regard to managing and preventing workplace stress. Each individual is responsible for themselves and how they interact with others in the workplace. The following information outlines Isle of Man Government's expectation for compliance with the policy statement and policy objectives which the separate legal entities within the organisation and their staff will follow when they are carrying out their duties.

There are four key areas of responsibility that the organisation must address, these are:-

1. To reduce harmful workplace pressures where these have been identified and to seek to prevent the build up of stress arising from them

2. To proactively support staff where stress is more likely to occur as a result of workplace pressure arising from issues and/or change

3. To provide appropriate support structures and arrangements for staff suffering from stress.

4. To monitor, evaluate and manage the performance of their managers and staff within the organisation

These areas of responsibility can only be discharged through the people within the organisation and therefore the organisation requires all staff to contribute. Certain arrangements have been put in place that can assist with the prevention and management of workplace stress and these include:-

- Welfare Services for all staff. Every member of staff can use the services of a trained Welfare Officer, the service is confidential and staff can self refer. See Appendix III for contact details and information on the service

- Occupational Health Services. These services are available and staff can be referred through their line management, or in some cases can self refer. See Appendix III for further information on the services and how to access them

- There is a network of Contact Officers across Government and although they are departmentally based staff can speak to any of the Officers for support and guidance. An up to date list can be found under the equal opportunities section of the Government intranet or by phoning The Personnel Office on 685000.

Trade Unions can also provide staff with information and support.

RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS

To contribute to the prevention and management of stress we must:-

- Report any areas of concern, ideally, directly to our line managers or through one of the internal support networks or if the other routes are not suitable through our Trade Union

- Be supportive of colleagues if we think they are showing signs of stress and encourage them to report the area of concern and seek support

- Try and stay positive looking for ways to solve problems rather than worrying about them

- Consider ways of improving our time management skills

- Develop coping strategies and methods for alleviating symptoms that reduce the impact of stress on us as individuals

- Be realistic and self aware – if it is the nature of the work or the job that is affecting us we should think about changing jobs

- Think about our lifestyle choices – eat more healthily, stop smoking, watch our alcohol and caffeine intake, take exercise

- Seek the support of our family and friends where possible

Appendix IV outlines information that may assist individuals in managing their own stress.

RESPONSIBILITY OF MANAGERS

To contribute to the prevention and management of stress we must:-

- Accept that excessive pressure can result in stress and that people are affected by it at different times and to different degrees

- Set a good personal example by being receptive and responsive to staff concerns

- Assist and support staff through addressing their individual and learning and development needs in relation to their job

- Investigate and respond to all reported occurrences of workplace stress, whether employee absence is involved or not

- Ensure records and statistics are kept of stress related absences

- As part of health and safety management use the Workplace Stress Management Standards as the basis for carrying out a risk assessment on stress in the workplace.

- Make staff aware of the results of the risk assessment and the arrangements put in place to prevent and manage stress

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the arrangements, making amendments where necessary

- Review our own performance against the HSE/CIPD competence framework for managing the potential for workplace stress

Appendix V outlines the management competencies that have been identified following research carried out by the HSE in conjunction with the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Investors in People. These management competencies are written in the form of functions that are within a manager's role and outline examples of positive and negative behaviours that can be used to evaluate performance.

The HSE have produced a survey tool, based on competencies, which can be used to evaluate performance against the competency framework. This can be accessed through the HSE website.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON STRESS

This section provides information designed to assist in understanding what stress is, how it can be caused and the impact it can have on individuals

WHAT IS STRESS?

Workplace stress is the adverse reaction people have to inappropriate pressures or other types of demands being put upon them.

It is important to recognise that reasonable pressure and challenges faced by staff can be stimulating and motivating but that excessive pressure can start to have a detrimental effect on individuals. It is also important to understand that failing to use the potential skills and experience of staff can also result in detrimental effects on individuals.

To help understand what happens to individuals when faced with pressure and challenges the figure below, known as the human function curve, shows the impact on performance. The figure shows how pressure can have a positive effect on performance but that continually increasing pressure means that at some point the individual's performance starts to drop and can then quite quickly lead to fatigue. Beyond the fatigue point there is a significant human cost as well as a cost to the organisation and an impact on the delivery of business objectives.

HUMAN FUNCTION CURVE
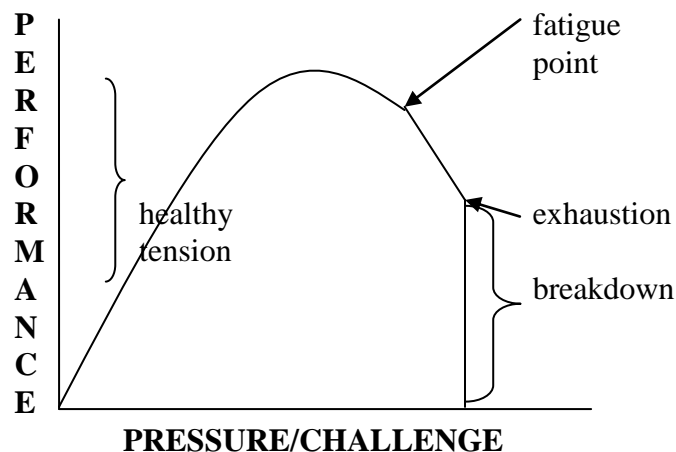
WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF STRESS?

Stress can have an impact on the individuals and their approach to themselves, work and others around them. As the reaction depends very much on the individual some of the indicators are contradictory but the important message is that it is changes in behaviour that are significant. It is therefore those that work more frequently or closely with the individual or team that are most likely to notice the changes.

Effects on individuals

- Emotional: Anxiety, anger, frustration, moodiness, irritability, loss of pleasure and interest, despair, depression, taking offence easily, becoming resentful, feeling helpless, inability to relax, reduced control, becoming suspicious and unhelpful, losing sense of humour and losing self esteem.

- Physical: A weakened immune system, tenseness, tiredness, appetite disturbance, nausea, headaches, light-headedness, sweating, allergies, muscular aches and pains, impaired sleep, alteration of menstrual pattern in women and irritable bowel syndrome. Longer term stress has been linked to raised blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, ulcers and cancer.

- Mental: Indecision, impaired memory, loss of concentration, easily distracted, bad dreams or nightmares, making mistakes, less intuitive, persistent negative thoughts, impaired judgement, more short-term thinking and making hasty decisions.

- Behavioural: Eating, talking and walking quickly, isolation, changes in eating habits - large loss or gain in weight, fidgeting, obsessions, lethargy, being less co-operative, showing disapproval, accidents and clumsiness, nervous habits and poorer personal presentation. Increased use/dependence on caffeine, alcohol or drugs may also occur, which is likely to exacerbate all of the above. Being withdrawn or less communicative.

Interpersonal effects

- Relationships are likely to be more difficult, both at work and elsewhere.

Effects at work

- Attendance can become either excessive or extremely poor, regular bouts of recurring illness can occur, timekeeping can become erratic,
- Performance can be impaired and the level of accidents rise.
- Stress in one person can also lead to stress in others who have to cover for their colleague or are concerned about them.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF STRESS?

There are many potential sources of stress in everyday life that can impact on both the home life and the work life of individuals. The following diagram is designed to show these potential sources of stress.
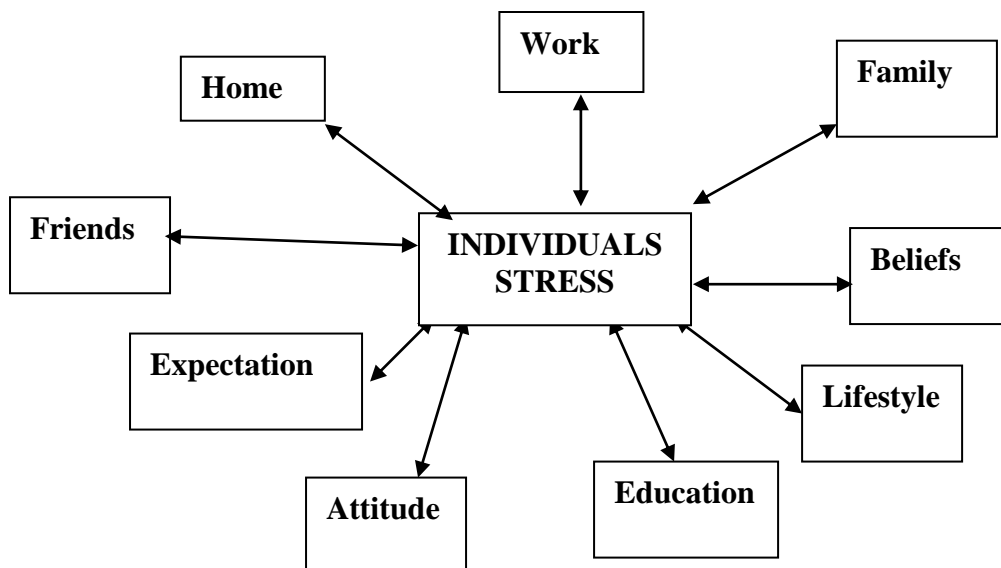
People experiencing stress from factors outside the workplace cannot generally "switch off" when they arrive at work and the degree to which it impacts on their work will depend on the individual. The same applies in reverse in that workplace stress can impact on an individual's life outside work.

Exposure to stressors in one area of life can leave people vulnerable to stress in another area and the combination of more than one source of stress whether at work or at home can be an additional risk factor. This means that people who are known to be experiencing stress in their personal lives, for example as a result of divorce or bereavement, may temporarily be more vulnerable to the effects of occupational stressors than at other times.

Sources of stress in the workplace can come from a variety of areas and it is generally recognised that most of these can be reduced by applying appropriate management techniques and by everyone playing their part.

Some working arrangements impact on people's ability to cope with pressure and therefore increase the likelihood of them feeling stressed. Examples of these are:-

- *Working patterns – shifts and night work, lone working*

- *Physical factors – noise, vibration, temperature, ergonomics, lack of welfare facilities, remote location*

- *Activities – risk of violence, competitive environment, high risk work*

GUIDANCE FOR MEETING ISLE OF MAN GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

THE WORKPLACE STRESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

The HSE have carried out much work with industry and specialists in the field of stress and have identified the six primary sources of workplace stress. These sources are:-

- **Demands**
- **Control**
- **Relationships**
- **Change**
- **Role**
- **Support, Training and Factors unique to the individual**

The standards are designed to help identify organisational factors that may contribute to workplace stress. Appendix I contains the detail of the standards. The purpose of the Standards is to define what each source of stress covers and then outline how compliance with them can be demonstrated. An example is given below

Source of Stress

Control - *this relates to how much say the person has in the way they do their work*

The Standard

- *Staff indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work*
- *Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns*

To further assist the standards have statements that act as indicators that outline what should be happening to demonstrate that management arrangements are adequate.

As part of the HSE research it was identified that the culture of the organisation was also a significant factor. It became evident, however, that if the other potential sources of stress were appropriately addressed then the culture within the organisation changed positively. Simply the culture of the organisation is dependant on people being managed appropriately and being treated with respect.

STRESS RISK ASSESSMENTS

The management standards provide a structure against which managers can assess the risks and evaluate if their arrangements are suitable or sufficient for preventing and/or managing stress in the workplace. They enable a more tangible approach and also provide a best practice benchmark.

Essentially the management standards provide information on the hazards (the sources of stress) and the controls that should be in place (the standards and indicators) this enables managers to consider how effectively they manage each of these aspects and therefore what the level of risk is to staff.

To carry out this risk assessment consideration needs to be given to the systems and procedures that are in place within the workplace as these are the measures that control the hazards and reduce the risks. Appendix 1 outlines the standards, the indicators and identifies Government wide arrangements that are in place. Some of these arrangements are specific to groups of staff on particular terms and conditions while others apply to all public sector staff.

A further section has been left blank for specific Departmental arrangements that might exist specific to the type of work undertaken, relating to terms and conditions of a group of staff or simply an additional process introduced to assist staff and managers.

The table is designed to assist managers in understanding the types of arrangements that would evidence adequate management and assist in reducing actual or potential workplace stress. It is very important that each manager considers how effectively those arrangements are actually implemented in their area, eg listing monthly staff meetings is pointless if the reality is that no one makes the time to have them and relies on everyone briefing each other, probably when they meet in the kitchen. The work on the standards using Appendix 1 is the first step in carrying out the risk assessment of how well stress is being prevented and managed.

In addition to the management standards information can be sought through the survey of management competencies (mentioned in the Responsibility of Managers section) or through staff surveys which are described in the next section of this document.

Once a review of all of the aspects has been undertaken evaluation of the residual risk can be undertaken. To enable this evaluation of risk to be carried out consideration needs to given to the likely impact on staff and the organisation of the shortfall in arrangements. Involve the individuals that work in the area and include consideration of employee turnover, sickness absence and getting feedback from staff in the area. Depending on the size of the section and/or the interpersonal relationships this can be done through a number of routes including staff meetings, using external facilitators, meeting individual staff or by carrying out a staff survey.

Having considered the risk a prioritised programme of work can be drawn up to address any shortfalls. The programme of work needs to be developed into an action plan and an example form is included in Appendix II.

Stress risk assessments need to be carried out as part of a risk based and prioritised programme of health and safety activity. They should be carried out for distinct teams that have common management arrangements and styles. It is unlikely that one exercise across a Department will provide data that can meaningfully identify the risks in a way that will enable them to be addressed or will provide sufficient data to enable the conclusion that the arrangements are adequate.

If a member of staff reports that they are stressed or it is believed that stress is impacting on their performance, health or wellbeing then a stress risk assessment can be carried out in relation to their particular circumstance. This can be done using the team risk assessment as a starting point or by working through the criteria and discussing it with the

member of staff. It is a reasonable expectation that the member of staff will participate in the exercise, however if the person is off work or the manager believes that the additional pressure may be detrimental to the individual advice can be sought through an Occupational Health referral. If the individual is deemed unable to participate in the assessment then it would be reasonable for the manager to undertake the risk assessment and discuss it with the individual at the earliest opportunity.

STAFF SURVEYS

Staff surveys generally involve questionnaires related to the areas covered in the management standards and provide a picture of how staff feel about their working arrangements and whether they think workplace stress is an issue. It is therefore important that those completing the survey have an understanding of what workplace stress is and what it is not prior to completing the questionnaire. This education process should not be undertaken with a view to influencing the outcomes but it is designed to enable staff to make an informed response. Staff surveys are sometimes referred to as stress audits.

It is not appropriate to make completion compulsory and to gain useful information it needs to be confidential. It is important that the information from the staff survey is used to assist with drawing up action plans as the responses will not provide an answer in themselves.

The information can help to prioritise the work that needs to be undertaken using the management standards framework.

It is important that consideration is given to appropriate groupings of staff for the data to be meaningful and useful to managers. An example is given below:-

A Department of 300 people had 12 returns showing high levels of stress, overall it was accepted that at 4% there was not much of a problem. The reality was that only 200 people had filled in the form and that 6 of those returns were from one area that had a team of 20 people.

For the data from staff surveys to be useful return rates need to be considered and the HSE advise that 50% is adequate, 60% is desirable, 70% is good and 80% is very good.

Some organisations have undertaken staff surveys without first establishing how to separate groups of staff to get meaningful data or how the information will be used to improve management arrangements. This approach frequently results in staff being negative and further de-motivated particularly if there is a significant problem.

The HSE provides an on-line staff survey form and analysis tool which is free to download and use. Many commercial companies provide a service that develops questionnaires that are designed around the organisation and will gather and analyse the information for you. Once the basic data is gathered consideration should be given to running focus groups to assist with developing the action plan and follow up surveys to establish the effectiveness of the implementation of the action plan (see Appendix II for example Action Plan form).

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS – REPORTED CONCERNS

If you identify that an employee is showing signs of stress or it is brought to your attention by the individual or a colleague, an initial response should be made as quickly as possible and within no more than seven working days. This approach should be carefully considered as it should be supportive rather than challenging. It may be the starting point for further follow up action or may identify a way forward and resolution in itself.

At any stage if the situation is impacting on the performance of the individual to the extent of putting their own or other people's health and safety at risk then immediate action must be taken to reduce that risk – advice and support can be obtained through Health and Safety, Staff Welfare and HR Professionals across Government.

The framework for the approach should be as follows:-

- **Listen Attentively**

  It is important that managers try and understand the situation that the employee finds them self in. This can be achieved by listening attentively and asking pertinent questions in an attempt to understand.

- **Agree on the Problems**

  The manager should try and identify with the individual the actual nature of the work problem(s) which is/are causing the difficulties. This is likely to involve consideration of the stress management standards and the individual's role and responsibilities (using the current job description), how they organise and manage their workload, management demands and practices.

- **Identify Possible Solutions**

  Work with the individual to identify a range of possible solutions to the problem(s). Consider the benefits of each. If appropriate encourage the individual to seek support from Staff Welfare or refer them to Occupational Health.

- **Narrow to a Course of Action**

  The manager and individual should agree an action plan for the best way forward with a built-in review date. It is important that any action that is taken is conducted in a sensitive and, when necessary, confidential manner.

- **Implement the Chosen Course of Action**

  During the implementation period the manager should regularly check on progress.

- **Review after the Agreed Period of Time**

  If necessary, the action plan should be adjusted and modified in light of experiences and changes in circumstances.

  If, after the agreed action plan has been implemented, the problem still persists then the manager should seek further advice and assistance. In circumstances where the performance of the individual remains unsatisfactory, the manager fails to address issues or the risk assessment finds the organisational arrangements to be adequate other internal procedures might be need to be instigated such as the Bullying, Harassment & Victimisation Policy or the Disciplinary, Grievance or Capability Procedures.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS – ABSENCE DUE TO STRESS

Where a manager receives notification that an employee is absent due to stress an investigation into the circumstances relating to the injury/illness needs to be carried out. If the stress is not attributable to work then it is important to ensure that while the employee is off work and on their return to work we offer support mechanisms to assist them. If it is declared or identified to be workplace stress then a stress risk assessment needs to be carried out relating to the circumstances and environment that the employee works in. Sometimes it is not possible to address all of the issues until the person is ready to return to work but it is important to carry out the risk assessment to identify if there are aspects of the work or environment that might be changed to assist the person in their return to work. Managers can get advice and support from all or some of the services or groups of people listed in Appendix III.

Under no circumstances should an employee be harassed or victimised for being off work with stress or during the resulting risk assessment process. It is reasonable to make contact with them to discuss the factors contributing to their absence but it may be appropriate to do this initially through a third party.

Investigation of Cases of Work Place Stress Absence

There is a requirement for managers to investigate all incidences of injury or illness caused or exacerbated by work. This requirement holds as equally true for psychological injury as it does for physical injury. The investigation will seek to establish the following points:

- Is the absence genuinely related to or contributed to by excessive pressure generated in the workplace?

- What aspects of the Stress Management Standards does the perceived stress relate to?

- Are other people affected or likely to be affected by the absence or the situation causing the absence?

- Has a relevant stress risk assessment been carried out? If no carry one out, if yes review it

- Have arrangements to prevent and manage stress been adequate? If no draw up an action plan, agree it with relevant people and implement it

- Have existing support mechanisms (e.g. mediation, counselling etc.) been utilised or made available where appropriate?

Developing a "Return to Work" Strategy

The Return to Work Strategy should take into account the results of the stress risk assessment and any agreed action plan. The strategy may involve an initial return on a limited number of days per week or hours per day building up to a full return to work. The strategy may also include temporary restrictions on particular duties which have previously posed difficulties for the employee. The management of the time allowed enabling the employee to return to full duties needs to be agreed and understood by both parties.

At the return to work meeting both the manager and the employee should formally agree that they understand the measures which are being put in place including any support mechanisms, training or changes to work practices.

It may be appropriate to involve other parties at this stage to mediate or to support either the manager or the employee returning to work.

Monitoring and Review

The implementation of the agreed return to work arrangements and any action plan need to be monitored and reviewed. Any subsequent changes need to be agreed and any shortfalls identified and addressed with the relevant party.

Stress-related absence data needs to be entered onto the Human Resources record keeping system. Statistics will be produced for consideration and action.

MANAGEMENT OF THE POLICY & OBJECTIVES

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy and its objectives needs to be monitored and measured through the internal management arrangements of each area of Government. Each Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring it is implemented to meet the needs of the people within their area of responsibility.

Isle of Man Government may from time to time include the arrangements for the prevention and management of stress in health and safety audits carried out on its behalf.

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Demands – issues like workload, work patterns and the work environment • Employees indicate that they are able to cope with the demands of their jobs • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns	**What should be happening** • Employees are given adequate and achievable demands in relation to agreed hours of work • Employee's skills and abilities are matched to the needs of the job • Jobs are designed to be within the capabilities of employees	**Management processes that contribute** • Business and Operational Plans • Business case/job description for post • Job Evaluation scheme • PDR Scheme • Job description/person specification • Competency framework for CS posts • Interviews • Assessment Centres • Job description/person specification • Competency framework for CS posts • Interviews • Assessment Centres • PDR Scheme • Capability Procedure • Public Service Training		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Demands continued	• Employees' concerns about their work environment are addressed	• PDR Scheme • Staff Welfare Service • Health & Safety Advice • Occupational Health Service • Mediation • Contact Officers • Complaints Procedure • Grievance Procedure • Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation Policy • Whistle blowing Procedure • Attendance at Work Policy		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Control – relates to how much say the person has in the way they do their work • Employees indicate that they are able to have a say about the way they do their work • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns	**What should be happening** • Where possible employees have control over their pace of work • Employees are encouraged to use their skills and initiative to do their work • Where possible, employees are encouraged to develop new skills to help them undertake new and challenging pieces of work • Employees are encouraged to develop their skills	**Management processes that contribute** • Operational Plans • PDR Scheme • Support for Continuing Professional Development Schemes • PDR Scheme • Public Service Training • Secondments • Special Projects • Support for Continuing Professional Development Schemes • Support for Skills Accreditation Schemes • PDR Scheme		

Location:-……………………………Section:- ……………………………………. Managers signature:-……………………………… Page 3 of 12

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Control continued	• Employees have a say over break times • Employees are consulted over their work patterns	• Terms & Conditions – CS Regulations, Whitley Council, JNC's Recognised TU's • Terms & Conditions – CS Regulations, Whitley Council, JNC's, Recognised TU's • Attendance at Work Policy		

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The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Support – relates to the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided • Employees indicate that they receive adequate information and support from their colleagues and superiors • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns	**What should be happening** • Policy and procedures are in place to adequately support employees • Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to support staff • Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to support colleagues • Employees know what support is available and how and when to access it • Employees know how to access the required resources to do their job	**Management processes that contribute**) PDR Scheme) Contact Officers) Staff Welfare Service) Health & Safety Advice) Occupational Health Service) Employee Relations)Advisers) Grievance Procedure) Mentoring) Complaints Procedure) Trade Union Representation) Access to copies of Terms &)Conditions) Attendance at Work Policy)))))))))))))		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Support continued	• Employees receive regular and constructive feedback	))))		

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STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Relationships – relates to promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour • Employees indicate that they are not subjected to unacceptable behaviours, eg bullying at work • Systems are in place locally to respond to individual concerns	**What should be happening** • Positive behaviours at work that avoid conflict and ensure fairness are promoted • Employees share information relevant to their work • Policies and procedures that prevent or resolve unacceptable behaviour are agreed	**Management processes that contribute** • Bullying, Harassment & Victimisation Policy • Equal Opportunities Policy • Staff Welfare Service • Employee Relations Advisers • Contact Officers • Mediation • Bullying, Harassment & Victimisation Policy • Equal Opportunities Policy • Staff Welfare Service • Employee Relations Advisers • Contact Officers • Mediation • Grievance Procedure • Disciplinary Procedure • Capability Procedure		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Relationships continued	• Systems are in place to enable and encourage managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour • Systems are in place to enable and encourage employees to report unacceptable behaviour	) PDR Scheme) Public Service Training) Capability Procedure) Disciplinary Procedure) Bullying, Harassment &) Victimisation Policy) Attendance at Work Policy) Equal Opportunities Policy) Staff Welfare Service) Employee Relations) Advisers) Contact Officers) Mediation) Grievance Procedure) Whistle blowing Policy		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Role – relates to ensuring individuals have a clear understanding of their role and that there are no conflicts within it • Employees indicate that they understand their role and responsibilities • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns	**What should be happening** • As far as possible the different requirements put on individuals are compatible • Information is provided to enable employees to understand their roles and responsibilities • Requirements placed on employees are made as clear as possible	**Management processes that contribute** • Business and Operational Plans • Job description/person specification • Competency framework for CS posts • Interviews • Assessment Centres • PDR Scheme • Job description/person specification • Competency framework for CS posts • Interviews • Assessment Centres • Business and Operational Plans • PDR Scheme		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Role continued	• Systems are in place to enable employees to raise concerns about any uncertainties or conflicts within their role or responsibilities	• PDR Scheme • Business and Operational Plans • Grievance Procedure • Attendance at Work Policy		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Change – relates to the management and communication of large or small changes within the organisation • Employees indicate that they are frequently engaged when organisational change is being undergone • Systems are in place locally to respond to any individual concerns	**What should be happening** • Employees are provided with timely information to enable them to understand the reasons for proposed changes • Adequate consultation on changes enables employees to have the opportunity to influence proposals • Employees are aware of probable impact on any changes to their jobs and given appropriate training • Employees are aware of timetables for change	**Management processes that contribute** • Agreement with GOA to notify them of organisational reviews or redundancy proposals • Attendance at Work Policy		

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
The Workplace Stress Management Standards & Internal Arrangements

STANDARDS	INDICATORS	GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS	DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS	LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS
Change continued	• Employees have access to relevant support during changes			

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY
ACTION PLAN

LOCATION:-   SECTION:-   DATE:-

STANDARD	ISSUE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	MILESTONE TARGET DATES	COMPLETED

MANAGERS SIGNATURE:- ………………………………….

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY

CONTACTS FOR INFORMATION & SUPPORT

- **The Isle of Man Government Staff Welfare Service - Telephone 687027**
  Offers a confidential service, within the requirements of the law, to all Government employees. The service is impartial and non judgemental. Staff welfare can be the initial point of contact with regards to a wide range of issues including; work related problems, domestic issues, ill health, stress, bereavement, substance misuse and support through trauma(including critical incident debriefing) A workplace mediation service is also available. Individuals can self refer to the service. The Department of Home Affairs also have a dedicated Staff Welfare Officer providing these services- Telephone 685182

- **Department of Health (DOH) Occupational Health Service- Telephone: 642150**
  The Occupational Health Service aims to improve the health, safety, and well-being of all staff within the DOH. The service is impartial, non-judgemental, and confidential, and can give advice and/or support for managers and their staff who may be experiencing indirect or direct, work related health problems in the workplace. Access to the service can be through agency, management, or self referral for DOH staff only. An answer phone for confidential messages is in operation when the department is closed.

- **Isle of Man Government Contact Officers –**
  The role of Contact Officers is to offer advice and support for employees in relation to the process and procedures in place, any of the officers can be contacted. An up to date list can be found under the equal opportunities section of the Government intranet or by phoning the Personnel Office on 685000.

- **The Counselling Service** -
  Referral to the service is usually via your G.P., although individuals can also self refer by contacting the service through the Department of Social Care. The service is free and provides counselling for personal difficulties; including bereavement, work related problems, relationship problems, depression, panic attacks, low self esteem, eating problems and abuse - sexual/ emotional / physical.

- **Drug and Alcohol Team** - **Telephone 687347**
  Government agency providing information, advice, support and counselling with regards to drug and alcohol problems.

- **D.A.S.H. Drug Advice Service and Helpline – Telephone 615622**
  Voluntary agency providing information, support and advice to individuals and their families with regards to problems associated with drugs and alcohol.

- **RELATE** - **Telephone 623902.**
  Provides relationship counselling and psychosexual therapy

- **CRUSE** - **Telephone 844110**.
  Provides counselling and support following bereavement.

- **Victim Support**. **– Telephone 679950**.
  Provides information, practical help and emotional support for people affected by crime.

- **Civil Servants – Telephone 685000 (General Office)**
  The Civil Service Commission have Occupational Health Advisors and access can be gained to this service for Civil Servants through the Employee Relations Advisers in The Personnel Office. To speak directly to one of the Officers Telephone 685726 or 685730

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY DRAFT

MANAGING WORKPLACE PRESSURE

There are some general guidelines one should follow in identifying excessive pressure and managing stress at work, such as:

Develop Problem Solving Skills

- Keep a stress diary for a month using four different columns - the incident or what happened to produce the stress, the people involved, what you did and what you should have done
- Consider the solutions available
- Make a plan to deal with the problems
- Choose the one most likely to succeed
- Try to avoid the most stressful situations

Increase your Self-Awareness

- List your strengths and weaknesses
- Learn to recognise how stress affects you - what are your own personal stress warning signals, e.g. headaches, muscle tension, etc.
- How do you cope? What behaviours succeed in managing your stress?
- Learn to know your limits and recognise the danger signs
- Deal with tensions before they become too severe

Find a Support System

- Use the support networks in place through work
- Look for colleagues who can offer you support
- Talk with them about how they cope/pick up advice and strategies, as this will help you feel in control of how things affect you
- Talk with family or friends
- Review your progress and assess the success or otherwise of your approach

Develop Time Management Skills

- Make a "to do" list and prioritise your tasks… what is essential/desirable/non urgent? - deal with the most important ones first
- Set realistic deadlines for delivery of each of these objectives. Break up the various tasks into smaller bite-sized units, with time deadlines for each
- Do not juggle paper; read it, act on it, file it or bin it
- Once a decision is reached, forget it. Do not waste time thinking about whether it is a good decision or not
- Where possible, decide on what time of day is good for you and use it for important tasks; use your 'low point' time for routine or less important tasks
- Keep meetings short and to the point and keep to deadlines. Manage meeting time if you are in a position to do so
- Plan your non-contact time
- Check whether you are delegating enough/appropriately and that you are not a victim of someone else's over-delegation

THE PREVENTION & MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACE STRESS POLICY

Develop Assertiveness Skills

- Learn to say no to unreasonable requests - e.g. by explaining your priorities/offering a time by which you could comply, etc.
- Consider whether you need to change the way you react to people or situations or to challenge (non-aggressively) they way you are being treated
- Be realistic - do not set too high standards for yourself!

Look After Yourself

- Explore relaxation techniques (there are many books/tapes available)
- Plan 'time out' for yourself, however short, when you do what **you** want to do
- Plan 'treats' so you always have something to look forward to
- Make sure you eat a healthy balanced diet
- Keep alcohol and caffeine intake down
- Take regular exercise - physical exercise both reduces mental tension and helps you sleep well.

Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work:

Competency	Sub-competency	Examples of manager behaviour	Behaviours Positive/Negative
Respectful and responsible: managing emotions and having integrity	Integrity	• is a good role model • treats team members with respect • is honest	))) Positive)
		• says one thing, then does something different • speaks about team members behind their backs	)) Negative
	Managing emotions	• acts calmly in pressured situations • takes a consistent approach to managing	)) Positive
		• is unpredictable in mood • passes on stress to employees • panics about deadlines • takes suggestions for improvement as a personal criticism	))) Negative)
	Considerate approach	• makes short-term demands rather than allowing planning • creates unrealistic deadlines • gives more negative than positive feedback • relies on others to deal with problems • imposes 'my way is the only way' • shows a lack of consideration for work-life balance	)))) Negative)))

Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work:

Competency	Sub-competency	Examples of manager behaviour	Behaviours Positive/Negative
Managing and communicating existing and future work	Proactive work management	• clearly communicates employee job objectives • develops action plans • monitors team workload on an ongoing basis • encourages team to review how they organise work • stops additional work being taken on when necessary • works proactively • sees projects/tasks through to delivery • reviews processes to see if work can be improved • prioritises future workloads	))))) Positive))))
	Problem-solving	• deals rationally with problems • follows up problems on team's behalf • deals with problems as soon as they arise	)) Positive)
		• is indecisive at decision-making	Negative
	Participative/ empowering	• gives employees the right level of responsibility • correctly judges when to consult and when to make a decision • keeps employees informed of what is happening in the organisation • acts as a mentor • delegates work equally • helps team members develop in their role • encourages team participation • provides regular team meetings	)))))) Positive)))
		• gives too little direction to employees	Negative

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Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work:

Competency	Sub-competency	Examples of manager behaviour	Behaviours Positive/Negative
Reasoning/managing difficult situations	Managing conflict	• acts as a mediator in conflict situations) • deals with squabbles before they become arguments) • deals objectively with conflicts) • deals with conflicts head on)	Positive
		• acts to keep the peace rather than resolve issues	Negative
	Use of organisation resources	• seeks advice from other managers when necessary) • uses HR as a resource to help deal with problems) • seeks help from occupational health when necessary)	Positive
	Taking responsibility for resolving issues	• follows up conflicts after resolution) • supports employees through incidents of abuse) • makes it clear they will take ultimate responsibility if things go wrong)	Positive
		• doesn't address bullying	Negative

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Management competencies for preventing and reducing stress at work:

Competency	Sub-competency	Examples of manager behaviour	Behaviours Positive/Negative
Managing the individual within the team	Personally accessible	• speaks personally rather than uses email • provides regular opportunities to speak one to one • returns calls/emails promptly • is available to talk when needed	))) Positive)
	Sociable	• brings in treats • socialises with the team • is willing to have a laugh at work	)) Positive)
	Empathetic engagement	• encourages employee input in discussions • listens when employees ask for help • makes an effort to find out what motivates employees at work • tries to see team member's point of view • takes an interest in team's life outside work • regularly asks 'how are you?' • treats all team members with equal importance	)))) Positive)))
		• assumes rather than checks that employees are ok	Negative