

Lone and Out of Hours Workers' Information Sheet

- In instances of lone working the major concern is that the worker becomes ill or is injured to the extent where they are unable to summon assistance. If they go undiscovered for a period of time their condition may deteriorate, perhaps to the point where it is fatal. Remember, lone working does not necessarily occur outwith normal working hours
- Out of hours working is not necessarily done alone. The two major concerns are:
 1. The absence of support in the event of an incident, accident or other emergency. Lab Managers, Fire Wardens, First Aiders, Radiation Protection Supervisors and Safety Services staff are not normally on site outwith normal working hours.
 2. The likelihood of intruders, or other undesirables, being present in and around the building is higher outwith normal working hours, especially during the hours of darkness, so the risk of violent attacks on personnel increases.
- The highest risk scenario, and therefore the one that gives greatest cause for concern, is when the work is done alone and out of hours.
- Some key control measures designed to ensure the safety of lone/out of hours workers are detailed below. Are they being implemented in your area? If not you should raise this with your Line Manager, Lab Manager or a member of SLS Safety.
 - Lone Workers must receive adequate training and instruction, especially in security, emergency and spill procedures.
 - Line Managers should carefully assess the need for supervision of out-of-hours work, taking the workers level of experience and competency into account. Appointed supervisors must be experienced and fully competent.
 - Where formal supervision is not necessary, operate a buddy system, i.e. an arrangement is made between colleagues to check in with each other at regular intervals, especially on arrival and prior to leaving the building. Note: if work is to be undertaken in any restricted access facilities, e.g. CL3 suites, the buddy must also have access to these areas.
 - Workers must make sure at least one person knows where they are working and when to expect them home (in the case of out of hours work) or back in the main lab (in the case of lone working during normal hours). If the worker does not return when expected their contact, without putting themselves at risk, should attempt to confirm that the worker is safe and well. If there is cause for concern, alert a senior member of SLS staff or University Security immediately.
 - All workers must keep an Emergency Numbers Card with their swipe/proximity card and carry both cards on their person while at work.
 - Workers are advised to carry charged mobile phones programmed with emergency telephone numbers.
 - Workers must avoid carrying out operations that carry a medium or high risk of harm – for example: handling large volumes of flammables; working with very toxic substances; performing reactions that may be vigorous or hard to control; working with sources of ignition; working with asphyxiant gas; handling heavy objects; working with large amounts of radioactive substances. Restrict such steps to normal working hours or assign additional controls to reduce the risk.