

## A QUICK GUIDE TO THE LONE WORKER MARKET

And why it may be important to you

For a free consultation please call us on 01243 624 529 or email [info@loneworking.co.uk](mailto:info@loneworking.co.uk)

### WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE ANY NOTICE OF THE LONE WORKER MARKET?

It means you and/or your organisation has

- An effective yardstick against which to select the supplier of Lone Worker Services with the most appropriate service for you
- The best possible chance of a swift and accurate response to any of those for whom you are responsible when they find themselves in trouble
- A good degree of protection against legislation and litigation

### LINKS

- <http://www.loneworking.co.uk/v2/links/>

\*Source; Connexion2

### Q1. What is a Lone Worker?

Many companies and organisations have employees who are vulnerable because they work in situations where their safety cannot be supervised, maybe at remote sites or visiting other people's homes.

Also there are organisations that are responsible for the safety of individuals made vulnerable by circumstances beyond their control.

Some examples are shown below.

A Lone Worker is defined by the British Standard for Lone Workers, (BS8484), and the Health & Safety Executive, as;

Lone Worker; a person working on their own without close or direct supervision

### Q2. Why should I take any notice of Lone Workers?

An employer has a legal Duty of Care under Health & Safety legislation to provide for the safety and security of their employees. This can be a problem when the employee works away from the direct supervision of their manager/supervisor.

Also the Corporate Manslaughter Act (Corporate Homicide Act in Scotland), makes it easier to prosecute employers if there is a death of an employee which could have been prevented by proper, and sensible, procedures.

For example, in February 2011, a small company was fined £385,000 in the first successful prosecution under the Act, when an employee died while working alone in a 3.8 metre deep unsupported trial pit that caved in.

Prosecution under the legislation is bad enough but employers should also bear in mind the possibility and expensive consequences of litigation.

### Q3. Are there any statistics on Lone Workers in the UK?

Estimates vary between 2 and 7 million, but somewhere around 3 to 3 ½ million seems to be a sensible and generally accepted answer.

Research shows that over 150 Lone Workers are attacked every working day. Other research quoted by one supplier of Lone Worker services estimates that 61 deaths and 14,000 serious injuries from slips, trips and falls were recorded in the UK in 2008 alone\*.

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## Q4. Can you give me some examples of Lone Workers and vulnerable people?

### Examples of Lone Workers are;

- Utility company employees visiting customers in their homes
- Community nurses and midwives looking after patients at home
- Security guards
- Social workers
- Maintenance staff & engineers

### Examples of vulnerable people are:

- Victims of domestic violence
- Dementia sufferers and others such as the elderly in the care of local authorities
- Children and adults with special needs
- Those in witness protection programs
- Patients monitored at home (Telecare)

## Q5. I have what I believe are Lone Workers. What should I do about them?

The first thing to do, which is a legal requirement anyway if you have more than 5 employees, is to carry out a Risk Assessment on your lone working staff.

## Q6. What do I do next?

The risk assessment should start you along the road by showing you the degree of risk for your Lone Workers. Probably the best thing to do next, unless you are already knowledgeable, is seek advice. This can be found in a variety of places:

- Consult the British Standard for Lone Workers, BS8484, obtainable at a price from the BSI, or look at [www.BS8484.com](http://www.BS8484.com)
- Consult your Health & Safety Manager
- Call a specialist independent Lone Worker consultancy
- Type 'BS8484' into Google and see where it takes you

## Q7. What is British Standard 8484 for Lone Workers?

The standard which came into being in 2009, was written by Patrick Dealtry (of the Lone Working Group), at the request of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to help regulate suppliers of Lone Worker services.

Their very real concern was the probability of false alarms leading to excessive demands on their response services in responding to Lone Worker personal safety alarms from unregulated companies, (as happened in the intruder alarm market).

Accredited ARCs can request a Unique Reference Number (URN) from each separate police force which gives them direct and speedy access to their control room and a Level 1 Response to the alarm, by-passing the 999 system.

There are several companies claiming to operate to BS8484. To confirm this is the case it is sensible to request their certificate of accreditation. This is likely to be issued by either NSI or SSAIB.

The ACPO policy is moving towards a situation where it requires that all suppliers, all devices and all ARCs should be accredited to the appropriate part of the standard in order to request a Level 1 Response.