

# **Isle of Anglesey County Council**

## **Vibration Policy**

**Version 2.0 April 2019**

### **About this policy**

This procedure recognises and accepts its legal responsibility as an employer to protect all of its employees within Ynys Mon County Council from the ill health effects of exposure to vibration.

Ynys Mon County Council recognises that the exposure to vibration presents health risks and will assess and control exposure in accordance with the relevant statutory duty regarding hand - arm and whole-body vibration under the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

The Policy is supported by resources on the Council's website.

## Revision history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
2.0	April 2019	Policy Created
	August 2020	No change

Date of next review	
This policy will be reviewed in:	August 2021
The review will be undertaken by:	Corporate Health and Safety Team

## Contact Details:

Corporate Health and Safety Team ([healthandsafety@anglesey.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@anglesey.gov.uk))

We are happy to provide this policy in alternative formats on request. Please use the above contact details.

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y  
Gymraeg.

This document is available in Welsh.

# Contents

## 1) Introduction

This procedure recognises and accepts its legal responsibility as an employer to protect all of its employees within Ynys Mon County Council from the ill health effects of exposure to vibration.

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## 2) Definition

Hand-Arm Vibration (HAV) is vibration, which reaches the hands and arms when working with hand-held power tools, hand-guided machinery or when holding materials which are being processed by machinery.

Whole-body vibration is shaking or jolting of the human body through a supporting surface (usually a seat or the floor), for example, when driving or riding on a vehicle along an unmade road, operating earthmoving machines or standing on a structure attached to a large, powerful, fixed machine which is impacting or vibrating.

## 3) Relevant Legislation

**Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** Employers owe a duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of all employees whilst they are at work and to other people who may be affected by their activities.

**Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2002 as amended:** Employers are required to tell all workers, including young workers, about the risks to their health and safety, identified by risk assessments, and the measures put in place to control them.

**Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005:** Employers will ensure they meet their obligations under the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations (2005) to tell all workers about the risks to their health and safety, identified by risk assessments, and the measures that are put in place to control them.

### **Regulation 4: Exposure limits Values and Action Values.**

Under Regulation 4 of the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 management will ensure employees do not exceed the daily exposure limit. The daily exposure limit value is the maximum amount of vibration that an employee may be exposed to within 1 day.

The exposure action value is a daily amount of vibration exposure above which employers are required to take action to control exposure. The greater the exposure level, the greater the risk.

Exposure limit values and action values for hand arm vibration:

- A. The daily exposure limit value is  $5 \text{ m/s}^2 \text{ A}(8)$
- B. The daily exposure action value is  $2.5 \text{ m/s}^2 \text{ A}(8)$

Exposure limits values and action values for whole body vibration:

- A. The daily exposure limit value is  $1.15 \text{ m/s}^2 \text{ A}(8)$
- B. The daily exposure action value is  $0.5 \text{ m/s}^2 \text{ A}(8)$

Note. The Regulations require to be as low as reasonably practicable. The actions levels are for guidance.

### **Regulation 6: Elimination of exposure to vibration at the Workplace**

Management will ensure the risk of exposure from vibration to employees is either eliminated or where this is not reasonably practicable, vibration shall be reduced to a low safe level as is reasonably practicable. Management will ensure the following are implemented;

Other working methods which eliminate or reduce the exposure to vibration.

Selecting tools that are suitable for the task, have the lowest vibration level possible and / or redesigning the task to reduce the grip, push and other forces.

Maintaining and servicing vibrating equipment effectively according to the manufacturer's instructions, keep in a good state of repair, so as to avoid potential increases in vibration and implement effective fault reporting procedures.

Managing the exposure to vibration of their staff to ensure that they do not exceed the EAV and ELV.

Training, informing and supervising staff to ensure they are aware of the hazard, the safe working procedures to be followed which minimise risk and how to recognise and report signs of injury.

Providing staff with protective clothing, e.g. gloves, etc. when necessary, to keep them warm and dry, thus reducing the risk of vibration white finger. It must be noted that gloves will help to keep the hands warm, but the use of anti-vibration gloves are not recommended as they do not reduce the amount of vibration reaching the hands.

Limit employee's duration and exposure to vibration and implement appropriate work schedules with adequate rest periods.

## **Regulation 7: Health Surveillance**

Ynys Mon County Council will identify all activities where exposure to vibrating equipment may arise and assess the risk where there is the potential for exposure to excessive vibration, applicants will be screened by Occupational Health for symptoms of Hand Arm Vibration or other medical conditions, which may restrict or prohibit work with vibrating equipment prior to employment.

The Occupational Health Department within the council should undertake pre-employment health screening for all employees who are likely to be exposed to vibration.

Ynys Mon County Council management will ensure the ongoing health surveillance programme for all employees identified to be at risk, which will be undertaken on a two yearly basis or as required by the Occupational Health Department.

Employees must report any further assessment by the Occupational Health Provider to their manager/supervisor.

## **Regulation 8: Information, instruction and training**

Managers will make arrangements for suitable information, instruction and training for employees by providing employees with:

- The health effects of hand-arm vibration.
- Sources of hand-arm vibration.
- Whether they are at risk, and if so whether the risk is high (above the ELV), medium (above the EAV) or low.
- The risk factors (e.g. the levels of vibration, daily exposure duration, regularity of exposure over weeks, months and years).
- How to recognise and report symptoms.
- The need for health surveillance
- Use of correct personal protective equipment.

Ways to minimise risk including:

- Changes to working practices to reduce vibration exposure.
- Correct selection, use and maintenance of equipment.
- Correct techniques for equipment use, how to reduce grip force etc.
- Maintenance of good blood circulation at work by keeping warm and massaging fingers and, if possible, cutting down on smoking.

### **4) Preventive Measures in the Workplace**

Ynys Mon County Council will ensure that the council meets its statutory duty regarding vibration under the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

## **Risk Assessment**

The purpose of the risk assessment is to enable managers to make a valid decision about the measures necessary to prevent or adequately control the exposure of

employees to HAV or WBV. It also enables manager to demonstrate readily to others who may have an interest e.g. employees, safety representatives and enforcement authorities that they have from the earliest opportunity considered the risks from vibration.

When conducting the assessment, the following steps should be followed.

- a) Identify all existing powered tools
- b) Review and observe the conditions under which such powered tools, equipment and machinery are used to obtain a true and representative appreciation of the nature of the work.
- c) Identify the maximum duration of their use in any working day if necessary by keeping a log or using monitoring devices.
- d) Assess the vibration magnitude from each piece of equipment used. This information must be provided by the manufacturer.
- e) Consider individual factors such as pre-existing health condition that may increase risk from vibration exposure for individual employees.
- f) Ensure that employees use equipment correctly. Poor posture, technique etc. may increase vibration exposure from a particular activity by up to 50%.

The risk assessment should identify the maximum trigger time or usage time permissible for the equipment to ensure that exposure does not exceed the ELV. The risk assessment should detail the measures in place to reduce the risk from vibration exposure and where applicable may include an Action Plan indicating any further measures planned. The risk assessment should be reviewed whenever there is change in vibration exposure or otherwise at least every year.

## **Purchasing Equipment**

When purchasing equipment, suppliers must provide information about the vibration magnitudes their product are likely to create in normal use. This is a requirement of the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008. A purchasing specification should incorporate maximum vibration magnitudes and test procedures; which suppliers have to satisfy. Manufacturers data must however be looked at with some caution as they may not necessarily be measurement of levels sustained when the equipment is put to your particular use.

When planning purchasing of equipment first consider other methods of work which can eliminate or reduce exposure to vibration including automation or mechanisation of work previously done with hand-operated or hand-fed machines.

Consultation with Corporate Health and Safety and employees prior to any purchase of vibratory equipment.

## **Work Practices**

It is important to ensure that work activities are designed to take into account ergonomic principles and to

- Encourage good posture and working techniques
- Ensure correct selection of the most appropriate tools for the task
- Ensure that all equipment is properly maintained

- Minimise time exposed to vibration e.g. regular breaks, job rotation etc.
- Provide suitable clothing to protect employees from cold and damp
- Provide suitable training and information for all those exposed to vibration.

## **Training**

HAVS Awareness to be provided by competent person through toolbox talks the awareness will include:

- The items of work equipment that pose vibration risks and their respective levels of risk
- How their personal daily exposures compare with the Exposure Action and Limit values (EAV and ELV)
- What symptoms of ill health they should look out for, to whom they should report them and how they should report them
- What control measures are in place to minimise risks
- What personal protective equipment is provided and when this should be used, e.g. the need to keep warm.
- Full training on the use of monitoring equipment.
- Training for the use of monitoring equipment should be provided to Managers, Supervisors and information considered when scheduling work to restrict working times and allow rotation of employees who will be exposed to high levels of vibration.
- The health surveillance that is provided, how it will be carried out and why it is important as well as the overall findings (in anonymous form)
- What employee's duties are; to:  
Follow instructions they are given on safe working practices;  
Report problems with their equipment such as unusually high vibration levels; broken or damaged equipment  
Co-operate with the programme of control measures and health surveillance  
Use only the equipment that they have been issued.

Where new staff are employed and are likely to be exposed to vibration levels in excess of the EAV, they should be made aware of the risks of vibration prior to first exposure, or at least within the first week of employment. This can be done when given health and safety induction; at the same time asking them to complete the initial health assessment form for return to Occupational Health.

## **Maintenance of Equipment**

In order to minimise the deterioration of equipment, items should be inspected and serviced on a regular basis. Advice from the supplier/manufacturers should be taken into account. There may be certain routine checks or preventative replacement of parts require, in which case these should be carried out at a set frequency.

Individual users must be made aware that if at any point they feel a machine performance has deteriorated in terms of vibration, they must report it at the earliest opportunity so that further investigations can be made.

## **Monitoring Exposure**

Where it has been identified that exposure to vibration is likely to take place, monitoring of that exposure must be undertaken. Specific monitoring equipment should be used to monitor exposure and allow calculation using the HSE points system. Action should be taken where 100 points on the system is achieved.

## **Health Surveillance**

Health surveillance is carried out by the Occupational Health Services and is mandatory for the employees who are regularly exposed to vibration above the EAV. Health surveillance is also offered to those exposed below the EAV if they are at increased risk e.g. if they report a pre-existing diagnosis of HAVS or any other condition which affects circulation or nerve conduction such as diabetes, carpal tunnel syndrome etc.

Health surveillance will involve:

- Initial health questionnaire prior to or very soon after first exposure.
- Face to face follow up where required
- Annual assessment questionnaire sent out to certain individuals by Occupational health
- Face to face review- this will be arranged if the questionnaire reveals symptoms or if an individual reports symptom between health surveillance questionnaires, or every 2 years otherwise.
- All individual records are held confidentially as medical records. Where appropriate, summary of result for groups of employees will be reported back to a manager and Corporate Health and Safety to indicate the effectiveness of vibration control. Specific recommendations may be made to a manager where an individual employee requires alteration to their duties to protect against HAVS. This information will be provided to Corporate Health and Safety to confirm implementation of any alterations required.

## **5) Responsibilities**

### **Health and Safety Level One Managers**

The Chief Executive Officer is the person ultimately responsible for ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation. Ynys Mon County Council should ensure compliance with this procedure and apply the Vibration Procedure within their service area.

### **Health and Safety Level Two Managers**

Level two managers should ensure that where their staff are exposed to hand-arm and whole body vibration that appropriate health & safety arrangements are in place within their own service to implement the Hand-arm & Whole Body Vibration procedure. They should on a regular basis monitor and review these arrangements within their service.



This will include, where possible, the standardisation of hand-held tools, equipment and plant used, e.g. same manufacturer and model. Level two managers will ensure arrangements are in place to ensure that staffs at risk from vibration are provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and health surveillance.

### **Health and Safety Level Three Managers**

Level three Managers are responsible for identifying within the general vibration risk assessment process if their staffs are exposed to hand-arm and whole body vibration as identified above.

### **Employees**

Employees will take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, other employees, persons in the care of the Council and those affected by their work. In addition they will:

- Use hand tool and equipment correctly or in accordance with the information, instruction and training received;
- Bring to the attention of their Line Managers, any deficiencies or problems in relation to adhering to, or the implementation of the safe systems of work;
- Immediately inform their Line Manager of any concerns regarding their health that may be affected by the exposure to vibration;
- Carry out routine maintenance requested of them by their Line Manager on the hand held tools, equipment or plant;
- Inform the Line Manager of any vibrating hand tool, equipment or plant that does not have a 'Hand Arm Vibration Data' tag;
- Attend any Occupational Health appointments arranged on their behalf, where health surveillance is required.

Employees must report any health problems or any signs of injury that could be linked to their job or could affect how they work to their line manager.

### **Further Information**

For further information contact the Corporate Health and Safety Team on 01248 752820.