

Introduction

Health and Safety and the Police Service

By its very nature the work of the Police service has always been hazardous. Police Officers are frequently exposed to risks, whether it is in operational situations, on station e.g. custody suite or during training.

It is a reality that each year a number of police officers are injured, some seriously and occasionally some make the ultimate sacrifice in their service to the public.

Whilst some senior officers may see health and safety as another bureaucratic burden that gets in the way of doing the job, there is no doubt that these officers need to care for those under their command.

This guidance has been prepared with a view to enabling the police to meet their moral and legal obligations or 'duty of care' to all their employees and other persons who may be affected by their work.

Effective Health and Safety Management

Within any emergency service the effectiveness of any arrangements to comply with the law on health and safety will amongst other things, depend on:

- The policy and objectives set by the Chief Officer/Constable, Chief Executive
- The commitment of individual managers throughout the service to achieving those objectives within the service safety management plan.

From the outset Police service managers should understand that:

- Like any other command or management function, the main responsibility for health and safety rests with them as managers
- The responsibility should not be delegated to advisers, despite the importance of their role as professionals in the field
- Managers can be held personally responsible for failures to control health and safety.