



Lone Working



In Safety terms, **Lone working** doesn't just mean working alone. A lone worker is a member of staff who, for significant periods of their working time, is engaged in activities that place them in a situation without direct contact with other staff or railway colleagues, or without direct supervision.

Some examples of this include only one person on the premises, e.g. site security or people working separately from others, e.g. line-side investigators and surveyors.

Why it matters

- Lone workers are more vulnerable to the consequences of risks, such as slips, trips and falls, health emergencies or aggressive behaviour from the public
- In the last 12 months, over 200 incidents involving lone workers were reported across the rail industry
- Without immediate support, minor incidents can escalate quickly, and it is imperative that help can be provided when needed
- Lone workers may delay reporting issues or feel isolated, which can impact wellbeing and safety
- Empowering lone workers with the right tools, behaviours and support is essential to keeping everyone safe.

Top risks

- Medical emergencies
- Violence or aggression
- Slips, trips and falls
- Equipment failure
- Fatigue or stress.



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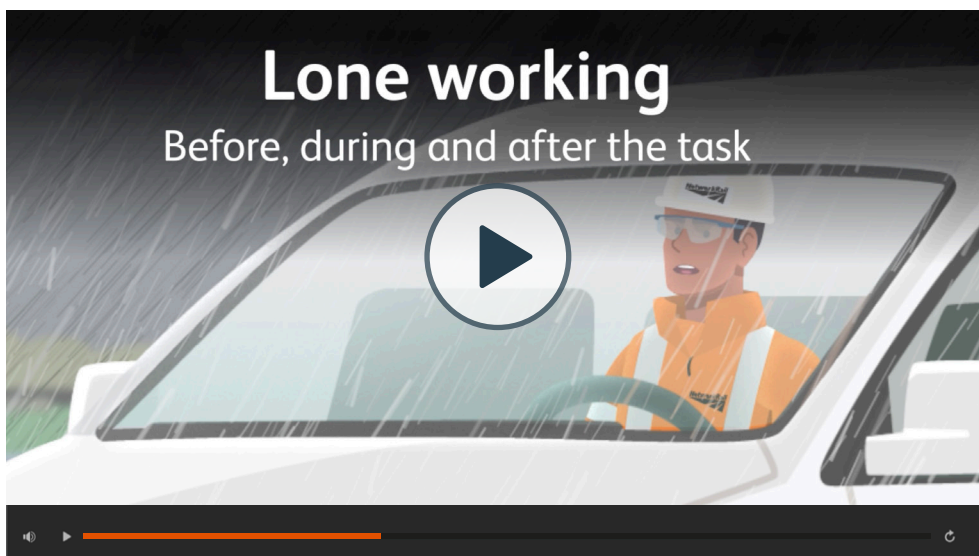


What to do



Lone working – before, during and after the task

Select the play button below to see the key points.



Key points

Before you start

- **Conduct a risk assessment and create an emergency response plan:** Ensure a lone working risk assessment has been completed and is up to date, and that the emergency response plan is suitable and sufficient
- **Plan your work:** Know where you're going, what you're doing, and how long it should take
- **Personal responsibility:** Ensure you are adequately rested and fit to work, and that any existing medical concerns are noted in the emergency plan
- **Check in:** Let your line manager or buddy know your location and expected return time.



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What to do



During lone working

- **Stay connected:** Keep your phone or radio charged and on you at all times
- **Be situationally aware:** Continuously assess your surroundings for new or changing risks
- **Use PPE and equipment properly:** Follow all safety procedures as if you were being observed
- **Unexpected hazards:** If necessary, conduct a dynamic risk assessment, and prioritise your personal safety.

After the task

- **Report any issues:** Log incidents, close calls or concerns, as appropriate
- **Check out:** Confirm with your contact that you've finished safely.

Controls to consider

- Use of lone worker devices or apps, such as Safe Hub
- Scheduled check-ins or buddy systems
- Training in conflict resolution and emergency first aid
- Clear signage and lighting in remote areas.

T.I.L.E. for lone working

- **Task** – What's being done? Is it high risk?
- **Individual** – Are they trained, fit and confident?
- **Location** – Is it remote, poorly lit or hazardous?
- **Environment** – Weather, time of day and access to help?



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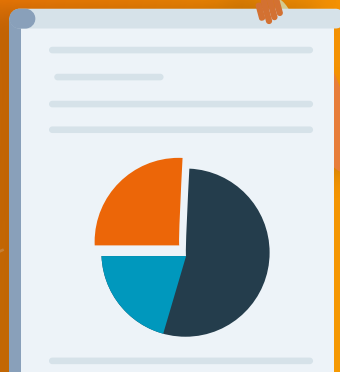


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What to do



If you are a lone worker...

Do

- ✓ Check in at the start of your shift so people know you are at work today
- ✓ Prepare well for your shift, wear relevant PPE, check weather conditions in advance, bring a source of hydration, wear any medical alert info that might apply
- ✓ Make sure you have full phone battery and a map function to where you are going (if you are leaving your base)
- ✓ Download Safe Hub from the app store, updated with the latest software version
- ✓ Consider carrying a personal alarm, available from procurement
- ✓ Communicate any changes to plan.

Don't

- ✗ Don't work alone in a confined space or substation
- ✗ Don't do something you don't feel comfortable with or haven't been trained to do
- ✗ Don't use the wrong equipment for a job because it is easier than going to get the right ones
- ✗ Don't leave your phone in the office or car; carry it with you
- ✗ Don't deviate from your schedule without informing your work.

Remember...

- Identify the hazards
- Implement controls
- Review regularly.
- Assess the risks
- Communicate clearly



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Resources



Questions to consider

- 1** **Is there a relevant Work Activity Risk Assessment in place?**
Think about how conditions, location or time of day might change from what has been assessed.
- 2** **Do I have a clear and reliable way to maintain communication while working alone?**
Have I tested my radio, mobile device or lone worker system? What will happen if I cannot be contacted?
- 3** **Have I informed the right people about where I'll be, what I'm doing, and how long I expect to be there?**
Consider whether your team, controller of site safety (COSS) or line manager are aware.
- 4** **Do I know what to do – and who to contact – in case of an emergency or unexpected situation while working alone?**
Have you reviewed the emergency plan for your current location or task?
- 5** **Have I recognised any signs of fatigue, stress or distraction that could impact my ability to stay safe while working alone?**
Reflect on your physical and mental readiness to work without immediate support.

Resources and support

HSE Lone Working
Guidance:
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/lone-working>

Speak to your local HSE
team for support

[Safe Hub – User guide](#)

Occupational Health & Wellbeing – speak
to your Regional OHS Specialist

Safety Event System (for reporting
hazards while working alone) – [Safety
Events Reporting – Home](#)



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