




WHS&E - Working In Isolation Policy and Procedures

STATEMENT

The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of South Australia Incorporated (PQSA) is committed to providing all workers, so far as is reasonably practicable, with a healthy and safe workplace, free from injury and health risks.

This policy provides guidance to PQSA/HomeCare+ management and staff for the development of safe systems of work to reduce the likelihood of injury from risks associated with remote or isolated work.

Approved by: 	Date: April 2015
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The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc.(PQSA) is incorporated under the *Association Incorporation Act 1985 (SA)* and conducts its business through operating Divisions, namely Support Services and HomeCare+.

SCOPE

Compliance with this policy is a condition of appointment for all persons engaged to provide services on behalf of PQSA.

DEFINITIONS

Client – A person who receives services from any division of PQSA.

Duty of Care - The obligation of a person not to be careless or negligent and to exercise reasonable care in the conduct of an activity.

Incidents – Something that happens an individual occurrence or event.

Isolated Work - As defined in the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 when a person works on their own:

- In an area that is isolated from the others because of the time, location or nature of the work; **AND**
- Operates / maintains plant, handles hazardous substances or performs other dangerous work.

Health – Refers to the physical and psychological health of a worker.

Manager – A person who is charged with the management or direction of The Paraplegic and Quadriplegic Association of SA Inc and its Divisions including PQSA/HomeCare+ and other divisions as determined from time to time.

Must – Indicates a mandatory action required by law, industrial instrument, or an Association policy or procedure.

Nominee - A person named to act for a manager.

Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU). – For the purpose of this policy refers to PQSA and its Divisions PQSA/HomeCare+

Should – Indicates a recommended action that should be followed unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

Worker – Is a person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking including work as an worker, contractor or subcontractor, an worker of a contractor or sub-contractor, an worker of a labour hire company, an outworker, apprentice or trainee, or a student gaining work experience, or a volunteer.

Reasonably Practicable – In relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is ,or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:-

- The likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned occurring; and
- The degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk; and
- What the person concerned knows, or ought to reasonably know, about –
- The hazard or the risk; and
- Ways of eliminating or minimizing the risk; and
- The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimize the risk; and
- After assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimizing the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimizing the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Reasonable – The appropriate standard or quality of objective decision-making that must be brought to bear when making an administrative decision.

Regional South Australia - Districts outside the Adelaide Metropolitan area, that have a county telephone prefix commencing 85, 86, 87 or 88.

Reporting – Is an account or statement given either verbally or in writing with the specific intention of relaying information or recounting certain events in an objective manner.

Workplace – Is a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary duty of PCBU is to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of workers (and others like clients and customers) is not put at risk from the conduct of the business or undertaking.

This duty-essentially the same as previously existed- requires PCBUs to provide:

- A safe work environment
- Safe plant and structures
- Safe systems of work
- Safe use and handling of plant, structures and substances
- Adequate facilities to support the welfare of workers
- Information, training, instruction and supervision
- Monitoring of the health of workers and conditions at the workplace to prevent illness or injury of workers.

Managers, in consultation with workers and their representatives, are responsible for:

- Identifying situations where workers and others will be working in isolation.
- Assessing risks associated with any activities that involve working in isolation.
- Determine under which conditions working in isolation is permitted and which types of duties may be conducted while working in isolation.
- Preparing and keeping up to date a register of the names and / or positions of those who are permitted to work in isolation.
- Develop an appropriate, reliable and regular system of communication, which must ensure:
 - A suitable means of communication is provided to workers working in isolation. (e.g. mobile phone, personal alarms).

Workers are responsible for:

- Conducting themselves appropriately to protect their own health and safety.
- Informing their Manager/Supervisor of any unsafe situations, conditions or procedures.
- Complying with instructions of Managers/Supervisors in relation to working alone or travelling in regional South Australia.
- Ensuring that their Manager or Nominee is informed of their location, activity, contact details and duration of activity if required to work alone or travel in regional South Australia.
- Maintaining regular contact with an identified contact person according to a pre-arranged schedule.

The Work, Health, Safety and Environment Committee will:

- Monitor statistics pertaining to incidence of injury, illness, and violence as a consequence of working alone or travelling in regional South Australia.

POLICY

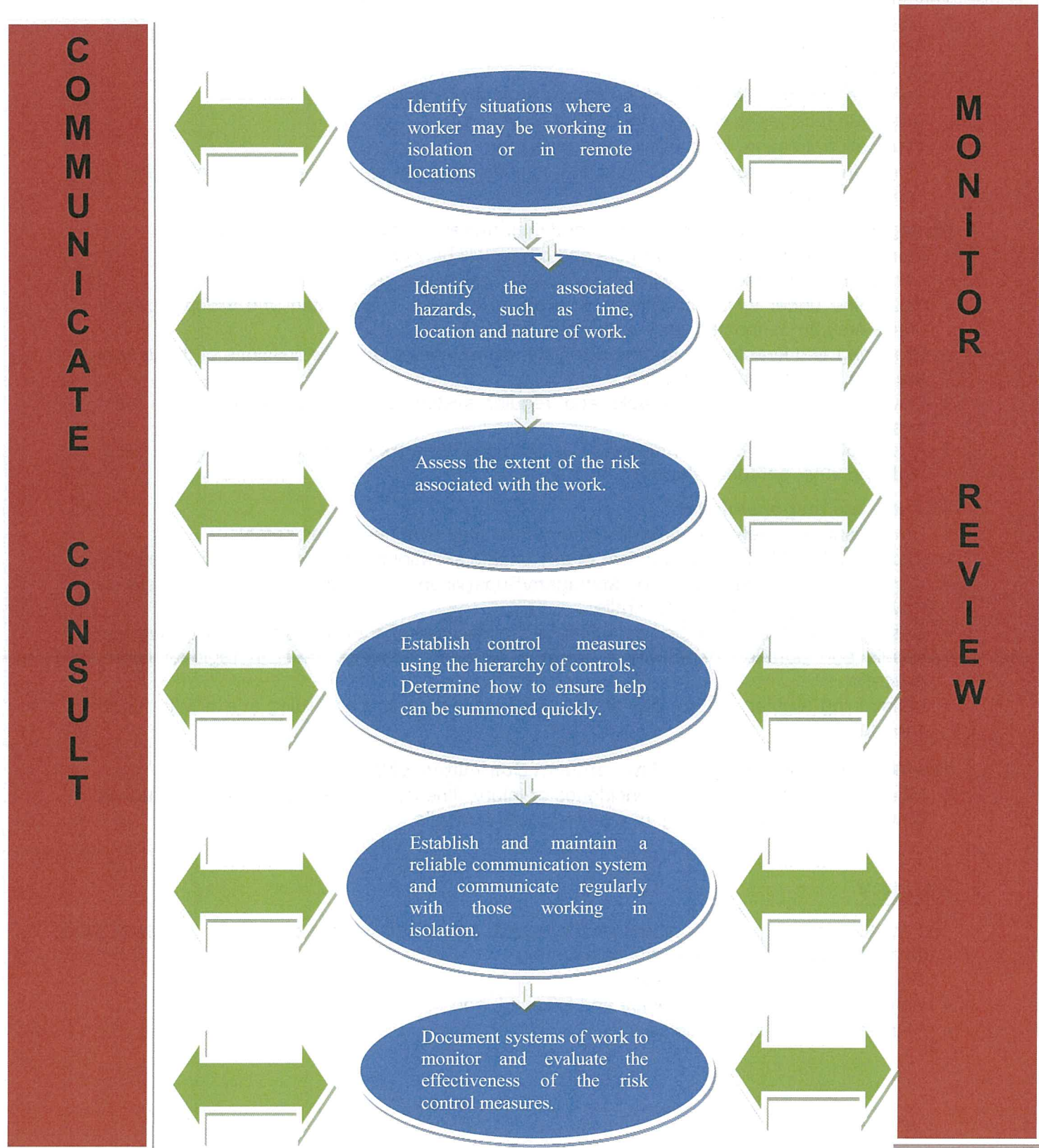
The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of workers who work alone or travel in regional South Australia by ensuring:

- Regular communication is made
- Safe work processes are in place and followed; and
- First Aid facilities are available.

PROCEDURES

A worker who works in an isolated environment is at greater risk of being subject to violence, and is distant from others able to provide assistance in the event of illness or injury. Therefore, it is essential that there are systems in place to provide workers working in isolation with adequate, reliable and regular communication.

Risk Assessment – Working in Isolation



Working Alone – Office Workers

All workers working alone in a PQSA/HomeCare+ office outside normal office hours (Monday – Friday 0830 – 1730 hrs) are to ensure:

- Written approval from a Manager is sought and completed and it can be in the form of an email.
- Written approval by a Manager is to remain on record in the Managers office.
- Where a premise is monitored by a security firm, the security firm is to be contacted prior to commencing the afterhours work. The security firm must be advised of the time the worker will be entering the premises and the expected duration of stay.
- They log into their computer at the commencement of work and log out at the completion of work.
- They communicate with their Manager or nominee either by phone call or SMS message at the commencement of the shift and again at the completion of their shift.
- All exit and entry doors are to remain locked.
- No unauthorised entry is to be allowed to persons not employed by PQSA/ HomeCare+ without prior written approval from a Manager.
- At the end of the afterhours work, where necessary, the security firm is notified that the premises has been vacated and secured.

If a worker suffers an injury or illness while working alone and is able to use the telephone, contact is to be made immediately with their Manager or nominee.

Workers are to maintain contact with the Manager or nominee every four (4) hours. If contact is not made half an hour after the expected time, the Manager or nominee is to attempt to make contact with the worker working alone in the office. If the contact is unsuccessful, the Manager or nominee is to arrange an immediate visit to the office. When in doubt the Manager or nominee is to contact emergency services to meet them at the office. At no time is a Manager/nominee or worker to put themselves at risk of harm.

Emergency Procedures for workers working alone:

- Contact Emergency Services, 000 (if required).
- Immediately contact Manager or nominee.
- Manager or nominee to contact the Chief Executive Officer.
- Incident Report to be completed by worker and Manager/nominee.
- Investigation and follow-up of the incident to be undertaken by Manager.

Administrative Workers travelling in regional South Australia

- Workers undertaking a planned trip in regional South Australia are to:
- Complete Travel Request Form and seek approval from their Manager or Nominee.
- Maintain contact with the Manager or Nominee every four (4) hours or at a pre-determined time/location.

At the commencement and completion of travel, workers are to contact their Manager/Nominee or the office:

- To log departure time.
- To log arrival time.

Managers or their nominee are to ensure workers travelling in regional South Australia for work purposes:

- Have a contactable mobile phone.
- Have an up to date First Aid Kit.
- Have a regional map.

If contact is not made by the worker travelling in regional South Australia after four (4) hours or the anticipated arrival time, the Manager or nominee is to commence contacting the worker by mobile phone, at the conclusion of half an hour if contact is not made emergency services are to be called and details of the last contact are to be given.

In an emergency situation the Manager or their nominee are to:

- Contact Emergency Services, 000 (if required).
- Contact the Chief Executive Officer.
- Complete an Incident Report.
- Investigation and follow-up of the incident to be undertaken.

Workers required to attend an emergency call out in regional South Australia between the hours of 2100 – 0600 hours are to:

- Log the call, time and place in the Emergency Support Worker Logbook.
- Contact the closest twenty-four (24) hour cluster site in the Adelaide Metropolitan area or a regional nominated number (numbers to be provided by Manager).
- The Worker will supply to the cluster or nominated worker, the time they will be leaving, their destination, route, contact number and an anticipated arrival time.
- Upon arrival they will call the cluster or nominated worker and log their arrival time.
- When leaving the property the worker will call the cluster site or nominated number and log the time they will be leaving, their destination, route, contact number and anticipated arrival time.
- Upon arrival at their destination the worker will contact the cluster site or nominated worker and report their arrival.

Cluster site or nominated worker will:

- Record the information received from the Worker in the After Hours Emergency Call Out Register.
- If the Worker has not called within half an hour of their anticipated arrival time the Cluster site or nominated worker is to call the Worker on the mobile phone number provided.
- If answered they are to record why the Worker has not arrived and a revised arrival time entered in the comment column of the Register.
- If the Worker is not answering their phone after the first attempt, a second attempt is to be made within ten (10) minutes of the first call.
- If there is still no response from the Worker the Cluster site or nominated worker is to contact the After Hours Supervisor and log the Incident.
- The Cluster site or nominated worker is to continue trying to make contact with the Worker by re-dialling their contact number until advised to stop by the After Hours CSO or a Manager
- The Cluster site or nominated worker is to complete an Incident Report Form

The After Hours Supervisor if contact is not made with the Worker after one (1) hour of the anticipated arrival time is to:

- Contact Emergency Services, 000 (if required).
- Give full details of the Incident, Support Worker details, contact numbers, route taken, anticipated time of arrival and follow call times.
- Complete an Incident Report.
- Manager is to contact the Chief Executive Officer.
- Investigation and follow-up of the incident to be undertaken.

RELATED LEGISLATION

- ◆ Work, Health and Safety Act (SA) 2012
- ◆ Work, Health and Safety Regulations 201
- ◆ SafeWork SA Safeguard – Keeping Staff Safe In Remote And Isolated Locations.

SUPPORTING PQSA DOCUMENTATION

- ◆ Work, Health and Safety Management System
- ◆ WHS&E - Drug and Alcohol Policy and Procedures
- ◆ WHS&E – Duty of Care Policy and Procedure
- ◆ WHS&E – First Aid Policy and Procedure
- ◆ WHS&E – Hot Weather Policy and Procedure
- ◆ WHS&E – Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Control Policy and Procedure
- ◆ WHS&E – Working From Home Policy and Procedures
- ◆ Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

A **breach** of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ignorance of these procedures will not generally be accepted as an excuse for non-compliance. Only in extreme circumstances and where such ignorance can be demonstrated to have occurred through no fault of the individual concerned will PQSA accept such an argument.

DISTRIBUTION AND REVIEW

PQSA will ensure all persons engaged to provide services either paid or unpaid will be aware of this policy and will have easy access to it in an appropriate format. All policies are to be reviewed on a periodic basis or when legislation or government policy determines.

