

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

Descriptor	Changes made	Date	Version
Policy first implemented		Sep-16	V1.5
Review no.1	Appendix A added	Nov-16	V2.0
Review no.2	Re-written	Mar-19	V3.0
Review no.3	Minor revisions to sections 5.1, 6.7, 6.9, 6.10 and 6.12	Aug-22	V3.1
Review no.4	Additional definitions included in section 3.0. Updates to section 6.0 to reflect changes in responsibilities and governance arrangements and minor updates to reflect SDS's responsibilities in recognised workplaces.	Aug-24	V3.2

Name of policy being superseded (if applicable)	N/A
Related policies	
Related SOPs	
Related Guidance	
Equality Impact Assessment completed	No
Islands Community Impact Assessment completed	No
Intended Audience	All SDS employees and other parties working for SDS or on our premises.
For publication	Internal and external
Team responsible for policy	Health & Safety
Policy owner contact details (email)	Sam.Jennings@sds.co.uk
Policy due for review (date)	August 2026

Policies should have a clear purpose and perform at least one of the following functions. Please identify all the functions this policy performs.	If statement applies, please mark with an X below
Outline how we allocate limited resources to deliver services or outcomes	
Outline how SDS adheres to legislation, statutory duty etc.	X
Ensure fair and consistent allocation of benefits	
Protect organisational assets, including data	
Define expectations around the employee/employer relationship	
Other (please specify)	

Policy Approvals

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee	21 August 2024
Executive Governance Board	4 September 2024

Policy Sign Off

Damien Yeates, Chief Executive

Chief Executive's Policy Statement

Protecting the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, and third parties who use our services or may be affected by our activities, is fundamental to our culture of everyday leadership.

In line with our ambition to be an exemplar of fair work and an employer of choice, we are committed to managing health, safety and wellbeing at work by:

- putting in place all reasonable measures to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees and third parties;
- demonstrating our commitment to continually improve health, safety and wellbeing performance;
- complying with health and safety statutory and regulatory requirements.

As Chief Executive, I have ultimate responsibility for ensuring health, safety and wellbeing risks are managed effectively across SDS. However, each of us has a personal responsibility for our health, safety and wellbeing at work.

By working together and putting health and safety at the heart of all we do, we can create and maintain a positive culture that keeps our people healthy and safe, and which ultimately contributes to overall wellbeing.

This policy, associated procedures and guidance documents provide the essential safety management framework to guide us in fulfilling our organisational obligations, and those associated with our individual roles.

I am confident that as everyday leaders we will all take the time to familiarise ourselves with, and act in line with our responsibilities.



Damien Yeates
Chief Executive
4 September 2024

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1. Policy summary

The health, safety and wellbeing policy establishes our expectations for how health, safety and wellbeing risks will be managed to ensure that SDS can meet its legal obligations. It also sets out roles and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing.

2. Strategic context

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 contains an explicit requirement for organisations with five or more employees to produce a written health and safety policy setting out their arrangements and responsibilities for managing health and safety. SDS chooses to go beyond what is legally required, by including in our policy a commitment to protect and promote employee wellbeing.

3. Definitions

Accident: A work-related event during which injury, ill health or fatality occurs.

Competent person: Someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience in relation to health and safety including knowledge of legal and regulatory requirements.

Management Teams: People managers who line manage other people managers.

Incident: An adverse work-related event in which an injury, ill health or fatality did not occur. *Note: This definition is in the context of health, safety and wellbeing. Other definitions may apply in other contexts, e.g. business continuity.*

Near miss: A type of incident where injury, ill health or fatality could have occurred, but did not actually occur.

Work-related ill health: Adverse physical or mental condition; must be identifiable and caused or aggravated by a work activity or a work situation.

Premises H&S Responsible Person: In Public Access Centres, this will be the Team Leader(s). In SDS buildings where multiple teams/departments are based, this will be discussed and agreed with the relevant service area management.

Risk assessment: A careful examination of what, in work, could cause harm to people to determine whether current precautions are adequate, or if more should be done to prevent harm.

SDS recognised workplace: Any place, other than home where SDS reasonably expects an employee to carry out work. This includes SDS offices, public access centres, schools, community venues or partner sites.

SDS building – Offices, public access centres and other buildings which are controlled and managed by SDS.

4. Scope

The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy (the Policy) applies to all employees. In addition, the Policy extends to non-employees such as contractors engaged to deliver services on our behalf, those who use our services and other parties who may be affected by our activities.

5. Policy detail

- 5.1 We will implement a health and safety management systems aimed at legal compliance as a minimum, and take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that:
 - our health, safety and wellbeing risks are identified and eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level;
 - SDS recognised workplaces are safe and healthy environments;
 - any work equipment provided is maintained; and
 - wellbeing is considered alongside health and safety.
- 5.2 We will consult with our employees and recognised Trades Unions, and encourage their commitment to and engagement in health, safety and wellbeing matters.
- 5.3 We will have a Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee with a remit to monitor and review this Policy and our health, safety and wellbeing performance, to ensure risks are being managed effectively.
- 5.4 We will set objectives to continually improve our health, safety and wellbeing performance.
- 5.5 We will provide adequate resources to meet our health, safety and wellbeing objectives.
- 5.6 We will define and communicate the roles and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing, including for Health & Safety Coordinators.
- 5.7 We will provide suitable information, instruction, training and supervision.
- 5.8 We will have first aid and emergency response arrangements in place to minimise the impact of accidents and incidents on our employees and services.
- 5.9 We will report and review all incidents, including injuries, work-related ill health and near misses, to minimise the likelihood of a recurrence, engaging with our recognised Trades Unions where appropriate.
- 5.10 We will regularly review our health, safety and wellbeing performance, including carrying out compliance checks, to drive continuous improvement and will regularly report on performance.
- 5.11 We will comply with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements, including approved codes of practice.
- 5.12 We will develop health, safety and wellbeing procedures and guidance to support our employees in meeting the requirements of this Policy.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Board

The SDS Board has responsibility to ensure adequate funding and resources are provided to effectively implement the Policy. Collectively, the role of Board Members is to support the implementation of the Policy and to consider the health, safety and wellbeing implications of all business decisions referred to them for approval.

6.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for ensuring health, safety and wellbeing risks are managed effectively and will provide effective leadership and direction for the implementation of this Policy. The Chief Executive will make sure, via the Director of Human Resources' input to Executive Governance Board (EGB), that responsibilities are met and that adequate resources are made available to enable this Policy to be implemented.

6.3 Director of Human Resources

The Chief Executive has nominated the Director of Human Resources as the responsible officer for implementing this Policy. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for:

- Providing assurance to the Board that SDS is fulfilling its health, safety and wellbeing obligations;
- Reporting on health, safety and wellbeing performance at least biannually into EGB; including on the effectiveness of governance and assurance processes;
- Advising EGB on current and future health, safety and wellbeing requirements;
- Ensuring that a safety management framework is in place, to enable the appropriate health, safety and wellbeing policies and procedures to be developed, maintained, monitored and reviewed;
- Ensuring that sufficient competent resources are provided to enable the development of the Policy and supporting policies, provision of technical advice and management of incidents;
- Ensuring that appropriate general health, safety and wellbeing information and training is provided to management and employees including training to update and refresh;
- Keeping the Chief Executive, EGB and the Board informed on health, safety and wellbeing performance, and significant incidents and issues;
- Ensuring consultation with employees and our recognised Trades Unions representatives on health, safety and wellbeing matters;
- Ensuring the adequate provision of occupational health services and employee assistance support; and
- Ensuring a suitable and proportionate wellbeing offering is available to employees.

6.4 Directors and Heads of Service

Directors and Heads of Service are accountable for implementation and compliance with the Policy, in respect of all their business activities, across their Directorate/ areas of responsibility. Directors and Heads of Service have a responsibility to:

- Demonstrate visible commitment to health, safety and wellbeing;
- Provide leadership for health, safety and wellbeing; promoting health, safety and wellbeing proactively throughout their Directorate/areas of responsibility, and championing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives;
- Ensure adequate resources are provided to effectively implement this Policy;
- Ensure health, safety and wellbeing roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are communicated, understood and executed in their Directorate/areas of responsibility;
- Ensure governance processes and oversight for health, safety and wellbeing are effectively executed in their Directorate/areas of responsibility;
- Ensure consultation in their Directorate/areas of responsibility with employees, and where appropriate, our recognised Trades Unions, and encourage their commitment to and engagement in health, safety and wellbeing matters;
- Review health, safety and wellbeing performance on a regular basis, directing action where required; and
- Assure their governance board that the Policy is fully complied with.

6.5 Management Teams

Responsible for overseeing all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the Policy within areas under their control, to support the Directors/Heads of Service in the execution of their accountabilities for health, safety and wellbeing. Responsible for:

- Ensuring health, safety and wellbeing risks are assessed and eliminated or controlled;
- Ensuring that the required health, safety and wellbeing training is provided to people managers and employees, including induction; and
- Ensuring that a Premises H&S Responsible Person is identified for all SDS buildings under their area of responsibility.

6.6 People Managers

People Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that this Policy and supporting policies and procedures are understood and followed by their direct reports and others under their control;
- Ensuring health, safety and wellbeing risks under their management are identified, assessed and controlled, with specialist input from the H&S Adviser and others including Facilities or Occupational Health where required;
- Ensuring that all health, safety and wellbeing training is conducted for their direct reports and others under their control, and records are maintained;
- Ensuring adequate supervision and monitoring of their staff to ensure their health safety and wellbeing;

- Ensuring personal emergency evacuation plans in place for their direct reports and others under their control who may need assistance to safely evacuate an SDS recognised workplace;
- Ensuring they promote the reporting of all accidents and incidents, including near misses, and work-related ill-health, and any hazards, damage or defects;
- Investigating H&S accidents and incidents, with input from the H&S Adviser and others including Facilities or Occupational Health where required; and
- Cooperating with Trade Union H&S representatives and H&S Coordinators.

6.7 Estates and Facilities Team

The Estates and Facilities Team have responsibility for property-related health and safety matters. The Estates and Facilities Team are responsible for:

- Ensuring that health and safety roles and responsibilities are clearly set out and adhered to in lease and sub-lease agreements, including maintenance and repair obligations;
- Ensuring compliance with health and safety requirements including but not limited to statutory obligations relating to asbestos, fire, water, gas and electricity; and
- Ensuring that all persons and contractors engaged in facilities management, security, maintenance, inspection or refurbishment of SDS buildings are competent and aware of their responsibilities in relation to health and safety whilst on SDS property.

6.8 Health & Safety Adviser

The Health & Safety Adviser is appointed by the Director of Human Resources as the primary 'competent person' for health and safety matters. The Health & Safety Adviser is responsible for:

- Defining the content of this Policy, and updating as necessary;
- Defining the content of supporting policies and procedures, and updating as necessary;
- Assisting the Director of Human Resources in defining a suitable and proportionate wellbeing offering;
- Providing guidance, interpretation, learning and other materials as required to help achieve compliance with this Policy;
- Defining the minimum required compliance information / metrics that should be used to continually evaluate compliance, and collating and reporting as appropriate;
- Establishing and implementing a programme of checks to evaluate compliance with this Policy, and recommending action required to meet the required standards;
- Providing support and advice to managers and employees on health, safety and wellbeing matters; including incident investigation; and
- Act as the primary point of contact with external health and safety regulatory bodies.

6.9 Premises H&S Responsible Person

Responsible, in their SDS Building, for:

- Ensuring health, safety and wellbeing risks under their management are identified, assessed and controlled, with specialist input from the H&S Adviser and others where required;
- Ensuring suitable fire safety measures are in place for fire alarm testing and emergency evacuation arrangements;
- Ensuring an appropriate number of trained Fire Wardens;
- Ensuring an appropriate number of trained First Aiders;
- Ensuring an appropriate number of trained H&S Coordinators;
- Ensuring H&S records are maintained and engaging with Property and Facilities Management, including the appointed facilities management contractor; and
- Coordination and cooperation with third parties in shared buildings.

6.10 Employees

Our employees are expected to actively contribute to and participate in achieving our objectives and creating a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture. Employees also have specific responsibilities to:

- Take care of their own health, safety and wellbeing, and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions;
- Cooperate with management and follow instructions, safe systems and procedures;
- Report any hazards, damage or defects relating to SDS recognised workplaces or work equipment provided by SDS as soon as possible; and
- Report any accidents, incidents (including near misses) or work-related ill health immediately via the accident/incident reporting system and assist with any subsequent investigation.

6.11 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee

The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee is SDS's formal consultation forum on health, safety and wellbeing matters. It is made up of representatives from our recognised Trades Unions and representatives from across SDS service areas.

The remit of the Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee is to:

- Provide leadership and oversight of health, safety and wellbeing matters;
- Champion health, safety and wellbeing and foster a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture;
- Review and approve SDS health, safety and wellbeing policies;
- Review and approve SDS health, safety and wellbeing strategy, objectives and initiatives; and
- Review and monitor health, safety and wellbeing performance and compliance with policy, and make recommendations/direct action as appropriate.

The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee members have a responsibility to:

- Promote visible commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing agenda and raise awareness of health, safety and wellbeing initiatives;
- Assist in the development of health and safety policy, procedures and guidance;
- Ensure decisions and actions from the Committee are cascaded to the areas they are representing;
- Ensure that the areas they are representing are updated on health and safety performance and risks and issues relevant to their service area; and
- Ensure the Committee is provided with all necessary health, safety and wellbeing information to enable it to fulfil its remit.

7. Further guidance

Further information on [health, safety](#) and [wellbeing](#) is available on Connect, along with the policies, procedures and guidance documents that support this Policy.