



**INLAND  
WATERWAYS**  
ASSOCIATION

# GUIDANCE NOTE

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*Behavioural  
Safety*

# CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Creating a Culture of Safety</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Influencing Behaviour &amp; Reducing Human Error</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Impact of Change Leading by Example</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Communication Style &amp; Content</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Facilitation, Coaching &amp; Mentoring</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Work Part Composition Training &amp; Competency Intervention Managing the Risk</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Benefits of Health &amp; Safety Discussions</b> .....	<b>12</b>

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## INTRODUCTION

There are rules, regulations, systems, procedures, codes of practice, standards and training requirements in place to support and govern health and safety in the workplace, but these can only be effective if there is a top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top culture of commitment to safe behaviour at all times. Trustees and board members must take an active role in ensuring the importance of health and safety and lead by example. All individuals need to hold safety as a value, not just a priority. They need to demonstrate this commitment through their behaviour in taking responsibility for their own safety, that of other volunteers and any other organisations or individuals that may be affected by the work they are undertaking.

***Creating a culture of behavioural safety is based on:***

- 1 Identifying and making evident, safe and unsafe practices.
- 2 Observing and intervening, where appropriate, to encourage safe practice or to amend unsafe practice.
- 3 Involving volunteers in safety issues and getting their feedback when something doesn't work.
- 4 Making changes to training, process, material and environmental change, as appropriate.
- 5 Recognising safe working practices and supporting good practices.

Behavioural safety represents a proactive process, engaging trustees, board members, leaders and volunteers within a culture of continuous improvement and awareness. Communication at and across all levels of an organisation is vital to the development of a successful and influential strategy.

Historically improvements in health and safety standards have been achieved through engineering technology/controls (plant and equipment) and safety management systems (risk assessments, permits to work) but these will not fully eradicate incidents and accidents.

Understanding how people make decisions and why people act as a consequence is the third element. The biggest gain in improving health and safety performance comes from integrating and understanding the human effect of risk management.

In order to create a behavioural safety culture, consistently high standards of engineering technology/control and safety management systems need to be established.



Effective leadership, management and workforce support is crucial for the success of safety culture. Volunteers respond more positively to peer intervention and volunteer engagement is a fundamental component of any behavioural safety culture.

# CREATING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

Having a culture of safety on your site will make your volunteers feel secure in the knowledge that their wellbeing is being taken seriously. They will feel more comfortable to be in that work environment and are more likely to come back to future work parties.

***Creating a cultures of safety on your site is based on three principles:***

## 1 Involvement

A safety culture is not about creating a fancy policy or clever documents but about involving everybody and having strong, clear leadership. Health and safety is for everyone so it has to involve everyone. It starts with trustees and the board and they have to lead it. It is important that they work with people on the ground doing the job. Involvement requires good communication from the board down to your volunteers, then back from the volunteers to the board. You should make health and safety a high profile and keep it that way. Encourage discussion on site and demonstrate how health and safety is a key part in any project planning.

## 2 Communication

When it comes to communication, those at the top have to take the lead, setting policy and creating documents means nothing if they are not communicated effectively to your volunteers. It's helpful to explain the rationale and background behind the documents and how they fit in with the project. Communication is two-way and it is important to find out how your volunteers feel about your procedures and what they think. Volunteers will learn when other volunteers remind them, not just from their leaders telling them.

A good induction process is used to open up communication and make it a model for future discussion. Make sure everybody understands what is required from them and the role they play.

The induction gives you an opportunity to state what your priorities are and the specific concerns for your site.

## 3 Review

You don't have to get your procedures right first time. You must be open to feedback and allow time to review and audit how effective your health and safety is. You can use feedback to understand what is going wrong and take suggestions from your volunteers to revise your procedures. Actively encourage feedback. Use near miss reporting and health and safety surveys to learn what is going right and what might not be as effective as it should be. Taking advice from your volunteers will make them feel valued.



### ***Stop and think:***

- 1 Do you have a health and safety policy – is it an integral part of your organisation?
- 2 Do you consult with your volunteers on health and safety matters?
- 3 How well do you know what is happening on the ground? Are near misses/accidents being reported?
- 4 Do you do an annual review of your accidents/near misses?

We have created Project Plan and RAMS templates to encourage planning.



Safety is always top priority, volunteers are encouraged to **stop doing a job if they don't feel that it is safe.**



Budget available for safety equipment and training.



**Creating our safety culture...**

Learning from our accidents and near misses and **making changes** to the way we work.



The board **regularly visit the site** and discuss safety matters with volunteers.



**Communication of safety issues** through lots of different medias - newsletter/ social media/training days

**Annual review** of accidents/ incidents which is fed back to volunteers.

Two-way communication - volunteers must feel **comfortable** raising safety concerns with the board.

On-site **toolbox talks** explaining task/or explaining a safe way of working.

Volunteers are actively encouraged to **report accidents & near-misses.**

# INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR & REDUCING HUMAN ERROR

Accidents can be contributed to or caused by people failing to carry out the job correctly, often by not listening or understanding health and safety information.

*People do not make errors deliberately, but errors may occur as a result of:*

- ① Stress or fatigue.
- ② Working long hours without sufficient rest.
- ③ Slipping into autopilot mode.
- ④ A lack of training.
- ⑤ Poor design of equipment.
- ⑥ Poorly maintained equipment.
- ⑦ Unclear procedures, or lack of effective procedures.
- ⑧ Shortcomings in the culture of the organisation.
- ⑨ Poor decision making, even when aware of the risks.
- ⑩ Misinterpretation of a situation or inappropriate action taken.
- ⑪ Poor situational assessment leading to incident escalation.
- ⑫ Bored or disheartened volunteers.
- ⑬ Medical problems.

Often on restoration sites volunteers 'make do' with tools, equipment and materials that are available to hand on the site. Proper planning will ensure that the right tools are supplied in adequate numbers, that equipment and materials are available for temporary works and the methods reflect the plant that is available.



Methods of work change over time and 'old hands' may be used to working to certain methods. Again, proper planning will ensure the current methods have been thought about, but they must be explained to, and understood by, your volunteers - both old, young and new.

Encouraging reporting of incidents and near misses allows the site leader to review what is working and what is not. Your site induction should identify what a near miss is. It is something that happens that could have caused an accident or incident, such as climbing into the hopper of a dumper to retrieve some materials, or scrambling up a steep bank rather than walking to the access point.

Your volunteers may not be used to the tasks they are being asked to carry out because it is different to what they do in their day-to-day life. Make sure they understand what is being asked of them and encourage them to think about their own and others safety.

It can be a natural instinct to 'show off' when trying to impress others. This can lead to your volunteer injuring themselves and should be discouraged. 'Horse-play' is another seemingly innocent activity aimed at having a laugh. There is no room for this on a construction site, which can be a dangerous place.

**Six factors that lead to accidents on restoration sites:**

- 1 **Knowledge:** not aware of hazards, lack of training, ignorance of capabilities/limits and the desire to help out and do some good.
- 2 **Keeness:** the desire to get on and help out, possibly before the planning is complete.
- 3 **Complacency:** it will never happen to me/I've been doing it this way for years.
- 4 **Peer pressure:** new volunteers don't want to look foolish in front of 'old hands'.
- 5 **Right tool for the job:** make do with the equipment you have ... creates unsafe practices.
- 6 **Site management:** site leader tells you to do it that way, unsafe practices the accepted norm on site. 'Just jobs' ... don't put proper plans in place.



**Active failure**

An immediate consequence made by people in situations where there is no room for error.



**Latent failure**

Caused by people removed in time and space from operational tasks, such as designers, trustees and board members. They are generally hidden until they are triggered by an event likely to have significant consequences. Examples include; poor design of workplace, plant and equipment, gaps in supervision, unworkable procedures, ineffective training, ineffective communication, ageing assets, plant, tools and equipment, poor planning and poor information on health and safety incidents.

Human failure can have an immediate or delayed consequence.



## IMPACT OF CHANGE

Change is unsettling at all levels of an organisation and puts the progress of the job, workforce morale and overall performance at risk. People may not see the need for change and feel that they would be disadvantaged by the change. Make sure you explain the reason and rationale behind the change.

## LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Successful implementation of a culture of safety needs to be embedded within the organisation and understood by volunteers and leaders. Leaders are a critical element for the success or failure. They should not be seen to be breaking basic rules as this sends a message that the behavioural safety approach is not being taken seriously.





## COMMUNICATION STYLE & CONTENT

Communication is at the heart of what we do and takes place in many forms. People feel trust when an individual's behaviour and body language is consistent with what is being said, i.e. when 'walking the talk'. It is vital to give any person receiving information the time and space to be able to think and formulate a response, it is the quality in the communication, not the quantity.

*Communication is transmitted and received in three ways:*

- ① What is said (words).
- ② How it is said (tonality).
- ③ Body language (conscious or not).



**The most effective communicators will make sure that the meaning they intend has been received.**

Reflective communication allows the communicator and receiver to draw comments from the other to make sure the message has been understood.



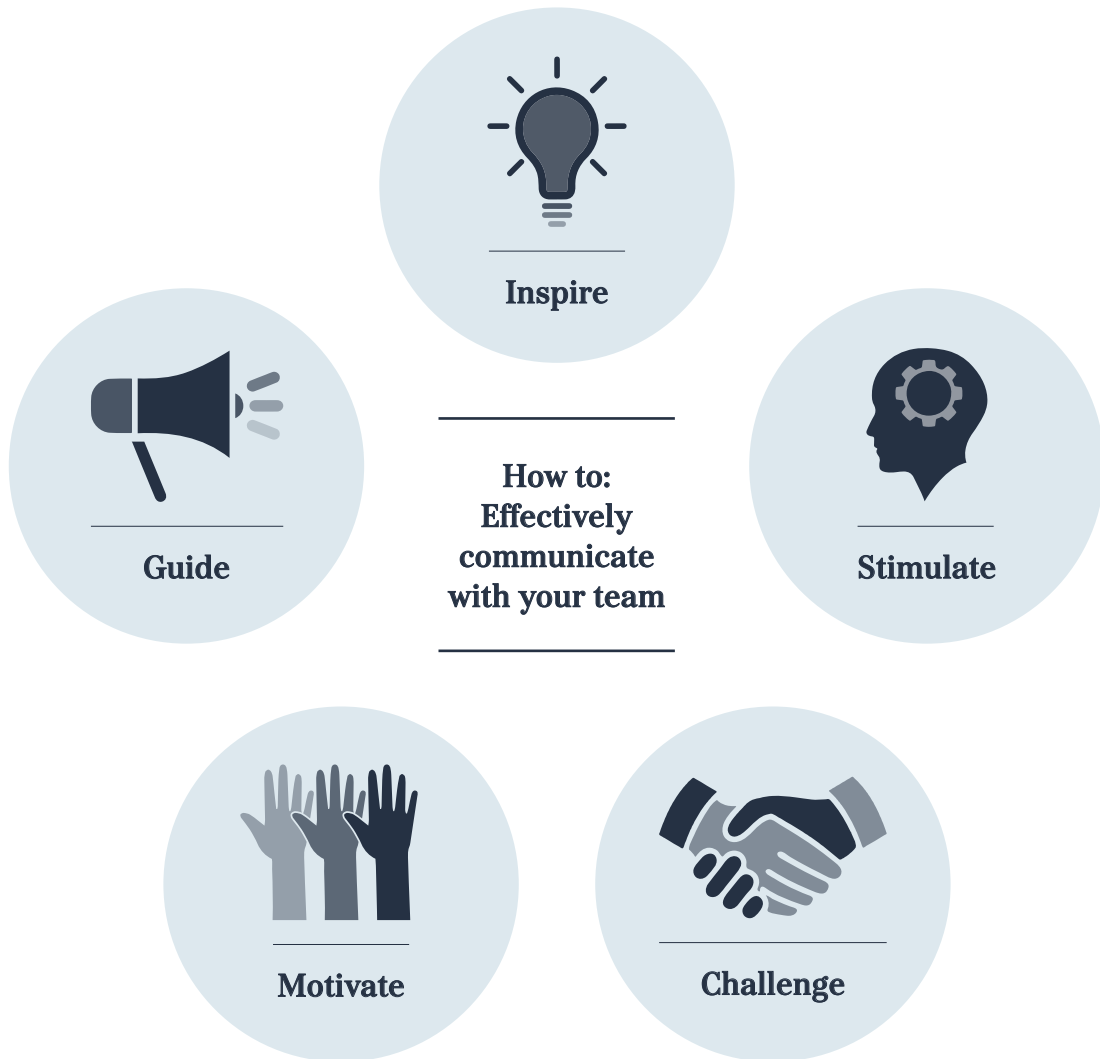
# FACILITATION, COACHING & MENTORING

These are interventions and support mechanisms through which volunteers are encouraged to take responsibility and contribute ideas to the benefit and safety of others. Leaders play an important part and can make a contribution themselves or identify other volunteers with appropriate skills.

**Facilitators** enable groups to work more effectively by collaborating to achieve results, they do not take sides or express or advocate a point.

**Coaches** inspire, motivate, challenge, stimulate and guide individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and techniques to perform effectively.

**Mentors** provide long term support. Guidance and advice and is more informal than coaching. Mentoring has a focus on personal development.



## WORK PARTY COMPOSITION MANAGING THE RISK

Operating without sufficient volunteers with the right competence and experience can result in significant risk to the work party. The make-up of the work party may be different day-to-day or week-to-week and the leader will need to assign tasks appropriately to reduce the risks.

### TRAINING & COMPETENCY

It is essential when managing change that a training and competency assessment is made and shortcomings are identified and addressed.

*Workforce is more effective and efficient if it is:*

- 1 Motivated and well trained.
- 2 Not under any unreasonable time pressures.
- 3 Given the correct information, instruction, training and supervision.
- 4 Working with the right, well maintained equipment.



### INTERVENTION

Intervention by leaders when they see an unsafe act is crucial in order to show commitment to, and support for, behavioural safety. Volunteers should not be made to feel intimidated when they point out unsafe acts.

The acceptability of risk is influenced by a number of factors and an informed decision requires access to information held within the safety management system.

*Factors include:*



#### Cost

Safety is compromised by the available budget, but it costs far more to investigate an accident than to provide safe working conditions in the first place.



#### Controls

Ownership of health and safety controls should lie with those at the place of work in order to provide a safe working environment.



#### Customs

Risks are taken because work has always been done that way.



#### Conditions

An increase in overall errors and more serious errors occurring when volunteers are put at risk due to conditions changing, such as longer working hours, environment, weather, tight timescales, lack of resources, workload, fatigue, stress or an ageing workforce.



#### Consequences

The consequences of something going wrong are rarely evaluated. Often the thought process is 'if it hasn't happened yet, it won't happen'.

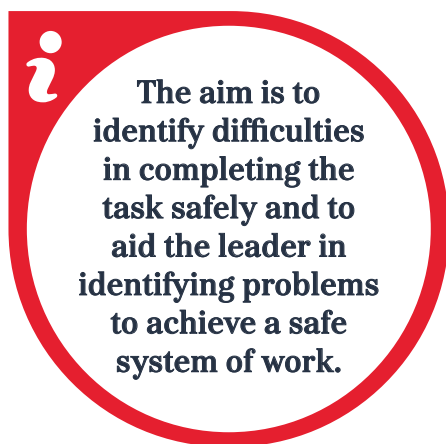


#### Benefit

Consider the benefits from taking a short cut, such as an early finish when the job is done.

## **BENEFITS OF HEALTH & SAFETY DISCUSSIONS**

Any safe system of work benefits from frequent and open discussions, with all involved recognising the value of shared ideas and knowledge. All volunteers and leaders can make valid contributions to discussions on behavioural safety.



An example of good practice communication is for leaders to have an informal 10-minute chat with their volunteers at the start of every day. It will help leaders to plan their day as well as improve coordination, consultation, production and safety.

## SHE INSPECTION SHEET

<b>Company Name</b>		<b>Project title</b>				
<b>Location</b>		<b>Contract No.</b>				
<b>Site activities being inspected</b>	<b>Date</b>		<b>Time (24hrs)</b>			
<b>Activity</b>		<b>Employee or contractor(s)</b>	<b>WRG volunteers</b>			
<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Element, checks and records</b>		<b>Comments</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>NC*</b>	<b>NA**</b>
<b>CO1</b>	<b>Corporate image/ information</b>	Compound set up, signage, cleanliness, staff dress, attitude, SHE awards, policies, employer's liability insurance, F10 notification, first aiders, etc				
<b>RA1</b>	<b>Risk assessment</b>	Copy available at site (specific to activity and authorised)				
<b>RA2</b>		Controls identified in place and complied with – risk assessment and method statement review sheet completed				
<b>RA3</b>		Evidence of communication – operatives signed into risk assessment				
<b>MS1</b>	<b>Method statement</b>	Copy available at site (specific to activity and authorised)				
<b>MS2</b>		Controls identified in place and complied with				
<b>MS3</b>		Evidence of communication – operatives signed into method statement				
<b>WH1</b>	<b>Work at height</b>	Prevention of falls from height or falling materials is adequate (e.g. work platforms with suitable edge protection or safety harnesses)				
<b>WH2</b>		Ladder and podium platforms are in good order and free from defects				



GUIDANCE NOTE

<b>L1</b>	<b>Lifting</b>	If lifting operations are in progress, asset tags are legible and intact, checked and valid for cranes, Hi-abs, telehandlers, excavators etc.				
<b>N1</b>	<b>Noise</b>	If noisy operations are in progress, hearing protection is being worn and has been assessed. Measures are in place to prevent activities creating a statutory nuisance in terms of noise				
<b>V1</b>	<b>Vibration</b>	If using equipment that can cause hand-arm vibration, staff are aware of and complying with trigger times				
<b>V2</b>		Measures are in place to prevent activities creating a statutory nuisance in terms of vibration (e.g. traffic flow near properties)				
<b>MH1</b>	<b>Manual handling</b>	If operatives are lifting heavy items, a manual handling assessment is in place – part of activity risk assessment				
<b>PT</b>	<b>Permit systems</b>	Hot works, confined space, permit to dig, permit to load etc.				



Waste / environment		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
<b>E1</b>	<b>Waste (if materials are being taken off site, obtain carrier's name and destination of load).</b>	<b>Material type</b>			
		<b>Carriers details</b>			
		<b>Name of tip</b>			
<b>E2</b>	<b>Environmental issues.</b>  <b>Pollution prevention guidance.</b>	Check waste transfer note is in place			
<b>E3</b>		Registered carrier's licence available			
<b>E4</b>		Copy of tip/transfer station licence available			
<b>E5</b>		Right waste being put in right skip and skips labelled			
<b>E6</b>		Site registered as a hazardous waste producer			
<b>E7</b>		Consignments notes in place for hazardous waste uniquely numbered (rule of 3:producer-carrier-reciever)			
<b>E8</b>		In relation to the selected activity the necessary permissions/licences/consents are in place (e.g. discharge from interceptors)			
<b>E9</b>		Oil/diesel storage are in bunds and no evidence of significant spillages; spill kits; emergency response			
<b>E10</b>		Exemption for recycled materials from the EA (e.g. 19A WRAP)			
<b>E11</b>		Wildlife (tree or ground-nesting birds, bats, badgers, licences etc)			
<b>E12</b>		Public/private nuisance (dust, noise, lighting)			

Workplace		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
W1	Access/egress (suitable and safe, planned, maintained)				
W2	Site security (compound, site, adequately fenced, trespassers)				
W3	Housekeeping (site tidy and kept to an acceptable standard – slips, trips and falls)				
W4	Dust/mud suppression (dust or mud a problem and being adequately controlled, cutting works using dust suppression)				
W5	Site traffic management (signs, parking, fences, traffic plan)				
W6	Lighting (adequate for operations in place, including task lighting)				
W7	Welfare (clean and tidy, cooking facilities are clean, adequate for numbers)				
W8	Pedestrian routes (pedestrians are adequately provided for, suitable public protection)				
W9	Temporary works (inspected, designed, temporary work coordinator, roof protection, falsework, formwork)				
W10	Excavation (fenced, design, safe access, signage)				
People - workforce		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
P1	Personal protective equipment (PPE) correct (mandatory and as identified by risk assessment)				
P2	Evidence of induction – check register at office				
P3	Evidence of training (for example, CPCS, LANTRA, NPL, IPAF, NRSWA, etc)				
P4	Evidence of last toolbox talk and risk assessment briefings				
P5	Behavioural (attitude, knowledge of task, tidiness, equipment, dress, etc)				



Plant equipment and lifting equipment (including fixed installations)		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
PE1	Tools/equipment (daily checks and weekly inspections being carried out by the operator/users)				
PE2	Evidence of statutory inspections being carried out for mobile plant and fixed installations (for example, compressors, mechanical, electrical, asbestos, gas, etc)				
PE3	Drip trays in place when carrying out filler duties (oil and diesel)				
PE4	Availability and location of emergency spill kit				
PE5	Refueling operations controlled				
PE6	Are thorough (e.g 6- and 12-month) examination certificates on file and in date for all lifting equipment and accessories				
PE7	General condition of lifting equipment (check for damage, incorrect use, etc)				
PE8	Electrical equipment has been PAT tested in last three months (check for sticker or tag)				
PE9	General condition (cables, transformers, spider boxes, hand tools, etc)				
PE10	Daily plant operator sheets are being completed and, where defects are noted, repairs done				
Materials		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
M1	Storage of materials (safe, prevent loss, damage or contamination, collapse)				
M2	If hazardous, COSHH assessment available and briefed to workforce				
M3	COSHH controls detailed in assessment are being complied with				
VD users		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
V1	Enough room for each person (11m <sup>2</sup> )				
V2	Desk free from glare, blinds available, artificial lighting (diffuser)				
V3	Self-assessment has been carried out by habitual users				
V4	VDU free from flicker or glare, ergonomic principles have been applied, noise, dust, etc.				

Welfare		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
WE1	Are there sufficient facilities for the people in the area?				
WE2	Is lighting, heating and ventilation adequate in all facilities?				
WE3	Have facilities been cleaned and waste removed?				
WE4	Are drinking water and cups available?				
WE5	Are hot/warm water, soap and towels/hand dryer available?				
WE6	Has appropriate information been posted (first aiders, route to hospital, emergency contact details and site rules, posters policies etc)?				
Fire		Comments	Yes	NC*	NA**
F1	Fire risk assessment and fire-fighting equipment suitable, sufficient and tested				
F2	Fire escape (fire escape routes, disabled person(s) obstructions, lighting, etc)				
F3	Assessment(s) (newly installed materials, petrol, solvents, cylinders, etc)				
F4	Fire prevention (permit systems, debris removal, electrical and test, smoking, etc)				
Weekly SHE inspection action sheet					
To be completed by sampler			To be completed by the person responsible		
item	Problem observed/ comments	Person responsible	Corrective action to be taken	Actioned (initial and date)	



**Weekly SHE inspection action sheet**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
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**Received by site management**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
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**NC\*** - not checked

**NA\*\*** - not applicable



## GUIDANCE NOTE

### USEFUL RESOURCES:

[Reducing Error and Influencing Behaviour](#)

[HSE Human factors – Behavioural safety](#)

[HSE Strategies to promote safe behaviour as part of a health and safety management system](#)

[Introduction to human factors](#)

[WRG video](#)

Sign up to read the full Practical Restoration Handbook and supporting resources here:  
[waterways.org.uk/practicalrestorationhandbook](http://waterways.org.uk/practicalrestorationhandbook)





Historic England

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