

1 PURPOSE

GWMWater is committed to ensuring the health and safety of employees while at work and in particular when working alone or in isolation. This is to ensure that the risk to employees that are required to work alone is minimized as far as is practicable.

Definition:

Working alone applies to any GWMWater employee, including on-call contractors, working on their own; working on their own outside of their normal work zone; or working in isolation.

(a) Working Alone

A person is alone at work when they are on their own; when they cannot be seen or heard by another person and when they cannot expect a contact from another worker for two hours or more.

(b) Working in Isolation

An employee is considered to be in isolation when working alone (as above) and

- a) Outside of town boundaries
- b) On a remote, rarely used road
- c) In, on or near hills or dense bushland and remote from human contact or;
- d) At remote sites near rivers, waterways, channels, lagoons, storages and lakes or;
- e) Where normal mobile communications, i.e. Tablet, Mobile Phone or laptop have limited or no connectivity

2 SCOPE

This procedure applies to all employees and on call contractors of GWMWater who are required to work alone or in isolation.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Executive Manager

The Designated Executive Manager is responsible for:

- a) Ensuring appropriate means of communication are available for all employees or on call contractors working alone or working in isolation.
- b) Enacting the emergency response procedures.

3.2 Divisional Manager/ Area Manager, Coordinator or Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator

The Divisional Manager/Area Manager/Coordinator/Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator is responsible for:

- a) Providing appropriate means of communication for all employees or on call contractors working alone or in isolation.
- b) Ensuring that employees or on call contractors log the location, type of work and expected time of return when working alone.
- c) Being aware of direct staff out working alone when the Area Manager or Divisional Manager finishes their shift.
- d) Enacting the emergency response procedures.

3.3 Employee /On call contractor

Employees and On Call Contractors are responsible for:

- a) Informing the OMC (or the Afterhours call centre if applicable, currently South East Water) of the following details:
 - o Current Location
 - o Intended Location
 - o Expected departure, journey and arrival times
 - o Estimated return time
- b) Immediately notifying OMC (or After Hours Call Centre) or their Supervisor upon becoming aware of a change in circumstances to the above; and
- c) Ensuring that all communication equipment is kept in an operational condition at all times.

3.4 Operations Maintenance Centre (OMC) and After Hours Call Centre (South East Water)

3.4.1 The OMC are to maintain a log that captures the following information for staff or on call contractors working alone or in isolation:

- a) Date of Entry
- b) Employee or On call Contractor Name
- c) Current Location
- d) Intended Location
- e) Estimated return time

3.4.2 The OMC to notify After Hours Call Centre (SE Water) when going off shift, of any staff member or on call contractor working alone or in isolation and contact details, expected time on the job and estimated return time so the After Hours Call Centre (SE Water) can make contact.

3.4.3 The OMC and After Hours Call Centre (SE Water) are responsible for:

- a) Contacting the employee or on call contractor working alone or in isolation after a failure of the employee to contact them by the nominated time; and
- b) Following up with an escalation process of calls starting with the Area Manager or On Call Duty Coordinator after hours until a GWMWater representative is contacted or located.

3.4.4 The OMC will utilise vehicle tracking to monitor the location of all staff movements during work hours. At the end of shift OMC will review and identify any vehicles which are not within work base and have not logged location and timeframes with OMC. The

relevant operators will be contacted to ensure details on working alone log are captured for handover to SE Water.

4 PROCEDURE

4.1 Communications

The Telstra Mobile Phone Network is the main form of communication used and available across GWM Water operational area. Even with the available mobile systems there will still be locations around the region where employees will not have mobile phone communication coverage. In these circumstances employees should make every effort to ensure that their supervisor or the OMC is aware of this situation. There are selected operational staff who are regularly working outside mobile coverage that have access to Satellite phones, these are to be utilised where required to maintain communication with supervisor.

4.2 Vehicle Tracking

OMC will utilise vehicle tracking to monitor the location of all company vehicles, this will enable staff working alone to be located in the event they cannot be contacted. Staff working alone within their normal work area, in normal working hours will not be required to log location with OMC.

4.3 WORKING IN ISOLATION - NORMAL WORKING HOURS

4.2.1 Water Treatment; Wastewater Treatment:

When working in isolation in their normal work area (eg Water Treatment Plant Operator, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator), employees **must**:

- a) Inform the OMC of their work location. If moving to another plant or location inform the OMC prior to moving (eg Water Treatment Plant Operator going from one plant to another)

4.2.2 Regional Operations:

When working alone outside of their normal work area or working in isolation, during normal working hours employees **must**:

- a) Inform the OMC of the work location(s), type of work, and estimated time of return and communication/contact details. For multiple sites the operator must contact the OMC at agreed regular intervals.
- b) Identify if the site and work activity can be conducted safely by only one person. If additional staff are required to access the site or to complete the work, contact your Works Supervisor or Manager. Do not commence any tasks until the required number of additional staff members arrive on site.
- c) Notify their Supervisor or OMC if they must leave site for any reason (eg to pick up materials or equipment) and provide notification upon return.
- d) Complete a SWMS or Hazard Assessment (Job Risk Analysis) and a permit to work where required (e.g. High Risk Work).

4.2.3 Office Staff-includes all normally Office-based staff;

Working Alone or In Isolation - Office employees working in the field

Office employees planning on working alone must:

- a) Ensure that their Manager is informed of the work location(s), estimated time of return and communication/contact details. For multiple locations an estimate of when arriving and leaving from each site must be provided.
- b) Ensuring that the In/Out board on the Wetnet is updated and that it accurately reflects the details required above.
- c) If long distance travel, 2 hours and over, is a requirement, whether going to meet others or not, notify supervisor of departure, location every two hours and on arrival. When a person arrives they may be with other people and not necessarily alone but it is to ensure supervisors are aware they have arrived.
- d) If an extension in time for the job is required Manager must be notified, prior to the nominated completion time.
- e) Complete a SWMS or Hazard Assessment (Job Risk Analysis) and a permit to work where required (e.g. High Risk Work).

If working in isolation, during normal working hours employees must:

- f) Inform their Manager and OMC of the work location(s), type of work, and estimated time of return and communication/contact details. For multiple sites the employee must contact their supervisor at agreed regular intervals
- g) Identify if the site and work activity can be conducted safely by only one person. If additional staff are required to access the site or to complete the work, contact your works supervisor or manager. Do not commence any tasks until the required number of additional staff members arrive on site.
- h) Notify their supervisor or OMC if they must leave site for any reason (eg to pick up materials or equipment) and provide notification upon return.
- i) If an extension in time for the job is required, this needs to be logged with the OMC or the After Hours Call Centre (SE Water) if extending after-hours, prior to the nominated completion time.
- j) Complete a SWMS or Hazard Assessment (Job Risk Analysis) and a permit to work where required (e.g. High Risk Work).

4.4 WORKING ALONE OR IN ISOLATION AFTER HOURS (ALL STAFF and CONTRACTORS)

When working alone or in isolation after hours (e.g. on call) employees must:

- a) Avoid working alone after hours if there are other available alternatives. Assess the need to attend, or whether work may be undertaken the following day.
- b) If attending on site, inform the after-hours Call Centre (South East Water), of the job requirements, location, expected duration of the job and the estimated time of return.
- c) Identify if the site and work activity can be conducted safely by only one person. If additional staff are required to access the site or to complete the work, contact the On

Call Duty Coordinator or Area Manager. Do not commence any tasks until the required number of additional staff members arrive on site.

- d) On completion of the job and returning home the operator is to log this with the after-hours Call Centre.
- e) If an extension in time for the job is required, this needs to be logged with the after-hours Call Centre prior to the nominated completion time.
- f) Complete a **SWMS or Hazard Assessment** (Job Risk Analysis) and a permit to work where required (e.g. High Risk Work).
- g) Not go to areas other than the one associated with the after-hours call out. If you need to change any work details contact the after-hours Call Centre immediately and advise of the change.

4.5 Contractors engaged by GWMWater:

- a) **On Call Contractors engaged in after-hours work in place of a GWMWater Employee for GWMWater must adhere to the above requirements in all instances.**
- b) **External Contractors engaged in after-hours work must have their own Lone Worker Procedure aligned with GWMWater requirements**

4.6 Personal Protective Equipment

Employees who are required to work alone **must** have the following personal protective equipment (PPE) available:

- a) At least two litres of drinking water;
- b) Their safety bag and all of the required contents (refer to safety bag inspection checklist); and
- c) First Aid Kit including the portable Snake Bite Kit.
- d) **Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) are assigned to staff who regularly work in isolation. PLB's are also available at major depots and the McLachlan St office.**

4.7 Emergency Escalation Procedures

The following emergency escalation procedures should be enacted if an employee fails to make contact or return by the nominated time.

4.7.1 Normal Working Hours

The **Area Manager, Divisional Manager, Coordinator or Senior Water Treatment Plant Operator** upon becoming aware that an employee **or on call contractor** working alone has not reported in by the scheduled time; the following must occur immediately:

- a) Contact should be attempted with the employee **or on call contractor**.
- b) **If contact cannot be established then other employees are to be sent immediately to the last known site location to investigate.**
- c) Contact attempts should continue to be made until either contact is successful or the investigating team finds the employee **or on call contractor**.

4.7.2 After Hours

Upon becoming aware that an employee **or on call contractor** working alone has not reported in by the scheduled time, the following must occur immediately:

- a) Contact should be attempted with the employee **or on call contractor** by the after-hours Call Centre
- b) If contact cannot be established then **notification** must be made by the after-hours Call Centre to the relevant **On Call Duty Coordinator**.
- c) If the **On Call Duty Coordinator** is not contactable the Duty Manager must be called
- d) If the Duty Manager is not contactable the responsible Executive Manager must be called.
- e) The GWMWater representative who receives the call from the after-hours Call Centre must then attempt to contact the employee **or on call contractor**.
- f) If contact cannot be established then other employees are to be sent immediately to the last known site to investigate.
- g) Contact attempts should continue to be made by the authority until either contact is made or the investigating team finds the employee **or on call contractor**.

4.8 Emergency Response / Contact Information

If when arriving at site an emergency situation is encountered, the appropriate emergency services should be called and appropriate first aid administered.

- a) For the relevant Emergency Service Dial 000

4.9 Specific tasks that cannot be undertaken alone

There are some specific tasks that must not be undertaken alone and these include:

- a) Confined Space Entry;
- b) Working at Height;
- c) Changing Chlorine Cylinders (Unless wearing BA equipment);
- d) Excavation work greater than 1.5 metres deep; and
- e) Asbestos Cement Pipe removal.

4.10 Working Alone - Fit for Task

Employees **or on call contractors** working alone should be reasonably fit. Employees **or on call contractors** must advise their Manager/Supervisor of any medical condition which may put them at risk if working alone. Medical conditions such as the following may need to be taken into account:

- a) Poor vision or hearing
- b) Cardiac or respiratory impairment
- c) Fits of giddiness or fear of heights
- d) Diabetes
- e) Epilepsy
- f) Allergic reactions (e.g. bee or wasp stings)

4.11 SCADA

Door alarms are to be fitted to all facilities with SCADA to record the arrival and leaving of personnel. This will provide a log of employee movements in the instance they fail to contact or return.

4.12 Training/Induction

Employees **or on call contractors must not work alone** unless they have completed First Aid Level two training and have a current CPR accreditation.

Employees **and on call contractors** must also have a satisfactory level of skill and competency to allow them to undertake the required work alone.

All new employees **and on call contractors** and existing must be inducted in this procedure.

5 DEFINITIONS

Listed alphabetically

After Hours

Is defined for this procedure as:

- a) Between the hours of 5.30pm and 7am **Monday to Friday** (after hours Call Centre operation)
- b) Including weekends and public holidays

High Risk Work

High Risk Construction work includes but is not limited to the following:

- a) If there is a risk of a person falling more than 2 metres
- b) Involving demolition
- c) Involving the removal or likely disturbance of asbestos
- d) Involving a confined space
- e) Involving a trench or shaft if the excavated depth is more than 1.5 metres
- f) On or adjacent to roadways or railways used by road or rail traffic
- g) At workplace where there is any movement of powered mobile plant
- h) In, over or adjacent to water or other liquids where there is a risk of drowning

6 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- a) [Emergency Management Manual](#)
- b) [Health and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- c) [CMS/3288 After Hours Escalation Policy](#)

7 REFERENCES

- a) Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004