



Somerset
Council

HS036 Hand Arm Vibration Policy



Organisation	Somerset Council
Title	HS036 Hand Arm Vibration
Author	Ian Haim
Owner	The Health and Safety Service
Protective Marking	Official – Unclassified
Primary Legislation	<u>The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005</u>

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Policy on a page

This policy is aimed at managers of employees (and the employees themselves) who frequently and regularly use tools or machinery, such as hand-held power tools, hand-guided powered equipment or powered machines which process hand-held materials. These all transmit vibration into the hands and arms of workers and may cause Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS).

Somerset Council (The Council) will conduct its activities so that no one should suffer, new or further harm, as a result of undertaking activities requiring the use of vibrating tools and equipment.

In order to comply with the above, this policy and associated HSG036 guidance document provides the Council's rules that must be followed, the standards to be maintained, and signposts to further guidance. It also highlights the risks to users, clients and the Council and the potential consequences of breaching this policy.

This document will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, Secondees and Volunteers.**

Key Messages

- HAVS is preventable, but once the damage is done, it is permanent.
- Damage from HAVS can include the inability to do fine work and could trigger painful finger blanching attacks.
- Health surveillance is vital to detect and respond to early signs of damage.

This “policy on a page” is a summary of the detailed policy document please ensure you read, understand and comply with the full policy.

Responsibilities

Somerset Council will ensure:

- Compliance with The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.
- It conducts its activities so that no one should suffer, new or further harm, as a result of undertaking activities requiring the use of vibrating tools and equipment.

Directors and Delegated Senior Managers will:

- Provide managers with sufficient information to recognise activities giving rise to significant risks.
- Require managers and supervisors to identify all situations where activities are undertaken by their staff requiring the use of vibrating tools and equipment.
- Ensure that detailed risk assessments are in place to control the effects of all hand- held vibrating tools and, as part of the control measures, ensure that health screening of individuals involved in these cases is carried out.
- Monitor the frequency and nature of incidents reported where HAVS is identified as a factor.
- Follow Somerset Council's policy and HSG036 guidance document for the rehabilitation of employees who report a HAVS condition or wish to return to work following an absence related to HAVS.
- Ensure that persons, who have received appropriate training and hold relevant experience undertake detailed HAVS risk assessments.

Service Managers and those with direct line-management responsibilities for employees undertaking work with vibrating tools will:

- Ensure that health screening of all identified staff is being followed in accordance with Somerset Council's policy guidance HSG036.
- As part of the induction process a risk assessment should be completed to identify employees who require Health Surveillance. When required, HAVS Tier 1 – Initial or baseline assessment questionnaire should be completed within 2 weeks of joining [\(Link to HAVS form prior to publishing\)](#).
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy and HSG036 guidance document as part of the appraisal process and 1:1s between manager and employees.
- Provide information for all employees on using handheld vibrating tools and ways of avoiding health conditions, which may be related to their use.
- Screen task and highlight those situations where the use of vibrating tools exposes persons to significant risk.
- Undertake and record detailed assessments to control the effects of all hand-held vibrating tools.
- Provide formal training using competent instructors for staff, where it is identified in the risk assessments as a necessary control measure.

- Encourage and remind employees to avoid placing themselves at risk.
- Involve their staff in the identification of tasks involving handheld vibrating tools.
- Ensure all employees using vibrating equipment are provided with a copy of the HSE document INDG296 'Hand-arm vibration, A guide for employees.
- Unless alternative arrangements for recording equipment usage are agreed with The Health and Safety Service: Ensure all employees using handheld vibrating tools are using and inputting their daily usage (trigger time) and the tool magnitude data using the hand arm vibration app.
- Ensure a register of tools is developed and maintained. Implementing effective arrangements for routinely sharing the content of this register with the Corporate Health and Safety Service to ensure the accuracy of data held in the app.
- Monitor employee's usage and daily/weekly exposure.
- Read and familiarise themselves with the supporting HSG036 Hand Arm Vibration Guidance.

Employees and Volunteers will:

- Not place themselves at risk, by complying with the control measures detailed in the risk assessment for use with handheld vibrating tools.
- Make sure that their manager has explained any risks to them and that they have been shown how to use the work equipment and any associated personal protective equipment (PPE) properly.
- Input their daily usage (trigger time) and the tool magnitude data using the hand arm vibration app.
- Inform their manager of:
 - Any shortcoming they recognise in health and safety arrangements.
 - Any condition from which they are suffering which affects their ability to perform operations.
 - Any tools they are using which are not included in the hand arm vibration app.
- Conduct daily user check before operating any vibrating tools.

The Health and Safety Service will:

- Offer advice to managers regarding this policy and associated guidance.
- Maintain and communicate this policy.
- Monitor the effectiveness of this policy.
- Review this policy at intervals not exceeding 3 years.

Governance Arrangements

Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's [disciplinary procedure](#).

Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

Responsible	The Health and Safety Service
Accountable	Chief Executive
Consulted	JNF Union Group, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG)
Informed	All members, employees, volunteers & 3rd parties (on request)

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, for instance when there is a change in statutory requirements and/or HSE guidance is revised, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by The Health and Safety Service and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
16/02/2016	Fiona Packer	V1.0	Draft Version
05/05/2016	Fiona Packer	V2.0	Final Revision
10/01/2017	Fiona Packer	V3.0	Final Version
12/07/2018	Fiona Packer	V4.0	Final Revision
10/01/2020	Julie Rutter	V5.0	Updated to incorporate change of OH provider and OH referral procedures

30/07/2021	Daniel Thomas	V6.0	Scheduled 3-year review
15/11/2021	Daniel Thomas	V7.0	Targeted review (see policy changes document for further detail)
07/02/2024	Ian Haim	V8.0	Scheduled 3-year review

Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate Health and Safety Advisor	Daniel Thomas	
Executive Director of Strategy, Workforce, and Localities	Alyn Jones	
HR Committee	Committee	