

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

**April 2018**

## **Part 1: Statement of Intent – Natural Environment Research Centre (NERC)**

UKRI through the NERC Executive Chair, management and staff are committed to achieving and maintaining a high level of Health and Safety (H&S) at work, complying with relevant legislation and continuously seeking to improve our management of H&S. We will strive to provide the effective management of H&S risks at all workplaces and fieldwork sites and ensure co-operation and coordination between management, staff and others. We will discharge our H&S duty of care and legal obligations to students and other non-UKRI personnel who are involved with or may be affected by our activities.

We will produce clear policies, procedures and guidance which will be regularly reviewed and improved to cover UKRI staff and other persons under NERC control wherever they work and ensure a consistent approach throughout NERC that is in line with statutory and UKRI requirements. H&S is a line management responsibility within NERC and UKRI.

The aims will be met by implementing and maintaining an H&S management system that will include:

- Assigning clear management responsibilities
- Planning safety activities and setting clear objectives for improving H&S performance
- Eliminating or reducing risks by implementing appropriate, effective control measures
- Identifying hazards associated with activities undertaken and ensures that the risks are minimised as far as reasonably practicable
- Appointing suitable competent persons
- Providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision
- Regularly reviewing and monitoring our H&S management and performance
- Providing suitable occupational health support and, where necessary, health surveillance
- Learning from experience to continuously improve our H&S best practice
- Promulgating best practice by sharing experiences between UKRI research centres and other external organisations
- Providing and maintaining effective routes of consultation and open channels of communication with our employees and others who are affected by this policy
- Co-operating and co-coordinating activities with other employers who share the same workplace
- Gaining accreditation to ISO 45001:2018 in all research centres where NERC staff are employed.

It will be ensured that there are adequate resources for implementation of this Policy.



**Signed:**

**Professor Duncan Wingham, NERC Executive Chair**

**Date: 01/April/2018**

## Part 2: Organisation for H&S

To ensure that the aims set out in the statement of intent are effective in promoting safe and healthy workplaces and that UKRI employees under the control of NERC are able to comply with H&S legislation, NERC and UKRI policies the following organisational arrangements have been established and responsibilities assigned within NERC.

### 1. UKRI CEO and NERC Executive Chair

**The UKRI Board is ultimately accountable for the health, safety and welfare of all UKRI employees and for the H&S of others who may be directly affected by UKRI's activities. (Ref UKRI H&S Policy)**

**This responsibility for UKRI's compliance with legislation and other regulatory permits is exercised on its behalf by the UKRI Chief Executive Officer**

The UKRI CEO has delegated the responsibility for H&S management through the line management chain to the NERC Executive Chair as set out in the UKRI H&S policy.

The NERC Management Board is ultimately responsible for health and safety performance within NERC. The NERC Executive Chair has a leadership role and a duty to ensure NERC's activities support UKRI's H&S obligations and that NERC Management Board members, Centre Directors and other senior managers take due account of H&S when making their management decisions.

The Executive Chair will

- a) Demonstrate a visible and active commitment to H&S issues both by what they say and by what they do
- b) Ensure appropriate arrangements for managing H&S within their Council are devised
- c) Task their Centre Directors to achieve a high standard of H&S performance
- d) Provide their Centre Directors with clear objectives for H&S performance, which must be part of the Performance Review process.
- e) Monitor the H&S performance of their Centre Directors in respect of their responsibilities
- f) Ensure adequate resources both in personnel and material are made available within NERC so that that UKRI meets its H&S obligations
- g) Ensure health and safety is a standing item on the agenda for NERC Management Board (NMB) and Centre Assurance Board (CAB) meetings

Ensure NMB regularly reviews H&S performance and compliance with legislation

## 2. NERC CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The NERC Chief Operating Officer (COO) is the NMB member appointed by the Executive Chair, with responsibility for H&S policy and assurance, recognising that the actual management of health and safety is via the line management chain. The COO will act as the 'champion' for NERC H&S at NERC board level. The NERC COO will be a member of the UKRI H&S Committee and chair the NERC Health and safety Team. The NERC H&S Advisor will report to the COO.

## 3. DIRECTORS and NOMINATED SENIOR MANAGERS

All NERC Directors have H&S duties as detailed in the UKRI H&S policy and will take a lead role in ensuring that a positive H&S culture is promoted and maintained in their areas of responsibility. Nominated Senior Managers will be appointed by each research centre and Head Office with assigned responsibility for overseeing H&S in their part of the organisation. The Nominated Senior Managers with responsibility for H&S will ensure that the strategic importance of a positive H&S culture is understood in their part of the organisation and that UKRI/NERC Policy, Procedures and Guidance are implemented and followed as appropriate.

## 4. MANAGERS

*A line manager is "any member of staff who supervises at least one other member of staff or co-worker or manages a significant area of work".*

All managers must:

- a. Demonstrate a visible and active commitment to H&S issues both by what they say and by what they do
- b. Identify and assess hazards associated with the operations and activities for which they are responsible, and that appropriate precautions have been put in place for all activities under their control, wherever their staff may work
- c. Consult with staff and co-operate with peers to enable a positive safety culture to be promoted and maintained throughout the organization, ensuring safety training needs are identified for their staff and safety courses attended
- d. Be accountable to their line manager for H&S issues under their control
- e. Ensure all accidents, occupational ill health, and specified dangerous occurrences are investigated and reported to the centre H&S advisor or the UKRI H&S team to ensure that UKRI can meet the statutory timescales for reporting under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)
- f. Ensure appropriate remedial action is taken following incident investigations and learning opportunities are identified and shared
- g. Implement recommendations for improved control of risk and other remedial actions as agreed with senior managers, H&S advisors and other competent staff
- h. Have any H&S responsibilities described in their job plan / description and be assigned objectives on these in their appraisal process if they fulfil an important role.

- i. Ensure safety monitoring checks are carried out and cooperate with any audit programs
- j. Ensure staff have, and correctly use, appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- k. Review H&S performance in their area of control and identify areas for improvement

## **5. STAFF**

All staff, including managers, must:

- a. Take reasonable care of their own H&S and the safety of other persons who might be affected by what they do, or don't do; to co-operate with their employer on H&S issues and not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of H&S
- b. Co-operate with their management to undertake risk assessments and continuously improve H&S standards and performance, and sharing best practice across NERC.
- c. Use machinery, equipment, dangerous substances and safety devices (including personal protective equipment) safely, properly and report any defects, failure or loss
- d. Comply with the requirements of risk assessments and report to their manager as soon as possible if they consider a risk assessment's review or modification is necessary
- e. Report accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences, occupationally related illnesses and occupational health problems to the locally recognised system
- f. Attend safety training as required
- g. Inform their manager, appointed competent person or appointed safety representative of any concerns about H&S
- h. Have any H&S responsibilities described in their job description and be assigned objectives on these in their appraisal process if they fulfil an important safety role.

## **6. NERC SAFETY MANAGEMENT TEAM**

The NERC Safety Management Team (SMT) is responsible for the management and planning of H&S across NERC in line with H&S legislation and UKRI H&S policy. The SMT is comprised of the Nominated Senior Managers with responsibility for H&S from NERC, its research centres and the closely related research institutes who have agreed to abide by this Policy. Each individual SMT member is the Nominated Senior Manager with primary day-to-day responsibility for H&S within their specific area.

The SMT will: advise and assure the Executive Chair, NMB and the Centre Directors on H&S, review H&S performance; oversee the NERC Safety Management System; oversee the Safety Management Group (SMG); provide guidance for NERC competent health and safety persons; consider learning points from significant accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses; report important H&S issues to NMB and, where necessary, to the Centre Directors; set corporate H&S objectives and approve NERC H&S Policy, Procedures and Guidance.

## **7. NERC SAFETY MANAGEMENT GROUP**

The NERC Safety Management Group (SMG) is responsible for advising the SMT and drafting NERC H&S Procedures and Guidance for consideration by SMT, ensuring they are in line with H&S legislation and UKRI policy. The NERC SMG is comprised of the full-time professional H&S Advisors from all components of NERC. In addition, the SMG is to establish, maintain and develop a safety management system, check compliance, plan improvements, monitor performance, review accidents, review audits, identify and implement training.

## **8. NERC CENTRE ASSURANCE BOARDS**

The NERC Centre Assurance Boards (CABs) meet at least twice a year for each research centre to provide assurance to the EC, part of which will be the H&S performance of the centre including reporting on serious H&S risks and responses to, or prevention of, serious or reportable occurrences. The COO, who is the assigned NERC Director with responsibility for H&S, is a member of all CABs. Where the NMB requires actions by research centres with regard to H&S, this will be communicated directly and implementation reviewed via the next CAB or SMT meeting or as appropriate.

## **9. LOCAL SAFETY COMMITTEES**

Local safety committees will be established in each research centre and Head Office and are an important element in meeting the need for consultation with employees and must:

- a. Monitor all aspects of H&S arrangements for the area and activities within their remit
- b. Consider reports from safety advisors, other specialist advisors and (where relevant) other safety committees
- c. Provide the normal route for discussion and consultation on H&S matters between management and employee representatives
- d. Consider and make recommendations for improvements in H&S arrangements in their area and, where appropriate, for consideration by NERC H&S Committee
- e. Meet at least twice a year.

## **10. H&S ADVISORS**

The NERC Corporate H&S Advisor is the appointed competent person for NERC, reporting to the COO and:

- a. Acts as the NERC competent person and 'Head of Profession' for H&S but does not directly manage the centre H&S advisors
- b. Advises and assists directors, managers, safety professionals and staff on H&S
- c. Oversees the implementation and management of the NERC Safety Management System and development of the arrangements for H&S

- d. Provides training for NERC managers and directors on H&S matters
- e. Provides corporate auditing of NERC's H&S performance to provide assurance to the NERC Exec Chair, NERC Council and NMB and UKRI H&S Committee
- f. Chairs the NERC Safety Management Group
- g. Supports the NERC Safety Management Team
- h. Is a member of the UKRI H&S Advisors Committee and the UKRI H&S Consultation Committee
- i. Provides a quarterly comprehensive performance reports to NERC and UKRI H&S Committee
- j. Develops a NERC internal H&S audit program and undertake audits of NERC and where required UKRI H&S management systems
- k. Provide early notification of any H&S matters that might have an impact on UKRI e.g. changes in external regulatory / legislative environment and appropriate incidents, accident trends and rates
- l. Keep the NERC COO and the UKRI H&S Committee advised of enforcing authority attention and action

Centre H&S Advisors are appointed as competent persons for each centre advising the senior appointed person for H&S within their centre. They comprise both full time safety professionals and part time Local Safety Advisors (LSAs) and:

- m. Provide competent and informed advice for management and staff
- n. Establish and administer the safety management system for their area of responsibility
- o. Investigate and keep records of accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences, occupationally related illnesses and occupational health problems
- p. Ensure details of reportable events as required by legal codes are submitted to the relevant regulatory authority and information provided to local management, NERC Corporate H&S and Safety Representatives
- q. Supply management and the senior H&S advisor with information and trends on H&S performance
- r. Keep management informed of good practice and proposed legislation
- s. Advise managers on the development of policy, procedures and guidance
- t. Help management to carry out audits and inspections
- u. Take part in local centre H&S committee meetings and NERC SMG/LSA meetings
- v. Work with managers to promote awareness of H&S throughout their sphere of influence

- w. Issue a prohibition for any work areas they believe to be unsafe
- x. Help represent their part of the organisation in any dealings with the health safety regulatory and enforcing authorities
- y. Liaise with the NERC Corporate H&S Advisor.

## **11. SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES**

Safety Representatives are appointed by recognised trade unions to represent employees on H&S matters under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and are consulted in discussions on issues that affect the H&S of staff. They have representation on the local safety committees and the UKRI H&S Consultation Committee. It has been agreed that the for the purposes of consultation on H&S matters under the H&S (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, appointed trade union safety representatives will represent all staff across NERC research centres and closely related research institutes.

## **12. OTHER PERSONS WORKING UNDER NERC CONTROL**

Students and other persons who are not employees but work under the direct control of NERC staff will be treated in the same way as if they were employees under the H&S at Work Act 1974. They will be afforded the same protection and have the same responsibilities for their own and other person's H&S as other NERC employees.

## **13. CONTRACTORS, COLLABORATORS AND CONSULTANTS etc.**

Other parties who are working on NERC premises such as contractors, visiting scientists, collaborators and consultants but who are not NERC employees and are not working under the direct control of NERC staff will be informed of the high standards required of them in relation to H&S. They will be monitored on their compliance with all aspects of achieving those standards. They will be expected to follow NERC Safe Systems of Work where agreed as appropriate, receive training, provide risk information on their work to NERC as required and information where necessary and ensure their own safety and the safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

## **Part 3: ARRANGEMENT FOR H&S – NERC OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

The arrangements for H&S that establish the minimum standards for H&S which are expected to be applied by UKRI or NERC are contained in [NERC policies, procedures and guidance notes](#).

Individual research centres may establish their own Safety arrangements within the spirit and intent of this document. They may also devise their own procedures and guidance which, whilst complying with the minimum standards laid down in NERC or UKRI, give more specific direction and reflect their own particular organisational arrangements, activities and risks.

In addition to following the NERC policies, procedures and guidance for H&S, it is NERC policy that all research centres and closely related research institutes which follow the NERC Safety Management System and have NERC staff employed within them either hold, or are



working towards holding, accreditation to ISO 45001 'Occupational H&S Management Systems'.

The NERC arrangements are posted on the internet so that collaborators and researchers who may work with NERC are able to view what standards NERC expects to be applied to its own work.

These will be added to, updated and reviewed periodically.

In addition a [NERC H&S Organisational chart](#) giving details of the senior management appointees, competent persons and relevant safety representative(s) for each NERC research centre and closely related research institute will be posted on the NERC website. This chart will be regularly updated.

This policy will be regularly reviewed and kept up to date in light of any significant changes to legislation and / or operational conditions.