

HOW TO USE THE WPF NETWORK

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY (SAMPLE)



Approved by the N.C.A. on 12th June 1998.

H & S 0

1. Any WPF centre with 5 or more employees (i.e. people paid directly by the centre on a salary, sessional or honorarium basis, unless their contract specifically states that they are contracted as self-employed persons) must under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA) have a written Health and Safety Policy Statement; (strictly speaking they do not need to do this if no more than 4 are ever working at any one time; however since it is almost certain that paid personnel will come together for meetings occasionally, this exemption is very unlikely to apply).
2. Adoption of the Sample Policy is recommended to all centres (even those with less than 5 employees) but not mandatory. This means that it reflects best current practice as defined by the N.C.A.. "Centres should consider carefully before departing from such recommended guidelines. During the WPF Appraisal process, special attention will be given to such non-compliance and the reasons given for this" (CSG0).
3. The WPF Network Sample Health and Safety Policy is constructed so as to fulfil the requirements of a health and safety policy statement under HASWA and subsequent legislation. It consists of:
 - H&S1 Health and Safety Policy Statement, which describes the centre's policy, and the responsibilities and general arrangements for health and safety;
 - H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines, which contains guidelines which the centre is committed to following (almost all the provisions in the guidelines, with the possible exceptions of Sections 8, 10 and 12, are required by law if the centre has any employees);
 - H&S3 Specific Arrangements, which details the specific arrangements for each of the premises used by the centre;
 - H&S4 A Guide to Health and Safety Law for WPF Centres;
 - H&S5 Risk Assessment Form
 - H&S6 Accident/Incident/Dangerous Occurrence Report Form.
4. When personalising the Sample Policy for your centre, it is recommended not to omit any of H&S1 or H&S2 without the prior approval of the Appraisal and Monitoring Committee. You may however need to adapt certain paragraphs of H&S3 in order to reflect arrangements at your own centre.
5. At certain points in H&S1 and H&S3, there are words *in italics*; these are instructions - simply follow them. A row of dots..... indicates a name or details requiring completion by you.
6. The Sample Policy is available from the Affiliates Administrator on hard disc in Microsoft Windows 95 format (which is compatible with most formats); please send the Affiliates Administrator an unused formatted disc and state which documents you require. Once you have imported the Sample Policy into your PC (the Affiliates Administrator is able to advise on how to do this), go through it as follows:
 - The centre name will need to go at the top of the document.
 - The Sample Policy uses the term "the centre" frequently - you may like to replace this sometimes with your local name.
 - Go through the document and complete the details wherever they are asked for.
7. If you do not have access to a PC, you will need to retype H&S3. H&S1 has a few blank spaces and H&S2 has none, so all you need to do with them is to photocopy them on to your letter-headed paper and complete the blanks in H&S1 by hand.
8. Please keep a paper copy of all deviations from the Sample Policy (preferably showing them in red ink) for your WPF Appraisal Visitors - this will save them time when they review your Policy against the Sample Policy.
9. The N.C.A. is continually seeking ways of improving the Sample Policy; please discuss any suggested amendments with the Affiliates Co-ordinator.

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H & S1

1. Policy

- 1.1. The centre's policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all staff, service users and visitors.
- 1.2. The centre will, to this end:
 - endeavour to observe all statutes, regulations and codes of practice with which this policy is consistent;
 - ensure so far as is practicable that sufficient competence is available to the centre to ensure the implementation of this Policy;
 - ensure that appropriate protective and preventative measures are implemented and reviewed;
 - ensure that all relevant personnel receive information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.
- 1.3. While the management of the centre is responsible for providing circumstances under which its activities can be carried out safely, all personnel also have a legal duty not only to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, but also to cooperate with the management in their efforts to carry out their responsibilities for health and safety.
- 1.4. This Policy and the way it operates will be reviewed in the light of experience and developments within the centre, and at least once every year.
- 1.5. A copy of the leaflet "Health and Safety Law: what you should know" is issued with this Policy.

2. General responsibilities and arrangements

- 2.1. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the centre is that of the Director, (name).....
- 2.2. (Name and/or position)..... is responsible to the Director for carrying out this Policy at the premises at and will ensure that all centre personnel using the premises receive appropriate safety training and are issued with Section C of this Policy covering the specific safety arrangements at those premises. *(If the centre has more than one premises, this paragraph will need to be repeated for each one. In a centre where the Director also carries out the Policy, this paragraph needs to be amalgamated with the previous one. The paragraph numbering may be affected).*
- 2.3. Whenever any centre personnel notice a health or safety problem, which they are not able to put right, they must immediately inform the appropriate person designated above.
- 2.4. Any centre personnel who are party to an accident, incident or dangerous occurrence, or who are off sick through circumstances linked to the activities of the centre, must report the situation to the Director (using the Report Form provided/attached), who is responsible for investigating, recording and reporting accidents and for notifying where appropriate the health and safety inspector.
- 2.5. Any centre personnel may ask for a health and safety matter to be placed on the agenda of the meeting of the

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trustees/ management committee/senior management team (*delete as appropriate*).

2.6. (Name).....is responsible for carrying out the annual Health and Safety Audit, and may be contacted if any health and safety issue remains unresolved.

2.7. Advice and consultancy on health and safety may be obtained from:

- the local health and safety inspector (address and phone number)
.....
.....
.....
- Health and Safety Executive (see telephone directory)
- the WPF Affiliates Co-ordinator.

3. About this Policy

3.1. The centre's Health and Safety Policy consists of the following elements:

- H&S1 Health and Safety Policy Statement (this document);
- H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines, which the centre is committed to following;
- H&S3 Specific Arrangements for each of the premises used by the centre;
- H&S4 A Guide to Health and Safety Law for WPF Centres;
- H&S5 Risk Assessment Form
- H&S6 Accident/Incident/Dangerous Occurrence Report Form.

3.2. H&S1 Health and Safety Policy Statement, and any changes to it, will be issued to all centre personnel (including not only those employed on a salary, sessional or honorarium basis, but also people contracted as self-employed and volunteers). The relevant parts of H&S3 will be issued to those centre personnel using the premises. H&S2, H&S4, H&S5 and H&S6 are available from:

.....
.....

Signed:.....(Director).....(Date)

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H & S2 (6/98)

1. Hazards and risks: All premises used by the centre, whether for management, counselling or training, will be inspected for health and safety hazards before use by a suitably qualified designate of the centre; any hazards will be rectified (or made safe and brought to the attention of users of the premises while rectification is being sought), and any safety measures implemented will be communicated to all users of the premises.

2. Risk Assessments: All significant risks associated with the activities of the centre will be recorded and assessed, and measures to reduce risks to an acceptable level will be implemented and communicated to all concerned.

2.1. The legislation requires that the assessment be "suitable and sufficient", and that it should:

- be systematic
- be comprehensive
- in detail be proportionate to the level of risk
- involve information provided by all those who may be affected.

A sample Risk Assessment Form (H&S5) is attached. The free HSE leaflet "5 Steps to Risk Assessment" (ref. C1750) may be useful.

2.2. All risk assessments will be signed by the Director to indicate the centre's acceptance of the measure taken.

3. COSHH Regulations: Wherever possible, the use of substances which carry a hazard warning symbol (black on a yellow/orange background) will be avoided. When such use is considered unavoidable (e.g. Tippex, printer cartridges, bleach), the manufacturer's Product Data Sheet will be obtained (from the address given on the product) and brought to the attention of staff who may use the product, explaining the possible hazards and personal protection and first aid procedures.

4. Insurance: The centre will ensure that all its activities and premises are covered by adequate employers and public liability insurance, and that the employers liability insurance certificate is displayed at the centre's premises.

5. First Aid:

5.1. It is recommended that all counsellors and receptionists should receive first aid training to the level of first aid appointed person (a suitable one-day course may be run by the local Red Cross); the centre should give serious consideration to funding this training itself. At a minimum there should be one appointed person among the centre's regular staff; larger centres should include a qualified first aider among their staff.

5.2. All the centre's premises will be provided with a first aid box (white cross on a green background) with the following recommended contents:

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Item	Number of employees			
	1-5	6-10	11-50	
First aid guidance card	1	1	1	
Individually-wrapped sterile adhesive dressings	10	20	40	
Sterile eye pads with attachments	1	3	4	
Triangular bandages	1	2	4	
Safety pins	6	6	6	
Sterile unmedicated dressings:	Medium	3	6	8
	Large	1	2	4
	Extra large	1	2	4
Disposable gloves (pairs)	1	2	4	

6. Accidents, Incidents and Dangerous Occurrences:

- 6.1. All centre personnel have a responsibility to report any accident, incident or dangerous occurrence which has resulted, or could have resulted, in an injury of some kind. A sample Accident/Incident/Dangerous Occurrence Form (H&S6) is attached; all completed forms should be submitted immediately to the Director, who will investigate the occurrence if necessary and complete the section "Action to be taken to avoid reoccurrence" (in a large centre someone else may do this, but the Director should still sign to indicate the centre's acceptance of the actions taken).
- 6.2. Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), certain accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences must by law be notified to the enforcing authority. The Director will be acquainted with the Regulations and will hold a copy of "Everyone's Guide to RIDDOR" (HSE Books, re. C5000), which includes the statutory Report Form.

7. Fire safety: The following fire safety measures will be in place at all the centre's premises:

- 7.1. A statutory Fire Notice detailing the evacuation procedure will be prominently displayed.
- 7.2. All centre personnel using the premises will receive instruction in fire drills and procedures and in the use of fire extinguishers; the procedures will show how clients and visitors are to be accounted for in case of fire evacuation.
- 7.3. Fire drills will take place at least annually and be recorded.
- 7.4. Following a risk assessment (and if necessary consultation with the local Fire Officer), appropriate fire exit routes, fire extinguishers, alarm call points, fire detectors, emergency lighting and self-closing doors will be

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installed.

7.5. A system of regular checks and servicing will be set up (see 9 below).

8 Counsellor and client safety:

8.1. The centre will endeavour to ensure the safety of counsellors from physical attack by clients, by ensuring that:

- counselling sessions, and especially initial interviews, will not normally take place without another person in the building;
- any previous history of violence by clients is investigated at initial interview and recorded in the assessment report;
- "alert buttons" are installed where possible in counselling premises.

8.2. Counsellors, and especially assessment counsellors, need to be aware that clients can sometimes behave unpredictably in ways which may endanger themselves, especially when very distressed; counsellors will need training in how to recognise potential hazards or hazardous situations, and how to report them.

8.3. Since many clients are on prescribed drugs, it is recommended that all centres possess in their office a copy of a book giving information on drug side-effects and overdose hazards; the British Medical Association "New Guide to Medicines and Drugs" (Darling Kindersley) is written in non-technical language and is particularly recommended.

9 Regular inspections and servicing: A recorded programme of regular safety inspections will be set up at each of the centre's premises, as follows:

9.1. Weekly inspections

- fire alarms tested, fire exits checked as free from obstructions;

9.2. Monthly inspections

- fire extinguishers visually inspected and emergency lighting and self-closing doors tested;
- the contents of first aid boxes checked against statutory contents;
- portable electrical equipment and sockets visually inspected;
- furnishings and fittings inspected for hazards;

9.3. Other inspections

- fire detectors will be tested/serviced at intervals recommended by the manufacturer;
- all fire equipment will be professionally serviced annually (or as recommended by the manufacturer);
- gas appliances will be professionally serviced annually;
- portable electrical equipment will be professionally tested annually;

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- fixed wiring will be professionally tested every 5 years;
- lifts will be professionally serviced at intervals recommended by manufacturer;
- practice evacuations will be carried out at least once per year.

9.4. The person(s) carrying out these weekly and monthly inspections (normally a member of the centre's staff) will need training in how to carry them out correctly.

9.5. If the centre's premises are in a building run by another organisation, it will be sufficient that the centre satisfies itself that the parent organisation carries out such inspections itself.

9.6. If the manufacturer or other competent person recommends different inspection/test intervals from the above, these may be adopted.

10. Annual health and safety audit:

10.1. The centre will be subject to an annual health and safety audit. The person carrying out the audit should preferably be a competent person from outside the centre; if not from outside, it should be a person with sufficient experience to carry out the audit who has a degree of independence from the management of the centre; it should **not** be the person who carries out the regular safety inspections.

10.2. The audit should include such matters as:

- ensuring that emergency procedures are in place (including adequate fire procedures, and procedures for shutting off gas, electricity and water);
- ensuring that the premises (including entrances, toilets, etc.) are kept safe by cleaning, maintenance and repair;
- ensuring that all equipment, especially electrical equipment, is correctly used, properly maintained and regularly inspected;
- ensuring the safe handling and storage of dangerous substances;
- ensuring that the recorded programme of safety inspections detailed above is properly carried out;
- reviewing accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences and actions taken to prevent reoccurrence;
- ensuring that risks are assessed and that measures following from risk assessments are communicated to those affected;
- ensuring that all current health and safety legislation is being adhered to;

10.3. The person carrying out the Audit will make recommendations to the trustees/management committee/senior management team (*delete as applicable*) of the centre, who will modify the arrangements for health and safety in the light of those recommendations.

11. Centres offering counselling at several locations: The above guidelines refer principally to premises under the control of the centre. Centres which offer counselling in several locations may use other organisations' rooms on a sessional basis; in this case the organisation controlling the premises has principal responsibility for health, safety and maintenance. However the centre's users of such rooms must be alert to any

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hazards and must be made aware of any health and safety or emergency procedures which apply to those rooms - in particular they must familiarise themselves with fire evacuation procedures. It should be noted that the centre has legal responsibility for health and safety in such rooms during the period of use.

12. Health and Safety file:

12.1. The centre will set up a Health and Safety File containing:

- all sections of the centre's Health and Safety Policy
- copies of all risk assessments carried out
- copies of Product Data Sheets for any hazardous substances
- records of all regular inspections and servicing
- copies of reports of accidents/incidents/dangerous occurrences (with any identifying client information removed)
- copies of the annual health and safety audit and recommendations
- copies of any relevant HSE publications held
- WPF H&S4 "A Guide to Health and Safety Law for WPF Centres".

12.2. The file will be made available to any centre personnel upon request.

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H & S3 (6/98)

Address of premises:
.....
.....

(If necessary, repeat this Section for each of the centre's premises)

Accidents

- The First Aid box is situated in.....
- Trained/qualified first aiders are:.....
- The person responsible for First Aid box is :.....
- Copies of the Accident/Incident/Dangerous Occurrence Form are available from.....and should be submitted on completion to.....

Fire safety

State who checks, and how often:

- Fire extinguishers.....
- Escape routes.....
- Fire alarms.....
- Name(s) of maintenance company.....

Other responsibilities

State who is responsible for:

- Health and safety training.....
- General maintenance of premises
- Regular safety inspections and servicing.....
- Annual health and safety audit.....

Hazards

- The following safety guidelines are issued to all centre personnel using the premises:.....
- Product Data Sheets are attached for the following hazardous products in use on the premises:

Information

- The Health and Safety File, containing all the centre's health and safety information and records, is available to any centre personnel upon request at.....

[Note: Section C should be issued in full to officers of the centre and administrators/receptionists; but certain parts of the Hazards section may be omitted when issuing to personnel such as counsellors or supervisors who do not come into contact with those particular hazards (e.g. Product Data Sheets)]

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H & S4

A GUIDE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY LAW FOR WPF CENTRES

A huge body of law covers the area of health and safety. This document is not an exhaustive description of health and safety law, but is an attempt at an overview of those aspects of the law which might affect WPF centres. The main text summarises the law; paragraphs inset in italics give additional clarification on how the law might affect a WPF centre.

Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) (HASWA)

This Act puts a general duty on employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their employees at work.

People are regarded as employees if they are paid directly by the centre on either a salary basis, or on an hourly or sessional basis, or on an honorarium basis, unless their contract specifically states that they are contracted as self-employed persons;

People are not regarded as employees if they are volunteers (paid reasonably incurred expenses only) or are contracted specifically as self-employed.

People (whether employers or not) in control of non-domestic premises have a duty under Sections 3 and 4 of the Act towards people who are not their employees but use their premises.

Thus under this Section even WPF centres with no paid personnel are responsible, so far as is reasonably practicable, for the health and safety of volunteers, trainees, clients, and visitors.

If a centre uses rooms in premises run by another organisation, the other organisation will be responsible for communal areas but the centre will be responsible for any rooms it uses for the period of use.

Under the Act, the employer must:

- provide equipment which is safe and without risks to health;
- ensure the health and safety of the employees' working environment;
- ensure health and safety training for employees including first aid and fire training.

Employees must take reasonable care not to endanger themselves or anyone else in the workplace.

If the organisation has 5 or more employees (as defined above),

there must be a written Health and Safety Policy setting out the organisations policy on health and safety and its method of meeting them. This must be kept up to date, and brought to the attention of all employees.

It is regarded as good practice, and therefore recommended to all WPF centres, to adopt a written Health and Safety Policy even if the centre has less than five people technically employed.

The Act is enforced in premises such as WPF centres by the local authority, normally by the Environmental Health Department, which can make random visits, act on complaints by employees, and issue improvement notices (non-compliance with which is an offence).

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Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992)

Employees must:

- make assessments of health and safety risks;
- record the significant findings of risk assessments if there are 5 or more employees;
- re-assess if work or equipment changes;
- notify identified risks to employees.

See WPF H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines para. 2 for further details.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (1985) (RIDDOR)

Employers have a duty to report to the local Environmental Health Department: fatal accidents, major injury, dangerous occurrences, accidents causing incapacity for more than 3 days, certain work-related diseases.

See WPF H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines para. 6 for further details.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (1994) (COSHH)

This covers every workplace and substance including dust, fumes, chemicals, micro-organisms. Employers must prevent/control exposure; make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks.

See WPF H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines para. 3 for further details.

Noise at Work Regulations (1989)

Employers must carry out assessments of noises levels; take action where necessary (certainly if over 90 decibels).

Unlikely to affect centres except in extreme circumstances.

Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992)

Covers any transporting or moving of a movable load. Employers must: assess the risk of injury from manual handling; establish measures to avoid hazardous manual handling; provide information and training on handling of loads.

Centre personnel need to be cautioned against attempting to move a load unless they have received training in how to do this.

Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (1981)

Adequate and appropriate first aid arrangements; suitable number of qualified first aiders (recommended 1 per 50 employees); inform employees of arrangements.

See WPF H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines para. 5 for further details.

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Display Screen Equipment Regulations (1992)

Employers must: assess workstations, reduce risks, provide breaks or changes in activity, provide free eyetests and spectacles if necessary. Workstations must conform to standards set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.

Will apply if the centre has a PC.

Fire Precautions Act 1971 and Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997

Buildings containing more than 20 people must have a Fire Certificate.

Employers must:

- assess the fire risks in the workplace
- check that a fire can be detected in reasonable time and that people can be warned
- check that people who may be in the building can get out safely
- provide reasonable fire-fighting equipment
- check that those in the building know what to do if there is a fire
- check and maintain fire safety equipment.

See WPF H&S2 Health and Safety Guidelines para. 7 for further details.

Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1992)

These regulations cover a wide area of provisions. Among other things, employers must provide:

- effective and suitable ventilation,
- suitable and sufficient lighting,
- a clean working environment,
- sufficient space and a suitable workstation,
- safeguards against accidents,
- washing facilities and drinking water,
- facilities for eating meals at work.

Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations (1989)

Employees must be provided with information relating to health, safety and welfare in the form of an approved poster or leaflet "Health and safety law: what you should know" (available from HSE Books).

Centres should provide a copy of the leaflet to all personnel; a master copy is supplied with the Sample Policy.

Consultation with Employees (Health and Safety) Regulations 1996

Employers have a statutory responsibility to ensure that staff are consulted on significant health and safety issues.

Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969

Employers must take out and maintain approved insurance policies against liability for bodily injury or disease sustained by their employees in the course of their employment; a current certificate of insurance must be displayed.

Centres should check that they have such insurance cover.

Advice on health and safety matters may be obtained from the local authority's Environmental Health Department,

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or from the Health and Safety Executive's InfoLine 0541 545500.

Health and Safety Executive free and priced publications (including all those mentioned in the WPF Network Sample Health and Safety Policy) are available by mail order from:

HSE Books

PO Box 1999

Sudbury

Suffolk CO10 6FS

Tel: 01787 881165

Fax: 01787 313995.

Graham Bennett 6/98.

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H & S5 (6/98)

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

Date of assessment:

Completed by:

Who was present:

Process leading to assessment:

Risk to, i.e. who could be harmed?: *(circle)*

Client Counsellor Trainee Other staff Visitors

Name *(if applicable)*.....

Hazard or action leading to risk:

Risk involved: *(give consideration to numbers of people affected, include how they might be harmed)*

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Factors contributing to risk:

Evaluate risks:

Effect:*(circle)* Major Serious Slight

Likelihood: *(circle)* High Medium Low

Measures agreed to reduce risk:

Effect of measures:

How will this assessment be actioned? *(identify tasks and people responsible):*

Signatures of all present:

Risk Assessment accepted on behalf of the centre by:

..... (Director).....(Date)

Review date:

Signature:

Outcome of review:

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Complete this form for all incidents or accidents leading to injury involving centre personnel, service users, or members of the public involved in the centre's activities or property; complete this form also for dangerous occurrences.

Please specify: Accident Incident Dangerous occurrence

Name of injured person:.....

Client/Student/Counsellor/Other staff/Visitor (*delete as needed*)

Other people involved:.....

.....

Details of occurrence

Date:..... **Time:**.....

Location of occurrence:.....

.....

How did the accident/incident/DO occur? (*include why if this can be established*):

.....

.....

.....

.....

Nature of injuries as observed or reported (*indicate if none*):

.....

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.....

.....

.....

.....

Action taken both immediately and subsequently:

.....

.....

.....

.....

Name and role of person completing form:.....

.....

Signature..... Date.....

This form should be submitted to the centre office as soon as possible upon completion.

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Office use only below this line

Comment from Director - include action to be taken to prevent reoccurrence:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Print name:.....

Director's signature:.....

Date:.....

Remember that certain accidents or dangerous occurrences must under RIDDOR be notified to the enforcing authority - see HSE booklet C5000.