

## Facilities Management from A to Z

Based on The FM Lexicon by Martin Pickard  
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### **L**one Working

Anyone who works by themselves without close or adequate supervision is classified under safety legislation as a “Lone Worker”. Specific regulations may apply if they are doing particular kinds of hazardous work but for general office activity the matter falls under the general safety management regulations.

A risk assessment must be carried out just as for other areas of risk in the workplace. It needs to take into account the risks to do with the job, the individual and the location where the work takes place. The assessment should identify if the work can be carried out safely by someone working on their own and the precautions or control measures that need to be put in place. Any additional training that may be required needs to be carried out and recorded.

The risk to the individual may vary depending on age, health or experience and whether equipment is being used that increases the risk of injury. Different issues will apply to new or expectant mothers and for young workers. The introduction of a “buddy” system if possible may address many concerns.

Workplace risks that should be considered include factors like access and egress, the location of first aid and fire safety facilities, lighting and weather. If the building is in a town centre and people will be working late there may be a history of violence in the area. The risk period for the individual includes entering and leaving the building as well as carrying out the work

The workers themselves and any safety representatives should be properly consulted during the risk assessment process. It is important that the people involved recognise that the procedures are not there to make their lives awkward but are designed to protect them from possible harm. It is important to get their buy in to any changes of procedure that are required.

*The HSE publish a useful leaflet on Lone Working. See [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf)*