



Setting up a Stress Steering Group

Terms of Reference

How do we ensure our management reduce and eliminate stress in our work place?

Set up a Joint Trade Union and Management Stress Steering Group to oversee stress risk assessment process

1. What is the membership and structure of the Stress Steering Group?

The principles set out with reference to health and safety committees in the SRSC Regs – Guidance paragraph 84, should be applied to how the Stress Steering Group is set up. In particular:

- They should be compact
- Not more members of management than union representatives and this should be based on **adequate** representation, so there may be a good case for there to be more union representatives than management. Including ensuring all trade unions and all areas are represented.
- Safety advisers, doctors and other h&s professionals should be ex-officio members.
- Management representatives should be aimed at ensuring adequate authority as well as the necessary knowledge and expertise

Best practice should ensure that:

- Meeting dates are agreed in advance and only postponed by joint agreement
- A named senior person, with executive h&s responsibility is committed to being present
- Named people are given responsibility for actions and committed to completion dates
- Minutes are issued promptly, are agreed and include information to reflect the discussion, decision, responsibility and a timetable for action
- All members of the Stress Steering Group are able to place items on the agenda

According to the HSE guidance at www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/steering.htm they advise a list of typical members of a steering group. They also state that it is 'important to have a representative group to steer and drive your action forward'. Therefore we would agree that we want senior management driving the agenda. It should also ensure that all trade unions are represented, the health and safety

manager and other management representatives who have responsibility to deliver on the Stress Management Standards.

2. What are the key functions of the Stress Steering Group?

The Stress Steering Group should decide on:

- The aims of the Stress Steering group, which should include reference to oversee and facilitate the implementation of the Stress Management Standards.
- The main actions to be undertaken, which should include the organisation and conduct of risk assessment and the design and implementation of control measures.
- The timetable for actions.
- What resources are needed to complete the actions?
- What regular information will be received by the group and how it will be investigated?
- The communication strategy for the group. i.e. how the Stress Steering Group and its actions will be communicated to the workforce. It should include how the aims and activities will be transparent for the workforce and accountable back to the group.
- When periodic reviews of progress should take place, what reports should be produced and who will have this responsibility.

The Terms of Reference should be endorsed by the 'board level' management.

3. Key Responsibilities:

The Stress Steering Group will need the following roles:

- A Stress Steering Group chair to chair the meetings and ensure that the actions are recorded accurately and progress reported to 'board level' management.
- A Stress Steering Group secretary to record the decisions of the meetings, organise the actions, organise the meetings and facilitate the meetings as per the agreed terms of reference. Ensures there is an audit trail of decisions.
- Other specific roles by agreement with the group to ensure all members of the group are actively involved in the decisions and actions.

4. Further Information:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/pdfs/steeringgroups.pdf>

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/tacking-workplace-stress-guide.pdf>

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