



Health and Safety Policy

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Document Control

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1. Scope

The National Oceanography Centre (NOC) has responsibility for two sites (Southampton and Liverpool) as well as the UK's Royal Research Ships (RRS) James Cook and RRS Discovery. Both NOC sites share facilities with co-located universities and are part of dynamic learning environments where graduate students carry out research alongside some of the leading scientists in their field. Where NOC staff are working at partner establishments, NOC will liaise with the management there to ensure commitment to H&S is equal to our own.

The scope of this policy applies to all NOC staff, students, contractors and visitors located at the two premises in Southampton and Liverpool and those working onboard the RRS James Cook and RRS Discovery.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the H&S Policy is to enable the NOC to operate effectively and allow its staff, students, contractors and visitors to undertake their activities without detriment to their health and safety.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that the NOC has a clear governance structure and proactive management system in place to enable it to comply with all relevant statutory H&S legislation.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

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

Compliance with the objectives will be achieved by following the NOC Policies, Procedures and Guidance Notes, posted electronically on the NOC website and are available at:

<https://connect.noc.ac.uk/legal-and-governance/policies>

It will be the decision of the Associate Director National Marine Facilities (AD NMF) whether local Procedures and Guidance Notes are appropriate in particular areas of health & safety.

5. Associated Documents

The University of Southampton's School of Ocean and Earth Science (SOES) shares a waterfront campus with the Southampton-operated elements of the NOC. The shared H&S responsibilities of the two owning parties are defined in Schedule 3 of the NOC and University Agreement document (see appendix 1)

The research ships operate in accordance with their Safety Management System (SMS) as prescribed by the International Maritime Organisation's International Safety Management code. The SMS is operated via a standalone system available to both sea and shore-based staff.

6. Policy Statement

NOC is committed to achieving and maintaining a high level of H&S at work, complying with all relevant legislation and continuously seeking to improve its H&S performance.

NOC will meet this by:

- Managing all aspects of H&S.
- Providing a framework for establishing objectives and appropriate targets for improvement.
- Assessing risks in advance of any significant personal exposure.
- Reducing risks by appropriate and effective control measures.
- Appointing competent persons to provide specialist advice to line managers and staff.
- Providing appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Implementing health surveillance where necessary.
- Routinely auditing our H&S management activities.
- Learning from our experience to improve our H&S best practice.
- Promulgating best practice by feedback from sites.
- Working closely with union appointed safety representatives.
- Providing adequate resources for implementing this Policy.

NOC expects staff, students, visitors, contractors, tenants, and other employers to share this commitment by complying with all relevant policies and, where appropriate, procedures and to understand that they too have legal and moral obligations to themselves and to one another.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure that the aims set out in the policy statement are effective in promoting safe and healthy workplaces and that both the organisation and employees are able to comply, as a minimum, with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant legislation, the following responsibilities have been established.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Ultimate responsibility for H&S lies with the NOC CEO. For routine H&S matters, the line of responsibility follows the normal managerial lines. The CEO will ensure:

- That the right resources both in personnel and material are made available to ensure that we meet our H&S obligations.
- Take a lead role in ensuring that a positive H&S culture is promoted and maintained at the Centre.
- H&S is a standing item on the agenda for NOC Board, Executive and Business and Operations Committee (BOC) meetings.
- That the NOC Executive regularly reviews H&S performance.

Directors and Associated Directors

All Directors and Associated Directors are responsible and accountable through the management chain reporting to them for the implementation and monitoring of this Policy. They will:

- Report at the earliest opportunity to the CEO, details of any incidents involving fatality, major injury, significant dangerous occurrence or significant damage within their area of control.

- Direct managers and staff to ensure that a positive H&S culture is promoted and maintained in their areas of responsibilities.
- Ensure that the work activities they control are properly planned and resourced.
- Ensure adequate assessments of risks are undertaken.
- Ensure that staff and students are adequately instructed, trained and supervised. To assist in this, they are required to make use of the assistance and advice available from the NOC Safety Advisor.
- Attend appropriate training in H&S matters. This includes the need to attend the IOSH Directing Safely course or equivalent.
- Ensure staff attend the appropriate H&S training.
- Undertake at least one formal safety inspection per annum.
- Use appropriate measures to assess the H&S performance of their staff and take active steps to improve performance where necessary.

NOC Executive

To ensure NOC follows the HSE guidance (INDG417: Leading H&S at work), the Centre has an Executive whose members are charged with the responsibility to support the NOC CEO with the obligations listed above. They are expected to work collectively, not just in the interests of their own operating area, but also in the interests of the Centre as a whole. The NOC Executive has a standing item on its agenda to address H&S. The Associate Director NMF (AD NMF) is also the Chair of the NOC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee to ensure that the NOC Executive is kept informed of, and is alert to, relevant health, wellbeing and safety risk management issues.

NOC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee

The NOC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee provides advice to the AD NMF on H&S issues and planned improvements or changes to NOC's safety management systems. The committee is supported by key personnel and specialist advisors (GM, radiation, diving, laser, etc.) as necessary. The committee will, amongst other matters, consider reports, review training, consider accidents and statistics, and endorse Policy, Procedures and Guidance. The committee will meet quarterly with the provision to hold emergency meetings when required. Membership will include local trade union representation.

A copy of the current Terms of Reference and membership is available on the local Intranet.

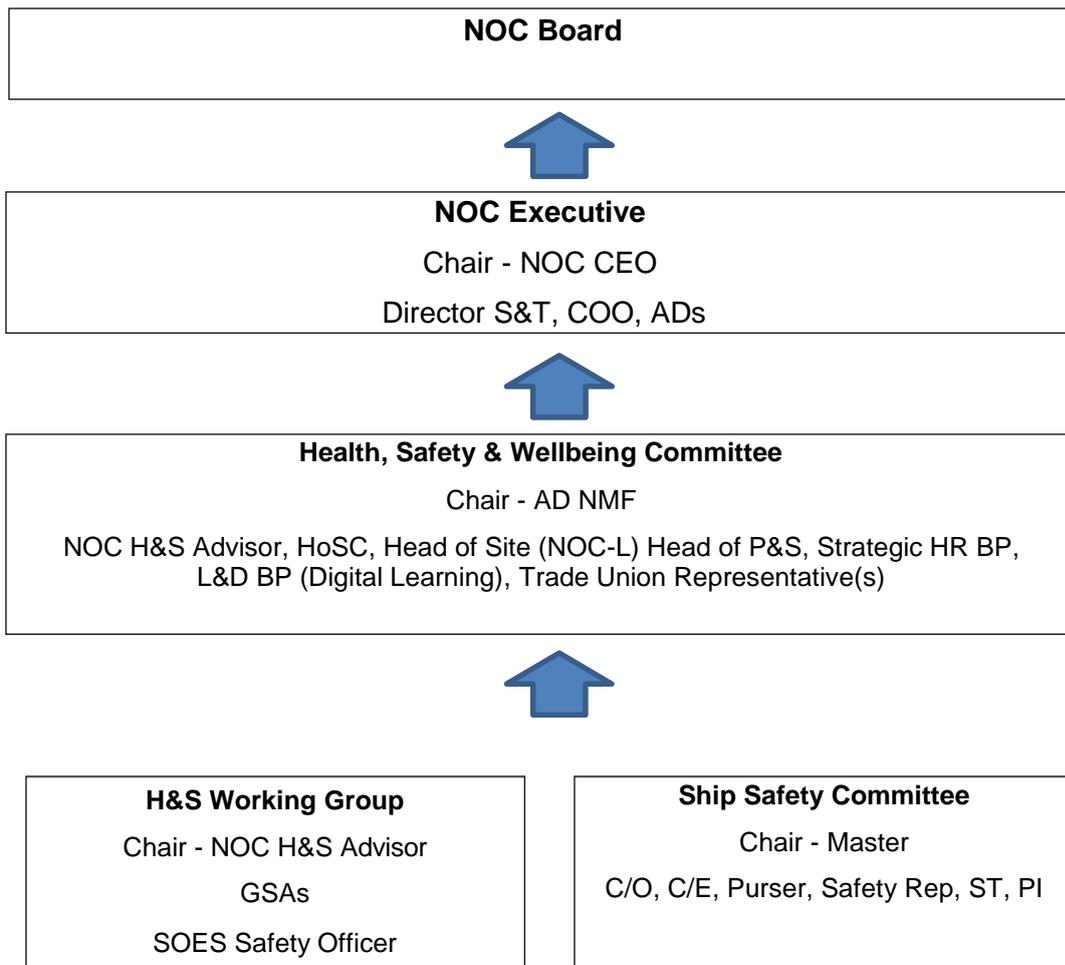


Fig 1 - H&S Governance Structure

H&S Working Group

The H&S Working Group will be responsible for ownership of safety issues, the understanding and use of the safety management systems and the promotion of suitable and appropriate training to support staff in managing H&S within their departments. It will provide an informal access point whereby staff can contribute to the development and implementation of safety measures within the NOC. Each member will provide advice to staff within their service on safety management principles and practice. The Group is supported by the Group Safety Advisors (GSAs) and the NOC H&S Assistants, with the NOC H&S Advisor as Chair. The Group will meet once a month, and will be timed to link in with the NOC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee to enable members to take forward items to these meetings. To enable communication with the University of Southampton, the SOES Safety Officer also has attendance to this group.

Ship Safety Committees

Each ship has a safety committee which meets once per month. The safety committee is chaired by the Master who also produces minutes of the meetings which are forwarded to the Head of Ship Compliance (HoSC) for review/action. The HoSC is required to formally respond to all points raised in the minutes before the next safety meeting. The safety committee agenda must, as a minimum, consider: a review of all accidents/incidents, a review of the SMS, familiarisation training for new joiners, a report of safety zone inspections and a review of open actions.

Managers

All managers must:

- a. Identify hazards associated with the operations for which they are responsible.
- b. Ensure that the H&S risks created by those hazards have been assessed and that appropriate precautions to adequately control them have been put in place for all activities under their control, wherever their staff may work.
- c. Manage staff and co-operate with peers to ensure that a positive safety culture is promoted and maintained.
- d. Be accountable to their line manager for health & safety issues under their control.
- e. Report to their manager on the discharge of these responsibilities.
- f. Complete H&S training to new staff as part of their general induction training. Group Safety Advisors are available to support in the process.
- g. Attend appropriate H&S training courses as requested by senior management. This includes the need to attend the Safety Management in a Research Environment (SMRE) course or equivalent.
- h. Ensure their staff attend the appropriate H&S training such as induction, Display Screen Equipment, Manual Handling, etc.
- i. Ensure accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences, occupationally related illnesses and occupational health problems involving their staff have been investigated as appropriate and actions to prevent their recurrence identified.
- j. Implement recommendations for improved control of risk and other remedial actions as agreed with senior managers and appointed competent H&S persons.

Staff

All staff, including managers, must:

- a. Safeguard their own health and safety, and that of co-workers.
- b. Co-operate with managers in carrying out safety arrangements.
- 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 it to their manager as soon as possible if they consider a risk assessment's review or modification is necessary.
- e. Attend appropriate H&S training courses as requested by management.
- f. Report accidents, incidents (near misses) and occupational health problems in the NOC accident, incident and near miss reporting system.
- g. Inform their manager, appointed competent person or appointed safety representative of any concerns about health and safety.
- h. Not interfere with or misuse equipment provided for H&S purposes.
- i. Not undertake any task for which authorisation and/or training has not been given.

NOC Safety Advisor

The NOC Safety Advisor is the appointed full time safety professional responsible for liaison on all H&S issues within the Centre and between the Centre and NOC/University level. They will hold either the NEBOSH Diploma in Health & Safety or its equivalents recognised by the Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (IOSH). They will be responsible for advising and assisting the Directors and their Directorate Management Teams on all aspects of health and safety. This includes:

- j. Provide competent and informed advice for management and staff.
- k. Establish and maintain the safety management system of policies, procedures and guidance documents.
- l. Investigate and keep records of accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences.
- m. Submit reportable events to the relevant regulatory authority and information provided to local management.
- n. Supply management with information on H&S performance.
- o. Keep management informed of trends in good practice and proposed legislation.
- p. Advise managers on the development of policy, procedures and guidance.
- q. Help management to carry out audits and inspections.
- r. Take part in health, safety & wellbeing committee meetings.
- s. Consult with Specialist Competent Persons/Advisors, or external agencies, for matters outside their experience.
- t. Accompany H&S enforcing authorities on inspection tours and feedback their findings to senior management.
- u. Issue a prohibition for any work areas they believe to be unsafe.
- v. Network with external safety specialists to improve good practice.
- w. Chair the H&S Working Group.
- x. Attend relevant meetings with SOES to discuss H&S matters.

Head of Ship Compliance (HoSC)

The HoSC leads on all safety related policies and activities for the RRS James Cook and RRS Discovery. The HoSC provides professional advice to the Masters and crew, to the Research Ship Manager (RSM) and to AD NMF. This includes all areas of the International Safety Management (ISM) and International Ship and Port facility Security (ISPS) codes, including MARPOL, as well as Flag and Class compliance. In addition, the HoSC will provide strategic advice to the RSM regards compliance issues associated with the Code of Safe Working Practices and the Maritime Labour Convention. The HoSC will normally be designated a deputy Designated Person Ashore in accordance with the ISM code. Where appropriate, the HoSC will co-ordinate activities with the NOC H&S Advisor.

Group Safety Advisors

Group Safety Advisors are appointed with part-time responsibilities to liaise with the NOC Safety Advisor on H&S issues. They should complete the SMRE course as a minimum or its equivalent IOSH course, with the opportunity to study the NEBOSH General Certificate if desired. They are responsible for advising and assisting their group management team on all aspects of health and safety. This includes:

- a. Provide competent and informed advice for group management.
- b. Assist in the development and management of safety documentations.
- c. Assist with the investigation of accidents, incidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences.
- d. Support line managers in producing and retaining records of risk/COSHH assessments.
- e. Organise group safety inspections in conjunction with management.
- f. Take part in Group Safety Advisors meetings.
- g. Issue a prohibition for any work areas they believe to be unsafe.
- h. Support line managers in providing H&S induction training to new staff.

Specialist Competent Persons/Advisors

Specialist Competent Persons/Advisors are responsible to the local management for advice on specific areas of expertise such as radiation, laser, genetic modification, diving.

Union Safety Representatives

Union Safety Representatives are appointed 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 NOC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee.

Other Persons Working Under NOC Control

Students and other persons who are not employees but work under the direct control of NOC 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 NOC employees.

Visitors, Contractors Tenants and SOES

Other parties who are working on NOC premises such as visitors, contractors and tenants but who are not NOC employees will be monitored on their compliance with all aspects of achieving H&S standards. They will be expected to follow Safe Systems of Work and ensure their own safety and of other persons who may be affected by what they do or omit to do. A formally written agreement between the NOC and the University of Southampton (Schedule 3), is held with the NOC Legal and Governance Team. This agreement details the remit of each organisations H&S Management System and any agreed collaborative working/meetings.

8. Overseas Travel & Fieldwork

NOC staff carry out short and long term research projects, and attend conferences, overseas. The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 does not apply overseas, but the NOC policy is to act as if it does. While such work would normally be subject to the H&S regulations of the country concerned, NOC cannot allow its staff to work to different standards just because they happen to be working abroad. We therefore require the same standards to be adopted wherever staff are working. For example, if a task is required to be risk assessed in the UK, then you must also have a risk assessment for the work you intend to do abroad. The only difference is that it may involve few additional precautions to when doing the same work in the UK.