

Health and Safety Report 2025

Officers' Recommendation

That Members note the content of the Health and Safety Report

Background

Devon & Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (D&S IFCA) recognises its responsibilities for making appropriate provisions and sufficient funds for the Health and Safety of its employees. It is therefore the policy of D&S IFCA to conduct its operations in such a manner as to secure Health and Safety for its employees and to protect members of the public who may be affected. It is the responsibility of D&S IFCA through its employees, to provide and maintain measures which will ensure that every employee can carry out their duties in a safe environment without risk to health. Equally, it is the duty of each employee to co-operate with the management in regard to Health and Safety matters. D&S IFCA expects each employee to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, to prevent accidents and avoid hazards to health.

D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy, and accompanying organisational arrangements, will contribute to D&S IFCA's overall ability to fulfil its duties and responsibilities by reducing injuries and ill health at work, both to employees and to any other persons who may be affected by their employees' acts or omissions. These measures will protect the environment and reduce unnecessary losses and liabilities.

To achieve this, D&S IFCA will:

- i) Set and maintain high standards for Health and Safety by controlling workplace hazards by assessing risks and establishing risk control measures which are suitable and sufficient;
- ii) Ensure that all employees are informed of these standards, by providing adequate and appropriate facilities for communication and consultation;
- iii) Ensure that employees understand their responsibilities at whatever level they operate and discharge them with care; and
- iv) Provide adequate levels of training and instruction to ensure that employees are competent to carry out their duties;

As part of the Health and Safety work of D&S IFCA, the appointment of two key roles was implemented in 2021. The Chief Officer is the Health and Safety Responsible Person, and the Deputy Chief Officer is the Duty Holder.

The Responsible Person bears responsibility for the overall arrangements, and for ensuring that the operations of D&S IFCA are executed at all times in such a manner as to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health and Safety at work of all employees and all persons likely to be affected by its operations. The Responsible Person, under D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy, will advise the Authority Members on safety, health and welfare matters and issue an annual report to the Full Authority.

The Duty Holder ensures that all risk assessments and safe working practices are in place to ensure safety of employees, and reviews policies and procedures and ensures that employees are aware of and fulfil their safety responsibilities.

Health and Safety Report March 2024 to June 2025

Health and Safety Service Provision

D&S IFCA reviewed its Health and Safety services provided by Peninsula in early 2025 and has compared these with other providers, in terms of services previously received including Health and Safety advice, on-line training, resources available, annual audits and also compared what additional services could be provided to support employee welfare. Three companies were compared, and Peninsula was able offer the most comprehensive wide-ranging services at a competitive cost. The new contract was agreed in May 2025 and covers the following Health and Safety services:

- Unlimited, 24/7 access to Health & Safety advice
- BrightSafe –online Health & Safety management system
- Health & Safety templates and documentation support
- Annual reviews and confidential compliance reports
- Award-winning wellbeing and medical support for the workforce – Employees Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Legal representation for any Health & Safety prosecution
- Crisis management and urgent support whenever you face a workplace safety emergency
- Weekly e-learning sessions, delivered by qualified Health & Safety consultants
- Online access to all your essential Health & Safety documents and policies

Due to the timing of the recent review of the Health and Safety contract a Health and Safety Audit for 2025 has not yet been carried out but D&S IFCA has contacted Peninsula to arrange a date.

Health and Safety Documentation Review

Health and Safety documents are reviewed regularly, as and when necessary, and are available to all D&S IFCA's Officers. Officers are required to read, sign and notify the Duty Holder that Health and Safety documents have been read and understood. Risk assessments are also reviewed as and when required, and all Officers are able to input into these Risk Assessments. All Officers must inform the Duty Holder that they have read the Risk Assessments, and an audit spreadsheet is kept and updated. The Risk Assessments are also held on the D&S IFCA's website Members' area so that they can be accessed by Officers when out of the office.

Since April 2024 the following Risk Assessments have been reviewed:

- RA6 Towing Trailers and Launching and Recovery of D&S IFCA Vessels
- RA12 Surveys on Board Fishing Vessels
- RA 15 Intertidal Surveys
- RA18 Lone Working Risk Assessment
- RA 10 Driving at Work

The following Procedures have been reviewed:

- Driver Handbook

- Lone Working Procedure
- Employee Induction Training Pack

Officer Training

As part of on-going health and safety training, all D&S IFCA Officers undertook refresher on-line training courses, in April and May 2025, as follows:

- Working at Height
- Driving for Business
- Health and Safety Awareness
- Lone Working

All Officers also took part in in-person refresher Conflict Resolution training in January 2025.

All training undertaken by Officers is logged in a training audit spreadsheet and this is reviewed by the Duty Holder to ensure that training remains up to date.

Accident Incident and Near Miss (AINM) Reporting System

From April 2024 to March 2025 two AINM have been reported, relevant forms have been completed, and investigations undertaken.

1. An incident occurred on 14th January 2025 when two D&S IFCA Enforcement Officers were undertaking landing inspections. During an inspection, a fisher not connected with the inspection engaged with the two Enforcement Officers. During this engagement the fisher made a verbal threat of physical violence towards one of the officers that was very quickly retracted.

The following day a complaint from the fisher regarding the conduct of the D&S IFCA Enforcement Officer, was received and dealt with by the Chief Officer. The D&S IFCA Complaints Procedure was appropriately followed. Post AINM investigation debriefs have taken place including the review of body worn video footage so that the incident could be discussed and lessons learned. Following this incident all Officers undertook in person Conflict Resolution training that had already been arranged, as a refresher course. The CO and DCO determined that the verbal threat had been dealt with appropriately at the time by the Officers and no further action to raise the matter with the fisher was taken. An Intelligence Report was created that summarised the incident and this was circulated to relevant enforcement agencies. In addition, relevant risk assessment and procedures were reviewed to ensure that all risks and control measures were detailed in the documents and whether any further control measures needed to be added. This is standard practice following any AINM. Reporting under RIDDOR was not required.

2. On 3rd March 2025 an incident occurred involving the trailer for PV David Rowe. A short time after D&S IFCA Enforcement Officers had begun to tow the empty trailer it became detached from the towing vehicle. Both the breakaway cable and the electrical cable parted, and the trailer came to rest on the ground. Whilst Officers brought the vehicle to an immediate stop, the concern was that the breakaway cable failed to activate the breaking system. The trailer cables have since been professionally inspected and repaired and a more substantial breakaway cable was installed for the trailer. There was no injury to Officers or members of the public or any additional damage to the trailer or vehicle. The AINM reporting system was followed and a debrief on the incident was held with Officers. As with all reported AINM relevant risk assessments and Safe Systems of Work were reviewed by the Duty Holder and

Officers. The IAuditor checklist was also reviewed. Reporting under RIDDOR was not required.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Background Papers

D&S IFCA's Health and Safety Policy - 9th January 2022