

SAFETY, HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IN DEFENCE

**A Policy Statement by the Secretary of State for Defence**

**Part 1 - Guiding Principles**

1. As Secretary of State I am responsible for all safety<sup>1</sup>, environmental protection (EP) and other sustainable development (SD) matters within Defence.
2. I require that:
  - Within the United Kingdom (UK) we comply with all legislation which extends to the UK (including legislation giving effect to the UK's international obligations).
  - Overseas we apply UK standards where reasonably practicable and, in addition, comply with relevant host nations' standards.
  - Where there are exemptions or derogations from either domestic or international law applicable to Defence, we introduce standards and management arrangements that produce outcomes that are, so far as reasonably practicable, at least as good as those required by legislation.
  - Where there is no relevant legislation, our internal standards aim to optimise the balance between risks and benefits. This does not mean avoiding risks but managing them responsibly, on the basis of impact and likelihood.
  - We seek to disapply legislation on the grounds of national security as far as possible only when such action is essential to maintain operational capability.
  - Since safety, health, environmental protection and other sustainable development issues are individual as well as line management responsibilities, we play our part by knowing what is expected of us and by following the rules and procedures that apply to what we do.
  - We take reasonable care of our own health and safety, that of others who may be affected by our acts or omissions at work, and of the environment.
  - We report anything likely to endanger individuals or the environment.
  - All managers and commanders promote and lead by example on safety, environmental and wider sustainable development matters as part of normal business, and create a culture where everyone understands and delivers their contribution to protecting people and the environment.
  - Targets are set and our safety, environmental protection and wider sustainable development performance is measured, monitored and reported and is consistent with and supports wider Government initiatives
3. This Policy Statement, which is to be observed throughout Defence, reflects the importance which I attach to the health, safety and welfare of all members of the Armed Forces, civilian employees, contractors and the public, and to protecting the environment.
4. The detailed organisation and arrangements that support this Policy Statement are set out in Part 2 of this statement and in JSP 815.



Secretary of State for Defence

20/09/10

---

<sup>1</sup> Safety includes occupational health and safety, fire safety and equipment and materiel safety.