**Case Study: Essex County Council**

**From trading standards officers to isolated librarians**

Essex County Council (ECC) selected Lone Worker Solutions and strategic partner Mitie, the facilities management giant, to protect team members when they are working alone or out-of-sight of colleagues. ECC is one of the UK's biggest councils employing approximately 9,000 staff. Council services include education, social care, waste and recycling, transport and highways, libraries, and leisure and tourism. Many of the staff who deliver these services work by themselves or out-of-sight of colleagues and can be in challenging customer facing roles.

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ECC has lone workers in many departments. Roles with a particularly high-risk profile include those where staff work directly with residents and businesses such as trading standards officers, social workers, park wardens, officers who make site visits and even librarians in some of the smaller facilities across the county. Many of these team members are often in isolated locations, using potentially hazardous machinery or facing aggressive and violent behaviour from the public. The council identified all the staff roles that included a lone-working component, conducted a risk assessment, and established a health and safety profile for each one.

SOS Fob to the rescue

Lone Worker Solutions selected the SOS Fob as the best fit for ECC staff who wanted a discreet device. SOS Fob is small and can be carried in a pocket or worn on a specially developed identification badge holder, produced on demand via 3D printing.

All workers identified as high-risk have a dedicated device. However, many staff in low-risk roles, or who work alone occasionally, are allowed to share. Although many suppliers don't support device-sharing, an advanced feature of Safe Hub is that each team member has a bespoke profile which can be ‘ported' across to any device in a matter of minutes.

Smartphone app

Along with the SOS Fob, we provided access to Safe Hub on our advanced smartphone app, so employees who don't want to carry an extra device are still fully protected. Safe Hub is the leading app system when it comes to providing support on PCs, all mobile handsets, BlackBerry devices, all smartphones (the system works seamlessly on Android, iOS and Windows) and Android smartwatches

Health & Safety Board

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ECC established a working group as a sub-division of the Health & Safety Board, to review existing procedures and consider future options. The group was charged with considering the wide range of lone worker profiles within the council. This included identifying the particular risks associated with each role, and mitigating factors, by developing individual risk assessments and lone worker profiles. The group conducted an audit of the legacy protection system that was in place, and the findings demonstrated a very low take-up among staff members.

ECC turned to their strategic facilities management supplier, Mitie, and its specialist partner, Lone Worker Solutions (LWS). The National Security Inspectorate (NSI) has approved LWS for BS8484:2016 Gold, the British Standard Code of Practice for the provision of lone worker device services, under its Guarding Gold scheme. The system monitors staff 24/7 through Mitie's state-of-the-art Alarm Receiving Centre Mitec; approved to NSI Quality Schedule BS5979 Gold Category II

The system offers lone workers multiple levels of support:

* Emergency – A Red Alert button connects the lone worker immediately with the ARC, who can dispatch blue light services, directing them to the worker's exact GPS location.
* Proactive – Worker Down uses motion and impact sensors which are monitored by the system. When an impact is detected the alarm is automatically raised with the ARC and escalation procedures implemented.
* Reactive – Safe Check sends a periodic voice, text or email message at pre-set intervals requesting an identity code to confirm that the individual is ‘OK’. If all is well, the system resets until the next message response is due.

*“Protection systems like this can't prevent a problem from occurring. But when something goes wrong, it is comforting for staff to know that if they press the button, someone will be listening; they know that you are in trouble, and they know where you are." Garry Fisher Corporate Health and Safety Manager, Essex County Council*

About Lone Worker Solutions

At Lone Worker Solutions, it’s our business to protect employees, managers and shareholders from the risks associated with working alone. This includes the potential hazards faced by staff who work by themselves, remotely, or out-of-sight or earshot of colleagues. When it comes to safety we don't believe in a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach; instead, we tailor our solution to each organisation's exact needs.

About Safe Hub

Safe Hub is an award-winning package of emergency, buddy, proactive, reactive, broadcast and virtual barrier protection for lone workers. Safe Hub supports lone and remote workers on the widest possible array of BS8484:2016 Gold Certified devices, including Android, Apple and Windows smartphones, BlackBerrys, standard mobiles, PCs, intrinsically safe devices, specialist personal safety devices and satellite phones.