

## **Northumberland County Council**

### **Control of Vibration - HAV Management Procedures**

This document details a system for managing employees' exposure to Hand Arm Vibration (HAV). The production of such a system was previously agreed by the HAV steering group. Managers need to familiarise themselves with the content of this document and put in place the control measures needed to manage HAV in their service. The HAV management programme will consist of the following:

- The risk assessment relating to the work activity in question
- Tool tags identifying vibration magnitude in  $m/s^2$
- A HAV weekly timesheet (completed by staff)
- A HAV calculator
- A HAV tool & equipment register
- A HAV spreadsheet (for recording employee exposure)
- Occupational health screening and surveillance procedures

#### **Risk Assessment**

Priority should be given to the revision and regular review of existing task-based risk assessments in order to identify all activities involving the use of vibratory or percussive tools. Nominated Managers within Street Scene will be responsible for ensuring that assessments are produced and implemented so that employees' exposure to HAV is adequately controlled. In situations where typical work patterns and the equipment used are determined to be well below the accepted action level it will simply be necessary to adhere to the control measures in the task-based risk assessment.

A more stringent HAV exposure monitoring procedure will be adopted in the following circumstances:

- if a work activity or task requires the use of several high risk tools, or
- if the task is too varied for exposure control to be maintained through the application of simple controls, or
- if the Occupational Health Unit have advised an employee that their exposure to HAV is restricted

This stringent monitoring procedure will take the form of daily exposure calculations which are carried out by each individual member of staff. The H&S team has produced a HAV tool and equipment register which details the tools used in each service, together with their vibration magnitude. This register is provided to relevant managers and is updated regularly.

Each tool will be fitted with a tag which details its vibration magnitude. Each day the employee records this magnitude on the HAV timesheet, along with the total trigger time for the tool. They then use these two figures to calculate their daily exposure using the HAV calculator. The calculator converts the figures into the total points for that tool. The points are then added together to form the points total for that day.

The employee then hands in the HAV time sheet to their line manager at the end of the week. The line manager is responsible for inputting the time sheet data into the HAV spreadsheet and for ensuring employees' exposure is kept to a minimum. This HAV management procedure is explained in greater detail below:

## **Tool Tagging**

All hand-held vibratory or percussive power tools (hired or purchased) that could produce HAV, will be fitted with a tool tag. This tag will identify the tool's vibration magnitude in  $\text{m/s}^2$ . In addition, at a later date, the tag will also allow a noise level, a portable appliance test date and the tool's weight (for manual handling purposes) to be recorded. Service Managers will be responsible for ensuring all vibratory tools under their control are tagged with the tool's vibration magnitude. Information on the tool's vibration magnitude can be found in the HAV tool and equipment register which has been provided to managers via the Heads of Service.

## **HAV Timesheet**

The HAV time sheet is a management tool which is completed by the employee and is used by the line manager to monitor an individual's exposure to HAV. In order to complete the form, the employee must first add each tool's make, model and vibration magnitude to the relevant column. Then the total trigger time for each tool is added to the relevant column. The employee then uses the HAVS calculator to convert the two figures (magnitude & trigger time) into a points total for that tool. This is then repeated for each tool used on that day. The list of points for that day are then added together which gives the total points for that day.

This process is repeated for each day of work until the time sheet is completed. The employee is responsible for completing the time sheet on a daily basis and ensuring that they do not exceed the Exposure Limit Value (ELV) of 400 points or their individual points total if they have been advised by the Occupational Health Unit that their exposure to HAV is restricted. Nominated Managers are responsible for ensuring that the employee completes the form and hands it in at the end of each week. The nominated manager will then add each employee's daily exposure to the HAV spreadsheet.

## **HAV Calculator**

The HAV calculator is provided to each employee and is used by them to compare a tool's vibration magnitude against a tool's trigger time in order to convert them into a daily points total. This total is then added to the HAV timesheet.

## **HAV Tool & Equipment Register**

The HAV Tool & Equipment Register is a database of all vibratory and percussive tools used by the various services within Street Scene. The register is divided into sections which cover the spheres of activity normally carried out in each service, for

example construction, horticultural/grounds maintenance, motor vehicle repair and janitorial functions. Tools in each section will be given a unique reference, for example 'C' for construction or 'H' for horticultural. Tools are also categorised into different tool types and are given a number, for example cut off saws have been assigned a prefix number 1. If there were four different models of cut off saw they would number from 1.1 to 1.4, therefore, a cut off saw used in a construction activity may have the reference number C 1.3.

Additional columns then identify the plant type, manufacturer, model number and attachment, if fitted. The next column identifies the vibration magnitude in  $m/s^2$  and the final column will identify the noise level of the tool in dB(A). Managers are to use the information detailed in the HAV Tool & Equipment Register to populate the necessary fields on the tool tag.

### **HAV Spreadsheet**

The HAV spreadsheet is a simple tool which allows Managers to monitor each individual employee's daily and weekly exposure to HAV. It contains the names of individual employees and groups them into their individual working gangs. The daily total from each employee's HAV time sheet is added to the spreadsheet and this allows the responsible Manager to monitor each individual to ensure the Exposure Limit Value (ELV) is not exceeded. The spreadsheet can also be used to identify if job rotation arrangements are being observed and highlight any tasks which produce high levels of vibration. From this, Managers can determine any additional measures, such as the provision of new, low vibration tools to reduce the employee's exposure to HAV. The system can also be used to monitor exposure of employees who have been advised by the Occupational Health Unit that their exposure to HAV is restricted limited exposure, for example 100 points per day.

### **Occupational Health Surveillance**

The Occupational Health Unit provides a health surveillance programme for employees who use vibratory tools and equipment. The surveillance process is broken down into various levels or tiers of assessment. These tiers range from a pre-employment HAV questionnaire for new employees and an annual HAV questionnaire for existing employees through to an independent medical assessment from an external provider. Once an employee's assessment is complete they and their line manager will receive a letter detailing the results of the assessment and any limitations placed upon them. Both are responsible for ensuring that the requirements in the letter are complied with. The Occupational Health Unit will also advise on reasonable adjustment or redeployment issues. Further information on Occupational Health Surveillance for HAV can be obtained from the Occupational Health Unit.

### **Training**

A training course will be provided to all staff that use vibratory hand held power tools as part of their daily work. The training will cover the causes and symptoms of HAV,

provide details on the HAV Management procedures and occupational health arrangements.