



EAST RIDING
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

Vibration at Work Safety Guidance Note

Lead Directorate and Service:	Corporate Resources
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1. Background

This safety guidance document provides information on managing the risks associated with workplace vibration arising out of council activities and the associated health and safety measures to be introduced to protect council employees.

This guidance applies to all operations where equipment and vehicles (supplied by the council and used by its employees) produce levels of vibration which require monitoring and controlling.

2. Foreword

In accordance with the Council's Corporate Safety Policy, the council is committed to pursuing continual improvements in health and safety. This safety guidance document supports this commitment and forms part of the council's health and safety management system. East Riding of Yorkshire Council operates a policy of ensuring that equipment and vehicles which are purchased or hired incorporate features which minimise the transmission of vibration to employees using them.

3. Implementation

Directorates are responsible for the implementation of this safety guidance document, and communication of its content as appropriate.

This safety guidance document is available on the safety services intranet page and where employees do not have access to the council's intranet, via their line manager.

The council relies on the co-operation of all employees, and trades unions for the successful implementation of this safety guidance document.

A review of this safety guidance document will be undertaken 2 years after its implementation, and where significant changes in legislation or working practices deem this appropriate.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Directors and Heads of Service

Directors and heads of service are ultimately responsible and accountable to the chief executive for ensuring this safety guidance document is issued to their management team.

4.2 Managers and Headteachers

Managers and headteachers are responsible for achieving the objectives of this safety guidance document where relevant to their area of service delivery and are responsible for ensuring that:

- The information contained within this safety guidance document is implemented and complied with.
- They consider the elimination of the risk of vibration at source, through changing working practices and robust systems of procuring and purchasing of equipment.
- Where it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate exposure to vibration it must be reduced to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.
- They consider whether there are other means of working, or alternative equipment or machines that would eliminate the exposure to the vibration.
- They introduce control measures whenever employees' daily exposure to vibration is likely to exceed the exposure action value, and ensure that employees are not exposed to above the exposure limit value.
- Implement an appropriate safe system of work and task planning that minimises exposure and allows adequate rest periods. This will include varying tasks between teams and between individuals within teams.
- Limit the duration and magnitude of exposure to vibration.
- They nominate a suitable competent person for each work area identified as at risk from vibration sources.
- They devise an action plan for the implementation of controls, clearly stating actions, responsibilities and timescales.
- They identify specific vibration training requirements through the Employee Development Review (EDR) process.
- They make arrangements for health surveillance for employees, where deemed applicable following completion of the hand arm vibration questionnaire (Appendix A).
- Ensure that a system of planned preventative maintenance is in place for all equipment, in order to maintain it in a safe and effective condition.
- Safe systems of work and risk assessments must be completed. Safety services will provide equipment test reports which should be referred to during this process.
- Relevant information, instruction and training is provided to staff to enable them to undertake their job safely and without risk.
- They must monitor that employees do not exceed their usage, and thus exceed the maximum daily exposure action value/exposure limit value.

4.3 Competent Person

A designated 'competent person' is given responsibility for the day-to-day management of vibration issues, and acts as a link between the employees and the management.

Specific duties may include:

- Acting as a point of contact for employees concerns in relation to exposure to vibration at work.
- Attend competent person training as arranged.
- Responsibility for the completion of and subsequent collation of the council's hand arm vibration questionnaire (Appendix A).
- Maintain contact with the manager in relation to issues raised by the employees and their ongoing monitoring or equipment testing.
- Liaise between identified employees and occupational health in relation to health surveillance and health concerns.
- Maintain an inventory of equipment deemed as requiring testing, monitoring or servicing.

- Liaise with safety services in relation to organizing and facilitating equipment monitoring.

4.4 Employees

Employees must ensure they carry out assigned tasks and duties in accordance with information, instruction, training and agreed safe systems of work. Specifically they must ensure that:

- This safety guidance document is complied with.
- They participate in the completion and review of safe systems of work and risk assessments.
- They co-operate to enable their manager to formulate and implement effective management systems.
- Ensure any equipment they use has been serviced and that cutting tools, blades and discs are kept sharp and replaced when worn.
- They comply with the maximum usage levels in accordance with the safe systems of work.
- Where necessary they record the points value of any tool usage accurately, in accordance with agreed systems.
- Rotate work with others to share the exposure to vibration between the team.
- Cease using vibrating tools when they reach their assigned exposure limit value.
- They attend health surveillance appointments as and when required.
- They notify their line manager or competent person if any issues or health concerns are identified.
- Their own health and safety and that of others are not put at risk by their actions.

4.5 Safety Services

The primary function of safety services is to support the council and its employees by providing professional, authoritative, impartial advice on all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing. Where managers/headteachers require further assistance, safety services will advise on achieving compliance with this safety guidance document. In addition, safety services employ a lead safety officer who is competent in the management and monitoring of exposure to vibration. In addition to advice, the lead officer can, upon request, carry out specialist vibration testing and prepare reports on the outcome. This should also extend to assistance with pre-purchase product specification considerations.

4.6 Occupational Health

Occupational health will support this policy and procedure by providing managers, headteachers and employees with guidance on work related health issues, including vibration. Further information on the role of occupational health can be found on the council's intranet. Occupational health can also provide health surveillance as deemed necessary by the hand arm vibration questionnaire.

5. Introduction

Regularly used, hand held vibrating equipment can cause damage to the blood vessels, nerves, bones and muscles in the hand and arm. This damage may potentially lead to a number of conditions, collectively known as Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS). The most commonly known is vibration white finger.

The assessment of the risk is based upon the exposure time and the level of vibration and the task. This relates specifically to the actual trigger-on time; that is the duration of time the source of vibration is used for.

Vibration presented by the vehicles can present health problems which affect the musculoskeletal system; whole body vibration (WBV). Whole body vibration is transmitted through the seat or feet of employees who drive mobile machines, or other work vehicles, over rough and uneven surfaces as a main part of their job. Large shocks and jolts may cause health risks including back-pain. Everyday road vehicles do not normally present significant risks which affect employees.

6. Arrangements

6.1 New Plant and Equipment

Prior to the purchase of equipment and plant (including second-hand) managers, with assistance from safety services where appropriate, should carry out an assessment to determine the most appropriate equipment. The assessment will generally include:

- Obtaining product specifications and carrying out a desk-top comparison exercise to identify those models with the lowest potential vibration levels for further field trials.
- A field trial of hand held equipment to establish its vibration levels.
- A field trial of off road vehicles to establish its vibration levels where deemed appropriate.
- Establishing the length of time of use before control measures are required (the action values).
- A comparison with other supplier's plant or equipment.
- Comparison with other data from the regional HAVs group records.
- Ergonomic considerations ie. ease of use, placement of the controls, etc
- Maintenance and servicing issues.

When specifying the purchase or hire of equipment and vehicles; consideration must be given to:

- Vibration levels at the driving position or holding location.
- Seating type/suspension - if appropriate.
- Ergonomics – posture; clear view without overstretching; layout.
- Ease of use.
- Usability/effectiveness - equipment that present a low vibration may not be suitable for the job or will increase the exposure of the individual.

Note: The values quoted by suppliers are often measured with the equipment in free running mode and not whilst in contact with a work material, or are tested in conformance to a standard which may not bear any relation to the actual levels transmitted during use in the workplace. Before purchase/hire equipment managers should seek guidance from safety services, as equipment may require testing in use to determine the true output levels.

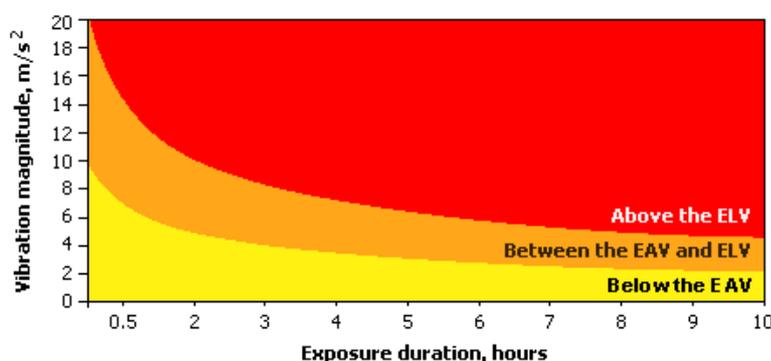
6.2 Action Levels - Hand Arm Vibration

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations requires the council to prevent or reduce risks to health and safety from exposure to vibration at work. The council therefore has duties through its managers/headteachers under these regulations to:

- Reduce exposure to hand arm vibration as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Assess the risks of vibration to employees.
- Decide if employees are likely to be exposed to:

	Action to be taken
Under the Daily Exposure Action Value (EAV)	Eliminate the risk or reduce exposure to vibration to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.
Over the Daily Exposure Action Value (EAV)	If exceeded, introduce a programme of controls to reduce exposure to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.
Daily Exposure Limit Value (ELV)	This is the absolute maximum exposure over an average 8 hour working day, if exceeded you must take immediate action to reduce their exposure below the limit value.

- Make sure the legal limits on vibration exposure are not exceeded.



- Take action to reduce exposure to vibration.
- Remember that the Exposure Limit Value is not a target and that all exposure to vibration must be minimised.

The HSE has developed a points system to aid employers in managing vibration exposure.

This system will be used by the council to record exposure to vibration where this is necessary, i.e. the work is close to or above the daily exposure action value.

The system assigns a points/hour value to the vibration magnitude emitted by the equipment.

Users then record the number of points they have received according to the trigger time they have used each vibrating tool for. They do this by using a look up table (Appendix D) or card containing the relevant values which has been issued to them.

They record those points on the Plant Usage Monitoring Form periodically during the day, this should as a minimum be at every break in the work.

The daily exposure action and limit values in the points system are:

Exposure Action Value	2.5m/s ²	100 points
Exposure Limit Value	5.0m/s ²	400 points

Within the council all activities that involve any exposure to vibration must be risk assessed.

Where the level of vibration is clearly below the EAV, no further action other than following good working practices and trying to minimise exposure is required.

If the level of vibration is assessed as close to or regularly above the EAV the users must record the level of vibration they receive in points in the Plant Usage Monitoring form which also includes a signed statement that they have not experienced any new signs or symptoms of HAVS.

In any event, no user of vibrating equipment will be allowed to exceed the ELV except in exceptional circumstances, agreed in advance with the relevant manager. If it is agreed, then reduced exposure will be necessary in the immediately following six days. Further guidance from safety services must be obtained about the dose values that will be permitted (see also 6.5 below).

In the event that any service area that does not normally reach the EAV identifies any task that may involve higher exposure values, then they must ensure that the:

- work is shared between employees to spread the dose, or,
- work is spread over a longer period, or,
- a combination of both.

so that the ELV is not exceeded.

Employees that are diagnosed with HAVS will be subject to the recommendations made by an occupational health physician. This may be permanent removal from the use of vibrating equipment or a reduction in the individual's daily exposure limit value.

In the case of the former, managers need to consult with human resources in respect of continued employment in their current role or redeployment to other roles within the council.

A reduction in an individual's daily exposure limit value means that they can only work with vibrating equipment each day until they reach their new limit value; this is often 100 points.

Managers should consider the effect this may have in respect of increasing the dose received by other members of the respective team or gang and the effect on work planning

6.3 Action Levels - Whole Body Vibration

Managers have to take action to prevent risks arising from exposure to vibration. You need to consider whether there are other methods or machines that can be used to undertake a work activity that would eliminate the exposure to the vibration, especially where large shocks and jolts are involved. If this is not possible the exposure should be reduced to as low a level as is reasonably practicable. This includes:

- Incorporating consideration of vibration exposure in to the purchasing procedures.
- Introducing control measures whenever your employees' daily exposure action value to vibration is likely to exceed the daily exposure action value 0.5m/s^2 (EAV), and
- Not exposing our employees above the daily exposure limit value 1.15m/s^2 (ELV).

The risks are likely to be low for exposures at or just above the exposure action value, while exposures closer to the exposure limit value will need more control.

6.4 Vibration Exposure Limits

Managers should not consider reduction below the exposure limit value to be a target – they must reduce exposure as low as they reasonably can. This may mean reducing the time for which the employee uses the equipment or vehicle each day, for example spreading that particular task over several days or sharing it between two or more employees (job rotation).

6.5 Occasional Exposures above the Exposure Limit Value (Weekly Averaging Of Exposure)

On very limited occasions, employers are allowed to average exposures over a week rather than over a day, but only in particular circumstances. This is primarily designed for where workers exceptionally need to carry out work causing uncommonly high vibration exposure in a single day, eg for emergency work. The main conditions are:

- That the person's exposure is usually below the exposure action value.
- That the risk is less than if the employee were exposed at the exposure limit value for the week.

An example of how this is calculated in practice is as follows:

Operators Weekly Exposure Log

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Total
EAV	2.0	2.4	2.3	1.5	2.2	Not above 2.5m/s^2
ELV	7.0	7.0	5	0	0	Average Week = 5m/s^2

This flexibility does not remove the duty on the manager to reduce the exposure so far as is reasonably practicable.

7. Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction

Risk assessments of tasks that involve vibration must be undertaken. It must consider the following:

- Installation.
- The task, including a calculation of expected total vibration emissions for the job,
- Preferred tools/equipment that do not emit hand arm vibration (eg mini excavators, ride on rollers) before tools/equipment that does:
 - Maintenance;
 - Operator/training/health surveillance;
 - The process;
 - Monitoring and supervision.

See the 'HAV Task/Activity Planning Flow Chart' at appendix B.

In addition, managers need to consider, for example, the risk of back pain resulting from whole body vibration. Also some of the requirements may be relatively straightforward and easy to implement, eg filling in potholes on unmade roads.

The risk assessment must identify a safe system of work that itemises how the task will be carried out and stipulate the preferred equipment that must be used.

Following any trials carried out by safety services, vibration test results reports will be issued which contain information on the level of risk presented by the use of the equipment or vehicle. These should be used as the basis of the full safe system of work and risk assessment.

Look up tables (Appendix D) and/or "player cards" will be issued to each employee these contain relevant information such as: equipment points values, exposure time's, type of equipment, etc. so that employees can accurately record exposure points. Managers will need to develop a control system to record: issue date, signature, etc.

7.1 Control Measures

These include:

- Avoiding risks.
- Evaluating the risks which cannot be avoided.
- Combating the risks at source.
- Adapting the work to the individual, especially with regards to the design of workplaces, the choice of work equipment and the choice of working methods.
- Adapting to technical progress.
- Replacing any unsuitable equipment or vehicles with models that are more suitable.
- Giving appropriate instruction, information and training to employees.
- Organising and planning work activities to minimise exposure to vibration.
- Monitoring operator competence.
- Monitoring individual records of exposure to ensure that the daily limit value has not been exceeded and where it has, taking further action including disciplinary measures if necessary.

- Verifying that the signed statement on the weekly plant usage record form in respect of the signs and symptoms of HAVS does not indicate that the individual has new symptoms. If an individual indicates new symptoms, then a tier two health questionnaire must be completed by the competent person. It must be submitted with an occupational health referral for the individual.

8. Training

8.1 Managers

All managers who have employees that may be exposed to vibration must attend the 'Vibration Management' half day course. A refresher training session should also be undertaken at least every 3 years.

To enable managers to undertake their duties as 'competent person' for health surveillance, they must also receive relevant training. Again a refresher training session should also be undertaken at least every 3 years.

Member and management development should be contacted to discuss any training requirements.

8.2 Employees

Employees must be provided with suitable information, instruction and training. To fulfil this, training courses are provided, which cover the following areas:

- Potential sources of hand arm and/or whole body vibration.
- The health effects of exposure to vibration.
- Specific risk factors, such as high levels of exposure, duration of exposure.
- Recognition of symptoms and signs of injuries.

Ways in which they can minimise risk such as:

- Correct use of equipment as trained.
- Reduction in force of grip.
- Ergonomic effects while driving.
- Changes to working practices.
- Maintenance of equipment and reporting of defects.
- How to maintain good blood circulation, ie. warmth, exercise, not smoking.
- Feedback to supervisor on any concerns on vibration issues.
- Completion of the weekly plant usage record form [HAVS] (Appendix C).

Employees should attend training during their induction period. The courses will be one half day duration. Refreshers will be delivered as part of the 'tool box' programme and delivered by management on an annual basis. Further refreshers at 3 yearly intervals should be requested from member and management development.

9. Maintenance

Managers should ensure procedures are in place regarding maintenance of equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specification.

Records will be kept of all maintenance.

Defects must be reported immediately to the line manager.

Vibration levels can be kept to a minimum by ensuring equipment is only used as per the manufacturers' recommendation and that employees are trained in its use. Equipment including attachments must be well maintained eg brushes changed when worn, vibration mounts changed before they are worn out, drill bits and cutting tools kept in a sharp condition and correctly stored.

If it is identified that any equipment has been tampered with to 'improve performance' (eg engine speed increased) it must be withdrawn from service until it has been returned to the manufacturer's settings.

10. Equipment Trials/Tests

Safety services have the capability to test the vibration levels emitted by vehicles (WBV) and equipment (HAV), however the measuring equipment is sensitive and good results require appropriate test conditions.

Therefore the following parameters must be met before measurements will be undertaken:

Indoors, at any time of year.

Outdoors:

- Between 1 April and 31 October.
- Outdoor temperature above 5°C.
- Precipitation, light showers or better.
- Not misty or foggy.

Procurement plans must allow sufficient time for the completion of field trials within these parameters.

If tests are required for evaluation purposes and are under trial conditions, service areas should devise 'standard tests' similar to real conditions, for example:

Lawn mowers should be tested after the first two cuts of the season and sward style and length must be similar if comparative tests are conducted on different days and at different locations.

Vibrating plates should be tested on an excavation 180mm deep with a reinstatement specification of 100mm sub base, 50mm binder course (20mm grade) and 30mm surface course (10mm grade).

11. Monitoring

A programme of monitoring output levels of equipment must be maintained as both noise and vibration levels will increase with wear. This should be carried out, or arranged by, the designated competent person.

Records must be kept of all vibration output tests.

For hand operated equipment an initial test of vibration output can be carried out by safety services. This information must be used in the monitoring system to establish the correct level of exposure allowed before further action is required. Test results will be used to determine operator exposure levels.

Testing of highway vehicles would not normally be undertaken, as the risk factors of this group of vehicles is considered by the HSE to be low. Off road all terrain vehicles such as tractors, all terrain vehicles etc may need vibration testing. The initial test will establish a base line; from this a schedule of testing will be developed from this initial test result. Comparisons with the test results undertaken by HSE will also be carried out to assist with the consideration of control measures needed etc. safety services should be consulted where new or established equipment or plant needs testing.

Additional periodic tests may also be carried out by safety services. These tests are designed to monitor the equipments compliance to standards. They will also be used to give an indication when equipment requires replacement.

12. Health Surveillance

Following pre-employment screening or in service referrals, feedback will be provided to managers, by the occupational health unit, this may include:

- Details of the screening undertaken.
- Any areas of concern.
- Recommendations on control measures to manage exposure.
- Frequency of future screening and at what level - competent person or occupational health.
- Other relevant information.

In a small percentage of people, symptoms may become apparent even when working at or below the stated safe limits. As such all employees should be made aware of the symptoms associated with exposure to vibration, and should report any of their own health concerns to the competent person for further consideration.

The 'Competent Person' (4.3 above) will work through the hand arm vibration questionnaire with each of their employees that record their vibration exposure, every winter. This is because the signs and symptoms of HAVS are more prevalent in colder weather conditions.

If any new signs or symptoms of HAVS are identified during the annual screening, then that individual must be referred to occupational health for a tier three health screening.

Periodic tier three health screening with occupational health may be required for any individual:

- That has a predisposition to contracting HAVS because of other medical issues connected to circulation or nervous systems (at least every three years).
- Already identified as having contracted HAVS (annually).

Tier Four involves a formal diagnosis and is carried out by a qualified occupational health physician. Such a diagnosis will also involve additional advice with regard to the employee's continued fitness for work with vibrating equipment.

Tier five is an optional level involving specialist tests for HAVS and can assist with the assessment of continued fitness to work

**Hand Arm Vibration
Competent Person Questionnaire**

Personal Details

Surname		First Name	
Date of Birth:		Job Title:	
Directorate:		Service Area	

Nature of Assessment

Is this assessment (✓):

In Employment (ie. Annual Assessment)			
Exit			

Hand Symptoms

Do you experience any of the following:

	Yes/No	
Numbness or tingling of the fingers for 20 minutes or more after using vibrating equipment?		
Numbness or tingling of the fingers at any other time?		
Waking at night with pain, tingling or numbness in your hand or wrist?		
Fingers going white on cold exposure?		
A change in your response to your tolerance of working outdoors in the cold?		
Any other problems in your hands or arms?		
Difficulty in picking up very small objects, such as screws or buttons, or opening tight jars?		
Any changes to your general health since your last assessment?		
Have you noticed any of the following symptoms of dermatitis on your skin (particularly hands): Dryness Itching or redness Flaking or scaling Cracking Swelling or blistering		

*If the answer to all of the above is NO please sign and date overleaf.
If the answer to any of the above is YES, please indicate 'Refer to Occupational Health' and sign and date overleaf.*

Other Risk Factors		
	Yes/No	
Do you smoke?		
Do you have any history of circulatory/vascular disease or illness?		

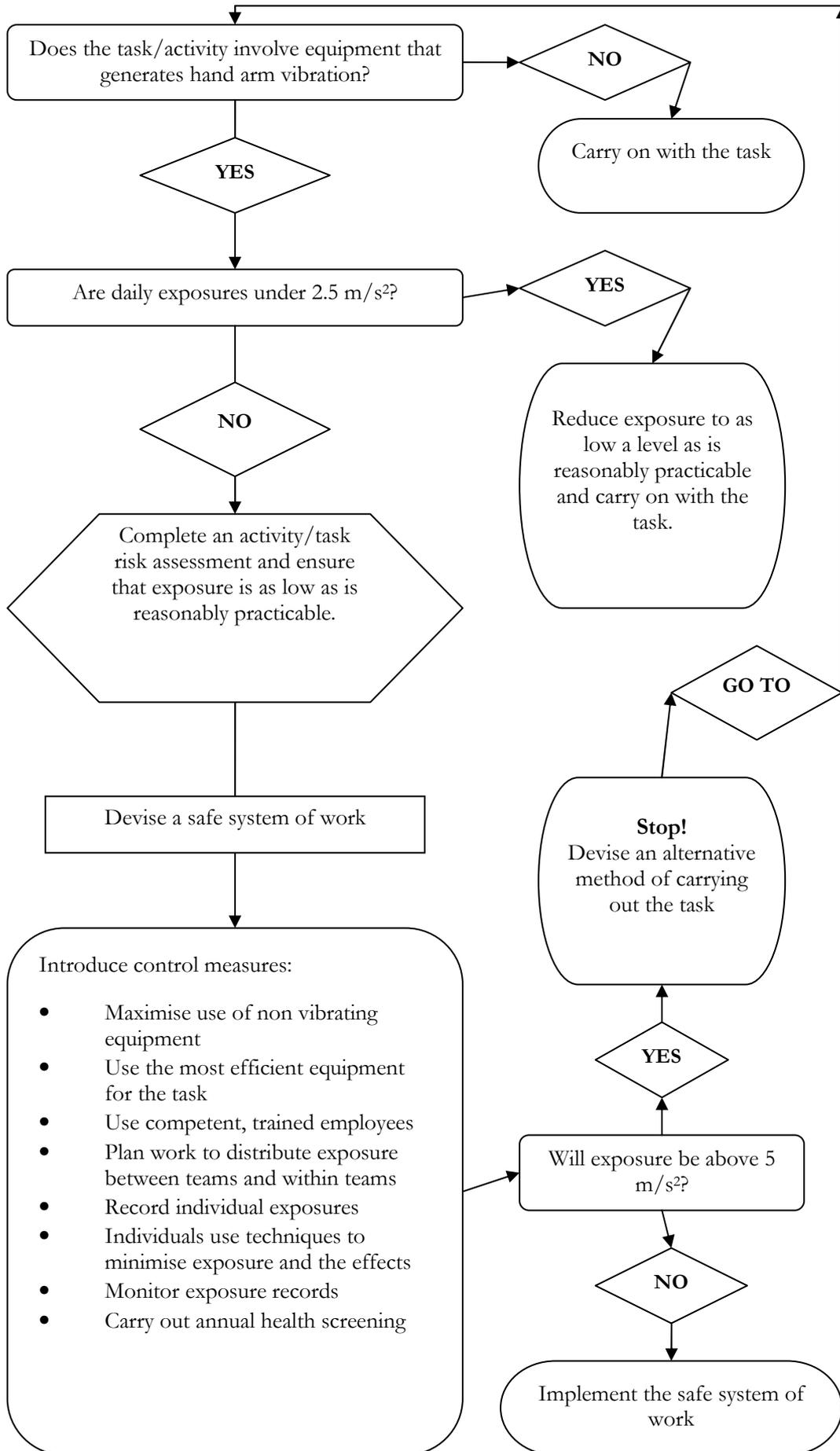
Education		
Do you understand that you must report any health problems to your supervisor/line manager and be subject to a review of fitness before undertaking your work activities?		
Have you attended the HAVS training course?		
Have you been given the following: HSE Upper Limb Disorders INDG171 HSE Hand Arm Vibration INDG296 Your service area risk assessment		

Employee Declaration		
I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this information is correct.		
Signed	Print Name	Date

Competent Person Actions (indicate date below)		
No Further Action Required		
Refer to Occupational Health		
Arrange Training		
Additional Comments		
Signature	Print Name	Date

Appendix B

HAV Task/Activity Planning Flow Chart



Appendix C (Example Equipment/Plant Usage Monitoring Form)

HAND HELD EQUIPMENT/PLANT USAGE MONITORING.							
Please enter your daily usage (including nil return) – in points for each item of equipment/plant used							
Plant Make & Model	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
Wacker BH24 - 2 Stroke Breaker							
JCB Beaver HM25 – Hyd Breaker							
Doosan DCT25BV - Air Compressor Gun							
Stihl TS410 - Stone Saw							
Husqvarna FS 400 - Floor Saw							
Wacker WP1030 300mm Vibe Plate							
Mikasa MVC64VH 350mm Vibe Plant							
Bomag BW55E Single Drum Pedestrian Roller							
Insert Daily Points Total							
Other Plant Make & Model	Please specify other equipment/plant (make and model) entering your daily usage, in minutes, for each item of equipment/plant used						
Tick box each day to declare nil usage of plant							

Monitor equipment usage times against the point's information provided, to ensure the cumulative 100 points per day is not exceeded.

<p>I confirm I have checked my hands for signs and symptoms of dermatitis. <i>Please delete either 'DO or DO NOT'</i> I DO/ DO NOT have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skin dryness • itching or redness • flaking or scaling • cracking • swelling or blistering 	<p>I confirm I have checked my hands for signs and symptoms of HAVS. <i>Please delete either 'DO or DO NOT'</i> I DO/ DO NOT have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blanching/whitening of the finger tips • numbness • pins & needles • chilblains • manual dexterity and grip strength reduced
--	--

Name: Signature:

If you identify any of the above symptoms for the first time, advise your Line Manager **immediately**
If the line manager identifies that an employee has any of the above symptoms they must discuss with the employee as soon as practicable with a view to making an Occupational Health referral.

Appendix D (Example Look Up Table)

SMALL PLANT HAVS INFORMATION									
Green = Low Risk, Amber = Medium Risk, Red = High Risk, Purple = Excessive Risk									
				Points by duration of trigger time in minutes					
<p>Try to reduce your exposure to 100 points per day. Do not exceed 380 points in any one day. Rotate tasks and carry out other duties</p>	Item of Small Plant	Code	m/s ²	5	10	15	30	60	
		Echo SRM-335 ESL Loop Handled Strimmer	ST1	5.6	6	12	17	33	66
		Echo SRM-335 ESU "U" Handled Strimmer	ST2	2.8	2	3	5	9	17
		Zenoah Komatsu SGCZ2600 DL Reciprocator	RE1	10	17	34	52	105	209
		Honda HRH536 Box Mower	MO1	6.7	8	16	24	48	95