

# Leadership and worker involvement toolkit

## STOP

Information sheet from Seven steps > Step 6 > Further tools



This information sheet provides guidance on setting up a procedure for stopping work due to imminent danger.

### A. Why should I consider having a procedure for stopping work?

The Leadership and Worker Engagement programme is about encouraging workers to take responsibility, not just for their own health and safety, but also for the health and safety of the people working around them. You will find many of the information sheets within this toolkit refer to **SLAM**, **S**top, **L**ook, **A**ssess and **M**anage.

**Stop** and engage your mind before your hands. Look at the task in hand.

**Look** at your workplace and find the hazards. Report these immediately to your supervisor.

**Assess** the effects the hazards have on you, the people you work with, equipment, procedures, pressures and the environment. Ask yourself if you have the knowledge, training and tools to do the task safely. Do this with your supervisor.

**Manage** and apply the correct controls and wear the correct PPE. If you feel unsafe, stop working. Tell your supervisor and team mates. Tell your supervisor what actions you think are necessary to make the situation safe.

What if one of your workers tells you it is not safe to continue when you are operating to a tight deadline and could lose money if you run over schedule? No job is worth someone's health or their life, and if you hesitate, even for a split second, you can give the impression that you are not willing to listen, or that health and safety is not really important. All the time and effort you will have put into doing your site walkabouts and observations will be wasted and you will have to build up that trust again.

Some larger construction firms have recognised that business pressures can sometimes lead us to make the wrong decisions. Having a written procedure in place can signal to workers that you are prepared to listen and taken on board any concerns they have without any repercussions.

For example, one of the largest construction firms has written a procedure in partnership with their unions that informs workers, managers and supervisors what they should do if they feel in imminent danger.

The procedure also lays down clear rules stating that anyone following the procedure should not suffer as a result.



## **B. What does the procedure for stopping work look like?**

The procedure for stopping work due to imminent danger is fairly straightforward and should have no hidden pitfalls. It is important though that you stress that any discussions must be carried out in a reasonable manner on both sides. Below is an example of a procedure for stopping work which you may wish to use, either as it stands or as a starting point to develop your own:

1. If any worker feels that they are in imminent danger they must stop work immediately and report to their supervisor.
2. If they see that any of their workmates may be in imminent danger then they should inform them and then report immediately to their supervisor.
3. The supervisor should assess the situation and produce risk assessments and method statements where required to provide information about appropriate control measures.
4. The worker should be able to take a colleague, safety representative or union representative along to talk to the supervisor.
5. If the worker feels his/her concerns have not been properly addressed then it should be reported to the site safety adviser, project manager or another senior manager.
6. If the worker still feels that his/her concerns have not been properly addressed, the Health and Safety Executive should be involved but only when all other avenues have been exhausted.
7. Workers have the right to be accompanied at all stages.
8. The Health and Safety Executive is the final arbiter and all workers have the right to contact them under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

## **C. How do I go about informing the workers about the procedures for stopping work due to imminent danger?**

All new workers, including sub-contractors, should get a copy of the procedure for stopping work due to imminent danger before entering the site(s).

For existing workers, you may wish to discuss the procedure during a toolbox talk. For managers and supervisors you may wish to look at how they action the written procedure as part of their objectives, which you can review as appropriate.

**The Leadership and Worker Involvement toolkit is aimed particularly at small and medium sized businesses and is designed to help improve your health and safety and bring additional benefits to your business performance and productivity.**