

Occupational Health and Wellbeing Policy and Strategy

February 2025

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1. PURPOSE

VolkerWessels UK (VW UK) has a moral and legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees so far as is reasonably practicable. We are required to conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to the health and safety of all employees whilst they are at work and risks to the health and safety of other persons arising from the workplace.

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Occupational Health and Wellbeing - Policy and Strategy

Issue 9, February 2025

VW UK recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. We are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees.

Managing employees' ability to effectively handle the demands and pressures of work and providing the necessary support through encouragement, sponsorship, line management and colleagues will lead to a healthy work-life balance and ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

We will promote the health and wellbeing of all staff by educating employees on preventative measures that can be taken, and how to deal with issues as and when they arise. This support will be provided through the use of our internal occupational health service.

We will continually review our processes, procedures and practices in order for those working on our behalf to maintain good health and wellbeing with a healthy work-life balance.

This document encompasses our policy and strategy, delivered through a programme of activities, to provide a framework to shape Occupational Health within VW UK.

2. SCOPE

This strategy applies to all employees within the VW UK group of companies and specifically VolkerHighways' employees from CVU. Existing policies, procedures and plans will support this strategy.

3. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AT VOLKERWESSELS UK

Occupational health is the speciality of medicine where **WORK** and **HEALTH** interact. VW UK introduced an internal Occupational Health (OH) service in 2007 starting with one employed nurse. Over the years the service has grown from strength to strength with one nurse increasing to three and additional support introduced through the employment of a coordinator, OH technicians and an administrator plus OH managers leading in both clinical and non-clinical aspects of the service. With the increase in resource, improved systems, and a defined strategy we are now able to offer a full range of services. Our OH team are passionate about what they do and this can be seen within all aspects of their work.

The VW UK Occupational Health team assesses the impact of work on health and conversely that everyone is fit for work. We not only consider the physical impacts but, the mental impacts too as these can also affect an individual's ability to work. We support everyone working on behalf of the company to ensure that their proposed work does not in any way damage or compromise their health. The Occupational Health team is there every step of the way from the beginning of employment, we assess health in the form of face to face assessments, questionnaires, telephone calls and cover not only the statutory requirements but also individual lifestyle choices. Whatever the problem may be we will always strive to find a solution that fits into both working and personal life.

In addition to the directly employed OH team, we utilise specialist third parties for a range of services including OH service providers, employee assistance programme, counselling, online healthy eating programmes and physiotherapy. Before we embark on a relationship with these providers we always ensure that they are able to offer the same high standards and passion that our own Occupational Health team are able to offer. We only ever use OH service providers who are SEQOHS accredited to ensure the very best service for our employees.

4. OUR COMMITMENTS

4.1 National and Industry Campaigns and Pledges

As part of our commitment to protecting the health and wellbeing of those working on our behalf, we are equally committed to a number of campaigns, pledges, initiatives or strategies, either of a national significance or specific to the construction industry.

Current commitments include:

Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) - No Time to Lose



IOSH's No Time to Lose campaign aims to get the causes of occupational cancer better understood and help businesses take action. <https://iosh.com/about/campaigns>

VW UK were a founder pledge signatory.

British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) - Breathe Freely



Breathe Freely is an initiative aimed at reducing occupational lung disease in the UK. <http://www.breathefreely.org.uk/>

VW UK are members of BOHS and signatories to the initiative.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – Protecting people and places

Protecting people and places

HSE strategy 2022 to 2032

Great Britain has one of the lowest rates of fatal and non-fatal work-related injury across Europe. We have seen real progress in how businesses understand and control workplace safety risk. We have well-established standards for safety, recognised and understood by industry. These have helped to reduce death and major injury, particularly in construction and manufacturing.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/the-hse-strategy.htm>

Mates in Mind



Mates in Mind aims to raise awareness, address the stigma of poor mental health and improve positive mental wellbeing in the UK construction industry.

<https://www.matesinmind.org/>

VW UK began its commitment by volunteering as a pilot organisation and joined Mates in Mind as a 'Supporter' organisation.

4.2 Campaigns

Campaigns are a large element of the service we offer to help raise awareness of risks to health. We run campaigns across the VW UK group and we follow a number of national campaigns relating to health such as heart disease, mental health and men's and women's health.

We have also developed a suite of campaign packs which are available to our construction sites and can be used to proactively implement campaigns.

By effectively raising awareness of the risks to health we are able to help prevent the health conditions...prevention is better than cure!

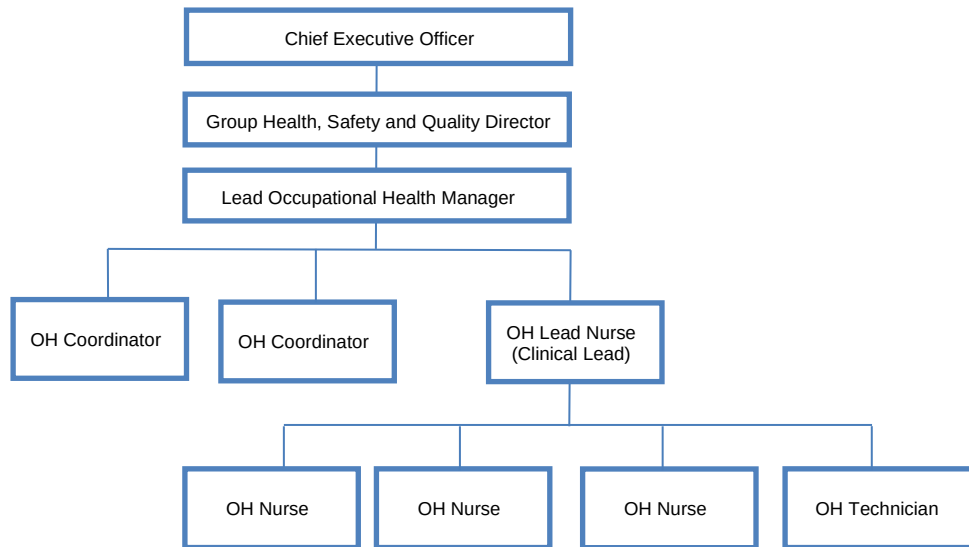
4.3 Safe, Effective, Quality Occupational Health Service



In May 2018 the VW UK Occupational Health Service became SEQOHS accredited. SEQOHS provides formal recognition that an OH service provider has demonstrated it has the competence to deliver against the measures in the SEQOHS Standards.

SEQOHS is managed by the Royal College of Physicians of London on behalf of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES



The VW UK Group Health, Safety and Quality Director (GHSQ Director) is responsible for the VW UK OH service and is the health and wellbeing lead at Senior Leadership level, on behalf of the CEO.

The VW UK OH team is responsible for ensuring compliance with this document and associated OH procedures. In line with the VW UK health assessment matrix, OH are responsible for ensuring all employees are covered under this policy and strategy. The OH Nurses are responsible for all clinical aspects of occupational health including the assessments completed by the OH Technicians.

The VW UK GHSQ Director works with the business unit HSEQ leads and HR managers, to ensure the effective implementation of the VW UK OH service including the delivery of any bespoke requirements. Where frameworks or large projects have specific requirements for direct OH support or programmes, the GHSQ Director and / or the Lead OH Manager (non-clinical) will work directly with a senior site or business representative.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the subcontractor contracted to complete works, to ensure their staff have received the correct medical / health surveillance, providing evidence of this to VW UK when requested e.g. evidence of safety critical medicals.

Employees can be categorised as one of the following:

i) Support Staff and Operational Management

Employees generally engaged in office or administrative duties do not undertake construction activities. Assessment for this group will take the form of an initial health declaration and medical. These employees will also be required to complete an annual questionnaire. The questionnaire will be reviewed and an appointment booked if necessary. Should the employee require support from occupational health they can contact us directly at any time.

ii) On the Tools

Construction site activities require an individual to have a certain degree of alertness and physical mobility. This category covers those individuals who will be completing works on site which is not primarily admin based works.

These workers will receive initial baseline health surveillance and will then be required to complete annual health surveillance based upon the VW UK health assessment matrix. They will also be required to complete fitness for work assessments before commencing work on site. Should the employee require support from occupational health they can contact us directly at any time.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

Employees can be categorised as one of the following (CONTINUED)

iii) Safety Critical

Safety critical work is defined as: *'Where the ill health of an individual may compromise their ability to undertake a task defined as safety critical, thereby posing a significant risk to the health and safety of others'.*

VW UK define the roles or workplaces as safety critical as detailed within H93 *Safety Critical Workers*. Other roles and environments will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with an Occupational Health Nurse.

Assessment will take the form of an initial health declaration and baseline health surveillance. Railway workers will be assessed to railway track standards to facilitate the issue of Sentinel cards.

6. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

VW UK has a duty to provide a workplace that does not put at risk the health of their employees. The aim of this service is to provide health assessments, health surveillance, advice, awareness and education for all employees.

Management of work-related illness or injury will be achieved by:

- Compliance with statutory requirements
- Workplace assessments
- Clinical assessment of affected employee
- Health surveillance
- Informed work force

6.1 Fitness for Work

We will endeavour to ensure that every employee, agency worker and subcontractor is fit to perform the tasks involved in their work effectively and without risk to their own or others' health and safety. It is not the intention to exclude a person from a job but to make any necessary reasonable modifications or adjustments to the job to allow the person to work efficiently and safely. We understand that we can't be fit and well all the time so it is important to manage this where possible without too much disruption to the individual's work or workplace.

Where applicable, baseline medicals and induction drug and alcohol screenings (see *VolkerWessels UK Drugs and Alcohol Policy*) will take place on site before an individual begins work. This should be pre-agreed with the VW UK GHSQ Director using the OH Service Level Agreement.

We assess an individual's fitness for work through the use of drug and alcohol screenings, questionnaires and medical review from an Occupational Health Nurse (where required).

We are able to support HR with employees returning to work after being absent. Using the Management Referral portal, HR are able to refer individuals to occupational health for a review of their fitness to work.

Following a significant vehicle collision involving a VW UK employee, we may reassess any driver post incident for fitness for work, including an eyesight check.

To ensure compliance with the above we have procedures on the following:

- H74 *Occupational Health - General*
- H81 *Fitness for Work*
- H90 *Drugs and Alcohol*

Immunisations

We offer annual flu-jabs, priority for employees over the age of 50 and those with certain medical conditions such as asthma. Immunisations are administered by approved third parties through the use of a voucher scheme. Works on public highways and public spaces place certain job roles at risk of needle-stick injury. These employees are therefore at greater risk of contracting Hepatitis B. We provide Hepatitis B vaccinations to those roles assessed by Health and Safety Managers as being at risk.

7. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Responsibility for health and wellbeing at work belongs to both employers and employees. We will always encourage our workforce to take care of their own wellbeing but there are a number of things we will do to help them do so.

7.1 Health Promotion

Health promotion is a vital part of occupational health and we will aim to:

- Educate employees and employers in the risks to health arising from work and other factors
- Influence the attitudes and behaviour of employees and employers in relation to the promotion of health and wellbeing through the use of posters, talks, presentations and information leaflets

Campaigns are provided monthly based upon the occupational health campaign calendar. This is reviewed annually and all published information and guidance will be available via the occupational health campaign hub for easy and convenient download and use.

7.2 Health Risk Management

Our health surveillance programme complies with statutory requirements and approved codes of practice. Health surveillance is completed based upon the VW UK Health Assessment matrix and will be carried out by an OH Nurse or OH Technician (all health surveillance undertaken by the Technician will be fully reviewed by an OH Nurse prior to any fitness for work report being issued.) Health surveillance and examination, including regular reviews, will depend on the employee's job, health and the risks they are exposed to, these include those employees exposed to:

- Asbestos
- Lead
- Noise
- Vibration
- Respiratory hazards
- Substances hazardous to health
- Confined spaces
- Night work
- Skin irritants

To ensure compliance around health surveillance we have procedures on the following:

- *H74 Occupational Health - General*
- *H75 Noise and Audiometry*
- *H76 Respiratory*
- *H77 Skin*
- *H78 Vision*
- *H79 Hand Arm Vibration*
- *H80 Musculoskeletal*
- *H89 Night Workers*

7.3 Wellbeing Clinics (Drop-in-clinics)

We provide OH wellbeing clinics at fixed offices and construction sites throughout the year. Wellbeing clinics are a means for any employee, or anyone working on our behalf including agency staff and subcontractors, to see an OH Nurse or OH Technician regarding any mental or physical health concern. Attendance at wellbeing clinics is voluntary and does not replace any planned health surveillance. Clinics give people the opportunity to see an Occupational Health Nurse during work hours.

Commonly two clinics are arranged per year at each of our principal offices (Hoddesdon, Doncaster, Preston, and Worcester). Clinics are arranged for larger construction sites or upon request from business unit representatives.

7. HEALTH AND WELLBEING (CONTINUED)

7.3 Wellbeing Clinics (Drop-in-clinics) (Continued)

The Occupational Health Coordinator is responsible for booking the clinics and the associated arrangements and communications. During the consultation with the OH Nurse or OH Technician attendees will be offered a range of health checks. The following procedures have been produced and are subject to annual review by the Clinical Team

- H83 *Blood Pressure*
- H84 *Blood Sugar and Diabetes*
- H85 *Cholesterol*
- H86 *Body Mass Index - Visceral Fat*
- H87 *Wellbeing Clinics*

On completion of a wellbeing clinic each site will receive a personalised report outlining the overall wellbeing of their site with recommendations for campaigns.

In addition to the Wellbeing Clinics we also offer the VW UK Health Challenge. The Health Challenge allow employees the opportunity and support to improve their lifestyles by changing or adapting their diets and physical activity. This is a competition which provides monetary prizes for the biggest loser and the greatest achiever.

7.4 Mental Health

‘Thriving at Work’ - The Stevenson / Farmer review of mental health and employers

The Prime Minister announced on 9 January 2017 that she was commissioning an independent review into how employers can better support all individuals currently in employment including those with mental ill health or poor well-being to remain in and thrive through work.

‘Many employers are already creating healthy, inclusive workplaces, but more needs to be done so that employers provide the support needed for employees with mental health conditions.’

Prime Minister Theresa May, January 2017

This study - the ‘Stevenson / Farmer review’ - led to conclusions that the stigma that surrounds mental health and therefore prevents open discussion on the subject means the UK faces a significant mental health challenge at work. The subsequent report - ‘Thriving at Work’ - recommended that all employers, regardless of workplace type, industry or size adopt mental health core standards as set out below. This will ensure ‘breadth’ of change across the UK workforce and will lay the foundations for going further, and can be delivered proportionally depending on the size and type of business. The mental health core standards provide a framework for workplace mental health and were designed in a way that they can be tailored to suit a variety of workplaces and be implemented by even the smallest employers.

In addition to this, the report recommended that all public sector employers and the 3,500 private sector companies with more than 500 employees should also deliver the mental health enhanced standards which will reach 46% of all employees.

The mental health standards for employers

In light of the feedback received from a wide variety of employers, Stevenson and Farmer concluded that an increasing number of employers want to improve the mental health of their workplace but need help in doing so. Therefore, they devised a common-sense package of standards that they believed any employer in the UK could implement. The mental health standards are built on a range of existing good practice and evidence.

7. HEALTH AND WELLBEING (CONTINUED)

7.4 Mental Health (Continued)

All employers can and should:

1. **Produce, implement and communicate a mental health at work** plan that promotes good mental health of all employees and outlines the support available for those who may need it.
2. **Develop mental health awareness among** employees by making information, tools and support accessible.
3. **Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available when employees are struggling**, during the recruitment process and at regular intervals throughout employment, offer appropriate workplace adjustments to employees who require them.
4. **Provide employees with good working conditions** and ensure they have a healthy work life balance and opportunities for development.
5. **Promote effective people management** to ensure all employees have a regular conversation about their health and well-being with their line manager, supervisor or organisational leader and train and support line managers and supervisors in effective management practices.
6. **Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing** by understanding available data, talking to employees, and understanding risk factors.

The mental health enhanced standards

Employers can and should:

1. **Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting**, to include a leadership commitment and outline of the organisation's approach to mental health.
2. **Demonstrate accountability** by nominating a health and wellbeing lead at Board or Senior Leadership level, with clear reporting duties and responsibilities.
3. **Improve the disclosure process** to encourage openness during recruitment and throughout, ensuring employees are aware of why the information is needed and make sure the right support is in place to facilitate a good employer response following disclosure.
4. **Ensure provision of tailored in-house mental health support and signposting to clinical help**, including digital support, employer-purchased Occupational Health or Employee Assistance Programmes, or NHS services, amongst other sources of support. Larger employers also have significant influence through their supply chains, customers and contractors, and can use this influence to encourage and support smaller employers to implement the mental health core standards, as well as sharing resources and knowledge. Many smaller employers will also aspire to, or be able to implement, the enhanced standards.

Our commitment to mental health

We are committed to addressing the stigma around mental health by raising awareness throughout our workforce and providing support and guidance where needed.

We are committed to meeting the 'Thriving at Work' core and enhanced standards, and will implement these requirements through our health and wellbeing strategy and service.

We provide mental health support and counselling through a number of aspects of the service:

- Use of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for counselling services.
- Direct discussion with an OH Nurse or OH Technician by an employee and where required subsequent referral to their GP or third party counselling.
- Through healthcare provided as part of employment packages (e.g. BUPA).
- Our management referral process allows individuals to refer themselves or be referred to occupational health if they are concerned about their mental wellbeing.
- We are able to offer an on-site counselling service in the event of a major incident where workers may require additional support.

7. HEALTH AND WELLBEING (CONTINUED)

Mental Health Awareness

VolkerWessels UK is committed to raising awareness of mental health issues and this is successfully completed in a number of ways including:

Each year a campaign calendar is developed with a focus on mental health. Several campaigns are run throughout the year which provide useful information, additional resources such as leaflets, posters and guides and information about the support available to employees.

Each of the campaigns is shared with all employees in the business and our sites are encouraged to print and display the campaigns on their notice boards. The campaigns are supported by a number of different resources which can also be printed and displayed around sites and offices.

Employee Training

We have provided a range of services, campaigns and support on mental health over recent years.

We recognise however that we need to do more and therefore we have made the commitment to implementing an extensive programme of briefing, engagement, training and more support. This includes:

- Providing *Keeping the pieces together* sessions across all sites and offices, a discussion to encourage everyone to play their part in supporting the mental wellbeing of those around us.
- Delivering mental health awareness training for line managers and supervisors.
- Seeking staff Mental Health Champions who will act as eyes and guides to mental health support for colleagues.
- Delivering Mental Health First Aid training for the Mental Health Champions

Mind - Awareness training for managers and supervisors - Strong leadership and management is a key factor in ensuring good mental health and wellbeing for employees. For many people, the way they are treated by their line manager and the behaviour of leadership in the organisation plays a key role in how employees feel about themselves and their work.

Leaders and managers can also play a vital role in reducing stigma and encouraging staff to talk about their mental health problems. We know that line managers play an important part in this respect, but often lack the confidence and awareness to provide the appropriate level of support.

Mental health awareness training sets out simple and practical steps to support staff. It looks at how to create a culture that supports staff to be open about their mental health, how to have a conversation with someone about their mental health, how to support someone experiencing a mental health problem and how to manage an employee's time off sick and their return to work.

Resilience training - Our aim is to build resilience in our employees. That means personal resilience and emotional resilience to the stresses, strains and changes involved with any job. Resilience builds a better workforce - enabling our employees to enjoy their role and rise to the challenge of the job.

On-going support

For those employees seeking support with mental health issues or issues which could potentially affect their mental health, there are a number of services available free of charge. These include but are not limited to:

7. HEALTH AND WELLBEING (CONTINUED)

Occupational Health management referrals - Our in-house Occupational Health Team is made up of experienced and competent individuals. All of which are available to speak to any employee or subcontractor about any issues they may be experiencing. A formal process for referrals is in place to allow HR, manager or self-referrals. This process ensures that advice is given by a competent Nurse and that the individual is signposted to the correct support services. Our Nurses have the ability to refer individuals for private counselling.

Mental Health Champions - Our 200 mental health champions are available to speak to all employees or subcontractors about any issues they are experiencing. They have been trained to identify mental health issues and to signpost to the most relevant support for them.

Private counselling - Private one-to-one counselling can be provided once an employee has been assessed by Occupational Health. This service is also available to employees' families. Individuals will receive an either all or a minimum of nine sessions free of charge through VolkerWessels UK.

Employee assistance programme (EAP) - Our EAP provided by Health Assured is intended to help employees deal with personal problems that may adversely impact their work performance, health and wellbeing. Our EAP provides an assessment, short-term counselling and a referral service for employees, subcontractors and immediate family.

We are able to determine from our anonymised data that the service is widely utilised by individuals experiencing mental health issues as well as a number of other issues.

BUPA private healthcare - Employees who utilise the private healthcare through BUPA will be able to request a number of services including counselling, psychologist or psychotherapy services and CBT.

The Future

We will continue to raise awareness of mental health issues through the use of campaigns, posters, booklets and other resources. We are committed to continue training our workforce to enable them to understand their own mental health and the mental health of the people they work with.

We will continue training volunteers to become Mental Health Champions and intend to roll our resilience training to further enhance our Mental Health Programme.

In addition to the training we already have in place, we will also be considering the Samaritans Suicide training for those Mental Health Champions wishing to take part. This will help to raise awareness of the issues which may arise and help our champions to identify those individuals in crisis who may need support.

7.5 Management Referrals

Health problems, of whatever nature, may affect work performance. If a manager or HR has any concerns about the effects of work on an employee's health, or the effects of a health problem on an employee's performance or attendance at work an individual can be referred to occupational health where they will be seen by an OH Nurse.

Employees can be referred via HR and their line managers, or they can refer themselves to occupational health.

In some circumstances it may be necessary for the OH Nurse to refer the individual to an outside provider. This could be to the individual's GP, an OH physician or to a Physiotherapy Practitioner through our Physiomed referral process.

To ensure compliance around wellbeing the following procedures have been developed:

- *H91 Management Referrals*
- *H74 Occupational Health - General*

10. IMS AUTHORISATION

Document owner approval:

Adrian Shah-Cundy, VW UK Group Health, Safety and Quality Director - 28.02.2025

Approval for IMS:

Alex Boatwright, IMS Manager - 28.02.2025

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