

A GUIDE TO BUYING A LONE WORKER SERVICE

Buying a Lone Worker Service can be confusing as there are many providers, devices and monitoring options available and many considerations to make before you start. So how should you go about procuring a lone worker service that's right for your business and what information do you need to prepare before you approach a supplier?

BEFORE YOU START

1. Define your lone workers

The first thing you should do before approaching a supplier of lone worker services is to identify who your company's lone workers are.

You can use the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) definition, which describes a lone worker as: "an employee who performs an activity that is intended to be carried out in isolation without close or direct supervision." Some examples of lone workers are social workers, bailiffs, parking attendants, service engineers, caretakers, builders and forestry workers.

2. Identify the risks

The next step is to identify the risks that your lone workers face. You can break this down into three steps, known as PET (People, Environment and Task):

- a. **People** – Who are the people your lone worker is likely to come into contact with? Do the people your staff meet pose a potential threat?
- b. **Environment** – Where will your lone workers be working? Will they be working in an isolated area, going in to another person's home, on the street amongst general public or working unsociable hours?
- c. **Task** – What task is your lone worker carrying out? Are they handling cash, enforcing the law, discussing sensitive or confrontational issues, working on an isolated building site alone or carrying valuables or pharmaceutical drugs?

After you have outlined the risks your lone workers may face, you can then define whether the risks they face are a high risk (most likely to happen), medium risk (may happen) or low risk (least likely to happen).

USEFUL LINKS

British Security Industry Association
BSIA Accredited Lone Worker Companies
National Security Inspectorate
Security Systems Alarms Inspection Board

www.bsia.co.uk
[Click here](#)
www.nsi.org.uk
www.ssaib.org

3. Risk mitigation

Now you have an accurate picture of the risks your lone workers face, you have all the information you need to write your lone worker policy and to plan your risk mitigation strategy.

A risk mitigation strategy should outline ways in which you can reduce the risks your lone workers face. For example, you may wish to consider:

- Whether you can change your current work patterns to reduce or cut out the lone worker risks entirely.
- Amending your management systems so that regular checks are carried out on lone workers.
- Consider introducing monitoring systems, like CCTV or lone worker devices.

After going through your checks and risk mitigation possibilities, you may decide that introducing lone worker devices is the best way forward to protect your lone workers.

CHOOSING A SUPPLIER

Some of questions you should ask potential suppliers are:

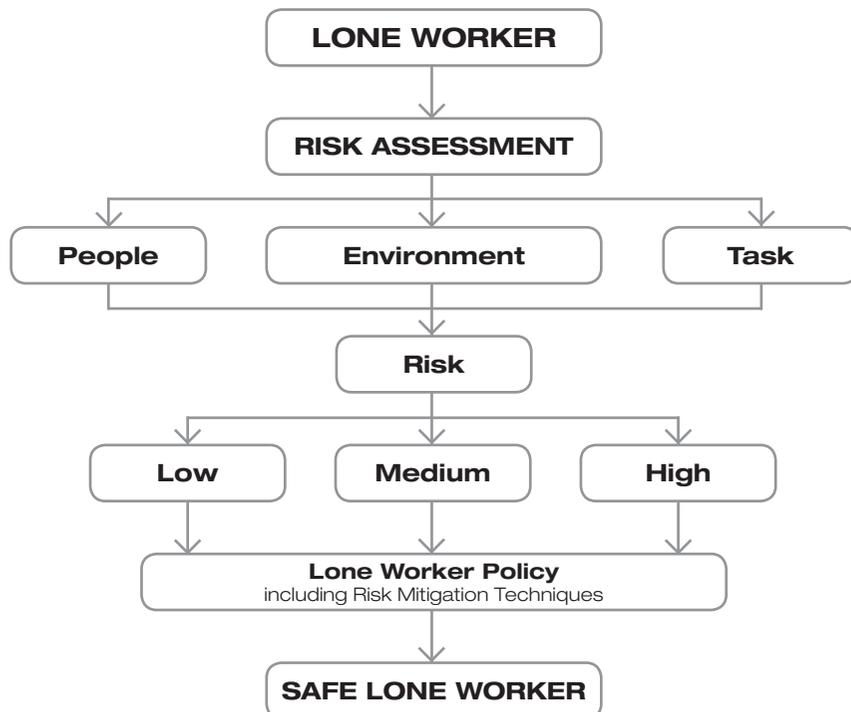
- a. Does the lone worker device meet the requirements set down in the British Standard for Lone Worker Services BS 8484 (Section 5)?
- b. Will the lone worker device meet my needs (e.g. environmental, network coverage, ease of operation, secure operation)?
- c. Ensure your supplier and monitoring centre meet the requirements of BS 8484 (Sections 4 and 6 respectively).
- d. How quickly will an alert be responded to (BS 8484, Section 7) and who will respond (your supervisor, another member of staff, a guarding company, or the police)?
- e. Does your Alarm Receiving Centre hold a Unique Reference Number (URN) from the police to enable an immediate response from them to your lone worker device if required?
- f. Does the supplier have flexibility in terms of alarm escalation contacts; different contacts for different times of the day and times of the week; prioritisation of escalation contacts?
- g. Ensure that your lone worker service is inspected by a third party accreditation inspectorate? The National Security Inspectorate (NSI) and Security Systems Alarms Inspection Board (SSAIB) are the two inspectorates which are currently able to undertake this inspection.
- h. Does the supplier provide comprehensive initial and ongoing training options?
- i. Is your lone worker device supplier and monitoring centre a member of the BSIA, which is a sign of quality for the manufacturers, suppliers and ARCs involved in lone worker services?

STEP-BY-STEP CHECKLIST

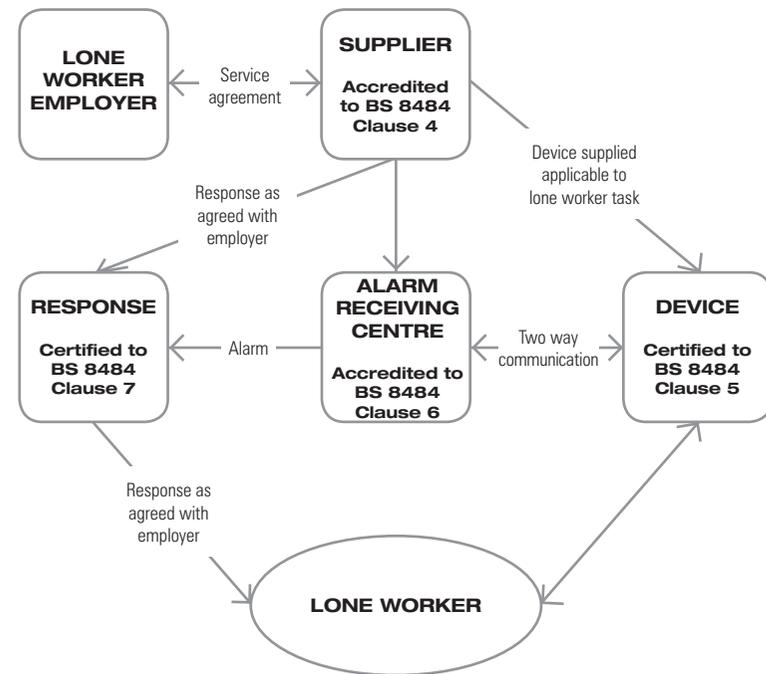
The main steps to follow when buying a lone worker service are:

1. Understand your legal responsibility.
2. Identify your lone workers.
3. Consider your lone worker employees' health and safety workplace requirements.
4. Do a risk assessment (P.E.T.)
5. Write your lone worker policy which will include risk mitigation measures to reduce the risk and define whether a lone worker service is required.
6. If a lone worker device service is required, you should choose a certified (UKAS accredited Inspectorate) BS 8484 supplier that includes the following:
 - a. A company certified to the requirements of Part 4 of BS 8484.
 - b. A certified device that meets the requirements of Part 5 of BS 8484.
 - c. An ARC certified to the requirements Part 6 of BS 8484.
 - d. A response certified to the requirements of Part 7 of BS 8484.
7. A supplier that belongs to the BSIA, for your peace of mind.

LONE WORKER ASSESSMENT



LONE WORKER SERVICE



For other information please contact:

British Security Industry Association
 t: 0845 389 3889 f: 0845 389 0761
 e: info@bsia.co.uk www.bsia.co.uk

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