

Employment E-Brief No 92

NEW GUIDANCE ON TACKLING WORKPLACE STRESS

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Towards the end of 2004, the Health and Safety Executive published its guidance for employers on how to combat work related stress. It has been developed after consultation with business organisations, unions and other professional bodies, and is aimed at reducing the incidents of workplace stress.

Entitled 'Management Standards for Tackling Work Related Stress' it looks at six key aspects of working life that, if not properly managed, can give rise to stress, and suggests minimum standards for working conditions.

It does not itself have legal effect, but it does give an indication of the minimum obligations on employers when considering their duties under, for example, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The standards are accompanied by a suggested procedure for employers to follow to ensure that they comply with their duties towards their employees.

The guidance is complemented by a new advisory booklet issued by ACAS. This is intended to offer practical advice and is based on the HSE standards. It is arguably more user friendly and contains helpful examples to illustrate how the standards may be incorporated into practical solutions.

The HSE guidance can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm

The ACAS advisory booklet can be found at:

www.acas.org.uk/publications/B18.html

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