

The Royal Air Forces Association Volunteer Programme Health and Safety Policy for Volunteers

The following policy applies to all individuals volunteering for the RAF Association in a welfare, event or fundraising role, whether directly for the Association or for an Association Branch. For the purposes of the following policy, both Branch and Association volunteers will be referred to as 'volunteers'.

The Royal Air Forces Association attaches the utmost importance to the safety, health and welfare of its volunteers and has therefore provided them with a policy and processes to follow.

Statement of policy

The Association's trustees, through the Central Council management Boards, bear ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all reasonably practicable measures are in place to maintain a safe working environment. The Association will comply with the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974; The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, covering general fire safety in England and Wales; Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, supported by the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006, covering general fire safety requirements for Scotland; The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010 and all subsequent regulations, including those implementing EU Directives. Day-to-day responsibility for Health and Safety including Fire Safety matters is delegated to the Secretary General.

Departments will take steps so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure that the workplace is a safe and healthy environment in which employees, contractors, volunteers and other persons affected by the Association's operations can carry out their duties. However, a safe and healthy workplace can only be achieved with the full co-operation of every employee and volunteer.

A full version of the Association's health and safety policy can be obtained on request. A summary of the policy, as relates to volunteers of the Association, is detailed below. This outlines the responsibility that the Association has to a volunteer and the responsibilities that a volunteer has to protect his or her own health and safety and that of others.

Responsibilities of the Association

1. The Association will provide appropriate public liability insurance for all volunteers of the RAF Association to ensure they are covered for their role. This encompasses all ages. A copy of the certificate can be made available on request.
2. All activities that volunteers are involved with will be risk-assessed, either on an event-by-event basis or by roles, to assess risks to health and safety for the volunteer, before accepting volunteers to participate in the activity or role they have been selected for. This will either be completed by the Association (for overall risk assessments for roles, for example) or by the member of staff organising a specific event or activity involving volunteers.
3. Volunteers managing other volunteers (e.g. Fundraising Team Leaders) will ensure that the volunteers they are responsible for will have access to guidance around the risk assessment as to how to be safe and healthy during their role. This will either be made available to volunteers in advance or briefed to them on the day of the event.



4. The respective managers and leaders, working with and responsible for volunteers, take responsibility for ensuring volunteers can work in a safe environment. These include Area Welfare Officers, Volunteer Coordinators, Branches and volunteer 'Fundraising Team Leaders'; however, the overall responsibility for volunteers sits with the Association and Association Branches.
5. All staff and volunteers are responsible for alerting the team leader, person in charge or their manager to any risks that may be perceived during the course of their role or at an event they are attending.
6. In the event of an accident or near miss at an event or activity involving volunteers, any member of staff (or volunteer) witnessing it should immediately report it to the person in charge (if at an event) or to their manager (if not at an event). This applies equally to minor and serious accidents, whether they affect members of the public, members of staff, or volunteers. They should also complete a Royal Air Forces Association Accident/Incident (Near Miss)/ Report.
7. The Association will provide health and safety equipment and/or clothing for volunteers where it is required in order that the volunteer can carry out their role or task effectively and in a healthy and safe environment.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

The Association will make every effort to ensure the environment is safe for volunteers to work in and it is then the responsibility of the volunteer to tell us if they think there is a problem.

1. All volunteers have a responsibility to ensure they have read and understood any risk assessments and guidance they are provided with for their role or for the event/activity they are attending and to ask questions where they are unsure.
2. If a volunteer is receiving their brief on the day of the event they are volunteering at, they have a responsibility to ensure that they have listened to and understood the information being given and to ask questions where they are unsure.
3. Volunteers in a team leader role must ensure they have completed a template risk assessment form for the activities they organise where they and other volunteers are involved (Fundraising Team Leader volunteers are required to do this). Helpful guidance is issued for volunteers alongside this form.
4. All volunteers (and staff) are responsible for alerting the team leader or their manager to any risks that may be perceived during the course of their role or at an event they are attending or if they feel at risk in the environment they have been asked to assist in.
8. In the event of an accident or near miss, at an event or activity that volunteers are supporting, a volunteer (or member of staff) witnessing it should immediately report it to their team leader, the person in charge (if at an event) or to their manager (if not at an event). This applies equally to minor and serious accidents, whether they affect members of the public, members of staff, or volunteers. The manager should also complete a Royal Air Forces Association Accident/Incident (Near Miss)/ Report. This form can be obtained by emailing volunteers@rafa.org.uk.
9. Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
10. Volunteers not in a role requiring them to lift items (the Fundraising Team Leader and Fundraiser roles will require some lifting of full collecting buckets) may be asked to assist with some manual handling tasks at events. If volunteers do not feel able to assist or are worried it may be detrimental to their health, safety or welfare, they need to inform their manager that they are not able to undertake the task. (There are no expectations placed on volunteers to do this and volunteers should feel confident to say if they do not feel able to undertake a task.)
11. Volunteers required to wear any specific equipment or clothing in order to carry out their role safely must ensure they wear it or use it where provided.

12. Any volunteer found to be putting the safety of members of the public, staff, or other volunteers at risk may be asked to leave the event they are attending immediately, if applicable. The Association treats breaches in Health and Safety as serious matters subject to action and possibly to the dismissal of the volunteer. This includes any specific safe systems of work, instructions, training and procedures laid down for the protection of those involved in Association operations, and for those who may become involved in them. Volunteers may be personally liable for any damage or illness caused where they are not carrying out their role as instructed.