

ESA Launch Introduction

This month's ESA Situational Awareness theme is associated with Workplace Violence & Aggression (WVA).

We all recognise that employees have the right to work without fear of violence and aggression, however the reality is that many workers are victims of such incidents.

The HSE define WGA as incidents in which a person is "abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work". WVA can include physical, verbal, or psychological behaviours, and can have profoundly negative consequences on workers' health and quality of life. Workers report heightened anxiety, feeling helpless, chronic fatigue, and increased stress, among many other issues.

WVA can also negatively affect those around targets, such as witnesses or targets' family and friends.



Research has suggested that WVA may occur more often than we think, as workers often do not report incidents when they happen. This can be for several reasons but, most notably, many workers feel that WVA is 'just part of the job' and have normalised such behaviours or believe that nothing will come out of their reporting. Unfortunately, this means we may not know the full severity of WVA across the waste sector and the impact it is having on their employees.

Looking at this research for the waste management sector, organisations have taken steps to support and engage with employees who wish to report incidents to implement preventative mechanisms to reduce WVA in the first place.

Available through the QR code is a short video clip that can be used as a toolbox talk that covers an approach to dealing with potential WVA events. The technique is referred to as 'PALMS' which allows employees to position themselves safely away from the confrontation, demonstrate the correct posture with a positive Attitude, listen to their views, make space and adopt a non-confrontational stance to reduce the confrontation and de-escalate a potential situation. If we're ever in a situation with those who our services interact with and we're being confronted. It's important to remain calm, respect their views and to try remove yourself from the situation and report the incident.

Alongside this we have produced a poster to display at sites to promote this month's theme within your organisation and a huddle card (see attached). The huddle card is a resource designed to accompany the toolbox talk, giving safety leaders pointers for discussion, and encouraging your teams to share their thoughts, experiences, and opinions.

Situational awareness is continuously **assessing your surroundings, identifying any **potential hazards** which will inform your **decision making** on how to carry out your work safely.**

HUDDLE CARD

Violence & Aggression

Huddle discussion

Wherever we work and whatever our role, we all share a common goal, keeping ourselves and others safe.

Introduce and show the video. After showing the video use this huddle card to generate a conversation about the theme, confirm understanding and seek collective feedback.



No job is so important we cannot take time and do it safely

- ▶ How should you react if someone becomes confrontational?
- ▶ What does PALMS mean?
- ▶ What would be the signs of a confrontational situation escalating?
- ▶ How should you react if violence becomes an immediate possibility?

We look out for and trust each other

- ▶ If a work colleague is in a situation whereby there is a potential for violence or aggression what would you do?

We share and seek ideas for improvement

- ▶ Why should we report situations of violence and abuse?
- ▶ Do you have any suggestions or improvements to manage and reduce potential violence acts or abusive confrontations?



← Scan the QR code to access the digital campaign content

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