Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

Overdue procedure starts:

Overdue alert or no check in message received.

Middle of the day check in or end of day check in?

Middle of the day.

Try to contact the overdue person, send reminder. **60 minute maximum grace period.**

60 min

Have they checked in within 60 minutes ?

No

End of the day, or boating activity.

Yes

Point of Contact (POC) to establish contact / find out where they are:

- Try to ring them / radio etc.
- Check **Get Home Safe** (GHS)
  - Log into GHS dash board and acknowledge you are following up.
  - Send them a message via GHS to cancel or extend.
  - Check last known position (try the What three words link)
- Check E Road
- Is it clear they are indeed home?
- Check with team leader / team member what their work plan had been with team leader / team member what their work plan had been.

30 min

Contacted them or clear they are home?

Yes

No

After / within 30 minutes:

- Notify department manager or Hydro Duty officer
- Notify / contact other team leaders
- Continue trying to contact them and or track them
- Check on E road for nearest vehicle / staff (could be another department or depot)
- Consider sending someone to the last know location

30 min

Contacted them or clear they are home?

Yes

No

Well done. Cancel Alert

After 30 minutes (now overdue by one hour):

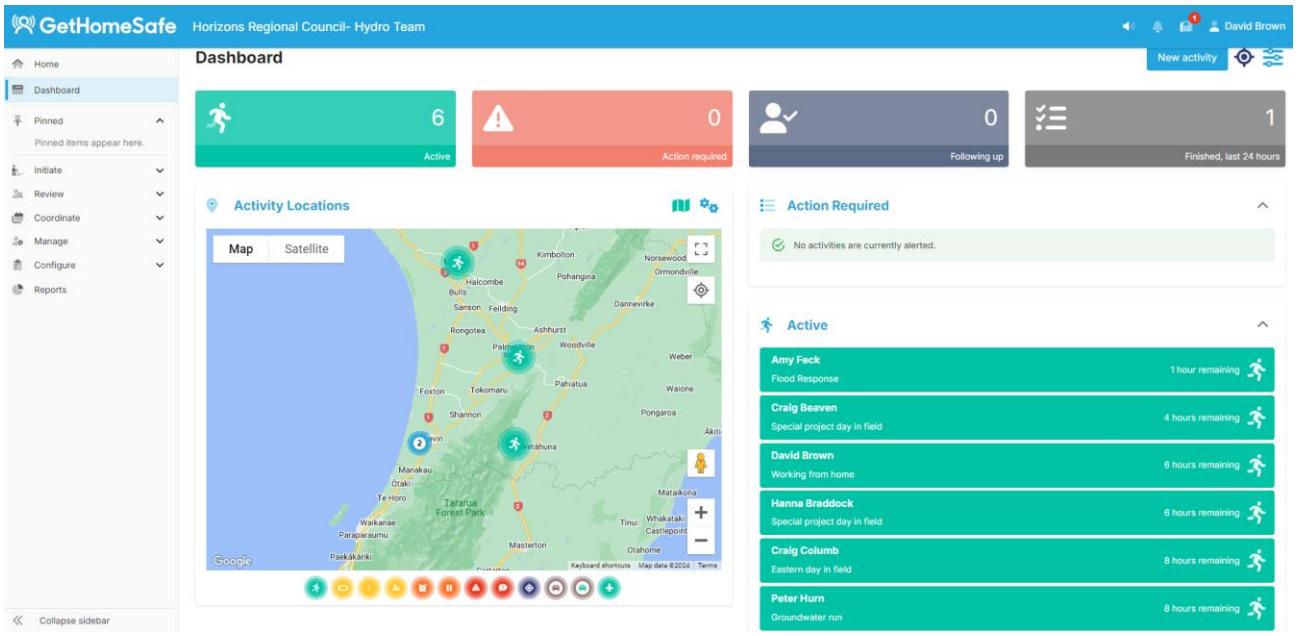
- Initiate HRC organisational Emergency Management response
- (refer to section18: Overdue Staff Member, EMDO Guide, pg. 30-31)
- http://intranet/UserFiles/Images/Emergency%20Management/P-EMDO-Guide.pdf
- *Raise to Brent (M) to discuss communication options (or Ged Shirley or EM duty officer in his absence)*
- *Call Staff partners/spouse. Have they been in contact during the day?*
- *Brent or Team Leader to notify Ged (GM) or Michael (CEO) that someone is missing.*
- *Call the Police (111)*

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

Overview:

This document outlines the procedures that Environmental Data (*Project team, boat operators, and data team)* staff will work to while working in the field. It also details the process for escalation when the staff member(s) has not checked in. This procedure is to be followed by these ED staff (*other teams have their own arrangement with their manager*) working away from their normal office location(s). This is to act as a check in / check out and is intended to ensure all our staff returned home at the end of a day.

The Environmental Data team use "Get Home Safe" for its daily check in and overdue staff procedures. The dashboard can be viewed here: https://hrc2016.gethomesafe.com/



Normal Operation

When working in the field each team member will use the "Get Home Safe" app. From our smart phones we will start an activity filling it out with details of our trip / plan for the day and who is with us. Examples: "Eastern day in the field", or "SoE Helicopter Lakes"). We will choose either a "Countdown" timer or a "Recurring Check In". The Recurring check in is the preferred option for activities where you will be in good cell phone reception. In this mode you can select for example a 3 hourly check in. Every time you check in either with a note or simple I am ok, the timer will be reset. For some trips an expected return is best in which case the Countdown method may be the best option (choose a number of hours that should see you safely back).

A good guide for using the get home safe app can be found here:

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

https://ghs-public-assets.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/GHS_User+Guide_GetHomeSafe+App.pdf

Planning

Each team will be responsible for their day to day operation and work planning. This includes looking after each other to check up when staff are overdue. This broad plan will be communicated to the wider Environmental Data (ED) team through the recurring Monday morning "tool box" meetings. These meetings are to detail the workload for the week and also any Safety & Wellbeing issues normally these will occur 08:45 every Monday. Occasionally these will be postponed e.g. when there is a team meeting on the day, or an adverse weather event.

On any given day each team (vehicle heading out) should have a point of contact (**POC**), get home safe adds some resilience to the system enabling others in the wider team to be alerted if your POC becomes unavailable.

Equipment

All Environmental department vehicles must contain the following gear:

- Sufficient PPE (personal) gear for intended work – waders, wet weather gear etc.
- 2 x inflatable lifejackets
- 2 x high vis vests (working on road sides)
- 360 degree all round flashing beacons
- "Road Inspection" sign with adequate mounting
- First Aid Kit
- Fire Extinguisher
- Personal Locater Beacon (**PLB**)
- VHF Mobile radio, with Environmental Data frequencies
- E-Road with GPS Tracking
- Cell phone with Get Home Safe App running. (staff issued)

4WD Environmental department vehicles must also contain the following gear:

- **A**ll **T**errain tires (AT's at the course treat end of the range) with sufficient tread for off road use
- Vehicle recovery kit (recovery hitch, bow shackle, snatch strap)

When pool vehicles are used (exempt when travelling to a "non-field" event, e.g. meeting), then a mobile grab bag must be taken which contains a SPOT and VHF Mobile radio. Remember to note the

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

pool vehicle details in the get home safe trip.

Staff working away from their vehicles

If staff are required to leave their vehicle (>100 meters), then they must have one of the following on their person (effective for the working environment):

- PLB or EPIRB
- Cell phone
- VHF Handheld radio, with Catchment Data frequencies
- SPOT
- If visiting a non-hydro site, staff are also required to leave a note on the vehicle dash board that identifies where they are going and what time they expect to return or alternatively add this as a note in the Get Home Safe check in.

Please note the following limitations of our safety the equipment:

SPOT *– suited for personal locator messaging. To improve message delivery, need to be stationary with clear view of sky for 20 minutes. (May not get a message out if simply traveling with it).*

PLB or EPIRB *– can only be used when emergency situation prevails. If button is pushed, the Emergency Services (rescue helicopter) will come.*

VHF radio *– only works if you have coverage of an Environmental Data repeater. PTT voice. VHF works on line of site from repeater, or other hand set when on simplex channels.*

E-Road *– only useful if the vehicle has One NZ coverage. Not to be relied on in an isolation for emergency tracking someone. Good for checking where they have been before losing coms potentially.*

Cell phone *– same as above. However, Wi-Fi connections at some remote sites allow messaging, email, face time calls etc. From Late 2024 we should also be able to text via satellite outside of cell phone coverage areas.*

Get Home Safe *– Same as above (requires cellular coverage) however the overdue alerts are sent from the cloud not from the device. Location services must be set to "always" to enable this app to track your location. Using a VPN connection during the day (e.g. to check loggernet) does turn off the location services and stops the get home safe app tracking. Once you have used a VPN and turned it off, please*

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

reopen the get home safe app and check in to start updating the position again.

***Get Home Safe with in-reach** – If you are travelling out of cellular coms then take an in-reach satellite tracker (selected in your GHS app). This way messages and tracking will continue no matter where you are.*

Get Home Safe

Get Home Safe, has been introduced because we want all of you to get home safe after a day's work. This tool not only has a great dashboard to see where our teams are, but proves it worth when staff are overdue. Not only does it alert your team members with your last reported location, but also a summary of your planned work for the day, Get Home Safe also escalates to other users when no one has started looking for you within 15 minutes and again at 30 minutes. Each team can be configured to suit their requirements. Example:

Notification Times

Configure alert notification times for team leaders...Read more

Team Leader	+0 min	+15 min	+30 min
Andrew Swanney	☑	☑	☑
Brent Watson	☑	☑	☑
Craig Grant	☐	☐	☑
David Brown	☑	☑	☑
Evan Lloyd	☐	☐	☑

Get Home Safe has been configured so when an alert goes out, members of your team and all team leaders will get notified at the required escalation time. Logging into the dashboard your team members can:

- Remind you to cancel the app
- Phone you from the App / no need to look for phone numbers
- See your last recorded location and battery status
- See what your planned work for the day was, and any check-ins that you completed
- Plan to come and assist you in the event something has gone wrong through the day.

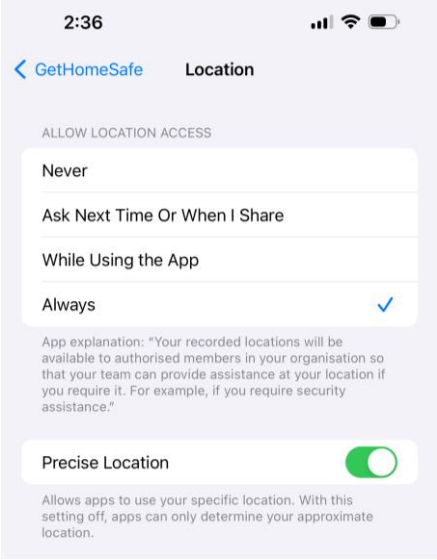
Once you have completed your day and finished your run in Get Home Safe:

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

- **All tracking stops, to protect your privacy the app no longer tracks you.**
- Your peers and manager can see you completed your day and got “home” safely
- A handy report can be viewed of your day.

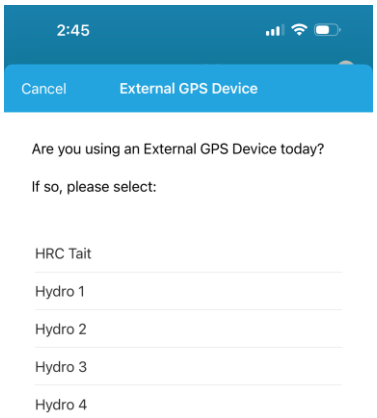
New Staff and when you get a new device or sometimes after an IOS update



As a minimum all staff while working in the field shall have get home safe running on their phone.

Ensure location services for Get Home Safe are set to “**Always**”.

Set the get home safe run up on the day to either be “Recurring” check in’s (e.g. every 3 hours), or to an end time where by you should be back home / finished for the day but not late at night.



If you are going out of cell phone coms during the day please take an In-reach satellite tracker with you, and with select it within your Get Home Safe App at the start of the day.

Your responsibilities working in the field

Each staff member should at all times be looking after their Health and safety and also those working with them. When going out in the field Get Home safe will be running with enough of a summary of your work plan to let others know where to start looking if something goes wrong. When you return to the office please finish the get home safe trip.

- Ensure all safety equipment required for the day is taken with you and used correctly
- Ensure adequate clothing including but not limited to rain wear, warm clothes, waders

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

- Ensure Get Home safe is running with location services on and set to "Always"
  - Recording what sort of work is happening today
  - Who you are with
  - What vehicle you are in if not your normal vehicle
  - Set to recurring check in or a time you will be back in the office / home
- Organized a Point of contact (normally within your team), who is not in your vehicle
- Check in, extend or Finish your GHS run throughout the day

Point of Contact (POC) expectations

The POC for a staff member can work in the field also (not in the same vehicle), as long as they are able to communicate/respond with their staff and contact the office. If the POC is required to leave coverage or otherwise no longer be able to respond, then a replacement POC must be organised for the staff members, and communicated to them.

- Will be aware of the planned activity for the day and when staff should be checking in or returning.
- The 'Emergency Procedures' will be strictly followed, if running late for check in time. No more than 1 hour shall pass after the check-in time has expired (note one extra hour's grace has been added for being late to check in in the middle of the day), before the POC escalates this to Horizons Regional Council 'emergency procedures'. Refer to the table at the front of this procedure.
- POC to escalate / inform management once an overdue person has not checked and no contact has been made with the person
- POC can update GHS app for others from the dashboard.

Note: you can as POC extend the timer or complete a run for your staff from the dashboard: https://hrc2016.gethomesafe.com/login

Manager / Team Leader expectations

Once a POC has escalated or after 30 minutes of a staff member being overdue, they shall ensure we are doing all we can to locate and contact the overdue staff. Things to consider:

- Is there another Horizons vehicle nearby (check on E Road) even if it is another department?
- Consider contacting their emergency contacts to see if they have heard anything / perhaps they have made it home.
- If it is a boat contact the coastguard *500. Also refer: https://tqm.horizons.govt.nz/Hydrology/Maritime/index.htm

© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

(includes details of the vessels to help in a search)

- Staff emergency contact list: \\ares\Hydrology\Hydrology Sites\General Site Information\Hydrology Staff Emergency Contact List.docx
- Once the staff have been overdue by 60 minutes escalate to General Manager.
- Initiate HRC organizational Emergency Management response
- http://intranet/UserFiles/Images/Emergency%20Management/P-EMDO-Guide.pdf
- Call the police 111 within three hours as per guidelines.

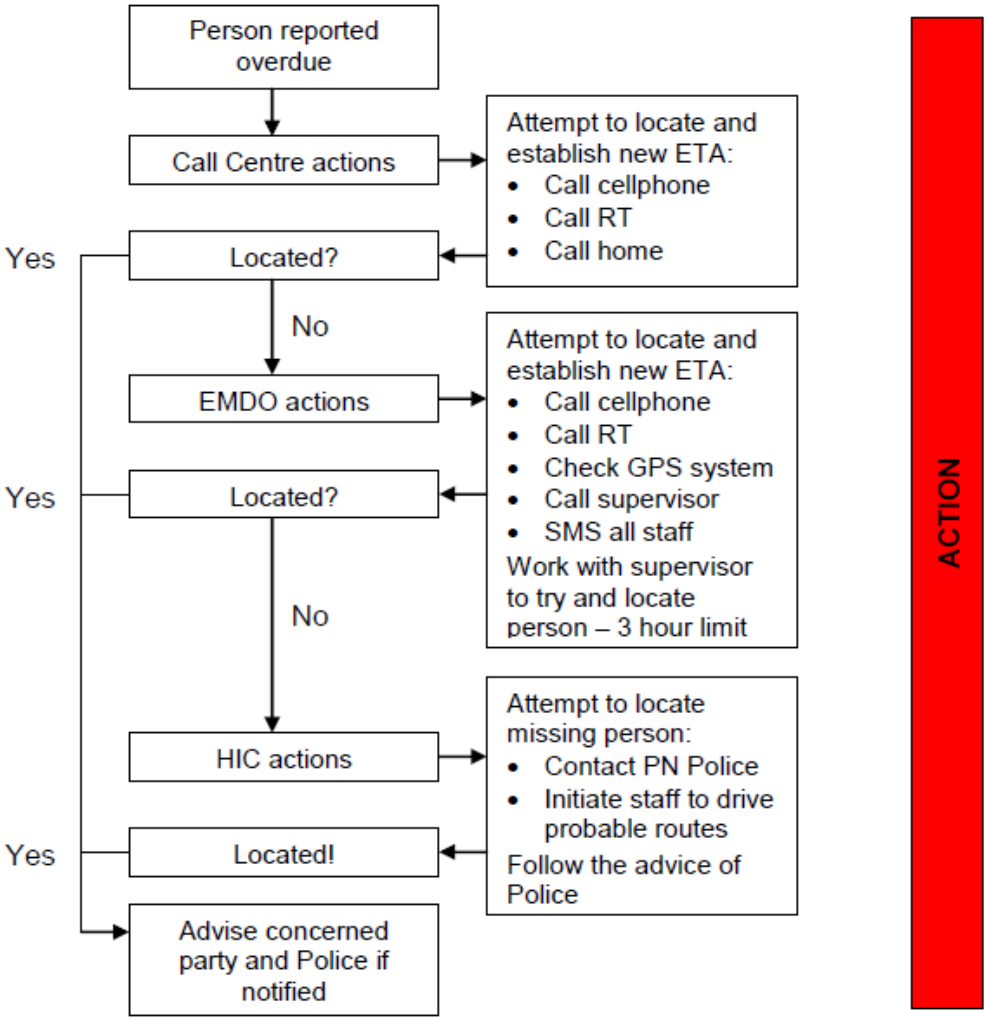
© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

Below is a COPY of H&S manual for reference ideally look for most recent version.

18. Overdue staff member

Should a staff member be reported as overdue (particularly after hours), the Call Centre may contact the EMDO to follow up. The following flow diagram is indicative of actions that may be taken.



© Horizons Regional Council 2025

Working in Field (Project and Data Team) / Overdue procedures

A staff member becomes overdue when they are more than 30 minutes past the estimated time of arrival (ETA). Some flexibility is provided during working hours, but after hours the deadlines should be observed. If the Call Centre is unable to quickly locate the staff member and amend their eta, this will be passed to the EMDO. All reasonable efforts should be made to track the staff member down. Options include:

- Contacting their supervisor,
- Sending a SMS to Council cell phones asking if anyone knows the whereabouts of the person to call in,
- Using E road to locate their vehicle (if on the system),
- Checking if they were using a SPOT tracking device and check whether that unit is operating and its last known position.

If a person is more than three hours overdue, contact should be made with one of the Council Incident Controllers and executive direction sought. The person's family should be informed of actions being taken to locate the overdue staff member.

Notes about the VHF radios

Vehicle radios will be operating on Slot1, and connected to the Environmental Data Crosswire Dispatch Software and base radio in the office. This software is setup in the Catchment Data office beside the Telemetry room and anyone in the office should be able to hear your PTT voice coming through the base radio. Other Catchment Data trucks that are in radio coverage (of any repeater) should also hear your voice call, as the repeaters are linked together and rebroadcast voice calls.

If talking on a hydro site radio, then the voice will come through the radios inside the telemetry room.

© Horizons Regional Council 2025