

Category 5 Standard

S5265 Workplace Aggression and Violence Standard

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 London Underground (LU) fully recognises the potentially damaging effects of aggression and violence in any form against individuals, work performance and the organisation as a whole and is determined to take action to deal with the issue. The purpose of this standard is to outline the requirements of LU in support of this company policy with the objectives of:
- I. reducing the risks to employees from aggression and violence;
 - II. protecting employees from all forms of aggression and violence whenever possible;
 - III. providing appropriate aftercare to employees who have been subjected to aggression and violence;
 - IV. ensuring that employees are aware of and fulfil their responsibilities to protect themselves against workplace aggression and violence, including the avoidance of initiating and / or provoking aggressive or violent incidents.

2 Scope and definition

- 2.1 This Standard applies to London Underground operational staff only.

- 2.1.1 Anybody who deals directly with the public may face aggressive or violent behaviour. They may be sworn at, threatened or even attacked. Additionally, this may be racially/religiously aggravated if, for example, at the time of the incident or immediately before or afterwards, there is a demonstration of hostility towards the victim based on the victim's race, colour, nationality, religion or ethnic origin. Aggressive and violent behaviour may also be aggravated through other prejudicial forms such as homophobic/transgender abuse.

2.2 Workplace Aggression and Violence

LU makes a clear distinction between workplace aggression and workplace violence as follows:

2.2.1 Definition of Workplace Aggression

LU defines workplace aggression as incidents in which persons are abused either verbally and/or through gestures in circumstances relating to their work, involving an explicit or implicit threat to their safety, wellbeing or health.

See section 6.1 for the definition of verbal abuse/abusive gestures

2.2.2 Definition of Workplace Violence

LU defines workplace violence as incidents in which persons are threatened and/or physically assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.

See section 6.1 for the definition of threat and assault.

2.2.3 Definition of the LU workplace

The workplace is defined as any LU property, i.e. station, train, office, rolling stock depot or work premises, any non-LU station served by LU trains, and any other premises or sites visited by an LU employee while at work.

3 Requirements

- 3.1.1 LU deplores aggression and violence to its employees and recognises that aggression and violence is not an acceptable part of any job, nor is it the duty of any employee to accept violent behaviour towards them. LU will therefore afford all reasonable assistance to enable them to carry out their duties without fear of aggression and/or violence. It will take steps to reduce the risk of workplace aggression and violence to its employees to a level that is as low as reasonably practicable.
- 3.1.2 The additional stress caused where aggression and violence is racially aggravated, or aggravated by any other prejudicial factors, will be fully recognised.
- 3.1.3 LU acknowledges both the risks to its employees from workplace aggression and violence and its obligation to minimise these risks. As a result it will maintain an integrated organisational approach to tackling workplace aggression and violence and, in consultation with the LU WVWG, will ensure that an Aggression and Violence Reduction Action Plan is maintained and constantly updated for this purpose.
- 3.1.4 Employees are required to avoid initiating or provoking aggressive and violent situations in dealing with customers, contractors and fellow employees.
- 3.1.5 LU will provide appropriate learning interventions on dealing with workplace aggression and violence. These will be given to all operational staff on induction into the organisation and will be supplemented through refreshment at appropriate intervals determined by risk assessment.
- 3.1.6 LU will take all steps reasonably possible to ensure that individuals who assault employees in the workplace are brought to justice and, where appropriate, provide support and / or legal assistance to employees involved in court action arising from workplace assault situations. A joint London Underground/British Transport Police Workplace Violence Unit will be maintained to assist in this process.
- 3.1.7 Measures will be taken to investigate the causes of workplace aggression and violence, both at individual level in order to ensure that incidents are properly investigated, where appropriate in conjunction with the British Transport Police, and within industry more generally in order to identify actions which may reduce the incidence of verbal abuse, threat and physical assault.

4 Responsibilities

4.1.1 All Employees

- I. To understand and accept their responsibility to take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and other people by avoiding situations which may give rise to aggressive and violent behaviour and to avoid fuelling situations which may give rise to aggressive and violent behaviour.
- II. To follow appropriate guidelines for dealing with potentially dangerous situations.
- III. To report incidents immediately to their manager or supervisor and to the British Transport Police where appropriate.
- IV. To provide prompt and accurate information to their manager or supervisor upon request concerning the circumstances in which incidents arose and how they progressed in order to assist in fact-finding. This includes the provision of written reports.

4.1.2 All Managers as appropriate to their areas of responsibility

- I. To encourage employees to report incidents immediately to their supervisor or manager and to ensure that they are reported to the Police, where appropriate, and recorded through the electronic Incident Report Form procedure.
- II. To monitor incidents of aggression and violence and abuse against staff, to carry out investigations into such incidents in order to establish their proper cause and to provide feedback to staff victims as appropriate.
- III. To arrange counselling, if requested, for those who have been involved in violent incidents; this may be particularly relevant where the aggression/violence has been racially aggravated, or aggravated by any other prejudicial factors.
- IV. To ensure that, where employees are on sick leave as a result of a workplace physical assault, they are given adequate support and advice regarding their rights and responsibilities in relation to receipt of assault pay from the company and compensation claims to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority.
- V. To work collaboratively with the British Transport Police to ensure that as far as possible those responsible for carrying out threats and assaults are brought to justice; this may include, where appropriate, the provision of resources through TfL's Legal Services to enable individuals to seek justice through the courts.
- VI. To ensure that workplace aggression and violence is included within the LU health and safety framework for risk assessment and to provide and implement measures to reduce the risk from aggression and violence, encompassing working procedures and emergency action plans.
- VII. To ensure that the problems of workplace aggression and violence are fully considered in the design and lay-out of the physical environment and in the implementation of working practices and procedures, particularly where changes are involved.
- VIII. To develop and implement guidelines for dealing with potentially dangerous situations and facilitate and ensure the attendance of relevant employees at learning interventions.

4.1.3 HR Managers

- I. To provide advice and guidance as required to managers on issues relating to individual employees who have been subjected to aggression and violence in the workplace.
- II. When providing advice and guidance, to take steps to ensure that factors such as additional stress and any legal implications are taken into consideration where violence has been racially aggravated, or aggravated by any other prejudicial factors.

4.1.4 HR Policy Manager

- I. To review the effectiveness of this Standard and audit compliance with the requirements stated therein.



5 Supporting and other relevant documents

- Company Employment Policy
- Code of Conduct Standard
- Workplace Aggression and Violence: Your individual Guide to its Management and Prevention (also known as the On-line booklet)
- Company Management system

6 Appendix – informative references

6.1 Definitions

6.1.1 Verbal abuse

Verbal abuse and/or abusive gestures are defined as insulting and/or offensive comments and is included in the description of **workplace aggression** provided that the insulting and/or offensive comments are directed at an individual, personally, who perceives them as threatening to their safety, wellbeing or health.

6.1.2 Threat

A threat is a declaration of intention to harm or injure and is included in the definition of **workplace violence** provided that the threat is personal to the individual, is specific to the individual's safety, wellbeing or health and that the person making the threat is perceived by the individual to be capable of carrying it out.

6.1.3 Assault

An assault is an act of violence that results in physical contact.

6.1.4 Workplace Violence Working Group

A quarterly management/trade union working group set up as part of the LU machinery for health and safety. The group is chaired by a stations Performance Manager and reports to the LU Health & Safety Forum. Its two principal aims are to encourage a joint management and trades union approach to reducing the risk of staff assaults and to ensure that staff who are assaulted are given appropriate help and support.

6.2 Other Information

6.2.1 Classification of workplace aggression and violence incidents

6.2.2 In accordance with standard practice within the railway industry, London Underground will classify incidents of workplace aggression and violence into the three categories of verbal abuse, threat or assault. In order to avoid double counting, incidents which start out as verbal abuse and progress to threat and/or to assault will always be categorised at the higher level.

6.3 Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are created:

- a) within London Underground's Glossary of Terms (1-622) (a Category 1 Standard);

- b) from published sources that are clearly identified.

Abbreviation	Definition	Source
LU	London Underground	a
TfL	Transport for London	a

6.4 Definitions

The following topic specific definitions are created:

- a) within London Underground's Glossary of Terms (1-622) (a Category 1 Standard);
 b) from published sources that are clearly identified.

Term	Definition	Source
Verbal abuse	Verbal abuse is defined as insulting and offensive comments and is included in the description of workplace aggression provided that the insulting and offensive comments are directed at an individual, personally, who perceives them as threatening to their safety, wellbeing or health.	b
Threat	A threat is a declaration of intention to harm or injure and is included in the definition of workplace violence provided that the threat is personal to the individual, is specific to the individual's safety, wellbeing or health and that the person making the threat is perceived by the individual to be capable of carrying it out.	b
Assault	Assault is an act of violence that results in physical contact.	b

6.5 Person accountable for the document

Person accountable for the document
Aidan Harris – Workplace Violence Unit Manager

6.6 Document history

Issue no	Date	Changes	Author
5-265 A1	October 2006	New standard authorised for use	L. Arwood
S5265 A2	September 2012	As per DRACCT No. 00425, 5-265 A1 updated in line with recent legislation (Equality Act)	Nicki Selling
S5265 A3	December 2015	As per DRACCT No. 04289	Aidan Harris