

Joint DRC/HSC statement on overarching principles of health and safety management and disability

We believe that health and safety law and its implementation is in the interests of all employees, whether disabled or non-disabled, and of the employer. Disabled people should expect effective and enabling risk management in the workplace.

Health and Safety law and the Disability Discrimination Act when used appropriately will work together to increase the employability and retention of disabled people. A positive and sensible approach to risk management can and should in most circumstances encourage the inclusion of disabled people in the workplace.

Risk assessment should not focus unduly on an individual's disability. It should look more broadly at the overall demands of the work and how best to manage associated risk.

We want:

- employers to develop a working environment in which employees feel safe and supported to disclose and discuss its impact (including potential barriers to engagement, development and advancement within the workplace) on the management of their disability or long term health condition;
- employees to work collaboratively with employers to help manage risk and to discuss positively with their employer approaches to making reasonable adjustments;
- the findings of risk assessments to provide clear recommendations wherever appropriate on how reasonable

adjustments and timescales for implementing them are to be built into successful risk management.

Health and safety should never be used as a false excuse to justify discriminatory treatment. It will be the exception rather than the rule to exclude disabled people from particular jobs and tasks.