



Annex 5 to Group Directive K 1:

Guide to Mental Health Protection

1 Introduction

Roche strives to provide its employees with a healthy working environment and, if necessary, to take appropriate corrective measures to improve employee health. Group Directive K1 provides basic guidance for local managers on ways to protect staff from health risks at the workplace. It refers to a very broad spectrum of risks including those that are chemical, biological, ergonomic and physical (noise, vibrations, temperature, radiation) in nature. In view of the character of the company's business, Directive K1 is particularly focused on working safely with chemical hazards.

The world of work is undergoing a far-reaching structural change which for many workers entails substantial modifications with respect to working hours, organization of work and workplace stress. As a result, the risk to health from undue psychological stress is becoming more apparent. Workplace stress experienced by the individual rarely leads directly to psychiatric disorders, but rather gives rise primarily to psychosomatic signs and symptoms such as back pain, high blood pressure or stomach trouble. We can thus assume that the significance of these symptoms in occupational health is much greater than that reflected by the statistics (e.g. on absences) alone. As physical and mental health are connected, it seems prudent to approach mental health protection in the same manner that traditional health protection measures have been addressed – using the steps outlined in Directive K1.

Mental health protection does create some unique challenges. For example, the genesis of mental illness is often complex and can hinge on a number of factors. It is therefore difficult, and often even impossible, to establish a direct causal link between a mental illness and a person's workplace. Moreover, unlike other workplace hazards, the socio-cultural context also plays a role in the individual assessment of psychological stress. This is why, in contrast to "classic" influencing factors (e.g. noise, radiation, and chemical exposures), there are no universally accepted threshold values in the evaluation of psychological stress. The important step is therefore the systematic risk assessment, which must be based on local experience in order to derive appropriate improvement measures, if needed. This annex has been developed as a tool for local plant management to use to fulfil the risk assessment requirement in a professional and efficient way.

2 General Principles

According to Directive K1, the following measures should be applied to provide employees with protection from workplace health hazards:

- Written assessment of workplace health risk
- Elimination or appropriate reduction of the risk
- Provision of information to the workforce

Directive K1 is applied based on the principle of prevention; in other words, preventive measures aimed at eliminating or reducing risks to health are implemented based on a risk analysis, and not as a reaction to adverse health-related events. To enable a healthy workplace, job-related psychological stress must be integrated into the occupational health protection framework along with all other health risks. A workplace risk analysis should serve as the foundation for this effort. Provision of information and training to all employees, and particularly to those in supervisory positions, is especially important in connection with



mental health as the psychological stress experienced by the individual is highly subjective, and may manifest itself in a variety of ways.

3 Written assessment of workplace health risk

An evaluation of risks to mental health is an integral part of any workplace risk assessment. This assessment captures parameters for so-called "psychological stress", i.e. any ascertainable influence from external sources that has an impact on the mental state of the worker. However, within the context of risk assessments, psychological stress is only relevant in cases where it may lead to a risk to health. For example, poorly organized work processes, frequent and unplanned interruptions of working routine or a lack of opportunities to receive support or share information with colleagues and line managers have been proven to have negative effects on the health of employees.

For every job function (i.e., the routine set of tasks or activities undertaken by all persons in that position), the specific psychological stress factors need to be investigated. These can vary considerably depending on culture, sector, plant, workplace and nature of work. The unique aspects of the work to be considered can usually be classified into the following categories: work content, work organization, social factors and work environment:

Area	Examples
Content of work	Completeness of task Leeway Variety Information/information supply Responsibilities Challenges, level of qualification needed Emotional strain
Organization of work	Working hours; quantity of work Workflows; time pressure Amount of flexibility required Communication/cooperation
Social factors	Support from colleagues or line managers Culture of interaction among staff
Working environment	Physical and chemical factors Workplace and structuring of information Tools

Additional details on these aspects can be found in Annex 7.2

There are many methods for assessing the risk of psychological stress. Tried and tested tools include, for example, anonymous or non-anonymous surveys (questionnaires; see example in 7.1), observation of work situations and conditions, observational (i.e. "on the job") interviews and moderated group discussions (e.g. workshops). No specifications or strict recommendations can be made regarding the conduct of risk assessments. The approach adopted should be tailored to fit the site's own specific concerns and structures. In practice this means that sites need to specify and apply their own individual methods and criteria for identifying psychological stress factors. Each site should identify the approach that is best suited to their local situation (sector, cultural area, etc.), and this is often best done with assistance from external advisers. An exchange of experience with comparable sites within the Roche Group, or from other companies, can also be useful.



Once the psychological stress factors have been identified, they need to be evaluated for every group of jobs/tasks. However, as there are no universally accepted threshold values, or safe levels, for psychological stress, quantification can only be performed on a "relative" basis by measuring stress factors using empirical values, or by estimating their strength in comparison to other workplaces. For example, within a site we can distinguish between workplaces with relatively high, medium and low risk to mental health. This quantitative risk ranking for the workplace should then be used as the foundation for prioritizing corrective and preventive measures.

4 Elimination or Appropriate Reduction of Risk

According to the principle of giving priority to prevention, measures for eliminating/reducing risk should be adopted pre-emptively, and not only in response to cases of mental problems that have already arisen. It is of course preferable that risk-reducing measures be implemented in those areas where they are most urgently needed i.e., where the greatest risk is perceived.

In the absence of universally valid threshold values for the individual stress parameters, it is the reaction of the employees which can serve as an indicator of high psychological strain. Specific events suggesting that the stress situation among employees could be critical are, for example:

- a high rate of sick leave
- high personnel fluctuation
- a large number of employees on restricted duties
- quality problems; impaired performance
- poor working atmosphere
- lack of communication
- frequent conflicts
- instances of bullying.

Measures for eliminating or reducing stress factors must be derived from and implemented according to the specific workplace situation, or the conditions associated with the specific activity. Active communication from the employees is essential, as typically most psychological stress factors experienced arise in the individual's own work area, e.g. badly structured workflow, communication problems, poor management behaviour or a lack of support between colleagues.

Measures for reducing these kinds of stress factors may include:

- Provision of a quiet workplace of sufficient dimensions without acoustic and visual distraction, privacy
- Avoidance of frequent interruptions; allocation of tasks to the appropriate people
- Improvement of communication
- Employee development opportunities
- Changes to the management culture
- Separation of incompatible individuals
- Changes to the work environment and working equipment



Suitable corrective measures must be achievable in their content, implementable within a reasonable period, and verifiable in their implementation. Active input from affected employees is therefore key to the development and implementation of an appropriate plan.

5 Provision of Information to Employees

Providing information to employees on the topic of "mental health" is critical for a number of reasons:

1. Education on the problem: Mental problems and illnesses remain an issue which many people do not like to discuss. People fear social stigmatization, receiving a poor performance review or even that their careers will be impacted. Ongoing, objective education on "mental health" helps raise employee awareness of the problem and can create an atmosphere where people can deal with this subject in an open and relaxed way. In addition, many people are unaware of the links between stress in the modern working world and the resultant physical consequences that may arise.
2. Canvassing for active support: In order to assess the risk of undue psychological stress within a site, employees should be invited to participate in the risk assessment process. In order to obtain broad-based support from the workforce, it is advisable to provide quality information to employees on their options for participation in advance of a planned campaign to ease any reservations people may have on the subject. It must be clear to the employee that the effort is being undertaken as a means of assessing the workplace for risk factors - not for assessing the mental health of the employee. It is important to differentiate the term "psychological stress" from "mental disturbance" or "mental illness" as the latter two terms unfortunately sometimes result in stigmatization and ultimately a negative attitude.
3. Health promotion: Psychological stress arising from a person's work situation is experienced subjectively by each individual and results in individual impacts. Another health promotion strategy is to increase the resilience of the individual employee, e.g. through counselling on stress management, or by directly offering suitable training opportunities (relaxation exercises, yoga, etc.). Such offerings can be very useful to the individual, but should be used as complementary measures. Under no circumstances should they replace the risk assessment and subsequent measures identified for the elimination and reduction of workplace risk described above.

6 Effectiveness Monitoring and Documentation

Occupational health and safety measures require regular monitoring to determine their effectiveness and, if applicable, to identify adaptations to due to changing circumstances. To this end, an assessment – in the sense of a quality control check – is implemented to determine how effective the risk assessment, and the identified mitigation measures, have been in reducing undue stress. This effectiveness monitoring allows us to decide what changes to the approach are needed. To enable this comparison, documentation in the form of a written risk assessment must be developed which includes:

- The outcome of the risk assessment
- The occupational health and safety measures derived from the risk assessment and the corresponding objectives
- The outcome of the monitoring of these measures

Acceptance by the employees of the stress management measures implemented can be viewed as a sign of the success of these measures. Changes in the situation can be



monitored, for example, by conducting regular employee surveys. At the same time, repeated surveys can provide indicators of new stress "hot spots" which may have arisen due to changes in working conditions.



7 Annexes

7.1 Questionnaire: Psychological Stress (Example)

	Yes	Mainly Yes	Mainly No	No
1. Job requirements				
1.1 Does the work consist mainly of repetitive, monotonous tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.2 Does the work require relatively long phases of close attention.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.3 Can the work be performed undisturbed (e.g. without interruptions from telephone calls).....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.4 Is the work emotionally stressful (e.g. due to customer conflicts, equipment failures).....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1.5 Does your work demand too little of you.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Organization				
2.1 Are responsibilities and roles clearly defined.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.2 Are you lacking information, documents, tools needed to perform your duties.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.3 Are tasks set inconsistently/ do they clash.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.4 Are tasks sufficiently plannable and predictable.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.5 Is prompt and adequate training provided for new tasks.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.6 Are your working hours burdensome (e.g. overtime, weekend work, shift work).....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Job prospects				
3.1 Is good performance recognized..	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.2 Is feedback provided on quality of work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.3 Can you see opportunities for advancement and development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.4 Are you worried for your job.....	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



3.5 Do you feel sufficiently informed on operational matters.....

4. Leeway

4.1 Do you feel burdened by technical monitoring and control systems in your workplace..

4.2 Are there opportunities to work with colleagues and line managers to develop solutions to problems.....

4.3 Does your job give you room for maneuver and self-determination (e.g. time management, work steps, choice of tools)....

4.4 Do you feel overloaded by a strictly applied pace of work or time/deadline pressure.....

5. Social climate

5.1 Is there discrimination and unfair treatment (e.g. based on age, gender, nationality, union membership, sexual harassment).....

5.2 Is there tension in the employee/line manager relationship

5.3 Is the mood among the employees strained.....

5.4 Do colleagues support each other in the event of workplace problems.....

5.5 Is the (general) working atmosphere good.....



7.2 Guideline on Counselling and Monitoring for Psychological Stress in the Workplace (Example)

1. Range of characteristics:

Work content and tasks	Possible critical manifestation
1.1 Completeness of task	Job includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only preparatory or• Only executive or• Only monitoring activities
1.2 Leeway	The employee has no influence on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work content• Workload• Working methods/procedures• Order in which tasks are performed
1.3 Variability (variety)	One-sided requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Few and similar work materials and equipment• Frequent repetition of similar actions at short intervals
1.4 Information/ Information supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Too extensive (sensory overload)• Too little (long periods with no new information)• Poorly presented• Incomplete (important information missing)
1.5 Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unclear competencies and responsibility



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- 1.6 Qualifications
- Tasks not in line with qualifications of employee (overload/insufficient challenge)
 - Inadequate orientation/induction for job
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- 1.7 Emotional strain
- Due to experiencing strongly emotional events (e.g. dealing with serious illness, accidents, death)
 - Due to constantly deferring to the needs of others (e.g. customers, patients, students)
 - Due to permanently displaying required emotions irrespective of own feelings
 - Threat of violence from other people (e.g. customers, patients)
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2. Range of characteristics: **Possible critical manifestation**
Work organization

- 2.1 Working hours
- Varying or long working hours
 - Poorly arranged shift work, frequent night work
 - Substantial overtime
 - Inadequate breaks
 - On-call work
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- 2.2 Flow of work
- Time pressure/high-intensity work
 - Frequent disruptions/interruptions
 - Rigid work schedule
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|-----------------------------------|---|
| 2.3 Communication/
cooperation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated single-user workstation • No or only limited access to support from line managers or colleagues • No clearly defined areas of responsibility |
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3. Range of characteristics: Social relationships	Possible critical manifestation
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|----------------|--|
| 3.1 Colleagues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too few/too many social contacts • Frequent disputes and conflicts • Type of conflicts: situations involving social pressure • Lack of social support |
|----------------|--|

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 3.2 Line managers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unqualified managers • Lack of feedback, recognition for achievements • Lack of leadership, lack of support when needed |
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4. Range of characteristics: Work environment	Examples of adverse effects
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|--------------------------------------|--|
| 4.1 Physical and
chemical factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise/lighting/hazardous materials |
|--------------------------------------|--|

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|----------------------|--|
| 4.2 Physical factors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor ergonomics • Heavy physical work |
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|---|--|
| 4.3 Workplace and
structuring of information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfavorable workspaces, lack of space • Inadequate presentation of signals and instructions |
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4.4 Work equipment

- Absence of or unsuitable tools/
work equipment
 - Poor operation or setup of
machines
 - Inadequate software design
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