Risk Assessment

The Directors of the Norman Lockyer Observatory Society (NLOS), here in after referred to as "the Directors" agreed to carry out a risk assessment for the observatory and grounds, including the Domes and other buildings to control the risks to people who use the Observatory, be they NLOS members, members of the public or members who are involved in its maintenance and upkeep.

The Directors do not have a legal requirement to record the findings of this risk assessment as less than five people work at the observatory. Much of the repair and maintenance work at the observatory is done by volunteers. self-employed workers are used from time to time and they have responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as for other issues like the hours they work and their financial and tax arrangements.

However the Directors agreed that there were other sound business reasons to record the findings of the risk assessment, and to take steps to make sure they were brought to the attention of those working, visiting, holding or involved in an event at the observatory.

The Directors delegated the task to produce the risk assessment to two Directors, Brian Ward-Smith and Peter Youd and to produce documentation for approval of the Secretary and the other Directors.

It should be noted that the observatory is a site of historic scientific interest and much of the equipment is early 19th Century and although care is taken to ensure the older equipment is as safe as possible this fact should be borne in mind to all those who operate the vintage telescopes and other equipment.

It should also be noted that that by its very nature as a working observatory much of the time equipment is being used and visitors and members attend in the hours of darkness which carry obvious risks. It is not always possible or appropriate to fully illuminate working areas, however red lights are provided in domes and walkways.

Risk Assessment Process

The risk assessment process followed the guidance in Controlling risks in the workplace:-

1. To identify the hazards, those carrying out the risk assessment:
   1. looked at HSE's website for free health and safety advice and guidance for small businesses
   2. walked around the observatory, the domes, grounds, car park and other areas, noting things that might pose a risk, and
   3. spoke to other NLOS members, and to people who had done jobs at the observatory.
2. The hazards and who could be harmed by them were recorded.
3. The controls in place to manage and mitigate these risks were also recorded which were then compared to the guidance on the HSE's website.
4. the findings of the risk assessment have been put into practice, recording who is responsible for doing what by when and what action was taken, recording the date and when it was done.
5. The findings were discussed at the Board Meeting on 03/10/2016. The Directors decided to put into place all the additional risk controls suggested in the risk assessment. They also decided that the risk assessment would be shown to all workers doing jobs at the observatory and would be made available to all NLOS Members and users of the observatory and its buildings and grounds and that it would be discussed with the representatives of all interest groups of the NLOS and members forum. A copy was also put up in the reception and the members room and on the website. It was further agreed the risk assessment would be reviewed annually, or immediately if any changes occurred to the observatory or how the facilities care used.