

## Radiation Protection Officer (RPO) Service (2019/20):

Secondary schools holding radioactive sources for teaching physics are deemed to be a 'Radiation Employer' and have legal responsibilities relating to this, including appointing an RPA (Radiation Protection Adviser).

CLEAPSS (the School Science Advisory Service) encourages Schools to keep and use the radioactive sources they hold. Practical work in this subject provides a unique opportunity to undertake meaningful investigations at the atomic level.

CLEAPSS provide an RPA at a distance service which can be accessed through Essex County Council (ECC) Corporate Health & Safety as a brokering organisation. Under this scheme ECC H&S is the RPO (not a legal term but convenient term for the role).

There are 2 schemes through which Schools can access the RPO Service from ECC Corporate H&S. **Both** schemes require that Schools have access to CLEAPSS General membership.

In both options the RPO Service ensures you meet your legal responsibilities in managing sources and works in the following way:

- A 'radiation employer' is required to consult with and appoint a competent Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) (competence set by HSE).
- Essex County Council has access to a competent RPA via CLEAPSS.
- A condition of this RPA service is that Essex County Council will be the Radiation Protection Officer (RPO).

### RPO Service Scheme 1 – part of the Corporate Health and Safety Advisory Service:

Where the school buys in to the corporate health and safety service, the RPO service is included as long as the following conditions are met:

- The school must have general membership to the CLEAPSS School Science Advisory Service *and*
- Where the school buys into CLEAPSS through a brokering organisation it must include the additional flat rate annual fee for CLEAPSS locally managed Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) Service.
- An RPO monitoring visit must be undertaken every 3 years at a cost of £200 per visit.
- The School through their appointed Radiation Protection Supervisor (RPS) must follow the advice issued by the RPO, manage sources in line with CLEAPSS Guide L93 and inform the RPO of any changes or incidents relating to the sources.

### RPO Service Scheme 2 – stand-alone RPO service:

If a school does not buy in to the Corporate Health & Safety Service, there is an option for Schools to buy a 'stand-alone' RPO Service. The conditions and cost are as follows:

- The school must have general membership to the CLEAPSS School Science Advisory Service *and*
- The school will also need to have paid the flat rate fee for the CLEAPSS locally managed Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA) Service. The school should be able to purchase this with the general CLEAPSS membership. If the school has not it can be added on to the

cost of the ECC H&S RPO stand-alone service and ECC will then pay this on to CLEAPSS.

- The cost of the stand-alone RPO service is £375 + VAT per pa (£435 + VAT if RPA flat rate needed). This would include an RPO monitoring visit if the school has not had one in the previous 2 years. The RPO would contact the School to agree a mutually agreeable date. If the school has had an RPO monitoring visit within the last 2 years (but not within the last year) and wants a visit this can be done at no additional charge if the School contacts ECC H&S. Note: An RPO monitoring visit every other year should be satisfactory and would not be needed more than once in a year.

### RPO Service:

Whichever way the school buys in to the RPO service it will include the following:

- Maintaining a database of sources held by each establishment. (Schools are required to inform us of any changes and must keep a copy of the register on file).
- Providing advice on the management of sources where schools phone up with queries (or refer to CLEAPSS or RPA as appropriate).
- Ensure that where any advice in relation to the management of radioactive sources is issued by the RPA this is communicated to schools, e.g. new guidance, change in policy / legislation, general advice etc.
- Monitor the management and storage of sources appropriately through visits at appropriate interval / cost dependent on RPO service option. Where visit identifies actions, a report will be issued to the schools RPS.

### Definitions:

▪ RPA	Radiation Protection Adviser. Legally required to be appointed by a Radiation Employer and who holds the competence set by the HSE. Appointed through CLEAPSS under the RPA at a distance model.
▪ RPO	Radiation Protection Officer (Essex County Council). This is not a legal term but a convenient term for the role undertaken. The RPO is the link between the school and the RPA.
▪ RPS	Radiation Protection Supervisor (School Staff – must be member of teaching staff. Preferably head of department / physics or similarly experience teacher)
▪ CLEAPSS	School Science Advisory Service. Essex Schools Service subscribes to CLEAPSS on behalf of all Essex maintained schools. Secondary academies wishing to purchase CLEAPSS can do so via the LA at a discounted rate.