



# Health and Safety Part One Policy

August 2002



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

## Part I - Health & Safety Policy

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## **Valuing our Staff**

Our recent staff survey shows that too many of us are worried that our health and safety at work is compromised by issues such as verbal abuse or excessive working hours.

Oxfordshire County Council has adopted four core values to define the organisation we are and strive to be. One of these values is "Valuing our staff". If we are to live up to this value – as we must – then we must provide a safe and healthy working environment for our staff and others. Not only is this a legal obligation it is also morally right. The Personnel Strategy makes clear, it supports the recruitment, retention and morale of good quality staff, and it is therefore a pre-requisite for the provision of high quality public services.

Managing health and safety is not the preserve of a few specialists. We all share this responsibility. Health and safety management needs to be part of our everyday concerns so that assessment and minimisation of risk is second nature to us all.

Our Health and Safety Policy is a key document. Please make good use of it, and in so doing help make Oxfordshire County Council an outstanding authority – one that values its staff and that its staff are proud to work for.

Richard Shaw  
Chief Executive  
August 2002



**OXFORDSHIRE  
COUNTY COUNCIL**

# General Health & Safety Policy Statement - Part I

## Statement of Intent

Oxfordshire County Council undertakes to fulfil its statutory responsibilities. It aims to provide safe workplaces and safe systems of work for its employees and other persons who may be affected by the work of the Council.

## Methods of Implementation

The Council will provide a Health and Safety Policy, which will be arranged in three parts. Part I sets out policies which relate to the Council as a whole. Part II specifies the organisation and arrangements for putting these into action within services/departments. Part III sets out implementation within individual workplaces.

The Council's responsibility for health and safety will be exercised by the County Councils Management Team within financial resources provided and in accordance with priorities set by the Council.

The County Council Management Team is responsible for the production of countywide policies and guidelines on health and safety, monitoring and co-ordinating the management of health and safety, safety training and the joint consultative process, and the management of the Council's Occupational Health Service.

Directors are responsible for health and safety within their own services/departments, and they will delegate this responsibility to their line managers and supervisors. Chief Officers will appoint Departmental Safety Advisers and designate other competent persons where appropriate, as required by legislation.

Line managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that health and safety policy and arrangements are implemented in the areas and activities under their control. This will include induction of all new employees and communication with existing employees so that they are aware of the health and safety policy and arrangements which affect them in their work.

Departmental Safety Advisers will work together to produce corporate policies and work closely with line managers and supervisors and will provide advice, monitor safety performance and evaluate safety practices within departments.

Employees will be required to:

- co-operate in ensuring their own and their colleagues' safety;
- comply with all safety rules;
- keep their own workplace free from unnecessary hazards;
- report to their line manager or supervisor any hazards, injury, accident, dangerous occurrence or "near miss" they encounter;
- use or wear personal protective equipment and clothing issued, as instructed.

All plant, materials and working methods used by the Council will be of a suitable standard as prescribed by regulations or codes of practice.

The Council will provide necessary health and safety facilities, safety equipment and clothing, information, training and supervision to ensure a safe system of work.

The Council will make arrangements for consultation with Safety Representatives and Safety Committees.

Review of Policy

This and other health and safety policies will be reviewed on a regular basis.

**The Council has policies on the following subjects:**

- Risk Assessment 2002
- Communication & Training 2002
- Health 2002
- Safety Management of Workplaces & Sites 2002
- Electricity at Work 2002
- Emergencies, Accidents & Incidents 2002
- Manual Handling 2002
- Premises, Substances & Equipment 2002
- VDU/DSE Use 2002

County Personnel Officer	01865 810280
Occupational Health	01865 815421

**Safety Adviser**

Chief Executive's	01865 815430
Cultural Services	01865 810290
Education Service	01865 428188 01865 780540 (County Facilities Management)
Environmental Services	01865 815074
Fire Service	01865 855214
Social Services	01865 854423
Trading Standards	01865 815985
Treasurer's	01865 815311

Queries on health and safety matters should be referred to the responsible line manager or where necessary to the Departmental Safety Adviser.

# RISK ASSESSMENT

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 This section relates to the implementation of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), and other relevant statutory provisions. It should be read in conjunction with the Approved Codes of Practice issued by the Health and Safety Commission.

## **Commitment**

- 1.2 Oxfordshire County Council is committed to the development of an effectively planned, organised and controlled approach to Health and Safety at Work. The Council also recognises that risk assessment is the cornerstone of sound management practice which aims to anticipate and so reduce the occurrence of accidents and incidents at work throughout the organisation. Towards these ends, and in order to comply with legislation, the Council undertakes to apply risk assessment to all work activities throughout its operations, in accordance with the HSC Approved Code of Practice. Further guidance is set down in Health & Safety Practical Guidance Notes. Risk assessment will be a key consideration in decisions on resource allocation and priority setting.

## **Training**

- 1.3 The Council undertakes to provide adequate prior and ongoing training for all senior and line managers to enable them to properly carry out their duties and responsibilities relating to risk assessment.

## **Responsibility for the Risk Assessment Process**

- 1.4 The County Council Management Team is responsible for countywide policy on risk assessment.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of Directors to identify line managers who are responsible for the risk assessment of each work activity and to ensure that each identified line manager is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities and has received adequate training to carry these out.
- 1.6 The process of risk assessment must be undertaken by a person who is familiar with the work activity concerned and the hazards it presents. This entails that in the great majority of cases the risk assessment will be undertaken by the departmental/service line manager of the work activity in accordance with the corporate approach and he/she will be responsible for maintaining adequate records.
- 1.7 In the more complex situations advice and assistance from more specialist officers, including Departmental Health and Safety Advisers, will be required to assist in carrying out the risk assessment.
- 1.8 Line managers are responsible for informing each employee (including all temporary workers and work experience workers) of the outcomes of the appropriate risk assessment(s) relevant to his/her work activities as part of his/her induction and instruction on the working practices required in carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the job.

- 1.9 Employees have a duty to inform their line manager or departmental nominated competent person(s) of any hazard to health and safety presented by a work activity and also of any shortcomings in the employer's protection arrangements for health and safety. Similarly employees must cooperate with instructions and guidance given and take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for those who may be affected by their actions or omissions..

### **Review of Risk Assessments**

- 1.10 Line managers are responsible for regularly reviewing risk assessments and maintaining appropriate

records in accordance with the relevant Part II policy requirements. Review of risk assessments must be carried out where circumstances relating to the work activity change e.g. when new technology is introduced or working practices are amended. In any event risk assessments will be reviewed annually.

## **2. Guidance**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 Health & Safety legislation establishes risk assessment as the key element in the process of successful health and safety management. This is emphasised in Oxfordshire County Council's policy on risk assessment, which should be read in conjunction with this guide.
- 2.2 Risk assessment requires Managers and Supervisors to be proactive and actually identify risks – and, more importantly, to do something about them! Risk assessment is also basically sound management practice. Used properly, it can anticipate and so reduce the occurrence of accidents and incidents, leading to a safer, healthier and more productive workforce. It is a far more efficient and cost effective way of dealing with health and safety problems than merely responding to accidents as and when they occur.

### **Who Should Do It?**

- 2.3 The role of senior managers is to ensure that risk assessment is carried out in accordance with the requirements.
- 2.4 It is Oxfordshire County Council's policy that the risk assessment process is carried out by the line manager of the area concerned since it is they who have the required thorough knowledge of the work activity and the hazards associated with it. They are also able to measure the outcomes of the risk assessment process and are best placed to monitor and review the process.
- 2.5 The County Council is responsible for the provision of adequate training in risk assessment techniques to assist line managers in carrying out their responsibilities.
- 2.6 In more complex situations the advice and assistance of specialists may be needed.

### **Legal Obligations**

- 2.7 Under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) employers must undertake a "suitable and sufficient" assessment of:

- (a) the risks to the health and safety of employees to which they are exposed whilst at work; and
- (b) the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employment arising out of or in connection with the work of the Council.

This will serve the purpose of identifying the measures the employers need to take to comply with their duties under the relevant statutory provisions.

- 2.8 The significant findings of the assessment must be in writing (or recorded in some other way) and an example of a risk assessment record form showing the necessary headings for proper recording is contained in Annex 1. Any particular group especially at risk must be identified. Examples of special groups at risk may be children, young persons, women of child bearing age, people with special needs, trainees including work experience, or new employees. There may be particular circumstances which place certain groups at risk, e.g. employees who are significantly taller or shorter than average height may be at risk themselves, or place others at risk, when lifting in pairs.
- 2.9 Risk assessment is a continuous and on-going process. If there are changes which may affect the risk assessment (e.g. introduction of new working methods, new technology, reduction in the numbers of workers, or replacement of equipment) then the assessment needs to be revised. Accidents and incidents may also lead to questions as to whether the original assessment is still valid. In any event risk assessments need to be formally reviewed at regular intervals – annually for most activities.
- 2.10 One suitable and sufficient risk assessment of a work activity should be adequate in dealing with all the potential hazards involved, and separate risk assessments for each aspect should not be necessary.

### **Hazard and Risk**

- 2.11 Assessors need to appreciate the difference between “Hazard” and “Risk”. **Hazard is the potential to cause harm and is present in every work activity. Risk, on the other hand, is the likelihood of that potential being realised, and so the extent of risk will be dependent on a variety of factors.** For example, using a chain saw clearly represents a hazard, and could result in serious personal injury, even death. But the risk will depend on a number of factors, e.g. how well trained is the user, is he/she wearing the correct safety clothing and protective equipment, what degree of supervision is involved, is the work being carried out on the ground or in a tree, how well maintained is the equipment being used. The real risk, in terms of personal injury not just to the user but to other persons who may be affected, will vary with the circumstances.

### **Risk Assessment Process**

- 2.12 The risk assessment process is a pro-active approach. It needs to be tackled in a systematic, logical manner, using an appropriate record sheet, by an assessor who is trained in basic techniques and is familiar with the activity being assessed. Managers should follow the approach set out below and use a record sheet similar to Annex 1. This process will assist in setting priorities and ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately.



### **2.13 Divide the Work Activity into Manageable Components**

Where possible split the work activity being assessed into separate components in order that each part can be adequately assessed. For each component of the work activity, an assessment needs to be undertaken considering the following issues:

### **2.14 What are the Hazards to Health and/or Safety?**

- (a) In order to identify the hazards, it will be necessary to gather information by observing the work activity, and utilising the experience, knowledge and expertise of those involved with it. Past records of incidents, such as accidents and near miss reports, will also be useful. Consideration must be given to the hazards posed to other persons as well as employees. Customers and the general public must be considered, especially for activities carried out in public areas or for situations where the public visit premises.
- (b) In identifying the hazards, consideration needs to be given to what could happen as well as considering what usually happens and what consequences would ensue.

### **2.15 What Risks are there to Employees and Other Persons?**

- (a) A risk assessment identifies the hazards present in a task and estimates the extent of risks involved. Existing precautions need to be taken into account but remember that just because safety rules exist does not mean that everyone adheres to them. Indeed, this process may show that workers are not aware of such rules, or if aware, do not appreciate their importance.
- (b) Some workers may be exposed to particular hazards. For example, for those employees undertaking work around the County, traffic hazards may create a risk, and for certain groups who tend to work alone, the nature of their work may create a hazard from violent members of the public leading to a risk of assault. Absence of communication between lone workers and their base may lead to a risk of injury or illness being undetected.
- (c) Some work places can be subject to generic assessments. For example, rather than every office manager undertaking an assessment, the common factors could be combined into a generic assessment, supplemented by specific information for particular workplaces. This generic assessment must be based on corporate standards.
- (d) A risk to the public may arise from the work of Council employees. Managers should take this into account in their assessments.
- (e) Managers should determine the risk level of a task as a result of the assessment in order to determine whether any further action is necessary. This can be done by giving the task an overall risk rating of High, Medium or Low. If existing preventative methods do not reduce the risks to a low level, then consideration must be given to additional preventative measures. There may be a need for a fuller assessment, involving your Departmental Health & Safety Adviser.
- (f) The risk assessment should, on completion, be included in Part III of the Health & Safety Policy.

(g) The findings of the risk assessment, including any remedial action required, should be communicated to employees so that they are aware of the risks and the preventative measures involved.

(h) Where women of child bearing age are employed, a risk assessment will be carried out and the significant findings addressed in the job description.

### **2.16 Adequacy of Completed Risk Assessment:**

The adequacy of a risk assessment will be tested if, after an incident has taken place, the assessment anticipated such an occurrence and specified the preventative and protective measures required to avoid such an occurrence, or at least reduce the risk of its recurrence to a low level. So if such an incident happened the following questions, amongst others will be asked:

- what was the reason for the incident?
- were all the precautions specified being taken at the time, and if not, why not?
- was all training, supervision, monitoring of health and safety standards and enforcement of safety rules suitable and adequate?
- had the risk assessment been brought to the attention of those involved?

### **Protective Measures : Principles**

2.17 In deciding on protective measures, the managers must apply the following principles:

- (a) Wherever possible, AVOID the risk altogether.
- (b) COMBAT RISKS AT SOURCE, address the cause of the risk.
- (c) Whenever possible, ADAPT WORK to the individual.
- (d) Take advantage of TECHNOLOGICAL, PROCEDURAL and TECHNICAL progress – often makes the work safer and more efficient.
- (e) Ensure effective PROCEDURAL arrangements are in place.
- (f) Integrate risk prevention into overall strategy so that there is a gradual reduction of risk, with priorities (and resources) being directed at greater areas of risk.

Risk assessment involves considerable management commitment. Nevertheless, it can result in significant savings if it successfully identifies the potential causes of accidents and incidents. Once properly completed, it requires regular review and updating as working methods and circumstances change. In any event it is a legal obligation and must be completed – failure to undertake a risk assessment will not only increase the risk of accident but will inevitably lead to enforcement action.

Should you require any further advice or assistance, please contact your Departmental Safety Adviser.

Please remember the following:

1. Break the work activity down into manageable components.
2. Identify the SIGNIFICANT risks liable to arise – disregard the TRIVIAL risks associated with life in general.
3. Ensure you have the RELEVANT INFORMATION – safe working practices, policies, procedures, manufacturer's instructions etc in order that you take account of existing control measures.
4. Ensure that the risk assessments covers any hazardous chemicals, noise and manual handling involved.
5. Can the risk be eliminated altogether, or an alternative method be used to reduce the risk, especially where the risk is considered HIGH?
6. Remember the requirements for supervision, training, instruction and information, and health surveillance.
7. The risk assessment must be repeated if there are significant changes to the work activity eg new equipment, technology or substances etc, or in any event annually.

#### **2.18 5 Steps of Risk Assessment**

1. **Look** for the hazards;
2. **Decide** who might be harmed, and how;
3. **Evaluate** the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done;
4. **Record** your findings;
5. **Review** your assessment from time to time, at least annually, and revise it if necessary.

Risk Assessment Form

Form RA1

Page .... Of ....

NB: If you choose to use another form of record you must ensure that the headings shown here are incorporated.

A.	Activity/Process/Operation	
B.	What are the Health & Safety Hazards?	
C.	What risk do they pose?	Estimate Risk Level H/M/L*
D.	What measures have been taken to reduce risk? (1,4,5,6,7,8,9,10)	Level Achieved H/M/L*
E.	What further action is needed to reduce the risk (state action/specify dates)	

\*H/M/L=High/Medium/Lo

CHECKPOINTS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has all health &amp; safety information been obtained?</li> <li>2. Consider the number of persons exposed.</li> <li>3. Estimate the initial risk level – H/M/L*</li> <li>4. Consider if elimination or safer substitute could be achieved</li> <li>5. Consider all necessary control measures including procedural and technical standards</li> <li>6. Are the above controls to the requirement standard and regularly maintained?</li> <li>7. Have emergency action plans been considered?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Have employees (and other persons) been adequately trained, instructed and informed?</li> <li>9. Has adequate supervision been provided?</li> <li>10. Is health surveillance required?</li> <li>11. What arrangements have been made for monitoring the assessment?</li> <li>12. How often is the assessment reviewed?</li> <li>13. Has the assessment been drawn to the employee's attention?</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

Name of Assessor ..... (11) Signed by ..... (12,13)  
(Premises/Site Manager)

Job Title .....

Date .....

Date .....

Review Date .....

# COMMUNICATION & TRAINING

## **1.Safety Training & Information**

- 1.1 Attention will be given to health and safety in the general programme of staff training. Specialist courses on health and safety will be organised where training needs are identified.
- 1.2 There are many external sources of information on health and safety matters and when information is not available at the workplace, contact should be made with the Departmental Safety Adviser or the County Personnel Officer.
- 1.3 Oxfordshire County Council recognises the key role of appropriate and adequate training in the exercise of its health and safety responsibilities and duties.
- 1.4 Health and Safety training will be provided where necessary as part of the Council's general training programme in order to fulfil its legal obligations, improve managerial effectiveness, promote good health and safety practice at work and prevent injury or hazards to the health of employees and members of the public.

## **Method of Putting This Policy Into Practice**

- 1.5 The Council will carry out this policy by the following means:
  - Directors will identify managers and employees who require health and safety training and will specify and prioritize their training needs based on risk assessment.
  - Training in health and safety has been identified as one of the key competences for all managers.
  - Special attention will be given to the training needs of the nominated competent persons to ensure they are fully equipped to perform their functions. Departmental Health & Safety Advisers will be trained to NEBOSH Part I general certificate or NVQ3, and full-timers will ideally be trained to NVQ 4 or NEBOSH diploma Part II.
  - Special attention will be given to the induction of new and transferred employees, particularly where employees work in hazardous conditions or use potentially dangerous equipment or substances as part of their jobs.
  - Employees will be encouraged to identify their own health and safety training needs and bring these to the attention of their line manager.
  - County Personnel Officer is committed to health and safety training and will provide advice and co-ordinate corporate health and safety training, within the constraints of central budgets.
  - **Directors** and the County Personnel Officer will take steps to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of training and take the necessary action to optimise this within available resources.
  - Health and safety training implications will be considered as part of the introduction of new working practices and health and safety programmes

and will be taken into account in the production of health and safety policies and procedures.

- Refresher training will be provided periodically and special attention will be given to employees who deputise occasionally in this respect.

## **2 Joint Consultation**

### **2.1 Formation of Safety Joint Committees**

2.1.1 It is recognised that:

- (a) the Council will organise joint consultative committees on safety. Where appropriate these will be integrated into the existing consultative machinery.
- (b) the creation of any safety committees (e.g. establishment safety committee) which are additional to the existing central or departmental joint consultative machinery is a matter that should be determined by local joint consultation, taking into account:
  - (i) the size of the working group and/or the establishment or geographical area in which the group works;
  - (ii) whether the different employment groups can be adequately covered by the same committee;
  - (iii) that each duly accredited safety representative need not serve on a safety committee, but each representative should have the facility to refer matters to a member of a committee responsible for safety matters, and the right, on occasion, to attend committee to make representations to his/her employer.
  - (iv) that it may be appropriate to form a special joint safety committee to oversee and review the progress of the implementation of Health and Safety Legislation but that the continuance of such a committee be considered at a later date.
  - (v) that the number of management representatives on a joint safety committee should not exceed the number of employee's representatives, and that the aim should be to keep the total size as reasonably compact as possible.

2.1.2 It is therefore agreed that:

- (a) if an existing central or departmental joint committee assumes responsibility for health and safety matters, such matters must be a separate item on the agenda and in such a position that adequate time for discussion is ensured.
- (b) the constitution and functions of central joint committees assuming health and safety responsibilities should include:
  - (i) designation as the advisory body on all matters related to health, safety and welfare of the employees it represents, to assist the Authority in improving working conditions whenever reasonably practicable.
  - (ii) powers to make recommendations to appropriate Committees of the Council on health, safety and welfare matters.
  - (iii) provision for meetings to be held at least every 3 months, and a procedure for calling special meetings when an urgent matter arises.
  - (iv) adequate representation of all interests, including elected members and safety representatives, safety advisers, line managers and other advisers as either members of, or permanent advisers to, the committee.
  - (v) provision of the opportunity to review the Authority's Health & Safety Policy Statement.

- (vi) recognition of the committee as responsible for assisting in the development of working rules for health and safety, and safe systems of work.
- (vii) reception and consideration of any reports and representations from the Health & Safety Executive, management and trade unions.
- (viii) the right to inspect, when necessary, giving adequate notice in writing, as a committee, workplaces, plant, equipment, materials and health and safety certificates and records.
- (ix) consideration of matters related to health and safety training within the Authority.
- (x) consideration of communication and publicity matters related to health and safety within the Authority.
- (xi) consideration of general matters related to appointment of safety representatives and time-off, while recognising that individual differences should first be referred to the local disputes and grievances procedures.

## **2.2 Safety Representatives**

2.2.1 It is recognised that:

- (a) the Authority as a whole recognises a number of unions even though only one union may represent a particular employment group.
- (b) it is made clear in the Regulations that the appointment of safety representatives is a matter for the recognised trade unions.
- (c) in determining the appropriate number of safety representatives and the time-off each requires to carry out his/her functions and undertake such training as may be reasonable, account must be taken of:
  - (i) size and complexity of the task
  - (ii) level of risk in the work concerned.
  - (iii) numbers of workplaces and employees and whether they can be "grouped" for safety purposes.
- (d) the TUC advises that most safety representatives will be existing workplace representatives or branch officials.
- (e) the TUC Local Government agreed statement indicates that an alternative approach to "grouping" a number of small establishments to be covered by one safety representative would be for a particular category of employee, employed over a geographical area, in a number of establishments or workplaces, to be represented by a single representative.

2.2.2 It is therefore agreed:

joint consultation on the nomination by recognised unions of safety representatives, taking account of Section 1 above, should be by consultation between the appropriate representatives of the Authority with the representatives of recognised unions. Wherever possible this should be through any existing local machinery on which all recognised unions are represented, or an ad hoc body established for this purpose.

## **Functions of Safety Representatives**

2.2.3 It is recognised that:

- (a) employers are required by the Regulations to provide such facilities and assistance as the safety representative may reasonably require in carrying out inspections of the workplace.
- (b) on nomination by the recognised trade union, if the nominee is an existing workplace representative or branch official, he/she may require further facilities and assistance than that previously afforded in respect of his/her industrial relations functions.
- (c) the allocation of specific functions to individual safety representatives will be dependent on their representative status i.e. central or departmental safety representative, or work group or establishment safety representative.

2.2.4 It is therefore agreed:

the affording of facilities and assistance related to the functions of a safety representative nominated by his/her trade union should be formally recognised by a facilities document which specifies all or some of the functions in the following terms:

- (a) to represent the employees in consultation with the employer.
- (b) to investigate and inspect potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace, and to examine the causes of accidents in the workplace.
- (c) to investigate complaints by an employee he/she represents relating to health and safety.
- (d) to represent employees in consultations with inspectors of Health & Safety Executive and of any other enforcing Authority.
- (e) to receive information from inspectors.
- (f) to attend meetings of safety committees to which he/she is elected, or, not being a member of a safety committee, to attend, on occasion, to make representations.
- (g) to inspect the workplace if they have given the employer or his/her representative reasonable notice in writing of their intention to do so and have not inspected it in the previous 3 months; and may carry out more frequent inspections by agreement with the employer.
- (h) where there has been a substantial change in the conditions of work since the last inspection, the safety representatives, after consultation with the employer, shall be entitled to carry out a further inspection of the workplace concerned notwithstanding that 3 months have not elapsed since the last inspection.
- (i) where there has been a statutory notifiable accident or dangerous occurrence in a workplace or a notifiable disease has been contracted there, or new information has been published by the Health & Safety Commission or the Health & Safety Executive relevant to the hazards of the workplace, a safety representative may carry out an inspection of the part of the workplace concerned, providing:
  - (i) it is safe for an inspection to be made.
  - (ii) the interests of the group they are appointed to represent might be involved.



Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, they shall notify the employer of their intention to carry out the inspection.

- (j) safety representatives shall be entitled to inspect any document which the employer is required to keep by virtue of any relevant statutory provision.
- (k) that none of the functions listed above shall be construed as imposing a duty on the representative.

### **Training of Safety Representatives**

2.2.5 It is recognised that:

- (a) there should be progress towards systematic training of nominated safety representatives and accordingly that use should be made of all available training facilities and resources.
- (b) authorities have a duty under the 1974 Act to provide such information, instruction and training as is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety at work of all their employees.
- (c) it is TUC policy that the first priority for unions is to brief safety representatives on their union duties.

2.3 It is therefore agreed that:

- (a) the same joint consultative process involving all recognised trade unions used for consultation on the appointment of safety representatives should also consult, wherever possible, on the systematic training of accredited safety representatives.
- (b) so far as employees who are nominated safety representatives are concerned, the objectives should be to assess jointly the extent to which training needs can be met by:
  - (i) in-Authority courses with management, safety officer and trade union input on course syllabus and content, with advice, assistance (and, where possible, participation) by the Provincial Training Staff, supplemented, where necessary, by
    - (ii) release for TUC day-release courses, and
    - (iii) any other suitable course which may be available.
- (c) the Authority should consult with recognised trade unions on the way in which supervisors might be trained, on the same in-authority courses as safety representatives, on their respective responsibilities in matters related to health and safety at work.

# HEALTH

## **1. Occupational Health**

1.1 The Occupational Health Service provides professional support to all management and advises staff in matters relating to health at work. It operates on a basis of complete professional confidentiality.

### **1.2 Aims**

To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the County Council by:

- assessing the health compatibility of employees and the job to be performed;
- ensuring that employees' health is not harmed by their work or the environment in which they work;
- promoting, maintaining and improving the physical, mental and psychological well being of all employees and assess the balance of these various factors upon the job.

### **1.3 Role**

- (a) Undertaking pre-employment screening and assessment to check the health of employees, with knowledge of the requirements of the job;
- (b) Investigating all cases referred by managers, including prolonged sickness absence or excessive levels of short term absences in line with the Sickness Monitoring and Management Procedure;
- (c) Advising managers on employees returning to work following illness or injury and giving advice on rehabilitation if required;
- (d) Arranging medical examinations of employees suffering from ill health or disability causing impaired work performance;
- (e) Advising managers on current health-related legislation;
- (f) Advising managers on the identification of hazards and controls for health risk at work, including staff immunisation;
- (g) Providing health surveillance of 'at risk' groups of employees to meet legislative and managerial requirements;
- (h) Undertaking environmental monitoring where necessary;
- (i) Providing health education and health promotion relating to health at work;
- (j) Providing a confidential staff counselling service;
- (k) Advising on First Aid Provision;
- (l) Maintaining all records in strict confidence.

### **1.4 Confidentiality**

The Occupational Health Service is confidential. Staff may refer themselves directly or via their line manager. Confidential information is only divulged with the full consent of the employee. In exceptional circumstances where an employee's presence at work constitutes a potential hazard to themselves or

others than their Director will be informed that he/she should temporarily cease work.

## **2. Stress at Work**

### **2.1 Principles**

Oxfordshire County Council provides a wide range of diverse services to the people of Oxfordshire.

All of these services are made possible through the work of the Council's employees, often working directly with the public. Consequently, the Council accepts that the fitness for work of its employees is a primary requirement for the efficient and effective performance of the Council's functions.

Accordingly, the Council undertakes to provide systems of staff management and a working environment which actively promote a sound and sustainable approach to work.

The Council acknowledges the crucial role of managers in this objective and undertakes to provide them with adequate training and guidance in the skills and management competences necessary to fulfil their responsibilities towards the employees for whom they are accountable.

The Council also seeks to encourage its employees to pay attention to their own mental and physical well-being at work and to actively develop a responsible, balanced approach to work and their personal lives.

### **2.2 Context**

The Council's Health & Safety Policy Statement sets out the way in which it will fulfil its commitment to the effective management of health and safety at work and its obligation to provide a safe system of work for both its employees and those who may be affected by the work of the Council. This incorporates the management of the risks to the psychological well-being and health of its employees which may be presented by their employment.

External matters over which the County Council has little or no control can impose substantial additional pressures throughout the Council's workforce. These include the annual budget settlement, new legislation, media coverage and population changes.

Some of the duties and responsibilities undertaken by County Council employees have the potential to put employees under pressure. For example, dealing with disturbed or aggressive clients; experiencing organisational change; facing dangerous emergency situations; or working within tight deadlines, heavy workloads or staff shortages.

In addition, from time to time, employees have experiences in other areas of their lives which may make them more vulnerable to pressures at work or have a temporary influence on their work performance.

### **2.3 Duties and Responsibilities under the Policy**

- Personnel Sub-Committee will monitor the development and implementation of the principles of this policy.

- The County Council Management Team will promote the principles of this policy when developing departmental practice and guidance, in implementing County Council policies and in the provision of appropriate training within their own departments.
- The County Council Management Team will brief members of the Committees on the likely impact of committee discussions and resolutions on pressures of work and employee morale. The standard section in committee reports on staff implications will be used for this purpose.
- The Personnel, Policy & Review Unit will promote the principles of this policy when developing corporate policies and procedures and in the provision of management development and training.
- Managers will promote and maintain systems of management and behaviour at work which adhere to the policy principles. The main managerial intervention points and key responsibilities are set out in the Health & Safety Practical Guidance Notes.
- The Occupational Health Unit will initiate, encourage and support activities which promote health and a healthy lifestyle and will develop, in conjunction with departments, an employee counselling service.
- Employees are required to report matters of concern relating to health and safety, including stress at work, to an appropriate manager. Employees are encouraged to develop a balanced and responsible approach to work and their personal lives and to inform management where personal stress is affecting their work

### **3. Smoking**

The dangers to health from smoking have been well documented over many years by such bodies as the Royal College of Physicians and the British Medical Association. More recently, evidence has been published identifying the harmful effects of smoke inhalation by non-smokers ("passive smoking").

In the light of this evidence, and following strong expressions of concern from the trade unions, the Council has introduced measures to encourage the development of smoke-free workplaces.

The Council recognises the need to respect the rights of all its employees and appreciates that there may be difficulties in implementing change. However, it is hoped that all employees will appreciate the value of a smoke-free environment and give their support to the measures outlined.

Further advice is available in the No Smoking Policy.

### **4. New & Expectant Mothers**

In accordance with the amended Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (1992), managers are required to undertake specific risk assessments for each pregnant employee or new mother to ensure that her own and her baby's health and safety is not put at risk by her work.

Female employees who have become pregnant, have had a baby within the last six months, or are breast-feeding should tell their manager at the earliest opportunity, so that an assessment can be made to ensure that any risks presented by their job are minimised.

The great majority of work within the County Council should not present a risk in most cases. Special care will be given, where a job requires manual handling, night work or unusual physical activity or where there are special medical circumstances. Advice will be provided by Departmental Safety Advisers and the Occupational Health Unit.

## **5. Hygiene**

The County Council Management Team will, where appropriate, include a policy and procedure on hygiene in Part II of their Health & Safety Policy. Advice on hygiene is available from the Occupational Health Unit.

# **SAFETY MANAGEMENT OF WORKPLACES AND SITES**

## 1. Site Management

### **Introduction**

- 1.1 Directors or heads of delegated establishments are responsible for assessing and delegating the various duties and responsibilities relating to site management at each workplace. Each responsible nominee will be instructed in and receive a copy of, the list of duties and responsibilities delegated to him/her, together with any additional duties and responsibilities specified in Part II and III of the Health & Safety Policy. Responsible nominees will need sufficient information/training necessary in order to fulfill the requirements of their role.

### **Main Objectives of Site Management**

- 1.2 Ensure the responsibilities for issues to do with the site/workplace are assigned to nominated persons. The responsible nominee must ensure that systems and arrangements are clearly defined, communicated to all site users and recorded in order to deal with site/workplace matters, and that necessary identified action to minimize risks to health and safety in the workplace is carried out.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

- 1.3 Site management will cover the following duties and responsibilities, together with any others set down in Part II or III of the Health & Safety Policy of the workplace.

#### **(a) Precautions against Fire and Other Emergencies**

Establishment of proper procedures for dealing with emergencies such as fire, accident, bomb alert etc. This includes ensuring that:

- these procedures are communicated to all employees, visitors, including members of the public, contractors etc;
- the requirements laid down in the Fire Safety Folder are followed;
- fire wardens are appointed;
- employees are trained;
- controls are in place for storage of combustible or flammable materials and the disposal of waste.

#### **(b) Health and Safety**

Ensure that the requirements of the Health & Safety Policy are complied with. This includes:

- assessing the first aid requirements of the site and ensuring systems are in place for dealing with accidents and emergencies including the appointment and training of a first aider (where appropriate);
- operating the accident/incident reporting procedure;
- site inspections (with trade union representatives where requested);
- following up identified hazards/risks and ensuring appropriate action is taken;
- checking that the workplace reaches the required standards laid down in the Workplace Health & Safety Action Statement;
- adequate arrangements for lone workers, including those working from home;
- following up any points requiring attention in accordance with the guidance given.

#### **(c) Security**

Undertake risk management inspections including:

- control of access to the building (keys, visitors, community use);
- security of high value equipment and cash;
- security of the building;
- systems for dealing with intruders;
- control of alarm systems;
- control of deliveries.

**(d) Management of Contractors on Site**

The 'Health & Safety On-Site Works' produced by the Director of Environmental Services lays down minimum health and safety standards expected of contractors when working on OCC sites. Further implementation of proper procedures for the management of visitors, deliveries and contractors on site must include:

- where appointing a contractor this should be in accordance with departmental procedures;
- providing contractors with information on emergency procedures, known hazards and risks associated with the workplace, operation of alarm systems;
- assessing the risks/hazards posed to employees and clients/members of the public from the operation of contractors and taking appropriate measures to remove or minimise these risks;
- arrangements to secure the building from intrusion and theft, such as issue of badges or passes, internal security of certain areas, clear sign-posting;
- monitoring and reporting contractors who are failing to follow safety procedures or operating in a sub-standard or dangerous way;
- arrangements for deliveries to be made to the right place to assist in security and avoid subsequent hazards from storage and manual handling operations;
- the minimum health and safety standards required of contractors carrying out work on county sites irrespective of how large or small a contract may be is laid down in 'Health and Safety On-site Works' produced by the Director of Environmental Services.

**(e) Management of Shared Sites**

Where a site or workplace is occupied by several different departments/service providers or employers – establish systems to ensure communication and co-operation among all employers is set up and maintained. The notes for managers of multi-occupied sites and a draft agenda for a multi-occupier site meeting are included below to assist in this.

## **2. Guidance**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 The Workplace (Health & Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 apply to all places of work other than means of transport, construction sites and sites where extraction of mineral resources or exploration for them is carried out. The regulations set general requirements in four broad areas: working environment, safety, facilities and housekeeping. The regulations are accompanied by an approved code of practice which gives general guidance on how to comply with the regulations.
- 2.2 The Action Statement below gives basic guidance to those who are in charge of workplaces to assist them in complying with the Regulations. Further advice is available from your Departmental Safety Adviser.

**WSA** - W S Atkins, Oxford are contracted by Oxfordshire County Council to provide property services. They can be contacted at:

**Chilbrook, Oasis Business Park, Eynsham, Oxfordshire, OX8 1TP**

*Tel: Oxford (01865) 882828      Hotline: Oxford (01865) 883888*

Any problems with the service provided by W S Atkins should be referred to ES Property Client Section. (tel: Oxford (01865) 815781).

**CPS** - Contract & Purchasing Services, County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND

Cleaning:    Tel: Oxford       (01865) 815994  
County Supplies:   Tel: Northants (01604) 611520

**Action Statement**

- 1 **Maintenance of workplace, equipment, devices and systems** - Workplaces and equipment must be properly maintained and cleaned to avoid being hazardous to health and safety.

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

*Action to be taken by the*

- Maintenance contracts for non-delegated work organised by WSA      • Report problems to WSA.
- Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe      • Report problems to WSA.
- Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.      • Ensure maintenance is out effectively

- 2 **Ventilation and temperature in indoor workplaces** - Workplaces should be reasonably well ventilated and of a reasonable temperature (manual work 13°C+; office work 16°C+) to avoid being hazardous to health and safety. A thermometer must be available on request to test temperature. Maintenance of heating and ventilation systems are covered as follows:

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

*Action to be taken by the*

- Monitoring      Provide a thermometer and where any problem is under local control take appropriate action.
- Maintenance contracts for non-delegated work organised by WSA.      • Report problems to WSA.
- Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe      • Report problems to WSA.
- Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.      • Ensure maintenance is out effectively

- 3 **Lighting** - Lighting levels should allow people to work and to move about the workplace safely. Special attention should be given to stairs and other hazardous areas.



*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- Maintenance contracts for non-delegated work organised by WSA.
- Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe.
- Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.
- Local arrangements should be made for lighting changing bulbs etc safely. Stocks should be kept at premises. CPS can arrange for Safety special purchases.
- Portable and task lighting (eg desk lamps) should be maintained and tested under local arrangements.

*Action to be taken by the*

- Report problems to WSA.
- Report problems to WSA.
- Ensure maintenance is out effectively.
- Faults in emergency accordance with the Fire Folder.
- Where lighting levels are inadequate, local improvements should be considered (eg angle-poise lamps).
- Establishments may wish to provide blinds at windows.

**4 Cleanliness and waste materials** - The workplace must be kept sufficiently clean. Waste must be disposed of properly and not be allowed to accumulate.

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- The County's cleaning contract sets down covered schedules for buildings cleaning.
- Waste is generally collected by the appropriate District Council.
- Builders commissioned by WSA to carry out work in occupied premises are required to clean and tidy work areas each day.
- Special arrangements will be required for the disposal of special waste (clinical, medical etc). Consult your Departmental Safety Adviser for advice.

*Action to be taken by the*

- Problems with cleaning, by the County's contract should be referred to CPS, if they cannot be resolved locally.
- Other local arrangements should be made for cleaning not covered by this contract.
- Ensure that builders (or do not block escape routes with Materials/rubbish.
- Where a departmental establishment cannot with the hygiene policy statement, the Departmental Safety

Adviser should be informed.

- 5 **Room dimensions and space** - Workplaces should have sufficient space to avoid hazards to health and safety. Normally a minimum of 11 cubic metres per person, depending on height of room and amount of furniture.

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- New building or alterations to existing places • work which are undertaken via ES will be carried refurbishment out in accordance with regulations. relevant

*Action to be taken by the*

- Submit self-financed of improvement and schemes for

departmental approvals.

- Self-financed improvement and refurbishment existing areas schemes will require appropriate that do not comply to departmental approvals.

- Report details of appropriate departmental manager.

- 6 **Workstations and seating** - All workstations must be suitable for the person using them regularly. A suitable seat should be provided. Where DSE (VDU) screen work is involved the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations should be complied with (see Policy on Use Of VDU/DSE)

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- A range of approved furniture to BS and are ignition retardant standards is available difficulties with through County Supplies. workstations should consult

*Action to be taken by the*

- Employees who experiencing

to their line manager to try reach a solution. Advice is available from Departmental Safety Advisers and the Occupational Health Manager.

- Office furniture should be purchased in accordance with advice from County Supplies.

- 7 **Floors and traffic routes** - Floors and traffic routes must be suitable for their usage and must be free of hazards likely to cause slips, trips or falls. Handrails should be provided where necessary.

Problems with structure beneath floor coverings of floors and traffic routes:

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- Maintenance contracts for non-delegated •

*Action to be taken by the*

- Report problems to WSA.

- work organised by WSA.
- Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe.
- Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.
- Where schemes of financial delegation coverings operate, responsibility for carpets and floor that are not a delegated coverings are delegated to establishments. responsibility of the establishment should
- County Supplies have floor covering supplies and fitters available to you.
- Do not lay loose rugs on floors unless they are non-slip.
- Ensure that the correct cleaning materials and methods are used.
- Report problems to WSA.
- Ensure maintenance is out effectively
- Problems with floor be reported to WSA.
- Where there is a problem with a covering under the establishment's delegated control this should be corrected urgently.

**8 Falls and falling objects** - Hazards which are likely to cause people to fall or be struck by falling objects must be avoided. Handrails must be provided where appropriate and materials must not be stored where they are likely to cause accidents.

*Arrangements in Place Establishment*

- Materials storage must be organised by the establishment manager.
- CPS have a full range of materials handling and storage equipment available through approved contractors. Contact Oxford (01865) 815052.

*Action to be taken by the*

- The need for handrails be discussed with the appropriate departmental manager where handrails avoid a hazard.
- Where storage presents a difficulty discuss with the appropriate departmental manager.

**9 Windows and transparent or translucent doors, gates and walls** - Where necessary for health and safety reasons, glazing in windows, doors and gates should be made of safety materials.

*Arrangements in Place Establishment*

- New building undertaken by ES/WSA will be carried out in accordance with Regulations.
- Self-financed improvement and refurbishment schemes will require appropriate departmental

*Action to be taken by the*

- Submit self-improvement and refurbishment

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>approvals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing glass, where necessary has been replaced glass is replaced upgraded in accordance with the County's with the current reglazing programme. are</li> <li>Replacement of broken glass is either Manual. organised by WSA or is a delegated responsibility.</li> </ul> | <p>schemes for relevant departmental approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure broken in accordance OCC guidelines. Details included in the Property Maintenance</li> <li>Where appropriate report problems to WSA.</li> </ul> |
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**10. Windows and skylights, and the ability to clean them safely** - Windows and skylights must be capable of being cleaned safely.

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|--|--|
| <p><i>Arrangements in Place Establishment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most windows etc will normally be cleaned cannot be by contract cleaners. ground</li> <li>CPS have approved contractors for your area. surface, report</li> </ul> | <p><i>Action to be taken by the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where windows cleaned safely from the or other suitable to appropriate departmental manager who will discuss with contract cleaners. This will particularly apply to buildings over two storeys.</li> </ul> |
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**11 Organisation of traffic routes** - Traffic routes must be organised and marked to ensure that pedestrians and traffic can circulate in a safe manner.

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|--|--|
| <p><i>Arrangements in Place Establishment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traffic routes to be organised by with existing establishment manager.</li> </ul> | <p><i>Action to be taken by the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer problems traffic routes to appropriate departmental manager.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

**12 Doors and gates** - Doors and gates must be suitably constructed and operate safely. Safety devices should be fitted where necessary.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Arrangements in Place Establishment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance is either covered by WSA or is doors and gates a delegated responsibility. non-delegated</li> <li>Maintenance of existing sliding doors is contract covered by a maintenance contract should be</li> </ul> | <p><i>Action to be taken by the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problems with which are either or covered by the organised by WSA</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

organised by WSA to which establishments can subscribe.  
gates

- reported to WSA.  
Problems with doors and
- which are the delegated responsibility of the establishment should be rectified accordingly.
- Do not wedge open fire

doors.

**13 Sanitary conveniences and washing facilities** - Adequately lit, ventilated, clean and private toilets and washing facilities must be provided. Hot and cold or warm water, soap and means of drying must be supplied.

<i>Arrangements in Place Establishment</i>	<i>Action to be taken by the</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance contracts for non-delegated work organised by WSA.</li> <li>• Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe.</li> <li>• Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.</li> <li>• The County's cleaning contract sets down covered schedules for buildings cleaning. County's cleaning</li> <li>• Where appropriate, departmental hygiene referred to policy statement gives details of resolved</li> <li>• Other local arrangements should be made for cleaning not covered by this contract.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report problems to WSA.</li> <li>• Report problems to WSA.</li> <li>• Ensure maintenance is out effectively</li> <li>• Problems with cleaning by the contract should be CPS if they cannot be locally.</li> </ul>

**14 Drinking water** - Drinking water must be readily available and conspicuously marked with an appropriate sign, where necessary.

<i>Arrangements in Place Establishment</i>	<i>Action to be taken by the</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CPS can supply signs through approved contractors.</li> <li>• Problems with drinking water supplies should be referred to WSA.</li> <li>• Maintenance contracts for non-delegated work organised by WSA.</li> <li>• Maintenance contracts for delegated work organised by WSA to which establishments subscribe.</li> <li>• Maintenance responsibilities delegated to carried establishments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report problems to WSA.</li> <li>• Report problems to WSA.</li> <li>• Ensure maintenance is out effectively.</li> </ul>

**15 Accommodation for clothes, and facilities for changing clothes** - Suitable and sufficient accommodation must be provided for personal clothing not worn at work and, where necessary, for special clothing to be worn at work.

Single sex changing facilities should be available where employees have to wear special clothes for work or where clothes cannot be changed elsewhere for health and safety reasons.

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- The provision of hat stands, lockers etc is delegated to establishments.
- County Supplies have contracts in place for the supply of these items.

*Action to be taken by the*

- Where possible, arise should be dealt with locally.
- Where problems arise that cannot be dealt with locally they should be referred to the appropriate departmental manager.

**16 Facilities for rest and to eat meals** - Where necessary for health and safety reasons separate rest/eating areas must be provided. Rest areas, where provided, should be free of contamination from the work and from tobacco smoke. Facilities must be available for pregnant women and nursing mothers to rest where necessary.

*Arrangements in Place  
Establishment*

- In many cases clean parts of the work area can be will be adequate for these purposes.
  - The County's No-Smoking Policy gives are inadequate guidance on tobacco smoke in the workplace.
- This can be amended locally providing proper procedures have been followed.

*Action to be taken by the*

- Many difficulties managed locally.
- Where facilities this should be referred to the appropriate departmental manager.

**3. Multi-Occupied Sites**

3.1 Workplaces which are shared by a number of different County Council departments/service providers or with other employers need special attention.

**Action**

3.2 In most cases departments/service providers will be responsible for the health and safety management of the parts of the workplace they occupy. There is also a requirement under the legislation to co-operate with others who are sharing the workplace and to co-ordinate activities to ensure the safety of all groups of employees, contractors and visitors to the site. This is especially necessary in common parts of the workplace such as reception areas, driveways and car parks, corridors, delivery bays etc.

3.3 Where one department/service provider is the main employer at a workplace the allocation of site management duties and responsibilities will normally be the responsibility of the relevant Director or head of a delegated establishment. In many cases this will entail the appointment of a Site Co-ordinator who will

establish site-wide arrangements so that others sharing the workplace can integrate themselves into the arrangements.

- 3.4 To assist with these requirements, a draft agenda for a meeting to co-ordinate health and safety management at a multi-occupied workplace is given below. This draft agenda will need to be adapted and/or added to according to the needs of the workplace occupiers and the workplace staff.
- 3.5 In cases where a County Council department/service provider has only a minor presence at a multi-occupied workplace the relevant Director is required to ensure that his/her employees co-operate with the arrangements made at the workplace and assist the main employer on the site by providing information and sharing risk assessments.
- 3.6 Where there is no controlling department/service provider or employer at a multi-occupied workplace joint arrangements should be agreed.
- 3.7 The draft workplace meeting agenda has been produced as a model for use in multi-occupied workplaces. The role of Co-ordinator could be rotated among the employers on site.

#### **Draft Agenda for Health & Safety Meetings at Multi-Occupied Workplaces**

1. Appointment of a Site Health & Safety Co-ordinator (where necessary)
2. Assessments of hazards and risks which are common to all site occupiers or which may arise from the operation of one occupier but have the potential to apply to other employees, contractors, self-employed, members of the public.
3. Arrangements for the provision of information on hazards and risks to health and safety to the employers of those working on the site, their employees, self-employed and visitors.
4. Procedures for the management of emergency procedures – evacuation, fire, bombs, assembly points, notices, fire wardens and evacuation officers, including training of designated employees and maintenance of equipment as necessary.
5. Arrangements for ensuring site security.
6. Accident/incident reporting and first aid arrangements where shared – responsible persons, training, records, boxes.
7. Control of shared contractors – selection and monitoring of contractors, allocation of responsibilities, liaison arrangements, arrangements for joint use of equipment and site facilities.
8. Arrangements for repair, maintenance, cleaning etc of common areas, problem reporting, responsibilities.
9. Traffic Control – review of arrangements, problem reporting, responsibilities.
10. Waste Disposal Arrangements
11. Frequency of these meetings.

## **4. Home Based Working**

- 4.1 The County Council as part of its environmental concerns, is committed to reducing travel to work problems and is already recommending that one day in ten, managers should be working from / at home. As ITC technology advances, more Flexiplace – home-working is being a realistic proposition for many employees.
- 4.2 Employees already work in a variety of locations that are not owned by the County Council. They include hospitals, school, day centers, 'clients' homes, village halls etc. All are covered (except private households dwellings) by Health and Safety Legislation. Working in such environments, the premises and the work activities must comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1994 etc.
- 4.3 Flexiplace / home working can be advantageous to employers and employees alike. There are however some areas of concern when undertaking such working practices. Some of the issues that need consideration are:

### **Advantages**

Helps reduce

- The likelihood of travel to and from work accidents
- The environment pollution from vehicle usage
- The exposure to harmful exhaust emissions
- The travel stressors (traffic jams, delayed and or over-crowded public transport etc)
- The cost of commuting
- Or eliminate the time spent traveling to and from work
- The overall length of the 'at work day' which includes travel

In addition

- Improves the balance between home and work demands
- Allows extra flexibility in hours worked, to suit individual
- People with disabilities are able to work in a familiar environment with adaptations
- There are no distractions from other employees/clients
- Those with home carer responsibilities, i.e. young families, the elderly etc. can be near at hand

Documents can be easily accessed with the continuing development of ICT

### **Disadvantages**

Increases

- Risk of breaches of data protection
- Personal isolation
- Energy costs
- Home v work pressures
- Workplace safety (including fire matters)
- Stressors caused by lack of socialization with colleagues, and not being made to feel part of the team
- Self-discipline problems
- Supervisory difficulties
- Exposure of other family members to work activity risks, e.g. chemicals, work equipment etc
- Difficulties of team briefing activities



- First aid 'cover' arrangements
- Lone worker safety / security issues

### **Considerations**

The following should be considered before allowing flexiplace / home-working

- Maturity
- Self-sufficiency
- Trustworthiness
- Self-discipline
- Good time management skills
- Good communication skills

4.4 The manager of a flexi-place worker must ensure that

- S(he) undertakes a risk assessment, on site, to assess the premises, equipment, procedures and the work environment in which the activities are to take place. Such assessments will need to be reviewed at least annually and whenever there are changes to relevant matters (see attached appendix)
- The workplace is checked in accordance with the Workplace Regulations outlined in this section
- A local health and safety policy has been drawn up with the owner / landlord to ensure the appropriate arrangements have been put in place
- Any equipment owned or provided for use by an employee must be regularly maintained and checked to meet OCC requirements
- The emergency arrangements, such as fire, first aid, evacuation, must be discussed, recorded and periodically reviewed
- The owner / landlord has registered the particular venue with the appropriate enforcement agency. (HSE, HEO)
- That appropriate provision of information and training has been given to the flexiplace employee to carry out the activities safely and without risk to health
- The ergonomics have been suitably assessed for an individual to operate safely in this environment
- In accordance with the Safety Representatives Safety Committee Regulations, ensure that recognized trade union Safety Representatives have the right to inspect such workplaces including home worker premises
- Home based employees attend the office from time to time, at least once a month, to ensure that they remain part of the team

## Assessment for home based working

To be completed and reviewed every 12 months or when changes affect the assessment.

This assessment must be completed before commencing home based working and sent to your manager promptly. Your manager or health and safety advisor will then carry out an inspection of the proposed work area. If serious hazards are identified home based working will be delayed until appropriate attention has been given to any problem identified.

### **EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

e.g. computers, printers, fax, desk, chair, filing cabinet, drawers, copier, telephone, modem link etc.

**(where there is substantial use of a computer a full sized (not lap top) must be used)**

<u>Hazard</u>	<u>Risk – high, medium, low</u>	<u>Measures taken to reduce, control the risk.</u>
1. Is there a designated work area?  2. Is the dedicated work area adequate for storage of supplied furniture and equipment?  3. Is there adequate space in the work area for the individual to carry out their work?  4. Is the work area supplied with a secure cupboard for confidential document where appropriate?  5. If using a computer is the password known only by the home worker to ensure safety?  6. If there is no dedicated work area is there a requirement to move work equipment each time it is used?		

<p>7. If so has a manual handling risk assessment been completed?</p> <p>8. Is mechanical manual handling equipment required?</p> <p>9. What regular contact arrangements will be in place between the home worker and manager to ensure safety? (how would anyone know if the home worker suddenly became ill or was injured)</p> <p>10. Is a computer used for a significant part of home workers time?</p> <p>11. If so a Display Screen Equipment assessment must be carried out.</p> <p>12. Is the lighting adequate for the task e.g. desk lamp, florescent lighting, good natural light?</p> <p>13. Has all portable electrical equipment been tested and placed on a testing schedule?</p> <p>14. Is there other electrical equipment, not supplied by the Council and used for work purposes, in the work area?</p> <p>15. Is this equipment fit for the purpose and tested/maintained on a regular basis?</p> <p>16. Are supplied electrical cables neatly tagged and free from damage?</p> <p>17. Is the computer equipment attached to a dedicated electricity and telephone supply? (not shared with other equipment)</p> <p>18. Are storage facilities, where required, adequate and easily accessible?</p>		
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<p>19. Is the temperature, ventilation and humidity comfortable to work in?</p> <p>20. Can the temperature etc be adjusted where necessary?</p> <p>21. Does the dedicated work area allow work to be carried out of a sensitive nature or to work without interruption to concentration?</p> <p>22. Are there any risks to other users of the dedicated work area?</p> <p>23. Is the access route to and from the dedicated area free from trip hazards?</p> <p>24. In the case of fire / emergency has an escape route been identified?</p> <p>25. Is there a means of identifying a fire emergency? (smoke alarms)</p> <p>26. Are there adequate welfare facilities available? (toilet, hot water, soap, towel, drinking water)</p>		
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<p><b><u>Further Actions Required</u></b></p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">10-10-10-10-10-10-10-10-10-10</p>
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**Work Location**

**Draw a plan of all areas of the home used in the course of home working. Include access to kitchen and bathroom and an emergency escape route.**

Assessor..... Employee.....

Signed..... Signed.....

Date..... Date .....



# ELECTRICITY AT WORK

## 1.1 The County Council Management Team will take the necessary measures to implement the following:

- (a) ensure that a policy is drawn up for the purchase of electrical equipment and that persons are not able to purchase electrical items on an ad hoc basis without proper controls;
- (b) ensure that electrical equipment is purchased which is fit for its intended purpose, eg if it is likely to be used in a damp or humid environment, low voltage equipment should be considered.
- (c) ensure that any electrical installation is undertaken by a competent person. Even a plug, incorrectly fitted, could lead to a serious accident and subsequent prosecution of the Authority.
- (d) ensure that any work on the electrical system is undertaken by a competent person;
- (e) introduce strict rules and tests for electrical equipment brought in from outside the workplace e.g. home or purchasing second-hand equipment. In the past, there have been worrying examples of electrical fires, kettles, radios, fridges and even washing machines that have been brought in from outside the workplace for use at work. The Authority is responsible for the safe integrity of such equipment.
- (f) ensure that electrical systems and fixed equipment are regularly and well maintained, inspected and tested in line with departmental policy as stated in the relevant Part II of the Health & Safety Policy and that records are kept;
- (g) ensure that employees receive adequate instructions and training in the use of electrical equipment so that it is used safely within its capabilities;
- (h) ensure that a safe system of work exists for non-electrical work where there is a risk of electrical injury.
- (i) employees are required to report faulty equipment to their line manager straightaway. Employees must not attempt to mend or misuse equipment, or bring in equipment to work which has not been tested and without managerial approval.

1.2 Environmental Services can arrange the expertise necessary to undertake inspection and maintenance of most items of electrical equipment.

## 2. Guidance

### 2.1 Introduction

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 extends to all places of work and all electrical equipment and systems at work. The aim of the Regulation is to reduce the fatalities and serious injuries which occur each year due to accidents involving electricity. They affect all departments/services of the authority.



## 2.2 Application of the Regulations

The regulations are concerned with the safe integrity of electrical equipment, the safety of electrical systems, the safety of electrical workers and their competence, and the safety of non-electrical workers, where there is a risk of injury. Injury, as far as the regulations are concerned, means death or personal injury from:

- electric shock;
- fires of electrical origin;
- explosions initiated or caused by electricity.
- electric burn;
- electric arcing; or

Examples of the areas affected are:

- Any electrical installation - in an office or establishment etc i.e. the wiring, socket outlets, lights, switches etc;
- Electrical equipment - VDU's, typewriters, workshop machinery, portable electrical tools etc;
- Vehicles - if a fire of electrical origin occurs in a vehicle, it presents a risk of injury and therefore vehicle electrics must be properly installed and maintained in order to comply with the Regulations;
- Low voltage equipment - even a torch, used in an explosive atmosphere (e.g. a manhole containing methane gas), could cause an explosion and, therefore, in this situation it would be necessary, in order to comply with the Regulations, to select a torch of the type suitable for this use;
- Work of a non-electrical nature - where there is risk of electrical injury. An example of this is the risk that exists to persons undertaking excavations etc from striking live power cables. In such instances a detailed safe system of work is necessary. The Departmental Safety Adviser should be contacted at an early stage.
- Use of electrical equipment and systems - there is an obligation to ensure that electrical equipment and systems are used safely. This means that to use an item of electrical equipment, which might otherwise be safe, in an unsafe manner, is a breach of the regulations. Residual Circuit Devices (RCDs) must be used where appropriate and adequately maintained.

## 2.3 The Regulations require that

- equipment and systems are properly designed and installed;
- equipment and systems are used safely;
- equipment and systems are adequately maintained;
- a safe system of work exists when work is undertaken on electrical equipment and systems; and
- a safe system of work exists when undertaking non-electrical work where there is risk of electrical injury.

The regulations are concise and versed in general terms. They are supported by a detailed memorandum of guidance. Their fundamental aim is to prevent danger or injury from an electrical source.

## 2.4 What the Regulations mean in practice for the authority

The regulations have general implications for everyone but there are special implications for electrical engineers, electrical workers and purchasers of electrical equipment. These responsibilities include:

## **2.5 Directors, Managers and Supervisors**

Should ensure (so far as is reasonably practicable) in areas under their control, that:

- all electrical equipment purchased is to a recognised electrical standard and is suitable for the purpose intended;
- equipment is properly installed and fuse ratings are correct;
- only competent people select, install and maintain electrical equipment and systems;
- regular inspection and planned maintenance takes place for electrical installations and fixed and portable equipment;
- staff do not use equipment brought from outside the workplace such as kettles, radios, fires etc unless they are first subject to inspection to ensure that they are safe and suitable, and then regularly reinspected to ensure that they remain safe;
- electrical equipment is used safely;
- safety of staff is ensured on non-electrical work where a risk of electrical injury exists.

## **2.6 Individual Employees**

- It is a statutory requirement under the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 that all employees shall:
  - \* co-operate with their employer in ensuring that the regulations are complied with;
  - \* comply with the regulations insofar as they relate to matters within their control;

Individuals therefore should ensure that:

- they do not use obviously faulty equipment and that they report defects to their immediate supervisor;
- they do not purchase, borrow, or bring in equipment from outside the workplace, unless it has been checked for electrical safety;
- they do not interfere with or misuse electrical equipment.

## **2.7 Electrical Technical Staff/Electrical Managers/Electrical Supervisors:**

Should ensure that:

- any equipment or installation specifications that they are involved with conform to current good practice taking into account British Standards and any other authoritative guidance;
- any advice they give to others is based upon the same principles as above;
- they remain up to date with current authoritative technical guidance;
- they do not involve themselves in areas beyond their knowledge, experience and competence;
- any contracts, specifications etc written by, or advised upon by them, contain requirements to comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, in particular the working precautions;

- they ensure that all electrical equipment and systems for which they have any responsibility are regularly inspected and maintained in line with current requirements;
- any work on electrical equipment undertaken directly by them or supervised by them is undertaken in line with the safe working requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989; in particular that work only takes place on live equipment if this is strictly essential and in which case special precautions are taken;
- any person they allow to work on any electrical system or equipment is competent to work on that particular class of equipment or system.

Note: This also applies to other staff involved in the preparation of contracts.

## **2.8 Persons who work on Electrical Equipment and Installations:**

- Persons who work on electrical systems or apparatus must be competent to prevent danger and injury having regard to the particular nature of the work. In many circumstances, where a person's technical knowledge or experience is not, of itself, sufficient to ensure that they can undertake the work safely, they will have to be adequately supervised by someone with such knowledge and experience;
- Electrical work must only take place when equipment has been effectively isolated unless live working is absolutely essential, in which case special precautions are necessary to prevent injury.

# EMERGENCIES, ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

## 1. **Fire Safety in County Council Buildings**

### 1.1 **Requirements for all Sites**

- Every building in which people work must be the subject of a fire risk assessment carried out by a competent person.
- Every building in which people work must have clearly displayed instructions on what to do in the event of fire.
- Fire wardens must be appointed for every site.
- All occupants of buildings must be made familiar with the means of escape and the location of fire fighting equipment.
- Special attention should be given to the needs of people with special needs or sensory impairment.
- Fire drills must be carried out from time to time and the details must be recorded in the Fire Safety Folder for that establishment.
- Where a fire alarm is installed, it must be tested at the intervals laid down in the Fire Safety Folder. A written record of such tests must be kept in the Folder.

### 1.2 **The Roles of Directors**

The **Chief Fire Officer** will:

- (a) provide advice upon request in respect of all buildings occupied for County Council purposes on the appropriate standard of fire safety provisions to the Director of the user department, and to the Director of Environmental Services. For this purpose, the Chief Fire Officer may initiate joint consultation on the appropriate standard of fire safety provisions for the various user groups of premises between himself, the Director of Environmental Services and the Director of the user department, with final determination by the appropriate Committee where necessary;
- (b) make arrangements for the purpose of the above, in consultation where appropriate with the Director of Environmental Services, for the inspection of all the buildings occupied for County Council purposes in accordance with whatever priorities and programmes have been agreed with the Director of the user department;
- (c) make inspections where requested and, as far as staffing resources permit, for the purposes of:
  - (i) checking that the agreed scheme of fire safety provision is being maintained;
  - (ii) observing fire drills;
  - (iii) giving instructions on the procedure to be followed in cases of fire and the use of fire equipment;
  - (iv) giving advice on fire precautions to be observed in the day-to-day running of premises and any similar matters.

The **Director of Environmental Services** will:

- (a) ensure that any defects in the agreed scheme of fire safety provisions which are reported or come to the attention of ES consultants are remedied in consultation with the Director of the department concerned in accordance with whatever urgency is appropriate;
- (b) make arrangements, in consultation with the Director concerned, for the routine maintenance of all fire protection equipment and devices (except for schools where maintenance of equipment and devices is a governor delegated responsibility) taking into account relevant Codes of Practice in this respect. The maintenance of portable fire extinguishers is carried out under a centrally managed contract. Where responsibility is delegated the costs are charged to the establishment;
- (c) undertake to carry out inspections and give advice on fire safety provisions in respect of any specific aspect of fire precautions upgrading which the Director of Environmental Services, the Chief Fire Officer and Director of the user department have agreed is more within the Director of Environmental Services' terms of reference than those of the Chief Fire Officer;
- (d) inform the Chief Fire Officer on completion of any scheme of upgrading of the fire safety provisions so that he/she can check that the work is satisfactory.
- (e) be aware of and take necessary action to provide for the fire safety needs of employees and visitors with disabilities or sensory impairment.

The **Departmental Director** will:

- (a) ensure that written guidance and instruction on fire precautions are available in each establishment
- (b) appoint a competent person to undertake a fire risk assessment in all buildings and to ensure that all necessary action identified is taken.
- (c) appoint Fire Wardens and maintain the Fire Safety Folder and make these available to occupiers, Safety Representative/Committees and those responsible for the running of all premises under the control of his/her department.
- (d) consult the Chief Fire Officer on the content of such advice and guidance and take whatever steps may be necessary to ensure that they are complied with;
- (e) ensure that all defects in the fire safety provisions in all buildings under his/her control are reported to the Director of Environmental Services.

## 2. **Bomb Alerts**

### *Requirements for all Sites*

- Every building in which people work must have clearly displayed instructions on what to do in the event of a bomb alert.
- Bomb alert wardens (usually delegated to Fire Wardens) must be appointed in all buildings.

- All occupants of buildings must be made familiar with the means of escape and action to take in the event of a bomb alert.
- Special attention must be given to the needs of people with special needs or sensory impairment.
- Bomb alert drills must be carried out regularly.
- Where a bomb alert alarm is installed it must be tested at appropriate intervals. A written record must be kept of these tests.

A "model" procedure is available in Annex 1. If this "model" procedure is used in an establishment it must be adapted to the particular needs of the building and users. A procedure to follow in the event of a bomb alert should be displayed or circulated to staff.

### **3. First Aid Arrangements**

- A risk assessment must be carried out by a competent person to determine the first aid requirements for each workplace.
- In larger workplaces (generally those with more than 50 employees) or where high risk activities take place first-aiders should be selected from volunteers in the work group and given training to qualification level.
- Where there is no requirement for a qualified first aider, the head of establishment should ensure that at least one "appointed person" is available when people are at work.
- The arrangements for first aid must be displayed on notices situated prominently in all buildings.
- A record of all treatment should be maintained and brought to the attention of the local supervisor at regular intervals.

#### **3.1 Duties of First Aiders**

*A first aider is a person who has been trained and holds an appropriate, current first aid certificate.*

Other than in the case of establishments where, because of the nature and location of the undertaking there are no specific hazards and the number of employees is small, sufficient numbers of first aiders must be appointed and trained to provide cover at all times, including foreseeable absences such as annual leave.

The responsibilities of the first-aiders in the management of a casualty are:

- to assess the situation;
- to arrive at a diagnosis for each casualty;
- to give immediate and adequate treatment, bearing in mind that a casualty may have more than one injury and that some casualties will require more urgent attention than others;
- to arrange without delay for the transport of a casualty according to the seriousness of their condition to the appropriate medical services.

First aiders are also responsible for regularly inspecting and maintaining first aid containers. Advice on content and storage of these is available in Annex 2.

### 3.2 Appointed Persons

An appointed person is a person provided by the employer to take charge of the situation (eg to call an ambulance) if a serious injury/illness occurs in the absence of a first aider or where no first aider has been appointed. The appointed person can render emergency first aid if trained to do so. Ideally all appointed persons should receive training in emergency first aid. An appointed person is also responsible for first aid equipment in the absence of a first-aider.

Appointed persons are not an acceptable full-time alternative where a first-aider is required.

## 4. Reporting & Investigation of Accidents, Incidents & Dangerous Occurrences

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR)

### 4.1 Requirements

Directors must designate an employee to be responsible for the accident reporting system and records on each site. In the event of an accident, dangerous occurrence, incident or injury to an employee or "visitor", the following reporting and investigation procedure below must be followed.

It is important that accident/incident records are kept and regularly and systematically reviewed. Information arising from the analysis of these records should be regularly considered by departmental managers and the management teams, safety representatives and safety committees.

### 4.2 Definitions Used

An Accident is defined as any occurrence, including violence, which results in an injury being sustained including psychological trauma or death.<sup>1</sup>

An Incident is an event which may or may not cause injury or damage to property but which has the potential to do so and for health and safety reasons should be reported to try and prevent accidents happening in the future. It includes "near misses".

Dangerous etc, Occurrence are a class of incidents such as collapse of machinery, explosion which are defined within RIDDOR

The Accident/ Incident Book is the formal record of the accident/incident report forms (form [ARI](#) or departmental form in the case of Fire Service). It also constitutes the official record.

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<sup>1</sup> The HSE definition includes any undesired circumstances which give rise to ill health to injury, damage to property, plant, product or environment, production losses or increased liability.

#### **4.3 Maintaining Accident/Incident Books**

A book of accident/incident report forms must be maintained in which the cause and nature of any accident or incident must be recorded. Such an entry is regarded as the official report of an accident/incident.

These records must be preserved for at least 3 years after the date of the last entry; if the accident/incident involves a person under the age of 18 the record must be retained for a minimum of 6 years after the person reaches the age of 18.

#### **4.4 Procedure**

This procedure applies when any person - employee, client, contractor, member of the public or visitor - is injured, made ill, or witnesses an incident or dangerous occurrence on any County Council site or while County Council duties are being undertaken elsewhere.

The procedure should be read in conjunction with local and departmental procedures and these should also be followed. Advice is available from Departmental Safety Advisers.

In the case of an accident the procedure should be initiated by the injured person(s) or someone acting on their behalf. In the case of an incident or dangerous occurrence the procedure should be initiated by witness(es) to the incident.

- (a) The accident/incident must be reported to the most senior person on duty at the time, however trivial the accident/incident/dangerous occurrence may appear.
- (b) The injured person or witness must ensure that the accident/incident/dangerous occurrence is recorded in the Accident/Incident Book held on the premises. The officer-in-charge, or the most senior officer on duty at the time, must ensure that this record is made correctly and that the Form [ARI](#) from the Accident/Incident Book is forwarded to the appropriate officer in accordance with local/departmental procedures. Any additional documents/comments must accompany this form.
- (c) Where an accident causes loss of life or major injury, as defined by RIDDOR, the appropriate officer, as defined by local/departmental procedures, must be notified immediately by telephone. He/she will then notify the Health and Safety Executive immediately by telephone. The County Personnel Officer must also be notified by telephone straightaway in the event of loss of life.

A written report and Form F2508 must then be submitted to the Health and Safety Executive, in accordance with RIDDOR.

- (d) Where an accident causes, or looks likely to cause, an absence from work of more than 3 days, form F2508 must be completed immediately and forwarded in accordance with local/departmental procedures. The 3 days include weekends, rest days and holidays.



- (e) Where a work-related disease is identified which is notifiable under RIDDOR the Occupational Health Unit should be informed and the Nurse/Manager will notify the Health & Safety Executive.
- (f) If following an accident it is learnt that a person has died at any time within the following 12 months as a result of the accident, the head of establishment must inform the Health and Safety Executive and County Personnel Officer, in writing, straightaway.
- (g) Dangerous occurrences, as defined by RIDDOR, must also be notified to the Health & Safety Executive on Form F2508 in accordance with local/departmental procedures, whether or not causing death, personal injury or disablement.
- (h) Where there may be implications involving the Council's insurance, the County Treasurer's Insurance Section should be notified. Do not acknowledge solicitors' letters personally. These should be sent to the County Treasurer's, Insurance Section.

#### **4.5 Accidents/Incidents/Dangerous Occurrences away from the Normal Place of Work**

Accidents/incidents/dangerous occurrences occurring to Oxfordshire County Council employees engaged in work away from their normal place of employment must be recorded at their normal place of employment in the Oxfordshire County Council Accident/Incident Book as soon as possible afterwards. The employee's Supervisor or Manager is responsible for ensuring that the accident/incident is reported correctly in the appropriate Oxfordshire County Council Accident/Incident Book, in accordance with local/departmental procedures.

If any Oxfordshire County Council employee sustains an injury on premises other than his/her normal place of work, it is the responsibility of the employee's Departmental Safety Adviser to notify the occupier of the premises where appropriate. Where the injury causes loss of more than 3 days' work, it is the responsibility of the occupier of the premises to report the facts to the Health & Safety Executive, unless the occupier is a private member of the public or the accident has happened during the course of a call on the services of the Fire Service where departmental procedures will be followed.

#### **4.6 Claims for Injury Against Oxfordshire County Council**

If an injured person wishes to make a claim against the County Council the claim should be made in writing to the County Treasurer's Insurance Section as soon as possible after the accident.

#### **4.7 Investigating Accidents/Incidents/Dangerous Occurrences**

Where appropriate, all accidents/incidents/dangerous occurrences should be investigated at the earliest possible opportunity by an appropriate person. A report of the findings should be given to the appropriate departmental manager and copied to the Departmental Safety Adviser.

#### **4.8 Collection of Data**

Each service/department may be required to produce, from time to time, a summary of all the reported accidents/incidents/dangerous occurrences which appear in their accident/incident books. This data will be reported to departmental management teams, departmental and central Safety Committees and to County Council Management Team on a regular basis.

## **5. Violence at Work**

### **5.1 Preamble**

County Council employees are potentially at risk of violence in the course of their normal employment. Those most at risk are likely to be employees who handle money or valuables; provide advice, care or training; work alone; or carry out enforcement duties. Services/departments should have a Code of Practice which incorporate the principles contained in this policy statement.

### **5.2 General Statement**

Violence, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as an incident in which an employee is verbally abused, threatened or attacked, by a client, pupil, member of the public or other person in circumstances arising out of, or in the course of, employment with the Council.

The Council, as an employer, has a duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work. The Council recognises that a prime consideration should be to prevent violent acts by changes in the working environment and/or working practices, and by providing training for employees at risk, where appropriate. Special attention will be given to employees who work alone, for whom risks may be greater.

All employees are obliged to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, and to co-operate with the Council on matters relating to their health, safety and welfare at work.

Where employees have been subjected to violence in the course of their work, the Council will give support, including time-off where necessary, but will not subsidise or conduct an employee's own legal proceedings. Violent incidents will usually constitute a criminal offence and should be referred to the police. If the police are unwilling to take action, **or if the incident is outside work but clearly related to employment**, the Council will consider initiating criminal proceedings on behalf of the authority against an assailant, or taking some other appropriate action.

The authority maintains insurance cover for the benefit of employees who are assaulted in the course of their duties.

### **5.3 The Policy in Operation**

Employees must report any incident to their Director or appropriate line manager. A record should be made of any such incident, however trivial. It is only from identifying the circumstances of each incident that preventative measures can be determined.

The special risks to employees who work alone regularly will be taken into consideration in the risk assessment process.

All incidents should be examined and remedial action taken where appropriate. There are no ready-made solutions but as an example, the possibility of violent incidents may be minimised by changing work arrangements or layout, limiting access, providing training to help employees recognise potentially violent situations so that they can be avoided or coped with, providing alarms or the security of an additional employee.

It is essential that the employees concerned, and if appropriate their trade union representative, are involved in the process of deciding the appropriate measures to be taken. An attempt should be made to balance the needs of the employees with those of the general public/clients/pupils, and it should be remembered that an atmosphere that suggests employees are worried about violence can often increase the likelihood of it occurring.

It is important to keep under review the measures outlined in the Code of Practice to ensure they are adequate.

It is essential that these procedures are brought to new employees' attention as part of the induction process. It is also necessary to remind existing employees of good practice from time to time.

## **Model Bomb Procedure/Model Instructions to Staff**

### **1. Model Bomb Procedure**

If the alarm sounds for a bomb warning the building should be evacuated as quickly as possible by means of the fire exits. Upon evacuating the building employees and visitors should if possible ensure that all bags/coats and personal effects are taken with them, and go straight to their building's assembly point which should be at least 200 yards away from the building.

Managers/Supervisors are advised to make themselves aware of the bags and briefcases etc which may be located at workstations within their own offices. In the event of a bomb warning employees may be requested by the police to help them search the premises. Consequently an awareness of what equipment, personal effects etc are brought in is important. Once the alarm has sounded the Fire Service should be warned immediately that the alarm is not for a fire but for a bomb warning/alert.

### **2. Model Instructions to Staff**

If you receive a telephone call warning that a bomb has been placed, try to follow this procedure:

- Let the caller finish his/her message without interruption; keep any replies necessary to one or two words;
- Note the time of the call;
- Write the message down, and if possible repeat the message to the caller.

Unless the message gives full details, keep the caller in conversation and try to ask:

- Where the bomb is located?
- What time it will explode?
- When it was placed?
- Why it was placed?
- Whether a code word is being used?

Note any clues to the caller's age and sex, any peculiarities of speech such as foreign accent or mispronunciation and conditions affecting speech such as anger, excitement or drunkenness. Try to identify any background noises.

### **3. Warning Procedure**

**If the warning relates to your own building, immediately press the nearest alarm.** It is then your duty to contact the person in charge of the building with the details of the warning message you have received or of the suspicious package (take anything you have copied down with you). He/she will then decide the best course of action in the light of the available information.

If the warning is for a bomb in or near a building other than your own, immediately notify by phone the person in charge of the building (e.g. the Chief Administrative Officer, Director, Head Teacher etc). Immediately thereafter notify the police (999).

### **4. Evacuation for Bombs**

An alarm will sound for a bomb warning, so on hearing this alarm everyone must evacuate the building. The assembly point should be at least 200 yards away from the building where the bomb alert is taking place.

Upon leaving the building employees and visitors should ensure that they take with them briefcases and personal effects. On leaving the building employees and visitors should go directly to the building assembly point.

- If in doubt contact the police.
- Do not hesitate to evacuate the building.

## Annex 2

### First Aid Containers

1. First aid containers (e.g. boxes, bags or cupboards) should be made of suitable material and designed to protect the contents, as far as possible, from damp and dust. Containers should be clearly identified with a white cross on a green background.
2. First aiders (or appointed persons) are responsible for regularly inspecting first aid boxes and re-ordering contents when necessary.
3. First aid containers which are to form part of an establishment's permanent first aid provision should normally contain the following items:
  - 1 guidance card;
  - 20 individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes) appropriate to the work environment (which should be detectable for the catering industry);
  - 2 sterile eye pads, with attachment (an example of a suitable eye pad currently available would be the Standard Dressing No 16 BPC);
  - 4 individually wrapped triangular bandages;
  - 6 safety pins;
  - 6 medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressing (approx 12cm x 12cm);
  - 2 large sterile individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings (approx 18cm x 18cm);
  - 3 extra large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings (approx 28cm x 17.5cm); and
  - 2 pairs of latex surgical gloves.

You should not keep tablets, medicines, **antiseptic or cotton wool** in the first aid box.

4. Soap and water and disposable drying materials, or suitable equivalents, should also be available. Where tap water is not available, sterile water or sterile normal saline, in sealed disposable containers each holding at least 300ml, should be kept easily accessible, and near to the first aid box for eye irrigation. At least 900ml should be provided and these should not be reused once the sterile seal is broken. **Eye baths/eye cups/refillable containers should not be used for eye irrigation.**

**Note:** Sterile first aid dressings should be packaged in such a way as to allow the user to apply the dressing to a wound without touching that part which is to come into direct contact with the wound.

5. That part of a dressing which comes into contact with a wound should be absorbent. There should be a bandage or other fixture attached to the dressings and consequently there is no reason to keep scissors in the first-aid box. Dressings, including adhesive ones, should be of a design and type which is appropriate for their use.



# MANUAL HANDLING

## Introduction

- 1.1 This section relates to the implementation of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. It should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety Executive guidance booklet "Manual Handling" and with guidance issued by the County Council in the Health & Safety Guidance Notes

## Commitment

- 1.2 Oxfordshire County Council recognises the risks to the health and safety of its employees presented by manual handling operations. It is committed to minimising these risks as far as practicable in accordance with the Council's policy on risk assessment.

## Method of Putting the Policy into Action

- 1.3 The Council will implement this policy by the following means:
- Chief Officers will identify line managers whose responsibility for risk assessment includes the assessment of manual handling risks, and ensure that each line manager is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities and has received adequate training to carry these out.
  - Training will be provided for line managers to enable them to perform the required manual handling risk assessments.
  - Line managers responsible for risk assessment of manual handling operations will carry these out in accordance with the guidance and training given using the risk assessment form provided.
  - A manual handling risk assessment will be reviewed by the responsible line manager when there is reason to believe it is no longer valid, when there is a significant change in an operation and after the occurrence of any reportable injury.
  - Departmental Safety Advisers, other nominated competent persons and the County Personnel Officer will provide advice and guidance to line managers on risk assessment as required.
  - The Occupational Health Unit will give advice on manual handling and related health issues such as back aches, lifting during pregnancy etc.
  - Risk assessments undertaken will be suitable and sufficient and action will be taken based on these to minimise the risks identified by the following steps:
    - \* avoid hazardous manual handling operations as far as is reasonably practicable (e.g. by automation or the provision of mechanical assistance).
    - \* where manual handling operations cannot be avoided, design working practices to minimise the risks of manual handling by addressing hazards presented by the task, the load and the working environment.
    - \* design tasks so that they are fitted to the capabilities of the individual rather than fitting the individual to the task (an ergonomic approach to job design)
  - Where manual handling operations are unavoidable the risk assessment for the task will be shown to employees involved to ensure they are aware of

the risks associated with each operation. Training will be provided for employees on the means of minimising these risks.

- Employees engaged in manual handling operations are required to:
  - \* take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others affected by their activities.
  - \* to co-operate with systems of work which minimise risks of manual handling and to report difficulties experienced while undertaking manual handling - operations to their line manager.
  - \* to comply with instructions and to use equipment provided in accordance with their training.
- **Special attention** will be given, including referral to the Occupational Health Service where appropriate, to employees who may be at risk from manual handling to ensure their continued physical health.

## **2. Guidance**

### **2.1 Introduction**

- 2.1.1 A manual handling operation involves an employee exerting his/her own physical effort in transporting or supporting a load, either directly or indirectly. Many employees are required to undertake manual handling in their daily work. Some employees undertake complex manual handling operations such as lifting disabled clients. This guidance relates to general manual handling operations. It does not cover the more specialised forms of manual handling and employees who undertake these will receive particular training in this field.
- 2.1.2 Both nationally and within Oxfordshire County Council over a third of all accidents reported arise from manual handling. These accidents occur as a result of handling, lifting or carrying loads at work.
- 2.1.3 Most of the reported accidents cause back injury, though hands, arms and feet are also vulnerable. National statistics suggest that, on average, each injury results in 20 days off work. The cost is enormous, and sometimes the victim never fully recovers.
- 2.1.4 Many manual handling injuries build up over a period of time rather than being caused by a single handling incident. These injuries occur wherever employees are at work e.g. in schools, offices, kitchens, residential and day establishments, on construction sites and while making deliveries.
- 2.1.5 Since January 1993 all employers are obliged to do a risk assessment of manual handling operations and to take action to minimise the risks associated with them. This practical guidance note aims to assist managers in fulfilling these requirements.
- 2.1.6 Oxfordshire County Council has a policy on manual handling which should be read in conjunction with this practical guidance.

### **2.2 Responsibilities of Line Managers**



- 2.2.1 In accordance with the County Council's policy on manual handling, Chief Officers will identify line managers who have responsibility for work which involves manual handling operations. Designated line managers are responsible for undertaking a risk assessment for these operations. This practical guidance note is designed to assist in this process and other training will be given. Wherever possible manual handling assessments should take place at the same time as other risk assessments to avoid duplication and the "Practical Guide to Risk Assessment" should also be referred to for background information.
- 2.2.2 Advice on carrying out the manual handling risk assessment and on reducing risks associated with manual handling operations is available from your Departmental Safety Adviser.

### **2.3 Can Manual Handling Operations be Avoided?**

The first stage in managing the risks of manual handling involves examining all manual handling operations to ensure that the work cannot be carried out by other means. Wherever reasonably practicable managers must arrange work so that manual handling operations can be avoided altogether. Questions to ask:

- Can the operation be automated? e.g. use a hoist
- Can the operation be taken to the load rather than vice versa? e.g. can the treatment be taken to the immobile resident?
- Can you arrange deliveries direct to the point of use?

*NB Take care not to increase hazards as a consequence of avoiding manual handling eg blocking access by changing delivery arrangements.*

### **2.4 Carrying Out the Risk Assessment**

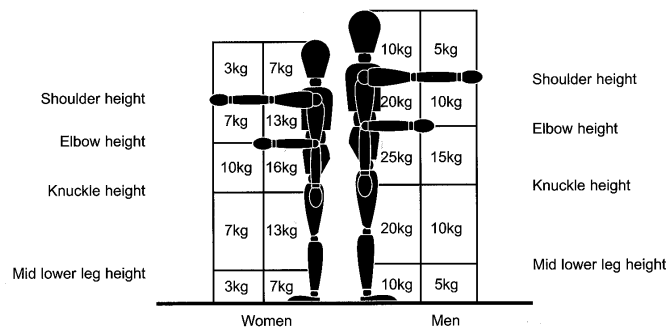
Where a manual handling operation cannot be reasonably avoided designated managers must carry out the following risk assessment procedure using these notes and the Assessment sheet attached. Appendix A

#### **Step 1: Assess the Level of Risk**

Decide on the level of risk involved – low, medium or high. To do this take into account the following factors:

##### **How much weight is involved?**

Assess the weights handled against the guidelines on weights in the diagram below. Each box in the diagram shows guideline weights for lifting and lowering. The weights assume that the load is readily grasped with both hands and the operation takes place in reasonable working conditions with the lifter in a stable body position.



If the lifter's hands enter more than one box during the operation, use the smallest weight. Use an in-between weight if the hands are close to a boundary between boxes. If the operation must take place with the hands beyond the boxes, make a more detailed assessment.

### How often is lifting required?

The guideline weights are for cases where up to about 30 operations per hour are performed, where the pace of work is not forced, adequate pauses to rest or use different muscles are possible, and the load is not supported for any length of time. This covers most occupations within the County Council.

However, it will be necessary to reduce the weights if the operation is repeated more often. As a rough guide, reduce the weights by 30% if the operation is repeated once or twice per minute; by 50% when repeated by five to eight times per minute; and by 80% when more than 12 times per minute.

### Can the lifting be done without twisting?

Reduce the guideline weights if the lifter twists to the side during the operation. As a rough guide, reduce them by 10% if the handler twists through 45 degrees, and by 20% if the handler twists through 90 degrees.

### Who is doing the lifting?

For the working population the guideline weights will give reasonable protection to nearly all men and 50-60% of women. To provide similar protection to nearly all working women, reduce the guideline weights by about a third.

Remember that any individual may have special problems and assumptions should not be made about an individual's capacity.

### What sort of load is being lifted?

The load to be lifted may have particular features which need to be assessed. It may be unevenly balanced, too large or difficult to grip well or present hazards of heat or cold, in carrying or if dropped. Packaged loads should be labelled to draw attention to hazardous properties.

*General Note: There is no such thing as a completely "safe" manual handling operation, however, working within these weight guidelines will cut the risk and reduce the need for a more detailed assessment.*

The weight guidelines are not legal limits. However, work outside the guidelines is likely to increase the risk of injury, so it should be examined closely for possible improvements and a more detailed assessment will be required. Any operation involving more than twice the guideline weights should be rigorously assessed – even for very fit, well-trained individuals working under favourable conditions.

Managers should ensure that employees who undertake manual handling operations are trained in doing so. Employees should be familiarised with the notes on "Good Handling Techniques" attached as section 2.5.

If the operation falls within the weight guidelines then the risks involved are likely to be low. A record of the assessment should be kept for future reference. However, if the operation does not fall into the low risk category, or you are unsure, move on to Step 2.

### **Step 2: Detailed Assessment**

If the Step 1 assessment has established that guideline weights are exceeded, the operation is hampered by difficult working conditions, the load is unstable or difficult to grasp with both hands, or presents risks in some other way, then a detailed assessment must be made of the operation. To do this use the assessment sheet provided. An example copy of this is attached to this guidance note.

Assess each aspect of the operation shown on the assessment form. The objective is to identify the higher risk aspects of the operation and to reduce these to the lowest practicable level. Possible ways of reducing risks are shown on the following page:

#### **Problems to look for when making an assessment**

##### **The tasks: do they involve:**

- holding loads away from trunk?  
to improve
- twisting, stooping or reaching  
and  
upwards
- large vertical movement?
- long carrying distances?
- strenuous pushing or pulling?
- unpredictable movement of loads?
- repetitive handling?
- insufficient rest or recovery time?
- a work rate imposed by a process?  
used?

##### **The loads: are they:**

- heavy, bulky or unwieldy?
- difficult to grasp?
- unstable or unpredictable?
- intrinsically harmful, eg sharp or hot?
- labelled to warn of hazards?  
help?

##### **The working environment: are there:**

- constraints on posture?  
movement?

#### **Ways of reducing the risk of injury**

##### **Can you:**

- improve workplace layout  
efficiency?
- reduce the amount of twisting  
stooping?
- avoid lifting from floor level or above  
shoulder height?
- cut carrying distances?
- avoid repetitive handling?
  - vary the work, allowing one set of  
muscles to rest while another is

##### **Can you make the load:**

- lighter or less bulky?
- easier to grasp?
- more stable?
  - less damaging to hold?
- have you asked your suppliers to  
help?

##### **Can you:**

- remove obstacles to free

- poor floors?  
obliged  
assessment.
- variations in levels?
- hot/cold/humid conditions?  
cold?
- poor lighting conditions?
- restrictions on movement or posture  
from clothes or personal protective  
personal protective equipment?
- provide better flooring? You are  
to carry out a specific risk
- avoid steps and steep ramps?  
• prevent extremes of hot and
- improve lighting?  
• consider less restrictive clothing or  
equipment?

**Individual capacity: does the job:**

- require unusual capability?
- endanger those with a health problem?  
a  
pregnant?
- endanger pregnant women?  
information
- call for special information or  
Departmental  
training?

**Can you:**

- take better care of those who have  
physical weakness or are  
pregnant?
- give your employees more  
information  
e.g. about the range of tasks they  
are likely to face?
- provide training. Ask your  
Safety Adviser for assistance.

**Step 3: Undertake all Practicable Remedial Action**

The objective of the risk assessment process is to put into practice those actions which have been identified to reduce risks to the lowest reasonably practical level. The first step to this is to prioritise remedial action identified and then to carry the action out. See Section 3 of the Assessment Sheet – Appendix A.

**Step 4: Discuss the Manual Handling Assessment with all Relevant Employees**

Ensure that all employees involved in the operation have seen and are aware of the assessment you have carried out, know the risks involved and what steps are necessary to minimise these. Employees should be asked to sign that they have read the assessment sheet for manual handling operations they undertake regularly. The assessment sheet should be available for easy reference to all relevant employees.

**Step 5: Review the Assessment:**

When remedial action has been taken, check that it has had the desired effect.

The assessment must be reviewed annually or when a significant incident or change occurs relating to the manual handling operation. The line manager who undertook the assessment is responsible for keeping records of the assessment. A copy of the assessment sheet should be sent to your Departmental Safety Adviser.

2.5 **Good Handling Technique**

Training in good handling technique is an important way of helping to reduce risks in manual handling operations. The following basic lifting advice should be followed at all times. Employees who undertake high risk operations should all

receive a greater degree of training. Advice is available from your Departmental Safety Adviser.

### **Stop and think**

Plan the lift. Where is the load to be placed? Use appropriate handling aids if possible. Test the load for weight distribution. Is the load labeled to warn of hazards? Do you need help with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, such as floor to shoulder height, consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench in order to change grip.

### **Position the feet**

Feet apart, giving a balanced and stable base for lifting (tight clothes and uncomfortable footwear make this difficult). Leading leg as far forward as is comfortable.

### **Adopt a good posture**

When lifting from a low level, bend the knees. Do not kneel or overflex the knees. Keep the back straight (tucking in the chin helps). Lean forward a little over the load if necessary to get a good grip. Keep the shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips.

### **Get a firm grip**

Try to keep the arms within the boundary formed by the legs. The best position and type of grip depends on the circumstances and individual preference; but it must be secure. A hook grip is less tiring than keeping the fingers straight. If you need to vary the grip as the lift proceeds, do it as smoothly as possible.

### **Keep close to the load**

Keep the load close to the trunk for as long as possible. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the trunk. If a close approach to the load is not possible, slide it towards you before trying to lift. Wear protective overalls etc to shield clothing.

### **Don't jerk**

Lift smoothly, keeping control of the load.

### **Move the feet**

Don't twist the trunk when turning to the side.

### **Put down, then adjust**

If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into desired position.

# Manual Handling of Loads

## Appendix A

### Risk Assessment Checklist

**Note:** This checklist will remind you of the main points to think about while you:

- Consider the risk of injury from manual handling operations
- Identify steps that can remove or reduce the risk
- Decide your priorities for action

<p><b>SUMMARY OF ASSESMENT</b></p> <p>Operation covered by this assessment:          .....          .....</p> <p>Location: .....</p> <p>Personnel involved: .....</p> <p>Date of assessment: .....</p>	<p>Overall priority for remedial action: Nil / Low / Med / High*</p> <p>Remedial action to be taken:          .....          .....</p> <p>Date by which action is to be taken:          .....</p> <p>Date for reassessment: .....</p> <p>Assessor's name: .....</p> <p>Assessor's signature: .....</p>
--	--

**circle as appropriate**

**Section A – Preliminary:**

**Q1 Do the operations involve significant risk of injury?**

**Yes / No\***

If 'Yes' go to Q2. If 'No' the assessment need go no further.  
 If in doubt answer 'Yes'.

**Q2 Can the operation be avoided / mechanised / automated at a reasonable cost?**

**Yes / No\***

If 'No' go to section 'B' (reverse side of document). If 'Yes' proceed then check that the result is satisfactory.

**Section C – Overall assessment of risk:**

**Q what is your overall assessment of the risk of injury?      Insignificant / Low / Med / High\***

If not 'Insignificant' go to Section D. If 'Insignificant' the assessment need go no further.

**Section D – Remedial action:**

**Q What remedial steps should be taken , in order of priority?**

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....

**And finally:**

- Complete the SUMMARY above
- Compare it with your other manual handling assessments
- Decide your priorities for action

**TAKE ACTION.....AND CHECK THAT IT HAS HAD THE DESIRED EFFECT!**

**Section B – More detailed assessment, where necessary:**

<b>Questions to consider:</b> (If the answer to question is 'Yes' place a tick against it and then consider the level of risk)	<b>Level of risk:</b> (Tick as appropriate)				<b>Possible remedial action:</b> (Make rough notes in this column in preparation for completing Section D)
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Med</u>	<u>High</u>	
<p><b>The Task:</b> -do they involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding loads away from trunk?</li> <li>• Twisting?</li> <li>• Stooping?</li> <li>• Reaching upwards?</li> <li>• Large vertical movement?</li> <li>• Strenuous pushing or pulling?</li> <li>• Unpredictable movement of loads?</li> <li>• Repetitive handling?</li> <li>• Insufficient rest or recovery?</li> <li>• A work rate imposed by a process?</li> </ul> <p><b>The Loads:</b> -are they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy?</li> <li>• Bulky /unwieldy?</li> <li>• Difficult to grasp?</li> <li>• Unstable / unpredictable?</li> <li>• Intrinsically harmful (eg sharp/hot?)</li> </ul> <p><b>The working environment</b> –are there:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constraints on posture?</li> <li>• Poor floors?</li> <li>• Variations in levels?</li> <li>• Hot/cold/humid conditions?</li> <li>• Strong air movements?</li> <li>• Poor lighting conditions?</li> </ul> <p><b>Individual capacity</b> – Does the job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require unusual capabilities?</li> <li>• Hazard those with a health problem?</li> <li>• Hazard those who are pregnant?</li> <li>• Call for special information/training?</li> </ul> <p><b>Other factors:</b> Is movement or posture hindered by clothing or personal protective equipment?</p>					

Deciding the level of risk will inevitably call for judgement.

**When you have completed Section B go to Section C.**



# PREMISES, SUBSTANCES & EQUIPMENT

## 1. Construction, Design & Management

### Introduction

- 1.1 The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994 (CDM) apply to all construction related works (including cleaning work where there is a risk of persons falling more than 2m) where the work will either:
- be longer than 30 working days;
  - involve more than 500 person days of construction work;
  - involve 5 or more persons working on the site at any one time.
- 1.2 If a project is expected to be over 30 working days or 500 person days of construction work then it is notifiable to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). If 5 or more persons are working on a site at any one time then it will bring the project within the scope of the regulations but it will not be notifiable to the HSE unless the 30 day or 500 person day rules are exceeded.
- 1.3 The regulations apply to all projects involving demolition or dismantling of a structure irrespective of the timescale or number of persons working on the site.
- 1.4 The requirements on the designer apply to all projects irrespective of the timescale or number of persons working on the site.
- 1.5 The Regulations place specific duties on the client, client's agent, designer, planning supervisor, principal contractor and contractor.

### **Commitment:**

- 1.6 Oxfordshire County Council accepts its responsibilities under CDM when carrying out the roles of:

Client:	who should be satisfied that only competent people are appointed as planning supervisor and principal contractor. This also applies when making arrangements for the appointment of designers and contractors. They should also ensure, as much as they can, that sufficient resources, including time, have been or will be allocated to enable the project to be carried out safely.
Designer:	who should ensure, as much as they can, that structures are designed to avoid, or where this is not possible, to minimise, risks to health and safety while they are being built and maintained. Where risks cannot be avoided, adequate information has to be provided. Design includes the preparation of specifications – it is not limited to drawings.
Planning	who has overall responsibility for co-ordinating the health and safety aspects
Supervisor:	of the design and planning phase and for the early stages of the health and safety plan and the health and safety file.
Principal	who should take account of health and safety issues when preparing and

Contractor: presenting tenders or similar documents. The principal contractor also has to develop the health and safety plan and co-ordinate the activities of all contractors to ensure they comply with health and safety legislation. Principal contractors also have duties to check on the provision of information and training for employees and for consulting with employees, and the self-employed on health and safety.

### **Arrangements**

- 1.7 As each Department has different requirements and roles under CDM the specific management arrangements and procedures are included in Departmental Parts II and III of the Health and Safety Policy.

## **2. Safety Inspections**

- 2.1 **Chief Officers** are responsible for developing systems which ensure that safety inspections are carried out in order to monitor health and safety within places of work.
- 2.2 Departmental Safety Advisers will ensure that procedures for carrying out inspections are included in Part II of the Health and Safety Policy and cover the arrangements for the management of inspections including their content, frequency, responsible persons and monitoring. All inspection procedures will include the following:

Emergency Procedures	to ensure that adequate procedures are in place for evacuation of the building or dealing with other emergencies and that these are known to employees.
Housekeeping	to ensure the workplace is tidy and free from hazards.
Equipment	to ensure that guarding and safety arrangements for all equipment, plant etc are in use and in order.
Fire Safety	to ensure that all fire precautions have been taken in accordance with the risk assessments as outlined in the Fire Safety Folder, firefighting equipment is in working order, fire doors are closed and means of escape are unobstructed.
Risk Assessments	to ensure that adequate and current risk assessments have been undertaken and required action has been implemented.

## **3. Protective Clothing/Equipment**

- 3.1 Suitable protective clothing and equipment will be provided, where appropriate and necessary, to all employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety while at work, in accordance with relevant legislation. Following a risk assessment, wherever practicable, risks will be minimised by controls and safe systems of work. Protective clothing and equipment will be used "as a last resort" to control risks which cannot be satisfactorily controlled by other means.
- 3.2 Personal protective equipment will:

- be appropriate for the risks involved;
  - be appropriate for the conditions of the job;
  - take into account ergonomic requirements;
  - take into account the state of health of the wearer;
  - fit the wearer correctly;
  - be effective in preventing or adequately controlling the risks;
  - comply with any relevant enactment on design or manufacture;
  - be compatible with any other equipment being used.
- 3.3 Chief Officers will ensure that clothing and equipment is appropriately maintained and stored when not in use, and will provide information, instruction and training on the proper use of the equipment and the risks involved. Managers and supervisors will ensure that clothing and equipment provided is used whenever appropriate and in accordance with instructions.
- 3.4 Employees are required to use personal protective clothing and equipment provided in accordance with instructions and training. Employees will report any loss, damage or defect in clothing and equipment to their manager without delay.

#### **4. Waste Management**

##### **Introduction**

- 4.1 This section relates to the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Environment Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 and the Controlled Waste (Regulations of Carriers and Seizure of Vehicles) Regulations 1991. All waste produced by the County Council is designated "controlled waste" under the Act and the County Council has a "Duty of Care" as the producer.

##### **Commitment**

- 4.2 Oxfordshire County Council accepts its responsibilities under the legislation relating to the safe disposal of the waste it produces. Wherever suitable, waste will be recycled, providing that a risk assessment indicates this can be undertaken safely. This policy does not cover the activities undertaken by the Council as a waste regulation authority.

##### **Method of Putting the Policy into Action**

*General Note: The great majority of waste produced can be safely disposed of in dustbins in the normal way.*

- 4.3 The Council will implement the policy by the following means:
- Chief Officers will identify managers who are responsible for waste disposal and ensure that each identified manager is aware of his/her duties and responsibilities.
  - Chief Officers will ensure that procedures for dealing with waste which is assessed as requiring special attention are included in Parts II and III of the Health & Safety Policy as appropriate.
  - Designated managers are required to assess the risks associated with the waste produced by the work under their control and to ensure that it is disposed of safely and in accordance with the Regulations.
  - Risk assessments of waste will cover the following points:

- \* does the waste need to be kept in a special container? (eg is it corrosive, likely to spill/leak/blow away/fall down?)
  - \* is it hazardous/dangerous to mix the waste with other substances?
  - \* is it hazardous/dangerous to crush, bury or incinerate the waste?
- Waste which is assessed as hazardous or requiring special attention will be dealt with in accordance with specific departmental procedures laid down in Parts II and III of the Health & Safety Policy. This includes clinical/medical waste and sharps.
  - Waste will be stored securely in a safe place, in suitable containers, suitably segregated, wrapped or packed. Special care must be taken to avoid waste presenting fire risks.
  - Designated managers will arrange for waste to be collected by an appropriately registered carrier at appropriate intervals in line with departmental guidelines. See 4.4 below.
  - The Occupational Health Unit will provide advice on the disposal of clinical waste or the potential health risks associated with waste.

#### **The Transfer Note for Controlled Waste**

- 4.4 Designated managers will check the registration of carriers to ensure that it is appropriate for the type of waste to be transferred and will ascertain that the disposal site is licensed to receive this waste with the appropriate waste regulation authority.
- 4.5 Whenever waste is passed on to a registered carrier the law requires that a transfer note is drawn up. An example blank copy of this is attached at annex 1. The transfer note is usually provided by the carrier, and will be completed by the designated site manager, after checking the registration of the carrier. One copy of the note must be retained by the designated line manager for a minimum of 2 years and the other must be passed to the carrier.
- 4.6 Where waste is transferred regularly in a weekly or daily collection one transfer note may be completed to cover all similar transfers for a period not exceeding one year.

#### **Role of the Departmental Safety Adviser**

- 4.7 Departmental Safety Advisers will provide advice to managers and employees on waste disposal and will assist in the preparation of departmental policies.

### **5. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**

- 5.1 The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH) lay down a step-by-step approach for the control of hazardous substances and for protecting people exposed to them.
- 5.2 The Regulations cover virtually all substances hazardous to health. The basic principles of occupational hygiene underlie the COSHH Regulations. Only substances such as asbestos, radiation and lead, which have their own legislation, are excluded.

#### **Policy**

- 5.3 Chief Officers are required to:

- (a) assess the risk(s) to health arising from the use of hazardous substances and what precautions are needed.
- (b) introduce appropriate measures to prevent or control the risk(s). Chief Officers must ensure that the exposure of employees and other people to hazardous substances is prevented - or, if this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

On the basis of the assessment, decisions have to be made as to which measures are appropriate to the particular work situation in order to deal effectively with any hazardous substances that may be present.

This may mean preventing exposure by removing the hazardous substance; substituting with a safe or safer alternative substance, or using it in a safer form; or if neither can be achieved, providing personal protective equipment.

- (c) ensure that control measures are used, that equipment is properly maintained and procedures observed.
  - (d) where necessary, and with the assistance of the Occupational Health Unit, monitor the exposure of employees and carry out an appropriate surveillance of their health.
  - (e) inform, instruct and train employees about the risks and precautions to be taken.
- 5.4 Departmental Safety Advisers are responsible for ensuring a register of potentially hazardous substances is kept and maintained (for providing advice and assistance to managers).

## **6. Asbestos**

- 6.1 The management of existing asbestos materials that have been used in the construction and insulation of County Council buildings is covered in 'Asbestos based materials in County Council buildings' document issued by the Director of Environmental Services.
- 6.2 Procedures for dealing with asbestos in equipment is covered in Department's Parts 2 and 3 policies, where appropriate.

## **7. Mobile Telephones**

A mobile telephone is a piece of work equipment. Accordingly, as with all work equipment, the potential risks associated with its usage must be assessed and appropriate protective measures must be put in place to minimise these.

Managers are required under the Council's Health and Safety policy to carry out a risk assessment on the use of mobile phones for each user. This document addresses only

some of the common risks. It should be amended and added to for individual cases, where necessary.

### **7.1 Use of mobile phones while driving**

The most common cause of death at work in the County Council is road traffic accidents. Thankfully, such cases are rare, however, mobile phone users need to be aware that by far the greatest hazard presented by their mobile phone is its potential as a source of distraction if used while driving at work. This is because a driver requires total concentration to operate and control a vehicle safely. In addition, work related conversations on the phone are likely to be complex, or to require considerable thought, which also jeopardises safety.

Consequently, **the County Council forbids the use of any mobile phone or fixed car phone, including those operated through a hands-free kit or headset, while driving.**

Phones should be switched off while driving and a suitable recorded message should be used to explain why. This does not apply where mobile phones with headsets are used for emergency operational purposes by the Fire Service.

### **7.2 Mobile phones and petrol stations**

Mobile phones can produce sparks which could cause an explosion if there is petrol or other flammable vapour in the air. Phones must, therefore, be switched off while near possible sources of flammable vapour, including at petrol stations.

### **7.3 Personal Safety**

Many employees feel that having a mobile phone is a useful way to call for assistance, if required, especially while working alone, and some employees are issued with a mobile phone for this purpose. However, the possession of a mobile phone must not be used as a substitute for taking proper precautions to minimise the potential risks of the job, such as violent attack, or risk of accident while working in isolation. In all cases a risk assessment must be carried out and protective measures put in place where appropriate.

### **7.4 Risks to health from radiation associated with mobile phone use**

Most people experience no ill effects from using mobile phones. Advice from the Council's radiation protection consultant is that there is no evidence of a significant health risk from their use. However, if there are concerned about possible health risks the following practices may be adopted when using a mobile phone:

- Use the mobile phone only when there is no land phone available
- Ask colleagues to contact you on the mobile phone only when necessary
- Keep conversations short, no longer than 10 minutes at one time
- Switch the phone from ear to ear frequently when talking
- Do not use the phone in a car, as this increases the field strength

If you experience symptoms which you believe may be caused by mobile phone use, contact the Occupational Health Unit or your General Practitioner(GP).

### **7.5 Warning Notices**

Watch out for notices restricting the use of mobile phones in areas where they may interfere with sensitive equipment. This could include hospitals.

If you have any questions about the health and safety aspects of mobile phone use please contact your Departmental Safety Adviser.

## 8. Safe Use of Work and Lifting Equipment

- 8.1 The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) lay down legal requirements for the safe management of equipment used at work. PUWER covers all work equipment and has special requirements for mobile equipment. LOLER adds further specific requirements relating to lifting equipment. These are augmented by the Associated Codes of Practice.
- 8.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that its employees, service users and members of the public are protected from risk in the use of work equipment of all sorts and seeks to implement this policy by adhering to the provisions of PUWER and LOLER.
- 8.3 Many of the Council's services will not require the use of high risk equipment so details are not included in this policy covering risks from equipment which it is deemed will not be used by the Council. **However, in order to ensure that equipment which presents special risks is managed in a safe way it is essential that all equipment used to lift people, all mobile work equipment which is used to carry people and all other work equipment which is identified as presenting potentially serious risks to health and safety is notified without delay to the appropriate Departmental Safety Adviser.**
- 8.4 In accordance with PUWER and LOLER work equipment will:
- be selected to be safe and suitable for its purpose and the environment in which it will be used.
  - be inspected appropriately by a competent person after installation and before first use, after re-assembly on a new site, after exceptional circumstances which may have affected it, when a significant risk has been identified and at suitable intervals to ensure it is safe to use. The findings of each inspection must be recorded in writing, be readily verifiable by users, and be retained.
  - where faults are identified by inspection, examination or any other means, be reported to the relevant manager straight away who will arrange for early repair. Where necessary for safety, the equipment will be taken out of use until it is put right.
  - be marked clearly with any warnings or instructions necessary for health and safety.
  - have adequate controls governing starting and stopping (including emergency stop and means of isolating from sources or energy where appropriate) and, where appropriate, its speed and operation in accordance with Regulation 17 '*Controls and Regulations*' and 18 '*Control Systems*' of PUWER.
  - be provided with adequate guards, fastenings and other devices to protect people from instability or dangerous parts of machinery in compliance with Regulation 11 '*Dangerous Parts of Machinery*' and Regulation 20 '*Stability*' of PUWER<sup>2</sup>.
  - be adequately lit, using special lighting where necessary.
  - be capable of being maintained so far as is reasonably practical while the equipment is shut down.
- 8.5 Mobile work equipment which carries people will, in addition to the points in 8.2:
- be suitable for carrying persons.
  - be impossible to start other than by authorised persons.
  - have features for reducing risks to health and safety to as low as is reasonably practical, including personal restraints, lights, adequate driver vision, brakes (with back up systems where necessary), fire-fighting
-

equipment, and features to prevent falling out and to prevent and protect against roll over.

- 8.6 In respect of lifting equipment the points in 8.2 will apply, and, in addition the following :
- lifting equipment will be thoroughly examined by a competent person
    - after installation and before first use
    - after re-assembly and before first use on another site
    - after exceptional circumstances have occurred
    - every 6 months where it is used for lifting people and otherwise every 12 months, unless a specific maintenance schedule applies
  - lifting equipment will be of adequate strength and stability for each load, with special care being taken of mounting and fixing points
  - loads and anything attached to them must be of adequate strength to take the weight of the load.
  - safe working load information, guidance on usage and will be clearly marked on lifting equipment,
  - lifting equipment will be positioned safely and so as to minimise the risk of a load drifting, falling free or being release unintentionally.
  - only equipment suitable for lifting persons will be used for this purpose. Where it may be unclear equipment not suitable for lifting persons will be clearly marked as such.
  - equipment for lifting persons will have suitable devices to prevent the carrier from falling free, to prevent those using it from falling, being crushed, trapped or struck and will allow persons to be rescued in the event of accident.
  - lifting equipment will not be passed on or received without physical evidence that its last required thorough examination has been carried out.
- 8.7 An employee making a thorough examination or inspection will report any defects to the appropriate manager straight away and will confirm this by a signed written report to the manager and the hirer or lessor of the equipment.
- 8.8 Chief Officers are required to:
- (a) nominate competent managers who are responsible for the control and safety of work equipment.
  - (b) ensure that nominated managers and those who operate, maintain or repair equipment are adequately trained and have adequate information and instructions about work equipment to enable them to carry out their responsibilities safely.
  - (c) allocate adequate budgetary provision for the acquisition and maintenance of appropriate and safe work equipment.
- 8.9 Managers are responsible for:
- (a) undertaking risk assessments to ensure that all equipment acquired or used complies with section 8.3 above and that measures have been taken to eliminate or minimise and adequately control all associated risks, in accordance with Regulation 12 '*Protection Against Specified Hazards* 'of PUWER'.
  - (b) notifying the appropriate Departmental Safety Adviser of mobile work equipment which is used for carrying people and other work equipment which is identified as presenting a potentially serious risk to health and safety.
-



- (c) ensuring that work equipment which presents specific risks is used and maintained only by authorised competent persons who have received specific training and guidance in its use.
- (d) ensuring that equipment is not used if it has been identified as unsafe, or for purposes or in environments for which it is not suitable.
- (e) ensuring the appropriate and regular inspection or thorough examination by a competent person and that written records and reports are retained.
- (f) identifying and implementing an appropriate maintenance schedule for each piece of equipment to ensure that it is kept in efficient and safe working order.
- (g) ensuring that maintenance and repairs are carried out by competent persons and that where maintenance logs are necessary these are kept up to date.
- (h) ensuring that every lifting operation using lifting equipment is planned properly by a competent person, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner.

8.9 Departmental Safety Advisers are responsible for:

- a) ensuring that policies on work equipment are kept up to date and distributing them to identified managers.
- b) advising on policies and PUWER and LOLER.
- c) ensuring that the provisions of PUWER and LOLER are applied fully and appropriately where DSA's have been notified of mobile work equipment which is used to lift or carry people and all other work equipment which is identified as presenting special or potentially serious risks to health and safety.

### Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 34)

#### Section A – Description of waste

1. Description of waste – type, condition and origin
2. Does it have any special handling requirements or other difficulties?  
NO  YES  State them
3. How is the waste contained?  
Inside  Loose in  Skip  Other  Please describe:  
Vehicle  vehicle
4. What is the quantity? (tonnes, cu metres, cu yards)

#### Section B – Person currently holding the waste

1. Full name (BLOCK CAPITALS):
2. Name and address of company:
3. Which of the following are you? (Please ✓ one or more boxes)
 

Producer of the waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	Holder of waste disposal or waste management licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Licence number: Issued by:
Importer of the waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt from requirement to have a waste disposal or waste management licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give reason:
Waste collection authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered waste carrier	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registration number: Issued by:
		Exempt from requirement to register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give reason:

#### Section C – Person receiving the waste

1. Full name (BLOCK CAPITALS):
2. Name and address of company:
3. Which of the following are you? (Please ✓ one or more boxes)
 

Producer of the waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	Holder of waste disposal or waste management licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Licence number: Issued by:
Importer of the waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	Exempt from requirement to have a waste disposal or waste management licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give reason:
Waste collection authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registered waste carrier	<input type="checkbox"/>	Registration number: Issued by:
		Exempt from requirement to register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give reason:

#### Section D – Transfer details

1. Address of place of transfer:
  2. Date of transfer note: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of transfer (single consignment): \_\_\_\_\_  
Multiple consignments: dates between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
  3. (If applicable): Name and address of broker  
who arranged this transfer:
  4. Signed on behalf of the current holder (B):  
Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_
- Signed on behalf of the receiver (C):  
Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): \_\_\_\_\_



# USE OF Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

## 1.1 Introduction

This section relates to the implementation of the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 which specify minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment. It should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety Executive guidance booklet "Display Screen Equipment At Work".

The ergonomic principles of this policy may be applicable to other work activities which are sedentary or involve repetitive movement.

## 1.2 Commitment

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to minimising the risks of working with display screen equipment. The implementation of this objective will be in accordance with the Council's policy on risk assessment. The Council recognises that by addressing the health and safety requirements of display screen equipment in accordance with the Regulations it will promote the most effective and efficient method of utilising this type of equipment.

## 1.3 Definitions Relating to the Application of this Policy

The policy will be applied to employees, work stations and equipment as defined below:

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE): Any alphanumeric or graphic display screen regardless of the display process involved.

USER: An employee who habitually uses DSE as part of his/her job for substantial periods of most days. The appropriate assessor will decide who is a user in accordance with HSE guidance booklet "Display Screen Equipment At Work" enclosed in "A Practical Guide to Display Screen Equipment"

WORKSTATION: DSE plus associated equipment including telephone, chair, desk, immediate work environment. (May be located at employee's home).

ASSESSOR: Departmental line manager with direct responsibility for the user of the DSE. All assessors will receive appropriate training before carrying out assessments and will refer any queries or problems to the Departmental Safety Adviser.

## 1.4 Method of Putting this Policy into Practice

The Council will implement this policy by the following means:

- The County Council will only purchase equipment to current British Standards (BS).
- Chief Officers will identify users, workstations and assessors in accordance with the above definitions.
- Users will be trained to enable them to use equipment correctly and to optimise their own workstation environment.
- New users of a workstation will be briefed on safety issues before they commence work.
- Users' training will be reviewed and additional training given when required after any significant change in the circumstances of the workstation and after a significant period of absence.
- Users will assist in risk assessments and will bring problems to the notice of the assessor.
- Assessors will undertake a risk assessment of each workstation, taking into account the needs of each user who works at each workstation.

- Assessors will assess each user of each workstation. New users of a workstation will be assessed before they commence work.
- Assessors will review risk assessments of workstations and assessments of users regularly, and in any event annually, and when there is a significant change in circumstances.
- Assessors will maintain records of assessments in accordance with the Practical Guide to Display Screen Assessment on the form provided. Annex A
- Assessors will inform Departmental Safety Advisers of problems identified and seek their advice when necessary.
- The Occupational Health Unit will provide advice and information on seating, equipment and health related matters such as repetitive strain injury.
- Based on the outcomes of the risk assessments undertaken, appropriate action will be taken to reduce risks identified by:
  - \* adapting the workstation environment to the user
  - \* adopting good job design, including regular breaks from screen work
  - \* obtaining advice
  - \* providing appropriate equipment
  - \* providing optical corrective appliances where required

### 1.5 Work Breaks

To minimise possible health risks it is vital that users take breaks from continuous work at display screen equipment. These breaks can either occur naturally (visiting the toilet, having coffee or lunch), arise from the way work is organised (visiting photocopier, collecting work from in-tray), or from carrying out other work between spells at display screen equipment (reading mail, carrying out research).

For best results the following guidelines should be followed:

- breaks must be taken **before** the onset of fatigue.
- if possible, breaks must be taken **away** from the screen.
- short, frequent breaks are better than long, occasional breaks.
- where intensive keyboard work is involved, work involving writing or further typing work should be avoided during breaks.
- work will be organised as far as possible so that there is a mix between screen based and non-screen based work.
- breaks will not be regarded as opportunities for idleness, but as means of improving productivity.

### 1.6 Eye and Eyesight Testing

The Council will pay, on request, for an eye and eyesight test for any identified user, or employee who is about to become an identified user. This test may be repeated at regular intervals, as prescribed by an optometrist or medical doctor, at the Council's expense.

Where an optometrist or medical doctor prescribes "special" corrective appliances for use solely with a DSE the cost of suitable basic appliances will be funded by the Council on receipt of a letter from him/her defining requirements. This applies where the users "normal" corrective appliances (eg glasses, contact lenses) are unsuitable for DSE use. The cost of "special" corrective appliances may not be used to offset the purchase of normal corrective appliances or a more luxurious appliance.

### 1.7 Musculoskeletal Injury

Musculoskeletal Injury has been identified as a potential hazard for DSE users. Regular breaks from DSE work and a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the workstation, taking into account the needs of the users, followed by appropriate action will minimise the risk of Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) developing.

If an employee experiences health difficulties which he/she believes may be related to DSE usage, he/she should inform his/her line manager who may refer him/her to the County's occupational health service. Where medical advice indicates and no alternative means of protection against RSI can be identified, the County Council undertakes to seek alternative non-DSE based employment wherever practicable.

## 2. Guidance

### 2.1 Introduction

This section breaks down the process of display screen equipment assessment into three stages which identify both the task to be undertaken and who is responsible for the action.

The guide is to be read in conjunction with the above information on Display Screen Equipment work, which provides the framework within which the assessment takes place and defines the terms used in the guide:

The guide also contains:

- Information sheet on arranging DSE environment
- General guidance on workstation design
- DSE User Daily Checks

Available from your Departmental Safety Adviser:

- DSE Workstation Record
- DSE User Questionnaire
- DSE Assessment 1
- DSE Assessment 2
- HSE Guidance on "user" criteria
- General guidance on possible effects on health

While this guide is mainly for use with DSE's, the ergonomic approach used may be adapted to assess and minimise risks from other work activities which are sedentary or require repetitive actions.

General advice on workstations and health is available from the Occupational Health Unit.

#### Stage I

- Identify Workstation
- Identify User

#### Stage II

- Training/Briefing

#### Stage III

- Carry out assessment

#### Stage I

- Identify Workstation \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor
- Identify Workstation Users \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor
- Complete Workstation Record as far as possible \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor
- Send one copy of Workstation Record to DSA to be kept in Workstation Register. Ensure one copy is held at Workstation \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor

#### Action

#### Stage II

- Assessors to be briefed by DSA's using: \_\_\_\_\_ DSA's
  - \* Video
  - \* The Workstation Record/User Questionnaire

- \* Information pack which contains:
  - ~ general guidance on workstation design
  - ~ general guidance on possible effects on health
  - ~ sources of information
  - ~ assessment checklist(s)
  - ~ user's daily checks (also to be held at workstation)
- Users to be briefed: \_\_\_\_\_ Departmental arrangements
  - ~ as above
  - ~ Record of training must be kept on user questionnaire

### Stage III

- Complete User Questionnaire \_\_\_\_\_ All Users
- Pass questionnaire to Assessor \_\_\_\_\_ All Users
- Complete ASSESSMENT I \_\_\_\_\_ User/Assessor
- The Assessor will decide whether:
  - \* the assessment is adequate
  - \* the assessment needs to be discussed with the user (the Assessor can authorise any minor remedial actions identified)
  - \* a more detailed assessment is needed \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor
- If ASSESSMENT 1 is adequate enter user details on Workstation Record \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor
- If a more detailed assessment is needed complete ASSESSMENT 2 with a view of addressing outstanding difficulties \_\_\_\_\_ User/Assessor
- All completed assessment form(s) and user questionnaires to be kept at Workstation and assembled into a register by site manager \_\_\_\_\_ Assessor/DSA
- Sample/check assessments on a random basis \_\_\_\_\_ DSA

*Note: The line manager will be the assessor in most cases.  
DSA = Departmental Safety Adviser*

## 2.2 General Guidance on Workstation Design

### 2.2.1 Equipment

All new equipment should conform to British Standards.

#### (a) **Display Screen**

- (i) The display screen should be adjustable (i.e. tilt) such that it can be set at right angles to the operator's use of sight within 60 degrees of horizontal line of sight.
- (ii) Where VDU's are used in conjunction with several documents (e.g. to transfer information) the viewing distances (from the eyes) should be within the range 450mm to 550mm and should not exceed 600mm. The distance from the eyes to the screen and from the eyes to the document should be approximately the same in order to minimise the changes in focus.
- (iii) Screen characters should be clear and easily legible, sharp and well defined.
- (iv) The operator should have some form of control over contrast, brightness of screen/display.
- (v) The screen should be so positioned as to avoid undesirable reflected images. However, where reflections are encountered, a detachable filter can be fitted to prevent such reflections.
- (vi) Screen will be cleaned at regular intervals using the manufacturer's recommended method.
- (vii) Equipment should be regularly maintained and cleaned in line with manufacturer's recommendations.

#### (b) **Keyboard**

- (i) The key legend should be easily legible and resistant to wear and abrasion.
- (ii) The keyboard should be detachable (ie flex attached to the main body of the terminal) and kept clean.

- (iii) The keyboard should be easy to move on the work surface yet stable and resistant to movement during use.
- (iv) A document holder should be provided where necessary. 50-100mm work space in front of keyboard to provide support for hands and arms.

**(c) Work Surfaces**

- (i) There must be sufficient space available (1600mm x 800mm preferred) so that all documents, books and other ancillary equipment can be arranged according to the operator's needs.
- (ii) There must be adequate knee clearance (620mm height x 580mm width x 450mm length) and foot room (600mm depth x 150mm length).
- (iii) Work surfaces must have a matt finish to avoid reflections and glare.

**(d) Chairs**

- (i) The chair must be adjustable in terms of seat height (ideally between 380- 535mm height).
- (ii) The chair must have an adjustable back rest, both in height (170-225mm from seat to centre of rest) and tilt.
- (iii) The chair must be on castors, preferably 5, in star arrangement and with swivel.
- (iv) A footrest (450mm length x 350mm width size) should be provided for smaller operatives where their feet do not rest flat on the floor.

## **2.2.2 Working Environment**

**(a) Lighting**

- (i) To avoid a direct reflective glare, the most suitable form of artificial lighting is a totally illuminated ceiling. Alternative direct lighting by low luminance light fittings or indirect lighting can be used.
- (ii) For direct lighting by low luminance light fittings, or indirect lighting, the ceiling, walls and floor should have at least a medium reflectance to avoid gloom.
- (iii) DSEs should be positioned between (not under) lighting rows so that the line of sight is parallel to light fittings and windows.
- (iv) Any fluorescent lighting used must have diffusers fitted.
- (v) To eliminate glare from windows or curtains, blinds or light absorbing film should be used whenever necessary.

**(b) Ventilation and Heating**

- (i) The area must be adequately ventilated and draught-free.
- (ii) Where several DSEs operate in one area, the heat generated may be substantial and this will be exacerbated by warm weather or in confined spaces. Additional ventilation may be necessary in such circumstances.
- (iii) Reasonable temperatures must be maintained (19°C to 23°C) but rooms should not be overheated.

**(c) Room Layout**

- (i) Sufficient space must be provided for both equipment and personnel to be accommodated in comfort.
- (ii) Planning of power point requirements must be carried out to avoid the need for trailing leads and cables. Whilst modern DSEs are constructed to ensure a high degree of electrical safety and do not pose a particular risk, the basic principles and precautions associated with any other electrical equipment in the office applies equally to DSEs.
- (iii) Employees must be consulted on layouts and clusters of workstations arranged in groups may be preferred to rows of desks arranged in linear fashion.
- (iv) It is beneficial to provide relief for operators in rooms where extensive and concentrated DSE work takes place e.g. wall pictures, plants etc.

**(d) Noise**

- (i) Where printers and other noisy office machinery are present, these should preferably be quietened by the use of acoustic hoods or screens or at least by standing on sound absorbing material. Alternatively, it may be preferable to site such equipment away from the VDU if the tasks require concentration and if this is technically feasible.



(ii) Excessively noisy terminals must be referred to the suppliers.

(e) **Miscellaneous**

(i) Any carpets provided should have a minimum of nylon to prevent static build up.

(ii) Where static occurs, then special measures should be taken to reduce the problem, eg spraying area with anti-static chemical, provision of anti-static filter, additional earthing etc.

(iii) Where particular problems arise due to lack of effective ventilation, consideration will be given to the installation of humidifiers.

## 2.3 **General Guidance on Possible Effects on Health**

### 2.3.1 The Main Tasks

The introduction of DSEs and other display screen equipment has been associated with a range of symptoms related to the visual system and working posture. These often reflect bodily fatigue and can readily be prevented by applying ergonomic principles to the design, selection and installation of display screen equipment and to the design of the workplace.

#### (a) **Upper Limb Pains and Discomfort**

Sitting in fixed positions for long periods, or awkward, rapid or repetitive movements of the head, body or arms can cause pains or discomfort in the neck, shoulders or arms. These symptoms usually disappear when work stops. But poor workplace or job design or inappropriate keying techniques may put some keyboard users at risk of chronic upper limb disorders. Symptoms can include pain, swollen soft tissue, restricted joint movement, loss of function and permanent disability.

#### (b) **Eye and Eyesight Effects:**

Medical evidence shows that using display screen equipment is not associated with damage to eyes or eyesight, nor does it make existing defects worse. Some users may experience temporary visual fatigue, leading to a range of symptoms such as impaired visual performance, red or sore eyes, headaches, or behavioural changes. These symptoms may be caused by:

- staying in the same position and concentrating for a long time;
- poor positioning of the display screen equipment;
- poor legibility of the screen or source documents;
- poor lighting, including glare and reflections;
- a drifting, flickering or jittering image on the screen.

Like other visually demanding tasks, DSE work may make users with pre-existing vision defects more aware of them. Such uncorrected defects can make work with a display screen more tiring or stressful than would otherwise be the case.

#### (c) **Fatigue and Stress**

Many symptoms described by display screen users reflect stresses arising from the user's task. They may be secondary to upper limb or visual problems but they are more likely to be caused by poor job design or work organisation, lack of control of the work by the user, under-utilisation of skills, high-speed repetitive working or social isolation. All these have been linked with stress in display screen work, although clearly they are not unique to it; but attributing individual symptoms to particular aspects of a job or workplace can be difficult. The risks to users of display screen equipment experiencing physical fatigue and stress can be minimised by careful design, selection and disposition of display screen equipment; good design of the user's workplace, environment and task; and training, consultation and involvement of the user.

### 2.3.2 Other Possible Risks

#### (a) **Epilepsy**

Display screen equipment does not cause epilepsy and sufferers should not be barred from work with it. However, people suffering from photosensitive epilepsy may be susceptible to flickering lights and striped patterns.

(b) **Radiation Effects**

A number of surveys have been undertaken to determine levels of electromagnetic radiation from display screen equipment. A recent extensive study concluded that emission levels are well below national and international limits for occupational exposure. Most radiation from DSEs is much less than that received from natural environmental sources such as the sun. Because radiation from DSEs does not add significantly to the national background level of radiation, it is considered that the DSE radiation emissions do not put the users at risk.

(c) **Effects on Pregnant Women**

There has been considerable concern about higher levels of miscarriage and birth defect reported among some groups of DSE users. However, reliable studies have been unable to demonstrate a link between miscarriages and birth defects and DSEs. Pregnant women therefore need not stop work with DSEs. However to avoid problems caused by anxiety, women who are pregnant or planning children and worried about working with DSEs should be advised to talk to their line managers about a transfer away from DSE work during pregnancy.

(d) **General Note**

Any particular health problems should be reported to the Departmental Safety Adviser or Occupational Health Unit and will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### 3. **User's Daily Checks**

(a) **C** hair

- Height allows you to work with forearms parallel to worksurface.
- Able to put both feet on the floor or foot rest.
- Back rest comfortably supports the small of your back.
- Cushion provides comfortable support under thighs, and is rounded at the front.
- Moves easily on its castors and rotates freely.

(b) **H** older

- Is at same viewing distance as screen.
- Is close to the screen to minimise head and eye movement.

(c) **E**nvironment

- Lighting sufficient to enable source documents to be read.
- Lighting does not cause glare or high contrast.
- Temperature is comfortable to work in.

(d) **C**omponents of Workstation

- Tidy arrangements to prevent clutter.
- All items are within easy reach to avoid need for stretching.
- Power points are not overloaded.
- Work surface clean and free from glare.

(e) **K**eyboard

- Is within easy reach.
- Is angled for comfortable typing.
- Is cleaned regularly : keep drinks away!
- Sufficient space in front to rest wrists on surface.

(f) **S**creen

- Is at a viewing distance which facilitates reading.
- Is free from dust and dirt.
- Is below horizontal view, requiring it to be viewed with your head slightly down.

- Is angled square to your line of vision.
- Is free from bright reflections or glare.

## Display Screen Equipment USER QUESTIONNAIRE

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) is a term to describe anything that displays text, numbers or graphics and can include visual display terminals as well as microfiche readers. Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require that the Council provides protection for users of such equipment, who are defined as '**workers who habitually use Display Screen Equipment as part of their job for substantial period of most days**'

In order to comply with these regulations it is necessary to find out if you are a 'User'. To do this please complete the front page of this questionnaire and return to your manager.

If there is any significant change in your work with the DSE you must complete another questionnaire.

Name:	Location:	Hours worked Per week:
-------	-----------	---------------------------

1. Are you required to use Display Screen Equipment almost continuously on most days to perform your duties? Y/N  
If the answer is Yes specify other duties not using your display screen equipment that you perform.

2. Estimate on average how many hours each day you use the equipment:

i. 0 – 1 hours       ii 1 – 2 hours       iii 2 – 4 hours       iv 4 – 8 hours  

3. Estimate what percentage of your work using the DSE requires high concentration:

i. 0 – 25 %       ii 25 – 50 %       iii 50 – 75 %       iv 75 - 100%  

4. Have you had any special training in relation to the use of DSE:

i on how to use the equipment     
ii on DSE Health and Safety  

Signed..... Date.....

Assessor..... Date.....

### Workstation Inventory ID Numbers:

**NOTE:** A record must be kept on the back of this form of all eye tests, user training and any problems encountered by the user.

## Record of Training

Date	Details of Training	Given By

## Eye and Eyesight Testing

Date	Reason For Test	Outcome

## Problems Encountered During Work on/with Workstations

Date	Nature of Problem	Action Taken

**Display Screen Equipment****RISK ASSESSMENT**

User.....Department.....

Date of Assessment.....Assessor.....

Work Station Location.....Work Station Inventory ID No. ....

<b>Screen:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>
Is it possible to swivel the screen?	
Is it possible to tilt the angle of the screen?	
Are there any reflections or glares on the screen?	
Are the characters on the screen large enough and easy to read?	
Are the characters on the screen adequately spaced?	
Is the image stable and clear?	
Is it possible to adjust the screen to the appropriate height?	
Can you adjust the brightness and contrast on the screen?	
Can background to characters be changed?	
Is the screen cleaned regularly?	
Date of COSHH assessment on screen cleaner?	
<b>Keyboard:</b>	
Is the keyboard easy to use with clear, legible keys?	
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?	
Is the keyboard able to tilt?	
Is there adequate space in front of the keyboard and edge of the desk?	
Is a wrist rest available?	
Is a mouse mat available?	
Is the surface of the keyboard non-reflective?	
Is the user left-handed?	
Is the keyboard cleaned regularly?	
<b>Desk Top:</b>	
Is there enough space to work comfortably?	
Does the space conform to OCC guidance (Part One Policy blue pages, page5, section 221c)?	
Is the surface large enough for other equipment and materials to be arranged and used with ease?	
Is the surface made of a low reflective material?	
Is the work surface at the correct height?	
Is there adequate leg room?	
Can the seat move under the surface?	
Is a document holder available?	
Is the document holder adjustable and stable?	
Is there adequate storage space?	

Continued:

<b>Seating:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>
Does the chair conform to OCC guidance (Part One Policy)?	
Is the chair adjustable in height?	
Is the back of the chair adjustable in height and tilt?	
Does the user know how to adjust the height and backrest?	
Does the backrest give adequate lumbar support?	
Is the chair stable?	
Does the chair have a five-point base?	
Are all the casters attached, free and working?	
Can the chair swivel freely?	
Is the seat width and length adequate for the user?	
Does the chair have arms?	
Are the arms detachable?	
Is the upholstery on the chair comfortable and in good condition?	
Is there a problem with static electricity?	
Is the floor surface sound and stable?	
<b>Footrest:</b>	
Can the user reach the floor with both feet when seated?	
If not is a footrest provided?	
Is the footrest stable?	
Is the footrest angle adjustable?	
Does the user know how to adjust the footrest?	
<b>Workstation Environment:</b>	
Is there enough room at the workstation to change position and move around comfortably?	
Is there enough light for the task?	
Is local lighting provided (desk lamp)?	
Is there glare or reflection on the screen from windows, walls etc?	
Can lighting be dimmed or adjusted?	
Does dimming or adjusting the lighting affect the comfortable working of others?	
Are there adequate blinds on the windows?	
Is there adequate ventilation?	
Is the level of humidity comfortable?	
Does heat emitted from the equipment cause you discomfort?	
Is there a thermometer available?	
Can the temperature and ventilation be adjusted?	
Is the working area noisy and distracting?	
Can noise be controlled?	
Does the user know what action to take to control noise?	

Continued:

<b>Software and Systems:</b>	<b>Y / N</b>
Is the software suitable for its use?	
Is the software adaptable for your purpose and easy to use?	
Is the format and pace of the information displayed suitable?	
Is a password required?	
Does the user know the password?	
Is there a computer backup system?	
Is lost data retrievable?	
Does the user know how to retrieve lost data?	
Is computer software training provided?	
Is any form of work monitoring used?	
Is the user aware of this monitoring?	
Is computer on-line help available?	
<b>User Welfare Factors:</b>	
Has the user had an eye test in the last 12 months?	
Are special corrective appliances necessary?	
Have they been provided?	
Is the user's colour vision deficient?	
If yes, is this a problem for the task?	
Is the posture of the user comfortable when using a computer?	
Are adequate rest breaks from the computer provided?	
Can the user take breaks at their own discretion?	
Can the user leave the workstation during rest breaks?	
Does the user work alone?	
If yes, is there a procedure for regular contact?	
Is the user taking long term medication?	
Does this affect their use of the equipment?	
Does this affect their concentration?	
Is the user Photosensitive Epileptic?	
Does the display screen trigger a seizure?	
Does the Manager know the procedure for dealing with this?	

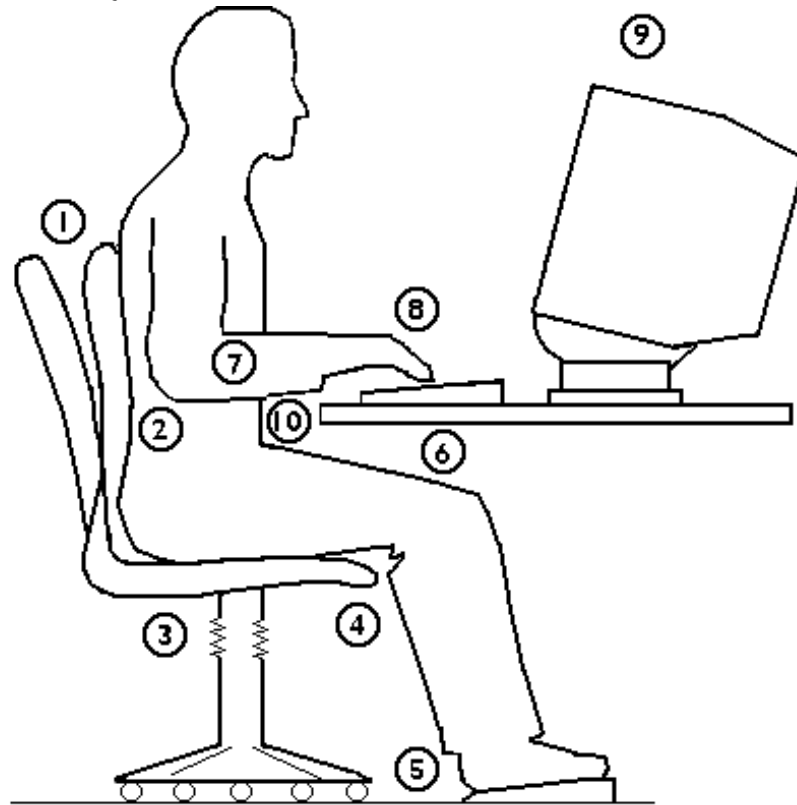


**Continued**

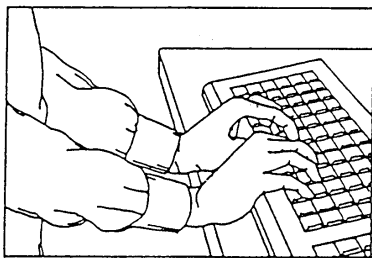
<b>Comments:</b>	
<b>Recommendations:</b>	

Actions to be completed by _____ (date)	
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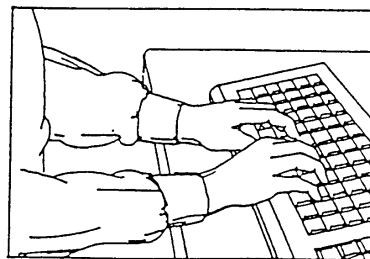
1. Seat back adjustable



- 2. Good lumbar support
- 3. Seat height adjustable
- 4. No excess pressure on underside of thighs and back of knees
- 5. Foot support if needed
- 6. Space for postural change, no obstacle under desk
- 7. Forearms approximately horizontal
- 8. Minimal extension, flexion or deviation of wrists
- 9. Screen height and angle should allow comfortable head position
- 10. Space in front of keyboard to support hands/wrists during pauses in keying



Try to avoid kinked wrists.



Try to maintain a straight wrist.

A wrist rest is useful to maintain the wrists at the correct angle.

Location Address.....Department.....

Date of Record.....Workstation Inventory ID.....

Location of Display Screen Equipment	Description and model numbers of equipment and attachments.	Name of user of the workstation

**All managers should ensure this record is complete and kept up to date at all times. All users of the workstation must be listed and have had a user questionnaire and risk assessment completed.**

