

# **Health and Safety Manual**

# **Department for Employment and Learning** **Health and Safety Manual**

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## **Foreword**

I am pleased to endorse the Department's Health & Safety Manual, which provides comprehensive advice on a full range of health and safety issues, as they apply to all Departmental staff.

A hard copy of the manual should be kept in each office and this should be easily accessible to all staff. A copy of the manual will also be available on the DEL Intranet. The manual will be revised and updated on a regular basis, and will provide staff with comprehensive advice on a full range of health and safety issues.

The manual provides guidance on management and individual responsibilities, in order to ensure a safe and healthy environment for both staff and visitors.

Health and Safety seminars will be held on a regular basis to ensure that staff are familiar with and understand their health and safety responsibilities and procedures. Managers are required to support the Health and Safety Policy, and should ensure that they understand their responsibilities and adapt the guidelines to meet local procedures.

I would ask everyone to familiarise themselves with the health and safety arrangements and co-operate fully with these procedures, to ensure a safe and healthy working environment.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of this manual, please contact Jim Hill, the Departmental Health and Safety Advisor.

Judith Shaw  
Personnel Officer

May 2004

## **Policy Statement**

### **GENERAL DEPARTMENTAL POLICY**

- 1.1. DEL will comply fully with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000.
- 1.2 It is the responsibility of the Department to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work by:
  - maintaining a safe and healthy working environment with adequate welfare facilities;
  - providing safe plant and safe systems of work;
  - providing a safe place of work with safe means of access to and exit from;
  - providing such information and instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees and other people entering the premises;
  - providing such safeguards necessary for the protection of members of staff, the general public and others visiting the property or premises owned or occupied by DEL;
  - ensuring that the above standards are maintained and that appropriate corrective action is taken when necessary as a result of reports, suggestions and information from individuals and professional bodies.
- 1.3 Arrangements will be made for the provision and implementation of instructions appropriate to operations carried out. Where they are applicable, published Codes of Practice in Health and Safety at Work will be adopted.
- 1.4 DEL will, in accordance with the requirements of the Order, make arrangements for joint consultation with appropriate Trades Union(s) for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.5 Ultimate responsibility for all Health and Safety matters rests with the Permanent Secretary. Responsibility for the implementation of the Department's policy has been delegated to a number of officers, namely;

Deputy Secretary – (PEFO)  
Principal Executive Finance Officer

Responsible to the Permanent Secretary of DEL for the enforcement of all health and safety matters.

**Greg McConnell**

Director of Corporate Services (DSO)

Responsible to the PEFO for the implementation of the Health & Safety policy.

**June Ingram**

Personnel Officer

Responsible to the Director of Corporate Services for the evaluation and revision of the policy.

**John McKeown**

Head of Personnel (Services) Branch (ADSO)

Responsible to the Personnel Officer for day to day implementation and ongoing review of the policy.

**Norman McCracken**

Departmental Health and Safety Advisor

Responsible to the Head of Personnel (Services) Branch. (ADSO)

**Jim Hill**

The post holder's primary function is to provide advice and guidance to all staff on health & safety at work, and ensure the Department is complying with all relevant legislation.

Implementation of all duties listed in paragraph 1.6

Person In Charge Of Building

**Premises Officer/Office Manager**

Responsible for the implementation of the Department's policy in respect of the duties assigned to them, for their own premises.

Implementation of all duties listed in paragraph 1.7

Line Managers

To comply with the policy.

Implementation of the duties listed in paragraph 1.9

Staff

The Health and Safety at Work Order places a legislative requirement on every individual in the workplace to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISOR**

### 1.6 The Health and Safety Advisor will:

- advise management on all matters relating to health and safety of staff, contractors and members of the public visiting any DEL premises;
- monitor the requirements of new legislation and advise management on measures necessary to ensure compliance with the statutory provisions;
- arrange training in conjunction with Personnel Staff Development;
- carry out and monitor risk assessment, summaries and reports;
- identify and resolve serious hazards/ risks, unsafe systems of work and undue delays in remedial measures;
- monitor accident/dangerous occurrences reports, and prepare hazard bulletins;
- advise management on health and safety risks/hazards and the protective/preventative measures necessary;
- arrange appointments with or site visits by the Occupational Health Service where professional assistance is needed to identify and assess hazards and to provide advice on prevention or control;
- undertake annual health and safety audits of all premises occupied by DEL, carry out spot checks and incident-response inspections;
- provide advice to staff on their legal responsibilities for health and safety including the health and safety of others;
- provide health and safety advice to local management when requested;
- provide health and safety advice during the alterations to office layouts or change of use within a work area;
- advise on the provision and use of protective clothing and equipment;
- advise on the health and safety implications for new installations, of equipment or machinery;
- investigate and analyse the causes of accidents and dangerous occurrences and advise management accordingly;
- ensure that the health and safety policy is reviewed on an annual basis;
- monitor fire and other emergency procedures in consultation with the premises officer to ensure correct local procedures are in place.

- consult /advise with Departmental Trade Union Side on health and safety issues.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PERSON IN CHARGE OF BUILDING PREMISES OFFICER / OFFICE MANAGER**

1.7 The Premises Officer / Office Manager will:

- ensure the building is maintained to a safe and acceptable standard;
- provide a range of support services required by other Departments/branches located in the same building;
- provide advice on health and safety, energy management and green housekeeping issues;
- provide the senior management with administrative support to ensure that policies on health and safety are met;
- maintain the Accident Book (B1510);
- ensure that the agreed procedures are followed in the event of accidents (see section 9 for more information);
- complete returns, e.g. accident records, energy usage etc;
- ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable access to and egress from the place of work is safe and without risk to health;
- work closely with other Departments/employers, to ensure that measures are taken to ensure compliance with statutory provision;
- establish, and where necessary, implement procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to persons on the premises;
- ensure that comprehensive and relevant information concerning health and safety is provided to staff or persons using the premises;
- ensure that statutory checks are carried out, e.g. fire alarms, fire fighting equipment etc;
- ensure all exits and emergency routes are free from obstruction;
- advise the Health and Safety Advisor of all serious risks identified;
- comply with and enforce any recommendations coming out of health and safety or security audits;
- monitor contractors working within the building, e.g. cleaners etc;

- liaise with Personnel (Services) Branch with reference to accommodation needs;
- consult with trade union through Local Consultative Committees regarding health and safety issues.

### **FIRE PRECAUTIONS OFFICER OR DEPUTY**

1.8 The person who has delegated responsibility for the fire safety within the building usually the premises officer must ensure:

- completion of weekly fire alarm tests;
- 2 practice evacuations of the premises are carried out each year;
- the appointment of fire wardens;
- monthly visual checks are carried out on ALL fire appliances to ensure they are in position in accordance with set schedules;
- maintenance of all records and validity of fire safety notices.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LINE MANAGER**

1.9 One of the principal objectives of the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 is to create an awareness of the importance of health and safety in the workplace.

Promotion of good health and safety is an essential function of good management, although ultimately responsibility rests with every individual employee.

In delegating responsibility and accountability the Department requires that managers plan an effective strategy to eliminate hazards and maintain high standards of occupational health and hygiene by:

- ensuring that adequate time is available to enable staff to carry out the requirements of the Order;
- ensuring that sufficient numbers of staff are nominated and attend appropriate health and safety courses;
- providing clear information on safe working practices and hazards in addition to ensuring that the recipients clearly understand the information given;
- ensuring that Departmental codes of practice and statutory instruments are followed;
- ensuring the implementation of safe systems of work;

- ensuring regular maintenance of equipment;
- ensuring that all staff understand their responsibilities both to themselves and to others and adhere to all Departmental Health & Safety policies and instructions;
- attending the appropriate training courses arranged by the Health and Safety Advisor, thereby acquiring a knowledge of their obligations, as managers, under the legislation.

#### (i) RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

1.10 Every individual member of staff is obliged:

- to comply with the safety instructions and directives laid down by the Department;
- not to misuse or interfere with anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare, or act in any way which might endanger themselves or others;
- to use properly the means and facilities provided for health, safety and welfare;
- to report to his/her manager any defects in plant, structure, systems, methods of work or equipment which come to his/her notice;
- to report to his/her manager any incidents which have led or might lead to personal injury or damage and to co-operate fully with any investigation which may be undertaken with the objective of preventing accidents or their recurrence.

Whilst DEL, as the employer, bears the primary responsibility for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978, the implementation of good health and safety practice together with the adoption of a positive and proactive approach to all health and safety matters in the workplace can only be achieved with the co-operation and support of Line Managers and every individual member of staff.

**This Order places a legislative requirement on every individual in the workplace to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.**

## Implementation

The Department's Health & Safety Policy Statement represents a commitment to comply fully with the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000.

It is important that the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) has a structured management system in place in all premises to control the risks to staff and others.

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 impose a shared responsibility upon both employers and employees.

### INVOLVING STAFF

2.1 Effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy requires involvement and commitment of all staff. This is often referred to as a “positive health and safety culture” and requires the following:

- ( a ) Competence – recruitment, training and advisory support.
  - assessing the skills needed to carry out tasks safely;
  - providing the means to ensure that *all* employees are adequately instructed and trained;
  - arranging for access to sound advice and help;
  - carrying out restructuring or reorganisation to ensure the competence of those taking on new health and safety responsibilities.
- ( b ) Control – allocating responsibilities, securing commitment, instruction and supervision.
  - leading by example: demonstrating commitment and providing clear direction – letting everyone know health and safety is important;
  - identifying people responsible for particular health and safety jobs, especially where special expertise is called for e.g. carrying out risk assessments, first aid, fire wardens;
  - ensuring that managers understand their responsibilities and have the time and resources to carry them out;
  - ensuring everyone fully understands what they must do and how they will be held accountable (set objectives).

( c ) Co-operation – in the workplace.

- Establishing a health and safety committee to consult with staff and their representatives. Consultation with employees must be carried out on matters relating to health and safety at work including:
  - i. any change which may substantially affect their health and safety at work, for example in procedures, equipment or ways of working;
  - ii. the employer's arrangements for ensuring that competent people are in place to fulfil health and safety laws;
  - iii. the information that employees must be given on the likely risks and dangers arising from their work, measures to eliminate these risks and what they should do if they have to deal with a risk or danger;
  - iv. the planning of health and safety training;
  - v. the health and safety consequences of introducing new technology, involving staff in planning and reviewing performance, writing procedures and solving problems;
  - vi. co-ordinating and co-operating with those contractors who work on the Department's premises.

( d ) Communication – spoken, written and visible.

- providing information about hazards, risks and preventative measures to employees and contractors working on the Department's premises;
- discussing health and safety through the health and safety committee forum;
- being “visible” on health and safety through regular health & safety audits/visits.

## **PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING**

2.2 This involves setting objectives, identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing standards of performance and developing a positive culture. Planning should provide for:

- identification of hazards and assessment of risks, and deciding how they can be eliminated or controlled;
- complying with the relevant health and safety laws;
- agreeing health and safety targets;

- a purchasing and supply policy which takes health and safety into account;
- safe systems of work;
- procedures to deal with serious and imminent danger;
- co-operation with neighbours and contractors;
- setting standards against which performance can be measured, as standards contribute to a positive culture and help to control risk.

## **MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

2.3 Health and safety performance needs to be measured to determine success specifically:

- the current position;
- the desired position;
- the difference between the two.

Active monitoring, before things go wrong, involves regular inspection and checking to ensure that standards are being implemented and management controls are working. Reactive monitoring, after things go wrong, involves learning from mistakes (why performance was substandard), whether they have resulted in injuries and illness, property damage or near misses.

Information gained from active and reactive monitoring should be used to identify situations that create risks, and to implement action. Priority should be given where risks are greatest. Information should be referred to those with authority to take remedial action, including organisational and policy changes.

## **REVIEWING PERFORMANCE AND AUDITING**

2.4 Monitoring provides information to facilitate the review of activities and improve performance. Audits complement monitoring activities by checking if policy, organisation, and systems are actually achieving the right results. Audits confirm, or otherwise, the reliability and effectiveness of systems. The approach to health and safety management can be improved by the combination of results from monitoring performance and information from audits. A health and safety audit should be carried out in each of DEL premises. The Health and Safety Advisor should review this on a regular basis.

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## **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000**

- 3.1 Regulation 3 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 requires all employers to assess the risks to workers and others who may be affected by their undertakings.
- 3.2 Significant findings of the assessments must be recorded.
- 3.3 It is DEL's Policy to implement the concept of Risk Assessment to maintain a safe and healthy working environment for all personnel within the Department.
- 3.4 This Policy will be kept up to date by regular reviews, which take account of the introduction of new activities affecting the existing arrangements.
- 3.5 The Department's obligations and responsibilities regarding Risk Assessment will be carried out by appropriately trained personnel within each Branch / Office.
- 3.6 The Risk Assessment should involve identifying the hazards present and evaluating the extent of the risks involved, taking account of any precautions already in place.
- 3.7 The Risk Assessment should be used to guide the judgement of the employer as to the measures required to fulfil duties under the 'relevant statutory provisions'. The measures in each workplace will derive from compliance with other health and safety duties in the Health & Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 and regulations associated with the Order.
- 3.8 All personnel must co-operate with the management of the Department to ensure that the control measures arising from the Risk Assessments are complied with at all times.
- 3.9 Risk assessment guidelines and forms can be found in sections 8 of this manual (Safety Circulars).

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## **Arrangements/Practical Issues**

In Jobs and Benefits Offices where the SSA has responsibility for premises, the procedures in this manual may be different.

In these offices where SSA procedures differ from those set out in this manual, existing local arrangements may be used until agreed joint procedures are put into place.

- 4.1 Training
- 4.2 Security Alerts and Evacuation
- 4.3 Smoking
- 4.4 Mobile Phones

**If you are in any doubt about any of these procedures please contact the Departmental Health and Safety Advisor**

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## TRAINING

- 4.1.1 Training is essential in the provision of safe working practices.
- 4.1.2 Training needs are likely to be greatest on recruitment. New employees should receive basic induction training, which includes health and safety, arrangements for fire and emergency evacuation procedures.
- 4.1.3 Changes in an employee's working environment may increase risks, requiring further training. These should be considered when:
- Employees transfer or take on new responsibilities;
  - New technology is introduced.
- 4.1.4 Refresher training may be necessary for employees who occasionally deputise for others and also for emergency procedures.
- 4.1.5 Managers have a responsibility to ensure that there is a sufficient number of staff trained in the relevant Health and Safety Practices.
- 4.1.6 The following Health & Safety training courses are presently available to staff:
- - Manual Handling
  - DSE Awareness
  - Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Risk Assessment Assessor Training
  - General Risk Assessment Assessor Training
  - Health & Safety Management of Premises (Previously known as the Premises Officer course)
  - Evacuation of Staff with Disabilities
  - Fire Warden Training
  - Fire Safety Awareness Training
  - First Aid at Work
  - Health and Safety Awareness
  - IOSH / NEBOSH
- 4.1.7 Staff should discuss the relevance of the above courses, with their line manager, and then self-nominate by completing an STD1 form.

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## SECURITY ALERTS / EVACUATION PROCEDURES IN DEL BUILDINGS

- 4.2.1 This is intended as a guide to management and staff in the event of a security alert. Some of the provisions can however also be applied in the case of fire, particularly in regard to evacuations.
- 4.2.2 Although security is primarily the responsibility of management, all staff have a part to play to ensure that the safety of everyone is paramount and that, in the event of a security alert, ensure that instructions given are precisely followed.
- 4.2.3 All staff should ensure they are aware of the layout of their building in particular the location of emergency exits. New staff should be shown the location of emergency exits on their first day and a plan identifying the emergency exits should be posted strategically throughout the building.
- 4.2.4 Practice evacuations should be carried out a minimum of twice per year. All staff should be made aware of the appropriate assembly points for each emergency exit. In the schedule of practice evacuations all alternative routes should be covered. Feedback from staff following practice evacuations should be encouraged in order to improve efficiency.
- 4.2.5 Wardens should be appointed to assist with the speedy and orderly exit of all personnel from the building. They should be identifiable by the wearing of distinctive armbands and/or safety helmets.
- 4.2.6 In the event of a security alert, the advice of the PSNI should form the basis of any action taken.

Action to be taken on:-

( a ) Discovery of a suspicious object:-

- PSNI to be informed;
- whenever possible the area containing the object should be secured;
- where appropriate management to arrange a suitable evacuation via appropriate route(s);
- management to advise when to return to the building after PSNI have given the all clear;
- Staff should not attempt to handle or investigate any suspicious object.

( b ) Receipt of telephone warning:-

- if the call comes from the PSNI or any other recognised source, where appropriate, evacuation action should be set in motion. Anyone noting anything suspicious as they evacuate should report this immediately to a warden at the appropriate assembly point;

- the building should only be re - occupied on the authority of the PSNI. Local liaison arrangements should be made to ensure that staff are kept informed of developments and instructions during the duration of an evacuation;
- on receipt of a call from an unidentified source, the PSNI should be contacted giving full details of the call. Action should then be taken in accordance with any advice given by the PSNI.

In many cases, however the PSNI will not give directions to evacuate. To deal with such situations effectively, it is important for management to have considered possible courses of action, which may include:-

- evacuating the building;
- conducting a search of the building by designated staff;

It is essential that all staff are aware of locally agreed arrangements as the manager will have to decide quickly on what action is to be taken and will require the full co-operation of staff in doing so.

4.2.7 It is recognised that, in many cases, time will be of the essence but management should consult with TUS as soon as possible when security alert action, particularly as outlined at 4.2.6(b) is being taken. Clear communication in such situations can prevent the spread of unnecessary rumour and unease.

4.2.8 The aim of any security measure must be the safety and well being of everyone working in or visiting a building. Should you require any further advice or guidance on this or any related matter please do not hesitate to contact the Assistant Departmental Security Officer Norman McCracken in Adelaide House on 028 90257861 or (GTN 57861)

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## **SMOKING POLICY IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING**

- 4.3.1 Smoking is a major risk for coronary heart disease, strokes and other diseases of the circulatory system. It is the single most preventable cause of premature death and avoidable illness. Non smokers are entitled to protection, from passive smoking and there is increasing evidence about its risk. Passive smoking can cause lung cancer, irritation to the eyes and chest and can be a particular problem to sufferers from asthma, bronchitis, people with heart problems and contact lens wearers.
- 4.3.2 As an employer the Department has an important role to play in protecting its staff and visitors from the danger of tobacco smoke in the workplace. Staff are reminded that with effect from 1 January 2005, smoking is banned in all Government premises.
- 4.3.3 Entrance and exit areas are to be considered to be non-smoking areas. We should not expect staff or visitors to have to walk through smoke to get to or from their place of work.
- 4.3.4 Departments when booking conference/ seminar facilities will also ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that the venue operates a non-smoking policy. Staff travelling in a private car on official business should refrain from smoking when travelling with a non-smoking colleague.

### **Other Premises**

- 4.3.5 Where NI departments and the NIO are not the sole occupiers or landlord, efforts should be made to introduce an agreed policy aimed at banning smoking in the whole building and if this is not possible, controlling it in relation to common areas, such as reception and lifts, used by NI Department and NIO staff.

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# MOBILE PHONES

## MOBILE PHONE AND DRIVING

4.4.1 Legislation has now been introduced in Northern Ireland to ban the use of hand-held mobiles while driving. The legislation came into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2004, and anyone found guilty of this offence will be fined, at present this is a £30 fixed penalty or up to £1000 on conviction in court. However it is planned to increase this to a £60 fixed penalty and 3 penalty points.

Mobile phones can be an essential means of communication away from the office. Using a mobile phone whilst driving can however distract your attention from the road, and driving today requires all of your concentration all of the time.

4.4.2 This legislation is being introduced, as research clearly shows that drivers are not in full control of their vehicle and are four times more likely to have an accident when talking on a phone irrespective of whether the equipment is hand-held or hands-free.. Doing so will risk the safety the driver, passengers, and other road users.

## HANDS FREE CAR KITS

4.4.3 In view of the dangers, the Department strongly discourages the use of mobile phones even when using hands free kits. **Hands free car kits will therefore not be provided by the Department.** It is recommended that staff keep mobile phones turned off while driving and use the voice mail or the call divert facility.

Managers should not expect to be able to speak to their staff on a mobile phone while they are driving.

Staff should find a safe place to park in order to make a call or check for messages. On a long journey regular breaks will also help you to relax and reduce tiredness, but remember it is against the law to stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency.

### 4.4.4 REMEMBER

- **Never use a mobile phone while driving “Switch it off”**
- **Use a message service or call divert and take regular breaks on long journeys.**
- **Phone calls and messages should only be sent or taken when the vehicle is parked with the engine off, in a safe location.**
- **Mobile phones should only be used for essential calls. These calls should be of short duration, and preferably a landline should be used whenever possible.**

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## LOCAL PROCEDURES

Please insert your local arrangements in this section.

### Building Contact details

- 5.1 Person In Charge of Building
- 5.2 Premises Officer
- 5.3 First Aid arrangements e.g. First aiders/appointed persons, equipment.
- 5.4 Fire Wardens
- 5.5 Evacuation Procedures
- 5.6 Useful contact numbers:
  - Police
  - Hospital
  - Alarm Company contact number
- 5.7 Health & Safety Training received, e.g. DSE, Manual Handling, Risk Assessment. etc.

Name	What type of training received	Date completed
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## **RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Risk assessments are an important part of the general Health and Safety Management structure.

All risk assessments should be recorded and cross-referenced to the location of the assessment file.

Please insert the record sheet, of all risk assessments carried out in your premises.

Details to be placed in this section: -

Date Assessment was carried out

Reason for Assessment

Area of Assessment

Assessors name

Location and reference number, of assessment.

Review date

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# Safety Audit

Safety audit reports will be insert in this section

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## **Safety Circulars (SC's)**

[SC1 Risk Assessment Guidelines](#)

[SC2 Christmas Decorations & Lights](#)

~~SC3 Mobile Phones~~

[SC4 Mobile Phones](#)

[SC5 Personal Protective Equipment](#)

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## **Relevant Legislation**

In Jobs and Benefits Offices where the SSA has responsibility for premises, the arrangements in this section of the manual may be different, in such cases existing local arrangements should be used until agreed joint procedures are put into place.

- 9.1 Fire Precautions
- 9.2 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) / Accidents
- 9.3 First Aid
- 9.4 Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health C.O.S.H.H
- 9.5 Electricity
- 9.6 Manual Handling
- 9.7 Display Screen Equipment
- 9.8 Personal Protective Equipment
- 9.9 Noise
- 9.10 Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare
- 9.11 Asbestos
- 9.12 Use of Work Equipment

**If you are in any doubt about any of these arrangements please contact your Departmental Health and Safety Advisor**

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## **FIRE SERVICES (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1984**

- 9.1.1 A copy of the Fire Safety Manual, produced by the Department of the Environment should be retained in every building.
- 9.1.2 Issues addressed within the manual include the certification of premises, responsibilities and procedures, fire precautions, means of fire fighting and record keeping.
- 9.1.3 DFP Construction Service has released a Fire Safety Training Presentation Pack including a video, a copy of which has been sent to all district managers who are responsible for organising the training.
- 9.1.4 DEL will ensure practice evacuations are carried out in their premises twice yearly
- 9.1.5 The fire alarm should be tested on a weekly basis.
- 9.1.6 Emergency lighting and fire fighting equipment should be visually tested on a monthly basis.

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# THE REPORTING OF INJURIES, DISEASES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES REGULATIONS (NI) 2004 (RIDDOR)

## REPORTING PROCEDURES

9.2.1 Departmental Accident Reporting and Investigation Procedures located in Section 9 of this manual.

## EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES

9.2.2 All injuries resulting from accidents at work, which cause incapacity for more than 3 days must be reported in writing on form NI2508 (see section 9) direct to the enforcing authority within 10 days of the accident.

The Enforcing Authority is:-

Health & Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSE NI)  
83 LADAS DRIVE  
BELFAST  
BT6 9FS

9.2.3 In the case of a death, a specified major injury or condition, or a dangerous occurrence, the enforcing authority must be notified immediately, ie. by telephone, this must be followed up within 10 days by a completed NI2508 report form.

9.2.4 A record must be made and kept of all reportable injuries.

9.2.5 Diseases, which must be reported, are listed in the regulation.

9.2.6 A report (on form NI2508 A) must only be submitted if a written diagnosis has been received from a doctor.

9.2.7 These forms and further information can be obtained from the Health & Safety Executive web site on [www.hseni.gov.uk](http://www.hseni.gov.uk)

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## **HEALTH & SAFETY (FIRST AID) REGULATIONS (NI) 1982**

- 9.3.1 This Department will comply with the requirements of the Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1982
- 9.3.2 In doing so it will use the revised Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) First Aid at Work which came into effect on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2000.
- 9.3.3 The ACOPs has been prepared to help employers understand and comply with the regulations. It offers practical advice on how to meet the First Aid at Work requirements.

### **Information Sheet on First Aid Staff & Equipment**

#### First aid staff

- 9.3.4 DEL require a minimum of two first aiders in an office where there are less than fifty staff. They must hold a valid certificate of competence in first aid at work. As first aid at work certificates are presently only valid for 3 years, refresher training with re-testing of competence needs to be carried out before the certificate expires. First aiders can attend a refresher course up to three months before the expiry date of their certificate. If a certificate expires, the individual will have to undertake a full course of training to be re-established as a first aider. The new certificate will then take effect from the date of expiry.

#### Appointed staff

- 9.3.5 Where it is not possible to have first aid staff there has to be appointed staff to look after the first-aid arrangements, including looking after the equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required. Arrangements should be made for an appointed person to be available to undertake these duties at all times when people are at work. Appointed staff are not first aiders and so should not attempt to give first aid for which they have not been trained.

#### First-aid container

9.3.6 Each location should hold at least one first-aid container. First-aid containers should be easily accessible, and placed, if possible, near to hand washing facilities. The contents of first-aid containers should be examined frequently and should be restocked as soon as possible after use. Sufficient supplies should be held in a back-up stock on site. Care should be taken to discard items safely after the expiry date has passed.

The HSE recommendations for a workplace with no special risk, the minimum requirements are as follows:

- be made of suitable material designed to protect the contents from damp and dust;
- be clearly identified as first aid containers (the markings should be a white cross on a green background);

- be placed in a clearly identified and readily accessible place; and contain only those items which the first-aider has been trained to use. You should not keep any tablets, medicines, or antiseptic in the first aid box

## First Aid Equipment

### 9.3.7 The contents should include:

- a guidance card (HSE provides a leaflet for inclusion in first aid boxes which gives information on the treatment of injured people);
- twenty individually wrapped adhesive dressings (assorted sizes) appropriate to the work environment;
- two sterile eye pads, with attachment;
- six individually wrapped triangular bandages;
- six safety pins;
- six medium sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings;
- two large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings;
- three extra large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings;
- sterile water;
- several pairs of appropriate gloves & a plastic apron;
- stainless steel scissors;
- moist cleaning wipes;
- a list of first aiders.

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# **CONTROL of SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS to HEALTH REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2003 (COSHH NI)**

## **EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.4.1 Assessing the risk to health arising from working with chemicals and determining what precautions are needed.
- 9.4.2 Introducing appropriate measures to prevent or control the risk.
- 9.4.3 Ensuring that control measures are implemented and that equipment is properly maintained and procedures observed.
- 9.4.4 Where necessary employers must monitor the exposure of the workers and carry out an appropriate form of surveillance of their health.
- 9.4.5 Informing, instructing and training employees about the risks and the precautions to be taken.

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# THE ELECTRICITY at WORK REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1991

## INTRODUCTION

- 9.5.1 Every year more than 1,000 work related accidents involving electric shock or electric burns are reported in the UK. About 25 of these are fatal. Many other deaths and injuries result from fires caused by poor electrical standards. Most of these accidents can be avoided by careful planning and appropriate precautions.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 9.5.2 The main duties imposed upon employers and employees with regard to electrical safety are contained in the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and the Electricity at Work Regulations (N I) 1991 - (EAWR).
- 9.5.3 The Order requires the Department to “ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees” and to ensure the provision of such “information, instruction, training and supervision” as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees.
- 9.5.4 The EAWR requires employers to ensure that electrical equipment is properly constructed, installed and maintained and suitable for the environment in which it is used. Employers must assess the risks associated with work activities involving electricity and ensure that the work, including maintenance, is carried out safely. Persons carrying out electrical work must be competent for the tasks that are assigned to them. This includes fitting or replacing plugs and, or fuses and changing light bulbs.

## ROUTINE SAFETY TESTING

- 9.5.5 The Premises Officer is responsible for ensuring electrical danger is minimised by having a managed system of inspections and tests of electrical installations and equipment.
- 9.5.6 Fixed electrical installations should be of a suitable standard i.e. BS7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations and should be properly maintained. Maintenance and Tests of fixed installations should be made by CPD as a minimum every 5 years or as specified on the test certificate.
- 9.5.7 The Regulations require portable equipment to be tested on a “regular” basis. Guidance on the frequency of inspection and testing of portable equipment is given in the HSE publication “Maintaining Portable Electrical Equipment in offices and other low risk environments” a summary can be found in Table 1. (See Appendix 2)

- 9.5.8 A simple inventory of all portable electrical equipment should be made to ensure that no items are overlooked during the safety testing programme. The register should include: all portable electrical equipment, any domestic electrical equipment and any personally owned electrical equipment used on the premises and or on site. It should be updated as and when new equipment is installed. The register should be held by the Premises Officer and supplied to the test engineer at the beginning of each inspection. (See Appendix 1)
- 9.5.9 Arrangements should be made for a competent person to inspect and test all electrical equipment. This will normally be carried out in conjunction with the CPD. All tested equipment must be marked as safe after successful completion of the tests. Equipment which does not meet the requirements of the test must be disconnected and either sent for repair or disposed and / or replaced.
- 9.5.10 A permanent record of the date tested and the date for the next test must be kept by the Premises Officer.
- 9.5.11 All staff must be instructed that equipment may not be used unless it bears a valid test label and the date of intended use is within the period shown on the label. Each office should have procedures regarding the action to be taken by staff on discovering faulty electrical equipment. This must be brought to the attention of all staff in the building.
- 9.5.12 Premises Officers must monitor the effectiveness of the test programme by keeping a record of equipment which requires repair and must investigate the reason for the failure of, or damage to equipment that requires regular repairs.

#### DOMESTIC AND PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

- 9.5.13 The inspection and testing programme should not overlook “domestic” equipment, such as kettles, portable heaters, coffee makers, mains radios, etc. The origin of any equipment has no bearing in law upon the requirement for safety. Such electrical items brought to work from home will present the same degree of risk as equipment provided by the Department. This equipment must be included on the list of items to be regularly tested.
- 9.5.14 Any form of personal heating or cooking appliances are prohibited (I.e. Toasters Heaters, electrical frying pans etc) only items supplied by the Department may be used in specified kitchens, tea points must not be used for cooking.

## LEASED EQUIPMENT

- 9.5.15 Some office equipment may be leased from a supplier and should be the subject of regular inspections for functionality by the supplier's engineer. The office manager should ensure that such inspections include a safety testing and inspection element. The equipment may be visually inspected more frequently for accidental external damage (e.g. to the supply cord). However, a damaged cord or machine should not be handled and should be immediately isolated from the supply in a way that prevents it being re-energised: i.e. – removal of plug and labeled or lock and label the isolator in the off position.

## VISUAL INSPECTIONS

- 9.5.16 Individual users should look critically at the electrical equipment which they use and look for damage to the outside of the equipment and its lead and plug before they use it, but they should not take the plug apart. They should report any defects to their line manager.

Visual examination is the most important maintenance precaution. Around 95% of faults or damage are found just by looking.

- 9.5.17 Managers should ensure that staff under their control have seen this information sheet or have been advised of its content. Managers must have a procedure for receiving complaints and ensuring that remedial action is taken. In the case of a defect, the offending equipment should be labelled as faulty and taken out of use, to be repaired or replaced.

- 9.5.18 Premises Officers of Buildings should ensure that there is a regular inspection of all electrical equipment.

This inspection should be carried out each time the equipment is used and should include the following points. Check the equipment before connecting, look at the cables and plugs for signs of:

- damage to the cable covering, eg cuts, abrasion (apart from light scuffing);
- damage to the plug, eg the casing is cracked or the pins are bent;
- non standard joints including taped joints in the cable;
- the outer covering (sheath) of the cable not being gripped where it enters the plug or the equipment. Look to see if the coloured insulation of the internal wires is showing;
- equipment that has been used in conditions where it is not suitable. eg a wet or dusty workplace;
- damage to the outer covering of the equipment or obvious loose parts or screws;

- overheating (burn marks or staining).

Any of the above mentioned defects should be reported to management immediately.

9.5.19 All inspections carried out by staff must be visual only and *must not* involve dismantling any part of the equipment or plug. . A damaged cord or machine should not be handled by a member of staff and should be immediately isolated from the supply in a way that prevents it being re-energised. All physical defects found during these inspections must be corrected by a qualified electrician. Any unauthorised members of staff interfering with electrical equipment will be subject to disciplinary action.

## RECORD KEEPING

9.5.20 The Premises Officer should keep the following records:

- a register of all electrical equipment,
- a copy of a record of all portable/transportable equipment test results,
- the fault reporting procedure.

9.5.21 The test results should be kept in a form which will facilitate inspection and reproduction when required. Each test result should be recorded as the tests progress and care should be taken to record the test figures accurately.

## INFORMATION FOR STAFF

9.5.22 Plugging-in and withdrawing mains plugs - should not be carried out “under load” i.e. with the socket outlet switched on , since this may cause arcing as the plug pins break contact with the socket. Before connecting to or disconnecting from the supply, staff should be instructed to either switch the equipment off at the wall socket and to place the equipment on/off switch in the off position.

9.5.23 Extension Leads - If the fixed electrical system has been adequately designed, at least one wall or floor socket should exist for every item of equipment requiring a mains supply. However if the use of electrical machinery increases, the use of extension leads may be unavoidable, but this situation should only be permitted to exist as a temporary measure. The Premises Officer should ensure that the fixed electrical system is extended to accommodate new items of electrical equipment.

9.5.24 Extension leads fitted onto drums or arranged in coils should be avoided since all cables must be unwound before they can operate safely without overheating. This arrangement will inevitably lead to unwanted amounts of cable being dispersed over the floor, subsequently becoming a trip hazard and inviting damage to the cable itself. Extension leads which are terminated with in-line sockets are preferred as a temporary measure. The connecting cable can then be of the correct length to allow it to be positioned safely.

- References:- Memorandum of Guidance on the Electricity at Work Regulations.  
The Institution of Electrical Engineers Regulations for Electrical Installations.



			<b>up to 5 years</b>
<b>Double insulated equipment, moved occasionally</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Every 2-4 years</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Hand held double insulated equipment</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Every 6 months – 1 year</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Earthed equipment (Class 1) e.g.Kettles and Floor cleaners</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Every 6 months – 1 year</b>	<b>Every 1 – 2 years</b>
<b>Cables and plugs connected to earthed equipment, and mains voltage extension leads</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Every 6 months – 4 years (depending on equipment)</b>	<b>Every 1 – 5 years (depending on equipment)</b>

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## **MANUAL HANDLING OPERATIONS REGULATIONS (NI) 1992**

### **EMPLOYERS KEY DUTIES**

- 9.6.1 Employers should ensure that employees should, avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far, as is reasonably practicable.
- 9.6.2 Where a hazard remains employers must carry out a risk assessment.
- 9.6.3 Every effort must be made to reduce risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 9.6.4 Employers must provide training and assistance.
- 9.6.5 Employees must be given a general indications and, if reasonably practicable, precise information on the weight of each load.

### **EMPLOYEES' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.6.6 Employees must make full and proper use of any system of work put in place by their employer, to reduce the risk of injury during manual handling operations.

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## **HEALTH and SAFETY (DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT) (DSE) REGULATIONS (NI) 1992**

### **EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.7.1 To identify 'users', 'operators' and DSE workstations.
- 9.7.2 To assess workstations to determine risks to users and operators.
- 9.7.3 To reduce any risks identified in the assessment.
- 9.7.4 To ensure new workstations meet the minimum requirements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations
- 9.7.5 To plan the daily work of users to provide breaks and changes of activity.
- 9.7.6 To provide DSE users with eye and eyesight tests if requested and special spectacles if normal ones cannot be used.
- 9.7.7 To give users training and information to ensure that DSE work can be undertaken safely and without risks to health.

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## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AT WORK (PPE) REGULATIONS (NI) 1993**

### **EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.8.1 To assess risks to health and safety, which have not been provided by means other than PPE, to enable the selection of suitable PPE.
- 9.8.2 To provide suitable PPE, free of charge, to protect employees against risks that have not been controlled by other means. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that PPE is properly used.
- 9.8.3 To maintain PPE in clean and efficient working order, replace it as necessary and provide appropriate storage for PPE when it is not in use.
- 9.8.4 To provide employees with comprehensive information, instruction and training to enable them to make efficient use of PPE

### **EMPLOYEES' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.8.5 To take full and proper use of PPE provided and take all reasonable steps to ensure it is clean and in effective working order.
- 9.8.6 To report any loss or obvious defect in PPE to their employer.

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## **NOISE AT WORK REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1990**

### **INTERPRETATION**

9.9.1 The noise at Work Regulations ( NI ) 1990 set out three noise action levels based upon the daily personal noise exposure (LEP,d ). The LEP,d is a single value which represents the overall daily exposure to noise. The first and second action levels are set at 85 db (A) and 90 db (A) respectively. The third is the peak sound pressure of 200 pascals.

### **ASSESSMENT**

9.9.2 The employer shall, when any of his employees are likely to be exposed to the first action level or above, ensure that a competent person makes a noise assessment of that exposure.

### **REDUCTION OF RISK**

9.9.3 The employer shall reduce the risk of damage to the hearing of his employees from exposure to noise to the lowest level reasonably practicable ( RP ).

### **PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO EMPLOYEES**

9.9.4 Every employer shall provide employees who are likely to be exposed to the first action level or above with adequate information, instruction and training on:

- the risk of damage;
- steps the employee can take to minimise the risk;
- how the employee may obtain personal ear protectors;
- the employees obligations under these regulations.

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## WORKPLACE (HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE) REGULATIONS (NI) 1993

### EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES

9.10.1 Employers and others in control of workplaces are required to comply with a set of minimum health, safety and welfare requirements covering the provision and maintenance of workplaces which meet minimum standards on:

- ventilation and temperature in indoor workplaces;
- lighting ( including emergency lighting );
- cleaning and decoration;
- room dimensions and space, suitability of workstations, seating;
- falls from heights and falling objects;
- glazing, windows and skylights (safe opening, closing and cleaning );
- safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles;
- glazed doors and partitions ( use of safe material and marking );
- doors, gates and escalators ( safety devices );
- floors, ( construction and maintenance, obstructions and slipping and tripping hazards );
- sanitary conveniences, clothing storage;
- drinking water;
- facilities for washing, changing and eating;
- rest area including facilities for pregnant women and nursing mothers.

### EMPLOYEES' KEY DUTIES

9.10.2 There are no specific duties imposed on employees under these regulations. However, employees have a duty under Regulation 12 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000 to use any machinery, equipment, dangerous substances, transport equipment, and safety device provided by the employer in accordance with the training and instructions given. Employees also have to inform the employer of any work situation, which represents a serious and immediate danger to health and safety. [\(Return to main Menu\)](#)

## CONTROL OF ASBESTOS AT WORK REGULATIONS ( NORTHERN IRELAND ) 2003

- 9.11.1 The person in charge of the building should have an asbestos register or know where it is normally held.
- 9.11.2 Contractors working in DEL premises should be made aware of the location where any asbestos has been identified.
- 9.11.3 DFP Works Section should be contacted if work with asbestos is involved.

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## **PROVISION AND USE OF WORK EQUIPMENT REGULATIONS (NI) 1999**

### **EMPLOYERS' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.12.1 These regulations place duties on all employers providing work equipment to ensure that it is suitable and properly maintained and that certain specific risks are addressed.
- 9.12.2 On multi-occupier sites, where more than one employer uses the same piece of equipment, employers will need to consider arrangements for allocating responsibilities for that work equipment.
- 9.12.3 Employers will have to apply the regulations to the full range of work equipment in use within the sector, in so far as it presents risks to people at work.

### **EMPLOYEES' KEY DUTIES**

- 9.12.4 There are no additional duties imposed on employees under these regulations, but under other health and safety legislation (Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work (NI) Regulations 2000). All employees must make full and proper use of any arrangements established by their employer for health and safety at work. This is particularly relevant for employees using work equipment. It means that employees who have received the necessary instructions and training are required to use their work equipment correctly.

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