

Health and Safety: Code of Practice

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HEALTH AND SAFETY: CODE OF PRACTICE

Information on the arrangements for implementing the Health and Safety Policy are set out in the attached appendices. These will be reviewed and updated when any new or changed legislation is introduced. Otherwise they will be reviewed every three years.

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ACCIDENT AND NEAR MISS ACCIDENT REPORTING

National Savings and Investments (NS&I) will comply with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995.

Definitions

1. Accident - an unplanned event which causes injury to persons, damage to property or both.
2. Near-Miss Accident - an unplanned event which does not cause injury or damage but could do so.

Reporting

3. All accidents must be reported using the recognised procedures and forms. Staff must report all near-miss accidents to their manager so that the appropriate action can be taken. Arrangements should also be in place to ensure that all accidents where injury has occurred are recorded in the Accident Book, held in Facilities Management.
4. In the case of an accident involving injury or a near-miss or dangerous occurrence, the manager must firstly inform Facilities Management and advise the Agency Health and Safety Officer as soon as practical thereafter.

Investigation

5. All accidents and near-miss accidents are investigated primarily to find out what caused the accident and to consider measures to prevent a recurrence.

Documentation

6. Form DF114 - Accident on Duty report completed by the First Aider and taken by hand to the Agency Health and Safety Officer. This gives details of the accident and the treatment given.
7. Form DF190 - Accident on Duty report completed by the line manager and returned to Human Resources. This is a record of the line manager's investigation of the accident.
8. Form DF548 - Accident Investigation Report completed by the AHSO.
9. Form DF547 - Form used to report a near miss accident.

Procedures

10. The full Accident and Near Miss Accident reporting procedures can be found in the Employment Policies area of the NS&I HR Information folder of the common file store.

ASBESTOS

1. NS&I will comply with the Control of Asbestos At Work Regulations 1987, the Control of Asbestos At Work (Amendment) Regulations 1998 and the Controlled Waste Regulations 1992.
2. There are potential risks with the existence of asbestos and asbestos containing materials in buildings where people work. Where such materials exist our aim is to ensure that no actual risk to staff arises.

Identification and Assessment

3. In Charles House it is the Inland Revenue who are responsible for maintaining an asbestos register which lists the location, type and condition of the asbestos-based materials known to be present.
4. The presence of undisturbed and undamaged asbestos containing material does not usually constitute a health hazard and provided it remains this way there is no need to remove it. Asbestos-based materials are more likely to be removed as part of refurbishment work.

Work on Asbestos

5. NS&I's Facilities Manager will ensure that all necessary tests are carried out prior to work commencing and that all work directly involving asbestos removal will be carried out by an approved contractor and in accordance with the above regulations. Asbestos removed will be properly bagged and disposed of. After the work has been completed the area concerned will be fully cleared and appropriate air tests will be taken to ensure that it is safe.

Information for Staff

6. Staff and TUS will be informed of works involving asbestos removal.

BOMB PROCEDURES

1. Charles House is not generally regarded as being in the high risk category but like all government buildings we maintain a basic level of protection. More stringent security measures are put into effect whenever advice is received of a more serious or specific threat. The state of alert is displayed at the building entrances.

Raising the Alarm

2. The switchboard staff have instructions on the action to be taken if they receive a bomb threat. If a member of staff receives a bomb threat directly, Facilities Management or the Ground Floor Security/Reception Desk should be informed immediately. Instructions on how to identify suspect packages/mail and the procedures to follow are contained in the Emergency Procedures which can be found in the NS&I Circulars area of the NS&I HR Information folder of the common file store.

Evacuation

3. In circumstances involving a bomb threat or suspect package the Inland Revenue's Building Incident Control Co-ordinator together with the NS&I Incident Control Officer will assume control and investigate. The Building Incident Control Co-ordinator will make the decision on whether or not to evacuate the building, taking into account the nature of the threat, the location of the package (if known) and the advice of the police. The Emergency Procedures contain detailed evacuation procedures and diagrams showing, exit routes, safe areas and assembly point.

CONTROL OF CONTRACTORS

1. Employers have a duty towards contractors who carry out work on their premises. The main legal requirements are covered in the Health and Safety At Work etc Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 1994, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996.
2. The work carried out by a contractor can range from a simple maintenance job lasting less than a day to a major contract lasting months.

Control Strategy

3. NS&I's Facilities Manager will be responsible for planning, controlling, co-ordinating and monitoring the activities of contractors to effectively minimise the risks to employees, other persons on site and the public. The extent to which each part of the following control strategy is relevant will depend on the degree of risk and the nature of the work contracted.

- inclusion of health and safety requirements in tenders.
- identification of suitable contractors.
- identification of hazards within the specification.
- checking the health and safety aspects of bids and selection of suitable contractors.
- control of contractors whilst on site.

Information for Contractors

4. Contractors will be given information and instruction on the following:
 - emergency procedures including assembly area.
 - security arrangements.
 - asbestos register.
 - any risks they may be exposed to whilst on our premises and the measures to control these risks.
 - a contact point to co-ordinate all aspects of the contract.
 - site safety rules.

Information for Staff

5. Staff will be informed of any works that directly affect them. The local TUS are also informed of any major works on the premises that will affect staff.

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

1. NS&I will comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

Assessment

2. NS&I's Agency Health and Safety Officer will make a suitable and sufficient analysis of all workstations for the purpose of assessing the health and safety risks to which the users are exposed. The risks identified in the assessment will be reduced to the lowest extent which is reasonably practicable.

Training

3. All employees who use display screen equipment (DSE) will receive appropriate health and safety training in the use of the workstation, ergonomics and safe working practices. The Agency Health and Safety Officer is trained to carry out risk assessments.

Assessment Records

4. The assessments will be recorded and retained by the Agency Health and Safety Officer. All users of DSE should complete a user checklist.

Assessment Review

5. Assessments will be reviewed and updated if there is a substantial change or modification to the workplace, practices and procedures or if there is reason to suspect that the assessment is no longer valid. Otherwise the assessments will be reviewed annually.

Eyesight Testing

6. All employees defined as users of DSE will be advised of their entitlement to an appropriate eye and eyesight test and of the procedures to be followed. The procedures for eyesight testing are covered in NSC 8/95.

Daily Work Routine of Users

7. Managers should organise the daily work routine of users to ensure that adequate breaks or changes of activity occur. Users who believe that their DSE workload does not permit adequate breaks or changes of activity should bring this to the attention of their manager.

Information for Users

8. Users will be provided with appropriate information on:
- all aspects of health and safety relating to their workstations.
 - the risks identified and the preventative and protective measures implemented to reduce the risks to the lowest extent reasonably practicable. These should meet the minimum requirements for workstations set out in the schedule to the regulations.
 - procedures relating to eyesight tests.
 - breaks/changes of activity from DSE work.
 - procedures to follow should they develop any health problems that may be associated with DSE work.

ELECTRICITY AT WORK

1. NS&I will comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
2. These regulations require all electrical systems, including appliances, to be constructed, maintained and operated in such a way as to prevent injury. All electrical appliances, including kettles and portable fans/heaters are potentially dangerous if used incorrectly and not maintained.
3. Arrangements are in place to check portable appliances periodically.
4. Staff must report any defects, for example frayed cables, loose connections or a smell of burning, immediately to Facilities Management. Unattended equipment must not be left where it could be a source of danger, and electrical cables must not trail in positions which could cause accidents.

FIRE PROCEDURES

1. NS&I will comply with the Fire Precautions Act 1971, the Fire Precautions Workplace Regulations 1997 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) (Amendment) Regulations 1999.
2. To comply with these regulations NS&I will:
 - check for potential sources that may cause a fire
 - assess what can be done to minimise the risk
 - check the workplace for any flammable materials and initiate their safe storage
 - check who in the workplace may be most at risk from fire and ensuring that the risk is minimised as far as possible
 - check for structures that could cause fire to spread
 - check for permanent obstacles that may hinder fire exit access
 - check available fire detection and warning systems and establish a regular maintenance plan.

Fire Instructions

3. All staff will receive regular instruction on what to do in the event of a fire. This will include:
 - the means of raising the alarm
 - action to be taken on the sounding of the alarm
 - the means of escape ie evacuation routes
 - the branch assembly area
 - arrangements for roll call
 - arrangements for disabled staff.

Fire Drills and Appliances

4. In Charles House it is the Inland Revenue who are responsible for fire drills which will be carried out periodically with a full evacuation at least once per year.
5. In Charles House it is the Inland Revenue who are responsible for fire extinguishers which are located throughout the building and staff should ensure they know where the nearest appliances are to them. All fire appliances are regularly inspected.
6. As and when required NS&I's Facilities Manager will organise fire drills for NS&I staff only and will ensure that all appliances in NS&I accommodation are regularly inspected.

Senior Fire Warden/Fire Wardens

7. The Senior Fire Warden is the Agency Health and Safety Officer. In the event of fire the branch fire wardens will be responsible for ensuring that their areas, including designated common areas, are evacuated.

FIRST AID

1. NS&I will comply with the Health and Safety (First Aid At Work) Regulations 1981.
2. These regulations place a general duty on employers to provide adequate First Aid provision for staff if they are injured or become ill whilst at work. It is also the duty of the employer to inform staff of the First Aid arrangements.
3. To comply with these regulations NS&I will:
 - have access to a Medical Suite with appropriate facilities and equipment.
 - seek and, where necessary, train volunteers to provide a sufficient number of qualified First Aiders.
 - provide a sufficient number of First Aid kits and make arrangements for them to be stocked and replenished as required.
 - display notices showing the names, locations and telephone numbers of qualified First Aiders.
 - inform staff of the First Aid arrangements.

First Aid Forms

4. Form DF114 - Accident on Duty. Completed by First Aider. This gives details of the accident and the treatment given.

FORK LIFT TRUCKS

1. NS&I will comply with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998.

Assessment

2. NS&I will assess the risks to staff involving lift truck operations and introduce measures that eliminate or reduce the risks as far as is reasonably practicable.

Training

3. Lift truck operators are trained by qualified private sector instructors and have to attain a certificate of competence and operators licence.

Information and Instruction

4. By reference to the manufacturer's manual lift truck operators and staff working in lift truck areas receive appropriate information and instruction of the risks identified and the preventative/protective measures in place to control the risks.

Maintenance

5. Maintenance should be carried out as per the manufacturers instructions. Otherwise the lift trucks should be examined by a qualified person every 6 months.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

1. NS&I will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1994.
2. In general terms employers are required to make arrangements to control the exposure of their employees to all substances which may affect their health.
3. To comply with these regulations NS&I will:
 - maintain an inventory of all substances hazardous to health used.
 - obtain hazard data sheets from manufacturers for each hazardous substance used.
 - arrange for risk assessments to be carried out by the Agency Health and Safety Officer.
 - introduce appropriate control measures where elimination or substitution of a hazardous substance is not possible.
 - arrange health surveillance of employees, where necessary. In these cases appropriate health records will be kept.
 - provide suitable personal protective equipment where necessary.
 - review the assessment if there has been a significant change affecting it or if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid. Otherwise a formal review will be conducted every 5 years.

Information and Training

4. Staff working with hazardous substances will be provided with sufficient information and training so that they are aware of the risks of exposure to hazardous substances and the precautions to be taken. Information will also be given to others who may be affected, such as contractors, tenants, temporary staff and visitors. Copies of the risk assessments, which are available for reference by staff and the TUS, will be held by the Agency Health and Safety Officer. Information is available to first aiders in the event of an accident in the use of hazardous substances.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

1. A Health and Safety committee has been established in accordance with the Health and Safety At Work etc Act 1974 and the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations 1977. The committee has its own terms of reference.

Committee Members

2. The committee is chaired by the Agency Health and Safety Officer and consists of representatives from Facilities Management and the Trade Union.

Meetings

3. Meetings take place on a quarterly basis and the minutes of all meetings are recorded and published.

Objectives

4. The objectives of the safety committee are:
- to establish and maintain standards of health and safety in keeping with legal requirements and NS&I policy;
 - to promote co-operation amongst all staff in instigating, developing and monitoring these standards to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all NS&I staff.

MANUAL HANDLING

1. NS&I will comply with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

Assessment

2. NS&I policy is to avoid the need for hazardous manual handling activities, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible to eliminate hazardous manual handling, an assessment will be undertaken by the Agency Health and Safety Officer to determine the level of risk. The assessment will take into consideration the task, the load, the individual and the environment. Suitable controls will be introduced to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

Assessment Record

3. The assessments will be recorded and retained by the Agency Health and Safety Officer.

Assessment Review

4. Assessments should be reviewed and updated when there is a significant change in the manual handling operation or if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid. Otherwise the assessments will be reviewed annually.

Training

5. Information and training will be provided to employees who are required to carry out manual handling activities. They will be informed of any risks identified and the preventative and protective measures implemented to reduce the risks to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

Employees Duties

6. These regulations require employees to follow appropriate training and procedures laid down by their employer to promote safety during the handling of loads.

NOISE

1. NS&I will comply with the Noise At Work Regulations 1989 and the Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1999.

Assessments

2. NS&I's Facilities Manager will arrange for noise assessments to be carried out in areas that may be affected by these regulations. Assessments will be recorded and reviewed annually or earlier if there are any significant changes affecting them.

Reduction of Noise Exposure Levels

3. NS&I will, as far as is reasonably practicable, take steps to reduce noise exposure levels of employees by means other than the use of personal protective equipment.

Provision of Ear Protectors

4. NS&I will provide suitable and effective ear protection to employees exposed to high noise levels, as indicated by the results of the noise exposure assessments. NS&I will also provide for the maintenance, storage, repair or renewal of ear protective equipment and provide training in the selection and fitting of protectors and detail the circumstances in which they should be used.

Ear Protection Zones

5. Where necessary ear protection zones will be designated and clearly marked. All personnel entering these zones will be required to wear ear protection.

Training

6. Employees who are exposed to levels of noise covered by these regulations will be provided with information, instruction and training about the potential harmful effects of noise and what they must do to protect themselves and meet the requirements of the law.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

1. NS&I will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment At Work (PPE) Regulations 1992.
2. To comply with these regulations NS&I will:
 - carry out an assessment of existing PPE to determine whether it is suitable.
 - take appropriate measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment.
 - evaluate and select PPE which will give protection against the risk.
 - provide any PPE free of charge.
 - involve staff in the selection of PPE.
 - implement steps for the maintenance, storage, cleaning, repair or replacement of PPE.
 - take all reasonable steps to ensure that any PPE provided to staff is properly used.
 - re-assess as necessary. Otherwise review annually.

Training

3. Information, instruction and training will be given to those staff who use PPE. This will include:
 - the risk(s) which the PPE protects against.
 - how to use the PPE properly.
 - action to be taken by the employee to ensure that PPE remains in good working order.

Employees Duties

4. Employees shall use PPE in accordance with training received and the manufacturers instructions.

RISK ASSESSMENT**Workplace Risk Assessment**

1. NS&I's Agency Health and Safety Officer will make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health and safety of its employees to which they are exposed to whilst they are at work and to any other persons who may be affected. This is a requirement under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 and the Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1999.

Assessment Records

2. The significant findings of the risk assessments carried out will be recorded. The record will include:

- any hazards which may pose serious risks to employees or other persons.
- the existing control measures.
- the control measures to be introduced as a result of the assessment.
- the personnel who may be affected.

3. Risk assessment records will be held by the Agency Health and Safety Officer.

Assessment Review

4. The assessment will be reviewed and updated if there is a substantial change or modification to the workplace, practices and procedures or if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid. Otherwise the assessment will be reviewed annually.

Information for Employees

5. Staff will be informed of the results of any risks identified and the preventative and protective measures to reduce the risks to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

Preventative and Protective Measures

6. The preventative and protective measures that have to be taken following the risk assessment depend upon the nature of the risk and the relevant legislation. In deciding upon the measures the following principles will be applied:

- whether it is possible to eliminate the risk altogether.
- whether it is possible to combat the risk at source.
- wherever possible, adapt work to the individual.
- if possible to take advantage of technological and technical progress to reduce or eliminate the risk.
- risk prevention measures recommended should form part of a coherent policy and approach.
- give priority to those measures which protect the whole workplace.

TRAINING

1. All staff need training to enable them to carry out their jobs and responsibilities effectively and safely. Training programmes should take account of the needs of new staff, staff transferred from one job to another, temporary staff and promoted staff.

Basic Job Training

2. All staff will be trained in the safe operation of machinery and equipment specific to their function. This will include information and instruction on the hazards and the protective/preventative measures in place to control the risks.

General Training

3. The following is a list of the main topics that should be covered in training programmes as appropriate:

- health and safety policy.
- responsibilities under Health and Safety legislation.
- correct operation of machinery and other equipment.
- the requirements of operating manuals, checklists, forms and necessary records.
- current workplace safety procedures.
- the supply, use, maintenance and replacement of PPE.
- safe handling procedures for substances hazardous to health.
- how to report accidents and workplace hazards.
- the objectives of accident investigation procedures.
- the benefits of good housekeeping and how to contribute.
- emergency procedures.
- manual handling techniques.
- use of display screen equipment.
- first aid arrangements.
- encouragement of safety awareness.

WORK EQUIPMENT

1. NS&I will comply with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.
2. To comply with these regulations NS&I will ensure that:
 - suitable work equipment is selected, properly adapted and adequately maintained.
 - where specific hazards are likely to be involved, access to the equipment is restricted to those employees given the task of using it, and who are trained in its use.
 - where a hazard is identified, measures will be taken to minimise the risks.
 - measures are taken to prevent access to any dangerous parts of machinery.

Training

3. Staff will be given appropriate training, information and instruction in the operation of machinery or equipment specific to their functions. They will be advised of any risks identified in the use of the work equipment and the precautions to be taken.

Employees Duties

4. Employees are required to use all work equipment correctly and in accordance with their training and manufacturers instructions.

WORKPLACE

1. NS&I will comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992.
2. These regulations set out general requirements covering many aspects of health, safety and welfare in the workplace.
3. To comply with these regulations NS&I will provide:
 - effective and suitable ventilation and reasonable temperature in indoor workplaces.
 - suitable and sufficient lighting (including emergency lighting).
 - sufficient room dimensions and space taking into account the number of occupants, furniture and equipment, and the layout of the room.
 - sufficient number of toilets and washing facilities, drinking water, eating and changing facilities, relaxation areas, and rest facilities for pregnant women and nursing mothers to rest.
 - regular maintenance of our buildings, equipment and facilities, regular cleaning of the workplaces and suitable arrangements for the removal of waste materials.
4. Most of the above which covers building and equipment maintenance including provision of services (water, electricity etc) is administered by Facilities Management.