

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SAFETY POLICY & ARRANGEMENTS



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Introduction

This document forms part of the National Ice Centre's organisational written safety policy arrangements.

Departments, services or teams may consider it appropriate to develop additional guidance and systems of work on specific work related activities.

Where proposals, additional guidance or changes to systems of work will have an impact on health, safety and welfare, this will be discussed and agreed at the Health & Safety Committee.

If you have any questions or require further information or support on the contents of this document, please contact The NIC Health & Safety Advisor or Corporate Safety Advice.

Overview Of Management & Colleague Responsibilities

Manager Responsibilities

Below is an overview of the responsibilities which is intended to support managers in identifying their key duties that need to be taken to comply with the requirements of this document and the safety management systems of the National Ice Centre.

- Managers need to ensure that any risks within the workplace are appropriately risk assessed and controls are identified and implemented
- Management need to ensure that good housekeeping is in place as this can reduce overall risk within a working environment.
- Managers need to ensure adequate working space is available.
- It is recommended that thermometers or other systems are available to allow for managers to measure temperature.
- Managers must consider that the lighting levels and ensure that it is adequate, especially in location where changes of height are present is in place
- Managers need to ensure that cables and leads are managed so they do not cross internal pedestrian routes
- Managers need to Ensure all filing cabinets are fitted with appropriate anti-tilt mechanisms
- Managers are required to consider the provision suitable accommodation for clothing including drying areas for work wear which is likely to be wet
- Managers must minimise above head height storage wherever reasonably practicable
- Managers need to provide appropriate equipment for low level work at height.

Employee Responsibilities

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 section 7 requires all employees to consider their own health & safety and the safety of others.

As an employee of the National Ice Centre, if you have concerns in relation to health & safety that is likely to cause you or someone else, injury or ill health then you must ensure that the concern is communicated to your manager immediately.

You are also required to co-operate with the management of the National Ice Centre to ensure compliance with the health & safety arrangements, policies and procedures and work to the requirements identified within this document.

Unplanned Accidents / Incidents Within The Office

Office accommodation is generally considered as a low-risk working environment.

Each year there are several hundred serious incidents that occur within these seemingly safe office environments.

There are also number of 'Notifiable' and 'Over 7 day' accidents reported each year to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) within office environments that are attributable to the following incident causations:

- Manual handling incidents
- Slips, trips or falls on the same level
- Falls from height (low level)
- Struck by moving object
- Struck against something fixed or stationary.

Accidents may be managed by considering a combination of risk assessment, implementing identified controls and colleague training and awareness.

Each office environment is unique and may have some or all of the issues identified within this document which may have the potential to create an accident within one of the categories identified in the above table.

Managers are responsible for ensuring the safety of their colleagues and this also covers the management of the working environment they oversee.

Managers also need to ensure colleagues receive appropriate information or training in relation to the hazards and risks that may be present.

Office Space

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1999 states that the total volume of the working environment, when empty, divided by the number of persons normally working in it should be at least 11m³ of working space, taking into account no more than 3m vertical height.

This minimum recommended figure of 11m³ may be insufficient if, for example, much of the room is taken up by furniture.

For this reason, it is advised that space taken up by filing cabinets, cupboards and any other storage equipment should be deducted from the calculation.

Examples of where additional space in addition to 11m³ may be required include; adequate room for Display Screen Equipment 'User' workstations, minimum dimensions for clear fire exit routes, etc.

A lack of work space can lead to ergonomic issues becoming a problem, for example if inadequate space for seating or manual handling operations.

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Slips, Trips & Falls

Manager need to be aware that a third of all reported accidents comprise slips, trips or falls. Any damage floor coverings must be reported promptly to the manager in control of the building with responsibility for maintenance / facility management.

Cables and leads should be managed so they do not cross pedestrian traffic routes. Where this is unavoidable cable guards/strips should be considered.

However, these should only be regarded as a short term remedial measure and must not be relied upon as the only means to prevent slips, trips and falls.

Spillages of liquid present a risk and should be cleared up immediately. Where this is not possible, active control measures such as signage or fencing should be taken to prevent the spillage from causing a risk.

Further guidance on Slips trips and fall can be found within the Corporate Safety Manual, Safety Policy and Arrangements – ‘Slips & Trips’

Workplace Environmental Conditions

Ventilation

Managers should ensure that adequate ventilation within the office, providing fresh air is available.

Poor ventilation may lead to tiredness, lethargy, headaches, dry or itchy skin and eye irritation.

If you feel that ventilation in your office area is inadequate, please contact Facilities Management or NIC Health & Safety Advisor for further information and assistance.

Temperature

Managers should consider the temperature within the office should provide reasonable thermal comfort without the need for special clothing.

Thermometers can be considered within office environments at a convenient distance from every part of the workplace to enable measurement of temperatures throughout, but need not be provided in each location.

In large open plan offices more than one thermometer may be appropriate.

Minimum temperature:

Although there is no maximum temperature, the Workplace (Health Safety & Welfare) Regulations set a minimum temperature of 16°C in office environments.

It should be noted that other factors such as air movement and relative humidity may impact on thermal comfort.

Local managers will need to consider appropriate actions in the event that an office environment being either too hot or cold.

Management action could include any of the following:

- putting insulation around hot plant or pipes.
- providing fans (e.g. desk or ceiling mounted).
- ensuring windows can be opened in non ventilated locations.
- shading windows with blinds or using reflective film to reduce the heating effect of the sun.
- site workstations away from direct sunlight and places or plant that radiate heat.
- providing chilled water dispensers with cups (water is preferable to caffeine or carbonated drinks).
- relaxing dress codes, but you **must** ensure that personal protective equipment that is issued continues to be used where necessary.
- providing additional heaters
- advising colleagues to layer their clothing to maintain thermal comfort



Lighting

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations require that every workplace shall have suitable and sufficient lighting.

Managers need to ensure that lighting is suitable to enable colleagues to work, use facilities and move from place to place safely and without experiencing eyestrain.

Issues created by poor lighting

Poor lighting may result in symptoms that can be commonly described as eyestrain.

If you feel that lighting in your office area is inadequate, please contact the NIC Health & Safety Advisor

The symptoms of eyestrain include:

- Irritation, e.g. inflammation of eyes and lids.
- Itchiness.
- Breakdown of vision, including blurred or double vision.
- Referred symptoms, e.g. headaches, fatigue and giddiness.

Most colleagues positioned to take advantage of natural light.

Natural light may not be feasible when windows have to be covered for security reasons, or where process requirements necessitate particular lighting requirements.

HS(G)38 'Lighting at Work' gives the following recommendations for lighting levels in relation to offices and buildings:

Activity	Typical locations/ types of work	Average luminance for the area as a whole (lux)	Minimum luminance at any position within it (lux)
Movement of people, machines and vehicles	Lorry park, corridors, circulation routes	20	5
Work requiring limited perception of detail	Kitchens, factories assembling large components	100	50
Work requiring perception of detail	Offices, sheet metal work, bookbinding	200	100
Work requiring perception of fine detail	Drawing offices, factories assembling electronic components, textile production	500	200

Photocopiers & Multi Function Devices

Normally the biggest hazard with photocopiers is considered to be electricity. Never tamper with photocopiers or similar office equipment provided.

Switch off the power where necessary.

Inside this type of equipment, be aware of hot surfaces and always follow the supplier's / manufacturers instructions for dealing with faults such as paper jams.

Where photocopiers are heavily utilised, they must be located in a well-ventilated area, preferably away from where colleagues work so that noise or other issues will not cause problems.

Even where they are lightly used, this equipment should still be positioned away from desks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where the manufacturer of the equipment has identified specific risks to health, the suitable controls they identify need to be implemented as part of the general operation of the equipment.



Stacking, Shelves, Storage & Filing Cabinets

Filing cabinets:

To prevent filing cabinets from tipping, it is always recommended that the bottom drawers are utilised first to provide a stable base.

Managers must consider the replacement of any filing cabinets not fitted with anti-tilt mechanisms.

When not in use, filing cabinets need to be kept shut and drawers should not open into corridors or fire escape routes

Shelves and store areas/rooms:

Storage areas should be kept clean and tidy and free of clutter, particularly on the floor (to avoid slip, trip and fall hazards).

High shelving in storage areas/rooms which requires the use of access equipment (e.g. stepladders) should be avoided wherever possible.

Where this is not reasonably practicable, suitable access equipment (e.g. kick steps and step ladders) must be provided and be readily available.

Where suitable access equipment is not available in the storage area/room, colleagues must be made aware of where it can be obtained from, e.g. by posting a conspicuous notice in the storage area and they must be competent in the use of such equipment.



As a general rule, heavy items should be stored approximately between waist and shoulder height (i.e. not low down or high up) to reduce the risk of manual handling injuries.

Any loose items must not be stored more than two metres off the ground as they are more likely to fall.

Racking or shelving should be securely fixed to the wall. Where the racking or shelving is not securely fixed, it is recommended that it **not** be stacked to a height greater than 1.2m.

Accommodation For Clothing

Managers should ensure that there is suitable accommodation for work clothing and colleagues own clothing should enable it to hang in a clean, warm, dry, well-ventilated place where it can dry out during the course of the working day.

Accommodation can be in working environment (e.g. offices).

The accommodation, as a minimum, should consist of a separate peg or hook for each colleague.

Workstations & Seating

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations provide detailed requirements in relation to the set up and usage of DSE 'User' workstations and Safety Policy & Arrangements – 'Display Screen Equipment' identify the Policy requirements for the National Ice Centre .

Although the workstation requirements of the DSE Regulations only apply to DSE 'users', the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations apply to all workstations, whether or not the colleague is a DSE 'user'.

The general requirements for workstations and seating are that:

- workstations need to be designed or arranged so that colleagues are at a comfortable height and position in relation to their work.
- suitable seats or chair should be provided where work operations can or must be done sitting.
- any seats are suitable for the colleague it is provided for (e.g. very tall or short workers).
- seats provide adequate support for the lower back.
- armrests may be useful, but must not prevent the worker from drawing close to the desk.
- A footrest should also be provided for colleagues who cannot comfortably place their feet flat on the floor, once the chair is adjusted to a suitable sitting height.

The National Ice Centre use the NCC On-Line DSE Self assessment system that is available to all colleagues.

Portable Electrical Appliances (PAT)

Full guidance on Portable Electrical Appliances is provided in Safety Policy and Arrangements - 'Electricity Regulations and Portable Appliance Testing'.

Key points for managers on the effective management of portable electrical appliances in office environments consider:

- Portable Appliance Tests (PAT tests) should be carried out on an approved and risk assessed timescale.
- Colleagues must not use or bring into work, personal items of electrical equipment without their line manager's authorisation. Where managers permit colleagues to bring in personal items for use at work (e.g. kettles) the manager must ensure that these items are also subject to the requirements of being PAT tested.
- The use of extension leads should be avoided where reasonably practicable, through the provision of a sufficient number of socket outlets conveniently located. Extension leads must **not** be connected together (i.e. one extension lead feeding another).
- Multi-plug adapters ('adapter blocks' that fit directly into socket outlets) must **not** be used. In addition to the risk of overloading, adapter blocks may cause physical damage to the socket due to the weight of the adapter block and plugs fitted into it.

Fire Safety

Full guidance on fire safety is provided in Corporate Safety Manual, Safety Policy & Arrangements –Fire Safety.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires a Responsible Person to be identified for each premise.

Managers should ensure they know who is the 'responsible person' for the premises they, and their colleagues, occupy and ensure they raise any fire safety issues to this individual.

Managers should ensure they know the fire evacuation procedures for the premises they occupy and ensure these are communicated to colleagues, during induction and periodically at team meetings.

The Responsible Person is responsible for ensuring a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment be completed for the premise and managers should have sight of this.

Managers are responsible for the completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for colleagues who may require additional assistance to safely evacuate their premises.

Facilities & Rest Breaks

The general requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 requires managers to consider appropriate facilities for rest breaks and eating meals consider the provision of:

- suitable seating for colleagues to use during their breaks.
- within reasonably clean workplaces, work seats or other seats in the work area could be considered as sufficient, provided that colleagues are not subject to excessive disturbance (e.g. excessive noise or contact with the citizens within a reception area).
- seats in work areas can be used as eating facilities provided that they are in a sufficiently clean place and there is a suitable surface on which to place food.
- welfare facilities should include the ability to make a hot drink (e.g. a kettle).
- where hot food cannot be obtained in, or reasonably near, the workplace a means to heat food should be provided (e.g. microwave oven).

First Aid

Full guidance on first aid provision is provided in Corporate Safety Manual, Safety Policy & Arrangements – First Aid.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 require adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure employees receive immediate attention if they are injured or taken ill at work.

Managers need to be aware of the first aid arrangements for the premises they, and their colleagues, are based and ensure this information is communicated with colleagues.

Further Information & References

The following information and reference material is in place to assist managers to understand their responsibilities and duties.

NIC Documentation

In addition to what has been identified, more detailed information on these issues and other related topics can also be found within the Corporate Safety Manual and it is recommended that you consider these in relation to working safely within an office.

External References

No specific office Information or References Identified.