

2 Office & General Workplace Safety

Contents

- 2.1 Scope
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities
- 2.4 Retention of Records
- 2.5 Related documents

Scope

2.1.1 This chapter sets out the procedures and guidance on the management of office and general workplace safety for all workplaces including those where defence personnel work in areas not under the direct control of the MOD (e.g. home working).

2.1.2 The chapter provides all defence personnel with an overview of the management of health and safety; staff should therefore read this chapter in conjunction with JSP 375 Volume 1 and other chapters within Part 2 Volume 1 to obtain details on subject specific health and safety arrangements.

Introduction

2.2.1 Many workplaces including offices are generally regarded as low risk environments, however they all have hazards which can result in work related accidents and/or ill health. Personnel are continually being exposed to new business methods and technology such as computers (including laptops and Smartphone's), office machinery and other electrical equipment to improve productivity and efficiency which may introduce new health and safety hazards to the working environment for those who use and maintain them.

2.2.2 Not all risks come from new technology, most accidents are caused by: slips, trips and falls; spilt substances (including hot drinks or food); being struck by or striking objects; manual handling; and cuts/puncture wounds from sharp objects. Ill health may be caused by stress; presence of pathogens or dust; exposure to hazardous substances; or incorrect setting up and/or use of workstations.

Roles and Responsibilities

Commanding Officer (CO)/Head of Establishment (HoE)

2.3.1 The CO/HoE should ensure that all Defence facilities and activities within their areas of responsibility comply with all applicable UK legislation (including legislation giving effect to the UK's international obligations) and with relevant host nations' standards by providing and maintaining a working environment that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health. The delivery of safety management is to be implemented via line management and the chain of command and treated as part of normal business.

2.3.2 Organisational structures and management arrangements for discharging duties in accordance with SofS Policy Statement, including identifying hazards and controlling potential risks are to be put in place along with processes for monitoring the effectiveness of such arrangements. All applicable procedures and control measures are to be brought to the attention of all relevant defence personnel (Service and civilian), contractors, visitors and lodger organisations etc.

2.3.3 The CO/HoE should ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the management of health and safety commensurate with the risk profile of their area of responsibility and that competent persons are appointed to key health and safety roles to safeguard the health and safety of defence personnel and others who may be affected by the work activities, plant, equipment and infrastructure under their control.

2.3.4 Cooperation and Coordination in a shared workplace (including temporary workplaces) is a mandatory requirement under UK health and safety legislation. Therefore, where the infrastructure is managed by a Maintenance Management Organisation, equipment is owned, maintained and/or operated by a third party organisation (whether a defence contractor or a non-defence tenant), the CO/HoE should ensure that the point of demarcation (and responsibility) is agreed, clearly defined and documented. Through effective regular communications and collaboration, assurances should be given and received that services or equipment are regularly inspected and maintained as appropriate; common procedures are adhered to, and that the activities undertaken by all stakeholders do not have an undue adverse impact on the safety or health of personnel. This should not be just an annual exchange of documentation but a continual process.

2.3.5 For the wellbeing of defence personnel, workrooms should be well ventilated providing sufficient fresh or purified air whilst maintained at a comfortable temperature (normally at least 16°C) and adequately lit (preferably by natural light). Provision of suitable facilities for changing from/to a persons own clothing to/from work clothing must be made where required; and secure and ventilated accommodation of such clothing that it will dry during the time it is not worn. Suitable facilities for rest and eating meals must be available in a clean environment separate from the immediate work environment and reasonable access to drinking water, washing facilities and sanitary conveniences must also be provided.

Managers

2.3.6 The attitude and behaviour displayed by Managers will set the tone and importance that staff place on health and safety; clear and good leadership is therefore essential. Managers should ensure that safety tasks such as assessing risks, inspecting workplaces and the co-ordination of team/branch health and safety issues are conducted by competent persons¹.

2.3.7 In addition to any task specific training, instruction and supervision, managers should ensure that induction training (emergency procedures, local risks, use of PPE, etc.) is provided to defence personnel and visitors under their control to ensure they are fully informed about the foreseeable risks associated with work activities and the work environment.

¹ As defined in JSP 375 Volume 1

2.3.8 Hazards within the manager's area of responsibility should be identified and, where appropriate, risk assessments completed and required control measures communicated to defence personnel and visitors etc in accordance with JSP 375 Part 2, volume 1, Chapter 8; the HSE online Office Risk Assessment Tool may prove useful for simple office type environments.

2.3.9 Managers should be aware of the potential health impact on defence personnel from different working patterns/practices, allow for regular breaks and encourage them to be taken, and where possible empower all personnel to manage their own work load/activities/practices to help reduce the potential for work related illness e.g. stress.

2.3.10 Workstations, working environment and working processes should be adequate for the task and where possible be ergonomically designed with furniture set up to meet the abilities and needs of individual users, have sufficient lighting, ventilation and maintained at a comfortable temperature.

2.3.11 Workplace Inspections should be undertaken at least once every six-months and more frequently in hazardous areas; and the findings recorded in accordance with JSP 375, Part 2 volume 1, chapter 4.

2.3.12 All work related accidents, ill health and incidents (including near misses) should be reported in accordance with local procedures and the requirements of JSP375, Part 2, volume 1, chapter 16.

2.3.13 All relevant safety documents/records for work areas and activities under the control of the manager should be maintained and made accessible to all applicable Defence Personnel, and for the purpose of health and safety reviews/audits.

All Personnel

2.3.14 All personnel are legally required to take appropriate action and comply with control measures introduced to mitigate risk and follow rules and procedures put in place to safeguard their health and safety.

2.3.15 Personnel should take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst undertaking work activities. All personnel should:

- be aware of the SofS Policy on Safety and Health;
- comply with local Health and Safety procedures and arrangements;
- only operate equipment they are authorised (and where appropriate trained, or under supervision if in training) to use;
- undertake induction training programmes and other training, as is required;
- be aware of who the Safety Personnel are and how to make contact e.g. local Safety Advisers, Fire Officers and First Aid staff;
- comply with local Emergency and Disaster Procedures and the actions to be taken;
- comply with the local accident and incident reporting procedures and where applicable the requirements contained in JSP375, Part 2, volume 1, chapter 16;
- complete Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments (see JSP375, Part 2, volume 1, chapter 12);

- co-operate with their managers by carrying out their duties in accordance with the training, information and instruction received;
- not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided within the work environment for Health, Safety and Welfare purposes;
- correctly use, maintain and store Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided;
- wear appropriate clothing (no loose clothing or jewellery) and have long hair held or tied back whilst operating dangerous equipment (e.g. shredders, lathes) to avoid entanglement/entrapment hazards;
- Inform their Manager of any change in circumstances that may affect their ability to perform their tasks (e.g. pregnancy, physical injury, medical condition);
- Report damaged, missing or misuse of safety equipment and unsafe practices.

Retention of Records

2.4.1 All records should be retained in accordance with the requirements of JSP 375 Part 2, Volume 1, Chapter 39.

Related Documents

2.5.1 The following documents should be consulted in conjunction with this chapter.

JSP 375 Part 2, Volume 1

- Chapter 04 – Workplace inspections.
- Chapter 05 – First Aid at Work.
- Chapter 08 – Health and Safety Risk Assessment.
- Chapter 10 – Manual Handling.
- Chapter 11 – Management of Hazardous Substances.
- Chapter 12 – Working with Display Screen Equipment.
- Chapter 16 – Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation.
- Chapter 17 – Stress at Work.
- Chapter 18 – Lone Working.
- Chapter 21 – Managing Staff Remotely.
- Chapter 23 – Safety When Working with Electricity and Electrical Equipment.
- Chapter 34 – 4C System: The Management of Visiting Workers and Contractors.
- Chapter 39 – Retention of Records.

JSP 426 Volume 2

- Leaflet 11-1 – General Fire Precautions.

Legislation and Guidance

- [Legislation Gov.UK -Health and Safety at Work, etc Act \(HSWA\)](#).

- [Legislation.Gov.UK -Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.](#)
- [HSE ACoP L5 – Control of substances hazardous to health.](#)
- [HSE ACoP L22 – Safe use of work equipment.](#)
- [HSE ACoP L23 – Manual handling.](#)
- [HSE ACoP L24 – Workplace health, safety and welfare.](#)
- [HSE ACoP L26 – Work with display screen equipment.](#)
- [Legislation.Gov.UK - Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order.](#)
- [HSE HSG 60 – Upper limb disorders in the workplace..](#)
- [HSE HSG 263 – Involving your workforce in health and safety](#)
- [HSE INDG36 – Working with display screen equipment \(DSE\): A brief guide](#)
- [HSE INDG 226 – Homeworking.](#)