

The health and safety 'six pack'

Information for UNISON branches, stewards and safety representatives

UNISON's guide to:

The Health and Safety at Work Act

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Display Screen Equipment Regulations

Manual Handling Operations Regulations

Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations

Other relevant legislation



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Introduction

This is a guide for UNISON health and safety representatives on a group of six regulations introduced on 1 January 1993, popularly known as 'the six pack'. These are:

- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations
- The Display Screen Equipment Regulations
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
- The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations

These regulations implement various European Directives on health and safety and also clarify how employers must comply with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWA) 1974.

This guide also gives a brief introduction to the Health and Safety at Work Act and a short summary of employers' duties under other health and safety regulations.

The legislation and regulations quoted apply throughout the United Kingdom. However, in Northern Ireland, although similar legislation applies in all cases, the actual name of the Act or regulation, and the date when it was implemented, may be different.

The information in this booklet is up to date as of August 2000.



Chapter 1: The Health and Safety at Work Act

Health and safety law is very wide ranging. Most of it is not made through Acts of Parliament but by regulations.

The right to make regulations on health and safety was given to the Secretary of State under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

This Act, which came into force in 1975, was designed to ensure that all workers in all occupations were covered by health and safety legislation. Rather than have lots of different laws covering different groups, it provided a framework within which health and safety could be regulated by creating one simple system of law dealing with all aspects of health and safety of people at work.

The Act is written in very general terms and the duties on employers are qualified with the words 'as far as is reasonably practicable'. This means that employers have often argued that the costs of a particular safety measure are not justified by the reduction in risk which the measure would produce.

The following are the main sections of the Act.

Section 1

This states the general purpose of Part 1 of the Act, which is aimed at:

- Maintaining or improving standards of health, safety and welfare of people at work.
- Protecting other people against risks to health and safety arising out of work activities.
- Controlling the storage and use of dangerous substances.
- Controlling certain emissions into the air from certain premises.

Section 2

This puts a general duty on employers to:

- Ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of their employees.
- Consult them concerning arrangements for joint action on health and safety matters, and in certain circumstances, at the request of duly appointed or elected trade union safety reps, to establish safety committees.





■ Prepare and publicise a written statement of their safety policy and arrangements.

Sub-section (4) of this section of the Act makes provision by regulations for the appointment of workers' safety reps by recognised trade unions.

Section 3

This places a general duty on employers and the self employed to ensure that their activities do not endanger anybody, and, in certain circumstances, to provide information to the public about any potential hazards to health and safety.

Section 4

This places a duty on anybody responsible for places of work to ensure that premises themselves, as well as plant and machinery in them, do not endanger people using them.

Section 5

Controllers of premises as a prescribed class must use the best practicable means to prevent emissions into the atmosphere of noxious or offensive substances and to render harmless and inoffensive such substances as may be emitted.

Section 6

This places duties on anyone who designs, manufacturers, imports or supplies an article or substance for use at work to ensure, so far as it is under their control, that the article or substance is safe when used in accordance with information supplied by them. The duty extends to the provision of necessary information and the carrying out of necessary testing, inspection and research. Those who install plant also have a duty to ensure that it is safely installed.

Section 7

This places duties on employees to take reasonable care to ensure that they do not endanger themselves or anyone else who may be affected by their work activities; and to co-operate with employers and others in meeting statutory requirements.

Section 8

This places a duty on everyone not to misuse anything provided in the interests of health or safety at work under a statutory requirement.

Section 9

This provides that no employer may charge their employees for anything done or equipment provided for health or safety purposes under a statutory requirement.

Section 15

This section allows the Secretary of State to make regulations on health and safety under the Act.





Section 28 (8)

This requires Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors to supply certain information on health, safety and welfare matters affecting safety to workers or their representatives.

To see what the Act means in practice, it is necessary to look at the regulations made under the Act, or the official approved Codes of Practice (ACoPs) and guidance.

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Chapter 2: Introduction to the six pack

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The six pack came about because of a European law called the 'framework directive' which was intended to harmonise health and safety legislation throughout Europe. The framework directive was followed by five other directives.

In the UK, the directives came into effect through regulations made by the Secretary of State under powers given to her under Section 15 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Three of the six pack also have Approved Codes of Practice (AcoPs). These are the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and the Workplace Health and Safety and Welfare Regulations. These have been approved by the Health and Safety Commission and give practical advice on what should be done to comply with the law. While employers and others do not have to follow AcoPs they need to prove that, if they do not, their alternative arrangements have the same, or better, standards of health and safety.

Guidance exists for all the regulations with the exception of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Commission and is not legally enforceable, but does indicate the standards and procedures expected by health and safety inspectors.

This UNISON guide covers the regulations, the codes, and the guidance. In the guidance, when 'must' is used, this refers to a legal requirement. The word 'should' indicates advice from ACoPs or guidance.

The fact that the 'six pack' are regulations does not make them any less enforceable. The importance that is put on them is shown by the fact that the Health and Safety Executive issue around 4,000 enforcement notices every year under the six regulations, and achieve over 200 convictions a year, a figure that is increasing every year.



Chapter 3: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

Most of these regulations became law on 1 January 1993. They include duties on employers, self-employed workers and employees. The rights of trade union safety representatives have been expanded by these Regulations.

Most of the duties are laid on employers.

Employers' duties are to:

- Assess risks to the health and safety of their employees and others who may be affected in order to identify the measures needed to comply with relevant health and safety law. Employers with five or more employees must record the significant findings of the risk assessment. There are specific requirements in respect of young workers, new and expectant mothers and women of childbearing age.
- Make arrangements for implementing the health and safety measures identified as being required by the risk assessment. Arrangements for planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review must be covered. Again, employers with five or more employees must record their arrangements.
- Appoint competent people to help with the implementation of health and safety arrangements.
- Set up emergency procedures.
- Provide information to employees which can be understood, as well as adequate training and instruction.
- Work together with other employers sharing the same workplace.

Employees' duties are to:

- Use equipment and dangerous substances in accordance with the training they have received.
- Report dangerous situations and any shortcomings in their employers' health and safety arrangements.

Rights of trade union safety reps are:

- To be consulted by their employer in good time on:
 - Any measure which may substantially affect the health and safety of employees whom the safety rep represents.





- Appointment of ‘competent’ people to provide health and safety assistance to the employer.
- Appointment of people to oversee emergency procedures.
- Any health and safety information provided to employees whom the safety rep represents.
- The planning and organising of health and safety training.
- The health and safety effects of new technologies. Safety reps must be consulted from the planning stage.

■ To have provided by the employer any facilities and assistance that safety reps may reasonably require to carry out their safety rep functions.

These rights are in addition to previously existing safety reps’ rights to consultation, inspection, investigation, information etc.

The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Date and title

All of these regulations came into force on 1 January 1993. The title is The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992. Also, definitions are given for concepts referred to in later regulations. The regulations were amended in 1994, 1997 and 1999.

Regulation 2: Exclusions

These regulations apply to all workplaces and work except ships at sea.

Regulation 3: Risk assessments

All employers must make a ‘suitable and sufficient’ assessment of health and safety risks to:

- Employees.
- Other people not employed by that employer. This covers visitors, agency staff and contractors, and members of the public, for example patients, clients, pupils and students.

The purpose of this risk assessment is to identify measures needed to bring health and safety standards up to legal requirements. So it is not enough for employers to make an assessment and then forget about the results. Remember that as well as detailed laws, employers must comply with the general requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Self-employed workers have a similar duty to assess risks to themselves and others. This is worth remembering in connection with outside contractors and agency staff who are self-employed.

- Young people. There is a separate requirement for risk assessing before a person under 18 is employed and once they are employed.





An assessment must be reviewed if:

- There is reason to suspect it is no longer valid—reasons could include complaints from employees or union reps, accident and illness records, warnings from enforcement agencies.
- There has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates. For example, changes in work methods, staffing, shift patterns, equipment, chemicals, management responsibilities or structure could all make an assessment out of date and in need of review.

Employers with five or more employees must record:

- Significant findings of the assessment.
- Any group of employees especially at risk.

‘Record’ means in writing or on computer disc etc.

Safety reps have a right to copies of the assessment records. Check that all jobs and workplaces (including work away from the employer’s premises) have been fully assessed. Decisions about which findings are ‘significant’ will vary, so get involved in risk assessments from the start and insist on copies of all the results.

Try to establish a regular timetable, say once a year, for the assessment to be reviewed jointly by management and union reps. This could be done by joint health and safety committees.

Regulation 4: Principles of prevention

When implementing risk assessments or introducing any preventative or protective measures employers have to do it on the basis of a set of general principles which are included in the regulations.

These state that employers must first look at removing any risks. If that is not possible they should evaluate the risk and combat it at source by adapting work to suit the individual, giving more choice of working methods, alleviating monotonous work, The next stage is adapting to technical progress, followed by substituting less dangerous substances or practices, and developing proper prevention policies.

The principles state that collective measures must be given priority over individual protective measures, which means that Personal Protective Equipment is a back up or last resort.

They also state that all measures must be underpinned by proper instruction.

Regulation 5: Health and safety arrangements

All employers must make and put into effect arrangements for:

- planning
- organisation
- control



■ monitoring

■ review.

This can best be achieved through introducing an effective health & safety management system. The ones suggested are the HSE's "Successful health & safety management" or BS8800. However neither of these fully involve safety reps in the process.

Employers of five or more employees must record their arrangements. Safety reps should use their rights to be consulted about these arrangements and to receive copies of records.

The Health and Safety at Work Act already requires employers to have a safety policy. Most employers will need to revise their policies to ensure they comply with this regulation. They must then ensure that the policy is put into practice.

Regulation 6: Health surveillance

All employers must ensure that employees are provided with appropriate health surveillance. The risk assessment should identify which employees need health surveillance. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) already requires health surveillance for some workers exposed to certain chemicals or biological agents. This regulation extends the provision and could cover, for example, workers at risk from work-related upper limb disorders (WRULDs) such as repetitive strain injury (RSI) or back injury.

Health surveillance should not be used instead of preventing or reducing risks. Nor should it be used, as a means of preventing future compensation claims, to get rid of staff susceptible to harm or who start showing signs of injury or illness. Try to negotiate relocation agreements for employees who are unfit for their present job.

Regulation 7: Health and safety assistance

All employers must appoint one or more competent people ('competent persons' in legal jargon) to assist the employer to comply with legal standards. Employers and self-employed workers can appoint themselves, but only if they are competent in health and safety. Larger employers are likely to appoint others to assist them. Competent persons can be employees or outside consultants and may work full or part time on health and safety assistance.

Whoever is appointed as a competent person, employers must ensure:

- There are enough competent people.
- They are allowed adequate time.
- They have adequate means to carry out their functions.

What is 'adequate' must be assessed by taking into account the size of the organisation, the risks to employees, and the distribution of those risks.

Competent people

The Health and Safety Commission has suggested aspects to take into account when identifying competent people.

Competent people should have a knowledge and understanding of:

- The work being assessed.
- The principles of risk assessment and prevention of risk.
- Up-to-date health and safety measures.
- Identification of hazards at work.

Competent people should be able to:

- Identify health and safety issues.
- Assess the need for action.
- Design, develop and implement strategies and plans.
- Check the effectiveness of these strategies and plans.
- Promote health, safety and welfare advances and good practices.
- Know their limitations and when to call for others with specific skills and expertise.



Don't accept the assumption that certain types of workplace, for example offices, libraries or schools, are always 'low risk' areas. Remember that the competent people will be appointed to assist with all health and safety measures, not just obvious ones such as protection against dangerous chemicals or machinery.

Where existing arrangements are that the employer already employs a competent person that person must be employed in preference to a competent person not in their employment. That means there are now legal restrictions on an employers ability to outsource or sub-contract their health & safety function.

If an outside consultant is appointed, the employer must:

- Inform the consultant of factors known, or suspected, to affect the health and safety of employees or others.
- Allow the consultant access to the same information that employees are entitled to (see Regulation 9). Competent people who are employees should receive this information as employees.

The definition of a competent person in these regulations is someone who 'has sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable him (or her) properly to assist in undertaking (preventive and protective) measures'.

This definition does not mention formal qualifications but the guidance makes clear that appropriately qualified specialists will be required in some situations. However, the main recognised qualifications are the NEBOSH certificate and diploma or an NVQ. The level of qualification required will depend on the nature of the work.

Employers cannot pass on their own legal responsibilities by appointing competent people to assist them. In fact, employers have a specific responsibility to ensure that the person appointed really is competent to assist.

Safety reps should use their rights to be consulted on the appointment of competent people. Try to agree clear criteria for appointments and provision of training, time and information. If members are offered this role, make sure that they get adequate training and time off other work to carry out their functions as competent people. This additional training and skills could also lead to members regrading.

Regulation 8: Serious and imminent dangers

All employers must set up procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to people at work.

Although this regulation refers only to 'persons at work', employers also have responsibilities to protect members of the public from dangers (see Regulation 3 and Health and Safety at Work Act). Try to get agreement that emergency plans take account of anyone (including visitors, patients, pupils etc) who may need to be evacuated from danger.

The regulations do not define 'serious and imminent danger' as this will vary from one job to another. Examples could include





escape of toxic chemicals, risk of explosions, risks of buildings collapsing or risk of electrocution.

Employers must also:

- Nominate a sufficient number of competent people to implement the evacuation of the premises. According to these regulations, a person is competent if they have ‘sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable him (or her) properly to implement the evacuation of the premises’.
- Restrict access to danger areas, ensuring that only employees who have received adequate health and safety instruction can enter. Once evacuated, employees must be stopped from re-entering the premises until the danger has been dealt with. Entry to dangerous areas should be restricted, for example by a permit-to-work system or by locking up rooms or equipment. Examples of these areas could be laboratories, electrical plant rooms, incinerators, confined spaces.
- Inform people at work about dangers and the necessary precautions to be taken. ‘Persons at work’ includes employees, self-employed workers, agency and contractors’ staff. Try to ensure that members of the public also know what to do in an emergency. Panicking, uninformed people endanger themselves and others around them.
- Enable people at risk of serious, imminent and unavoidable danger to stop work and proceed to a place of safety at once. Note that the right to stop work is limited to ‘serious, imminent and unavoidable danger’. This means changes which are going to happen immediately and which cannot be avoided except by getting away from the area fast.

This regulation does not give workers the specific right to refuse dangerous or unhealthy work. Instead, use the more general employees’ duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act. This requires every employee to ‘take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself (or herself) and of others’. It can be argued that employers who insist their employees do dangerous or unhealthy work are telling employees to break the law.

In addition, employees and safety representatives are given protection from victimisation for taking certain health and safety actions under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

This regulation does allow people to resume work if there is still a serious and imminent danger but only in exceptional cases. This is intended to allow emergency services, such as firefighters and ambulance crews, to work at the scene of an accident.

However, employers have a duty to reduce risks to emergency workers by informing them about known risks, for example fire hazards or dangerous chemicals. Employers of emergency workers must train them to recognise risks and take preventive and protective measures against them.





Regulation 9: Contact with external services

Employers now have to ensure that they have all necessary contacts with the emergency services. This means that they need written procedures on how to deal with emergencies, serious situations and potential disasters. These have to include liaison with the police, ambulance and fire services. The procedures should be included in induction training.

The scale of the arrangements will depend on the nature of the organisation, but clearly hospitals, high-rise offices, large educational establishments, and similar employers will need quite detailed policies and procedures.

Regulation 10: Information for employees

All employers must provide their employees with 'comprehensible and relevant' information on:

- Risks identified by the assessment.
- Measures to prevent or protect against these risks.
- Procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger.
- Competent people appointed to oversee emergency procedures.
- Risks from the work of other people working on the premises. This means that employees should be informed of risks from contractors' work, for example.

This regulation extends the general duty on employers to provide health and safety information to employees. Information must be 'comprehensible and relevant', so information full of technical or medical jargon will not meet this legal requirement.

The guidance to these regulations state that information should be provided in a form which takes account of any language difficulties or disabilities. For employees with little or no understanding of English or who cannot read English, employers may need to make special arrangements. These could include providing translation, using interpreters, or in some cases replacing written notices with clearly understood symbols or diagrams.'

Employers must also give information to parents before employing a child.

Regulation 11: Co-operation between employers

Where employers share a workplace (on a temporary or permanent basis) each employer must:

- Co-operate with other employers on the premises 'as far as is necessary' to enable them to comply with legal duties.
- Co-ordinate measures taken to comply with health and safety laws.
- Take 'all reasonable steps' to inform other employers about risks from their work.





Regulation 12: Working on other people's premises

All employers (or self-employed people) must provide contractors' employees with 'comprehensible' information on:

- The risks to their health and safety from the premises or work. For example, building repair workers should be warned about asbestos or fragile roofs; maintenance contractors should be warned about contaminated equipment.
- The preventive and protective measures that the employer has taken against risks. For example, contractors should be told about relevant safe working practices such as wearing earmuffs in noisy areas or restricting access to dangerous areas or equipment.
- Emergency procedures and the competent people nominated to oversee evacuation from the premises (see Regulation 8). Contractors' employees should know what to do in the event of serious and imminent dangers.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, Sections 3 and 4, employers have general duties to ensure that they do not endanger others who are not their employees. This means that contractors and main employers have duties towards each others' employees.

Regulations 11 and 12 set out more explicitly what employers need to do to ensure that they do not endanger the health and safety of the employees of others. Employers' risk assessments should take into account any other employees or self-employed workers on the premises.

Contracts should specify who is responsible for health and safety arrangements, so that matters such as training, protective clothing, maintenance of equipment, occupational health and accident reporting are sorted out before work begins.

These regulations also apply to self-employed workers sharing premises on a temporary or permanent basis.

Regulation 13: Training and capabilities

Employers must not give employees tasks which are beyond 'their capabilities as regards health and safety'. Before entrusting tasks to employees, employers must take into account employees' physical and mental capabilities, as well as their training, knowledge and experience.

All employers must ensure that employees are provided with adequate health and safety training when:

- They are recruited (induction training).
- Exposed to new or increased risks.
- There is a transfer of job or a change in responsibility.
- New equipment is introduced or use of existing equipment is changed.
- New technology is introduced.





- A new system of work is introduced or there is a change in the existing system of work.

The regulations do not define ‘adequate’ training, but this should include:

- All the risks that employees are exposed to and the precautions needed.
- Arrangements for reporting hazards, incidents, illnesses and accidents.
- Emergency procedures.

All health and safety training must be:

- Repeated periodically where appropriate (refresher training).
- Adapted to take account of new or changed risks to employees (as outlined above).
- Take place during working hours. This also covers part-time workers and those working unsocial hours. Employers may have to make different arrangements for these employees, but the amount and quality of training must not be worse than training provided during ‘normal’ hours.

The Approved Code of Practice says: ‘If it is necessary to arrange training outside an employee’s normal hours, this should be treated as an extension of time at work’. Therefore agreements on overtime payments or time off in lieu should apply.

Even if employers do not carry out the training themselves, they still have a responsibility to ensure that training provided, by, for example, an outside organisation, is adequate.

The Safety representatives regulations state that safety reps must be consulted about the plans and organisation of health and safety training.

Regulation 14: Employees’ duties

All employees must:

- Follow instructions and training given by their employer in the use of machinery, equipment, dangerous substances, transport equipment, means of production, safety devices.

- Inform their employer of:

- Any work situation which is a serious and immediate danger to health and safety, and

- Any shortcomings in the employers’ protection arrangements for health and safety.

This regulation extends employees’ general duties, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, not to endanger themselves or others and to co-operate with their employer in complying with the law.

Employees are only expected to report things which they have





been trained or informed about. So, for example, employees cannot be expected to report a dangerous situation or faulty equipment which they have not been trained to recognise.

This duty on employees does not reduce the duties on employers to make their own assessment of risks and introduce improvements. Employers cannot get out of their own responsibilities simply by claiming that faults were not reported to them.

Regulation 15: Temporary workers

All employers and self-employed workers must provide temporary workers with 'comprehensible' information on any:

- Special occupational qualifications or skills required to do the job safely.
- Health surveillance required to be provided by law.

This information must be given to temporary workers before they start work. This regulation applies to temporary workers on fixed-term contracts and those employed by an employment business or agency.

Regulation 16-18: New and expectant mothers

Where women of childbearing age are employed and there is any potential hazard likely to affect a new or expectant mother, the assessment must include an assessment of that risk. This is regardless of whether the employer knows that any of the women are pregnant.

Once any woman notifies their employer they are pregnant, or has given birth in the last six months, or is breastfeeding, if the risk cannot be removed, then the worker can be suspended on full pay. There are also restrictions on night work for new and expectant mothers if it is likely to damage her health.

New regulation 19: Young workers

There are restrictions on the kind of work a person under 18 can do. This means that, where young people are employed, a separate risk assessment must be undertaken.



Checklist for assessing management action

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tick boxes

Risk assessments

Are management doing their risk assessments?

Are all jobs, workers and hazards covered?

Are risks to contractors, patients, clients, pupils, visitors etc covered?

Are competent people, who understand about health and safety and type of work, carrying out the assessments?

Are safety representatives involved in the assessment process?

Are safety representatives given copies of assessment results?

Do assessments cover the preventive and protective measures required?

Are these controls adequate?

Are assessments regularly reviewed, for example, yearly by a joint safety committee and when there are changes at work?

Health and safety arrangements

If adequate control measures are not in place, does management intend to introduce them?

Have priorities for action been set, with an agreed timetable for introducing measures?

Are there arrangements to monitor and review the effectiveness of control measures?

Health surveillance

Have risk assessments identified the need for any health checks?

Have health checks been developed and are they appropriate?

Can employees themselves or the union, as well as management, refer an employee for a health check?

Is protection in place to stop health checks being used as a substitute for preventive measures?

Is protection in place to stop health checks being used to weed out susceptible workers or those showing symptoms?

Is there a relocation agreement for workers who are shown to be unfit for their job?

Competent people

Have competent people been appointed to assist in general health and safety compliance?

Have competent people been appointed to oversee emergency procedures?

Do they have sufficient training, experience and knowledge?

Do they have adequate time, resources and information?

Is outside expertise called in if necessary?

Are safety representatives consulted over the appointment of competent people?



Serious and imminent danger

Are emergency procedures in place?

Do they cover all foreseeable incidents? ...

Do they cover agency staff, contractors etc as well as employees?

Do they try to ensure the public are also covered?.....

Have members been informed of the hazards and precautions to take?.....

Will members be able to stop work if they reasonably believe that there is serious and imminent danger?.....

Is access to danger areas restricted?

Information and training

Are all employees given adequate training?

Is training given to new employees on starting work?.....

Is training given when changes are made for example, to jobs, the workplace, equipment?

Is refresher training provided?

Does training take place during work hours and are all shifts and part timers covered?

Are employees given understandable information about health and safety, based on the risk assessments?.....

Are contractors' employees, agency staff etc given health and safety information?

Are the needs of employees who have difficulty with English covered?

Are safety representatives consulted over information and training for members?

Co-operation between employers

Have arrangements been made to ensure co-operation and co-ordination on health and safety between employers sharing the same premises?

Have arrangements been made between employers and contractors?.....

Are these arrangements adequate?





Chapter 4: Display Screen Equipment Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

These regulations cover display screen equipment (DSE) such as visual display units (VDUs), microfiche and process control screens. The regulations apply wherever DSE is used, including offices, classrooms, computer suites, hospital wards and work at home.

These Regulations became law on 1 January 1993.

Employers' duties

- Assess risks to health from DSE workstations and to reduce the risks identified by assessments to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Assessments must be kept up to date.
- Ensure that workstations in use after 31 December 1992 comply with standards laid down by the regulations.
- Ensure that workstations in use before 31 December 1992 comply with the standards, if an assessment shows that they are a risk to health and safety.
- Plan the work of DSE users so that there are periodic breaks or changes of activity reducing their workload at the display screen equipment.
- Ensure that DSE users are provided with
 - Eye and eyesight tests on request.
 - Further tests at regular intervals.
 - Additional tests on request for users who experience visual difficulties (such as headaches).
 - Spectacles, where tests show these are needed for DSE work.
- Provide health and safety training for DSE users.
- Provide information on all aspects of health and safety relating to workstations, and on measures taken to comply with the regulations.
- Ensure that all workstations in use before 31 December 1992 comply with the standards laid down in these regulations.

Workstations

'Workstation' in these Regulations means more than just a desk. It also means, for example, the screen, keyboard, disk drive, printer, document holder, chair, work surface; and lighting, temperature, noise and space around the display screen equipment.

Employees' duties

There are no specific duties on employees in these Regulations. However the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 require all employees to use equipment provided in accordance with the training and instructions given by their employer.

The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Definitions

These regulations came into force on 1 January 1993. This regulation defines terms used in other regulations, especially 'display screen equipment', 'workstation', 'user' and 'operator'. These definitions are important in determining the people and areas covered by these regulations.

Display screen equipment means 'any alphanumeric or graphic display screen regardless of the display process involved'. This includes visual display units (VDUs), microfiche readers, and process control screens. The regulations cover this type of equipment wherever it is used (but see exceptions below).

The regulations do not apply to the following equipment:

- Drivers' cabs or control cabs for vehicle or machinery.
- Display screen equipment on board a means of transport.
- Display screen equipment mainly intended for public operation.
- Portable systems, unless they are in prolonged use.
- Calculators, cash registers or any equipment with a small measurement display required for direct use of the equipment.
- Window typewriters showing no more than a few lines of text.

However, even when these specific regulations do not apply, employers still have general duties, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, to ensure the health and safety of employees and others.

Workstation means all of the following:

- Display screen equipment, keyboard, software.
- Any optional accessories to the display screen equipment.
- Any disk drive, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, work chair, work desk, work surface or other item peripheral to the display screen equipment.
- The immediate work environment around the display screen equipment, for example, noise, lighting, temperature, space.

All of these should be included in employers' risk assessments (see Regulation 2) and should meet the requirements laid down in these regulations (see Regulation 3).



Who is a user?

The test of who is a 'user' is not just the length of time display screen equipment is used. Guidance to the regulations gives the following criteria for a 'user':

- The individual depends on the use of display screen equipment to do the job
- The individual has no choice as to use or non-use of the display screen equipment
- The individual needs significant training and/or particular skills in the use of display screen equipment
- The individual normally uses display screen equipment for continuous spells of an hour or more at a time
- The individual uses display screen equipment in this way more or less daily
- Fast transfer of information between the user and screen is an important requirement of the job
- The performance requirements of the system demand high levels of attention and concentration by the user, for example, where the consequences of error may be critical.

If most or all of these criteria are met, the employee is a 'user'.

User means an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his (or her) normal work. This definition is important in deciding which employees are entitled to eye and eyesight tests (Regulation 5) and regular rest breaks (Regulation 4).

HSE Guidance to these Regulations gives examples of DSE users. These include community care workers, librarians, scientists, secretaries, telephone operators, and receptionists who use DSE frequently.

In practice, if a number of employees use the same display screen equipment, or if use of the equipment is vital for the job, employers will find it easier to designate all employees who use DSE as 'users' under the regulations.

Operator means a self-employed person who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his (or her) normal work. Workstations provided for the use of self-employed workers must meet the standards laid down in Regulation 3 and be included in employers' risk analysis (Regulation 2). Employers must also provide self-employed workers with information on all aspects of health and safety relating to their workstations, and on the measures taken to comply with the regulations.

Under these regulations, operators do not have to be provided with eye and eyesight tests, training or periodic breaks from DSE work. However, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employers have a general duty to protect the health and safety of people who are not their employees.

Regulation 2: Assessment of workstations

Employers must carry out a 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of workstations to identify any risks to users or operators. This assessment should be reviewed if:

- There is reason to suspect it is no longer valid (for example, if there are reports of health problems).
- There has been a significant change in the workstation, for example, new equipment, different users/operators, change in working environment.

Employers must reduce the risks identified by the assessment to 'the lowest extent reasonably practicable'.

Reasonably practicable means a balance between the cost of preventing health risks and the consequences of not preventing these risks. It does not mean that employers can legally refuse to make improvements just because they claim they can't afford them. Some of the health effects of display screen work can cause pain and permanent disability and should not be ignored.

Risks to health

The Guidance to the Regulations highlights three main risks to health from DSE work. These are:





■ Upper limb disorders (also called repetitive strain injuries) which cause pain in hands, wrists, shoulders, neck and back. If untreated, some of these disorders can lead to long-term or even permanent disability. These disorders are caused by poor design or wrongly-adjusted equipment; sitting for too long in one position; high workload and tight deadlines.

■ Eye and eyesight effects, including headaches, sore eyes, blurred vision. Work with display screen equipment can show up pre-existing eye defects, such as short-sight, that workers were not previously aware of. These effects may be caused by lack of breaks; badly designed, adjusted or positioned equipment; poor lighting; flickering image on the screen.

■ Stress and physical fatigue can be reduced by careful design, selection and positioning of DSE; good design of the user's workplace, environment and task; and training, consultation and involvement of the user.

The Guidance also addresses other factors that have caused concern over DSE work:

Effects on pregnant women

The Health and Safety Executive says that, taken as a whole, research has not shown any link between miscarriages or birth defects and working on display screen equipment.

However, restricted postures, for example sitting in one position for too long, may cause problems for pregnant women. During the later stages of pregnancy, women may find it difficult to sit comfortably at a workstation because of their size.

In guidance on seating at work the HSE says that seating should be comfortable and should allow for frequent changes in posture and for getting to and from the workstation easily.

To avoid stress and anxiety, women who are pregnant or planning children should be allowed to transfer to non-DSE work if they wish. Try to get the right to transfer included in new technology agreements.

Effects of radiation

The Guidance to the Regulations says that levels of radiation given off display screen equipment are very low and do not pose a significant risk to health. No special protective measures are needed to protect the health of people from this radiation.

Regulation 3: Workstation standards

Employers must make sure that all workstations used by users and operators, comply with the requirements set out in a schedule to the regulations. The schedule is reproduced at the end of this document.

Workstations first put into service on or after 1 January 1993 had to comply with the standards immediately.





Taking breaks

The Guidance to the Regulations gives general advice on breaks:

- Breaks should be taken before the onset of fatigue, not in order to recuperate, and when performance is at a maximum, before productivity reduces. The timing of the break is more important than its length.
- Breaks or changes of activity should be included in working time. They should reduce the workload at the screen, in other words, they should not result in a higher pace or intensity of work on account of their introduction.
- Short, frequent breaks are more satisfactory than occasional, longer breaks: for example, a 5-10 minute break after 50-60 minutes continuous screen and/or keyboard work is likely to be better than a 15 minute break every two hours.
- If possible, breaks should be taken away from the screen.
- Informal breaks, that is time spent not viewing the screen but, for example, engaged on other tasks, appear from study evidence to be more effective in relieving visual fatigue than formal rest breaks.
- Wherever practicable, users should be allowed some discretion as to how they carry out the task; individual control over the nature and pace of work allows optimal distribution of effort over the working day.

Workstations already in use before January 1993 had until 1997 to meet the standards, unless a risk assessment showed that they were a risk to health and safety. In that case, the workstation had to be replaced or modified immediately to meet the standards in the schedule.

The Guidance to the Regulations points out that ‘where a particular item is mentioned in the schedule, this should not be interpreted as a requirement that all workstations should have one, unless the risk assessment under Regulation 2 suggests the item is necessary’.

Some deviation from the schedule is allowed if the job would be impossible otherwise. Examples given in the Guidance to the Regulations include: process control rooms where tilting screens may be inappropriate, and individuals who suffer from certain back complaints may prefer a chair with a fixed back rest or a special chair without a back rest.

Regulation 4: Breaks and changes of activity

Employers must plan the activities of display screen equipment (DSE) users so that their work on DSE is periodically interrupted by breaks or changes of activity to reduce their workload at that equipment.

Where possible, users should be allowed to take breaks when they need them. Where this is not possible, or is unlikely to happen because of pressure of work, an agreement on DSE work breaks should be drawn up. TUC guidance suggests 15 minute breaks away from the equipment after 45 minutes work. The more intensive the work, the more frequent the breaks needed.

Regulation 5: Eye and eyesight tests

Employers must provide, on request, an appropriate eye and eyesight test for users or those who will shortly become display screen equipment users.

All eye and eyesight tests must be:

- Carried out by a competent person, either an optometrist or doctor with ophthalmic qualifications.
- Carried out as soon as practicable after being requested by the user.
- Provided without cost to employees.

Employers must then offer eye and eyesight tests at regular intervals. Employers should seek the advice of an optometrist on how frequent these intervals should be—it may vary between individuals.

Employers must also provide, on request, tests for users who experience ‘visual difficulties which may reasonably be considered to be caused by work on display screen equipment’, for example headaches or sore eyes.

Employees who use display screen equipment must request tests—there is no requirement for employers to provide them



automatically. Make sure that all DSE users know about their rights to eye and eyesight tests.

Eye and eyesight tests must be carried out by a competent person. This should be either an optometrist or a doctor with ophthalmic qualifications. Vision screening tests such as the 'keystone' test are not full eye and eyesight tests and do not fulfil the requirements of the regulations.

Employers must provide 'special corrective appliances' where an eye and eyesight test shows these are necessary and 'normal corrective appliances' cannot be used.

Special corrective appliances means spectacles or lenses prescribed for work with display screen equipment.

Normal corrective appliances are spectacles, contact lenses and so on prescribed for other uses, for example for reading written material or for driving. Users who already wear spectacles or lenses for other uses may still require a special prescription for display screen equipment work.

Regulation 6: Health and safety training

Employers must provide adequate health and safety training for users or people who will shortly be using display screen equipment.

Health and safety training must also be provided when the organisation of a workstation is altered. This training will be in addition to general training involving, for example, keyboard skills or use of a particular computer program or word processing package.

Regulation 7: Information

Employers must ensure that users and operators are provided with information about:

- All aspects of health and safety relating to their workstations.
- Risk assessments and measures taken to reduce risks.

Additionally users must be given information about:

- Eye and eyesight tests—their rights and arrangements for providing these tests.
- Initial training (see Regulation 6) and training provided when workstations are altered.

The schedule

This schedule sets out the minimum requirements for workstations which are contained in the Annex to Council Directive 90/270/EEC(a) on the minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment.

Extent to which employers must ensure that workstations meet the requirements laid down in this schedule

Costs

The provision of eye and eyesight tests and of special corrective appliances under these Regulations is at the expense of the user's employer.

UNISON believes employers should allow paid time off to attend eye and eyesight tests, or arrange for proper tests to be carried out in working time at the workplace. The cost of tests must be paid by employers.

Employers must also pay for special corrective appliances where tests show these are necessary. The Guidance to the Regulations suggests that employers need pay only for a basic appliance. If users want a more expensive appliance, with, for example, designer frames, they could agree to pay the extra cost.

Training needs

Guidance to the Regulations suggests that training should cover the following points:

- Recognition of hazards and risks, for example screen reflections and glare.
- Explanation of health risks and causes, for example, poor posture and lack of breaks.
- Describing what users can do to minimise these risks, for example changing position, adjusting furniture and equipment, regular cleaning of screens, taking breaks and changing activity.
- Reporting of problems or shortcomings in work patterns of workstations.
- Giving information about eye and eyesight tests, rest pauses and standards for workstations.
- Explaining how the user can contribute to assessments of workstations.



An employer shall ensure that a workstation meets the requirements laid down in this Schedule to the extent that:

- Those requirements relate to a component which is present in the workstation concerned.
- Those requirements have effect with a view to securing the health, safety and welfare of persons at work.
- The inherent characteristics of a given task make compliance with those requirements appropriate as respects the workstation concerned.

Equipment

General comment

The use as such of the equipment must not be a source of risk for operators or users.

Display screen

The characters on the screen shall be well-defined and clearly formed, of adequate size and with adequate spacing between the characters and lines.

The image on the screen should be stable, with no flickering or other forms of instability.

The brightness and the contrast between the characters and the background shall be easily adjustable by the operator or user, and also be easily adjustable to ambient conditions.

The screen must swivel and tilt easily and freely to suit the needs of the operator or user.

It shall be possible to use a separate base for the screen or an adjustable table.

The screen shall be free of reflective glare and reflections liable to cause discomfort to the operator or user.

Keyboard

The keyboard shall be tiltable and separate from the screen so as to allow the operator or user to find a comfortable working position avoiding fatigue in the arms or hands.

The space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the operator or user.

The keyboard shall have a matt surface to avoid reflective glare.

The arrangement of the keyboard and the characteristics of the keys shall be such as to facilitate the use of the keyboard.

The symbols on the keys shall be adequately contrasted and legible from the design working position.

Work desk or work surface

The work desk or work surface shall have a sufficiently large, low-reflectance surface and allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and related equipment.





The document holder shall be stable and adjustable and shall be positioned so as to minimise the need for uncomfortable head and eye movements.

There shall be adequate space for operators or users to find a comfortable position.

Work chair

The work chair shall be stable and allow the operator or user easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position.

The seat shall be adjustable in height.

The seat back shall be adjustable in both height and tilt.

A footrest shall be made available to any operator or user who wishes one.

Environment

Space requirements

The workstation shall be dimensioned and designed so as to provide sufficient space for the operator or user to change position and vary movements.

Lighting

Any room lighting or task lighting provided shall ensure satisfactory lighting conditions and an appropriate contrast between the screen and the background environment, taking into account the type of work and the vision requirements of the operator or user. Possible disturbing glare and reflections on the screen or other equipment shall be prevented by co-ordinating workplace and workstation layout with the positioning and technical characteristics of the artificial light sources.

Reflections and glare

Workstations shall be so designed that sources of light, such as windows and other openings, transparent or translucent walls, and brightly coloured fixtures or walls cause no direct glare and no distracting reflections on the screen.

Windows shall be fitted with a suitable system of adjustable covering to attenuate the daylight that falls on the workstation.

Noise

Noise emitted by equipment belonging to any workstation shall be taken into account when a workstation is being equipped, with a view in particular to ensuring that attention is not distracted and speech is not disturbed.

Heat

Equipment belonging to any workstation shall not produce excess heat which could cause discomfort to operators or users.



**Radiation**

All radiation with the exception of the visible part of the electromagnetic spectrum shall be reduced to negligible levels from the point of view of the protection of operators' or users' health and safety.

Humidity

An adequate level of humidity shall be established and maintained.

Interface between computer and operator/user

In designing, selecting, commissioning and modifying software, and in designing tasks using display screen equipment, the employer shall take into account the following principles:

- Software must be suitable for the task.
- Software must be easy to use and, where appropriate, adaptable to the level of knowledge or experience of the operator or user; no quantitative or qualitative checking facility may be used without the knowledge of the operators or users.
- Systems must provide feedback to operators or users on the performance of those systems.
- Systems must display information in a format and at a pace which are adapted to operators or users.
- The principles of software ergonomics must be applied, in particular to human data processing.

Chapter 5: Manual Handling Operations Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

‘Manual handling operations’ means physically lifting, carrying or moving any load. Loads can be objects, people or animals. These regulations apply wherever manual handling operations are carried out.

There are no maximum weight limits set for loads. Instead, the regulations require a full assessment of all risks including the task, load and working environment. The regulations are based on ‘ergonomics’ which means fitting the job to the person rather than the person to the job.

These regulations became law on 1 January 1993. They include duties of employers, self-employed workers and employees

Employers’ duties

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable—this may be done by redesigning the task to avoid moving the load or by automating or mechanising the process.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations to the lowest level reasonably practicable—particular consideration should be given to the provision of mechanical assistance but, where this is not reasonably practicable, then other improvements to the task, the load and the working environment should be explored.
- Review risk assessments if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid, or if there has been any significant changes in the manual handling operations.
- Provide training and information for employees, and specific information about the load.

Employees’ duties

Make full and proper use of any system of work provided for employees by their employer to reduce risks of manual handling injuries.

Duties of self-employed

Avoid handling loads manually if possible, assess and reduce



remaining risks of injury to themselves as far as reasonably practicable.

Duties of manufacturers

To ensure safety in design and manufacture and to provide information on safety.

The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Date and title

All of these regulations came into force on 1 January 1993.

Regulation 2: Definitions

Injury

These regulations aim to prevent all types of injuries from manual handling except injuries caused by poisonous or corrosive chemicals on, in or leaking from the load. Chemical hazards are dealt with by specific legislation such as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH).

Back injuries are one of the most common types of manual handling injury, but risk of injury to any part of the body due to manual handling is covered by these regulations.

Load

This regulation also states that load 'includes any person and any animal'.

Manual handling operations

The definition given here of 'manual handling operations' is very wide: 'manual handling operations means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force'.

Self-employed workers are responsible for their own safety during manual handling. But other laws, especially the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, require employers and self-employed workers on the same site to co-operate on health and safety procedures and information.

The regulations require self-employed workers to avoid manual handling operations if possible, and to assess and reduce remaining risks of injury to themselves as far as reasonably practicable.

Contractors who employ others have all the responsibilities of employers. Employers are also responsible for the health and safety of employees working away from their premises

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employers and controllers of premises have a duty towards contractors' employees too. For example, they should ensure that the premises and equipment provided are in a safe condition. Check that contracts specify arrangements and responsibilities for health and safety, including manual handling.



Regulation 3: Exclusions

These regulations apply to all workplaces and work except ships at sea.

Regulation 4: Employers' duties

This regulation sets out steps to be taken by employers:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable—Regulation 4(1)(a).
- Assess any hazardous operations that cannot be avoided—Regulation 4(1)(b)(i).
- Remove or reduce the risk of injury, using the assessment as a basis for action—Regulation 4(1)(b)(ii).

Further duties require employers to:

- Provide information about loads—Regulation 4(1)(b)(iii).
- Review assessments—Regulation 4(2).

Regulation 4(1)(a)—Avoiding manual handling

The first step when looking at any job is to see whether moving or supporting loads 'by hand or by bodily force' needs to be done at all. Can the work or workplace be redesigned so that loads are not moved unnecessarily?

If manual handling cannot be avoided entirely, employers should consider introducing mechanical equipment to reduce movement of loads by hand. This could mean installing lifts, hoists, conveyor belts, adjustable height furniture, trolleys etc.

Remember that equipment does not eliminate manual handling risks and can even introduce new ones. These risks, together with training and maintenance needs should be considered before equipment is purchased.

Regulation 4(1)(b)(i)—Risk assessments

Employers must make risk assessments of 'any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk of employees being injured'.

In practice, all manual handling operations involve some risk of injury. So all manual handling should be subject to these steps. Check that employers do not exclude any manual handling on the grounds that the risks aren't worth investigating.

The risk assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient'. This assessment must include all the factors listed in a schedule to the regulations. The schedule covers characteristics of the task, the load, the working environment, and individual capability.

Schedule covering risk assessment

Factors to which employers must have regard and questions that must be considered when making an assessment of manual handling operations:

The task

Does it involve:

- Holding or manipulating load at distance from trunk?

Who should carry out an assessment?

The Regulations put the responsibility on employers to see that a proper manual handling assessment is done.

The Guidance encourages employers and managers to carry out assessments themselves, but acknowledges that outside specialist advice may be needed to help solve unusual handling problems.

These are some of the requirements that assessors should meet:

- Observe and appreciate the significance of manual handling operations, including possible departures from observed practice.
- Seek out additional information where necessary and put raw information together in a systematic way.
- Form valid and justifiable conclusions as to the risk of injury.
- Make a clear record of the assessment in all but simple cases, and communicate its findings to those who need to know.
- Recognise their own limitations so that the knowledge or skills of others can be called on if necessary.

In addition, assessors must have read and understood the Manual Handling Regulations and Guidance. Whoever carries out the assessment, they will need information and time to do it.



- Unsatisfactory bodily movement or posture, especially twisting the trunk or stooping?
- Excessive movement of load, especially excessive lifting or lowering distances, excessive carrying distances, or excessive pushing or pulling distances?
- Risk of sudden movement of load?
- Frequent or prolonged physical effort?
- Insufficient rest or recovery periods?

The load

Is the load:

- Heavy?
- Bulky or unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable, or with contents likely to shift?
- Sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging?

The working environment

Are there:

- Space constraints preventing good posture?
- Uneven, slippery or unstable floors?
- Variations in level of floors or work surfaces?
- Extremes of temperature, humidity or air movement?
- Conditions causing ventilation problems or gusts of wind?
- Poor lighting conditions?

Individual capabilities

Does the job:

- Require unusual strength, height, etc?
- Create a hazard to those who might reasonably be considered to be pregnant, have a disability or have a health problem?
- Require special knowledge or training for its safe performance?

Other factors

Is movement or posture hindered by personal protective equipment or by clothing?

Guidance on the regulations says that, in general, assessments should be recorded and kept readily accessible for as long as they remain relevant. Employers should include their manual handling policy in the general health and safety policy required by the Health and Safety at Work Act. Safety reps have a right to see records of these assessments and policies.

Regulation 4(1)(b)(ii): Removing or reducing risks if hazardous manual handling operations cannot be avoided

Employers must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of injury to employees 'to the lowest level reasonably practicable'. Reasonably practicable has a legal definition. It is a balance



between the cost of avoiding injuries and the consequences if you don't avoid them. This does not mean that employers can legally refuse to make any improvements because they say they can't afford it. But be prepared to argue that manual handling injuries are likely and/or will cause pain, disablement etc if preventive measures are not taken.

When cost is at issue, also point out that manual handling injuries cost employers money in:

- Lost working time.
- Payments for sick leave and job cover.
- Loss of trained and experienced staff.
- Successful compensation claims against employers.

The guidance also spells out the duties of manufacturers.

■ The guidance questions the effectiveness of abdominal and back support belts and suggests that in some circumstances they can even be dangerous. It proposes instead that risk should be reduced through safer working practices.

■ Training and information for employees must be provided by employers, under the Health and Safety at Work Act. But the Guidance on the Regulations warns that the provision of information and training alone will not ensure safe manual handling. However, as a complement to a safe system of work, rather than a substitute for it, the Guidance says that effective training has an important part to play in reducing risk of injury. Training programmes should be provided for all employees who handle loads.

Regulation 4(1)(b)(iii): Information about the load

Employers must give employees information on:

- The weight of each load.
- The heaviest side of any load the centre of gravity of which is not positioned centrally.

This information may be 'general indications' or, where reasonably practicable, 'precise information'. If the load is an object, precise information about weight and centre of gravity should be available from suppliers. If the load is a person, details of their weight and disabilities etc should be included in patient or client care plans.

Regulation 4(2): Review of risk assessments

Assessments must be reviewed when there has been a significant change in manual handling operations or 'there is reason to suspect that the assessment is no longer valid' (for example, after an accident or near-miss).

Regulation 5: Employees' duties

All employees must make full and proper use of any system of work provided for employees by their employer to reduce risks of manual handling injuries.

Examples of making tasks, loads and working environments safer are given in the Health and Safety Executive Guidance on the Manual Handling Regulations.

Examples particularly relevant to lifting and handling of people are given in the Guidance on manual handling of loads in the health services.

Training programme

Training should include:

- Recognising potentially hazardous handling operations.
- Dealing with unfamiliar handling operations.
- Using handling and lifting aids properly.
- Using personal protective equipment properly.
- Recognising the importance of good housekeeping.
- Knowing your own capabilities and limitations.
- Using good handling techniques.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to provide health and safety training for employees:

- When employees are recruited.
- When there are new or changed risks.
- Which is repeated periodically (refresher training).
- Which is offered during working hours and at no cost to employees.

Manual handling training must also meet these requirements.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employees to use equipment provided in accordance with the training and instructions given by their employer.

The Guidance on the Manual Handling Regulations notes that Regulation 5 ‘does not preclude well-intentioned improvisation in an emergency, for example during efforts to rescue a casualty, fight a fire or contain a dangerous spillage’. This means that emergency personnel will not be responsible for manual handling accidents if they have to depart from an established system of work in an emergency.

Guidance on the Manual Handling Regulations

Working away from employers’ premises

Guidance to the regulations points out that they apply also to work away from the employers’ premises:

‘There will sometimes be a limit to employers’ ability to influence the working environment; but the task and perhaps the load will often remain within their control, as will the provision of effective training, so it is still possible to establish a safe system of work.’

So employers cannot shrug off their responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of employees working off site. These might include:

- Home carers.
- Community nurses.
- Ambulance personnel.
- Blood transfusion staff.
- Refuse collectors.
- Anyone delivering goods.
- Water workers.
- Maintenance workers.

Consultation with safety representatives

The HSE’s guidance on the manual handling regulations advises employers to involve employees and safety reps in the assessment of risks:

‘The views of staff can be of particular value in identifying manual handling problems and practical solutions to them. Employees, their safety representatives and safety committees should be encouraged to play a positive part in the assessment process.’

The guidance also advises close involvement in training and improvements to reduce manual handling risks:

‘Employees, their safety representatives and safety committees should be involved in the development and implementation of manual handling training, and the monitoring of its effectiveness.’

See also the section on safety representatives in Chapter 9.

Chapter 6: Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

'Personal Protective Equipment' (PPE) includes protective clothing. Hearing and most respiratory protective equipment is covered by other regulations and official guidance.

These regulations became law on 1 January 1993. They include duties on employers, employees and self-employed workers.

Employers' duties are to:

- Provide PPE to employees whenever health and safety risks are not adequately protected against by other means.
- Select PPE that is suitable for the risk; for employees who will be using it; and the working environment.
- Assess the PPE available to ensure it is suitable.
- Maintain the PPE in a clean and effective condition.
- Provide suitable accommodation for PPE provided.
- Ensure that the PPE provided is properly used.
- Provide information, training and instruction for employees.

All personal protective equipment provided under these or other Regulations must be free of charge to employees.

Employees' duties are to:

- Use protective equipment provided, in accordance with training and instruction given by their employers.
- Report any loss or obvious defect in protective equipment provided to their employer.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure that their protective equipment is returned to the accommodation provided for it after use.

Self-employed workers' duties

Self-employed workers who are provided with PPE have similar duties to employees. Otherwise they must provide themselves with suitable, assessed PPE, kept in a clean and properly maintained condition and stored in suitable accommodation when not in use.



Checklist for personal protective equipment (PPE)

This checklist of questions will help you find your way around the PPE Regulations. Stewards and safety reps should be asking these questions to find out if their workplace meets legal standards on personal protective equipment.

- What are the health and safety risks from work? (See Regulation 6).
- Can risks be eliminated or reduced without using PPE? (See Regulation 4).
- Which PPE will be suitable? (See Regulations 4 and 6).
- Does other legislation apply instead of, or in addition to, the PPE Regulations? (See Regulation 3).
- Is PPE provided compatible with other items of PPE? (See Regulation 5).
- Is there a system of regular maintenance? (See Regulation 7).
- Is appropriate storage provided for PPE? (See Regulation 8).
- Is information, instruction and training provided for employees? (See Regulation 9).
- Do employees know how to use PPE properly? (See Regulation 10).
- Is supervision adequate to ensure proper use of PPE? (See Regulation 10).
- Is there a procedure for reporting loss or defects in PPE? (See Regulation 11).

The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Date and title

All these regulations came into force on 1 January 1993.

Regulation 2: Definition of 'personal protective equipment'

This regulation defines 'personal protective equipment' as meaning 'all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is introduced to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects him (or her) against one or more risks to his (or her) health and safety, and any addition or accessory designed to meet that objective'.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) includes:

- Protective clothing such as overalls, gloves, safety footwear, safety helmets or high visibility clothing.
- It also includes protective equipment such as safety goggles and visors, life-jackets, underwater breathing apparatus, safety harnesses.

However there are some exceptions, which are listed in Regulation 3.

Regulation 3: Equipment not covered by these regulations

These regulations do not apply to the following types of PPE:

- Ordinary working clothes and uniforms which do not specifically protect the health and safety of the wearer, for example, workers' own clothes or uniforms worn for show. However, most uniforms also protect wearers from bad weather, chemicals, body fluids, or other hazards of the job. Make sure that these uniforms and work clothes are not excluded by employers.
- Offensive weapons used as self-defence or deterrent equipment. The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) guidance to the regulations says that these regulations do not require employers to provide equipment such as personal alarms, or truncheons for security staff.

However, employers do have a duty to protect staff against violence at work. If self-defence or deterrent equipment is needed, use the Health and Safety at Work Act requirements to negotiate provision. These regulations do apply to protective equipment such as helmets, face visors or body armour. This is particularly relevant to emergency services personnel and security guards.

- Portable devices for detecting and signalling risks and nuisances, for example, personal gas detectors or radiation dosimeters. However, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employers must provide these where necessary. Follow the principles of the PPE Regulations.

- Personal protective equipment used for protection while travelling on a road, for example, motorcycle crash helmets



and car seat belts, are dealt with by specific traffic legislation. However, the PPE Regulations do apply to crash helmets worn at work elsewhere.

- Equipment used during the playing of competitive sports. However, these regulations do apply to PPE worn by sports instructors and lifeguards and the like while at work.
- When more specific regulations require the provision or use of personal protective equipment. These more specific regulations are:
 - Control of Lead at Work Regulations 1980.
 - Ionising Radiation Regulations 1985.
 - Control of Asbestos Regulations 1987.
 - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1988.
 - Noise at Work Regulations 1989.
 - Construction (Head Protection) Regulations 1989.

In practice these specific regulations should be read alongside the PPE Regulations. A sensible approach is to apply the principles of assessing, selecting and maintaining suitable PPE and providing information and training for employees to all situations where PPE is needed. More specific regulations must be followed where relevant.

These PPE Regulations replace the Protection of Eyes Regulations 1974, which have been scrapped.

Regulation 4: Provision of PPE

When health and safety risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means, employers must provide employees with suitable personal protective equipment (PPE).

PPE should be seen as a 'last resort' not a quick or cheap method of controlling risks. There may be a better solution: for example, improving ventilation; changing the way the job is done; improving guards on machinery. However, sometimes PPE will still be needed in addition to other improvements.

Any PPE provided must be 'suitable'. The regulations define suitable as:

■ *Appropriate for the risks involved and the conditions at the place where exposure to the risk may occur.* For example, ordinary washing-up gloves will not protect against many solvents and strong disinfectants, so they are not 'appropriate' for those chemicals. Also lightweight PPE intended for occasional or home DIY use may not be robust enough for working conditions. PPE used in catering areas must be easily cleaned to comply with food hygiene requirements.

■ *Takes account of ergonomic requirements and the state of health of the people who use the PPE.*

'Ergonomic requirements' means that the effects of PPE on the wearer and on the work must be taken into account

Application to non-employees

Under these Regulations, trainees and school children on work experience schemes have the same rights to protection and duties as employees.

Self employed workers who are provided with PPE have similar duties to employees. Otherwise they must provide themselves with suitable, assessed PPE, kept in a clean and properly maintained state and stored in suitable accommodation when not in use.

Although these Regulations do not cover other non-employees such as visitors, students or school children while at school or college, the Health and Safety at Work Act requires employers to protect the health and safety of non-employees. Employers are advised to follow the requirements of these PPE Regulations in order to comply with their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

This could mean keeping a supply of suitable protective clothing available for visitors or providing PPE for students working with chemicals or machinery. Employers' risk assessments must include consideration of risks to non-employees who may be affected by their work. Employers must also inform and co-ordinate health and safety arrangements with contractors working on their premises. These are requirements under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992.



when selecting PPE. PPE is not suitable if it is badly fitting, uncomfortable, puts a strain on wearers or makes the work unnecessarily difficult.

PPE must not endanger the health of wearers. Workers who suffer from heart or lung problems may not be able to use breathing apparatus as a normal part of their work. Some people are allergic to latex (natural rubber) so PPE made of other materials could be more suitable for them.

■ *Fits the wearer correctly.* To ensure this, employers may have to offer a range of types and sizes of PPE. Wearers should be involved in selection and fitting of PPE.

■ *So far as is practicable, it is effective to prevent or adequately control risks without adding new ones.* Poorly chosen PPE can cause tripping hazards, get caught in machinery, slow movement, obscure vision etc. Dirty PPE can cause skin rashes and infections. Some PPE will inevitably cause problems, for example wearing ear muffs makes it difficult to hear warning sirens. This must be taken into account when assessing health and safety risks (see Regulation 6).

■ *Complies with relevant European standards.* Under the PPE (Safety) Regulations 1992, personal protective equipment for work which passes specified tests will carry a 'CE' mark. This shows that the PPE complies with required standards.

Regulation 5: Compatibility of PPE with other equipment

Employers must ensure that different sorts of PPE worn together are compatible. This may mean selecting specially designed equipment. For example, safety helmets can be designed to be worn with visors or ear muffs. Employers' assessments must consider the effectiveness and comfort of the combination of PPE that is used, and not just individual items of PPE.

Regulation 6: Assessment of PPE

Where risks cannot be adequately controlled by other means, employers must assess:

- The risks to health and safety that need to be controlled.
- What PPE would be 'suitable' protection against those risks.

Employers must do this before choosing any PPE. The assessment helps in selection of suitable PPE.

The assessment must be reviewed if:

- There is reason to suspect it is no longer valid—for example, complaints from users, reports of accidents or ill health, new information about PPE.
- There have been significant changes: for example, of users, of risks or in working conditions.

All except the simplest assessments should be recorded on paper or electronically. Safety reps have a right to copies of



the assessment records. Check that all PPE has been included (including PPE used away from the employers' premises).

Union representatives and PPE users should be closely involved in the assessment and selection of PPE.

Regulation 7: Maintenance and replacement of PPE

Employers must ensure that all PPE provided is:

- Maintained.
- Cleaned or replaced as appropriate.
- In efficient working order.
- In good repair.

To ensure this, employers should set up proper maintenance systems to examine, test, repair, replace, clean and disinfect PPE as appropriate. Stocks of disposable PPE and replacement parts must be available when needed.

Special arrangements are needed for the storage, cleaning or disposal of infected or contaminated PPE.

Regulation 8: Storage for PPE

Appropriate accommodation must be provided for PPE when it is not in use. This 'accommodation' should protect PPE from contamination, dirt, loss or damage. Depending on the type of PPE and the workplace, the accommodation may be lockers, pegs, boxes etc.

Adequate PPE storage must be provided on vehicles when used by mobile workers. Mobile workers may also need to carry separate containers for contaminated or used disposable PPE.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require employers to provide accommodation for ordinary clothing (for example workers' own coats worn to work). This should be separate from PPE.

Regulation 9: Information, instruction and training

Employers must provide employees with information, instruction and training that is 'adequate and appropriate'. This information etc must tell employees about:

- The risks which the PPE will avoid or limit.
- What the PPE is for.
- How to use the PPE provided.
- Any action needed by the wearer to maintain the PPE in clean and efficient repair.

This information and instruction must be 'comprehensible' to all employees involved. Information full of technical terms may not meet this legal requirement. Information must be in language which employees understand. Note that this will not always be English.



Training

Training in the use of PPE should include the following points:

- Explanation of risks and why PPE is needed.
- Operation, performance and limitations of PPE.
- Instructions on selection, use and storage of PPE. Special procedures such as permits to work should be explained.
- Factors affecting performance of PPE such as other PPE; poor fit; working conditions; defects; wear and tear; contamination.
- Practice in putting on, wearing and removing PPE.
- Practice and instruction in inspection and testing of PPE before use.
- Practice and instruction in any maintenance to be done by PPE user.
- Recognising defects and arrangements for reporting loss or defects.
- Instruction in safe storage of equipment.

Training will not be adequately covered in a quick chat by the PPE salesperson. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to provide adequate health and safety training when employees are recruited, when there have been significant changes, and at appropriate intervals (refresher training).

Training must also take place during working hours, so special arrangements may need to be made for part-time workers and those working unsocial hours.

Regulation 10: Employees' duties to use PPE

Employers must 'take all reasonable steps' to ensure that employees use properly the equipment provided. It is not enough just to make PPE available to staff.

Employees must use PPE provided in accordance with training and instructions provided. If employees have not received 'adequate and appropriate' training, they are unlikely to be held responsible for not using PPE properly. But employees must not deliberately endanger themselves or others.

Employees are also required to 'take all reasonable steps' to ensure that PPE is returned to the accommodation provided for it after use. Employees need not do this if it is agreed that they can take their PPE away from the workplace.

Regulation 11: Employees' duties to report loss or defects

Employees must report to their employers any loss of or obvious defect in PPE provided for them. There must be arrangements for reporting loss or defects and employees should be informed about these arrangements. This must include PPE used away from employers' premises.

This duty on employees does not reduce the duties on employers to make their own inspections and assessments. Employers cannot get out of their own responsibilities simply by claiming that faults were not reported to them.

Chapter 7: The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

These Regulations apply to all work equipment and cover ‘any machinery, appliance, apparatus or tool and any assembly of components’.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, all employers are required to assess the risks to the health and safety of workers and others who may be affected by the work. This will include assessing the risks of work equipment.

Safety representatives have rights to be consulted in good time, on all aspects of health and safety including selection of suitable work equipment and maintenance procedures.

The HSE’s guidance to these regulations states that where there is an overlap with other regulations, compliance with the more specific regulation will normally be sufficient to comply with the Work Equipment Regulations.

Employers’ duties

- **Suitability**—ensure that work equipment is constructed or adapted to be suitable for the purpose for which it is used or provided; have regard to working conditions and risks to health and safety when selecting equipment; and ensure that work equipment is used only for operations for which and under which it is suitable. Suitable means ‘in any respect which it is reasonably foreseeable will affect the health and safety of any person’.
- **Maintenance**—ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state and working order, and in good repair. Ensure that where there is a maintenance log, it is kept up to date.
- **Information**—ensure that all people who use, or who supervise the use of, work equipment have available to them comprehensible and adequate health and safety information and, where appropriate, written instructions on use. These must also include the conditions and methods of use, and foreseeable abnormal situations and action to be taken in such circumstances.
- **Training**—ensure all people who use, or supervise the use of, work equipment have received adequate health and safety training.



■ **Other EC requirements**—ensure that work equipment complies with UK enactments implementing EC Directives listed in a Schedule to the Regulations in respect of work equipment provided for use for the first time after 31 December 1992.

■ **Specific requirements**—concerning dangerous parts of machinery; protection against specific hazards; high or very low temperatures; controls and control systems; isolation from sources of energy; stability; lighting; maintenance operations; markings; and warnings.

Employees' duties

There are no specific duties on employees in the Work Equipment Regulations. However, employees have a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act not to endanger themselves or others at work.

The Management of Health and Safety Regulations require employees to use work equipment correctly, in accordance with training and instructions.

Self-employed workers' duties

Self-employed workers have a duty to ensure that the work equipment they use at work complies with these regulations. If the equipment is provided for their use by an employer, that employer shares the duty to ensure the equipment complies with the regulations.

The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Date and title

New work equipment had to comply with all the regulations from 1 January 1993. 'New' means work equipment provided for use from 1 January 1993. Any equipment sold, leased or hired from that date is also 'new' equipment and must comply with all these regulations.

Equipment provided before 1993 had to comply with all remaining regulations by 1 January 1997.

Regulation 2: Definition of 'work equipment' and 'use'

These regulations apply to all work equipment and cover 'any machinery, appliance, apparatus or tool and any assembly of components'. Examples of work equipment are mowers, drills, knives, laboratory apparatus, ladders, hoists, overhead projectors, photocopiers and computers. In 1998 the regulations were extended to include 'installations'.

Private cars are not covered by these regulations but other motor vehicles are. For example, ambulances, tractors and delivery vans are covered by these regulations. When used on public roads, all motor vehicles must also comply with relevant road traffic laws.

Use of work equipment means any activity involving work equipment, including:





- Starting, stopping.
- Programming, setting.
- Transporting.
- Repairing, modifying.
- Maintaining, servicing.
- Cleaning.

This wide definition of ‘use’ means that employers must consider the safety of people carrying out all these activities, including cleaning and maintenance workers.

Regulation 3: Workplaces not covered by regulations

These regulations do not apply to ships at sea.

Regulation 4: General duties of employers and self-employed

All employers have a duty to ensure that work equipment provided to their employees and self-employed people working for them complies with these regulations. This applies when the equipment is provided by employers and when employers allow employees to provide their own work equipment.

Self-employed workers also have a duty to ensure work equipment they use complies with these regulations.

Where there is more than one employer on site, employers must make arrangements to co-operate and share information on health and safety. Although the main responsibility of each employer is to their own employees, they must also consider the employees of others. So, for example, this regulation will apply when contractors’ employees are working on the premises, even if only for a few hours.

(See also *Chapter 3: Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations*).

The regulations also cover equipment hire companies.

Regulation 5: Suitable work equipment

Employers must ensure that work equipment is suitable for the work it is provided to do. They must also ensure that work equipment is only used for work it is intended for. Employers’ risk assessments should cover:

- The design and condition of equipment: for example, could it cause deafness, vibration injuries, strain injury, burns or cuts? If so, what can be done to reduce or eliminate these risks? This could include selecting better designed equipment or making modifications to guard sharp edges, reduce noise and vibration etc.
- The working conditions where equipment is used: for example, electrical equipment must be specially designed for use in wet areas. Equipment should be easy to operate even in confined spaces or while wearing protective clothing.





■ The purpose of equipment: for example, lightweight DIY tools and equipment are not suitable for professional construction and repair work. Hoists must not be used to lift loads weighing more than the stated safe limit.

Regulation 6: Maintenance

Employers must ensure that work equipment is ‘maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair’. Employers must also ensure that where any machinery has a maintenance log (book), the log is kept up to date.

HSE guidance to the regulations says that any maintenance work should only be done by people who have received adequate information, instructions and training relating to that work (see also Regulations 8 and 9).

Regulation 7: Specific risks

Where there is a specific risk, the employer should first try to eliminate the risk. If that is not possible, they should try to control the risk through the provision of guards, and, only after these are done, should they deal with any remaining risk through safer systems of work, training and instruction.

If risk cannot be removed or controlled, then only people with sufficient information, instruction and training should be able to use it.

In addition, the regulations say that repairs should only be carried out by people who have had suitable instruction and training.

Regulation 8: Information and instructions

Employers must ensure that all people who use, or who supervise the use of, work equipment must have available to them comprehensible and adequate health and safety information. Also, where appropriate, they should have written instructions on use of equipment. Information and instructions must cover:

- Conditions and methods of use.
- Foreseeable abnormal situations.
- Action to be taken if, for example, there are accidents, breakdowns or other emergencies.

Information must be ‘comprehensible’, so information full of technical jargon will not meet this legal requirement. Information must be in a language which employees understand. Note that this will not always be in English.

Regulation 9: Training

Employers must ensure that all persons who use, or who supervise or manage the use of work equipment, have received adequate health and safety training. This training must include:

- Work methods.
- Health and safety risks.
- Precautions to be taken.





Note that supervisors and managers must also receive training.

Regulation 10: European Community requirements

Employers must ensure that work equipment complies with any UK laws implementing European Directives. There are a number of Directives laying down 'essential safety requirements' for work equipment. Equipment that meets these requirements will be marked 'CE'.

Regulation 11: Dangerous parts of machinery

Employers must ensure that dangerous parts of machinery are guarded to stop people coming into contact with the dangerous parts. 'Dangerous parts' means sharp edges or moving parts that could trap or crush hands, hair or clothing etc.

Note that dangerous parts of machinery should be made safe for cleaning and maintenance and the like, as well as for operating the machinery.

Regulation 12: Protection against specified risks

Employers must ensure that the following specified hazards are prevented or controlled:

- Material falling or being thrown out of work equipment. For example, a loose board falling from scaffolding or wood chips flying from cutting equipment.
- Rupture or disintegration of parts of work equipment. For example, an abrasive wheel bursting.
- Work equipment catching fire or overheating. For example, electric motor burning out, thermostat failing.
- Unintended discharge of any gas, dust, liquid etc. For example a pipe bursting.
- Unintended explosion of work equipment. For example, sparks igniting flammable gas.

Employers should include these and any other hazards in their risk assessments. Risk controlling measures should be provided as part of the equipment, where reasonably practicable. Protective clothing and equipment should be provided only as a last resort. (See *Chapter 6: Personal Protective Equipment Regulations*).

Regulation 13: High or low temperatures

Employers must ensure that people are protected against very hot or cold parts of work equipment to prevent burns, scalds or searing. Engineering measures (insulation, doors or lids etc) should be applied, with protective clothing and equipment provided if necessary. Training and supervision are also important.

Regulation 14: Controls for starting equipment

Where appropriate, employers must ensure that equipment has one or more controls for:





- Starting the work equipment; and
- Controlling changes in speed, pressure or other conditions that could present new risks.

The purpose of this regulation is to prevent accidental start up of equipment, or uncontrolled changes in operation.

Regulation 15: Control stops

Employers must ensure, where appropriate, that work equipment has one or more controls to stop the equipment safely.

Regulation 16: Emergency stop controls

Where appropriate, employers must ensure that work equipment has one or more emergency stop controls.

Regulation 17: Controls

Employers must ensure that all controls for work equipment are clearly visible and identifiable.

Where reasonably practicable, equipment control operators must be able to check that no-one is in danger before the control is used, for example, a driver should check that no one is behind a reversing vehicle.

Where this is not reasonably practicable, effective systems of work must be introduced—for example, a lookout to warn a driver of obstructions when reversing.

Failing this, an audible, visible or other suitable warning must be used—for example, hooter and flashing lights warning of a reversing vehicle.

In any case, employers must ensure that anyone who could be in danger when work equipment is started or stopped is able to get out of danger in time.

Regulation 18: Control systems

Employers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that control systems of work equipment are safe. If anything goes wrong with equipment controls systems, it must still be possible to operate 'stop' or 'emergency stop' controls.

Regulation 19: Isolating from energy sources

Where appropriate, employers must ensure that work equipment can be isolated from sources of energy by, for example, cutting off electricity or gas supplies. Means of isolating equipment must be clearly identifiable and accessible. Employers must ensure that reconnection to energy sources does not endanger equipment users.

Regulation 20: Stability of equipment

All employers must ensure that equipment is stabilised to prevent it falling over, collapsing or overturning. This includes mobile work equipment.

Regulation 21: Lighting

Employers must ensure that suitable and sufficient lighting is provided wherever work equipment is used. If daylight is not





sufficient, special lighting will be needed. (See also *Chapter 8: Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations*).

Regulation 22: Maintenance operations

Work equipment must be constructed or adapted, as far as reasonably practicable, so that maintenance operations can be carried out while work equipment is shut down. If this is not reasonably practicable, employers must ensure that:

- Maintenance operations can be carried out without risk to maintenance workers; or
- Appropriate protection from risks is provided—for example, temporary guards and slow-running of machine.

Regulation 23: Markings

Employers must ensure that work equipment carries clearly visible health and safety markings, as appropriate. For example: start and stop controls, weight limits, gas cylinders, electrical elements and ionising radiations should all be clearly marked.

Regulation 24: Warnings

Employers must also ensure that equipment incorporates warnings or warning devices as appropriate. These must be easily perceived and understood. Too many warnings can be confusing, especially in busy or noisy areas. Warnings must be suitable for workers with disabilities and anyone wearing protective equipment such as earmuffs.

Regulations 25–30

These regulations, introduced in 1998, extend the scope of the regulations to require seatbelts and roll-over prevention systems to be fitted to mobile work equipment, such as dumper trucks and forklift trucks, where necessary.





Chapter 8: The Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations

Summary of duties and rights

These regulations lay down minimum standards for workplaces and work in or near buildings. Unlike previous legislation, these regulations apply to most types of workplace except transport, construction sites and domestic premises. These regulations apply in a limited way to temporary worksites and to outdoors agricultural and forestry work.

These regulations became law on 1 January 1993.

Workplaces must be suitable for all who work in them, including workers with any kind of disability. This applies especially to Regulations dealing with traffic routes; seating and workstations; toilet, washing and changing facilities; rest and meal facilities. All workplaces should be as accessible as possible to people with disabilities and new buildings or conversions must be designed with this in mind.

These regulations replace parts of earlier legislation dealing with workplace requirements. This includes parts of the Factories Act and Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 require all employers to carry out comprehensive risk assessments which will include workplaces and facilities.

Trade union safety representatives have rights to be consulted on any measures which may substantially affect the health and safety of their members. Use these rights to be consulted before changes are made to your workplace.

Employers' duties and those of controllers of premises

■ **Maintenance**—ensure that workplace, equipment, devices and systems are maintained in an efficient state and working order, and in good repair. Where appropriate, they must be subject to a suitable system of maintenance.

■ **Ventilation**—ensure that enclosed workplaces are ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh and purified air.

■ **Temperature**—maintain a reasonable temperature inside buildings during working hours. A sufficient number of thermometers must be provided.





- **Lighting**—provide lighting that is suitable and sufficient and natural so far as is reasonably practicable. Emergency lighting must be provided where lighting failure would cause danger.
- **Cleanliness**—keep workplaces and furnishings sufficiently clean. Waste materials must not accumulate, except in suitable receptacles.
- **Space**—ensure work rooms have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space. Existing workplaces previously covered by the Factories Act must comply with certain requirements for space and toilets.
- **Workstations**—ensure that workstations are suitable for the worker and work. A suitable seat must be provided where necessary.
- **Floors**—ensure floors are suitable and not uneven or slippery, presenting a safety risk. They must be kept free from obstructions likely to cause a slip, trip or fall. Handrails must be provided on staircases, except where they would obstruct traffic.
- **Falls**—take suitable and sufficient measures to prevent people falling or being struck by falling objects. Tanks must be securely covered and fenced where there is risk of a person falling into a dangerous substance.
- **Windows**—ensure windows, and transparent and translucent surfaces, consist of safe material; are clearly marked; and safe when open.
- **Traffic**—organise workplaces to allow safe traffic circulation by pedestrians and vehicles.
- **Doors**—ensure doors and gates are suitably constructed and comply with certain specifications.
- **Escalators**—ensure escalators function safely, are equipped with necessary safety devices, and are fitted with easily identifiable and readily accessible emergency stop controls.
- **Toilets**—provide suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences at readily accessible places. Existing workplaces previously subject to the Factories Act 1961 must comply with certain requirements for space and toilets.
- **Washing**—provide suitable and sufficient washing facilities at readily accessible places.
- **Water**—provide an adequate supply of wholesome drinking water, and cups, readily accessible and conspicuously marked.
- **Clothing**—provide suitable and sufficient accommodation for clothing, as well as changing facilities where special clothing is worn.
- **Restrooms**—provide suitable and sufficient rest facilities at readily accessible places. Rest rooms and areas must include suitable arrangements to protect non-smokers from discomfort. Suitable facilities must be provided for: pregnant or nursing workers to rest; and for workers to eat meals.





The regulations step by step

Regulation 1: Dates when regulations come into force

These regulations applied immediately to:

- 'New workplaces' in use after 31 December 1992.
- Modifications, extensions or conversions started after 31 December 1992. The regulations applied as soon as the modifications were complete.

'Old workplaces' in use before 1 January 1993 did not have to comply with the regulations until 1 January 1996, unless a risk assessment showed that the workplace was a risk to health, safety or welfare. Then employers then had to take steps to remove or reduce the risk.

Regulation 2: Definition of 'workplace' and 'domestic premises'

The regulations apply to a wide range of workplaces, including schools, hospitals, leisure complexes, catering areas, nursing homes, offices, factories and shops.

'Workplace' means work areas and any other areas to which workers have access. This includes stairs, corridors, private roads and pathways. Workplaces may be indoors or outside.

'Domestic premises' are not covered by the regulations. However, under the Health and Safety at Work Act, employers are required to look after all employees' health and safety. Employers' duties to provide information and training, supervision and safe equipment etc are even more important when employees are working in other peoples' homes or in their own homes.

The Regulations do apply to residential and nursing homes and hostels etc.

Regulation 3 Application to building and temporary sites etc

The regulations do not apply to building sites. The Construction Regulations apply instead.

Temporary worksites must have, 'so far as is reasonably practicable':

- Toilets and washing facilities.
- Drinking water.
- Changing facilities and storage for clothing.
- Facilities for rest and eating meals.
(See Regulations 20 to 25.)

Outdoors agricultural and forestry worksites must have, 'so far as is reasonably practicable':

- Toilets and washing facilities.
- Drinking water. (See Regulations 20 to 22.)



‘So far as reasonably practicable’ means a balance between the cost in money, time and effort of making improvements and the likely harm if improvements are not made. Employers must prove that the risk of harm is so small or unlikely that the cost is not worth it. This does not mean that employers can avoid their responsibilities simply by claiming that they cannot afford improvements in health, safety or welfare.

Regulation 4: Responsibilities of employers

Employers have responsibilities for the health and safety of their employees and others working on their premises. Before deciding that facilities are adequate, employers should take account of all employees, self-employed workers and contractors who may use them.

When employees are working on other employers’ worksites, their own employer still has a duty to ensure their health, safety and welfare under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Where employers share a workplace, on a temporary or permanent basis, they are required to co-operate on health and safety under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations. Contracts and agreements between employers should include measures to comply with the Workplace Regulations and other legislation.

Regulation 5: Maintenance

The workplace, equipment, devices and systems must be maintained in good repair and not be a risk to health and safety.

The ‘equipment and devices’ referred to include:

- Ventilation systems.
- Emergency lighting.
- Seating and workstations.
- Guards to prevent falls.
- Escalators.

Regulation 6: Ventilation

In enclosed workplaces, employers must provide ‘effective and suitable’ ventilation to supply a ‘sufficient quantity’ of fresh or purified air.

The Approved Code of Practice to the Regulations says that ventilation systems should not cause uncomfortable draughts. Air inlets should not be situated near contaminated air, for example from vehicle exhausts or flues. Recycled air systems should be filtered and mixed with fresh air.

Workplaces where hazardous substances are used will need a higher standard of ventilation. Legislation such as the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, includes more specific requirements.

Maintenance

The Approved Code of Practice that accompanies the Regulations lists the following as a suitable system of maintenance:

- Regular maintenance (including, as necessary, inspection, testing, adjustment, lubrication and cleaning) is carried out at suitable intervals.
- Any potentially dangerous defects are remedied and access to defective equipment is prevented in the meantime.
- Regular maintenance and remedial work is carried out properly.
- A suitable record is kept to ensure that the system is properly implemented and to assist in validating maintenance programmes.



High temperatures

No maximum temperature is given in the regulations or Code. But the Code of Practice does say that 'all reasonable steps should be taken to achieve a comfortable temperature', for example:

- Insulating hot pipes and equipment.
- Providing air cooling plants.
- Shading windows.
- Siting workstations away from hot areas.
- Using fans and increased ventilation in hot weather.

As a last resort, in unavoidably hot or cold work areas, employers should provide suitable protective clothing and rest facilities and limit the amount of time that individuals work in these areas.

Work in 'confined spaces' such as sewers, tanks or pits also needs special precautions.

Regulation 7: Temperature

Employers must ensure that:

- During working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings is 'reasonable'.

This means providing reasonable comfort without the need for special clothing—expecting workers to work indoors in thick coats or gloves does not comply with this regulation! The Approved Code of Practice says that workrooms should normally be at least:

- 16°C for most types of work.
- 13°C for work involving 'severe physical effort'.

But the Code points out that other factors (such as draughts and humidity) must also be considered when aiming for a 'comfortable' temperature.

- Methods of heating or cooling must not produce harmful or offensive fumes, gases or vapours.
- A sufficient number of thermometers must be provided to enable workers to check temperatures in indoors workplaces.

The Code of Practice says that thermometers need not be provided in each workroom. However, if the temperature in a particular workroom is uncomfortable, insist that the temperature in that room be measured.

Regulation 8: Lighting

Employers must ensure that:

- Every workplace has suitable and sufficient lighting.
- This should be natural light, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Suitable and sufficient emergency lighting shall be provided where needed.

The regulations do not define 'suitable and sufficient', but the Code says that lighting should be sufficient to enable people to work, use facilities and move from place to place safely and without experiencing eye-strain. Outdoor areas should be adequately lit after dark.

The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 also include specific requirements for lighting for use of DSE.

Regulation 9: Cleanliness

- Every workplace, furniture, furnishings and fittings must be kept sufficiently clean.
- Floors, walls and ceilings must have easily cleaned surfaces.
- Waste materials must not be left around, except in suitable containers.





The regulations do not define ‘sufficiently clean’, but this will depend on the work done in the workplace. Food preparation and health care work will require very high standards of cleanliness. All floors should be kept clear of spills and objects that could cause trips or falls.

The Code of Practice warns that cleaning should be carried out by an effective and suitable method, and without exposing anyone to a health and safety risk. This includes risks to people doing the cleaning.

Regulation 10: Room dimensions and space

Every workroom should have sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space for purposes of health, safety and welfare.

The Approved Code of Practice says that, as a minimum, 11 cubic metres should be allowed per person working in the room. This assumes that the room is up to three metres high. But the Code also says that the number of people who may work in any room at the same time will depend on:

- The size of the room.
- Space taken up by furniture, fittings and equipment.
- The layout of the room.

So the minimum allowance of 11 cubic metres will not comply with these regulations if the room is crowded with equipment or furniture.

Regulation 11: Workstations and seating

- Every workstation must be suitable for the worker using it and the work being carried out.

Unfortunately ‘workstation’ is not defined by the regulations or Code. However, it is likely to mean desks, worksurfaces, workbenches etc. Workstations should be arranged so that the work can be carried out safely and comfortably. Awkward postures or movements such as bending or stretching should be kept to a minimum.

- Outdoor workstations should provide protection from bad weather; allow the user to leave quickly in an emergency; ensure that the user is not likely to slip or fall.
- Suitable seating should be provided where the work can be done sitting down, with a footrest where necessary.

Seating should be the right height for the user and in relation to the work surface. Seating should also include proper back support.

Regulation 12: Floors

- Every workplace floor must be suitably constructed, without uneven or slippery surfaces.
- Every workplace floor must, so far as reasonably





practicable, be free from obstructions and other slip, trip or fall hazards.

- Stairs and steep slopes must be provided with handrails where possible.

- Floors should have effective drainage in wet areas.

This applies to workplaces both indoors and outdoors. More detail about flooring and prevention of slips and trips is given in Health and Safety Executive *Watch your step: Prevention of slipping, tripping and falling accidents at work*.

Regulation 13: Preventing falls and falling objects

Where reasonably practicable, employers must prevent anyone:

- Falling a distance likely to cause personal injury.
- Being hit by a falling object likely to cause personal injury.
- Falling into a tank or a pit containing dangerous substances.

Where possible, these accidents should be prevented by fixing guarding in dangerous areas. It is not enough for employers simply to tell workers to be careful of holes or pits etc.

Regulation 14: Windows and transparent doors etc

Windows and glass doors must be:

- Made of safety material or be protected against breakage.
- Marked or designed to make transparent surfaces obvious.

The intention of this regulation is to prevent injury from broken glass or accidentally walking through unmarked glass doors or panels.

Regulation 15: Windows, skylights and ventilators

All windows, skylights and ventilators must be designed to be opened, closed or adjusted safely. When open, they must not be a hazard to health and safety.

Regulation 16: Safety of window cleaning

All windows and skylights must be easily cleaned and window cleaning equipment must be safe.

Regulation 17: Traffic routes on site

Every workplace must be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate safely.

'Vehicles' here include road vehicles, fork lift trucks, and automatic driverless vehicles.

Regulation 18: Doors and gates

Doors and gates must be suitably constructed and fitted with any necessary safety devices.





These safety devices include stops on sliding doors, safety features on powered doors and see-through panels in doors which swing in both directions.

Regulation 19: Escalators and moving walkways

Escalators and moving walkways must function safely; be equipped with necessary safety devices; be fitted with emergency stop controls.

Regulation 20: Toilets

There must be 'suitable and sufficient' sanitary conveniences (toilets) provided at readily accessible places. 'Suitable' means that the conveniences must be:

- Adequately ventilated and lit.
- Kept in a clean and orderly condition.
- In separate rooms for men and women (except where each toilet is in its own room and has a lockable door, not a row of cubicles in one room).

The Approved Code of Practice says that flush toilets should be provided which are connected to a suitable drainage system. Toilet paper should be provided. In toilets used by women, suitable means should be provided for the disposal of sanitary dressings.

Regulation 21: Washing facilities

There must also be 'suitable and sufficient' washing facilities provided at readily accessible places. This includes showers if required by the nature of the work or for health reasons—for example, hot or dirty work or chemical contamination. 'Suitable' means that washing facilities must be:

- Provided near to sanitary conveniences.
- Provided near any changing rooms.
- Provided with a supply of clean hot and cold water.
- Provided with soap or similar means of cleaning, for example 'liquid soap'.
- Provided with towels or other suitable means of drying by hot air driers etc.
- Sufficiently ventilated and lit.
- Kept in a clean and orderly condition.
- Provided with separate showers for men and women (except where each facility is in its own room and has a lockable door—not a row of showers in one room).

Toilets and washing facilities

The table on page 58 gives the minimum number of toilets and washing facilities listed in the Approved Code of Practice.





However, the Code also says that enough facilities should be provided to enable everyone at work to use them without undue delay. This means that more than the minimum toilets and facilities will be needed in many workplaces.

People at work	Toilets	Washbasins
1 to 5	1	1
6 to 25	2	2
26 to 50	3	3
51 to 75	4	4
76 to 100	5	5

More toilets and washbasins will also be needed where members of the public use them too—for example visitors, residents or students. Where possible, try to get separate toilets and facilities for staff and the public.

In catering areas, food hygiene laws also require certain standards of toilets and washing facilities.

For temporary and remote worksites, employers must comply with these regulations as far as is reasonably practicable (see Regulation 3). If not, mobile facilities should be provided wherever possible. Use of public facilities is only acceptable as a last resort, where no other arrangement is possible.

Regulation 22: Drinking water

An adequate supply of wholesome drinking water must be readily accessible at suitable places. The supply must be marked where necessary, and cups provided unless the supply is a drinking fountain.

Regulation 23: Accommodation for clothing

Employers must provide suitable and sufficient accommodation for:

- Workers’ own clothing which is not worn during working hours.
- Special clothing worn at work but not taken home, for example overalls, uniforms, thermal clothing.

Accommodation should be clean, warm, dry and well-ventilated, and located in a convenient place. So far as is reasonably practicable, accommodation must include facilities for drying clothes.

The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 also require accommodation for clothing and equipment.

Regulation 24: Changing facilities

Suitable and sufficient changing facilities must be provided where:





- Workers have to wear special clothing for work.
- Workers cannot be expected to change in another room.
- There must be separate facilities for, or separate use of, facilities for men and women.

Changing facilities must provide privacy and be large enough for everyone to use without overcrowding or unreasonable delays.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations also require changing facilities for people working with toxic substances.

Regulation 25: Restrooms and meal facilities

Suitable and sufficient rest facilities must be provided. All rest facilities must include:

- Facilities for workers to eat meals if food could be contaminated in the work area by, for example, chemicals, dirt, dust or water. Facilities must also be provided when meals are regularly eaten in the workplace.
- Arrangements to protect non-smokers from discomfort caused by tobacco smoke.
- Suitable rest facilities for pregnant workers and nursing mothers. These should be situated near to toilets and include somewhere comfortable and quiet to lie down if needed.

In new workplaces, extensions or conversions (see Regulation 1) 'rest facilities' must be a separate restroom or rooms. In old workplaces (Regulation 1), 'rest facilities' may be a restroom or rest area.

However, all rest facilities should be large enough for everyone who needs to use them. All rest facilities should be clean, quiet and contain enough chairs and tables for users.

Eating facilities should also be kept clean and include means of obtaining hot drinks. The Approved Code of Practice to the regulations says that when hot food cannot be obtained in or near the workplace, facilities should be provided for workers to heat their own food.





Chapter 9: Other important regulations

There are a number of other regulations that cover health and safety. Like the 'six pack', most are regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act to implement European legislation.

The following are a summary of some of the main regulations that a UNISON health and safety representative is likely to come across. They are dealt with in more detail in the UNISON's edition of the TUC guide to health and safety *Hazards at work*.

In addition to these listed below, the Working Time Regulations 1998 cover hours of work and holiday entitlement. There is a separate UNISON guide on this regulation (see *Further information*).

The Chemicals (Hazard Information and Packaging for Supply) Regulations

These regulations, known as CHIP, along with the approved guide and ACoP, are a system for classifying and labelling dangerous substances. CHIP states that any substance covered by the regulations must be labelled to warn of the hazard when supplied or transported. The regulations also state that suppliers must provide information on any hazardous substances through the provision of safety data sheets. These include information on health and fire hazards, storage precautions, emergency action and waste disposal.

These regulations are extremely important and also give safety reps an entitlement to have copies of safety data sheets. All safety reps should ensure they have access to these sheets whenever dangerous substances are used, including cleaning, amenity horticulture, labs, laundries etc.

The substances that are covered by CHIP are categorised into various groups:

- explosive
- oxidising
- extremely flammable
- highly flammable
- flammable
- very toxic
- toxic
- harmful
- corrosive
- irritant
- sensitising
- carcinogenic (causing cancer)
- mutagenic (causing genetic defects)
- toxic for reproduction
- dangerous for the environment.



Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations

These regulations, known as COSHH cover all substances classified as very toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant under CHIP. They also cover all other substances hazardous to health that are used in work activities. COSHH even applies to micro-organisms unless the hazard arises directly from a person suffering from a disease. There are certain substances—such as lead, asbestos, and radiation—that are covered by other regulations.

Under COSHH every employer must take certain steps.

Make a risk assessment

This assessment, which usually needs to be in writing, is to allow a decision to be made about what measures have to be taken to control the hazards presented by the substances.

Control

Once a potential risk has been identified, the employer must take the necessary steps to ensure that workers are either prevented from exposure or the exposure is adequately controlled by eliminating the substance, or, where that is not reasonably practical, substituting it with a less dangerous substance or using other control methods such as ventilation or, if no other method of control is possible, providing personal protective clothing. This should be seen as a last resort.

The regulations require employers to comply with the occupation exposure limits laid down for that substance. There are two types of limit:

- Maximum exposure limit (MEL).
- Occupational exposure standard (OES).

A MEL must not be exceeded and exposure must be as low as reasonably practical. An OES should not be exceeded unless the employer identifies why it is being exceeded and takes action to remedy the situation as soon as reasonably practical.

Enforce

COSHH also requires employers who provide control measures to make sure that they are properly used.

Examine and test

The regulations state that when control measures are in place they have to be maintained and in good repair. This means that an employer must make sure that the measures are examined and tested.

Survey health

Employers must, where it is necessary for the protection of the health of workers, ensure there is suitable health surveillance. This is necessary if any worker is exposed to any one of the substances listed in Schedule 6 of the Regulations. The Approved Code of Practice also gives examples of health effects where health surveillance should be considered.



Give information, instruction and training

The regulation states that workers must be given sufficient information, instruction and training to allow them to know about the risks involved and the precautions they should take.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

These regulations, known as RIDDOR, state that employers must keep a record of certain accidents and incidents. These are:

- A major accident.
- A major injury arising from an accident at work.
- An injury to someone who is not at work, such as a member of the public, requiring immediate hospital treatment.
- A dangerous occurrence (this is where an event does not necessarily result in an injury but could have caused significant harm).
- An injury arising from an accident which results in someone at work being unable to do their normal work for more than three days.
- The death of an employee occurring within a year of a reportable injury.
- A person at work suffering from a specified disease who is carrying out certain work activity. These are specified in the regulations.

The records must be kept for three years by a 'responsible person' who has to notify either the HSE or local authority in writing. The information must be made available to safety reps and safety committees. Safety reps also have a right to investigate accidents, which is dealt with in the next section.

Safety representatives and safety committees

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations (SRSCR) 1977 (1979 in Northern Ireland) give trade unions the legal right to appoint safety representatives in workplaces.

Under this law the union's safety reps have a wide range of rights and functions. These include:

- Safety reps can make representations on behalf of their members to the employer on any health, safety and welfare matter.
- They can represent their members in consultations with HSE inspectors or other enforcing authorities.
- They can require their employer to set up a safety committee within three months of a request.
- They have the right to inspect designated workplace areas at least every three months and also make additional inspections if work practices change.





- They have the right to investigate any potential hazards, complaints by members and the causes of accidents, dangerous occurrences and diseases.
- They have the right to receive facilities and support from their employer to enable them to carry out inspections, to receive legal and technical information from HSE or local authority inspectors, and receive information from the employer to enable them to carry out their functions.
- They should also receive time off with pay to carry out their job as safety reps and to undergo either TUC or union-approved training.
- In addition every employer must provide any help and facilities reasonably required by safety reps to enable them to carry out their functions.

Under SRSCR, safety reps cannot be held legally responsible for their actions as a safety rep. The regulations make it clear that responsibility for health and safety lies with the employer not with safety reps. However, safety reps, like any employee, have an individual responsibility for health and safety under the Health and Safety at Work Act (see Chapter 1).

The Employment Rights Act 1996 strengthens the position of safety reps and other employees. Safety reps are protected from victimisation or dismissal for carrying out their designated functions. In addition, both safety reps and other employees are protected if they leave, or propose to leave, the workplace in circumstances of serious and immediate danger, or if they take, or propose to take, action against serious and imminent danger.

This protection covers everyone regardless of length of service, hours of work, or age and is enforceable through employment tribunals.

Any employees not in groups covered by trade union safety reps, must be consulted by their employers under the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996. The employer can choose to consult these employees directly or through elected representatives.

The right to time off, training and protection from victimisation are generally the same for trade union safety reps and representatives employed under the 1996 Act, but only trade union safety reps have the right to inspect or to establish a safety committee. Under the SRSCR, safety committees have to be set up within three months of two safety reps requesting one in writing.

Although the guidance to the SRSCR states that the size and scope of a safety committee is a matter for discussion and agreement between unions and employees, it does recommend that committees be compact, should have half management and half union representation, and that safety professionals and doctors should be ex-officio members.





Further information

Publications

Health and Safety Executive

All the regulations, approved codes of practice (ACoPs), and guidance referred to in this booklet are available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 6FS (tel: 01787 881165, fax: 01787 313995). Usually these publications cost between £5 and £8 so you might want to try your local library first, or even ask your employer's health and safety officer if you can borrow a copy. HSE Books also provide very good free guides to the Health and Safety at Work Act, COSHH, CHIPS, RIDDOR and the Safety Reps and Safety Committees Regulations.

To get a copy of the HSE Books catalogue of both free and priced items, phone them on 01787 881165.

Labour Research Department

The Labour Research Department have also published a very useful guide to the law, *Health and Safety Law, A Trade Union Guide*. Available from LRD, 79 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HF, price £3.75.

UNISON

UNISON produces a number of guides and leaflets on various health and safety matters including bullying, violence, risk assessment and the Working Time Regulations.

Every branch should already have a copy of the excellent TUC guide to health and safety *Hazards at Work*. This 300-page guide is an indispensable tool for every branch health and safety officer.

Your branch secretary can order publications (including an up-to-date catalogue) from UNISON's Communications Unit, 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ.

Advice

If you have any specific health and safety query, your branch health and safety officer or branch secretary may be able to help you. If they are unable to answer the enquiry themselves, they may pass the request to the regional officer or to the Health and Safety Unit at Mabledon Place.

UNISON's Health & Safety Unit is at:
1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ
Tel: 020 7551 1446 Fax: 020 7551 1766
E-mail: healthandsafety@unison.co.uk

Your comments

UNISON welcomes comments on this booklet from branch safety officers and safety reps. Please either write to the Health & Safety unit, UNISON, 1 Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9AJ or e-mail to healthandsafety@unison.co.uk





The health and safety 'six pack'

Information for UNISON
branches, stewards and safety
representatives

UNISON's guide to:

The Health and Safety at Work Act

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

Display Screen Equipment Regulations

Manual Handling Operations Regulations

Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations

Other relevant legislation



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