

Workplace Welfare Policy

Signed



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1. INTRODUCTION

This code of practice explains how the duties contained in the Safety Policies of the Mervyn Lambert Plant Ltd apply to compliance with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992¹.

The 'Workplace' regulations apply to all areas of the business and came fully into force on 1st January 1996.

2. DEFINITIONS

WORKPLACE means any premises or part of premises which are not domestic premises and are made available to any person as a place of work and includes:

- a) any place within the premises to which such person has access while at work; and
- b) any room, lobby, corridor, staircase, road, or other place used as a means of access or egress from the workplace or where facilities are provided for use in connection with the workplace other than a public road.

TRAFFIC ROUTE means a route for pedestrian traffic, vehicles or both and includes any stairs, staircase, fixed ladder, doorway, gateway, loading bay or ramp.

SO FAR AS IS REASONABLY PRACTICABLE means that the degree of risk in a particular activity or environment can be balanced against the time, trouble, cost and physical difficulty of taking measures to avoid the risk. If these are so disproportionate to the risk that it would be

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unreasonable for the persons concerned to have to incur them to prevent it, they are not obliged to do so. The greater the risk, the more likely it is that it is reasonable to go to very substantial expense, trouble and invention to reduce it. But if the consequences and the extent of the risk are small, insistence on great expense would not be considered reasonable.

WORKSTATION means any area set aside for an individual to perform a task.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers are responsible for ensuring that every workplace under their control complies with the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations.

4. GUIDANCE ON COMPLYING WITH THE REGULATIONS

4.1 Maintenance

Workplaces and equipment must be kept in efficient working order and in good repair so far as this affects the health, safety and welfare of staff. Regular maintenance is needed and any faults discovered should be corrected promptly.

4.2 Ventilation

This requirement deals with general workplace ventilation rather than local extract ventilation. Every enclosed workplace should be ventilated with a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air so that stale air and air which is hot or humid is replaced at a reasonable rate. In small offices and other rooms, windows or other openings may be sufficient, although these are rarely satisfactory if the room is shared because of draughts; this is especially the case in the winter months.

4.3 Temperature

Temperature in all workplaces must be **reasonable** during working hours and thermometers should be available so that staff can measure the temperature. The temperature should be at least 16°C unless the work involves severe physical effort in which case the temperature should be at least 13°C. These temperatures may not, however, ensure reasonable comfort; this is also dependant on other factors such as air movement and relative humidity. There is no legal maximum workplace temperature in the UK; the World Health Organisation recommend 24°C. Thermal comfort is an important issue. One hardly notices the climate in a room for as long as it is comfortable; the more it deviates from a comfortable standard the more it attracts attention. Draughts are often a problem in shared offices; this is often because the layout of the room results in someone sitting in line with an air supply vent. In such cases the air flow may need to be re-routed or deflected to prevent the draught. Wall-mounted radiators can cause problems for a number of reasons. They are often obstructed by desks or other furniture and so have reduced effectiveness. Also, people working near to them may be too hot whilst others further away are not warm enough. The problems can be reduced by positioning the workstations so that the radiator wall forms one side of a walk-way or corridor inside the room.

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4.4 Lighting

Workplaces should have sufficient and suitable lighting which, so far as is reasonably practicable, must be natural light. The lighting must be sufficient to allow people to work, use facilities and move from place to place without experiencing eyestrain. The quantity of light falling on a Cleanliness and Waste materials

Workplaces and the furniture, furnishings and fittings within the workplace should be kept sufficiently clean for the intended task. The surfaces of the floor, walls and ceilings of all workplaces inside buildings should be suitable to allow cleaning. Waste materials should be disposed of properly. Clinical waste disposal arrangements are detailed in the Infection Control Manual⁵.

4.5 Room dimensions and space

Rooms where people work should provide sufficient floor area, height and unoccupied space for the safety and comfort of the occupants. There should be at least 11 cubic metres per person. In making this calculation a room which is more than 3 metres high should be counted as 3 metres high. Many rooms in the trust have a height of 2.7m, giving a floor area of approximately 4m². The figure of 11 cubic metres per person is a minimum and will be insufficient if, for example, much of the room is taken up with furniture. People still need to be able to reach their desks, use their equipment, filing cabinets, shelves, etc. without risk to themselves or others. Old-style desks are usually 1.5m wide and 0.75m deep (although this cannot accommodate a standard 17inch CRT monitor and so there is an over-hang at the back, the 'real' depth being more like 0.9m). Newer desks are larger. Where space is limited careful planning of the workplace is particularly important.

4.6 Workstations and seating

Every workstation should be suitably designed. This means that it should protect the worker from adverse weather, it should enable the worker to leave swiftly in an emergency and it should ensure that the worker is not likely to slip or fall. A suitable seat should be provided where the work can be done sitting down and a footrest where necessary. The code of practice on Display Screen Equipment gives information about the requirements for VDU workstations².

4.7 Conditions of floors and traffic route

Floor and traffic routes should be of sound construction and should have adequate strength and stability taking into account of the loads placed on them and the traffic passing over them. The surfaces of floors and traffic routes should be free from any hole or slope or uneven or slippery surface which is likely to cause a person to slip, trip or fall, cause a person to drop or lose control of anything being lifted or carried or cause instability or loss of control of vehicles and/or their loads. Any hole or slope which is likely to be dangerous must be fenced off. Arrangements must be made to deal with snow and ice. Maintenance arrangements should include floors and traffic routes.

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4.8 Falls and falling objects

The consequences of falling from heights or into dangerous substances are so serious that a high standard of protection is required. Secure fencing should be provided to prevent people falling from edges. These regulations also apply to objects falling on people. Further detailed guidance on this aspect of the regulations is given in the Approved Code of Practice¹ to the regulations.

4.9 Windows, gates and walls

Every window in a wall or doorway should incorporate features which make its presence obvious, for example wire mesh in the glass, to avoid accidents because the glass is not visible.

4.10 Windows, skylights and ventilators

It should be possible to reach and operate the controls of open able windows, skylights and ventilators safely. Where necessary window poles or similar equipment should be available or other safe means of access should be provided. When open, the windows must not be a hazard – either to the people inside the building or those outside.

4.11 Ability to clean windows etc. safely

Suitable provision should be made so that windows can be cleaned safely if they cannot be cleaned from the ground or other suitable surface. Suitable provision includes: fitting windows which can be cleaned safely from the inside, for example which pivot so that the outer surface is turned inwards and can be cleaned; fitting access equipment such as suspended cradles or travelling ladders which have an attachment for a safety harness; fitting attachments for safety harnesses on walls; providing suitable conditions for the future use of mobile access equipment, including ladders up to 9 metres long.

4.12 Organisation etc. of traffic routes

Workplaces should be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate safely. Traffic routes in a workplace must be suitable for the people or vehicles using them, sufficient in number, in suitable positions and of sufficient size..

4.13 Doors and gates

Doors and gates should be suitably constructed and be fitted with any necessary safety devices. A door or gate which can be opened by being pushed from either side must provide a clear view of both sides when closed.

4.14 Toilets and washing facilities

Suitable and sufficient toilets should be provided at readily accessible places. They should be adequately ventilated and well lit and be kept in a clean and orderly condition. Suitable and sufficient washing facilities, including showers if required for the nature of the work, should be provided in readily accessible places. 'Suitable' means that they should be in the immediate vicinity of toilets and changing rooms and should have a supply of clean running hot and cold or warm water.

A table in the Approved Code of Practice gives guidance on the minimum number of toilets and washing facilities which should be provided. The number of people at work shown in the first column refers to the maximum number likely to be in the workplace at one time. Where separate

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toilets are provided for different groups of workers, for example, men, women, office workers and manual workers, then a separate calculation should be made for each group.

4.15 Drinking water

An adequate supply of clean drinking water should be provided for all staff. It should be readily accessible at suitable places and be conspicuously marked. Cups must be provided unless the water is in a jet.

4.16 Accommodation for clothing

Suitable and sufficient accommodation shall be provided for clothing which is not worn at work and for any special clothing which is worn at work but not taken home. Accommodation for work clothing and worker's own personal clothing should enable it to hang in a clean, warm, dry and well-ventilated place where it can dry out during the working day. If the workroom is unsuitable for this purpose then accommodation should be provided in another convenient place. The accommodation should consist of one clothes hook per person as a minimum.

4.17 Facilities for changing clothing

A changing room or rooms should be provided for workers who change into special work clothing and where they remove more than outer clothing. Changing rooms should also be provided where necessary to prevent workers' own clothing being contaminated by a harmful substance. They should be constructed and arranged to ensure the privacy of the user.

4.18 Facilities for rest and to eat meals

Suitable seats should be provided for workers to use during breaks. The seats should be in a suitable place where personal protective equipment does not need to be worn. Rest rooms should be large enough for the numbers of workers expected to use them. Facilities for pregnant and nursing mothers to rest should be conveniently situated in relation to sanitary conveniences and include somewhere to lie down. Rest areas and rest rooms should be arranged to enable employees to use them without experiencing discomfort from tobacco smoke. This may be done by providing separate areas for smokers and non-smokers or by prohibiting smoking in rest rooms. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on the premises except in designated smoking areas. In all cases, the rights of non-smokers to a smoke-free environment takes precedence.

4.19 Fatigue. Any employee working over 71 hours, or as directed by the HSEQ Manager, is to have their working hours (for that week) entered onto the company Fatigue and risk Index Calculator sheet. This, once completed, must be forwarded to the HSEQ Manager by email. In the event that the fatigue risk assessment reveals an unacceptable score OR the operative in question complains of fatigue, then steps must be immediately taken by their line manager to remove them from the workplace without delay. In severe cases the operative must not be allowed to drive home.

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