

## READING PACK

HSE Catering Information Sheet - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/cais4.pdf>

### **Managing health and safety pays in the catering industry [Abridged]**

Why bother with health and safety?

Statistics have proved that bad management practices cause accidents and cost money, time and effort. The number of major injuries to employees in hotel and catering industries rose by 4% in 2004/05 to 1224. This is the highest number reported during the last eight years and continues an upward trend since 2001/01. The rate of major injury also continues an upward trend from the previous two years, rising from 67.1 per 100 000 employees to 69.4. 55% of major injuries were as a result of slips or trips. In this same year there were over 5000 accidents to employees which were not major, but lead to three or more days off work. These figures represent costs both in terms of pain and suffering for individuals and in direct costs to employers. Your employees are less likely to have work accidents and ill health if you have good controls in place.

#### **What are the main risks?**

Individual workplaces will, of course, exhibit their own patterns of risk, but the main causes of accidents and ill health in the catering industry are:

- slips, trips and falls;
- lifting and manual handling;
- contact with hot surfaces and harmful substances;
- dermatitis;
- work-related upper limb disorders.

#### **What can be done?**

Remember, most accidents can be prevented by good management and supervision combined with effective training, which makes accident prevention no different from any other aspect of running a successful business. Careful thought and planning applied to those areas of catering where the risks are highest should help to prevent accidents and reduce costs. It will also show enforcement officers that you are going down the right route towards complying with health and safety legislation.

#### **Training**

Owners and managers have clearly defined legal duties about training employees. The law requires every employer and self-employed person to consider the health and safety training needs of themselves and all employees, including new recruits, part-timers and temporary or agency staff. It is important to appreciate that time and effort spent in ensuring staff are working safely and understand the reasons for good practices is likely to:

## **Consultation with employees**

Good management of health and safety can only be achieved with the co-operation of the workforce. It is vital that your employees know what is expected of them and are aware of any risks to their health and safety that may arise at work and any safe systems of work that are applied.

The co-operation of the workforce is likely to be more constructive if you consult with them about developing health and safety measures. Where you recognise a trade union, safety representatives must be consulted about the health and safety arrangements before action is taken. Where trade unions are not involved, the workforce should be encouraged to appoint its own safety representatives. Involving safety representatives helps ensure that health and safety measures will be effective in practice.

## **Summary**

Health and safety will not be a burden if managed properly.

Managing health and safety effectively:

- ensures it is not a burden;
- keeps costs to a minimum and can bring savings;
- prevents injury and ill health to your business' most important resource: people;
- reduces the likelihood of civil claims.

Effective management of health and safety can best be achieved by:

- realising it is an integral and essential part of business management;
- identifying the main risk areas and taking action on those first;
- setting yourself clear targets, for example to train
- staff and to clearly allocate responsibilities;
- supervising adequately;
- consulting staff at all stages.

## **Health and safety of children and young people in catering [Abridged]**

### **What are my legal duties as an employer?**

You must assess and reduce risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, for all employees (whatever their age) and tell them what the risks are and what steps are being taken to control them. You must consult employees on health and safety matters, either directly or through elected safety representatives.

Additional laws apply to young people below the age of 18. You must:

- assess risks to young people before they start work;
- take into account their inexperience, lack of awareness of risks and immaturity;
- provide information to parents or guardians of school-age children about risks and control issues before they start work; and decide whether to prohibit young people altogether from certain work activities.

You do not need to repeat this every time a young person starts work but you should always review the risk assessment if there are any changes to the work.

Other factors to consider are lack of physical strength, possible smaller size, any health issues (for example asthma) and any physical or learning disabilities.

You also need to consider suitable induction training, supervision by a competent person and clear instructions on tasks you have decided young people must not do.

The regulations do not apply to young people working on occasional and short-term work that is not harmful in firms owned by their family.

### **Employment of children**

Additional legal requirements apply when employing children:

You should therefore always check with your local authority before employing children below minimum school leaving age.

A child is someone below the minimum school leaving age (around 16, depending on their birthday and its relation to the date school term ends).

Children below the minimum school leaving age must not be employed in industrial undertakings, such as factories or construction sites, except when on work experience programmes approved by local education authorities.

The minimum age for other employment is 14 years, but local authorities have the power to make bye-laws restricting work in certain types of premises to those above the minimum school leaving age. These bye-laws may also contain a list of light work which children aged between 13 years and the minimum school leaving age can do in non-industrial premises.

## **REGULATION (EC) No 852/2004 - Hygiene of Foodstuffs [Abridged]**

### *Article 1*

#### **Scope**

1. This Regulation lays down general rules for food business operators on the hygiene of foodstuffs, taking particular account of the following principles:

- (a) primary responsibility for food safety rests with the food business operator;
- (b) it is necessary to ensure food safety throughout the food chain, starting with primary production;
- (c) it is important, for food that cannot be stored safely at ambient temperatures, particularly frozen food, to maintain the cold chain;
- (d) general implementation of procedures based on the HACCP principles, together with the application of good hygiene practice, should reinforce food business operators' responsibility;
- (e) guides to good practice are a valuable instrument to aid food business operators at all levels of the food chain with compliance with food hygiene rules and with the application of the HACCP principles;
- (f) it is necessary to establish microbiological criteria and temperature control requirements based on a scientific risk assessment;
- (g) it is necessary to ensure that imported foods are of at least the same hygiene standard as food produced in the Community, or are of an equivalent standard.

This Regulation shall apply to all stages of production, processing and distribution of food and to exports, and without prejudice to more specific requirements relating to food hygiene.

### *Article 4*

#### **General and specific hygiene requirements**

1. Food business operators carrying out primary production and those associated operations listed in Annex I shall comply with the general hygiene provisions laid down in part A of Annex I and any specific requirements provided for in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.
2. Food business operators carrying out any stage of production, processing and distribution of food after those stages to which paragraph 1 applies shall comply with the general hygiene requirements laid down in Annex II and any specific requirements provided for in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.
3. Food business operators shall, as appropriate, adopt the following specific hygiene measures:
  - (a) compliance with microbiological criteria for foodstuffs;
  - (b) procedures necessary to meet targets set to achieve the objectives of this Regulation;
  - (c) compliance with temperature control requirements for foodstuffs;
  - (d) maintenance of the cold chain;
  - (e) sampling and analysis.
4. The criteria, requirements and targets referred to in paragraph 3 shall be adopted in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 14(2). Associated sampling and analysis methods shall be laid down in accordance with the same procedure.

5. When this Regulation, Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and their implementing measures do not specify sampling or analysis methods, food business operators may use appropriate methods laid down in other Community or national legislation or, in the absence of such methods, methods that offer equivalent results to those obtained using the reference method, if they are scientifically validated in accordance with internationally recognised rules or protocols.

6. Food business operators may use the guides provided for in Articles 7, 8 and 9 as an aid to compliance with their obligations under this Regulation.

#### *Article 5*

#### **Hazard analysis and critical control points**

1. Food business operators shall put in place, implement and maintain a permanent procedure or procedures based on the HACCP principles.

2. The HACCP principles referred to in paragraph 1 consist of the following:

(a) identifying any hazards that must be prevented, eliminated or reduced to acceptable levels;

(b) identifying the critical control points at the step or steps at which control is essential to prevent or eliminate a hazard or to reduce it to acceptable levels;

(c) establishing critical limits at critical control points which separate acceptability from unacceptability for the prevention, elimination or reduction of identified hazards;

(d) establishing and implementing effective monitoring procedures at critical control points;

(e) establishing corrective actions when monitoring indicates that a critical control point is not under control;

(f) establishing procedures, which shall be carried out regularly, to verify that the measures outlined in subparagraphs (a) to (e) are working effectively;

and

(g) establishing documents and records commensurate with the nature and size of the food business to demonstrate the effective application of the measures outlined in subparagraphs (a)

to (f). When any modification is made in the product, process, or any step, food business operators shall review the procedure and make the necessary changes to it.

3. Paragraph 1 shall apply only to food business operators carrying out any stage of production, processing and distribution of food after primary production and those associated operations listed in Annex I.

4. Food business operators shall:

(a) provide the competent authority with evidence of their compliance with paragraph 1 in the manner that the competent authority requires, taking account of the nature and size of the food business;

(b) ensure that any documents describing the procedures developed in accordance with this Article are up-to-date at all times;

(c) retain any other documents and records for an appropriate period.

**GENERAL HYGIENE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL FOOD BUSINESS OPERATORS  
(EXCEPT WHEN ANNEX I APPLIES)**

**General requirements for food premises (other than those specified in chapter iii)**

1. Food premises are to be kept clean and maintained in good repair and condition.
2. The layout, design, construction, siting and size of food premises are to:
  - (a) permit adequate maintenance, cleaning and/or disinfection, avoid or minimise air-borne contamination, and provide adequate working space to allow for the hygienic performance of all operations;
  - (b) be such as to protect against the accumulation of dirt, contact with toxic materials, the shedding of particles into food and the formation of condensation or undesirable mould on surfaces;
  - (c) permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination and, in particular, pest control;and
  - (d) where necessary, provide suitable temperature-controlled handling and storage conditions of sufficient capacity for maintaining foodstuffs at appropriate temperatures and designed to allow those temperatures to be monitored and, where necessary, recorded.
3. An adequate number of flush lavatories are to be available and connected to an effective drainage system. Lavatories are not to open directly into rooms in which food is handled.
4. An adequate number of washbasins is to be available, suitably located and designated for cleaning hands. Washbasins for cleaning hands are to be provided with hot and cold running water, materials for cleaning hands and for hygienic drying. Where necessary, the facilities for washing food are to be separate from the hand-washing facility.
5. There is to be suitable and sufficient means of natural or mechanical ventilation. Mechanical airflow from a contaminated area to a clean area is to be avoided. Ventilation systems are to be so constructed as to enable filters and other parts requiring cleaning or replacement to be readily accessible.
6. Sanitary conveniences are to have adequate natural or mechanical ventilation.  
25.6.2004 EN Official Journal of the European Union L 226/15
7. Food premises are to have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting.
8. Drainage facilities are to be adequate for the purpose intended. They are to be designed and constructed to avoid the risk of contamination. Where drainage channels are fully or partially open, they are to be so designed as to ensure that waste does not flow from a contaminated area towards or into a clean area, in particular an area where foods likely to present a high risk to the final consumer are handled.
9. Where necessary, adequate changing facilities for personnel are to be provided.
10. Cleaning agents and disinfectants are not to be stored in areas where food is handled.

CHAPTER II

**Specific requirements in rooms where foodstuffs are prepared, treated or processed (excluding dining areas and those premises specified in chapter III)**

1. In rooms where food is prepared, treated or processed (excluding dining areas and those premises specified in Chapter III, but including rooms contained in means of transport) the design and layout are to permit good food hygiene practices, including protection against contamination between and during operations. In particular:

(a) floor surfaces are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials unless food business operators can satisfy the competent authority that other materials used are appropriate. Where appropriate, floors are to allow adequate surface drainage;

(b) wall surfaces are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This will require the use of impervious, non-absorbent, washable and non-toxic materials and require a smooth surface up to a height appropriate for the operations unless food business operators can satisfy the competent authority that other materials used are appropriate;

(c) ceilings (or, where there are no ceilings, the interior surface of the roof) and overhead fixtures are to be constructed and finished so as to prevent the accumulation of dirt and to reduce condensation, the growth of undesirable mould and the shedding of particles;

(d) windows and other openings are to be constructed to prevent the accumulation of dirt. Those which can be opened to the outside environment are, where necessary, to be fitted with insect-proof screens which can be easily removed for cleaning. Where open windows would result in contamination, windows are to remain closed and fixed during production;

(e) doors are to be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This will require the use of smooth and non-absorbent surfaces unless food business operators can satisfy the competent authority that other materials used are appropriate;

and

(f) surfaces (including surfaces of equipment) in areas where foods are handled and in particular those in contact with food are to be maintained in a sound condition and be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect. This will require the use of smooth, washable corrosion-resistant and non-toxic materials, unless food business operators can satisfy the competent authority that other materials used are appropriate.

2. Adequate facilities are to be provided, where necessary, for the cleaning, disinfecting and storage of working utensils and equipment. These facilities are to be constructed of corrosion-resistant materials, be easy to clean and have an adequate supply of hot and cold water.

3. Adequate provision is to be made, where necessary, for washing food. Every sink or other such facility provided for the washing of food is to have an adequate supply of hot and/or cold potable water consistent with the requirements of Chapter VII and be kept clean and, where necessary, disinfected.

### **Food waste**

1. Food waste, non-edible by-products and other refuse are to be removed from rooms where food is present as quickly as possible, so as to avoid their accumulation.

2. Food waste, non-edible by-products and other refuse are to be deposited in closable containers, unless food business operators can demonstrate to the competent authority that other types of containers or evacuation systems used are appropriate. These containers are to be of an appropriate construction, kept in sound condition, be easy to clean and, where necessary, to disinfect.

3. Adequate provision is to be made for the storage and disposal of food waste, non-edible by-products and other refuse. Refuse stores are to be designed and managed in such a way as to enable them to be kept clean and, where necessary, free of animals and pests.

4. All waste is to be eliminated in a hygienic and environmentally friendly way in accordance with Community legislation applicable to that effect, and is not to constitute a direct or indirect source of contamination.

## CHAPTER XII

### **Training**

Food business operators are to ensure:

1. that food handlers are supervised and instructed and/or trained in food hygiene matters commensurate with their work activity;
  2. that those responsible for the development and maintenance of the procedure referred to in Article 5(1) of this Regulation or for the operation of relevant guides have received adequate training in the application of the HACCP principles;
- and
3. compliance with any requirements of national law concerning training programmes for persons working in certain food sectors.

## **Risk Assessments [Abridged]**

### ***Five steps to risk assessment aims to help you assess health and safety risks.***

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting your workers and your business, as well as complying with the law. It helps you focus on the risks that really matter in your workplace – the ones with the potential to cause real harm. In many instances, straightforward measures can readily control risks, for example ensuring spillages are cleaned up promptly so people do not slip, or cupboard drawers are kept closed to ensure people do not trip. For most, that means simple, cheap and effective measures to ensure your most valuable asset - your workforce - is protected.

The law does not expect you to eliminate all risk, but you are required to protect people as far as 'reasonably practicable'. This guide tells you how to achieve that with a minimum of fuss.

This is not the only way to do a risk assessment, there are other methods that work well, particularly for more complex risks and circumstances. However, we believe this method is the most straightforward for most organisations.

### ***What is risk assessment?***

A risk assessment is simply a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. Workers and others have a right to be protected from harm caused by a failure to take reasonable control measures.

Accidents and ill health can ruin lives and affect your business too if output is lost, machinery is damaged, insurance costs increase or you have to go to court. You are legally required to assess the risks in your workplace so that you put in place a plan to control the risks.

## **Step 1: Identify the hazards**

First you need to work out how people could be harmed. When you work in a place everyday it is easy to overlook some hazards, so here are some tips to help you identify the ones that matter:

- **Walk around** your workplace and look at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm.
- **Ask your employees** or their representatives what they think. They may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious to you. For information on how you can do this please visit our worker involvement pages<sup>[1]</sup>.
- Visit the **HSE website**. HSE publishes practical guidance on where hazards occur and how to control them. There is much [information](#)<sup>[2]</sup> on the hazards that might affect your business.
- Alternatively, **call HSE Infoline** (Tel: 0845 345 0055), they will identify publications that can help you, or contact [Workplace Health Connect](#)<sup>[3]</sup> (Tel: 0845 609 6006), a

free service for managers and staff of small and medium-sized enterprises providing practical advice on workplace health and safety.

- If you are a member of a **trade association**, contact them. Many produce very helpful guidance.
- **Check manufacturers' instructions** or data sheets for chemicals and equipment as they can be very helpful in spelling out the hazards and putting them in their true perspective.
- Have a look back at your **accident and ill-health records** – these often help to identify the less obvious hazards.
- **Remember to think about long-term hazards to health** (eg high levels of noise or exposure to harmful substances) as well as safety hazards.

## Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how

For each hazard you need to be clear about who might be harmed; it will help you identify the best way of managing the risk. That doesn't mean listing everyone by name, but rather identifying groups of people (eg 'people working in the storeroom' or 'passers-by').

Remember:

- some workers have particular requirements, eg new and [young workers](#)<sup>[1]</sup>, new or [expectant mothers](#)<sup>[2]</sup> and people with disabilities may be at particular risk. Extra thought will be needed for some hazards;
- cleaners, visitors, contractors, maintenance workers etc, who may not be in the workplace all the time;
- members of the public, if they could be hurt by your activities;
- if you share your workplace, you will need to think about how your work affects others present, as well as how their work affects your staff – talk to them; and
- ask your staff if they can think of anyone you may have missed.

In each case, identify how they might be harmed, i.e. what type of injury or ill health might occur. For example, 'shelf stackers may suffer back injury from repeated lifting of boxes'.

## Step 3: Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

Having spotted the hazards, you then have to decide what to do about them. The law requires you to do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. You can work this out for yourself, but the easiest way is to compare what you are doing with good practice.

There are many sources of good practice - [HSE's website](#)<sup>[1]</sup>, [HSE Infoline](#)<sup>[2]</sup> (Tel: 0845 345 0055) and [Workplace Health Connect](#)<sup>[3]</sup> (Tel: 0845 609 6006) will all help.

So first, look at what you're already doing, think about what controls you have in place and how the work is organised. Then compare this with the good practice and see if there's more you should be doing to bring yourself up to standard. In asking yourself this, consider:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

When controlling risks, apply the principles below, if possible in the following order:

- try a less risky option (eg switch to using a less hazardous chemical);
- prevent access to the hazard (eg by guarding);
- organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard (eg put barriers between pedestrians and traffic);
- issue personal protective equipment (eg clothing, footwear, goggles etc); and
- provide welfare facilities (eg first aid and washing facilities for removal of contamination).

Improving health and safety need not cost a lot. For instance, placing a mirror on a dangerous blind corner to help prevent vehicle accidents is a low-cost precaution considering the risks. Failure to take simple precautions can cost you a lot more if an accident does happen.

[Involve staff](#)<sup>[4]</sup>, so that you can be sure that what you propose to do will work in practice and won't introduce any new hazards.

#### **Step 4: Record your findings and implement them**

Putting the results of your risk assessment into practice will make a difference when looking after people and your business.

Writing down the results of your risk assessment, and sharing them with your staff, encourages you to do this. If you have fewer than five employees you do not have to write anything down, though it is useful so that you can review it at a later date if, for example, something changes.

When writing down your results, keep it simple, for example 'Tripping over rubbish: bins provided, staff instructed, weekly housekeeping checks', or 'Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation used and regularly checked'.

We do not expect a risk assessment to be perfect – but it must be suitable and sufficient. You need to be able to show that:

- A proper check was made;
- You asked who might be affected;
- You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved;
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low; and
- You involved your staff or their representatives in the process.

If, like many businesses, you find that there are quite a lot of improvements that you could make, big and small, don't try to do everything at once. Make a plan of action to deal with the most important things first. Health and safety inspectors acknowledge the efforts of businesses that are clearly trying to make improvements.

A good plan of action often includes a mixture of different things such as:

- a few cheap or easy improvements that can be done quickly, perhaps as a temporary solution until more reliable controls are in place;
- long-term solutions to those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health;
- long-term solutions to those risks with the worst potential consequences;
- arrangements for training employees on the main risks that remain and how they are to be controlled;
- regular checks to make sure that the control measures stay in place; and
- clear responsibilities – who will lead on what action, and by when.

Remember, prioritise and tackle the most important things first. As you complete each action, tick it off your plan.

### **Step 5: Review your risk assessment and update if necessary**

Few workplaces stay the same. Sooner or later, you will bring in new equipment, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense therefore, to review what you are doing on an ongoing basis. Every year or so formally review where you are to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back.

Look at your risk assessment again. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements you still need to make? Have your workers spotted a problem? Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

When you are running a business it's all too easy to forget about reviewing your risk assessment – until something has gone wrong and it's too late. Why not set a review date for this risk assessment now? Write it down and note it in your diary as an annual event.

During the year, if there is a significant change, don't wait: check your risk assessment and where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you're planning your change – that way you leave yourself more flexibility.

## Warehousing and Storage – Keep it Safe [Abridged]

### Causes of accidents

The main causes of accidents in warehousing and storage are:

- slips and trips;
- manual handling;
- work at height;
- vehicles in and around the warehouse; and
- moving or falling objects.

There may be other risks on your site that you should also consider.

### Slips and trips

Slip and trip accidents are a serious problem in warehousing and storage and can happen anywhere. They are often seen as trivial and 'just one of those things', but most slip and trip accidents can be avoided.

#### *Slips*

- Slips usually happen because the floor is wet or contaminated.
- Within warehouses, water, oil, cleaning products, dry powders and foodstuffs can all make the floor more slippery. Other items, like stretch wrapping, label backing and plastic bags, can also cause slips. Try to stop the floor getting contaminated, e.g. by maintaining equipment properly.
- When contamination does happen, deal with it immediately, e.g. by cleaning.
- Most floors have good slip resistance when they are clean, dry and level. However, smooth floors that become even a tiny bit wet or contaminated will be slippery; the rougher the floor, the better it will cope with water and other contamination and the less likely someone is to slip.
- The right footwear can help reduce slips but only consider issuing footwear to control slip risks as a last resort – try to eliminate the root of the problem first.

#### *Trips*

- Objects on the floor or uneven surfaces are usually the cause of trips.
- Trip hazards can include items like goods, waste packaging, banded strapping loops and pallets.
- Plan workflows and storage to make sure that goods, equipment and waste do not cause obstructions or project into places where people may walk.
- Keep floors and traffic routes free from obstructions.
- Check that floor surfaces are even both inside and outside buildings and fill in any holes.
- Provide good lighting. Good housekeeping is important; if items fall onto traffic routes, clear them as soon as possible. Also inspect the workplace regularly to make sure that there are no trip hazards.

## Manual handling

- People suffer from work-related aches and pains in the warehousing and storage industry, including problems such as lower back pain and neck pain. If there is a risk from a manual handling task, try to avoid the task first. If the task cannot be avoided, the risk of injury occurring must be minimised.
- Carry out a manual handling assessment for manual handling operations and tasks
- that present a risk of injury.

Consider:

- the task;
  - the load;
  - the working environment;
  - individual capability; and other factors.
- 
- Think about all systems of work and tasks that involve manual handling. Where appropriate, redesign tasks to avoid the need to move loads manually, or use mechanical handling devices, eg lift trucks, pallet trucks, trolleys, conveyors, chutes, scissor lifts etc. Where necessary, introduce additional mechanical handling devices to avoid or reduce manual handling operations.
  - Give your employees information about the weight of a load and its heaviest side if its centre of gravity is not central.
  - Provide training in safe manual handling techniques and manual handling devices used. Training should be specific to the task. It should complement a safe system of work and not be a substitute for it.

## Work at height

- Any work at height, including maintenance work undertaken for you by a contractor, must be properly planned, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe way.
- Avoid work at height if you can, but if it cannot be avoided, select the correct equipment for the task.
- People can fall from stepladders or ladders. Where they are used you must be able to show that it is not reasonably practicable to select alternative, safer equipment because the task is low risk and short duration.
- Never use pallets on fork-lift trucks for accessing work at height or as working platforms.
- Never climb on racking unless it is specifically designed for use as access equipment.
- Make sure that everyone involved in working at height has the ability to do the work safely, training may be needed. Some access equipment may require specialist training, eg a mobile elevating work platform (MEWP).

Inspect equipment used for work at height (such as ladders) to make sure it is safe. Do this before use, periodically and after an incident that might affect the equipment's safety.

## Vehicles in and around the warehouse

Moving vehicles need to be carefully managed to control and reduce the likelihood of accidents.

### *Managing deliveries and visitors*

All of the employers involved in the delivery and collection of goods should exchange any relevant information on health and safety.

Visiting drivers should be given any information they need in advance to ensure their own safety and that of others. Think about how you will communicate with visiting drivers who do not speak and/or only have a limited vocabulary or understanding of English, eg provide copies of your site rules, illustrated with pictograms, to cover expected foreign languages.

### *Pedestrian safety*

Pedestrians and vehicles have to be able to circulate safely. Workplace traffic routes should be suitable for the people and vehicles using them. Where vehicles and pedestrians use the same traffic route, there should be adequate separation between them. Consider the complete separation of vehicles and pedestrians first – where this is not possible you will need to use other control measures.

### *Traffic routes*

Traffic routes should be properly designed.

Consider:

- vehicles being used;
- minimising the need for reversing;
- avoiding sharp bends and blind corners;
- maintenance – don't allow potholes to develop; and
- anything that can affect load stability, eg steep slopes.

### *Reversing vehicles*

Warehouses should be designed to reduce the risks from reversing vehicles where possible, eg by using a one-way system. Where you cannot avoid reversing, keep pedestrians out of the area where a vehicle is reversing. Reversing sensors and CCTV on vehicles can be useful.

### *Coupling and uncoupling*

You should have procedures in place to check that trailers are coupled and uncoupled safely (using the parking brakes on the tractor unit and the semi-trailer) and that semi-trailers are parked with the parking brake correctly applied.

### *Load safety*

You should have safe systems of work for loading and unloading vehicles. When goods or materials are unloaded from one level to another and there is a risk of injury from a fall, you should use appropriate fall protection measures.

### *'Driveaways' or premature vehicle departures*

Have a safe system of work in place so that drivers never move their vehicles (accidentally or deliberately) until the load is secure and it is safe to depart. Check this system regularly to make sure that it works.

## **Moving or falling objects**

### *Falling objects*

Take steps to prevent people being injured by falling objects. If there are areas or specific activities in the warehouse with a risk of material or an object striking someone, make sure that the area is clearly indicated and that unauthorised people don't enter it.

### *Mechanical handling*

Mechanical handling equipment (eg a fork-lift truck) should be suitable for the job it is used for. All industrial truck operating areas should be suitably designed and properly maintained. Industrial truck operators need to be trained by a competent person. Operator training should include the following three stages:

- basic training;
- specific job training; and
- familiarisation training.

### *Maintenance and examination of industrial trucks*

Lift trucks should be regularly maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Lifting parts of industrial trucks, such as the mast, chains, carriage, forks and tilt mechanism, need to be thoroughly examined by a competent person.

You should have:

- a documented pre-shift check;
- a system for reporting defects and for ensuring that remedial work is carried out;
- a planned routine maintenance system; and
- a thorough examination/safety inspection regime for each truck.

### *Storage systems*

Storage areas should be properly designated and clearly marked. The layout of storage and handling areas should avoid tight corners, awkwardly placed doors, pillars, uneven surfaces and changes of gradient.

Inspect pallets each time before use to make sure that they are in a safe condition.

Take damaged pallets out of use for repair or destruction. Handle empty pallets carefully – do not drag or throw them about.

Pallets should be loaded correctly to ensure load stability; banding, shrink or stretch wrap can help with this. If you use pallet racking in your warehouse, make sure the pallets you use are suitable for the type of racking you have.

Racking systems should be properly designed and installed, this includes being able to safely take the load of the goods being stored. Protect racking if it is likely to be struck by lift trucks and other vehicles. Inspect racking regularly to make sure it is repaired and maintained properly and is safe. You should use three types of inspection:

- immediate reporting of damage and defects;
- visual inspections at regular intervals; and
- 'expert' inspections carried out at intervals by a competent person

Where you find damage that affects the safety of the racking system, offload the racking and introduce controls to prevent it being used until remedial work has been carried out.

Keep a record of inspections, damage and repairs, eg in a logbook.

## **General principles - site traffic control [Abridged]**

Site traffic control relies upon a combination of physical features such as the selection of appropriate vehicles to carry out the necessary work in the conditions that prevail, road layout and marking, signs and signals and other considerations such as systems, procedures and training.

Site traffic control should typically consider the following types of traffic:

- Road traffic - commercial delivery vehicles (including road tankers, wagons, couriers etc), internal vehicles (including fork lift trucks, mobile cranes, bicycles), visitor and staff cars/motorbikes/bicycles etc;
- Pedestrian traffic - site employees, contractors and visitors either on their way to or from their normal place of work at the beginning or end of the working day, or as part of their work during the day.

Road users, both drivers and pedestrians, should know exactly what is expected of them. This can be achieved by establishing a Road Hierarchy, which is used to provide a consistent standard for each road type in terms of design standard, signing, access constraints etc.

Traffic routes should be determined and can be classified as either access/through routes to site for deliveries, shuttle routes between buildings for on-site activities, or emergency access routes for fire engines, ambulances etc. Careful planning and consideration of site traffic control issues can result in a reduction in the likelihood of collisions between vehicles and/or equipment.

Incompatible types of traffic should be segregated as far as possible to avoid potential interactions between chemicals in the event of a collision between road traffic vehicles or between road traffic and stationary storage facilities or pipelines carrying chemicals.

This guidance is not concerned with traffic control within buildings such as warehouses or process plant areas where special consideration needs to be given to the potential interaction between fork lift trucks and/or pedestrians.

### ***Traffic flow***

In order to assist in controlling traffic flow on-site a number of additional measures can be incorporated in order to manage traffic flow in congested areas and reduce speeds on-site. Such techniques include the following:

- Traffic lights can be used to control flow at busy junctions, in narrow locations and at entry and exit locations to the site;
- One-way systems should be considered where necessary to reduce the likelihood of collision, reduce congestion and improve traffic movement;
- Roundabouts may smooth traffic flow and avoid road traffic turning directly in front of on-coming traffic;
- Traffic calming devices such as speed humps, rumble strips, width restrictors etc can be incorporated into road design to encourage a reduction in speed. (Such devices

are not appropriate in areas where fork lift trucks routinely operate since they introduce additional hazards for this type of vehicle). The design of such features must be appropriate for the type of traffic envisaged;

- Physical barriers should be incorporated into road design to protect vulnerable and hazardous installations such as storage tanks, pipework systems, buildings or pedestrian access areas;
- Signs and road markings; and,
- Site speed limits.

## **Working with VDU's [Abridged]**

### **What's the difference between a VDU, a VDT, a monitor and display screen equipment (DSE)?**

There isn't one. All these terms mean the same thing - a display screen, usually forming part of a computer and showing text, numbers or graphics. This booklet gives advice on health and safety in working with such screens. It covers both conventional (cathode ray tube, TV-style) screens and the newer flat-panel displays such as those used in portable computers. The advice in this booklet applies to the whole workstation, job and work environment, as well as to the VDU, keyboard and other equipment.

'Does my VDU affect my health?'

*Answers to some common questions from VDU users*

*Am I at risk?*

VDUs have been blamed - often wrongly - for a wide range of health problems. In fact, only a small proportion of VDU users actually suffer ill health as a result of their work. Where problems do occur, they are generally caused by the way in which VDUs are being used, rather than the VDUs themselves. So problems can be avoided by good workplace and job design, and by the way you use your VDU and workstation.

*What can be done to reduce stress in my VDU work?*

People who use a VDU sometimes complain of stress, but this usually arises from increased pace of work or pressure to meet deadlines, not the VDU itself. Some VDU workers find stress reduced because the VDU makes their job easier or more interesting, but for others stress becomes worse. This can happen when a system does not work well or when the user does not feel in control or competent to operate it.

Employers can help overcome stress by providing the right training, and by designing systems and tasks to match the abilities of the people who work with them.

The Regulations and how they affect you

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 implement an EC Directive and came into effect from January 1999 (some small changes were made in 2002). The Regulations require employers to minimise the risks in VDU work by ensuring that workplaces and jobs are well designed.

*Who is affected?*

The Regulations apply where staff habitually use VDUs as a significant part of their normal work. Other people, who use VDUs only occasionally, are not covered by the requirements in the Regulations (apart from the workstation requirements). However, their employers still have general duties to protect them under other health and safety at work legislation.

What do employers have to do to comply?

The Regulations do not contain detailed technical specifications or lists of approved equipment. Instead, they set more general objectives.

Employers have to:

*Analyse workstations, and assess and reduce risks*

Employers need to look at:

- the whole workstation including equipment, furniture, and the work environment;
- the job being done; and
- any special needs of individual staff.

Employees and safety representatives should be encouraged to take part in risk assessments, eg by reporting health problems. Where risks are identified, the employer must take steps to reduce them.

*Ensure workstations meet minimum requirements*

These requirements are good features that should normally be found in a workstation, such as adjustable chairs and suitable lighting. They are set out in a schedule to the Regulations, covering screens, keyboards, desks, chairs, the work environment and software. All workstations covered by the Regulations now have to comply, to the extent necessary for the health and safety of workers (a transitional period for modification of older workstations expired at the end of 1996).

*Plan work so there are breaks or changes of activity*

As the need for breaks depends on the nature and intensity of the work, the Regulations require breaks or changes of activity but do not specify their timing or length. However the guidance on the Regulations explains general principles, for example short, frequent breaks are better than longer, less frequent ones. Ideally the individual should have some discretion over when to take breaks.

*On request arrange eye tests, and provide spectacles if special ones are needed*

Employees covered by the Regulations can ask their employer to provide and pay for an eye and eyesight test. This is a test by an optometrist or doctor. There is also an entitlement to further tests at regular intervals; the optometrist doing the first test can recommend when the next should be. Employers only have to pay for spectacles if special ones (for example, prescribed for the distance at which the screen is viewed) are needed and normal ones cannot be used.

*Provide health and safety training and information*

Employers have to provide training, to make sure employees can use their VDU and workstation safely, and know how to make best use of it to avoid health problems, for example by adjusting the chair.

Information should also be provided about VDU health and safety. This should include general background information - this could be done by giving out copies of this booklet. It should also cover more specific details of the steps taken by the employer to comply with the Regulations, such as the action taken to reduce risks and the arrangements for breaks.