

1992 No. 513

HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations
(Northern Ireland) 1992**

Made 2nd December 1992

Coming into operation 1st January 1993

The Department of Agriculture, the Department of Economic Development and the Department of the Environment acting jointly as the Department concerned^(a) in exercise of the powers conferred by Articles 17(1), (2), (5) and 55(2) of, and paragraphs 1(1) and (2), 6, 7(1), 8 and 13 of Schedule 3 to, the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978^(b) and of every other power enabling them in that behalf, after consultation in accordance with Article 46(1) of that Order with the Health and Safety Agency for Northern Ireland and such other bodies as appeared to them to be appropriate, hereby make the following Regulations:—

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 and shall come into operation on 1st January 1993.

Interpretation

2. In these Regulations—

“display screen equipment” means any alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved;

“operator” means a self-employed person who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his normal work;

“use” means use for or in connection with work;

“user” means an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his normal work;

“workstation” means an assembly comprising—

(a) display screen equipment (whether provided with software determining the interface between the equipment and its operator or user, a keyboard or any other input device),

(b) any optional accessories to the display screen equipment,

(a) See Article 2(2) of S.I. 1978/1039 (N.I. 9)

(b) S.I. 1978/1039 (N.I. 9)

- (c) any disk drive, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, work chair, work desk, work surface or other item peripheral to the display screen equipment, and
- (d) the immediate work environment around the display screen equipment.

Application

3. These Regulations shall not apply to or in relation to—

- (a) drivers' cabs or control cabs for vehicles or machinery;
- (b) display screen equipment on board a means of transport;
- (c) display screen equipment intended mainly for public operation;
- (d) portable systems not in prolonged use;
- (e) calculators, cash registers or any equipment having a small data or measurement display required for direct use of the equipment; or
- (f) window typewriters.

Analysis of workstations

4.—(1) Every employer shall perform a suitable and sufficient analysis of those workstations which—

- (a) (whether or not he has provided them) are used for the purposes of his undertaking by users; or
- (b) have been provided by him and are used for the purposes of his undertaking by operators,

for the purpose of assessing the health and safety risks to which those persons are exposed in consequence of that use.

(2) Any assessment made by an employer in pursuance of paragraph (1) shall be reviewed by him if—

- (a) there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid; or
- (b) there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates;

and where as a result of any such review changes to an assessment are required, the employer concerned shall make them.

(3) The employer shall reduce the risks identified in consequence of an assessment to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

(4) The reference in paragraph (3) to “an assessment” is a reference to an assessment made by the employer concerned in pursuance of paragraph (1) and changed by him where necessary in pursuance of paragraph (2).

Requirements for workstations

5.—(1) Every employer shall ensure that any workstation first put into service on or after 1st January 1993 which—

- (a) (whether or not he has provided it) may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by users; or
- (b) has been provided by him and may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by operators,

meets the requirements laid down in the Schedule to the extent specified in paragraph 1 thereof.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that any workstation first put into service on or before 31st December 1992 which—

- (a) (whether or not he provided it) may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by users; or
- (b) was provided by him and may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by operators,

meets the requirements laid down in the Schedule to the extent specified in paragraph 1 thereof not later than 31st December 1996.

Daily work routine of users

6. Every employer shall so plan the activities of users at work in his undertaking that their daily work on display screen equipment is periodically interrupted by such breaks or changes of activity as reduce their workload at that equipment.

Eyes and eyesight

7.—(1) Where a person—

- (a) is already a user on the date of coming into operation of these Regulations; or
- (b) is an employee who does not habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of his normal work but is to become a user in the undertaking in which he is already employed,

his employer shall ensure that he is provided at his request with an appropriate eye and eyesight test, and that any such test is carried out by a competent person.

(2) Any eye and eyesight test provided in accordance with paragraph (1) shall—

- (a) in any case to which sub-paragraph (a) of that paragraph applies, be carried out as soon as practicable after being requested by the user concerned; and
- (b) in any case to which sub-paragraph (b) of that paragraph applies, be carried out before the employee concerned becomes a user.

(3) At regular intervals after an employee has been provided with an eye and eyesight test in accordance with paragraphs (1) and (2), his employer shall, subject to paragraph (6), ensure that he is provided with a further appropriate eye and eyesight test and that any such test is carried out by a competent person.

(4) Where a user experiences visual difficulties which may reasonably be considered to be caused by work on display screen equipment, his employer shall ensure that he is provided at his request with an appropriate eye and eyesight test, and that any such test is carried out by a competent person as soon as practicable after being so requested.

(5) Every employer shall ensure that each user employed by him is provided with special corrective appliances appropriate for the work being done by the user concerned where—

- (a) normal corrective appliances cannot be used; and
- (b) the result of any eye and eyesight test which the user has been given in accordance with this regulation shows such provision to be necessary.

(6) Nothing in paragraph (3) shall require an employer to provide any employee with an eye and eyesight test against that employee's will.

Provision of training

8.—(1) Where a person—

- (a) is already a user on the date of coming into operation of these Regulations; or
- (b) is an employee who does not habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of his normal work but is to become a user in the undertaking in which he is already employed,

his employer shall ensure that he is provided with adequate health and safety training in the use of any workstation upon which he may be required to work.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that each user at work in his undertaking is provided with adequate health and safety training whenever the organisation of any workstation therein upon which he may be required to work is substantially modified.

Provision of information

9.—(1) Every employer shall ensure that operators and users at work in his undertaking are provided with adequate information about—

- (a) all aspects of health and safety relating to their workstations; and
- (b) such measures taken by him in compliance with his duties under regulations 4 and 5 as relate to them and their work.

(2) Every employer shall ensure that users at work in his undertaking are provided with adequate information about such measures taken by him in compliance with his duties under regulations 6 and 8(2) as relate to them and their work.

(3) Every employer shall ensure that users employed by him are provided with adequate information about such measures taken by him in compliance with his duties under regulations 7 and 8(1) as relate to them and their work.

Exemption certificates

10.—(1) The Secretary of State for Defence may, in the interests of national security, by a certificate in writing, exempt any of the home forces, any visiting force or any headquarters from any of the requirements imposed by these Regulations and any such exemption may be granted subject to conditions and to a limit of time and may be revoked by the said Secretary of State by a further certificate in writing at any time.

(2) In this regulation—

- (a) “the home forces” has the same meaning as in section 12(1) of the Visiting Forces Act 1952(a);
- (b) “headquarters” has the same meaning as in Article 3(2) of the Visiting Forces and International Headquarters (Application of Law) Order 1965(b); and
- (c) “visiting force” has the same meaning as it does for the purposes of any provision of Part I of the Visiting Forces Act 1952.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture on 2nd December 1992.

(L.S.)

I. C. Henderson

Assistant Secretary

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Economic Development on 2nd December 1992.

(L.S.)

Philip B. Strong

Assistant Secretary

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of the Environment on 2nd December 1992.

(L.S.)

Trevor Pearson

Assistant Secretary

(a) 1952 c. 7

(b) S.I. 1965/1536, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations

(Which 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)

1. EXTENT TO WHICH EMPLOYERS MUST ENSURE THAT WORKSTATIONS MEET THE REQUIREMENTS LAID DOWN IN THIS SCHEDULE

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

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

2. EQUIPMENT

(a) *General Comment*

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

(b) *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.

(c) *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.

(d) *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.

(e) *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.

3. ENVIRONMENT

(a) *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.

(b) *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.

(c) *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.

(d) *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.

(e) *Heat*

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

(f) *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.

(g) *Humidity*

An adequate level of humidity shall be established and maintained.

4. INTERFACE BETWEEN COMPUTER AND OPERATOR OR 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—

- (a) software must be suitable for the task;
- (b) 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;
- (c) systems must provide feedback to operators or users on the performance of those systems;
- (d) systems must display information in a format and at a pace which are adapted to operators or users;
- (e) the principles of software ergonomics must be applied, in particular to human data processing.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations.)

1. Subject to the exception specified in paragraph 2 of this note, these Regulations give effect as respects Northern Ireland to the substantive provisions of Council Directive 90/270/EEC (“the Directive”) on the minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment (O.J. No. L156, 21.6.90, p. 14).

2. These Regulations do not purport to give effect to Article 9.4 of the Directive (measures taken pursuant to Article 9 not to involve workers in additional financial cost).

3. Regulation 4 requires each employer—

- (a) to make a suitable and sufficient analysis of those workstations which—
 - (i) (whether or not he has provided them) are used for the purposes of his undertaking by users, or
 - (ii) have been provided by him and are used for the purposes of his undertaking by operators;
- (b) to assess the health and safety risks to which those operators or users are exposed in consequences of that use;
- (c) to reduce those risks to the lowest extent reasonably practicable; and
- (d) in the circumstances specified in paragraph (2) of that regulation to review (and where necessary change) any assessment such as is referred to in sub-paragraph (b) above.

4. Regulation 2 defines not only the words “operator”, “user” and “workstation”, but also the phrase “display screen equipment”.

5. Regulation 5 requires each employer to ensure that any workstation which—

- (a) (whether or not he has provided it) may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by users; or
- (b) has been provided by him and may be used for the purposes of his undertaking by operators,

meets the requirements laid down in the Schedule to the Regulations. In the case of workstations first put into service on or before 31st December 1992, the employer has until 31st December 1996 to ensure compliance with the above-mentioned requirements.

6. Regulation 6 requires each employer to plan the daily work routine of users at work in his undertaking in such a way that those users' workload at display screen equipment is reduced.

7. Regulation 7 requires each employer to ensure that a user employed by him is provided with—

- (a) initial eye and eyesight tests at his request;
- (b) at regular intervals thereafter and with the consent of the users concerned, subsequent eye and eyesight tests;
- (c) additional eye and eyesight tests on request, where the user concerned is experiencing visual difficulties which might reasonably be considered to be caused by work on display screen equipment; and
- (d) appropriate special corrective appliances, where normal corrective appliances cannot be used and any eye and eyesight tests carried out on the user concerned in accordance with regulation 7 show such provision to be necessary.

8. Regulation 8 requires each employer to ensure that—

- (a) users employed by him are provided with adequate health and safety training in the use of their workstations; and
- (b) users at work in his undertaking are provided with adequate health and safety training whenever their workstations are substantially modified.

9. Regulation 9 requires each employer to ensure that operators and users at work in his undertaking are provided with adequate health and safety information, both about their workstations and about such measures taken by him to comply with regulations 4 to 8 as relate directly to them and their work.

10. Regulation 10 enables the Secretary of State for Defence to grant certificates of exemption from these Regulations in the interests of national security.

11. A person who contravenes the Regulations is guilty of an offence under Article 31 of the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978.