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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the circumstances in which Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may be deemed necessary and the procedure for sourcing, use and maintenance of PPE.

The main requirement of the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 is that personal protective equipment is to be supplied free of charge and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled by other means.

This policy is relevant to all employees especially Line Managers who are responsible for staff completing tasks which have the potential to cause harm where it is required to use Personal Protective Equipment, described in the definition below.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is defined in the Regulations as ‘all equipment which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects them against one or more risks to their health or safety’ e.g. Aprons, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing and safety footwear.

2.0 IMPLEMENTATION

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to use Personal Protective Equipment, both the individual staff member and manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which are presented in such a case.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Organisation meets its statutory obligations and that effective arrangements for the management of health and safety are put in place. The Chief Executive Officer has executive responsibility to manage Health and Safety including compliance with Health and Safety at Work Act, etc. 1974 and other relevant legislation, best practice guidance and Company policies to meet legal and organisational requirements.

Senior Leadership Team (Chief Officers)

The Chief Officers have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Organisation meets its statutory obligations and that effective arrangements for the management of health and safety are put in place and are therefore responsible for setting and approving policy direction in relation to manual handling.

The Health and Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team are responsible for advising on appropriate measures to meet legal and organisational requirements as required.

Line Managers

The responsible manager has a duty to provide users of PPE suitable information, training and instruction enabling them to make proper effective use of PPE.

Training for PPE users must include the following:

- An explanation of the risks present and why the PPE is being used
- How to operate the PPE and any limitations of the equipment which may affect the protection offered
- Instructions on the storage of the PPE
- The arrangements for reporting loss or defects of the PPE

Having provided PPE as a last resort after considering other safety measures, it is important that users wear it at all times when exposed to the risk, the responsible manager must also provide suitable supervision ensuring that identified required PPE is worn.

Employees

The Regulations place the following duties on employees:

- PPE must be examined before use.
- Use any PPE provided as instructed.
- Any loss or obvious defect must be reported to the Line Manager.
- Employees must take reasonable care of any PPE provided to them.
- Report hazards and risks to their Line Manager, including any lack of PPE provision, defects in the PPE provided or lack of suitability.

Health and Safety Trade Union Representatives

Health and Safety / Trade Union Representatives have certain responsibilities and duties and are able to audit and complete inspections where required.

A health and safety representative is a fellow worker who represents other union members to look after the health and safety at work of people they work with.

Health and Safety Representatives have the right to:

- take an active part in workplace risk assessments.
- investigate potential hazards and 'dangerous occurrences' and examine the accident data.
- investigate members' complaints.
- carry out inspections of the workplace in work time, at least every three months.
- be consulted on new working practices and new technology.
- receive safety information from their employer (such as inspectors' reports, hygiene surveys and risk assessments).
- attend union-approved training courses without loss of pay; and

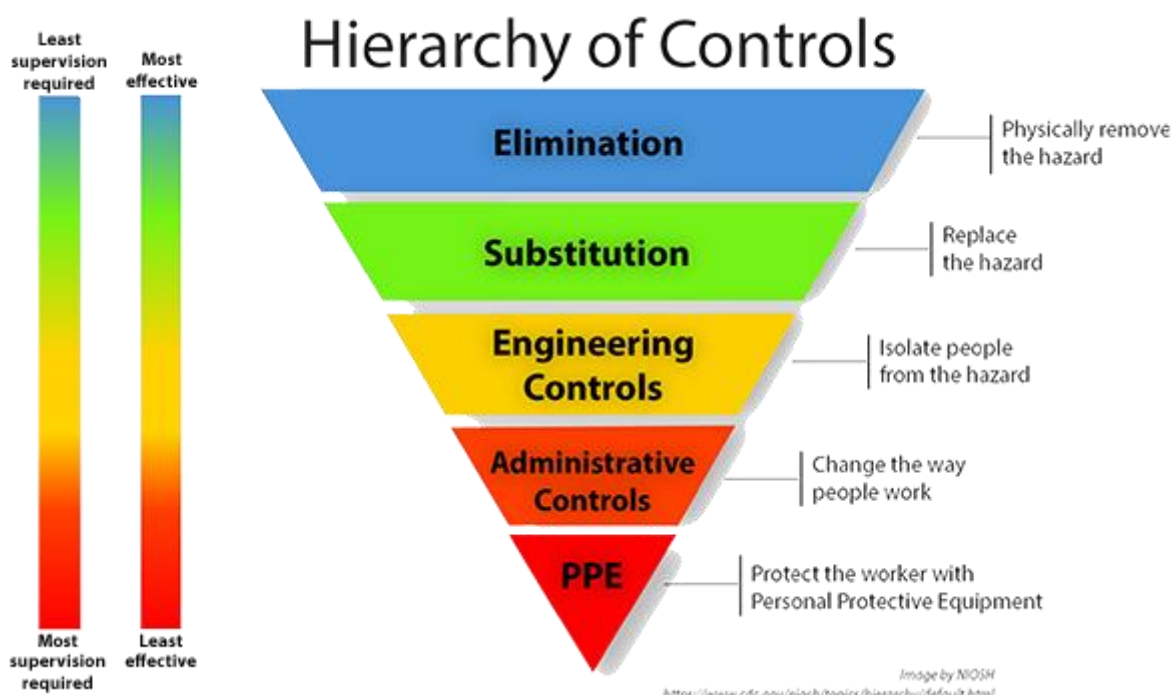
- have access to a phone and office equipment, and paid time off work, both to carry out inspections and to meet staff and other safety reps.

4.0 HIERACHY OF CONTROL

Personal protective equipment (PPE) include gloves, glasses, earmuffs, aprons, safety footwear, dust masks which are designed to reduce exposure to the hazard. PPE is usually seen as the last line of defence only after all the previous measures have been tried and found ineffective in controlling risks to a reasonably practicable level must personal protective equipment (PPE) be used. It is also usually used in conjunction with one or more of the other control measures.

For example where you cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall (should one occur). If chosen, PPE should be selected and fitted by the person who uses it. Workers must be trained in the function and limitation of each item of PPE

There is a recognised hierarchy of controls within Health and Safety which shows that other controls must be considered before the control of personal protective equipment as described:



Eliminate hazard at source, e.g.

- use a non-hazardous substance instead of a hazardous one
- stop using a noisy machine

Substitute the hazard at source, e.g.

- use a substance less hazardous than the one used at present
- replace a noisy machine with a quieter one

Isolate person from hazard, e.g.

- do not allow people to work near noisy machines
- isolate the hazard

- fit guards

Reduce employee exposure, e.g.

- reduce the amount of time people are exposed to noise by alternating staff regularly.

Personal protective equipment (PPE), e.g.

- gloves, goggles for substances and ear defenders for noise

5.0 ASSESSING FOR SUITABLE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

As identified in other health and safety legislation, where there is a requirement for risk assessments to be undertaken, those risk assessments should identify the need for the provision and wearing of any PPE and RPE and should include the type and grade of the equipment required for example FFP3 masks, disposable unpowered vinyl gloves etc.

To allow the right type of equipment to be chosen the different hazards in the workplace need to be considered carefully. This will enable an assessment to be made of which types of PPE are suitable to protect against the hazards for a particular task.

The following factors should be considered when assessing the suitability of equipment:

- Is it appropriate for the risks involved and the conditions at the place where exposure to risk may occur? For example, eye protection designed for providing protection against flying debris may not be suitable to prevent chemical splashes into the eye and vice versa.
- Can it be adjusted to fit the wearer correctly- some facemasks/respirators require a face fit tests
- Is it to a recognized standard? i.e. marked with CE
- Is the rating of the PPE / RPE suitable for its intended use?

The level of protection that equipment provides will vary in accordance with the intended use and hazard type. The CE mark signifies complies with the relevant European community provisions on design and manufacture.

Additional markings or EN numbers will identify its level of protection. It is critical that the appropriate level of PPE is identified for the hazard it is protecting against. It is advisable to obtain advice from reputable suppliers whenever making a purchase, or alternatively seeking advice from the Health and Safety Team.

6.0 WEARING RPE

These are some of the key factors for users of RPE to remember:

- Users of tight-fitting facepieces should have passed a fit test for the particular RPE device they are using.
- Hair, spectacles or other PPE can break the seal on tight-fitting facepieces, allowing the user to breathe in hazardous substances.
- Valves on reusable RPE need to be maintained and replaced.

7.0 CARE & MAINTENANCE OF PPE / RPE

Equipment needs to be well looked after and be properly accommodated when not in use, for example stored in a dry clean cupboard or in the case of smaller items such as eye protection in a box or case.

8.0 FACE FIT TESTING

If you are considering RPE with a tight-fitting facepiece, you should make sure that each wearer undergoes a fit test. Remember, people come in different shapes and sizes, so facial differences will mean that one kind of RPE is unlikely to fit all. The differences are even more significant between men, women, and people of different ethnicity. If the RPE does not fit, it will not protect the wearer.

Facepiece fit testing is a method of checking that a tight-fitting facepiece matches the wearer's facial features and seals adequately to their face. It will also help to identify unsuitable facepieces that should not be used. Remember that tight-fitting RPE will only provide effective protection if the wearer is clean shaven, so they should also be clean shaven when fit tested.

Please book all face fit testing through the Stores team and White Lund Depot.

9.0 MONITORING & REVIEW

The ongoing requirement and use of PPE / RPE will be monitored through the risk assessments and their updates and the supervision process.

Any member of staff with a concern regarding this issue should ensure that it is discussed with their supervisor / manager or with the team, as appropriate.