



LEIA Safety Information Sheet

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

Prepared by the LEIA Safety and Environment Committee

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PREAMBLE

This Information Sheet is one of a series produced by the LEIA Safety and Environment Committee on topics relevant to the Lift and Escalator Industry. Whilst every effort has been taken in the production of these sheets, it must be acknowledged that they should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation, codes of practice etc. They should not be taken as an authoritative interpretation of the law but guidance to it.

INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 were made under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and amended in 2002 under Health & Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 and apply to display screen equipment. The Regulations implemented a European Directive on minimum safety and health requirements for work with display screen equipment.

This Information Sheet covers only the Display Screen Equipment Regulations, it is important to ensure that the general duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 are complied with.

As a result of the foregoing legislation, overlaps exist between general and specific duties. An example of this is where there is a requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Display Screen Equipment Regulations to carry out an assessment of the workplace. The legal requirement is to comply with both the specific and general regulations, however, this should not give rise to any difficulty. The assessment carried out under the specific regulation will almost certainly satisfy the more general regulations.

Definitions

In these Regulations there are words that should be interpreted as follows: -

- Display Screen Equipment - any alpha numeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved.
- User - any person who habitually uses the display screen equipment for a significant part of their work, including home-based workers.
- Workstation – which includes the following: -
 - Display screens, laptops, touchscreens or other similar devices and any optical accessories to the screen equipment
 - Inputting devices such as a mouse and a keyboard.
 - Disk drives, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, work chair, work desk, work surface or any other item to do with display screen equipment.
 - The working environment around the display screen equipment

These definitions will determine if the Regulations apply in a particular situation.

APPLICATION OF THE REGULATIONS

What do employers have to do to comply?

- Analyse workstations, assess and reduce risks
- Ensure workstations meet the minimum requirements
- Plan work so there are breaks or changes of activity
- On request arrange eye tests and provide spectacles if special ones are needed
- Provide health and safety training and information
- Consult with your employees

Analyse workstations, assess and reduce risks

The employer has a responsibility to perform a suitable and sufficient analysis of the work stations regardless of who has provided them and where they are used. Use of display screen equipment at home for the purposes of work falls within the scope of the Regulations. This remains the case regardless of who owns the relevant equipment.

All assessments must be reviewed if there is reason to believe that the existing assessment is no longer valid, or where there has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates. This would include a major change to software, screen, keyboard, input device, work station furniture etc.

Any risks identified by the assessment must be reduced at the earliest opportunity. If a problem exists, indicated by the assessment, and appears to be complex, or if any remedial action taken does not work it may be necessary to obtain expert advice.

The main risks associated with display screen equipment relate to muscular skeletal problems, particularly Upper Limb Disorders, visual fatigue and mental stress. Risks to temps, freelance staff etc. must also be assessed and controlled.

Records of each assessment should be kept in writing or in some other retrievable form, except where:

- The assessment is quickly and easily repeatable
- The assessment finds no significant risk
- The work station is temporary

Ensure workstations meet the minimum requirements

The Display Screen must:

- have well defined characters, be able to display stable and flicker-free images
- have adjustment for the brightness and contrast between characters and background
- allow the screen to swivel and tilt
- be free of reflections and glare causing discomfort to users.

The Keyboard must

- be separate from the screen and be tiltable
- have sufficient space between the front of the keyboard and the edge of the work surface
- be placed on a matt surface to avoid reflective glare
- have key symbols adequately contrasted and visible during normal use.

The Work Surface must

- be large enough for the equipment and material upon it
- have sufficient space to allow a comfortable working position

- have a stable and adjustable document holder, if required.

The Chair must

- be stable and allow easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position
- allow the seat to be adjusted
- allow the back rest to be adjusted

Workstation Environment must consider

- Space - sufficient for users to change position and vary movements
- Lighting - room lighting or task lighting must ensure satisfactory conditions and appropriate contrast
- Reflections and Glare - work stations must be designed to prevent glare or reflection on the display screen from windows or brightly coloured walls.
- The Display Screen should be repositioned if necessary to eliminate reflections and glare. Any windows must be fitted with blinds etc to control daylight falling on the screen.

Interface between the Display Screen Equipment and User

The employer must acknowledge the following principles: -

- the software must be suitable for the task
- the software must be easy to use
- the software must not be used to measure the worker's speed or accuracy, without their knowledge
- information must be displayed in a suitable format

Plan work so there are breaks or changes of activity

Account must be taken to plan the daily work routine of display screen equipment users to incorporate periodic interruption by breaks or changes of activity. In most tasks, natural breaks or pauses occur as a consequence of the daily work load. If possible, jobs at display screens should be designed to consist of a mix of screen-based and non-screen-based work to prevent fatigue and to vary visual and mental demands.

Short, frequent breaks are better than longer infrequent ones.

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

Display screen equipment users are entitled, but not obliged to undergo an appropriate eyesight test. Repeat testing is to be available on recommendation from the optician.

Provision of Glasses

Where spectacles are prescribed specifically for work with display screen equipment, the user's employer must provide them. If glasses are needed for any other purpose it is not the employer's responsibility. The employer is not expected to supply tinted lenses or other specialised glasses.

The employer is expected to pay only for the basic cost of suitable lenses and frames.

Provide health and safety training and information

Adequate health and safety training in the use of work station equipment must be made available to users. The training should be directed towards reducing the risks of muscular skeletal problems, eyesight difficulties and mental stress and should cover: -

- Comfortable posture and postural change
- Adjustment, layout and positioning of work station equipment
- Maintenance of display screen equipment

- Importance of breaks and/or changes of activity
- The importance of reporting problems.

Consult with your employees

Consulting with your employees helps to manage potential health issues in a practical way by:

- Helping to spot the risks
- Making sure health & safety controls are practical
- Increasing the level of commitment to working in a healthy way.

DUTIES TO THE SELF EMPLOYED

Under the 2002 Amendments, the client of the self-employed (the client employer) has a duty, if the workstation has been provided by the client employer, to assess and reduce risks, ensure the workstation complies with the minimum requirements and provide information, as if directly employed. There is no requirement for the client employer to plan work breaks or to provide eye tests or training for the self-employed.

LAPTOPS AND SIMILAR

- Laptop computers and other portables should be compact and easy to carry.
- The design features, like small keyboards, can make prolonged use uncomfortable.
- It is preferable to avoid using a portable if full sized equipment is available.
- Wherever possible, portables should be placed on a firm surface at the right height for keying in a safe environment.
- Position and adjust the screen to avoid glare and reflection from light sources.
- Adjust brightness and contrast to suit lighting conditions.
- Keep screen surface clean.

For any clarification of this information sheet contact your company Safety Advisor or the LEIA Safety and Training Manager.

References:

Work with display screen equipment: Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 L26

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l26.htm>

Working with Display Screen Equipment – a brief guide (rev 4)

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.htm>

Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck1.htm>

BS EN ISO 9241 Series Standards: Ergonomics of human-system interaction

<https://shop.bsigroup.com/>