

Backstage Theatre & Centre for the Arts

General Statement of Policy, on Health, Safety and Welfare at Work of all Staff & Customers

1.1 General Statement

The policy of Backstage Theatre & Centre for the Arts in respect of safety is to conduct its affairs, in so far as is reasonably practicable, ensuring the safety, health and welfare at work of its staff, customers and others who may have occasion to visit or undertake inspections or works in its premises. This Safety Statement has been prepared as required by section 12 of the 1989 Act and regulation 10 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives which the Safety Statement aims to achieve are:

1.2.1 To comply, so far as is reasonably practicable, with the terms and requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989, the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Applications) Regulations, 1993 and any other relevant statutory provisions.

1.2.2 To maintain a safe workplace, safe means of access and egress and safe systems of work, to protect its staff in so far as they come into contact with foreseeable work hazards.

1.2.3 To ensure that plant and machinery are properly maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations

1.2.4 To provide information and training as may be necessary to enable all employees to carry out their duties without risk to the health and safety of themselves and others

1.2.5 The provision of suitable protective clothing and equipment where hazards cannot be eliminated.

1.2.6 To develop (1) safety awareness among staff and (2) individual responsibility for health and safety at all levels.

1.2.7 To encourage full consultation on health and safety matters

1.2.8 To ensure that the organisation structure exists within the organisation for the effective implementation of the Safety Statement.

1.2.9 To ensure that adequate resources of time, personnel and finance are made available for the effective implementation and maintenance of the Safety Statement.

The Management Committee with the support of all levels of management and staff, shall ensure that the implementation of this Safety Statement reflects the above objectives.

The Safety Statement will be reviewed, annually at least, to ensure that it remains relevant to current legislation and any specific requirements identified by risk assessments.

The Safety Statement should be brought to the attention of and made accessible to, all staff of Backstage Theatre & Centre for the Arts by management and the provisions of the Safety Statement should be made known as appropriate to other employers/contractors who may from time to time visit the Centre to carry out maintenance, modifications etc.

Signed:

Date:

ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General

The management committee will provide the General Manager with support in carrying out the Department's statutory obligations and in honouring the commitments given in this Safety Statement.

It is the duty of individual staff members to contribute to their own safety. Any matters arising, which might have an adverse bearing on safety and/or health, should be reported to the management committee. Management should take all reasonable steps to resolve the matter at local level and in the event that outside assistance is required, then this should be immediately undertaken.

Those given specific responsibilities must ensure that these responsibilities are properly delegated in their absence.

2.2 Management Committee

- 1 The management committee shall have overall responsibility for implementing the Safety Statement.
- 2 Delegate to the appropriate staff levels responsibility to put in place necessary arrangements.
- 3 Ensure that through consultation, the Safety Statement is critically reviewed as often as necessary but at least on an annual basis and that the necessary changes are devised, implemented and maintained.
- 4 Ensure the provision of adequate training, information and instruction to enable staff in the organisation to carry out their statutory obligations under the Act.
- 5 Ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, that adequate resources are made available for the effective implementation of the Safety Statement.
- 6 Ensure that internal accident reporting and investigation procedures exist and are implemented.
- 7 Arrange that appropriate provisions in the Safety Statement which may affect non-employees, are brought to their attention.
- 8 Ensure corrective action is taken as soon as possible to comply with any enforcing notice issued by the Health and Safety Authority.

2.3 General Manager

- 1 Take responsibility for the implementation of the Safety Statement.
- 2 Have a full knowledge and understanding of the Safety Statement and ensure that all persons reporting to them recognise and accept their responsibilities.
- 3 Ensure that responsibilities given to individuals are fully understood and will lead to the effective implementation of the Safety Statement.
- 4 Keep up to date with Health and Safety Changes as publicised by the Health and Safety Authority and agree ways of implementing them with the Management Committee.
- 5 Keep staff informed of any health and safety matters that may affect them.
- 6 Ensure that a copy of the Safety Statement is made available to and its contents understood by staff.
- 7 Ensure that representations made by members of staff are fully considered and acted upon if reasonably practicable.
- 8 Ensure that arrangements are in place for liaison with visiting companies & contractors when they report for work in the Theatre and for maintaining communications to ensure that they comply with their contractual obligations on health and safety issues.
- 9 Make certain that arrangements are in place to enable all staff & customers to comply with the Tobacco (Health Promotion and Protection) Regulations, 1995.
- 10 Ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided to each member of staff.
- 11 Ensure that all areas of the Theatre comply with current health and safety requirements and standards for workplaces (this would include maintaining satisfactory standards of heating, lighting and ventilation).
- 12 Ensure that the obligations under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997 are complied with.
- 13 Ensure that measures to protect the Health and Safety of Pregnant Employees are complied with.
- 14 Review the organisations Emergency Evacuation Programme on an on-going basis and ensure that this programme is complied with.
- 15 Organise fire precaution, prevention and emergency training.
- 16 Ensure that new staff members are made aware of emergency procedures.
- 17 Ensure that effective steps are taken in order that all persons employed in the place of work are familiar with the means of escape and their use in case of fire or other emergency evacuation and with the routine to be followed in such circumstances.
- 18 Ensure fire drills are carried out every 12 months whenever practicable and a record of such drills maintained. Copies of these records must be sent to the Management Committee.

- 19 Make arrangements, in respect of fire drills, to assist staff who because of disability, have difficulty in negotiating stairs etc. and identify such staff and advise them of these arrangements.
- 20 Ensure that records are kept of all accident reports, reports of near misses and dangerous occurrence reports.
- 21 Where appropriate, ensure that adequate and suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is made available to staff if required, that adequate training and information is given to staff required to wear PPE, that PPE is adequately maintained and used by staff.
- 22 Ensure that all VDU/PC workstations are correctly installed and comply with the relevant regulations and arrange for suitable equipment (including furniture) to be provided for VDU/PC workstations for all staff.
- 23 Ensure that all office machinery is maintained by competent personnel in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 24 Ensure that by regular cleaning, all areas of the theatre are up to standard and that rubbish is removed on a regular basis.
- 25 Ensure that hazards in all areas are avoided or minimised through "good housekeeping";
- 26 Ensure that access and egress routes or stairwells are not blocked.
- 27 Ensure that hazards (such as damaged/broken fittings and spillages which could injure or cause staff or others to slip, trip or fall) are eliminated as quickly as possible after they occur or come to their notice.

2.4 Stage Manager

- 1 Liaise with visiting companies & contractors when they report for work in the Theatre and maintain communications to ensure that they comply with their contractual obligations on health and safety issues.
- 2 Ensure that all machinery and equipment being used by stage crew is maintained by competent personnel in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 3 Arrange for defective equipment, containing a safety or health risk, to be taken out of use, put in a safe place and suitably labelled until repaired or replaced.
- 4 Ensure that all fire equipment is in the appointed areas, is in working order and is serviced on an annual basis.
- 5 Ensure that signs, notices or fire alarm call points etc. are not obstructed or removed.
- 6 Ensure that hazards in stage and get in areas are avoided or minimised through "good housekeeping";
- 7 Ensure that by regular cleaning, the stage and get in areas are up to standard and that rubbish is removed on a regular basis.

2.5 Employees

Employees have legal duties and responsibilities laid down under Section 9 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 and Regulation 14 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations, 1993:-

- 1 It is the duty of every employee to take reasonable care of his/her own safety, health and welfare while at work
- 2 It is the duty of every employee to take reasonable care of any other person who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions while at work.
- 3 It is the duty of every employee while at work to co-operate with management in complying with the relevant statutory provisions.
- 4 It is the duty of every employee, provided by the Organisation with protective equipment, to use it while at work.
- 5 It is the duty of every employee to report, without delay, to the General Manager any defects in plant, equipment, place of work or system of work, which might endanger safety, health or welfare, of which he/she becomes aware.
- 6 Arising out of his/her work activities, no employee shall intentionally tamper with anything, which secures the safety, health or welfare of other persons.
- 7 It is advised that all accidents and incidents are reported immediately to the General Manager.
- 8 All staff should co-operate in evacuating the premises promptly once the alarm has been raised.

2.6 Other Persons

Those providing a service to the Organisation must comply with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work, Act, 1989 and are legally obliged to safeguard the health and safety of themselves and of others affected by their work activities.

Persons supplying a service to the Organisation where required must:-

- 1 Have a Safety Statement.
- 2 Where the nature of the anticipated work could potentially constitute a risk to organisation's staff, provide a copy of the Safety Statement.
- 3 Provide full and clear information to those who may be affected by their work activities, so as to minimise their exposure to risk.
- 4 Familiarise themselves with the organisation's rules, evacuation plans and emergency procedures.
- 5 Follow all instructions and comply with all safety, health and welfare guidelines provided.
- 6 Use any safety equipment provided.
- 7 Only use equipment in good working order.
- 8 Not pose unnecessary risk to the Organisation's staff and customers.
- 9 Comply with relevant safety and health legislation and standards.

2.7 Customers of the Organisation

Customers must be under the direct or indirect supervision of a member of staff of the organisation. The evacuation plan and emergency procedures should be clearly displayed in all areas.

Members of the public attending the Theatre should be made aware of the safety procedures that apply in the event of fire or other emergency. This should take the form of Fire Instruction Notices and/or announcements as appropriate.

A fire instruction notice is a printed list of instructions on the actions to be taken when a fire or other emergency occurs. The notice is divided into two parts depending on whether a person discovers a fire or hears a warning of fire. All places of assembly should have displayed in prominent locations fire instruction notices appropriate to the location e.g. front of house and backstage areas.

CONSULTATION:

3.1 General

Staff will be consulted on matters relating to health and safety. It has been agreed that such consultation would be best effected through staff meetings.

Staff will be afforded the opportunity to elect a safety representative at these meetings.

The organisation will, as far as is reasonably practicable, take account of any representations made by a Safety Representative, or employees if no such representative has been elected.

Representations received from Safety Representatives and/or employees will be an essential part of the annual review in assessing the effectiveness of arrangements for securing the safety and health of workers in this organisation.

3.2 Safety Representatives

Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 provides for the selection and appointment, by employees in a place of work, of a Safety Representative who will have the right to represent them in consultation with the employer and to obtain from the employer any necessary information to ensure the safety and health of employees.

The Safety Representative is given a number of rights and powers under the Legislation. These include the right to

- be given information from the employer in connection with the safety, health and welfare of employees
- be informed by the employer that a Health and Safety Inspector is on the premises
- accompany an Inspector on a tour of the premises, except where the Inspector is investigating an accident
- make oral or written representations to an Inspector
- receive advice and information from an Inspector
- make representations to the employer on safety, health and welfare issues
- investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences at the place of work provided s/he does not interfere with the performance of other statutory functions
- to investigate potential hazards and complaints made by an employee whom s/he represents relating to the employees safety, health at welfare at work having given notice to the employer
- reasonable time off from work without loss of earnings to acquire knowledge to enable him/her to function effectively and to carry out his/her functions.

STAFF CO-OPERATION

4.1 General

The Safety Statement is produced to ensure the safety, health and welfare of staff.

All staff must co-operate fully to ensure the successful implementation of the Safety Statement and must familiarise themselves with its content and raise with their immediate supervisor any questions they have for clarification as necessary.

All staff must carry out their activities in a safe manner at all times.

All staff must comply with the control measures as indicated, use equipment and material only as intended and use appropriate personal protective equipment when required.

All staff must co-operate with the internal accident reporting and investigation procedures as outlined in this statement.

Staff must co-operate by attending specified training programmes, seminars, lectures when required and by making full use of safety information provided.

TRAINING

5.1 General

The organisation will ensure its employees' competence in health and safety by providing them with appropriate

- Training
- information
- supervision
- instruction

All new employees should have

A planned induction course which should include modules on

- health and safety policy
- emergency evacuation procedures
- accident reporting procedures

A tour of their workplace including the emergency escape routes.

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING

6.1 Definition of Accident

An accident can be defined "as an unplanned event giving rise to death, ill-health, injury, damage or other loss".

6.2 Procedures to be followed in the event of an accident

The General Manager should ensure that all accidents are investigated and reported for any necessary follow-up action. The report should

- state what happened and when.
- state who saw it and obtain statements from them (signed and dated)
- state what the injured party was doing at the time of the accident
- state if the activity was authorised
- if safety equipment or protective clothing is provided for the activity being undertaken state whether it was being used.
- if possible, include a sketch or photograph of the accident scene.

6.3 Accidents Reportable to the Health and Safety Authority

The following types of accidents are reportable to the HSA.

(a) an accident causing loss of life to any employed or self-employed person if sustained in the course of his/her employment,

(b) an accident sustained in the course of their employment which prevents persons from performing the normal duties of their employment for more than 3 consecutive days not including the date of the accident,

(c) an accident in the Theatre to any person not at work caused by a work activity which causes loss of life or requires medical treatment. This clause includes visitors and members of the public etc.

Notification to the HSA should be made as soon as possible by the General Manager on the Authority's approved form (IR1). This form should be completed in triplicate, one copy to the Authority, one to the management committee where a 10-year record will be maintained and one retained at the theatre for enquiry purposes.

6.4 Incident

Incident means an unplanned event, with the potential to lead to an accident.

In addition to reporting an accident, the General Manager should also report "incidents" to the management committee. The investigation of an "incident" followed by meaningful action to eliminate any defect identified can prevent an accident occurring in the future. The General Manager should also report all threats and cases of aggressive or hostile behaviour towards staff.

VULNERABLE GROUPS

7.1 General

The organisation recognises that some groups are particularly vulnerable to hazards in the workplace. These groups include

- new workers
- pregnant women
- people with disabilities.

7.2 New Workers

The following procedures should be carried out by the General Manager or by a suitable person nominated by the General Manager.

- 1 Explain to the new employee what s/he will be required to do and to whom s/he will be directly responsible.
- 2 Arrange for the new employee to be issued with any protective clothing or equipment necessary e.g. safety helmets, safety goggles, ear defenders, personal protective clothing etc. and obtain their signature for the items issued.
- 3 Arrange for any health and safety training or instruction required.
- 4 Show the new employee the location of the emergency evacuation routes and assembly points.
- 5 Explain the procedures in the event of an emergency evacuation.
- 6 Show the new employee where copies of health and safety notices are kept.

7.3 Pregnant Employees

Staff who become pregnant should advise the General Manager of this fact as soon as possible. If they have concerns about the known pregnancy-related risks associated with their work, they should discuss this with the General Manager. A risk assessment can be made and any extra safeguards considered necessary, put into effect.

7.4 Staff with Disabilities

Management should ensure that in the event of an emergency adequate assistance is provided for the safe evacuation of those with a disability.

RESOURCES AND REVISION

8.1 Resources

The management committee accepts that the implementation of a successful safety management programme is dependent, inter alia, on the provision of adequate resources. It will ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, that adequate resources are made available to support the safety management programme on an ongoing basis.

Finance should be made available

- to rectify any defects, which are considered to be a major hazard to the safety, health and welfare of employees (where reasonably practicable)
- to purchase any personal protective equipment (PPE) which is deemed necessary
- for any training, information and instruction, deemed necessary.

Training courses will include induction courses, manual handling courses, first-aid courses and other courses that are deemed relevant and necessary for the protection, safety, health and welfare of staff. Where possible, competent in-house personnel will be used to train employees on health and safety issues. Where this is not possible, competent external personnel will be brought in for this purpose. All staff will be allowed time off, without loss of remuneration, to attend health and safety courses where relevant.

8.2 Circulation and Revision of the Safety Statement

The Safety Statement will be given to all staff. This Safety Statement will be reviewed as necessary or at least once per year and revisions required will be put in place. The fulfilment of the objectives set out in the General Statement of Policy will be assessed and the need for modifications considered.

The contents of the items discussed by the Health and Safety staff representatives and management will form part of the review mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the arrangements.

All reports of accidents and any subsequent accident investigation and prevention measures will also be subject to review to highlight possible deficiencies.

HAZARDS/RISK/CONTROLS

9.1 Identification of Hazards

Section 12(3) of the 1989 Act requires that the Safety Statement be based on an identification of hazards and an assessment of risks to safety and health at the place of work to which Safety Statement relates.

A **hazard** is identified as anything that can potentially cause harm and includes, human injury, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these (e.g. lifting heavy loads, trailing cables, hot surfaces).

Hazards likely to be found in this organisation are listed in Schedule 1 of this document where risk assessment and control measures are included and detailed.

9.2 Assessment of Risks

Risk is a combination of the likelihood of an accident or ill-health happening and the consequences of such an accident (e.g back injury).

Risk assessment is the process of evaluating the magnitude of the risk to the health and safety of workers at work. Under Regulation 10 of the General Application Regulations 1993 this assessment must be written down.

Wherever possible, risks should be eliminated and designed out of the workplace if reasonably practicable or reduced to an acceptable level by control measures and resources to safeguard health and safety.

As part of the risk assessment, each risk should be examined and categorised according to possible consequences and control measures should be put in place to ensure a tolerable level of risk.

It is stressed that the purpose of a risk assessment is to highlight the significant risks to staff and to prioritise the allocation of resources for their control. However, no risk should be ignored even if it is categorised as low.

Schedule 1

HAZARDS

This document outlines the hazards and risks likely to be found in an environment such as in Backstage Theatre & Centre for the Arts. This list of hazards and controls is not intended to be exhaustive. The hazards and risks are listed alphabetically and these can be modified to suit the changing environment.

While hazards of a significant nature only are listed in this assessment, a safety conscious attitude is required of the General Manager and staff in relation to any hazard that may be encountered in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the suggested control measures.

ALPHABETICAL INDEX

- Access/Egress Hazards
- Electrical Hazards
- Fire Hazards
- Hot Liquids Hazards
- Housekeeping Hazards
- Hygiene Hazards
- Machinery Hazards
- Manual Handling Hazards
- Noise Hazards
- Office Environment Hazards
- Office Furniture and Material Hazards
- Rigging on Stage Hazards
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Smoking Hazards
- Stress in the workplace
- Trailing Cables/Wires
- Visual Display Units Hazards
- Wet Floors
- Working at a Height Hazards
- Working on Stage Hazards

Hazard Access/Egress

Safe access and egress to a place of work is a basic requirement. However, if not properly planned and maintained, it may pose a hazard to persons entering and leaving premises.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1** Doors and access points should be well maintained and kept clear.
- 2** Passageways should be well maintained and kept clear of any obstruction.
- 3** Extra seating should not be placed at rear of auditorium during a show as this would restrict access for audiences.
- 4** Sound equipment must never be placed in an area where it will cause an obstruction.
- 5** Floor coverings and floor surfaces should be well maintained to minimise hazards of slips, trips and falls.
- 6** Stairways should be well maintained and staff should be instructed to use handrails provided.
- 7** All means of access and egress should be provided with appropriate lighting.
- 8** Key to full house lights switch must be kept inside auditorium door at all times.
- 9** White markings on steps in auditorium must be kept clean at all times to be clearly visible when house lights are down.
- 10** Torches must be used by ushers to assist audience members who wish to leave or get to their seat during a show or at any time when house lights are down.
- 11** Staff and visiting company personnel should always use torches provided when accessing areas which have poor lighting e.g. moving backstage from auditorium when stage working lights are not on.
- 12** Appropriate No Parking signs should be displayed in all areas where parking would cause an obstruction to safe access or egress.

Hazard Electrical

Electricity has the potential risk to cause electrocution, shock, burns and fire. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the following control measures.

Control Measures

- 1** Electrical Equipment should only be used and operated by suitably competent technical staff.
- 2** Repairs maintenance and any form of permanent or temporary wiring where bare wire terminations are required should only be carried out by a suitably trained technician or by the engagement of qualified electrician where necessary.
- 3** All electrical equipment should be inspected before use for faults. Any faulty equipment should not be used until it is repaired. Staff should report all electrical defects. Defective equipment should be taken out of use, put in a safe place and labelled "do not use" until attended to by a competent person.
- 4** A programme of regular maintenance checks for all portable appliances shall be maintained with a regular written record and reporting system
- 5** All temporary cables where necessary should be kept off the floor wherever possible. When this is not possible, carpet or other suitable floor covering should be used to cover any exposed cabling
- 6** All flexible leads should be kept away from passageways and doorways as they may get damaged or become trip hazards.
- 7** Flats or pieces of scenery should never be placed over cables.
- 8** Wheeled boxes or access tower should never be run over cables on the ground. Always lift over.

Hazard Fire

Section 18 (2) of the Fire Services Act, 1981 states "it shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section applies to take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises, and to ensure in so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire".

In addition, section 18(3) outlines that "it shall be the duty of every person being on premises to which this section applies, to conduct himself in such a way as to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable any person on the premises is not exposed to danger from fire as a consequence of any act or omission of his".

Smoke inhalation and burns could result in multiple fatalities. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1** Fire evacuation training is provided through yearly fire drills. A hands-on demonstration of fire extinguisher use is also made available to the fire drill personnel.
- 2** Evacuation Officers should be appointed for each area to ensure that offices, toilets etc. are evacuated where fire or other emergencies require them to be evacuated.
- 3** Evacuation notices should be displayed in all appropriate areas of the theatre to indicate the evacuation routes and the designated assembly point outside the building. Emergency evacuation procedures are set out in the Emergency Evacuation Plan (available on request)
- 4** All fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms should be tested and maintained. Smoke detectors should be provided for areas such as storerooms, which are not frequented continuously.
- 5** Fire alarm call points, signs and notices, passageways and escape routes should be maintained and kept free from obstruction and all exits unblocked and operational.
- 6** All lighting (e.g. general lighting, safety lighting, exit notice lighting and lighting of any external exit ways) should be properly maintained. Materials should be kept well away from light fittings.
- 7** Electrical installations and equipment should be tested and maintained. All electrical equipment should be switched off and, where necessary, unplugged when not in use.
- 8** Waste paper bins should be emptied regularly and store rooms, passageways, stairs etc. should be kept free from rubbish.
- 9** Use of pyrotechnics or naked flames on stage is not permitted except with the permission of the resident stage manager and only when suitable and acceptable safety precautions have been taken.
- 10** All scenic elements such as sets props fabrics etc must be appropriately flame proofed to a recognised and certified safety standard.
- 11** Smoking is prohibited in **all** areas of the theatre

Hazard: Hot Liquids

Carrying hot liquids in the workplace can cause minor/serious injury from scald. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 All members of staff are requested to exercise the fullest caution when preparing/handling hot beverages in the workplace.
- 2 Trays should be provided for customers purchasing tea/coffee at Coffee Dock.
- 3 The queue barrier should always be used at Coffee Dock to avoid large crowds on front of Coffee Dock counter and to facilitate ease of movement for customers carrying away hot liquids.

Hazard: Housekeeping

Bad housekeeping can lead to serious injury from fire and trips/falls.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 Floors, passages and stairs should be kept clear of goods and litter.
- 2 Litter bins should be placed where the risk of causing fall is minimal.
- 3 Waste should be removed regularly.
- 4 Access/egress routes or stairwells should not be blocked.
- 5 Safety signs or notices or fire alarm call points should not be obstructed or removed.
- 6 Broken/damaged equipment or furniture should be removed from the work area or rendered secure pending disposal or repair.
- 7 Damaged/broken fittings and spills should be eliminated as quickly as possible.

Hazard Hygiene

There is a risk of illness from bad hygiene. Management, with the co-operation of staff, has a responsibility to ensure satisfactory hygiene standards are maintained.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 Food or remnants of food should not be left in offices, Green Room or Dressing Rooms.
- 2 Staff using coffee dock facilities should clean up after themselves at all times.
- 3 Any sign of mice or vermin should be reported to the General Manager

Hazard: Machinery

Where machinery is used in the theatre environment it must be treated with care and respect. Misuse or poor maintenance of equipment can lead to serious risks to staff and therefore any concerns in this respect should receive prompt attention.

Under Section 10 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 the supplier of any article for use at work is required "to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the article is designed, constructed, tested and examined so as to be safe and without risk to health when used by a person at a place of work".

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 Training should be provided by a competent person in the proper use of all machinery.
- 2 All machinery should be maintained by competent personnel in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If a machine breaks down it should be repaired, as necessary, by the manufacturer or his agent.
- 3 Photocopiers should be positioned to minimise nuisance from heat and noise, and should be fitted with ozone filters and operated with document cover in position.
- 4 The electric drill winch system should only be operated by or on the authority of the resident technical staff.
- 5 All unsafe machinery should be taken out of use, put in a safe place and labelled "do not use".
- 6 Warnings on machinery should be strictly observed.
- 7 Purchases of machinery/equipment by the organisation should meet the highest safety standards.

Hazard Manual Handling

Manual handling is defined as "any transporting or supporting of a load, by one or more employees, and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving a load which, by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves risk, particularly of back injury, to employees.

Risk: Musculo-skeletal problems including acute or chronic back injury, sprains, of the chest and abdominal muscles and hernias.

Additionally, a load can be dropped and cause consequential injuries.

Note that the risk arises by reason of:

- the characteristics of the load (e.g. too heavy, too large, too unwieldy etc.),
- the physical effort required (e.g. too strenuous etc.),
- the characteristics of the working environment (e.g. insufficient room, uneven floor etc.),
- the requirements of the activity (e.g. over-frequent effort involving the spine, excessive rate of work imposed by the process, whether the worker is physically suited to carry out the task etc.).

Observance of the control measures provides an acceptable level of risk.

Control Measures

- 1** Trolleys and carts should be provided to minimise the need for manual handling of materials.
- 2** Staff members required to handle heavy materials should be given training and instruction in the correct handling methods.
- 3** The General Manger should take appropriate organisational measures (team work etc.) to reduce the risk from load handling where manual handling could not be avoided.

Hazard: Noise

The European Communities (Protection of Workers)(Exposure to Noise Regulations, 1990 (S.I. No. 157 of 1990) set out (1) the legal requirements, which must be observed, regarding the noise levels to which persons may be exposed, and (2) action to be taken to monitor and control noise at the place of work.

A rule of thumb is that if continuous loud noise is such that it necessitates that you must shout in order to communicate at a distance of about two metres, then it is probably above the legal limits regarding exposure.

Continuous loud noise can

- cause headaches, loss of concentration, damage to hearing
- can interfere with oral communication leading to misinterpretation of instructions or warnings
- can drown out warning sounds e.g. alarm signals.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the following control measures.

Control Measures

1 Steps should be taken to keep noise levels to a minimum. Where an unacceptable noise level is caused by the operation of its own machinery, the organisation will fully adhere to the Health and Safety Authority's guidelines on noise levels.

2 Notices should be displayed where noise is a problem.

3 Hearing protectors are provided and should be used where appropriate.

A copy of the HSA "Guidelines to the Noise Regulations" is available on written request.

Hazard: Office Environment

Potential ill-health problems can arise from extremes of temperature, humidity, dust levels, lighting, noise etc. The following control measures ensure a minimal risk situation.

Control Measures

1 Portable fans should be provided if required during hot weather or air conditioning malfunction.

2 To reduce dust levels, office cleaning should include furniture such as desks, shelving and top of filing cabinets.

3 All office equipment is of high quality and maintained to manufacturers' recommendations to minimise the production of dust, heat and noise.

Hazard: Office Furniture and Materials

Modern offices are safe places to work, yet accidents occur from slips, trips, falls, collisions etc. The following control measures ensure minimal risk.

Control Measures

- 1** High standards of general housekeeping should be maintained at all times.
- 2** Adequate means of access to and egress from workplaces should be maintained with clear means of escape in case of evacuation.
- 3** All telephone and electrical leads should be positioned so as to avoid the risks of trips and falls.
- 4** Office furniture, fittings and equipment are of high quality, with minimum sharp corners, and should be positioned to minimise risks of collision.
- 5** File drawers, desk drawers, presses etc. should be kept closed when not in use.
- 6** The main office must be kept clear of obstructions. Posters, coats, stationery etc. must be tidied away as well as possible.
- 7** The use of shelving requiring high reaching should be eliminated in so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 8** Suitable steps should be made available where the need for such high reaching might not be avoidable. Unstable chairs for high reaching etc. should not be used.

Hazard Rigging on Stage

There is a risk of serious injury to staff and visiting company personnel when lights/sets are being rigged on stage. This risk can be minimised through the implementation of the following control measures.

Control Measures

- 1** The maximum loading on any bar is not to exceed 250kg uniformly distributed load.
- 2** Always make sure the rigging equipment used has a suitable safety rating.
- 3** All hung items e.g. lanterns, speakers, etc. must have a safety chain securely attached and all loose parts e.g. frames barn-doors etc. must be properly secured to prevent them falling.
- 4** Any item e.g. scene cloth, temporary bar, etc. hung from the grid must be suspended by way of suitable suspension gear and any item longer than three metres must be fixed to bars at a minimum of three points.
- 5** Ensure that any raised scenic element e.g. risers, get off platforms and treads etc. are protected with appropriate safety rails, edged with white or luminous tape and sufficiently illuminated with controlled work lights.
- 6** Ensure at all times while working or rigging at a high level that the floor area below is controlled to avoid injury from accidentally dropped items.
- 7** When operating the electric drill winch system ensure that the stage area is clear.

Hazard Slip, trips and falls

Slips, trips and falls can cause minor/major or even fatal injury. The following control measures ensure a minimal risk situation.

Control Measures:

- 1** All floor surfaces should be maintained in good condition and regularly cleaned and repaired as necessary.
- 2** Any tripping hazards such as worn or torn floor coverings which are identified should be reported to the General Manager immediately for attention.
- 3** Seats in auditorium must be regularly tightened.
- 4** Any spillage which occurs must be cleared up immediately. The area should be marked by appropriate hazard notices until the area has been cleaned up.
- 5** Corridors, reception areas and walkways must be kept free from obstruction. Cardboard boxes, filled plastic bags, packing material or other debris must not be stored in these areas.
- 6** Safe means must be used when accessing heights. Suitable steps should be used. Under no circumstances should chairs, desks or filing cabinets be used as a means of access to heights. Staff should not over-reach when placing or removing goods from heights.
- 7** Safety scaffolds and gantries must be used at all times by staff engaged in setting lighting or any work related to working with heights and all guidelines in the use of this equipment must be adhered to.

Hazard Stress in the workplace

Workplace stress arises when the demands of the job and the working environment on a person exceed their capacity to meet them. Causes of stress in the workplace can include

- Faulty work organisation
- Poor working relationships
- Poor communication at work
- Ill defined work roles
- Highly demanding tasks
- The threat of violence

The following control measures will ensure minimal risk of stress.

Control Measures

1. Regular staff meetings should be held to ensure good communication and to address any issues of concern to staff and explore and agree on appropriate action to resolve such issues.
2. Training should be provided for all staff to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to perform their role.
3. Team days and social events will be organised for staff to foster and encourage co-operation, harmony and good team spirit.
4. All members of staff should be provided with copies of the company policy on bullying, intimidation and sexual harassment.
5. All members of staff are entitled to a copy of grievance procedures so that they are aware of the appropriate channels through which an issue causing undue stress can be pursued.

Hazard Trailing Cables/Wires

There is a risk of serious injury from trips/falls to all in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 All wires and cables should be always secured against obstructing safe passage
- 2 Any cables trailing between lighting bars must be secured above head height or above height of trucked scenery

Hazard Visual Display Units (VDUs/PCc)

There is a risk to staff using VDUs of visual fatigue, mental stress and possible serious injury from physical (musculoskeletal) problems. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 1993, Part V11 should be implemented. A risk assessment of all VDU/PC workstations should be carried out regularly to evaluate the safety and health conditions to which they give rise, particularly as regards the possible risks listed above, and having carried out the assessment appropriate measures should be taken to remedy any such risks found. Observance of the control measures will ensure a tolerable level of risk.

Control Measures

- 1 Staff should be consulted on floor layouts.
- 2 Workstations should be ergonomically designed to ensure correct posture by possessing the following characteristics;
 - Stable easily adjustable seating with lumbar support
 - Seat adjusted to give knee and thigh clearance
 - Footrests provided, if required.
 - Desktop at elbow height and eyes cast downwards at approximately 20 degrees.
 - Space in front of keyboards to rest hands
 - Sufficiently large desk with low reflectance surface
 - Screen at right angle with 500/600mm viewing distance.
 - Document holders provided, if required.
 - Document holders will be at same level and viewing distance as screen.
- 3 Instruction and training should be provided on the use of equipment and on health and safety aspects.
- 4 Good quality hardware and software, document holders, screens with anti-glare characteristics and low reflective matt surfaces should be provided.
- 5 Adjustable window coverings and secondary lighting should be provided.
- 8 Arrangements should be put in place so that work on visual display screen equipment is periodically interrupted to reduce the workload or time spent at the display screen.

Hazard Wet Floors

There is a risk of serious injury from slips/falls on wet polished/glazed surfaces to all in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

- 1 Action must be taken to deal with spillages on floors/stairs in the workplace as quickly as possible after they come to notice.
- 2 The General Manager should bring to the attention of all members of staff the need for due care in walking on glazed floor surfaces in wet weather.
- 3 Cleaners are required to display supplied stand-up signs where wet surfaces existed after they had mopped out glazed surfaces. All staff are asked to exercise caution and take care when walking on such surfaces and the General Manager should review the situation regularly.

Hazard Working at a Height

There is a risk of serious injury to staff and others from working from a height. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

Control Measures

Access Tower

- 1 Always inspect the tower before use.
- 2 Ensure that the wheels are locked and the tower is level before mounting the tower.
- 3 Do not attempt to carry equipment while climbing the tower. Always pull it up with a rope from the working platform, keeping it within the wheelbase of the tower at all times.
- 4 The working platform must always have a guard rail and kickerboards on all sides.
- 5 Do not stand on kickerboards or guard rails to gain extra height.
- 6 Do not attempt to gain additional height advantage by using boxes, stepladder etc on the platform.
- 7 Ensure all tools etc are properly secured to prevent them accidentally falling to the ground.
- 8 Outriggers must be used and castor brakes must be locked.
- 9 Never attempt to move the tower by pulling yourself along from the platform.
- 10 When moving the tower with anyone on the platform there must be at least two people at the foot of the tower to stabilise it and move it. On raked floors four persons should be used.
- 11 Never move the tower until the person on the platform is happy to do so. Clear communication between the person on the platform and the person in charge at the foot of the tower is essential.
- 12 Do not attempt to move the tower over uneven surfaces with anyone in the cage.
- 13 Wear a safety harness if for any reason you cannot adhere to any of the above guidelines.

Front of House Gantries

- 1 When hauling lights etc up to / down from gantries make sure loads are securely fastened and that there is a person at the bottom to receive equipment and to check no one walks under load.
- 2 If a pulley is being used make sure both people are communicating properly to ensure at least one person is always supporting the load. Lights dropping from pulleys because no-one is holding the rope is a common hazard.
- 3 Access to the Gantry should be restricted to competent technical staff and access while audiences are in the theatre should be restricted and controlled.

Ladders

- 1 Always use the appropriate equipment for the job you intend to do.
- 2 Ensure the ladder is high enough for the activity to eliminate the need to over-reach.
- 3 Check that equipment is not faulty and is erected properly
- 4 Ensure the equipment is stable and safe.
- 5 Make sure you have enough light to work safely.
- 6 Take precautions to prevent equipment or tools from falling.
- 7 Do not attempt to move heavy ladders by yourself

Hazard Working on Stage

Good working practices need to be constantly observed in the light of the ever-changing environment of the stage area, particularly during fit ups and take downs. During a fit up the stage can get cramped and lighting poor. This is not an excuse for bad working practice. The following control measures should be adhered to in order to minimise risk

Control Measures

- 1 The visiting companies production manager or stage manager in liaison with the resident stage manager must ensure that adequate space and lighting is provided for work to be carried out safely This is especially important during focus or plot sessions when light levels are very low.
- 2 Trip hazards or obstacles that cannot be moved should be clearly marked. All people likely to be working in the vicinity of the hazard should be explicitly warned.
- 3 Wing and crossover access routes to and from exits and dressing rooms shall be maintained by way of clearly marked and illuminated pathways

APPENDIX 1

Fire / Bomb Threat

It is the duty of all members of the public being on the premises to conduct themselves in such a way that no person on the premises is exposed to danger from fire through any act or omission of theirs.

The following notices, giving directions to staff, members of the public and other persons in case of emergency will be prominently displayed both front of house and backstage.

Front of House

On Discovering a Fire

- Activate the nearest alarm panel
- Inform a member of staff of the location of the fire
- Leave the premises using the exit to which you are directed by staff.
- Do not run.
- Do not re enter the premises

On hearing an alarm or other warning

- Do not panic.
- Await the instructions of staff.
- Do not run.
- Walk quietly to the exit to which you are directed by staff.
- Once outside the building do not re-enter.

Backstage Area

On Discovering a Fire

- Activate the nearest alarm panel
- Inform a member of staff of the location of the fire
- Leave the premises using the nearest available exit
- Do not run.
- Do not re enter the premises

On hearing an alarm or other warning

- Do not panic
- Leave the premises using the nearest available exit.
- Once outside the building do not re-enter.

DIRECTIONS TO STAFF IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

FIRE

1. When fire is detected the alarm should be sounded to evacuate the building.
2. Where it is possible action should be taken to extinguish.
3. Where possible inform the relevant staff members.

EVACUATION

1. Obey the instructions of the emergency evacuation plan.
2. Leave SMARTLY and in orderly fashion by the designated exit route and assemble at the designated assembly point.
4. Do not delay in collecting personal items, coats etc.

BOMB THREAT

Should you receive a phone call or otherwise become aware of a bomb threat:-

1. Listen carefully to all the details.
2. Inform the appropriate staff member(s)
3. Do not cause a general alarm.
4. Await instructions to evacuate.
5. In evacuating the building please make a CURSORY CHECK of your work area and report any suspicious objects when you have left the building.

POWER CUT

Await instructions of the General Manager.

APPENDIX 2

The following information will also be displayed in the front office:

EMERGENCY/FIRST AID

1. Please note that a first-aid kit is held in the workplace -

By Sean Mulroy

In the front office

2. Also note the following details of the nearest available doctor/hospital -

Doctors

College Medical Centre 043 44077

Dr Padraic Mc Garry
College Medical Centre
Ballinalee Road
Longford
Tel 043 41207

Dr Mel Gorman
College Medical Centre
Ballinalee Road
Longford
043 45182

Dr Kevin Flanagan
College Medical Centre
Ballinalee Road
Longford
043 48884

Hospital

Casualty Department
St Josephs Hospital
Dublin Road
Longford
Tel 043 46211

Mullingar Regional Hospital
Mullingar
Co Westmeath
Tel 044 40221

(Note that where an emergency service is required the emergency telephone numbers 999 should be used)

Re: First-Aid Boxes and Kits

Different work activities need different provisions

Different work activities involve different hazards and therefore different first-aid provision is required. Some places of work such as offices have relatively low hazards whereas others such as factories and construction work sites have a greater degree of danger. Requirements for first-aid provision at work will therefore depend on several factors including the size of the undertaking, the numbers employed, the hazards arising, access to medical services, dispersal of employees, employees working away from their employer's premises, workers in isolated locations etc.

Medications

Drugs or medications should not be stored in first-aid boxes or kits and they should only be administered as prescribed by a registered medical practitioner.

Supervision of first-aid equipment and supplies

In workplaces where there are Occupational First-Aiders, first-aid boxes should be under their control. Otherwise they should be under the control of a responsible person named in the Safety Statement. The contents of the boxes and kits should be replenished as soon as possible after use in order to ensure that there is always an adequate supply of all materials. Items should not be used after the expiry date shown on packets. It is therefore essential that first-aid equipment be checked frequently, to make sure that there are sufficient quantities and that all items are usable.

Recording First-Aid Treatment

All incidents requiring first aid attention should be recorded by the attending first-aiders for subsequent examination by a Health and Safety Inspector.