

## Display Screen Equipment (DSE):

### 1. Introduction:

This document sets out the requirements of current health and safety legislation in relation to the use of DSE and provides guidance on compliance with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992.

### 2. Definitions:

Reference is made throughout the legislation to equipment “users” and it is therefore important from the outset to understand the definition of a “user,” which is:-

**“Anyone who regularly uses Display Screen Equipment for a significant part of the work they normally carry out during the course of their employment”**

It is appropriate to classify a person as a “user” **if any** of the following criteria apply:-

- A person who normally uses DSE for continuous or cumulative spells of an hour or more at a time and does so more or less every day.
- A person who depends on the use of DSE to do the job, because the same results cannot be achieved by a readily available alternative.
- A person who has no discretion as to the use or non-use of the DSE.
- A person who needs significant training and/or particular skills in the use of DSE in order to complete the job.

### 3. Requirements of the Regulations:

1. To carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments of all DSE workstations.
2. To provide eye-tests, free of charge, to DSE users in accordance with the requirements of current legislation.
3. To properly maintain all DSE, including workstation ancillary equipment and software in good condition.
4. To keep a documented system of training and inspection.

### 4. Health Issues:

DSE users may suffer from postural or visual fatigue resulting from poor ergonomics and/or the working environment.

There is good evidence that work with DSE does not cause any permanent damage to eyes or eye sight, although complaints of temporary discomfort, eye strain and headaches are common. As with any work that is visually demanding, users with existing uncorrected vision defects are more likely to suffer fatigue with DSE work.

A common issue raised is Repetative Strain Injury or RSI, this can affect hands, wrists arms, neck, shoulders or back particularly after long periods of uninterrupted DSE working. These problems can in the main be avoided by good workstation design, and arrangement of workload to ensure frequent breaks from screen are achieved.

Users of bifocals may find them less than ideal for DSE use as it is important to see the screen without lifting and lowering your head. Contact lens users may find that they become uncomfortable but in the main this is caused by the warm air in an office with lack of humidity.

DSE screens do not give out harmful radiation nor do they have any affect on pregnant woman to cause birth defects or miscarriages.

#### **5. Eye Site Test and Corrective eyewear:**

Employees are entitled to ask for an eye test if they are someone who uses DSE as a significant part of normal work. This is a full eye and eyesight test by an optometrist. (With changes in Health Legislations eye sight tests are now freely available at no cost).

The DSE Regulations require that an employer will have to pay for spectacles if the test shows you need special spectacles (e.g. ones prescribed for the distance the screen is viewed at). If your ordinary prescription is suitable for your DSE work the employer does not have to pay for your spectacles. However, McCafferty Consultancy Ltd will make a contribution to the cost of corrective eyewear at a level that will be determined from time to time based on the high street cost of a basic single lens for DSE use. In line with general health practice it is expected that employees will have eye sight tested every two years.

#### **6. Risk Assessment:**

An assessment of the workstation will be carried out using the company self assessment form, and will take account of:-

- Desks should have a worktop height of between 580 and 790mm, unless the operator has special needs.
- The ambient general lighting levels for DSE workstations should be between 300 - 500 lux, as measured by a simple light meter.
- Where necessary operators must be provided with additional task lighting so that they can adjust levels to their own comfort, provided that no interference is caused to other nearby workstations.
- Glare from bright lights, screen reflections and desktop finish will be modified where reasonably practicable by the use of shielding or blinds, replacing or repositioning sources of light, rearranging document holders or other parts of workstations N.B. anti-glare screen filters will only be considered if other measures fail to solve the problem.
- Changes to workstations will always be discussed with the operators before they are implemented.
- For prolonged use of DSE such as data entry, the keyboard height will be such that when the users' fingers are resting comfortably on the home-row keys, the angle at the elbow is 90 degrees.
- Keyboards will be chosen that can be tilted and separated from the screen to enable the operator to select a comfortable working position and avoid fatigue in the arms, wrists or hands.
- Desks will be large enough to allow normal tasks to be performed that are associated with the user's work.
- Desktops will, where reasonably practicable, have a low reflection surface and allow flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and related equipment