



Health and Safety Policy

**First created: 2009
Due for Revision: 2011**

Policy Statement

It is the policy of EGO Performance Company to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees and others, including members of the public, who may be affected by its work.

The aims and objectives of the policy are:

- To promote and maintain standards of safety, health and welfare that comply fully with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, other relevant legislation and codes of practice
- To protect employees, participants and others (including the public) from foreseeable hazards
- To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- To provide all employees with the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision needed to ensure that safe working practices are adhered to and safety awareness is developed
- To ensure that employees & participants are aware of their responsibilities to take care of themselves and others
- To encourage consultation and cooperation between employees, participants and management on any aspect of health and safety
- To regulate any risk created by work operations and, where necessary, consult with outside bodies in order to maintain a safe working environment.
- To review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals

For the purposes of this policy and statement all employees, paid or unpaid, freelance artists and the board of trustees working for EGO Performance Company, will be referred to as employees.

Responsibilities

The Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has ultimate responsibility for health and safety. The Board is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to ensure that adequate resources are made available, thereby maintaining a suitable, safe working environment. Georgina Egan is designated by the board as the company Health and Safety representative. It is her responsibility to advise on all issues relating to Health and Safety, including this policy. Training is provided for this representative as required to ensure that she is kept fully informed of all current issues relating to Health and Safety law and practice. She oversees Health & Safety issues on a day-to-day basis working under direction of the Board and Artistic Director/s the designated officer will :-

- Communicate the Health & Safety Policy to all relevant people
- Receive and action all reports, verbal and written, regarding health and safety issues
- Complete risk assessments at regular intervals (or more frequently whenever working conditions change) and delegate action points
- Maintain liaison with all individuals connected with health and safety
- Arrange adequate training programmes in relation to health and safety
- Ensure health and safety aspects are incorporated in all job instructions
- Review the implementation of the policy by the organisation
- Bring to the attention of the Board of Directors annually all new legislation, codes of practice and other matters affecting health and safety including all major incidents
- Advise on matters of accident prevention and implementation of Health and Safety Policy within the organisation

Other Employees

Employees working for EGO Performance Company are responsible for :-

- Making themselves familiar with and conform to the health and safety policy at all times
- Observing all safety rules at all times
- Wearing appropriate safety equipment when required
- Not interfering with anything provided to safeguard their health & safety
- Reporting all accidents, damage, dangerous occurrences and health & safety concerns to the General Manager (via another member of EGO Performance Company staff if necessary)
- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions

- Administering first aid to injured employees & participants (where training has been previously provided)

Arrangements For Maintaining A Safe And Healthy Working Environment

EGO Performance Company recognises there are a number of hazards present within the working environment that require control to be exercised in order to maintain the health and safety of employees, participants and others. These controls and procedures are detailed as follows:

Recruitment and Training of Staff

All employees will be given a copy of the Health & Safety Policy with their relevant handbooks/contracts upon appointment. It is the responsibility of the employee's line manager to ensure that all new employees are taken through a health and safety induction which includes guidance on how to read and use this policy and an induction into the fire, evacuation and first aid rules relating to the working environment.

Participants will be informed of health and safety issues relevant to them at group induction sessions.

Employees & participants are asked to consult the General Manager if they are in doubt concerning the implementation of safe working procedures or if they consider arrangements to be unsafe.

Employees & participants must abide by the rules and regulations in force for the maintenance of a healthy and safe environment as detailed above. When health and safety is disregarded it will be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors where disciplinary action may be recommended.

All Health & Safety training needs will be identified by the General Manager. Training will be provided, where appropriate, in areas of health and safety awareness, first aid, the use of protective equipment and safety devices and manual handling.

Risk Assessment

The Board of Directors will identify the risk assessments to be undertaken and then delegate the responsibility of carrying out those risk assessments to the General Manager. Once risk assessments have been completed, preventative measures should be evaluated according to the risk assessment and improved if necessary.

Risk assessments should be carried out at regular intervals and the evaluations of these assessments to be completed and filed in the Health and Safety folder in EGO Performance Company's office.

An example risk assessment form is enclosed as appendix A.

Accident & Incident Reporting

A record of all accidents, however minor, should be managed by the General Manager. All injuries should be reported immediately in order that repeat accidents can be prevented. 'Near Miss' accidents should be reported to the General Manager, or senior member of staff on duty, immediately so that preventative measures can be taken.

First Aid

All employees are responsible with familiarising themselves with the first-aid points at each venue they work within.

An explanation of what to do in the event of an emergency is enclosed in Appendix B. Employees should administer first aid only if they have been formally trained to do so. If an alarm has been raised, and there is no fully trained person available to provide assistance, first aid should be administered under the guidance of a 999 call operator and/or Appendix B. Permission for first aid to be administered to youth theatre participants must be obtained from the young person's parent/carer prior to its provision.

Fire and Evacuation

Fire and evacuation procedures will differ from venue to venue. Responsibility for fire evacuation will lay with each employee. Employees should familiarise themselves with the posted fire precautions and drill procedure of each venue they work within and consider all health and safety issues when working at unfamiliar venues.

For touring productions, the Stage Manager is responsible for ensuring that all employees have familiarised themselves with the evacuation procedures for each venue worked within.

Workshops/Activities With Young People

- Youth leaders are responsible for leaving the workshop space clear of furniture at the end of every session. Chairs should be safely stacked and fire exits must be left clear of any obstructions
- Leaders must ensure that fire exits remain clear during sessions when furniture may be moved around
- Whilst EGO Performance Company recognises that the nature of performing arts involves physical activity, young people must be given the option to sit out of activities where they feel unsafe
- Leaders should consider the appropriateness of the activities to the age, ability and experience of the young people they are working with in relation to health and safety issues
- Young people should be properly instructed in the use of technical equipment and supervised where appropriate
- Young people should be regularly reminded of their contribution to the health and safety of themselves and others. Disciplinary action will be taken when individuals disregard health and safety rules
- Leaders must always consider health and safety issues in the design and implementation of workshops and equipment used for performance projects

Monitoring

The General Manager will ensure that working conditions are regularly monitored, ensuring that safe working practices are being followed. The General Manager is also responsible for investigating work-related accidents and is responsible for acting on findings from any such investigations to prevent a recurrence.

Appendix B – First Aid

What to do in an emergency

The first point of call in any emergency is to dial 999

If you have received first aid training as approved by the General Manager, you must respond to an emergency situation in line with your training. If you have not received training, and there is no fully trained person available to assist you, the 999 call operator will talk you through the necessary action to undertake.

If no other help is available, these notes should offer simple guidance on how to respond in an emergency situation until help arrives.

Priorities

Your priorities are to:

- assess the situation – do not put yourself in danger
- make the area safe
- assess all casualties and attend first to any **unconscious** casualties
- send for help – do not delay

Check for a response

Gently shake the casualty's shoulders and ask loudly, 'Are you all right?' If there is no response, your priorities are to:

- shout for help
- open the airway
- check for normal breathing
- take appropriate action

Don't forget your ABC!

Airway

To open the airway:

- place your hand on the casualty's forehead and gently tilt the head back
- lift the chin with two fingertips

Breathing

Look, listen and feel for normal breathing for no more than 10 seconds:

- look for chest movement
- listen at the casualty's mouth for breath sounds
- feel for air on your cheek

If the casualty is breathing normally:

- place in the recovery position
- get help
- check for continued breathing

If the casualty is not breathing normally:

- get help
- start chest compressions (see CPR)

CPR

To start chest compressions:

- lean over the casualty and with your arms straight, press down on the centre of the breastbone 4-5 cm, then release the pressure
- repeat at a rate of about 100 times a minute

- after 30 compressions open the airway again
- pinch the casualty's nose closed and allow the mouth to open
- take a normal breath and place your mouth around the casualty's mouth, making a good seal
- blow steadily into the mouth while watching for the chest rising
- remove your mouth from the casualty and watch for the chest falling
- give a second breath and then start 30 compressions again without delay
- continue with chest compressions and rescue breaths in a ratio of 30:2 until qualified help takes over or the casualty starts breathing normally.

Severe bleeding

If there is severe bleeding:

- apply direct pressure to the wound
- raise and support the injured part (unless broken)
- apply a dressing and bandage firmly in place

Broken bones and spinal injuries

If a broken bone or spinal injury is suspected, **obtain expert help. Do not move casualties** unless they are in immediate danger.

Burns

Burns can be serious so if in doubt, seek medical help:

Cool the affected part of the body with cold water until pain is relieved. Thorough cooling may take 10 minutes or more, but this must not delay taking the casualty to hospital.

Certain chemicals may seriously irritate or damage the skin. Avoid contaminating yourself with the chemical. Treat in the same way as for other burns but flood the affected area with water for 20 minutes. Continue treatment even on the way to hospital, if necessary. Remove any contaminated clothing which is not stuck to the skin.

Eye injuries

All eye injuries are potentially serious. If there is something in the eye, wash out the eye with clean water or sterile fluid from a sealed container, to remove loose material. **Do not attempt to remove anything that is embedded in the eye.** If chemicals are involved, flush the eye with water or sterile fluid for at least 10 minutes, while gently holding the eyelids open. Ask the casualty to hold a pad over the injured eye and send them to hospital.

Appendix C - Guidance for Users of Equipment

Computer Equipment

These guidelines cover the operation of all computer-based systems, including word processors and other display screen equipment. The guide refers to the provisions of the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 which require EGO Performance Company, as employers, to establish and maintain a safe working environment and operating procedures, so far as is practicable.

The User

A user is someone who regularly or habitually uses display screen equipment, where it forms an essential part of the work undertaken or where it is a specific requirement of the post, and where the normal daily use of equipment is for periods of 2 hours or more. Reference to users throughout these guidelines is in accordance with this definition.

Equipment

The following guidelines are agreed as necessary for the safe, efficient and comfortable use of equipment. It is recognised that these may need to be reviewed from time to time depending upon changes in technology and regulations:

- Equipment should not produce excessive heat, noise or vibration during operation. Steps should be taken, where applicable, to reduce these effects by the use of hoods, better equipment ventilation, etc.
- Anti-glare screens such as mesh filters to reduce screen glare will be fitted where requested.
- In order to eliminate any potential risks involved by using inappropriate keying techniques the user should consider the use of a wrist-rest, which can be incorporated into the keyboard.
- The screen size on equipment used mainly for routine word processing should not be less than 300mm measured diagonally. The minimum height of the characters on the screen should be 3mm.
- Aids for use with display screen equipment should be requested of the General Manager if required.
- It is recommended that users should not use equipment for more than one hour without a break (i.e. switching to alternative, non screen-based, work for at least 10 minutes).
- Staff allocating work should take account of the above and allow sufficient time for long or complex tasks involving display screen equipment.

The Work Station

- The user should be able to adjust the display screen and the chair position to suit themselves in order to maximise comfort and efficient display screen use.
- The keyboard should be positioned on a surface of normal desk height and the user should be able to adjust the position of the keyboard independently of the screen.
- The display screen and the keyboard should, as far as possible, be equidistant from the eye of the user.
- The display screen should be positioned in front of the user such that the screen height and angle allow for a comfortable head position.
- The keyboard and chair height should be positioned such that forearms extend approximately horizontally so as to ensure that wrist movement is comfortable and avoids fatigue in the arms and/or hands.
- A surface should be provided adjacent to the work station which is deep and wide enough to hold the relevant number of documents and be positioned on the appropriate side(s) of the keyboard dependent upon the user(s) being left or right handed.
- When renewal of furniture is being considered users should review their seating requirements so that they have seating which provides adequate support for the back. Where necessary the use of a footrest should be considered.
- Display screen equipment should be placed at right angles to windows or in such a position that the sunlight does not reflect directly on to the display screen or obstruct the user's field of vision when operating equipment. The use of window blinds or other devices for reducing direct sunlight onto the screen should be considered.
- There should be sufficient space between workstations to allow staff reasonable access.
- Good ventilation and natural light should be present in the area in which the work station is situated, the use of spot lamps should be used to highlight documents only

Using Ladders

- Do a pre-use check to ensure that the ladder is set up correctly
- Ensure there is space to fully open the ladder

- Use any locking devices
- Ground should be firm and level
- Have a strong upper resting point (not plastic guttering)
- Floors should be clean, not slippery
- Only do short duration work on a ladder (maximum 30 minutes) and work with loads up to 10 kg only
- Always grip the ladder when climbing
- Do not overreach - make sure your belt buckle (navel) stays within the stiles and keep both feet on the same rung or step throughout the task
- Do not work off the top three rungs – this provides a handhold

Good handling technique for lifting

Here are some practical tips in safe manual handling.

Think before lifting/handling. Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials.

For a long lift, consider

resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.

Adopt a stable position. The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). The worker should be prepared to move their feet during the lift to maintain their stability.

Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.

Get a good hold. Where possible the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.

Start in a good posture. At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).

Keep the load close to the waist. Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

Don't flex the back any further while lifting. This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.

Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Keep the head up when handling. Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

Move smoothly. The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed. There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.

Put down, then adjust. If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.

Source: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns>

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