



Rethinking safety through
INCLUSION
+
WELLBEING

HS+E INFORMATION

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL AND GUIDANCE

21/03/2024

OFFICE SAFETY

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This HS+E information provides a risk management approach is taken to promoting office health and safety and preventing illness and injuries, including musculoskeletal conditions to all Laing O'Rourke personnel involved in office environments. It also describes the requirements for office safety so that all personnel:

- Understand the basics of office safety
- Identify hazards in office environments
- Assess health and safety risks in office environments
- Make informed decisions when contributing to design and set up decisions for new office work environments or when purchasing new office equipment

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 PROJECT OFFICES

For Project offices, the Project Leader is the default person with overarching accountability for office safety. The Health and Safety Management Plan, along with supporting plans will identify the relevant processes, roles, and responsibilities necessary to ensure the office in managed consistent with Workplace Health and Safety legal requirements.

1.2 REGIONAL /HEAD OFFICES

For regional/head offices, the Facilities Manager, in consultation with relevant members of the AEC and the H&S Leader, will nominate the person who has overarching responsibility of day-to-day office safety and operations. The nominated person will ensure people have been identified and nominated for each of the following functions:

- Emergency Warden/s
- First Aid
- Return to Work Coordinator.

To support the nominated person in their responsibilities, regional/head offices may consider the creation of a health and safety committee (HSC). Health and Safety Representatives may also be nominated and appointed as per local regulatory requirements.

If established, a committee can support the nominated person in the identification of issues, incident/emergency response protocols, change management, communication and consultation with other office members, and decisions that may impact the office operations and people.

Refer **System Requirement Communication and Consultation** for further information on HS Committees.

2.0 ASSESSING THE RISKS

As part of the planning and office set up the project leader or nominated individual for regional offices will be accountable for the development of the specific risk assessment. To understand the nature of the work activities and the type of hazards involved, the following questions should be considered:

- Does the work involve exposure to infectious material or contaminants?
- Do workers need to change out of their clothes?
- Is the work mostly conducted standing or seated?
- Is the work sedentary or physically active?
- Is the work done in shifts?



Workers undertaking different work within the same workplace may also have different requirements for facilities depending on the work they do and the equipment they use.

The type of facilities needed for an office environment also depends on the size, location and nature of the workplace. For example, whether the work is carried out in a building or structure, or whether work is performed in a workplace belonging to another business should be taken into consideration. The following questions should be considered:

- Does the workplace cover an extensive area?
- Do the workers travel between workplaces?
- Is the workplace permanent or temporary?
- Is the workplace close to appropriate welfare facilities?
- Will the facilities be available at the times workers need to use them?
- Is the means of access safe?

The number of workers at the workplace will determine the size and type of facilities required. Facilities will consider the number of toilets, hand washing facilities against the number of workers who usually use them and the provision of privacy and security for men and women.

The requirements of workers with any particular needs or disabilities should also be addressed in the assessment of the workplace.

The planning phase will also allow consideration of the environmental conditions that could have an effect on individual well-being and posture. The work environment should be conducive to concentration and suitable for the tasks being performed.

Environmental factors that require consideration include:

- Lighting
- Noise
- Space
- Thermal comfort
- Ventilation

Other considerations include:

- Walkways should be well lit and be kept clear of materials, equipment, rubbish and electric leads
- Floors should be level and free of any spillage
- Free standing fittings should be completely stable or secured to the wall or floor
- Office machines and equipment should be kept in good working order
- High touch points should be hands free e.g. taps, dispensers and doors,
- Consider areas to enable inclusion and wellbeing i.e. multifaith space, quiet room

The means of entry and exit to and from the workplace must be safe. This may include ensuring that workers with special needs or disabilities can safely enter and leave the workplace. Entries and exits should be slip-resistant under wet and dry conditions.

Aisles and walkways should be kept free of furniture or other obstructions at all times. Where it is necessary to clearly define entry and exit routes, the boundaries of the route should be marked by a permanent line of white, yellow or other contrasting colour at least 50 mm wide or by glowing markers. Entry and exit routes, stairs and walkways should be adequately lit.



3.0 MAINTENANCE

The office work environment should be maintained so that it remains in a clean and safe condition. Broken or damaged furniture, fixtures and fittings, including chairs, plumbing, air-conditioning and lighting should be repaired promptly.

Facilities should be clean, safe, accessible and in good working order. Consumable items, including soap and toilet paper, should be replenished regularly. Equipment and furniture such as microwaves, fridges, lockers or seating should be maintained in good working order.

Workplaces and facilities should be cleaned regularly, usually on a daily or weekly basis. The cleaning schedule of facilities such as dining areas, toilets, hand basins and showers should take into account shift work, the type of work performed, the likelihood of contamination and the number of workers using them.

4.0 EVENT MANAGEMENT

Events, injuries and emergencies will be managed as outlined in **System Requirement Event Management, Reporting and Investigation, Primary Standard Emergency Planning and Response** and **System Requirement Injury Management and RTW**.

Relevant information will be disseminated to staff via the project or office induction.

For Regional / Head Offices, the nominated person, with support from the Health and Safety team, will ensure all events are investigated with any identified actions assigned to relevant persons and closed out.

With support from the Health and Safety Team, and where relevant the HSC, the nominated person will ensure any trends or other lessons learnt are identified, actioned, and communicated to other personnel.

The nominated person with support from the Health and Safety Team will ensure monthly safety performance data/information for the regional/head office is uploaded to IMPACT.