

CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE – 23RD OCTOBER 2003

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON TELEWORKING

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of a joint report by the Confederation of British Industry, Trades Union Congress and the Employers Organisation for Local Government, into Teleworking. This subject is becoming increasingly relevant, as more employees work from home using IT equipment provided by their employers.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Teleworking is defined, in the report, as “a form of organising and/or performing work, using Information Technology, in the context of an employment contract/relationship, where work, which could also be performed at the employers premises, is carried on away from those premises, on a regular basis”.

2.2 When setting up a teleworking network, it will be necessary for a number of issues to be addressed, including health and safety considerations.

2.3 An employer’s duties, under Health and Safety Legislation remain the same, namely:

(i) Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

(a) The employers duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees;

(b) The Health and Safety Policy must reflect the new work activity

(ii) Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999

(a) The employer must carry out written risk assessments, including those for female employees who are pregnant or have given birth within the last six months

(iii) Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992

(a) The workstation and I.T. equipment provided must allow compliance with the regulations

(b) Teleworkers must be trained, allowed eye tests and regular breaks away from the screen

(iv) Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

(a) The equipment supplied must comply with existing safety standards and be C.E marked.

In addition, an employer must provide adequate first aid supplies.

- 2.4 Similarly, an employee engaged in teleworking is obliged to work in a safe manner, to report faults and accidents and allow access to officers of the enforcing Authority, the employer and workers representatives, subject to prior notification and agreement.
- 2.5 The document advises employers that they should carry out a self-assessment of the risks from work activities carried out in the home.

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