

Health and Safety in the Media Industries: A Guide

It is recognised that the Media industry is largely made up of organisations employing between one and four persons and the majority of these are self-employed. The '1974 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act' places responsibility for health and safety on employers, employees and the self employed.

Responsibilities

Anyone working on a project where visioncreate.tv is the host broadcaster, or where visioncreate.tv is providing facilities, must comply with all current relevant safety requirements including, but not limited to, those issued by the UK Health & Safety Commission and Executive, the Home Office, and Vision: West Notts.

Anyone using their own equipment should ensure that it has been tested for safe use in the UK and should have a copy of the safety test/certificate available to give to the visioncreate.tv on request.

To comply with UK health and safety legislation, those in control of the work must:

- Assess the risks of the work involved and control the risks to an acceptable level as stated by the Health and safety executive
- Ensure that those working have appropriate instructions, information and training to carry out the work safely
- Provide information about the risks and controls to those involved and the arrangements in place for emergencies
- Co-ordinate the activities of those involved in the work

For further information on how UK legislation applies to the broadcasting industry, see the following Health & Safety Executive publication:

Health & Safety in audio-visual production www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg360.pdf

Health and Safety On Location

Location safety mainly resolves around 'trips, slips and hazards'. Each location must be assessed by the production team to ascertain hazards and where possible to control these to reduce any injury resulting from an incident, especially to any member of the public. The production team, should work within the framework of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and where reasonably practicable, take steps to ensure the safety of themselves and others around them.

The following health and safety considerations should be taken into account before, during and after film projects.

- Carry out a visit to the location to discuss arrangements with the customer, requesting where necessary, permission for access and right to take photographs
- Carry out a risk assessment particular to the areas where the crew may wish to record. You may wish to create a risk assessment form to document this and get the relevant people to sign it (e.g. the person carrying out the assessment and the owner of the property)
- Ensure that where necessary the location has adequate fire precautions and signage in place

- Consult with the owner, where necessary, of the location on any risk assessment they may have carried out and what actions were required and have these been effectively implemented
- Share with the crew any health and safety concerns and, if necessary, the location management
- Ensure that all equipment is maintained and safe to use, especially electrical equipment
- Ensure that all production team members are trained to use equipment safely
- Take precautions to minimise any identified potential problems related to safety affecting the production and to any other people at the location.

visioncreate.tv has included is a visual reference chart for *three step risk assessments* at the end of this guide to help you get started. We recommend you print it out and refer to it regularly whilst on location.

Health and Safety in The Vision Create TV Studio

There are several risk assessments that visioncreate.tv has undertaken in relation to the studio and provide training for. These include:

- fire precautions
- using display screen equipment (DSE)
- manual handling
- control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH).

Fire precautions relate to having adequate types of fire extinguishers, which must be regularly serviced; displaying escape and emergency signage and ensuring escape routes are free from obstructions.

With the increased use of computers and digital equipment for manipulating images it is essential to consider the people who use display screen equipment (DSE) for long periods of time. It is very important to ensure that the computer, the workstation and the working environment meet current safety regulations, to lessen the possibility of wrist and eye strain.

Most crew members will, at some time, have to lift reasonably heavy and bulky equipment, such as lighting. A risk assessment will highlight the potential damage to the human torso, which may result in long-term absence from work. Manual handling training can help people to store equipment at correct heights and how to lift objects. Also, a risk assessment can indicate where mechanical aids such as trolleys can be of help.

With the advent of digital imaging in the industry, chemicals for processing and printing (wet processing) are not so widely used. There are however certain products used which are hazardous, for example, batteries and printer ink cartridges, along with industrial cleaning substances. These should all be listed as required by COSHH on a risk assessment.

Electrical safety is also very important. All electrical equipment such as lighting equipment should be tested (usually referred to as portable appliance testing) at specified intervals. The electrical wiring installation of the studio facilities also requires testing at specified intervals. A competent person should carry out all testing and records of these tests must be kept.

