

## Lothian Operational Standard

### LB-HS-114 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

This Standard details the minimum requirements for ensuring compliance with health and safety legislation and implementation of the Lothian H&S Policy Statement.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

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Some substances used at work can be harmful to those working with them however exposure and subsequent ill health is preventable.

'Substances hazardous to health' include substances or preparations which:

- Are defined in CLP<sup>1</sup> Regulations as "dangerous to supply" and carry a warning label indicating Explosive, Flammable, Oxidising, Corrosive, Acute toxicity or Hazardous to the environment,
- Are allocated a workplace exposure limit,
- Is dust that is present in quantities equal or greater than
  - 10 mg/m<sup>3</sup>, 8hr TWA inhalable dust
  - 4 mg/m<sup>3</sup>, 8hr TWA respirable dust
- Is a biological agent e.g. a micro-organism which can cause infection, allergy, toxicity or otherwise create a hazard to human health,
- Is any other substance which, because of properties and the way it is used or is present, creates a risk to health

NOTE: COSHH Regulations do not include lead or asbestos for which there is separate legislation

#### 2. POLICY STATEMENT

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Lothian are committed to ensuring that where work involves the use of hazardous substances the least hazardous substance is purchased and any risks associated with the use of hazardous substances are managed and ill health prevented.

#### 3. SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

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The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations impose duties on the employers to:

- Identify and understand health hazards associated with the work activities
- Assess the risks to health arising from activities involving hazardous substances
- Implement control measures as necessary to reduce harm to health

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<sup>1</sup> CLP (Classification, Labelling and Packaging) Regulations

- Maintain control measures in good working order;
- Provide information, instruction and training for employees and anyone else that might be affected;
- Provide monitoring and health surveillance as appropriate to the risk;
- Plan for emergencies
- Retain health records

## 4. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

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### Substance Inventory and Procurement

#### 4.1 Each location must ensure:

- An up-to-date inventory of hazardous substances is maintained within the SYPOL system
- COSHH Assessments are created, stored, and accessed digitally via SYPOL

#### 4.2 Where a case can be made for the introduction of a new substance:

- The initiating location must complete a OM156 – COSHH Assessment Request Form (**Appendix 1**)
- This must include the **Safety Data Sheet (SDS)** and all required information
- The request must be submitted to the **H&S Manager** for review via the SYPOL system

No substance may be purchased, introduced, or used until:

- A COSHH assessment has been completed within SYPOL, and
- Formal approval has been granted by the H&S Manager

### Assessing the Risks

A suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks from exposure to hazardous substances must be carried out and documented.

4.3 COSHH assessments have been carried out and documented for core activities which involve the use of hazardous substances.

4.4 The COSHH assessment must be reviewed in order to ensure local or “site specific” assessment. Each hazard must be considered individually in order to identify how exposure may occur and evaluate whether the control measures are adequate to control the risk to personnel.

4.5 Where the existing control measures have not been implemented and risks are not under control, additional action that will be taken locally to reduce the risks must be identified.

4.6 Where there are additional hazards, the risks associated with these must be evaluated and the control measures necessary to reduce the risks must be identified and documented.

#### **New Substances and Assessments**

4.7 Where there is no existing assessment within the SYPOL system, a new COSHH assessment must be requested using the COSHH Assessment Request Form and completed within SYPOL prior to use.

4.8 When completing a COSHH assessment within SYPOL, the manager or competent person must ensure that it:

- a) Identifies the person or persons at risk,
- b) Identifies the hazards,
- c) Evaluates the risks
- d) Identifies the control measures necessary to reduce the risk to an acceptable level
- e) The assessment is documented

4.9 Any significant additional hazards identified through Sypol assessments must be brought to the attention of the H&S Department.

#### **Controlling Exposure**

4.10 The control measures identified in the risk assessment must be implemented and maintained.

4.11 In all cases the prevention of exposure must be considered by:

- a) Changing the method of work so that the operation giving rise to the exposure is no longer necessary; or
- b) Modifying a process to eliminate the production of a hazardous by-product or waste product; or
- c) Substituting with non-hazardous substances

4.12 Where elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable the following measures should be considered to reduce exposure:

- d) Change the process to emit less of the substance
- e) Enclose the process so that the product does not escape
- f) Extract emissions of the substance near the source
- g) Have as few workers in harm's way as possible
- h) As a last resort provide personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, coveralls and a respirator

If your control measures include f, g and h, make sure they all work together.

**4.13** The eight principles of good control practice must ALL be applied in order to ensure effective and reliable control. More information can be found in Schedule 2A of the Approved Code of Practice, L5

**Principle (a)**

Design and operate processes and activities to minimise emission, release and spread of substances hazardous to health

**Principle (b)**

Take into account all relevant routes of exposure – inhalation, skin and ingestion when developing control measures

**Principle (c)**

Control exposure by measures that are proportionate to the health risk

**Principle (d)**

Choose the most effective and reliable control options that minimise the escape and spread of substances hazardous to health

**Principle (e)**

Where adequate control of exposure cannot be achieved by other means, provide, in combination with other control measures, suitable personal protective equipment

**Principle (f)**

Check and review regularly all elements of control measures for their continuing effectiveness

**Principle (g)**

Inform and train all employees on the hazards and risks from substances with which they work, and the use of control measures developed to minimise the risks

**Principle (h)**

Ensure that the introduction of measures to control exposure does not increase the overall risk to health and safety

### **Use and Maintenance of Control Measures**

**4.14** Control measures must be properly implemented and maintained including periodic examination of mechanical control measures and any respiratory and personal protective equipment.

**4.15** Mechanical control measures e.g. local exhaust ventilation, must be checked before use, regularly maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and thoroughly examined at least every 14 months.

**4.16** Where the risk assessment indicates personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or respiratory protective equipment (RPE), the equipment must be suitable for the task, offer the correct protection and fit the user properly in order to be effective.

**4.17** All PPE and RPE must be visually inspected before use, kept clean and in good working order and maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

**4.18** RPE must be checked once every 3 months and damage seals and valves changed and air quality to air fed RPE checked every 3 months

- 4.19 The issue of RPE and PPE must be recorded, retained and records of inspection, maintenance and thorough examinations should be retained for at least 5 years.
- 4.20 Arrangements must be in place to ensure that defects in control measures are reported and remedial action taken as appropriate.

### **Monitoring**

- 4.21 Air monitoring should be undertaken periodically to show that Workplace Exposure Limits, where set, are being complied with.
- 4.22 Biological monitoring should be carried out in conjunction with air monitoring to show that control measures are working properly and exposure is being prevented or properly controlled.

### **Health Surveillance**

- 4.23 Potential new employees or existing employees being transferred to jobs which are likely to expose them to a substance which is associated with an ill health effect is required to participate in an ongoing health surveillance programme.
- 4.24 Employees are legally obliged to co-operate with the manager by attending referral appointments for health assessment as recommended by the Occupational Health Provider.
- 4.25 Where a diagnosis has been made, the manager must prevent further harm to the employee by acting on the advice of the occupational health specialist.
- 4.26 The manager should monitor the effectiveness of their control measures by analysing trends from the health surveillance data of anonymised groups of employees.

### **External Reporting of Cases of Ill Health**

- 4.27 Where the occupational health specialist or a doctor has made a confirmed diagnosis of occupational disease and this is associated with a relevant work activity the manager must inform the H&S Manager who will ensure that it is reported to the local HSE office on Form 2508A in accordance with The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, (RIDDOR)
- 4.28 The report must be submitted as soon as possible after the doctor has notified you that your employee is suffering from a work related disease. A record of the report must be retained.

### **Emergency Procedures**

- 4.29 Emergency procedures must be established to limit risks to health, regain control and deal with waste from following leakage, spillage or uncontrolled release.

- 4.30 Arrangements must be in place to ensure the provision of first aid i.e. the availability of trained first aiders and suitable first aid facilities.
- 4.31 Employees must be aware of the correct action to take in an emergency. Summary information and guidance for employees on substances has been developed. This should be made available to employees and displayed at H&S Information Notice boards. (See Information, Instruction and Training).

### **Information Instruction and Training**

Employees must be provided with clear and relevant information and instruction on:

- The risks identified in the SYPOL COSHH assessment
  - The control measures implemented
  - How to access COSHH assessments digitally via SYPOL
  - Emergency procedures
- 4.32 All non-employees, such as temporary or contract workers must be informed of risks as relevant to the work they are undertaking.
- 4.33 Arrangements should be in place to ensure employees allocated with responsibility for carrying out assessments or ensuring maintenance of control measures, including the checking and maintenance of PPE and RPE, are provided with an appropriate level of training, information and instruction to ensure competence.
- 4.34 Managers must regularly assess the competency of employees and ensure training and instruction is provided and refreshed at regular intervals i.e. every 3-5 years.
- 4.35 All training information or instruction given to employees or non-employees must be documented and records retained.

## **5. WHO SHOULD DO IT**

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### **5.1 Managing Director must:**

- Ensure responsibility is appropriately allocated for the management of COSHH and necessary resources are made available to enable duties under the COSHH Regulations to be fully discharged and any remedial actions addressed

### **5.2 Directors and Senior Managers must:**

- Ensure arrangements for assessing and controlling risks associated with the use and storage of hazardous substances are in place at each location and that responsibilities for implementing control measures have been allocated for each location within their responsibility
- Ensure that arrangements for the control of substances hazardous to health are regularly monitored and reviewed in the light of changes to legislation or working practice or in the event of an incident or ill health

- Ensure managers undertaking COSHH risk assessments are competent and have received an appropriate level of training, instruction and information

### **5.3 Line Managers e.g. Engineering Managers, Operations Managers or equivalent must:**

- Identify substances used in the workplace and the tasks and activities that might expose employees to a health risk
- Ensure that COSHH assessments are requested, reviewed, and accessed via the SYPOL system and that no substances are used without prior approval
- Define, implement and maintain measures to prevent or control the risks from hazardous substances in accordance with risk assessment and hierarchy of control
- Communicate the outcome of the COSHH risk assessment i.e. risks and precautions specific to the substance and the way in which it is used in the workplace and provide instruction, information and training as necessary on the action to take in the event of an emergency
- Regularly assess the competence of those nominated with a specific role are competent and ensure they receive appropriate level of training and instruction at regular intervals
- Ensure non-employees, for whom they are responsible, have received information on the risks, control measures and the action to take in the event of an emergency
- Ensure health surveillance is carried out at the required frequency
- Take disciplinary action where employees fail to adhere to control measures

### **5.4 HR Managers must:**

- Ensure new potential employees and those being transferred to jobs involving exposure to hazardous substances, where there is a health risk, are screened prior to their appointment
- A robust health surveillance programme and referral procedures are developed and implemented for those exposed to risks from hazardous substances
- Health records from health surveillance and fitness to work advice are retained for 50 years

### **5.5 Stores & Purchasing Manager must:**

- Ensure that no substances are ordered or introduced unless an approved COSHH assessment exists within SYPOL
- Verify that a COSHH Assessment Request Form has been completed and approved prior to purchase

#### 5.6 H&S Manager must:

- Provide advice on how to implement the H&S requirements in order to ensure continued compliance with COSHH legislation
- Review and approve all new COSHH assessment requests submitted via the SYPOL system
- Maintain oversight of the SYPOL COSHH database to ensure completeness and compliance
- Assist managers and support the risk assessment process

#### 5.7 Employees must:

- Familiarise themselves with the risks and precautions associated with hazardous substances they use in the workplace and the action to take in the event of an emergency
- Cooperate with management, and others who have responsibility for ensuring control measures are maintained at all times
- Not misuse or damage equipment which has been provided to reduce exposure and report any defects in control measures to their line manager
- Participate in the health surveillance programme and attend referral appointments as appropriate
- Report defects in control measure immediately to the line manager
- Raise any concerns about their health and safety with their manager in the first instance

## 6. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

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- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (as amended) and Approved Code of Practice, L5
- EH40/2005 Workplace Exposure Limits (as updated by HSE)
- The Classification, Labelling and Packaging of Chemicals Regulations 2015
- The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (as amended 2022)
- SYPOL COSHH Management System