

## Health & Safety Policy - Contents

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# Health & Safety Policy

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose and Availability**

- i) This policy is intended to cover all drama activities of Tiverton Dramatic Society known hereafter as the 'Society'.
- ii) The purpose of the policy is (as far as reasonably practicable) to ensure the safety of members, employees, volunteers and the general public who are involved in any way with the activities of the Society.
- iii) The policy is intended to inform and guide the judgements and practices of those who are in any way involved in the production of an event or a performance.
- iv) Officers of the Society have a duty to ensure that Health & Safety Policies and Codes of Practice are adopted and monitored and may appoint or delegate a representative to undertake this task.
- v) This policy should be accessible to all members of the Society, employees, volunteers and the general public.

### **Compliance**

This document is intended to be informative and to guide the activities of the Society. All aspects of this document will be adhered to so far as reasonably practicable.

A Health & Safety Policy Statement should be completed as appropriate and available for inspection by members of the Society as each AGM or on demand by members, the emergency services or the Health & Safety Executive.

### **Scope**

This policy covers the maintenance, inspection and testing of all equipment and materials owned or used by the Society and all persons who use them; the buildings used by the Society and the training of member or volunteers of the Society.

- i) All relevant current legislation and guidance should be referred to and adhered to as appropriate. (see section 'Legislation & Guidance')
- ii) All members or volunteers of the Society shall be trained as appropriate in respect of the tasks that they are expected to undertake. (see section 'Training')
- iii) All equipment and materials owned or used by the Society shall be inspected and tested as appropriate. (see section 'Maintenance, Inspection and Testing')
- iv) All buildings used by the Society shall be inspected as appropriate. (see section 'Maintenance, Inspection and Testing')
- v) All activities of the Society should be assessed for hazards. (see section 'Risk Assessments')

### **Legislation & Guidance**

Current legislation affecting the performing arts is manifold and if any doubt arises about a situation then advice should be sought from the Health & Safety Executive. In particular, the legislation affecting performing arts includes:

- i) Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- ii) The Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations)
- iii) COSHH - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- iv) LOLER - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations
- v) Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992
- vi) Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- vii) PUWER - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- viii) Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- ix) Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- x) The Health & Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989
- xi) Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969
- xii) RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
- xiii) Noise at Work Regulations 1989
- xiv) Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- xv) Guidance on the use of Flashing Lights and smoke

The relevance of the legislation and guidance as stated above (examples given in brackets):

- i) Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 sets out general duties which employers have towards employees and members of the public, and employees have to each other. These duties are qualified in the Act by the principle of "so far as reasonably practicable". This means that measures do not have to be taken if they are technically impossible or if the time, trouble and cost of the measures would be grossly disproportionate to the risk.
- ii) The Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations) describes that which employers are required to do to manage health and safety under the Health & Safety at Work Act. The main requirement is that all employers carry out a risk assessment. The findings of the risk assessment must be recorded where there are five or more employees. (All activities of the Society should be assessed for risk except where it is a normal daily activity for most people)
- iii) COSHH - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 requires that risks from hazardous substances be assessed and adequate precautions taken. (The use of paints, varnishes and spray cans etc.)
- iv) LOLER - Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations require that lifting equipment is strong enough and suitable enough for its intended use. This applies even if an employee provides his own equipment for use. Hoists, chains and linkages are all covered by these regulations. (Lifting heavy equipment onto fly towers or lighting barrels etc.)
- v) Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992 cover heating, ventilation, lighting, seating and welfare facilities. (In rented spaces, any problems in respect of this regulation should be reported to the owner)

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- vi) Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 require employers to provide appropriate protective clothing for their employees. (Hard hats, leather gloves, face masks, goggles etc.)
- vii) PUWER - Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 require that equipment provided for work is safe. (Power tools etc.)
- viii) Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 covers the moving of heavy objects by hand or bodily force. (The regulation requires a risk assessment to be performed for all movements of heavy objects and consideration must be given to the physical nature of the employee)
- ix) Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 cover requirements for First Aid. (A First Aid kit must be provided at the place of work etc.)
- x) The Health & Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989 require employers to display a poster telling employees what they need to know about Health & Safety. (Standard posters are available from a range of sources)
- xi) Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969 requires employers to take out insurance against accidents and ill health to their employees. (Accident insurance must be provided which covers all those working at a performance, rehearsal or other venue)
- xii) RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 requires employers to notify certain occupational injuries, diseases and dangerous events. (Falls from height, inhalation of toxic fumes etc.)
- xiii) Noise at Work Regulations 1989 requires employers to take action to protect employees from hearing damage. (Ear defenders, ear plugs, screens etc.)
- xiv) Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 requires people in control of electrical systems to ensure that they are safe to use and maintained in a safe condition. (Lighting and sound equipment, hoists etc.)
- xv) Guidance on the use of smoke and flashing lights is available from the HSE. However, for theatrical purposes, when stroboscopic effects are used, warnings must be provided at the auditorium entrance and by audio announcement prior to the show. In addition, the flash rate must be limited to 5 flashes per second. (Light activated epilepsy is a factor affecting the use of flashing lights)

**Important Note:** As far as the regulations are concerned, members and volunteers are to be considered as employees and the officers of the Society are to be considered as employers.

**Maintenance, Inspection and Testing**

Health & Safety law requires that all work equipment be maintained in a safe condition. In order to achieve this equipment must be maintained, inspected and, where necessary, tested. This may require the involvement of specialist contractors or other competent persons.

There are two levels of inspection:

- a visual check carried out by persons before use
- formal maintenance/inspection checks carried out by competent persons trained for the purpose, or appropriate contractors. These are usually carried out annually but may depend on the frequency of use and mobility of the equipment concerned.

All formal inspections shall be recorded in a log maintained for the purpose.

The Society is not responsible for the formal maintenance, inspection and testing of equipment or materials which are not under their ownership. However, officers of the Society may demand to see the formal inspection record of any venue in which they operate.

Visual inspections before use are required of all equipment and materials whether or not owned by the Society. All concerns raised through these visual inspections should be notified to an officer of the Society who will act on the findings accordingly. Where the equipment and materials failing a visual inspection are not owned by the Society then the owners should be informed as soon as practicable and no use of the said equipment and materials should be made until rectification has taken place.

Health & Safety is the responsibility of everyone and, as such, any faults, defects, problems or occurrences which relate to the property of persons or organizations other than the Society but have been observed by members or volunteers of the Society or the general public should be notified to those responsible as soon as is practicable.

### **Risk Assessments**

A risk assessment is an important step in protecting workers as well as complying with the law. It helps focus on the risks that really matter - the ones with potential to cause real harm.

It may be impossible to eliminate all risks but the requirement is that persons are protected as far as reasonably practicable.

Risk assessments require the following five steps to be taken:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- Record the findings and implement them
- Review the assessment and update if necessary

A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm such as chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, open drawers etc..

The **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Risk assessments should be in place for all activities of the Society. All risk assessments should be recorded in a log suitable for that purpose. (see Appendix B)

A fire risk assessment should be provided by the owner of the venue on demand.

### Training

Every employer has a duty of care to his workforce whether they be members of the organization or volunteers. The Society, therefore, has the same duty of care. When tasks are required to be done which may involve an element of risk then adequate training must be given by a competent or qualified person. It must never be assumed that, if a person or persons volunteer for a task, or are requested to do a task, that they are competent enough to fulfil that task without appropriate training being given. This applies to all tasks related to the business of the Society.

The types of tasks which require training are too numerous to mention but examples are given below of tasks which require persons to be trained before they are undertaken.

- the use of power tools
- the use of hand tools liable to cause injury
- the manual handling of heavy, large or unstable items
- the erection and use of tower scaffolds
- the use of non-domestic electrical equipment
- the visual inspection of electrical equipment
- the use of lifting equipment
- the visual inspection of lifting equipment
- the use of ladders and step ladders
- the visual inspection of ladders and step ladders
- the role of Fire Warden
- the use of PPE - personal protective equipment
- any tasks which are not considered to be part of day to day domestic activity
- fire proofing of materials

Persons who may provide the training could include:

- builders
- carpenters
- electricians
- Fire Officers
- persons who are experienced, competent and familiar with the equipment in question

When at a performance venue, the stage director or stage manager or other officer of the Society must ensure that all persons working on the project in hand have had appropriate training and are aware of the many hazards that may exist. When overhead work is in progress, the person responsible for such work must ensure that all persons are clear from the area underneath the work in progress.

Training is required to be given to all front of house staff prior to each public performance. This must include their duties in respect of the evacuation of the building in the event of an emergency and the uses for each type of fire extinguisher. (see Appendix A)

It is required that the Society keep a record of those responsible for providing the various types of training and those who have undertaken the training. This can be in the form of a simple tick sheet with names.

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### **Emergency Procedures**

For every performance where the general public is admitted to the performance space, there must be adequate front of house staff who are trained in evacuation procedures. Normally, there should be one member of staff allocated to each fire exit. These are known as fire wardens. All fire wardens should carry a torch, and a means of communicating with each other and with backstage.

Where there is no public telephone at the venue a mobile phone or other method of immediately contacting the emergency services should be provided.

A trained First Aider should be present at the venue at all times that there is a public performance.

Safety should always be considered before fighting fires. Except where it can be managed and extinguished easily, e.g. paper in a waste bin, a fire should not be tackled unless safe to do so. Evacuating the premises is the first priority.

At times other than when the general public is present, a telephone should be available in the case of an emergency.

**Appendix A - Fire Extinguishers, Types and Uses**

**Appendix B - Risk Assessment Form (sample)**

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# **Health & Safety Policy**

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