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Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 343

Adopted 6 August 2002

Labour Protection Requirements when Working with Displays

Issued pursuant to Section 25, Clause 4 of the Labour Protection Law

I. General Provisions

1. These Regulations prescribe the labour protection requirements when working with a display (an input-output device which, with the help of a screen, enables to input into a computer and output from it text and graphic information of various types in a visual form).

2. Labour protection requirements prescribed in these Regulations shall apply to employees, who work with displays in workstations for at least two hours each working day when performing the duties of employment.

3. A workstation is a workplace which has a computer and devices for the provision of operation thereof (system block, display screen, software, keyboard, input device) determining the connection between an operator and a machine. A workstation may also be provided with other accessories necessary for work, for example, a printer, scanner, modem, disc drive, telephone, fax apparatus and document holder. A workstation also includes the part of the room necessary for work with a display, work desk and work chair.

4. These Regulations shall not apply to work with:

- 4.1. displays in driver's cabs or control cabs for vehicles or machinery;
- 4.2. stationary computer systems of means of transport (also water transport and air transport);
- 4.3. computer systems intended for public use;
- 4.4. portable computer systems which are not in continuous use at a workplace;
- 4.5. cash registers, calculators, measuring instruments and other devices the screen of which, in accordance with the standards referred to in Paragraph 5 of these Regulations, is considered to be small; and
- 4.6. typewriters of traditional design with a screen.

5. The State non-profit limited liability company *Latvijas standarts* [Latvian Standard] shall submit for publication in the newspaper *Latvijas Vēstnesis* [the official Gazette of the Government of Latvia] a list of those Latvian national standards which may be applied to fulfil the requirements set out in these Regulations (hereinafter – applicable standards).

6. If applicable standards have been complied with in fulfilling the requirements set out in Chapter III of these Regulations, the requirements set out in Chapter III of these Regulations shall be considered as having been complied with.

7. An employer shall be responsible for compliance with these Regulations.

8. Compliance with these Regulations shall be supervised and controlled by the State Labour Inspection.

II. Obligations of Employers

9. Employers shall ensure the conformity of workstations with the requirements set out in Chapter III of these Regulations.

10. The obligations of an employer are as follows:

10.1. to specify the working environment risk factors of a workstation and to evaluate the potential risk to the safety and health of employees, particularly the risk of physical and mental stress;

10.2. to take measures to prevent the risks detected in the evaluation referred to in Sub-paragraph 10.1 of these Regulations;

10.3. to inform employees or their representatives regarding all measures of labour protection performed at their workplaces, in particular regarding measures taken by the employer in accordance with Sub-paragraphs 10.1 and 10.5 and Paragraph 11 of these Regulations;

10.4. to appropriately train employees before commencing work and each time when the working environment or organisation of work has been significantly changed;

10.5. to plan the work of employees in such a way that the daily work on a display screen is periodically interrupted by breaks or that the nature of the work is changed in order to reduce the sight load, physical and mental load; and

10.6. to consult with employees or their trusted representatives, and representatives of employees regarding the safety and health protection at workplace, as well as to ensure the participation of employees in solving the relevant issues.

11. Employers shall provide employees who work on display screen with mandatory health examinations, including eyesight tests in accordance with the procedures specified in regulatory enactments:

11.1. before commencing display screen work;

11.2. periodic examinations; and

11.3. if an employee complains about visual difficulties which could be caused by display screen work.

12. If it has been determined in a health examination that an employee requires special medical optical corrective appliances (spectacles) appropriate to the performance of the employment duties, the employer shall provide these to the relevant employee.

13. Expenses for the eyesight test referred to in Sub-paragraph 11.2 of these Regulations shall be covered by the employer, but the costs of the eyesight test referred to in Sub-paragraphs 11.1 and 11.3 shall be covered by the employer or the employee on the basis of mutual agreement if not otherwise provided for by the contract of employment.

14. Expenses required for the fulfilment of the requirements referred to in Paragraph 12 of these Regulations (for example, acquisition of spectacle lenses and spectacle frames, manufacturing of spectacles for work) shall be covered by the employer. The employer shall specify the procedures for the acquisition of special medical optical corrective appliances (spectacles) in the working procedure regulations or the collective labour contract. Prior to the drawing up of working procedure regulations or entering into the collective labour contract the employer shall consult with employees or their trusted representatives, and representatives of the employees.

III. Prevention or Reduction of Risk

15. A workstation shall be organised so that utilisation thereof does not endanger the safety and health of an employee.

16. A display screen shall comply with the following requirements:

16.1. the characters on the screen shall be clearly formed, of adequate size and with adequate spacing between characters and lines;

16.2. the image on the screen shall be stable, with no flickering or other forms of instability;

16.3. the brightness and contrast between the characters and the background shall be easily adjustable and adaptable to conditions by an employee;

16.4. the screen shall swivel and tilt easily to suit the needs of the employee;

16.5. the display shall have a separate base or an adjustable table; and

16.6. the screen shall be free of reflective glare and reflection that may cause discomfort to the employee.

17. The keyboard shall comply with the following requirements:

17.1. the keyboard shall be tiltable and separate from the screen and the employee may find a comfortable working position to avoid fatigue in the arms or hands;

17.2. the surface of the keyboard shall have a matt surface and shall prevent reflective glare;

17.3. the arrangement of the keyboard and the keys shall be easy to use; and

17.4. the symbols on the keys shall be sufficiently contrasted and legible.

18. The work desk shall comply with the following requirements:

- 18.1. the work desk shall have a low-reflectance surface;
- 18.2. the height of the work desk shall be appropriate to particular features of the body of the employee taking into account the requirements and principles of ergonomics;
- 18.3. the work desk surface shall be sufficiently large so as the employee may support his or her hands and arms thereon, change the positioning of devices and objects at the workplace, as well as find a comfortable working position;
- 18.4. the space in front of the keyboard shall be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the employee; and
- 18.5. the document holder shall be stable and adjustable and shall be positioned so as to minimise the need for uncomfortable head and eye movements.

19. The work chair shall comply with the following requirements:

- 19.1. the work chair shall be stable and allow the worker freedom of movement and a comfortable position;
- 19.2. the seat of the work chair shall be adjustable in height;
- 19.3. the seat back of the work chair shall be adjustable in both height and tilt; and
- 19.4. each employee shall have a footrest if he or she wishes.

20. The layout of the workroom shall comply with the following requirements:

- 20.1. the dimensions and design of the workstation shall provide sufficient space for the employee to change the body position and move freely;
- 20.2. room lighting and workplace lighting shall be sufficient and ensure appropriate contrast between the screen and the background environment, taking into account the type of work and the vision requirements of the employee;
- 20.3. possible disturbing glare and reflections on the screen or other equipment shall be prevented by co-ordinating the workstation layout with natural lighting, the positioning and technical characteristics of the artificial light sources;
- 20.4. the sources of light, windows, transparent or translucent walls and brightly coloured fixtures or walls of the workstations shall not cause direct glare and, as far as possible, the reflections on the screen;
- 20.5. windows shall be fitted with a suitable system of adjustable covering to reduce the daylight that falls on the workstation;
- 20.6. the noise emitted by equipment of the workstation shall not impede conversation and concentration on the performance of work duties in the workroom;
- 20.7. the equipment of the workstation shall not emit excess heat that could cause discomfort to the employee;
- 20.8. all radiation shall be reduced to a level that does not endanger the health of the employee; and
- 20.9. an adequate level of humidity shall be maintained in the workroom.

21. In designing, selecting, commissioning and modifying software, as well as in determining tasks connected with the use the workstation equipment, the following requirements shall be complied with:

21.1. the software shall be suitable to the performance of the work duties of the employee, and, as far as possible, appropriate to the experience and level of knowledge of the employee;

21.2. it is prohibited to utilise computer programs which control the quality or quantity of work of the employee without prior notification of the employee;

21.3. the software shall ensure the awareness of the employee of the operation of the computer program and the work results;

21.4. information on the display screen shall appear in a form and at a speed acceptable to the employee; and

21.5. the principles of ergonomics shall be complied with, including the ergonomic requirements for the software, in particular if the employee is involved in data processing.

IV. Closing Provision

22. Workstations established by 1 June 2001 shall be modified by 31 December 2004 in conformity with the requirements of these Regulations.

Prime Minister

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Minister for Welfare

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