

6.2 Health and Safety Legislation

The following is not intended to be a definitive list, but instead identifies those regulations that impact significantly on the workplace where activities may be undertaken.

6.2.1 Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

This places a duty on employers to “ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees”. In turn, employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

6.2.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Health and safety in the workplace needs to be managed in order for continuous improvements to be made. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require employers to:-

- i) identify and assess risks to their employees and others
- ii) introduce effective arrangements to implement appropriate preventative and protective measures to control risk
- iii) ensure that risks are periodically reviewed and the effectiveness of control measures are regularly checked

6.2.3 The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM)

The CDM regulations were introduced because of an unacceptably high death and injury rate in the construction industry. These regulations have an impact on all stages of the planning and management of health and safety of a project, they place duties on clients, designers and construction organisations.

Whilst a designer cannot eliminate all health and safety risks, he or she can make a significant contribution, by tackling risks at source, giving priority to measures which give protection to everyone affected by the risk and passing on health and safety information.

The CDM 2007 Regulations revise and bring together the CDM Regulations 1994 and the Construction (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1996 into a single regulations package.

6.2.4 Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

The PUWER regulations originally came into force from 1st January 1993 and they are intended to sit alongside and compliment other Health and Safety legislation and in particular the Health and Safety at Work Act, The Noise Regulations (2005) and The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

The main objective of PUWER is to ensure the provision of safe work equipment and the safety of its use. The regulations place a responsibility on the employer to ensure that any work equipment is suitable for the task undertaken; it is properly maintained and that appropriate training and instruction is provided.

6.2.5 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)

The COSHH Regulations identify Occupational Exposure Levels (OEL) and Workplace Exposure Levels (WEL) for a range of chemical compounds and some material types (including wood dust) that could cause harm if the exposure levels are exceeded. They set out a system of management including the implementation of the following:

- Risk Assessment
- Control procedure for each risk
- Monitor the controls
- Inform, instruct and train employees
- Keep records
- Implement health surveillance
- Review procedures

6.2.6 Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Covering the transporting or supporting of loads by hand or bodily force. These regulations set out a clear hierarchy of measures including:-

- Avoid hazardous manual handling as far as is reasonably practicable
- Assess any hazardous handling operations that cannot be avoided
- Reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable

(Further information is published by the Health and Safety Executive, HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA Tel. 01787 884148 Web: www.hsebooks.com)

A comprehensive Employers Guide to Health and Safety for the Woodworking Industry is published by the British Woodworking Federation, 55 Tufton Street, London, SW1P 3QL Web: www.bwf.org.uk