

# Completed ngc report

[Law](#), [Security](#)



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The building consists of a canteen area, an office for admin duties, two toilets, a locker room, a drying/store room for personal protective equipment (PPE) and a small store room. In the yard is one store for the storage of various outdoor work materials and tools. The premises are occupied by up to fifteen staff at any one time. Staff work on a rotation of day and night shifts and the building is used for messing, completing paper work and planning work. The yard and store are used for loading and unloading vehicles with work equipment to prepare for railway work.

There were no members of staff on duty at the time of the inspection.

## **Executive Summary**

Upon completion of the inspection I found there were several areas of concern which lead to breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA), the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRFSO), the Manual Handling Operations Regulations, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER). The health and safety of the employees who are using

the premises may also be at risk if some of these concerns are not addressed immediately.

Failure to address these issues may lead to attention and possible enforcement action from the HSE and/or the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR). Breaches of statutory duty or failure to comply with improvement or prohibition notices may result in court action being taken which may lead to criminal prosecution and fines of up to 20 000 in a magistrates court and the possibility of up to 6 months imprisonment. A detailed description of the findings is listed below with reference to specific observations given in brackets.

## **Main findings of the inspection**

**Fire precautions** The Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (RRFSO) requires that fire fighting arrangements must be provided in the workplace (18). Although there are fire extinguishers located throughout the building there is an absence of any extinguisher in the office. Therefore there is an urgent requirement to have extinguishers installed here as employees would be in extreme danger if a fire were to start in the office. The RRFSO also states that fire exits must remain free from obstructions at all times (1).

The PPE blocking the fire exit is not only creating a tripping hazard but it is putting the health and safety of the employees at risk of becoming trapped in the building if a fire were to start.

## **Management of Health and Safety**

Many of the observations are the result of a poor Health and Safety management system which could easily be rectified by members of staff and

at a very low cost to the organisation. (2, 3, 8, 10, 12). Use of rail steel as doorstops presents a significant risk of slips, trips and falls and is a very easy problem to rectify.

Other housekeeping issues such as tangled cables, hand cleaners being stored near eating and drinking utensils and overflowing waste paper bins are all issues that will present a very poor image to visitors but are low cost and not time consuming problems to resolve. These issues may also be in breach of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. PPE. Issues The Personal Protective Equipment regulations state that all PPE must be suitably stored and maintained (1, 14). The PPE blocking the fire exit must be removed and all the old PPE in the store room should be disposed of and replaced as it is no longer fit for purpose.

The heater in the drying room (6) also needs urgent attention as its purpose is to dry out PPE used by employees in wet weather conditions. With the heater not functional this has an impact on the ability to maintain the PPE to a good standard.

## **PUWER Issues**

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations state that employers must ensure that all work equipment is suitable, maintained and inspected (7, 17). The old fax machine in the office has been out of use for quite some time with service tags out of date and there has been no effort to have it repaired or replaced.

It is creating a tripping hazard as well as breaching PUWER. A similar situation has arisen regarding the water dispenser in the canteen. The

employees have shown their concerns about not being able to use the machine and it is in serious need of repair or replacement. This is also creating a welfare issue which must be addressed. Manual Handling Issues There are some issues concerning heavy materials being stored at ground level (13, 20). This is in breach of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 and presents a high risk of a RIDDOR injury to employees lifting or moving these materials. As suggested these materials must be stored correctly and at waist level to prevent injuries from bending and lifting. This will prevent high costs through RIDDOR incidents and loss of productivity.

## **Conclusions**

The building and yard are all of modern design with full refurbishments having been carried out as recent as 2007. Many of the hazards found were as a result of a lapse in general Health and Safety management and many of the observations could be rectified by simple maintenance and tidying up of the building and yard. This is a very low cost practice which in turn could improve the Health and Safety of the workforce. The employees have all had a very good level of workplace specific Health and Safety training with certificates on display on the notice board. However this training counts for little if it is not put into practice on a daily basis. It appears there have also been many bad habits picked up over the years such as poor general housekeeping. Employers and employees should take pride in a clean and safe workplace and it also sets a good example to any visitors or potential clients. A safe workplace will also reduce the risk of accidents and ill health

to employees and in the long run savemoneyfrom unnecessary claims, losses of production and a poor corporate image.