FIRST-AID IN THE WORKPLACE

Introduction

This document outlines the requirements for first aid training and first aid kits. The information provided highlights the changes made to training as of 2009 and the changes to the requirements for first aid kits to be brought in January 2012.

Background

The Isle of Man Health and Safety at Work Inspectorate (HSWI) regard complying with the UK’s approved code of practice (ACOP) and guidance to the UK’s Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 as meeting the requirements of the IOM Health and Safety at Work etc Act (HASAWA) in respect of provision of first aid. The HASAWA requires employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees whilst at work and to protect non employee’s from health and safety risks arising from work activities.

The First Aid ACOP and guidance requires an employer to provide first aid to employees who are injured or become ill at work. To meet the requirement employers must have adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and trained personnel. Whilst the UK First Aid Regulations cover the arrangements for employees it is widely accepted that provision should be made for non employees that regularly use an employer’s premises or services. A link to a full copy of the Regulations and ACOP is provided in the further information section of this note

FIRST AID TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS

From the 1 October 2009 the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) introduced the following standards for first aid training:

- A 3 day First Aid at Work (FAW) course
- An Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) course that is one days training.
- The FAW requalification course which is 2 days.
- The HSE will also strongly recommend that holders of the FAW and EFAW certificate undertake annual refresher training during any 3 year certification period. Although not mandatory, this will help first-aiders maintain their basic skills and keep up to date with any changes in first aid procedures. The Basic Skills Update course will usually take 3 hours.

The EFAW course has been introduced to allow employers to provide a more proportionate response to their first aid needs. The EFAW aims to give employers a choice of approved courses, thereby ensuring that adequate first aid is available without placing excessive burdens on their business.

On successful completion of an FAW or EFAW course, candidates will be issued with a certificate, which is valid for three years. At the end of the 3 year period they will need to undertake an FAW requalification course (2 days) or EFAW course (1 day), as appropriate, if they are to continue to fulfil the role of first-aider. Training should be arranged before certificates expire.
To establish the number and level of training required for first aiders the organisation needs to carry out a risk assessment. The risk assessment needs to consider a number of aspects including:

- The degree of hazards presented by the work activities
- The number, nature and work patterns of employees
- The history of illness and injuries in the workplace
- The physical nature of the workplace and its location in relation to getting access to medical assistance
- Public access

The UK HSE have developed an interactive web tool that can be used to assist with carrying out this risk assessment. The link to it is provided below in the section headed further information.

This risk assessment of first aid needs may show that some level of first aid is required but that a full FAW first-aider would be unlikely to need the range of skills taught on the course. Duty holders should use the findings of their first aid needs assessment to help them decide whether first-aiders should be trained in FAW or EFAW. If the needs of the workplace require FAW trained first-aiders to be provided, it is not an acceptable alternative to provide EFAW trained first-aiders.

The appointed person will remain the minimum requirement where an employer’s first aid needs assessment identifies that a first-aider is not necessary. Their role will still be to take charge of the first aid arrangements, including looking after the first aid equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required.

These training arrangements do not affect first-aiders holding a valid FAW certificate obtained under the training standards prior to October 2009. The certificate will still be valid for three years. However, when this current certificate expires, the new arrangements will apply.

The flowchart below covers the summarises the training cycle
FIRST AID TRAINING CYCLE

FIRST AID NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FIRST AID AT WORK (FAW) (18 HOURS) CERTIFICATE VALID FOR 3 YEARS

YEAR 0

EMERGENCY FIRST AID AT WORK (EFAW) (6 HOURS) CERTIFICATE VALID FOR 3 YEARS

YEAR 0

BASIC SKILLS UPDATE/ANNUAL REFRESHER (3 HOURS)

YEAR 1

YEAR 2

BASIC SKILLS UPDATE/ANNUAL REFRESHER (3 HOURS)

YEAR 3

FAW REQUALIFICATION (12 HOURS) CERTIFICATE VALID FOR 3 YEARS

YEAR 3

EFAW (6 HOURS – SAME COURSE AS YEAR 0) CERTIFICATE VALID FOR 3 YEARS

YEAR 3

------- = Future years
WORKPLACE FIRST AID KITS

The New Standards

The BSi (British Standard Institute) have published the new BS-8599 British Standard Workplace First Aid Kit. BS-8599-1 is the new British Standard that specifies the contents that should be included in workplace first aid kits, and provides guidance as to the size of kit required for a given workplace environment, based on the number of employees and the level of risk present. This standard replaces the BHTA-HSE kits that most employers currently have in the workplace and which are based on the HSE’s guidelines. This BHTA standard is set to be withdrawn on the 31st December 2011 with the introduction of the new standard.

Why Has This Been Implemented?

The new list of recommended contents forms part of a modern approach to what is deemed to be a sensible range of products in the workplace of today. Factors such as new technologies in product development, different types of injury and risk, changes to training protocols as well as an increased awareness of infection control have resulted in the current kits no longer being ideal.

The HSE participated in developing BS-8599-1, and are expected to change the current Approved Code of Practice and Guidance to the BSI standard.

What Are The Specific Changes?

- Increased numbers of gloves, which now need to be Nitrile material. The old kits had only one pair of gloves and 29 dressings.
- Fewer medium and large dressing to reflect consumer demand.
- Fewer Triangular Bandages, which are no longer used for the immobilisation of lower limb injuries.
- The introduction of a new smaller dressing specifically for finger injuries that are too large for first aid plasters. Previously the smallest dressing was 12cm square, making it impractical for finger injuries.
- The introduction of a spool of tape to secure bandages without the use of safety pins.
- The introduction of modern wet gel type burns dressings and a conforming bandage to secure it.
- The introduction of first aid shears, to cut clothing away from an injury site.
- The introduction of an eye wash bottle into the travel kit, recognising that running water or fixed eye wash stations are unlikely to be available to workers travelling away from the workplace.
- The introduction of a resuscitation device providing protection for first aiders giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- The addition of a foil survival blanket to provide means to keep a casualty warm, particularly in cases of clinical shock.
- Traditional moist wipes are replaced with a sterile wipe to ensure safer treatment of injuries.
- More plasters to reflect consumer demand.

The following chart shows the contents of the new kits
Contents List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Aid Guidance Leaflet</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents List</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Dressing (12cm x 12cm) (Sterile)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Dressing (18cm x 18cm) (Sterile)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangular Bandage (Single Use) (90cm x 127cm)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Pins (Assorted) (minimum length 2.5cm)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Pad Dressing with Bandage (Sterile)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washproof Assorted Plasters</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moist Cleaning Wipes</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microporous Tape (2.5cm x 5m or 3m for Travel Kit)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrile Gloves (1 Pair)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finger Dressing with Adhesive Fixing (3.5cm)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouth to Mouth Resuscitation Device with Valve</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foil Blanket (130cm x 210cm)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Wash (250ml)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burn Relief Dressing (10cm x 10cm)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Shears (Suitable for cutting clothing)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conforming Bandage (7.5cm x 4m)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Size of First Aid Kit required

As well as the new inventory for the first aid kits, four sizes have been introduced; workplace small, medium, large and a travel kit. In order to select the correct first aid kit for their workplace, employers are required to carry out a risk assessment to decide the level of hazard present and the number of employees within the area.

The BSi has outlined a guide to help employers select the most suitable kit for their requirements. Where there are special circumstances, such as remoteness from emergency medical services, shift work or sites with several separate buildings, there might need to be more first aid kits than set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Hazard</th>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Number and Size of First Aid Kits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Low Level Hazard:</strong> Shops, offices, libraries etc</td>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>1 Small Size Kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25-100</td>
<td>1 Medium Size Kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 100</td>
<td>1 Large Size Kit (per 100 employees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Level Hazard:</strong> Light engineering and assembly work, food processing, warehousing, extensive work with dangerous machinery or instruments</td>
<td>Less than 5</td>
<td>Small Size Kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>Medium Size Kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 25</td>
<td>1 Large Size Kit (per 25 Employees)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further information

The following link takes you to the HSE First Aid web pages which includes a lot of additional information

http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/index.htm

This link takes you to the risk assessment tool.

http://www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/assessmenttool.htm

If you wish to look at the full UK Regulations and Approved Code of Practice a free downloadable pdf version is available through this link