SAFERtheatre

"setting the scene for health & safety"

SAFERtheatre is a new campaign to promote, improve and maintain health & safety standards within our industry.

In general we are pretty good at all the health & safety stuff but it doesn't mean we can't improve or remove some of the complacency we might hear or see around safety! SAFERtheatre will highlight the good practice throughout the UK and aims to make theatres and productions safer and healthier for everyone.

We have developed SAFERtheatre so members look inside their organisations and establish, or improve, basic health & safety controls to mitigate risks to staff. It will also demonstrate externally to customers, investors and other stakeholders that you have taken key health & safety protective measures.

Key Benefits

- Created for our industry
- Helps identify strengths and weaknesses of an organisation
- Encourages activities for continuous improvement
- Establishes good management strengths towards health & safety

SAFERtheatre encourages basic health & safety principles that members should implement and then build upon. Our key theme for 2017 will be 'Improving Workplace Health' but every year we will also campaign to improve our key six core values:

Positive Policy

Active Engagement

Recognise Threats

Proactive Reporting

Responsive Action

Dynamic Improvement

SOLT|UKT will support you in achieving the core values of SAFERtheatre. For example if you haven't got a policy we will work with you to create one, never held a safety meeting we can come to you and support you through your inaugural one. Our aim is to fill in your basic health & safety gaps by providing guidance & document templates to achieve SAFERtheatre at your organisation!

We will also use **#SAFERtheatre** so we can share ideas, assist with problems and generally have some fun to generate positive interaction. You can communicate what you are doing to support the campaign throughout the year using the **#SAFERtheatre.**

The campaign will culminate every year during the first week of September - SAFERtheatre Week! This is when everyone will share what they have done to improve all things health & safety at their theatres, productions or event space and celebrate the industry achievements.

Implementing the SAFERtheatre values can help significantly reduce organisations risk management vulnerabilities. However it does not remove all risks so participants will be required to implement additional health & safety measures to achieve their overall management system. Overall the campaign will promote new and better practice across a range of subjects including security, risk and technical management.

The aim is for the whole industry to take part, be as creative as possible and promote all things health & safety! So why not get involved!

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Positive Policy

- All organisations employing five or more people must legally have a written Health & Safety Policy statement. The policy should cover all aspects of the organisation and be relevant to all employees.

- It should establish how seriously your organisation takes its health & safety responsibilities and accountabilities.

- Ideally it should be written by your own staff, they know the organisation best and how it operates. As well as benefiting from their day-to-day experience of the job, doing so will give you a better chance of getting their commitment to carry out the policy aims.

- There are no set rules regarding what your **"Positive Policy"** must cover but you should consider:

  - a statement section (usually one page) detailing how health & safety will be achieved and indicating your commitment to health & safety
  - an organisation section that details where responsibilities are allotted and how employees fit into the overall health & safety system
  - an arrangements section that contains details of how specific activities and functions are managed. This section could include such matters as risk assessments, fire safety, first aid, healthy workplace & welfare provisions, accident reporting, security & counter terrorism, work equipment, hazardous substances, manual handling, stress management etc.

- There are numerous ways to bring the policy to the attention of everyone. You may decide to give a copy to each employee or you could post copies on notice boards or in appropriate places.

- Whatever you choose to do, you must make sure that you bring the policy to the attention of everyone!

- Monitoring that the policy is still effective is vital. There are many ways that this can be done, including carrying out spot checks or safety inspections using internal checklists.

- More formally, effective monitoring can be achieved through audits and by reviewing management reports and accident investigations.

Active Engagement

- Consultation with employees is vital to ensure health & safety is managed successfully!

- It helps encourage a positive health & safety culture and ensures that everyone is given an opportunity to influence policies and procedures. Don't be scared to try new things – if the initiative is acted upon and prevents an accident, it will have been worthwhile:

  - have regular health & safety meetings or as a fixed topic at all departmental meetings
  - regularly update information on notice boards
  - pass on information via newsletters and internal publications
  - send e-mail alerts to staff
  - safety page or section on company intranet or internet site

- Without co-operation between employers and employees, the chances of managing health & safety effectively are reduced. The key objectives of **"Active Engagement"** are to:

  - educate staff that they can be responsible for the prevention of workplace accidents
  - promote and inspire the interest of employees
  - provide the unrestricted discussion of problems and possible solutions
  - develop performance goals and objectives and assess how well these have been met
  - inform and educate about new policies, procedures and processes
  - review changes in work practices and legislation

- You should also strive for regular communication & co-operation with third parties and other visitors regarding health & safety. Your best practice procedures should include:

  - assess hazards and risks to contractors and employees prior to, and during the activity
  - give information on emergency procedures, site rules and welfare facilities
  - co-ordinate and control the work and ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities
  - maintain regular communication with all parties to ensure everyone has up-to-date information
  - make company employees aware of hazards created by contract activity
  - monitor their health & safety performance
  - investigate all injuries, near misses and cases of ill health

Recognise Threats

- Manage your hazards by first identifying what they are and then your organisational weaknesses to those threats!

- **"Recognise Threats"** will help you to decide what improvements you need to make and what type of mitigation and contingency plans you need to develop. Your objective is to discover the following:

    - what can go wrong?
    - what are the consequences?
    - how could it arise?
    - what are other contributing factors?
    - how likely is it that the hazard will occur?

- Risk Assessments are subjective evaluations based on personal judgement, using a combination of knowledge and experience of the task or activity being assessed. They assist you in putting sensible controls in place which prevent accidents & ill health and aim to achieve the following:

    - assess the risk to employees, customers, visitors, contractors and anyone else who might be affected by your workplace hazards
    - identify the control procedures necessary to reduce or remove risks
    - provide and maintain a safe working environment

- The most common risk assessment procedure follows five steps:

    - identify potential hazards
    - identify who or what is at risk from these hazards
    - determine and implement control measures
    - document the process - this doesn't need to be complex or too bureaucratic
    - review risks periodically as part of your management procedures

- Assessments you might need to consider include fire risk assessment, security, manual handling, stress & mental health and specific risks to certain staff such as display screen equipment (DSE), as well as any specialist needs you may have. e.g. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Production hazards etc.

Proactive Reporting

- You should develop procedures to ensure all accidents, whether resulting in injuries or not, are reported.

- The more unreported risks you take, the greater the likelihood of a serious accident. It basic terms your **"Proactive Reporting"** should find out:

    - what happened?
    - how it happened?
    - why it happened?

- It's often difficult to establish which unsafe activities will be the one that causes a major injury. You need to encourage everyone to take responsibility to report. It's also imperative to cultivate a 'no blame' approach to reporting.

- The few minutes spent reporting and investigating accidents & near misses can help prevent similar incidents and injuries. It also:

    - enables you to pro-actively resolve hazards before a catastrophic or costly incident occurs
    - engages the workforce in solving problems
    - escalates health & safety ownership and reinforces employees' self-esteem
    - exposes valuable information that otherwise might not be discussed
    - develops a positive attitude surrounding health & safety
    - implements preventative actions and communicates the result of your investigations.

- The investigation of all accidents and near miss issues is an essential part of proactive management. The objectives of an investigation should:

    - establish the facts and sequence of events
    - identify accident causes by establishing unsafe acts or workplace conditions
    - determine the human, organisational and/or job factors that gave rise to unsafe acts or conditions
    - take long term and short term measures to prevent a recurrence
    - ensure compliance with the law

Responsive Action

- You should identify potential emergency situations, assess the risks and ensure emergency plans are practiced & maintained. Your **"Responsive Action"** priorities for protection should fall under the following categories:

  - o people: staff, customers, productions, visitors, contractors.
  - o physical assets: buildings, contents, equipment.
  - o information: electronic and paper data.
  - o processes: supply chains, critical procedures. The actual operational process and essential services required to support it.

- You should complete risk assessments to ensure that fire hazards, security measures and emergency plans have been identified, risk mitigation carried out and protection measures (including management actions) implemented. The following may help you to assess and manage the risks at your location:

  - o what are my actual organisational risks?
  - o what is appropriate and relevant for your organisation?
  - o what protective emergency risk mitigation measures currently in place?
  - o have you consulted your local counter-terrorism security advisor, local authority and the emergency services?
  - o who else should be consulted? (neighbours, occupiers, etc.)
  - o which measures can be implemented easily?
  - o which measures will take greater planning and investment?

- You must have written site-specific evacuation procedures in place and the documents must be available for all staff. You must also hold emergency evacuation (or invacuation) drills in order to test the effectiveness of the procedures.

- Staff should take part in drills for the purpose of familiarisation of the procedure and to ensure that key personnel are aware of their duties.

- Visiting Companies, contractors and other visitors must be made aware of the evacuation procedures and encouraged to take part in practice evacuations.

Dynamic Improvement

- By proactively planning and managing health & safety your organisation will see a **"Dynamic Improvement"** through your risk behaviour and an overall positive attitude towards health & safety.

- Training will equip your staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to adhere to your policies & procedures. Investing in training ensures the needs of the company are fulfilled, while achieving individual needs for personal development and job satisfaction.

- Training employees is critical to ensure they work safely, are aware of any hazards they may face at work and more importantly how to deal with them.

- All employees have a role in ensuring a healthy & safe working environment so basic training should be provided as part of an employee's induction.

- Additionally, some staff might have particular health & safety-related training needs; for example, those taking high risk specific roles, fire-wardens, first-aiders or your company's nominated competent health & safety person.

- You should regularly review and evaluate your health & safety performance, including the effectiveness of your policy and procedures. This will help identify strengths and weaknesses, identify new hazards that could make you vulnerable and ensure compliance with health & safety legislation.

- You should set key health & safety objectives in order to:

    o raise your profile regarding health & safety management
    o give direction in the development of best practice policies and procedures across all your activities
    o provide regular feedback to employees and management teams
    o develop performance targets and assess how well these have been met
    o create action plans for further health & safety improvement
    o promote learning and development opportunities
    o share knowledge and expertise throughout the industry with a view to changing practice where appropriate

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