

# **The Courthouse Arts Centre (Tinahely Courthouse CLG)**

## **Risk Assessment Policy & Risk Management Plan**

**Reviewed November 2017**

### **HAZARDS/RISK/CONTROLS**

#### **1.1 Identification of Hazards**

Section 12(3) of the 1989 Act requires that the Safety Statement be based on an identification of hazards and an assessment of risks to safety and health at the place of work to which Safety Statement relates.

A **hazard** is identified as anything that can potentially cause harm and includes, human injury, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these (e.g. lifting heavy loads, trailing cables, hot surfaces).

Hazards likely to be found in this organisation are listed in Schedule 1 of this document where risk assessment and control measures are included and detailed.

#### **1.2 Assessment of Risks**

**Risk** is a combination of the likelihood of an accident or ill-health happening and the consequences of such an accident (e.g back injury).

**Risk assessment** is the process of evaluating the magnitude of the risk to the health and safety of workers at work. Under Regulation 10 of the General Application Regulations 1993 this assessment must be written down.

Wherever possible, risks should be eliminated and designed out of the workplace if reasonably practicable or reduced to an acceptable level by control measures and resources to safeguard health and safety.

As part of the risk assessment, each risk should be examined and categorised according to possible consequences and control measures should be put in place to ensure a tolerable level of risk.

It is stressed that the purpose of a risk assessment is to highlight the significant risks to staff and to prioritise the allocation of resources for their control. However, no risk should be ignored even if it is categorised as low.

## **Schedule 1**

### **HAZARDS**

This document outlines the hazards and risks likely to be found in an environment such as in The Courthouse Arts Centre. This list of hazards and controls is not intended to be exhaustive. The hazards and risks are listed alphabetically and these can be modified to suit the changing environment.

While hazards of a significant nature only are listed in this assessment, a safety conscious attitude is required of the Artistic Director and staff in relation to any hazard that may be encountered in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the suggested control measures.

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## **Hazard Access/Egress**

Safe access and egress to a place of work is a basic requirement. However, if not properly planned and maintained, it may pose a hazard to persons entering and leaving premises.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

Doors and access points should be well maintained and kept clear. Passageways should be well maintained and kept clear of any obstruction.

Extra seating should not be placed at rear of auditorium during a show as this would restrict access for audiences.

Sound equipment must never be placed in an area where it will cause an obstruction.

Floor coverings and floor surfaces should be well maintained to minimise hazards of slips, trips and falls. Stairways should be well maintained and staff should be instructed to use handrails provided.

All means of access and egress should be provided with appropriate lighting.

Torches must be used by ushers to assist audience members who wish to leave or get to their seat during a show or at any time when house lights are down.

Staff and visiting company personnel should always use torches provided when accessing areas which have poor lighting e.g. moving backstage from auditorium when stage working lights are not on.

## **Hazard Electrical**

Electricity has the potential risk to cause electrocution, shock, burns and fire. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the following control measures.

### **Control Measures**

Electrical Equipment should only be used and operated by suitably competent technical staff.

Repairs maintenance and any form of permanent or temporary wiring where bare wire terminations are required should only be carried out by a suitably trained technician or by the engagement of qualified electrician where necessary.

All electrical equipment should be inspected before use for faults. Any faulty equipment should not be used until it is repaired. Staff should report all electrical defects. Defective equipment should be taken out of use, put in a safe place and labelled "do not use" until attended to by a competent person.

A programme of regular maintenance checks for all portable appliances shall be maintained with a regular written record and reporting system

All temporary cables where necessary should be kept off the floor wherever possible. When this is not possible, tape or other suitable floor covering should be used to cover any exposed cabling

All flexible leads should be kept away from passageways and doorways as they may get damaged or become trip hazards.

Flats or pieces of scenery should never be placed over cables.

Wheeled boxes or access tower should never be run over cables on the ground. Always lift over.

## **Hazard    Fire**

Section 18 (2) of the Fire Services Act, 1981 states "it shall be the duty of every person having control over premises to which this section applies to take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on such premises, and to ensure in so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire".

In addition, section 18(3) outlines that "it shall be the duty of every person being on premises to which this section applies, to conduct himself in such a way as to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable any person on the premises is not exposed to danger from fire as a consequence of any act or omission of his".

Smoke inhalation and burns could result in multiple fatalities. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

## **Control Measures**

Fire evacuation training is provided through yearly fire drills. A hands-on demonstration of fire extinguisher use is also made available to the fire drill personnel.

Evacuation Officers should be appointed for each area to ensure that offices, toilets etc. are evacuated where fire or other emergencies require them to be evacuated.

Evacuation notices should be displayed in all appropriate areas of the theatre to indicate the evacuation routes and the designated assembly point outside the building. Emergency evacuation procedures are set out in the Emergency Evacuation Plan (available on request)

All fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms should be tested and maintained. Smoke detectors should be provided for areas such as storerooms, which are not frequented continuously.

Fire alarm call points, signs and notices, passageways and escape routes should be maintained and kept free from obstruction and all exits unblocked and operational.

All lighting (e.g. general lighting, safety lighting, exit notice lighting and lighting of any external exit ways) should be properly maintained. Materials should be kept well away from light fittings.

Electrical installations and equipment should be tested and maintained. All electrical equipment should be switched off and, where necessary, unplugged when not in use.

Waste paper bins should be emptied regularly and store rooms, passageways, stairs etc. should be kept free from rubbish.

Use of pyrotechnics or naked flames on stage is not permitted except with the permission of the resident stage manager and only when suitable and acceptable safety precautions have been taken.

All scenic elements such as sets props fabrics etc must be appropriately flame proofed to a recognised and certified safety standard.

Smoking is prohibited in **all** areas of the theatre

### **Hazard: Hot Liquids**

Carrying hot liquids in the workplace can cause minor/serious injury from scald. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

All members of staff are requested to exercise the fullest caution when preparing/handling hot beverages in the workplace.

Remind customers to handle hot liquids with care when purchasing tea/coffee

### **Hazard: Housekeeping**

Bad housekeeping can lead to serious injury from fire and trips/falls.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

Floors, passages and stairs should be kept clear of goods and litter.

Litter bins should be placed where the risk of causing fall is minimal.

Waste should be removed regularly.

Access/egress routes or stairwells should not be blocked.

Safety signs or notices or fire alarm call points should not be obstructed or removed.

Broken/damaged equipment or furniture should be removed from the work area or rendered secure pending disposal or repair.

Damaged/broken fittings and spills should be eliminated as quickly as possible.

### **Hazard    Hygiene**

There is a risk of illness from bad hygiene. Management, with the co-operation of staff, has a responsibility to ensure satisfactory hygiene standards are maintained.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

## **Control Measures**

Food or remnants of food should not be left exposed in kitchen, offices, Green Room or Dressing Rooms. Staff using these facilities should clean up after themselves at all times.

Any sign of mice or vermin should be reported to the Artistic Director.

## **Hazard: Machinery**

Where machinery is used in the arts centre environment it must be treated with care and respect. Misuse or poor maintenance of equipment can lead to serious risks to staff and therefore any concerns in this respect should receive prompt attention.

Under Section 10 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 1989 the supplier of any article for use at work is required "to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the article is designed, constructed, tested and examined so as to be safe and without risk to health when used by a person at a place of work".

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

## **Control Measures**

Training should be provided by a competent person in the proper use of all machinery.

All machinery should be maintained by competent personnel in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. If a machine breaks down it should be repaired, as necessary, by the manufacturer or his agent.

Photocopiers should be positioned to minimise nuisance from heat and noise, and should be fitted with ozone filters and operated with document cover in position.

All unsafe machinery should be taken out of use, put in a safe place and labelled "do not use".

Warnings on machinery should be strictly observed.

Purchases of machinery/equipment by the organisation should meet the highest safety standards.

## **Hazard    Manual Handling**

Manual handling is defined as "any transporting or supporting of a load, by one or more employees, and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving a load which, by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves risk, particularly of back injury, to employees.

**Risk:** Musculo-skeletal problems including acute or chronic back injury, sprains, of the chest and abdominal muscles and hernias.

Additionally, a load can be dropped and cause consequential injuries.

Note that the risk arises by reason of:

the characteristics of the load (e.g. too heavy, too large, too unwieldy etc.),

the physical effort required (e.g. too strenuous etc.),

the characteristics of the working environment (e.g. insufficient room, uneven floor etc.),

the requirements of the activity (e.g. over-frequent effort involving the spine, excessive rate of work imposed by the process, whether the worker is physically suited to carry out the task etc.).

Observance of the control measures provides an acceptable level of risk.

### **Control Measures**

Trolleys and carts should be provided to minimise the need for manual handling of materials.

Staff members required to handle heavy materials should be given training and instruction in the correct handling methods.

The Artistic Director should take appropriate organisational measures (team work etc.) to reduce the risk from load handling where manual handling could not be avoided.

### **Hazard: Noise**

The European Communities (Protection of Workers)(Exposure to Noise Regulations, 1990 (S.I. No. 157 of 1990) set out (1) the legal requirements, which must be observed, regarding the noise levels to which persons may be exposed, and (2) action to be taken to monitor and control noise at the place of work.

A rule of thumb is that if continuous loud noise is such that it necessitates that you must shout in order to communicate at a distance of about two metres, then it is probably above the legal limits regarding exposure.

Continuous loud noise can

cause headaches, loss of concentration, damage to hearing  
can interfere with oral communication leading to misinterpretation of instructions or warnings  
can drown out warning sounds e.g. alarm signals.

Minimal risk is ensured through application of the following control measures.

### **Control Measures**

Steps should be taken to keep noise levels to a minimum. Where an unacceptable noise level is caused by the operation of its own machinery, the organisation will fully adhere to the Health and Safety Authority's guidelines on noise levels.

Notices should be displayed where noise is a problem.

Hearing protectors are provided and should be used where appropriate.

A copy of the HSA "Guidelines to the Noise Regulations" is available on written request.

### **Hazard: Office Environment**

Potential ill-health problems can arise from extremes of temperature, humidity, dust levels, lighting, noise etc. The following control measures ensure a minimal risk situation.

#### **Control Measures**

Portable fans should be provided if required during hot weather or air conditioning malfunction.

To reduce dust levels, office cleaning should include furniture such as desks, shelving and top of filing cabinets.

All office equipment is of high quality and maintained to manufacturers' recommendations to minimize the production of dust, heat and noise.

### **Hazard: Office Furniture and Materials**

Modern offices are safe places to work, yet accidents occur from slips, trips, falls, collisions etc. The following control measures ensure minimal risk.

#### **Control Measures**

High standards of general housekeeping should be maintained at all times.

Adequate means of access to and egress from workplaces should be maintained with clear means of escape in case of evacuation.

All telephone and electrical leads should be positioned so as to avoid the risks of trips and falls. Office furniture, fittings and equipment are of high quality, with minimum sharp corners, and should be positioned to minimise risks of collision.

File drawers, desk drawers, presses etc. should be kept closed when not in use.

The main office must be kept clear of obstructions. Posters, coats, stationery etc. must be tidied away as well as possible.

The use of shelving requiring high reaching should be eliminated in so far as is reasonably practicable.

Suitable steps should be made available where the need for such high reaching might not be avoidable.

Unstable chairs for high reaching etc. should not be used.

## **Hazard    Rigging on Stage**

There is a risk of serious injury to staff and visiting company personnel when lights/sets are being rigged on stage. This risk can be minimised through the implementation of the following control measures.

### **Control Measures**

The maximum loading on any bar is not to exceed 250kg uniformly distributed load.

Always make sure the rigging equipment used has a suitable safety rating.

All hung items e.g. lanterns, speakers, etc. must have a safety chain securely attached and all loose parts e.g. frames barn-doors etc. must be properly secured to prevent them falling.

Any item e.g. scene cloth, temporary bar, etc. hung from the grid must be suspended by way of suitable suspension gear and any item longer than three metres must be fixed to bars at a minimum of three points.

Ensure that any raised scenic element e.g. risers, get off platforms and treads etc. are protected with appropriate safety rails, edged with white or luminous tape and sufficiently illuminated with controlled work lights.

Ensure at all times while working or rigging at a high level that the floor area below is controlled to avoid injury from accidentally dropped items.

## **Hazard    Slip, trips and falls**

Slips, trips and falls can cause minor/major or even fatal injury. The following control measures ensure a minimal risk situation.

### **Control Measures:**

All floor surfaces should be maintained in good condition and regularly cleaned and repaired as necessary.

Any tripping hazards such as worn or torn floor coverings which are identified should be reported to the Artistic Director immediately for attention. Seats in auditorium must be regularly checked.

Any spillage which occurs must be cleared up immediately. The area should be marked by appropriate hazard notices until the area has been cleaned up.

Corridors, reception areas and walkways must be kept free from obstruction. Cardboard boxes, filled plastic bags, packing material or other debris must not be stored in these areas.

Safe means must be used when accessing heights. Suitable steps should be used. Under no circumstances should chairs, desks or filing cabinets be used as a means of access to heights. Staff should not over-reach when placing or removing goods from heights.

Safety scaffolds and gantries must be used at all times by staff engaged in setting lighting or any work related to working with heights and all guidelines in the use of this equipment must be adhered to.

## **Hazard    Stress in the workplace**

Workplace stress arises when the demands of the job and the working environment on a person exceed their capacity to meet them. Causes of stress in the workplace can include

- Faulty work organisation
- Poor working relationships
- Poor communication at work
- Ill defined work roles
- Highly demanding tasks
- The threat of violence

The following control measures will ensure minimal risk of stress.

### **Control Measures**

Regular staff meetings should be held to ensure good communication and to address any issues of concern to staff and explore and agree on appropriate action to resolve such issues.

Training should be provided for all staff to ensure that they are equipped with the necessary skills to perform their role.

Team days and social events will be organised for staff to foster and encourage co-operation, harmony and good team spirit.

All members of staff should be provided with copies of the company policy on bullying, intimidation and sexual harassment.

All members of staff are entitled to a copy of grievance procedures so that they are aware of the appropriate channels through which an issue causing undue stress can be pursued.

## **Hazard    Trailing Cables/Wires**

There is a risk of serious injury from trips/falls to all in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

All wires and cables should be always secured against obstructing safe passage

Any cables trailing between lighting bars must be secured above head height or above height of trucked scenery

## **Hazard      Visual Display Units (VDUs/PCc)**

There is a risk to staff using VDUs of visual fatigue, mental stress and possible serious injury from physical (musculoskeletal) problems. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 1993, Part V11 should be implemented. A risk assessment of all VDU/PC workstations should be carried out regularly to evaluate the safety and health conditions to which they give rise, particularly as regards the possible risks listed above, and having carried out the assessment appropriate measures should be taken to remedy any such risks found. Observance of the control measures will ensure a tolerable level of risk.

### **Control Measures**

Staff should be consulted on floor layouts.

Workstations should be ergonomically designed to ensure correct posture by possessing the following characteristics;

Stable easily adjustable seating with lumbar support

Seat adjusted to give knee and thigh clearance

Footrests provided, if required.

Desktop at elbow height and eyes cast downwards at approximately 20 degrees. Space in front of keyboards to rest hands

Sufficiently large desk with low reflectance surface Screen at right angle with 500/600mm viewing distance. Document holders provided, if required.

Document holders will be at same level and viewing distance as screen.

Instruction and training should be provided on the use of equipment and on health and safety aspects.

Good quality hardware and software, document holders, screens with anti-glare characteristics and low reflective matt surfaces should be provided.

Adjustable window coverings and secondary lighting should be provided.

Arrangements should be put in place so that work on visual display screen equipment is periodically interrupted to reduce the workload or time spent at the display screen.

## **Hazard      Wet Floors**

There is a risk of serious injury from slips/falls on wet polished/glazed surfaces to all in the workplace. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

Action must be taken to deal with spillages on floors/stairs in the workplace as quickly as possible after they come to notice.

The Artistic Director should bring to the attention of all members of staff the need for due care in

walking on glazed floor surfaces in wet weather.

## **Hazard      Working at a Height**

There is a risk of serious injury to staff and others from working from a height. Minimal risk is ensured through application of the control measures.

### **Control Measures**

#### **Ladders**

Always use the appropriate equipment for the job you intend to do.

Ensure the ladder is high enough for the activity to eliminate the need to over-reach.

Check that equipment is not faulty and is erected properly

Ensure the equipment is stable and safe.

Make sure you have enough light to work safely.

Take precautions to prevent equipment or tools from falling.

Do not attempt to move heavy ladders by yourself

## **Hazard              Working on Stage**

Good working practices need to be constantly observed in the light of the ever-changing environment of the stage area, particularly during fit ups and take downs. During a fit up the stage can get cramped and lighting poor. This is not an excuse for bad working practice. The following control measures should be adhered to in order to minimise risk

### **Control Measures**

The visiting companies production manager or stage manager in liaison with the resident technician must ensure that adequate space and lighting is provided for work to be carried out safely This is especially important during focus or plot sessions when light levels are very low.

Trip hazards or obstacles that cannot be moved should be clearly marked. All people likely to be working in the vicinity of the hazard should be explicitly warned.

Wing and crossover access routes to and from exits and dressing rooms shall be maintained by way of clearly marked and illuminated pathways

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Fire / Bomb Threat**

It is the duty of all members of the public being on the premises to conduct themselves in such a way that no person on the premises is exposed to danger from fire through any act or omission of theirs.

The following notices, giving directions to staff, members of the public and other persons in case of emergency will be prominently displayed both front of house and backstage.

#### **Front of House**

##### On Discovering a Fire

Activate the nearest alarm panel  
Inform a member of staff of the location of the fire  
Leave the premises using the exit to which you are directed by staff.  
Do not run.  
Do not re enter the premises

##### On hearing an alarm or other warning

Do not panic.  
Await the instructions of staff.  
Do not run.  
Walk quietly to the exit to which you are directed by staff.  
Once outside the building do not re-enter.

#### **Backstage Area**

##### On Discovering a Fire

Activate the nearest alarm panel  
Inform a member of staff of the location of the fire  
Leave the premises using the nearest available exit  
Do not run.  
Do not re enter the premises

##### On hearing an alarm or other warning

Do not panic  
Leave the premises using the nearest available exit.  
Once outside the building do not re-enter.

## **DIRECTIONS TO STAFF IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

### **FIRE**

1. When fire is detected the alarm should be sounded to evacuate the building.
2. Where it is possible action should be taken to extinguish.
3. Where possible inform the relevant staff members.

### **EVACUATION**

1. Obey the instructions of the emergency evacuation plan.
2. Leave SMARTLY and in orderly fashion by the designated exit route and assemble at the designated assembly point.
4. Do not delay in collecting personal items, coats etc.

### **BOMB THREAT**

Should you receive a phone call or otherwise become aware of a bomb threat:-

1. Listen carefully to all the details.
2. Inform the appropriate staff member(s)
3. Do not cause a general alarm.
4. Await instructions to evacuate.
5. In evacuating the building please make a CURSORY CHECK of your work area and report any suspicious objects when you have left the building.

### **POWER CUT**

Await instructions of the Artistic Director.

## **APPENDIX 2**

The following information will also be displayed in the reception:

### **EMERGENCY/FIRST AID**

1. Please note that a first-aid kit is held in the workplace -

#### **In the Kitchen**

2. Also note the following details of the nearest available doctor/hospital -

#### **Doctors**

Dr Majella Perry  
Millview Court  
Tinahely

Dr Damian Doyle  
Main Street  
Carnew

Tel 0402 38690  
087 050999629

Tel 053 94 26411

#### **Hospital**

Naas Hospital  
Tel 045 897221

Wexford Hospital  
Tel 053 91 53000

#### **Local Garda Station**

Tel 0402 38102

#### **Local Fire Station**

Tel 0402 38154

#### **Local Parish Priest**

Roman Catholic – 0402 28188  
Church of Ireland – 0402 28922

#### **Designated Person for Child Protection:**

Maggie Gallagher Artistic director – 087 4137608

(Note that where an emergency service is required the emergency telephone numbers 999 should be used)

## **Re: First-Aid Boxes and Kits**

### **Different work activities need different provisions**

Different work activities involve different hazards and therefore different first-aid provision is required. Some places of work such as offices have relatively low hazards whereas others such as factories and construction work sites have a greater degree of danger.

Requirements for first-aid provision at work will therefore depend on several factors including the size of the undertaking, the numbers employed, the hazards arising, access to medical services, dispersal of employees, employees working away from their employer's premises, workers in isolated locations etc.

### **Medications**

Drugs or medications should not be stored in first-aid boxes or kits and they should only be administered as prescribed by a registered medical practitioner.

### **Supervision of first-aid equipment and supplies**

In workplaces where there are Occupational First-Aiders, first-aid boxes should be under their control. Otherwise they should be under the control of a responsible person named in the Safety Statement. The contents of the boxes and kits should be replenished as soon as possible after use in order to ensure that there is always an adequate supply of all materials. Items should not be used after the expiry date shown on packets. It is therefore essential that first-aid equipment be checked frequently, to make sure that there are sufficient quantities and that all items are usable.

### **Recording First-Aid Treatment**

All incidents requiring first aid attention should be recorded by the attending first-aiders for subsequent examination by a Health and Safety Inspector.