

# Glossary of Terms

**Accident:** An accident can be described as any unplanned event or action that results in an undesired consequence e.g. injury, ill-health, damage to the environment, damage to or loss of property, plant and materials.

**Access:** Entrance to a building/area or workplace.

**Approved Code of Practice:** A standard, a specification, and any other written or illustrated form of practical guidance, instruction or control, issued or approved by the Health and Safety Authority. DIT Codes of Practice are approved by DIT Health and Safety Committee. General codes of practice are rules established by regulatory bodies or trade associations which are intended as a guide.

**Biological Monitoring:** Biological Monitoring refers to the collection and analysis of biological samples (blood, saliva, tissues, secretions, excreta etc.) for the presence of a workplace agent or its metabolite. The purpose of this procedure is to determine the extent of exposure encountered by the employee in the workplace to a specific agent, thereby protecting the employee from potential hazards.

**Carcinogen:** A substance or physical agent that causes cancer.

**Corrosives:** Substances and preparations which may on contact with living tissues, damage or destroy them. Acids and bases are common corrosive materials.

**Dangerous Occurrences:** The uncontrolled release or escape of any substance or agent, in circumstances liable to cause damage to the health of , or major injury to any person, is a notifiable dangerous occurrence.

**Egress:** Means of exiting a building/area or workplace.

**Ergonomics:** The scientific study and analysis of the human, the machine, and/or working environment interface and an investigation of those elements in the system that affect optimum human performance on a given task or set of tasks. Ergonomics is concerned with the design of objects, systems and environments, for human use.

**Error:** Mistake; inaccuracy; error of judgement leading to action resulting in an accident and its subsequent effects, a wandering or deviation from the right course or standard.

**Fires:** Classed as the following:

- Class A – solid materials of an organic nature (compounds of carbon) such as wood, paper, cloth both natural and synthetic.
- Class B – Liquids, petrol, thinners, solvents, lubricating oils, paint etc. and liquid based materials that will liquefy when heated such as cooking fat, waxes polystyrene plastics etc.
- Class C – Flammable gases such as propane, butane(LPG), natural gas, acetylene, hydrogen(evolved when lead acid batteries are charged).
- Class D – Flammable metals such as magnesium, sodium, aluminium, potassium etc.
- Class F – Fires involving cooking oils or fats.

**Fire Precautions:** The measures taken and the fire protection features provided in a building ( e.g. design, systems, equipment and procedures) to minimise the risk to the occupants from an outbreak of fire.

**Fire Prevention:** Precautions designed to avoid an outbreak of fire, reduce the potential for fire to spread and safeguard persons and property in the event of a fire.

**First-Aid:** First-Aid is the immediate treatment given in life threatening situations (e.g. heart stoppage or severe bleeding) pending the arrival of medical help; or the treatment for minor injury (e.g. cuts, bruises etc.).

First-Aid does not involve the administration of medicines,.

**Hazard:** The ability, nature or property of a substance or situation which has the potential to cause harm in terms of human injury, ill health or damage to property or the environment.

**HSA:** (National Authority for Occupational Safety and Health in Ireland) is the national body charged with overall responsibility for promotion of occupational safety and health and for the administration and enforcement of the relevant statutory provisions on safety and health.

**Incident:** An incident is the sequence of events or actions that produces the accident. All accidents are incidents. However, the definition of an incident is wider in that it also includes dangerous occurrences and near misses.

**Job Safety Analysis:** A generalised examination of the tasks associated with the performance of a given job and an evaluation of the hazards associated with those

tasks and the controls used to prevent or reduce exposure to these hazards. Usually performed by the responsible supervisor for that job and used primarily to train and orientate new employees. Also known as job hazard analysis.

**Lock – Off:** A system whereby controls such as switches or valves can be physically and intrinsically locked in .

**Loss:** Personal injury and/or asset damage.

**Manual Handling:** Any transporting or supporting a load by one or more employees, and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving a load, which, by reasons of its characteristics or of unfavorable ergonomic conditions, involves risk, particularly of back injury, to employees (HSA).

**Means of Escape:** Structural means whereby a safe route is provided for persons to travel unaided from any point in a building to a place of safety.

**Mistake:** A human action that produces an unintended result.

**Mutagens:** An agent, such as a chemical, ultraviolet light, or a radioactive element that can induce or increase the frequency of mutation in an organism.

**Mutation:** A sudden, random, permanent inheritable change in the genetic material of a cell.

**Near Miss:** An occurrence that had the potential to result in serious injury, damage, or both, but did not.

**Negligence:** The omission to do something, which a reasonable person, guided upon those considerations which ordinarily regulate the conduct of human affairs would do, or something, which a prudent and reasonable man would not do.

**Noise:** The sensation of sound is produced when pressure variations reach responsive ear. Also may be defined as unwanted sound.

**Permit to Work:** A formal written of authority to operate a planned procedure, which is designed to protect personnel working in hazardous areas or activities. Authority for a safe system of work.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Means all equipment (including clothing) which is intended to be worn or used by a person at work and which protects

him/her against one or more risks to his/her health and safety, and any addition or accessory designed to meet that objective. For example: gloves, eye protection, ear plugs/muffs, safety footwear, overalls/laboratory coats, high visibility clothing, safety helmets etc.

**Policy:** A statement of an Organisation's strategy for achieving a safe and healthy working environment and the responsibility, organisation and arrangements for pursuing and implementing the strategy.

**Risk:** The combination of the likelihood and consequence of the hazard occurring.

**Risk Assessment:** A formal estimation of the likelihood that persons may suffer injury or adverse health effects as a result of identified hazards.

**Risk Management:** The introduction of a change or control measures with the intention of eliminating or bringing the level of risk associated with a hazard within acceptable limits.

**Safe System of Work:** A safe system of work is a formal procedure which results in the systematic examination of a task in order to identify the hazards and assess the risks, and which identifies safe methods of work to ensure the hazards associated with the task are either eliminated or minimised.

**Safety:** The condition of being safe; freedom from danger; risk or injury.

**Safety Audit:** Monitoring of the implementation of a safety policy by subjecting each area of an activity to a critical systematic examination with the purpose of minimising loss, and providing a quantified assessment of performance.

**Safety Culture:** This term has no widely agreed definition. It may be described as a product of the individual and group values, attitudes, competencies and patterns of behaviour to determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of an organisations health and safety programmes.

**Safety Inspections:** Safety Inspections are a method of investigating the health and safety performance of an organisation (i.e. equipment, machinery, environment, processes etc.)

**Safety Monitoring:** Periodic checks on observance of corporate safety standards and procedures.

**Safety Policy:** A legal requirement on an employer to prepare, and keep up to date a written statement of their policy regarding the health and safety of their employees. The requirement for a written statement is for 5 or more employees.

**Safety Representative:** A person elected by the DIT under the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act 1989 and who fulfils the function conferred upon them by the guidelines outlined by the HSA.

**Safety Statement:** A Safety Statements is an organisation's written programme for safeguarding the health and safety of all employees. It represents the employer's commitment to health and safety and should state how the employee's health and safety will be ensured, what necessary resources, equipment and procedures will be provided to prevent accidents and ill health in the workplace, while complying with the appropriate legislation (HSA).

**SDS (Safety Data Sheet)/MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet):** Suppliers of chemicals and other materials used in the workplace must provide users with the appropriate safety information. The SDS gives the information required under prescribed headings on the safe use, handling and storage of a chemical and any other specific precautions to be taken with the chemical.

**Solvent:** A substance that is capable of dissolving another substance to form a solution. Organic solvents are usually flammable materials and may pose certain physical and chemical hazards.

**Task Analysis:** An expansion of the job safety analysis (JSA) method of identifying hazards associated with a given job or task. Differs from JSA in its level of specific detail and consideration of the human interface in all aspects of the job performance.

**Teratogens:** chemicals which may cause non – heritable genetic mutations or malformations in the developing foetus.

**Welfare:** Welfare facilities is a wide term embracing both sanitary and washing accommodation at workplaces, provision of drinking water, clothing, accommodation (including facilities for changing clothes) and facilities for rest and eating meals.

**Workplace:** The workplace may be described as any place where people are at work.

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