

11 December 2007

Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

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From: Supervising Officer, Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

To: Supervising Officers i/c Ministries/ Departments

Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005

As you are aware the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2005 has been proclaimed on 01 September 2007 and is now applicable to wherever work is performed, including the Civil Service.

2. The Occupational Safety and Health Act provides, amongst others, for every employer:

- (a) to ensure the safety, health and welfare at work of all his employees and to provide and maintain a working environment and any plant or system of work that is safe and without risk to health;
- (b) to ensure that use, handling, storage or transport of articles or substances is safe and without risk to health; and
- (c) to provide and maintain adequate facilities and arrangements for the welfare at work of his employees as well as provide information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the safety and health of his employees.

3. Under special duties of the employer, it is specified in the legislation that:

- (a) every employer of 50 or more employees is required to make a written statement of his policy in respect to the safety and health of his employees; and

- (b) the employer is also required to provide appropriate resources for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures required to be taken by him under this Act

4. The new legislation also provides that employees have the responsibility to take reasonable care for their safety and health and to cooperate with their employer in the discharge of any duty or requirement under the Act. As such, every employer of 50 or more employees has to establish a Safety and Health Committee under the Chairmanship of a senior member of the management responsible for safety and health and welfare of employees. The Committee will be responsible, among others, to:

- (a) promote co-operation between employer and employees in achieving and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions;
- (b) make proposals to the employer on matters regarding safety, health and welfare of employees; and
- (c) make recommendations to the employer on training requirements and education programmes for particular employees or group of employees.

5. We rely on your collaboration and support for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2005. We trust that you will personally ensure that sufficient resources are made available to Office Superintendents/Office Supervisors and officers concerned to enable them to efficiently discharge safety and health duties for ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for one and all.

6. Officers of the Occupational Safety and Health Unit of this Ministry are at the disposal of Ministries/Departments to provide guidance and assistance on safety and health matters. They may be contacted on telephone numbers 2108667/2109344.

P. Jhugroo
Supervising Officer

Copy to: Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service