APPENDIX 1

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR WORKSTATIONS

EQUIPMENT

The use of the equipment must not be a source of risk for users and must conform to minimum standards for DSE compliance.

Display Screen

The characters on the screen should be well defined and clearly formed, of adequate size and with adequate spacing between the characters and lines.

The image on the screen should be stable, with no flickering or other forms of instability.

The brightness and the contrast between the characters and the background should be easily adjustable by the user, and also be easily adjustable to ambient conditions.

The screen must swivel and tilt easily and freely to suit the needs of the user.

It should be possible to use a separate base for the screen or an adjustable table.

The screen should be free of reflective glare and reflections liable to cause discomfort to the user.

Where users have more than one screen the following considerations should be made to ascertain where they should be placed:

- Angle: screens should be angled to face the user
- Position and height: screens should be positioned to reduce repetitive or excessive head and neck movement.
- Necessity: does the user need all the screens?
- Frequency of use: how often and for how long is each screen used?

Keyboard

The keyboard should be tiltable and separate from the screen so as to allow the user to find a comfortable working position avoiding fatigue in the arms or hands.

The space in front of the keyboard should be sufficient to provide support for the hands and arms of the user.

The keyboard should have a matt surface to avoid reflective glare.

The arrangement of the keyboard and the characteristics of the keys should be such as to facilitate the use of the keyboard.

The symbols on the keys should be adequately contrasted and legible from the design working position.

Laptop computers do not comply with the schedule because the keyboard is attached to the screen. This leads to compromised head and neck postures. In addition, the keys may be smaller than normal causing awkward hand postures. While laptop keyboards are acceptable for short periods of keying, a docking station with a separate full size keyboard is preferable for prolonged use.

Non Keyboard Input Devices (NKIDS)

Apart from the keyboard most users use a mouse which should not be a source of risk, to input data, although there are an increasing number of alternatives. The following should be considered:

- Consider the shape, size and functionality of your mouse
- Use keyboard shortcuts as an alternative to using the mouse
- Consider the position of your mouse. It should be as close to your keyboard as possible on whichever side suits the user.
- Take your hand away from the mouse when you are not using it.
- Loosen your grip on the mouse
- Consider the cleanliness and speed of the mouse, both can effect its effectiveness.

Work Desk or Work Surface

The work desk or work surface should have a sufficiently large, low reflectance surface and allow a flexible arrangement of the screen, keyboard, documents and related equipment.

The document holder should be stable and adjustable and should be positioned so as to minimise the need for uncomfortable head and eye movements.

There should be adequate space for users to find a comfortable position.

Work Chair

The work chair should be stable and allow the user easy freedom of movement and a comfortable position.

The chair should have a five star mobile base with suitable castors.

The seat should be adjustable in height.

The seat back should be adjustable in both height and tilt.

The size of the seat should be wide enough to seat people comfortably i.e. deep enough to support legs of tall people but not so deep that shorter workers cannot use backrest.

A footrest shall be necessary for any user whose feet do not touch the floor when chair height correctly adjusted for keyboard use.

ENVIRONMENT

Space Requirements

The workstation should be dimensioned and designed so as to provide sufficient space for the user to change position and vary movements.

Lighting

Any room lighting or task lighting provided should ensure satisfactory lighting conditions and an appropriate contrast between the screen and the background environment, taking into account the type of work and the vision requirements of the user.

Reflections and Glare

Workstations should be so designed that sources of light, such as windows and other openings, transparent or translucid walls, and brightly coloured fixtures or walls cause no direct glare and no distracting reflections on the screen.

Windows should be fitted with a suitable system of adjustable covering to attenuate the daylight that falls on the workstation.

Noise
Noise emitted by equipment belonging to any workstation should be taken into account when a workstation is being equipped, with a view in particular to ensuring that attention is not distracted and speech is not disturbed.

Heat
Equipment belonging to any workstation should not produce excess heat which could cause discomfort to users.

Radiation
All radiation with the exception of the visible part of the electromagnetic spectrum should be reduced to negligible levels from the point of view of the protection of users' health and safety. DSE gives out visible light which enables the screen to be seen. Levels of radiation emitted from DSE are set by international recommendations. Equipment manufacturers must ensure that their equipment is below the safe level identified in the international recommendations.

Humidity
An adequate level of humidity should be established and maintained.

INTERFACE BETWEEN COMPUTER AND USER

In designing, selecting, commissioning and modifying software, and in designing tasks using display screen equipment, the employer should take into account the following principles:

- Software must be suitable for the task.

- Software must be easy to use and, where appropriate, adaptable to the level of knowledge or experience of the user; no quantitative or qualitative checking facility may be used without the knowledge of the users.

- Systems must provide feedback to users on the performance of those systems.

- Systems must display information in a format and at a pace which are adapted to users.