Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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1. Purpose of the policy

a) To set out SOFEA's commitment to the Health Safety and Wellbeing of all it's staff, volunteers, visitors, and learners. It will outline the organisation, arrangements, processes and procedures to ensure that we are complying with current legislation and codes of good practice.

b) SOFEA is committed to consult employees on health and safety issues.

c) SOFEA is committed to ensuring that the health and safety policy and management system are constantly monitored and reviewed particularly following changes to the business and following accidents or incidents to ensure continual legal compliance.

d) SOFEA's manages the Health and Safety of it's staff, volunteer, visitors and learner in compliance with the following legislation:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Food Safety Act 1990

e) SOFEA's manages the Health and Safety of it's staff, volunteer, visitors and learner in compliance with the following regulations:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) 1999
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1998
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Occupational Safety and Health (Noise Exposure) Regulations, 2019
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at work regulations 2022
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Work at Height Regulations 2005 Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations (HSIER)

2. About this policy

This policy applies to all parts of SOFEA across all sites.

3. Definitions

HSE – The Health and Safety Executive

RA - Risk Assessment

SOP – Standard Operating Procedures

4. Summary of employers responsibilities

a. Under health and safety law employers are responsible for managing the health and safety risks in their businesses. SOFEA fulfils this responsibility in the following way:

- Assess risks

SOFEA has a duty under health and safety law to assess risks in the workplace. This means identifying work activities that could cause injury or illness and taking action to eliminate the hazard, or if this isn't possible, control the risk.

- Provide information about risks

SOFEA gives workers information about the risks in their workplace and how they are protected. SOFEA instructs and trains staff at the start of their time with us and continuous throughout their career.

- Consult employees

SOFEA consults employees on health and safety issues. This is undertaken by monthly health and safety meetings, health and safety toolbox talk at staff briefings etc. Health and safety is a standard item on all meeting and 1:1 agendas.

- Provide health and safety information

SOFEA complies with its legal duty under the Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations (HSIER) to display the approved poster in a prominent position in each workplace.

Specific Responsibilities

b) Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is responsible jointly and individually for managing SOFEA's health, safety and welfare, in a way that enables the charity effectively carry out its charitable purposes.

c) Chief Executive Officer (CEO) The CEO (Richard Kennell) has overall responsibilities of the health, safety and welfare of all employees, learners, volunteers, visitors and contractors. The following duties are carried out in partnership with the Site Directors and the Compliance officer, however overall responsibilities lie with the CEO.

d) Operations Director and The Site Directors have overall responsibility for implementing this policy. By embedding processes and procedures that are necessary to ensure SOFEA's health, safety and welfare compliance.

e) Heads of Departments have day to day responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all their staff, volunteers and learners under our duty of care. They will report to the Site Operations and Health and Safety working group and a quarterly basis.

f) The Compliance Officer has the responsibility to monitor that the duties of the above are carried out correctly in compliance with Health and Safety legislation and regulations. They will scrutinize the data, audit the processes and procedures and report any failings.

g) Staff, volunteers, visitors, and learners are required by law, to co-operate with management in all matters concerning the health, safety and welfare of themselves and any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst at work. SOFEA encourages all employees to inform management of any areas of the health and safety concerns to ensure that the policy is maintained as a true working document.

5. Summary of employee responsibilities

All employees have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by your actions at work. Workers must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements in the following ways:

a) ensure they work in ways that are safe and without risk to themselves, learners, other staff, or visitors.

b) co-operate with SOFEA by adhering to advice, instructions and procedures for health and safety arrangements.

c) report any unsafe practices or procedures.
d) report any unsafe fixtures, fittings or items of equipment.
e) participate actively with the SOFEA to improve the standard of health and safety for all.

6. Arrangements

Below are the arrangements put in place by SOFEA to effectively manage the Health Safety and Wellbeing for individuals and across the sites.

7. Access and Egress
8. Accident Reporting
9. Alcohol and Non-Prescription Drugs
10. Auditing the Safety System
11. CCTV
12. Contractors
13. COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
14. Crisis Management Plan
15. Death or Suicide Protocol
16. DSE
17. Driving at work
18. E-Safety
19. Electrical Safety
20. Extreme Temperatures
21. Fire Safety
22. First Aid
23. Food Safety
24. Gas Safety
25. Harassment and Violence
26. Housekeeping
27. Infection Control
28. Ladders Safety
29. Legionella
30. Lighting
31. Lifting Equipment
32. Lone Working
33. Mental Health / Wellbeing
34. Moving and Handling
35. New and Expectant Mothers

36. Noise
37. Office Equipment
38. Off Site Visits
39. PAT testing
40. Pest Control
41. Personal Protective Equipment
42. Prescription Drugs
43. Property Maintenance
44. Remote working
45. Risk Assessments
46. Security
47. Smoking
48. Stress
49. Workplace Transport
50. Working at height

7. Access and Egress

a) Provision is made to ensure that staff, volunteers, visitors and learners can access and leave our sites in a safe manner.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage safe access and egress through a combination of:
   - Pedestrian vehicle segregation measures in place
   - Forklift buddy to be vigilant for unauthorised personnel while the forklift is in operation.
   - No unauthorised personnel in the loading bay when deliveries are coming in and going out.
   - External lighting in the car park.
   - CCTV by the entrance (Milton Keynes only)

8. Accident Reporting

a) SOFEA recognises the importance of managing accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences. By reporting and recording this information we are able to recognise trends or patterns and learn from incidents, helping us build a strong Health and Safety culture.
b) This policy sets out responsibilities for arranging, reporting and monitoring incident, accidents and near misses over all SOFEA sites and any off-site activities.
c) SOFEA uses a paper accident sheet to record all accidents on site.

d) SOFEA also uses an online accident reporting system Online Accident Reporting form as a means of recording potentially dangerous situations, incidents or accidents and dangerous occurrences.
e) When an accident has occurred, it must be reported immediately to your manger or the Head of Department. The situations need assessing to see if the current control measures are still fit for purpose or does more need to be done.
f) A report of all accidents, incidents, work related illness or near misses in compiled and sent to the CEO and Operations Director.
g) It relates the procedure for recording the incident, undertaking an investigation, acting on ways to improve and subsequent reporting under the RIDDOR regulations.

This policy statement is supported by the Accident Reporting SOP.

9. Alcohol and Drugs

a. SOFEA has a zero-tolerance policy regarding the consumption or effect of alcoholic drinks and non-prescription drugs on staff, volunteers, contractors and learners on site or during office hours.
b. Staff, volunteers, contractors and learners who are believed to be under the influence will be removed from site and my face disciplinary action.

10. Auditing the Safety System

a) SOFEA has introduced a system of regular compliance inspection and reporting through Site Operational groups and The quarterly Health and Safety meeting. The data is provided by Heads of Department and the Compliance Officer is responsible for verifying that the standards are being met.

11. CCTV (South Midlands)

a) The use of CCTV and the DATA that is collected is designed to protect individuals, their property and SOFEA's property. It is designed not to be intrusive on learners and staff are notified of its use and positioning.
b) This policy statement is supported by the CCTV SOP

12. Contractors

a) Robust systems of selecting, managing, and monitoring contractors helps to reduce potential Health and Safety issues. SOFEA has put in place systems which put Health and Safety arrangements at the centre when selecting a contractor.

b) Contracts are drawn up to clearly identify each parties' responsibilities under Health and Safety law. Ensuring that contractors and SOFEA's staff, volunteers and learners are not put at risk by the contractors acts or omissions.
c) This policy statement is supported by the Contractors SOP.

13. COSHH

a) The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 is legislation that outlines the general requirements imposed on employers to protect employees and other persons from the hazards of substances used at work.
b) SOFEA complies with this legislation by undertaking COSHH risk assessments, controls the exposure from chemicals for staff, volunteers, and learners.
c) SOFEA policy states who have responsibility for controlling COSHH products including the way we manage how the substances are brought on site, it establishes the safe way it should be used, stored and disposed of. We also address the process of dealing with accidents involving chemicals.
d) SOFEA's Science Lab will be subject to separate regulations (CLEAPPS) and currently undergo an external review of procedures every two years.
e) All substances that fall under the COSHH regulations are stored in their original container with the original label and warnings clearly visible and always kept in a locked cupboard.
f) Food or drink containers are never to be used to store chemicals. All spillages must be cleaned up immediately, and accidents recorded on the online accident form as outlined in the Accident Reporting section of this policy.
g) As part of health and safety education, learners are taught to recognise the orange warning symbols, which they may come across on household containers, such as bleach, disinfectants, lavatory cleaners, oven cleaners, paint strippers etc, and are warned of the associated dangers. Protective clothing is available to all staff when using chemicals.
h) This policy statement is supported by the COSHH SOP the COSHH risk assessments and the COSHH data sheets.

14. Crisis Management Plan

a) SOFEA is aware of the importance of having plans in place to deal with Crisis Management i.e. the flood on site or external threats that means the site is inaccessible to both staff and learners.
b) Full details of the plan can be found in the Business Continuity Policy.

15. Death and Suicide

a) SOFEA has a detailed procedure to be followed in the event of a death or suicide either on site during office / educational hours or out of hours. This policy statement is supported by the Death Post-vention procedure.

16. Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

a) Display Screen Equipment (DSE) based work can potentially have serious effects on health. DSE users can experience a range of different physical and psychological health problems including eyestrain, blurred vision, headaches, and musculoskeletal problems including repetitive strain injury (RSI) and work-related upper limb disorders (WRULD). Problems are caused by a combination of badly designed jobs, equipment and work environment. However, most of these conditions are preventable by giving attention to the way in which work is organised and providing appropriate equipment and workplaces.

SOFEA's policy is to manage the effects of using DSE through regular assessment of workstations and monitoring individual conditions. This policy statement is supported by the and the DSE SOP and the risk assessments.

17. Driving At Work

a) It has been estimated that up to one third of all road traffic accidents involve somebody who is 'at work' at the time, making work-related road collisions the biggest single safety issue for many UK businesses.
b) SOFEA's policy is to develop a culture of safe driving practice. Regular vehicle checks, inspections and monitoring is in place to ensure that both company vehicles and individuals who are tasked with driving for work are fit to do so.

This policy statement is supported by the Driving Safety SOP, and the Driving Safety Risk assessment and the Driver's induction.

18. E-Safety

a) SOFEA recognizes new technologies are integral to learners' lives and to the process of learning. The Internet and other digital platforms are powerful tools for learning and provide opportunities for creativity.
b) However, the misuse of online platforms can result in negative affect on individual's and others mental health. Therefore, to ensure that all staff and learners have safe Internet access and usage at all times SOFEA will enforces an Acceptable use of ICT Policy.

19. Electrical Safety

a) The safe management of electrical installations and equipment is essential to our business. It is therefore imperative that electrical systems and equipment are designed, constructed, selected, maintained and used with care. Not only is there a potential for harm, but loss of power supply could impact our ability to conduct business and force temporary closure.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Electrical Safety in compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1898 and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of Risk Assessment, regular maintenance and inspection both internally and with external competent contractors. Training and Development to ensure our staff are competent and confident to use Electrical equipment safely.
c) This policy statement is supported by the Electrical Safety SO and the Electrical Risk Assessment.

20. Extreme Temperatures

a) There may be occasions when staff are required to work in extreme temperature to fulfil their responsibilities. This may include, working in the freezer or delivering food during the summer.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage working in extreme temperatures in compliance with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:
    - Risk Assessment for tasks that require working in extreme heat or cold.
    - The provision of cold drinks or cool packs to be provided for the delivery teams.
    - The provision of extra warm clothing to be warn in the freezer.
    - Restricting the number of people with access to the freezer
    - Regular maintenance, inspection, and testing
e) This policy statement is supported by the Extreme Temperatures SOP and the Extreme Temperatures RA.

21. Fire Safety

a) Fire prevention is an important obligation for all businesses. SOFEA has a responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees and others who may have access to the workplace as well as adjoining businesses or premises.
b) These general duties include safety in relation to fire hazards, both from the work processes and activities, as well as general fire safety in the workplace.

c) It is the policy of SOFEA to ensure that all employees, visitors, learners and contractors are protected from the risks of fire.
d) In order to achieve this, appropriate fire prevention, precautionary and evacuation measures shall be taken in compliance with the relevant fire legislation and recognised good practice standards.
e) SOFEA's policy is to manage Fire Safety in compliance with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:
    - Fire Risk Assessment undertaken by an external Fire Safety Officer.
    - Regular maintenance, inspection, and testing
    - Regular fire drills for staff, volunteers and students
    - Training and Development of staff and learners
    - Good levels of housekeeping
    - Fire prevention practices and procedures
    - No smoking on the premises, smoking only permitted in the designated areas
f) This policy statement is supported by the Fire Safety Policy and all the Fire Safety arrangements can be found on TEAMs.

22. First Aid

a) People at work can sustain an injury or become ill and it is important that they receive immediate attention and that an ambulance is called for in serious situations. The provision of adequate first aid cover is essential; it can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major ones.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage First Aid Provision in compliance with The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:
    - First Aid Risk Assessment to establish the level of risk and provision needed.
    - Regular training of appropriately training staff members in accordance with the risk assessment
    - Good levels of housekeeping and maintenance to reduce the likely of accidents requiring first aid.
    - A robust system of recording and investigating near misses and accidents.
c) This policy statement is supported by the First Aid RA.

23. Food Safety

a) In partnership with Fareshare SOFEA supports many different organisations through its food delivery. The safe receipt, storage, delivery, and disposal of food is a vital part of the SOFEA business model.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Food Safety in compliance with the Food Safety Act 1990 and by following SOFEA's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points training and procedures:

- Adequate resources are provided to ensure that proper provision can be made for food safety
- Risk assessments are carried out and regularly reviewed in accordance with our HACCP's
- Safe Systems of work are introduced to record and track the source and destination of the food.
- All employees are training in basic food safety as part of induction and regularly refreshed. Certain staff are training to level 2 or 3 food safety as their role requires.
- The provision and maintenance of all plant, machinery, and equipment to ensure it is safe and without risk to health or food safety.
- The working environment for all staff, volunteers and learners is safe and without risk to health or food safety and that adequate provision is made with regard to the facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work
- Monitoring activities are undertaken to maintain agreed standards
- All food prepared or stored on the premises complies with all food safety requirements and is of the nature, substance and quality demanded.

c) This policy statement is supported by the Food Safety Manual

24. Gas Safety (Milton Keynes)

a) Every year, a number of people die from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by gas appliances or flues which have not been installed properly or maintained. When gas does not burn properly, carbon monoxide is produced, which is poisonous.
b) This policy statement is supported by the Gas Safety.

25. Harassment and Violence

a) Any form of harassment or violence against staff, learners or volunteers whether committed by co-workers, managers, learners or third parties, is unacceptable. It breaches ethical standards, as well as affecting the physical and mental health of those involved.

b) Violence, Physical or verbal abuse is not tolerated and any incidents involving, staff, volunteers, visitors or learners MUST be reported immediately to the Head of Department and recorded on the incident database.
c) This statement is supported by the Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy.

26. Housekeeping

a) Poor standards of housekeeping are a common cause of injury and damage at work and can create possible fire hazards. Unsatisfactory housekeeping is often the result of poor working practices, lack of direct supervision and/or organisational deficiencies within the workplace.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage housekeeping and general maintenance in compliance with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Everyone is responsible for keeping their own workspace clear and tidy.
- All communal areas are left clean, washing up done etc.
- Regular inspection to ensure standards are maintained.

27. Infection Control

SOFEA has a responsibility to manage the control of infectious diseases that could have a negative effect on the way we are able to provide the services to the community. Details of this are described in the Standard Operating Procedure.

28. Ladders Safety

a) SOFEA has engineered its processes to ensure that the need for working at height is reduced to the lowest possible level. To enable this, we have introduced safe systems for managing the installation of racking, the maintenance of equipment is essential to our business.
b) Ladders have limited use on site and staff are aware that they are only to be used to gain access to a safe working platform. The are regularly maintained and access to they are restricted.
c) SOFEA's policy is to manage Working at Height in compliance with The Work at Height Regulations 2005 and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of

- Risk Assessment for all tasks that require staff to use ladders
- Regular inspection and maintenance of ladders equipment
- Training and development to ensure our staff are competent and confident to use ladders or lifting equipment

d) This policy statement is supported by the Ladder SOP.

29. Legionella

a) Legionnaire's disease is one of a group of diseases collectively known as Legionellosis. People inhaling aerosols, which are contaminated with Legionella bacteria, contract infection.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the threat of Legionella in compliance with Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:
   - Legionella Risk Assessment to establish the level of risk and controls needed.
   - Appropriately trained staff
   - Regular testing and monitoring of the systems.
   - A robust system of recording and investigating near misses and accidents.
c) This policy statement is supported by the Legionella SOP.

30. Lighting

a) Poor lighting can have a negative effect on people's physical and mental health. The damaging effects of poor or artificial lighting can result in headaches, eye strain or sight deterioration.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the levels of light on the SOFEA sites in compliance with The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Undertaking a risk assessment of the light levels across the site
- Make reasonable adjustments through engineering controls, reducing the risks down to the lowest possible level.

31. Lifting Equipment and Lifting Operations (Forklift)

a) Lifting equipment is usually defined as any plant certified for lifting and in SOFEA's case it is the forklift and the powered pallet truck.
b) SOFEA has put in place processes to ensure that the risks involved with operating the forklift and the pallet truck is reduced to the lowest possible level. To enable this, we have introduced safe systems for training, inspection and maintenance of this equipment which is essential to our business.
c) SOFEA's policy is to manage the operation, maintenance and storage in compliance with The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998

(LOLER regulations) and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Externally delivered training of appropriate staff members
- Good levels of housekeeping in the warehouses to assist with the free movement of the forklift
- Regular maintenance and inspection
- A robust system of recording and investigating near misses and accidents.

d) This policy statement is supported by SOPS for each type of equipment and can be found in the Lifting Equipment folder on TEAMs.

32. Lone Working

a) Lone workers can be anyone who works by his/herself without direct contact or supervision. Examples include: - a person working on their own in a workshop, persons working in an office on their own, persons working outside normal hours on their own and mobile or peripatetic workers.

b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the risk associated with lone working a combination of:

- Undertaking a risk assessment of the duties undertaken when working alone
- Make reasonable adjustments to the working practices of the individual to reduce the risk down to the lowest possible level.

c) This policy statement is supported by the Lone Working Policy.

33. Mental Health / Wellbeing

a) Supporting people's mental health is extremely important to SOFEA and we aim to promote positive mental health for each learner, volunteer or member of staff.

b) SOFEA's policy is to promote a positive mental health culture through a combination of.

- All staff having an awareness of an individual's circumstances, knowing who may need extra support. Employers must now carry out mental health risk assessments where stress or psychological harm could occur.
- One to one support through regular meetings, between staff and their managers.
- Flexible working arrangements and support systems are seen as part of a safe working environment.
- Keep in touch policy for staff absence from the workplace, i.e., on long term sick or maternity leave
- A culture of accepting that it is ok not to be ok.

- A programme to introduce mental health first aiders for staff in high pressure roles.

34. Moving and Handling

a) SOFEA has engineered its processes to ensure that the need for moving and handling is reduced to the lowest possible level.

b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Moving and Handling in compliance with The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER regulations) and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of.

- Risk Assessment for all moving and handling tasks, with regular reviews.
- Compliance with the Fareshare's maximum lifting weights for warehouse activity.
- Regular inspection and maintenance of lifting equipment
- Employers must ensure up-to-date manual handling training is provided regularly.
- Design delivery and storage, to reduce the need to physically move items
- Arrange deliveries to reduce the need to physically move items

35. New And Expectant Mothers

a) SOFEA is committed to protecting the health and safety of all new and expectant mothers. The phrase "new and expectant mother" means an employee who is pregnant, or who has given birth within the previous six months or who is breastfeeding.

b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the operation, maintenance and storage in compliance with The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Undertaking a risk assessment of the duties and tasks of the expectant mother and when the member of staff returns to work.
- Make reasonable adjustments to the workload of the individual to reduce the risk down to the lowest possible level.

36. Noise

a) Hearing damage caused by exposure to noise at work can be permanent and incurable. Hearing loss is usually gradual due to prolonged exposure to noise. The damaging effects of noise are related to the level of noise the ear receives and the duration of the exposure.

b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the levels of noise on the SOFEA sites in compliance with The Occupational Safety and Health (Noise Exposure) Regulations, 2019 and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Undertaking a risk assessment of the noise levels from the tasks and activities undertaken by SOFEA staff and volunteers.
- Make reasonable adjustments through engineering controls, reducing the risks down to the lowest possible level.

37. Office / Education Equipment

a) All staff and learners have a responsibility to ensure all equipment used is reasonably clean, well maintained, and safe. If any item of equipment is identified as being unsafe in any way, it's should not be used and removed immediately, and the Site Directors notified.

38. Off Site Visits

a) An off-site visit is any visit where the learners are taken away from the educational site. A risk assessment must be completed by the event organiser and signed by the Compliance Officer **before** the visit takes place.
b) Control measures must be put in place to reduce the risk level to low. If risk levels remain at medium or high the visit must be discussed further with all concerned, until the risk can be reduced to an acceptable level.
c) The risk assessment process also determines the level of first aid cover for the visit. The Risk Assessment must be reviewed on a continual basis to ensure that it is still relevant, and the risk level remains low. All members of staff must sign to say they have read and understand the risks and the controls in place.

39. PAT testing

a) All portable electrical appliances will be tested as necessary. The frequency of the tests varies according to the equipment and where/how it is used. SOFEA has decided to test at least once a year. Any items that are passed this timescale or are clearly damaged or faulty must not be used, removed if possible and the Site Director notified.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Electrical Safety in compliance with the of Risk Assessment, regular maintenance, and inspection both internally and with external competent contractors. Training and Development to ensure our staff are competent and confident to use Electrical equipment safely.
c) SOFEA's policy is to manage the testing of Portable Electrical Appliances in compliance with The Electricity at Work Regulations 1898 and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of:

- Only purchasing equipment from a reputable source
- Regular maintenance and inspection
- A robust system of recording and investigating near misses and accidents.

d) This policy statement is supported by the Electrical Safety SOP.

40. Pest Control

a) Robust and effective Pest Control is vital to the continuing operation of the SOFEA sites. Failure to manage Pests correctly could result in an interruption in warehouse operations and for a serious infestation a prosecution by the Environmental Health Office.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Pest control in compliance with the Food Safety Act 1990 and by following SOFEA's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points training and procedures:
c) Training all staff and volunteers in basic food safety and significant members of the team in level 2 and 3 Food Safety.
d) A robust system of cleaning and inspection
e) This policy statement is supported by the Pest Control SOP.

41. Personal Property

a) Staff and students are responsible for the security of their own personal items. Learners are provided with a locker and discouraged from leaving valuable items around the school.

42. Personal Protective Equipment

a) Personal protective equipment (PPE) is to be supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways. PPE will only be used as a last resort when preventative or other control measures cannot be applied.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage the correct use of PPE in compliance with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at work regulations 2022 and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of:
   - Only purchasing equipment from a reputable source
   - Inspect all PPE before use to ensure that it is suitable, clean and undamaged.
   - Having in place a system to report any defective PPE, any discomfort or ill health experienced as a consequence of wearing the equipment, any breaches to the correct usage of PPE. Employers must now provide suitable PPE to both employees and certain contractors (limb (b) workers).
   - PPE must be free of charge, properly fitted, and maintained — including face coverings in specific roles.

- New standards and certifications may differ from CE markings — watch for UKCA marking.

43. Property Maintenance

a) All staff are required to be vigilant around the issue of property maintenance. Any defects in the conditions of buildings or grounds should be reported to the Site Directors immediately.

44. Remote Working

Remote and hybrid working is regularly undertaken by SOFEA staff with prior approval from their managers. SOFEA are expected to carry out and document risk assessments for home-based employees.

- Ergonomics, screen time, and mental health are all key factors.
- Failure to assess home working environments can now trigger compliance issues.
- Providing Display Screen Equipment (DSE) training is essential for remote teams.

45. Risk Assessments

a) Risk Assessments will be carried out on all our significant hazards to ensure the safety of all our staff, volunteers and learners.
b) Risk Assessments are undertaken by staff with experience and competence to undertake the task/activity safely. The Compliance Officer can support with assessing the risk and will sign off the assessments.
c) The risk assessment will follow the 5 steps:
    1. Step 1: Identify the hazards.
    2. Step 2: Decide who might be harmed and how.
    3. Step 3: Evaluate the risks and introduce control measures.
    4. Step 4: Record your findings and implement them.
    5. Step 5: Review your risk assessment and update.
d) The risk assessment will be shared with all relevant staff and volunteers and the assessment reviewed and revised, as necessary. The review will take place at least annually but will also take place if there are any significant changes, such as building work being carried out or if there are major staff changes.
e) SOFEA's policy is to manage Risk in compliance with Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) and by following the HSE code of practice.

46. Site Security

a. Balancing the desire for an open and welcoming environment and the need to keep staff, volunteers, visitors and learners safe is a continuing challenge.

b. SOFEA's policy is to manage Site Security in compliance with Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) and by following the HSE code of practice, through a combination of:

- Staff, volunteers and learners are to treat the site with respect and not act in a way that could put others at risk.
- Staff to be vigilant around the site, reporting any concerns to the Site Director.
- Access to the Didcot site to be limited to the main entrance 1D and all visitors should be directed this way.
- Access to the Milton Keynes site to be limited to the main entrance on Dawson Road and all visitors should be directed this way.
- Staff to sign in and out when on site.
- Visitors and contractors are to sign in at reception and must wear a visitor's lanyard at all times when on site. Visitors are not to be unaccompanied when on site.
- No smoking or vaping outside of the designated smoking area
- Regular lock down drills

47. Smoking

a. SOFEA has a zero-tolerance policy regarding smoking or vaping by staff, volunteers, contractors and learners within the SOFEA buildings or in the vicinity of the buildings away from the designated smoking areas.

48. Stress

a) The HSE defines stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'.

b) Stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether a worker can cope.

c) There are six main areas of work design which can affect stress levels. You should manage these properly. They are:

- demands
- control
- support
- relationships

- role
- change

d) A separate risk assessment will be undertaken, ensuring all reasonable steps are made to reduce the stress the employee is facing.
e) This policy statement is supported by the Stress Policy.

49.Workplace transport

e) Workplace transport is defined as any vehicle that is owned or leased by SOFEA for the purpose of collecting or delivering goods to the wider SOFEA community. It also includes the transportation vehicles owned by our suppliers or partners.
f) SOFEA has put in place processes to ensure that the risks involved with operating these vehicles is reduced to the lowest possible level. Similar safe systems of work have been developed around loading and unloading of these vehicles. To enable this, we have introduced safe systems for driver training, vehicle inspection and maintenance for all our vehicles which is essential to our business.
g) SOFEA's policy is to manage the operation, maintenance and storage in compliance Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and in accordance with the HSE's code of practice on Workplace Transport.
h) SOFEA manages the risk through a combination of:
   - Appropriate external training for all staff members who are operating or loading or unloading commercial vehicles.
   - Instruction and supervision for all staff members who are operating or loading or unloading commercial vehicles.
   - A buddy system in place when operating a forklift around commercial vehicles.
   - Regular maintenance and inspection of all vehicles SOFEA is responsible for.
   - A robust system of recording and investigating near misses and accidents.
i) This policy statement is supported by SOPS and Safe Systems of Work and can be found in the Workplace Transport folder on TEAMs.

50. Working at height.

a) SOFEA has engineered it's processes to ensure that the need for working at height is reduced to the lowest possible level. To enable this, we have introduced safe systems for managing the installation of racking, the maintenance of equipment is essential to our business.
b) SOFEA's policy is to manage Working at Height in compliance with The Work at Height Regulations 2005 and by following the HSE guidance, through a combination of

c) Risk Assessment for all tasks that require staff to work at height.
d) Regular inspection and maintenance of equipment
e) Training and development to ensure our staff are competent and confident to use ladders or lifting equipment
f) This policy statement is supported by the Working at Height SOP (SOPHSESv1)

51. Monitoring and review of the policy

a) This policy is reviewed once a year by our board of trustees to ensure that it is achieving its objectives. It is also reviewed following any significant changes in the organisation or following a major accident or incident as part of the investigation process. Updates to the policy will be communicated to staff through regular training sessions and staff briefings.

Name: Richard Kennell CEO

Signed: .....

Date: .....