1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Integral to the provision of safe working environment is the control of substances hazardous to health in the workplace. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH (NI)) 2003 is a statutory regulation that states general requirements on employers to protect employees and other persons from the hazards of substances used at work by risk assessment, control of exposure, health surveillance and incident planning.

1.2 The NIGALA is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of its employees, including the promotion of working environments within which the risks of developing a work-related medical condition or suffering an injury is minimised insofar as it is reasonably practicable.

1.3 Office environments are not generally areas that contain hazardous substances therefore risk from hazardous substances in an office environment is low.

2.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS BULLETIN

2.1 This bulletin describes the NIGALA’s arrangements for discharge of its responsibilities to all employees and others who might be affected by its actions, particularly as determined by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH (NI)) 2003.

3.0 DEFINITION OF HAZARD SUBSTANCES

3.1 Hazardous substances are described as:

- Any substances which are labelled as being ‘very toxic’, ‘toxic’, ‘harmful’, ‘irritant’ or ‘corrosive’.
- Any substance with a workplace exposure limit.
- Substantial quantities of airborne dust of any kind.
- Biological agents.
- Any other substances that creates a comparable health hazard.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

4.1 The objectives of this bulletin are:

- Controlling the health risks to employees and others affected by their activities might be exposed to as a result of work activities;
- Reduce the incidence of work-related ill-health caused by hazardous substances;
- Promote the use of substances with less hazardous nature;
- Reduce the likelihood of an emergency such as a fire or spillage occurring;

Reduce the need to wear personal protective equipment (PPE).

4.2 The NIGALA’s objectives will be achieved by completing and actioning risk assessment.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health and safety in the NIGALA.

5.2 CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER

The Corporate Services Manager has delegated responsibility for the overall implementation of this bulletin.

5.3 LINE MANAGERS

- Incident reporting and investigation procedures are carried out where appropriate.
- Should ensure waste which may require disposal as special waste are identified to the Corporate Services Manager to enable disposal in accordance with applicable regulations.

5.4 EMPLOYEES

Employees will ensure that they:

- Follow safety procedures;
- Be aware of emergency procedures;
- Report any hazard or defect in safety arrangements;
- Inform their manager should they have any injury or condition which might be affected by working with hazardous substance;
- Read container labels being particularly careful with those having a hazard classification;
- Store substances safely;
- Never put substances into unmarked containers;
- Ensure hazardous substances are not accessible to the public/visitors;
- Use PPE correctly where provided.

6.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 COSHH regulations require a risk assessment to be carried out.

6.2 The NIGALA COSHH risk assessment will be undertaken on an annual basis for each office, in accordance with the NIGALA Risk Assessment Programme, by a NIGALA Risk Assessor (James Lawne and Sinéad Casey) or sooner if ill health related to work is reported or there is new evidence about hazards of substance.
6.3 All necessary additional precautions identified as being required will be put into place as soon as reasonably practicable following completion of an assessment.

7.0 INCIDENT REPORTING PROCEDURE

7.1 All incidents including those involving hazardous substances must be recorded and reported in accordance with the NIGALA’s Adverse Incident Bulletin 3.

8.0 PROCEDURES FOR USING/DISPOSING OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

8.1 CARTRIDGES/TONERS

Sealed cartridges/toners are used by the NIGALA and disposed of in accordance with the NIGALA’s Recycling and Waste Management Policy².

8.2 CLEANING PRODUCTS

Cleaning of NIGALA offices and cleaning provisions are provided by contract cleaners.

If employees are carrying out minor cleaning duties, in general always read the label and never mix chemicals. Only use substances for their intended purpose.

8.3 WASTE MANAGEMENT

The NIGALA’s arrangements for Waste Management are set out in the Recycling and Waste Management Policy.

9.0 CROSS-REFERENCE TO OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

9.1 This bulletin should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

BULLETIN 1 Risk Assessments
BULLETIN 3 Adverse Incidents
DOCUMENT NIGALA Risk Assessment Programme
POLICY NIGALA Waste Management & Recycling Policy

10.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information in relation to COSHH can be found at:

- http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/
- http://www.hseni.gov.uk/guidance/guidance/topics/coshh.htm

² NIGALA Recycling & Waste Management Policy available on NIGALA intranet