



LEAFLET 44

SAFETY SIGNS

AMENDMENT RECORD

Amnd No	Date	Text Affected	Authority and Date
1	June- July 2009	Whole Document	SSDC Jun 09

REVISION NOTE

Leaflet 44 has been wholly revised. The scope of this leaflet has been changed to cover safety signs only and does not cover information on hand signals.

HISTORICAL RECORD

Original Leaflet was introduced in October 2001

LEAFLET 44

SAFETY SIGNS

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Foreword

This leaflet is published under the authority of the Chairman of the Defence Occupational Health and Safety Board (OHSB). This leaflet is for application across all areas of MOD and the Armed Forces and reflects any changes in legislation and or MOD policy.

1. SCOPE

1.1 This leaflet provides guidance for all staff and Line Managers, (both Service and civilian) on the identification, format and display of safety signs where there is a need to maintain a higher level of awareness of significant risks on MOD premises and is applicable through the whole of the MOD. However, it excludes signs and labels used in connection with the supply of substances, products and equipment or the transport of dangerous goods; these requirements are covered in the relevant leaflets or specific Joint Service Publications (JSPs) - see Section 6 - Related Documents.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Safety signs are used as one of a variety of methods of communicating health and safety information. They are designed to allow recognition of significant risks by staff through combination of shape, colour or pictogram and may be accompanied by supplementary text. More detailed information on the usage of health and safety signage can be found in the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Head of Establishment (HoE)

3.1 Heads of Establishment are to ensure adequate signage is provided to inform or warn all staff and visitors of significant risks throughout the site.

Line Managers

3.2 The Line Manager must take into account the risk assessment (JSP 375, Vol 2 Leaflet 39) conducted on the hazard itself when determining the need to display safety signs. Where a significant risk remains following implementation of control measures, appropriate safety signs shall be displayed in a prominent location and in accordance with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations.

3.3 Where a safety sign would not help to reduce the risk, or where the risk is not significant, there is no need to provide a sign.



3.4 Line managers shall ensure that all safety signs are properly maintained, not obstructed from view, and that their meaning is understood by all staff.

Staff

3.5 All staff must ensure that they understand what safety signs mean and comply with the instruction.

4. SIGN FORMAT

4.1 Safety signs have specific meanings dependent on their shape and colour. Table 1, below shows examples of the acceptable format for safety signs.

Meaning or purpose	Colour	Shape	Instruction and information	Example
Prohibition sign	Black pictogram on a white background with red edging and diagonal line	Round	Must not do; specific instruction e.g. No access for unauthorised persons	
Warning sign	Black pictogram on a yellow or amber background with black edging	Triangle	Be careful; take precautions e.g. trip hazard	
Mandatory sign	White pictogram on	Round	Must do; specific	




Meaning or purpose	Colour	Shape	Instruction and information	Example
	a blue background		behaviour or action, e.g. wear personal protective equipment	
Safe condition	White pictogram on a green background	Rectangle or square	Identifies a safe route; location of safety equipment; safe condition e.g. escape routes; first aid equipment	
Fire-fighting signs	White pictogram on a red background	Rectangle or square	Fire fighting equipment or facilities	

Table 1

4.2 Pictograms should be used in preference to text, to simplify understanding.

4.3 It may sometimes be useful to supplement a safety sign with text to aid understanding e.g. when introducing a new or unfamiliar sign, or using a general danger or warning sign. Where additional text is added to a sign, the background colour to this text is the same colour as the background of the sign it is supplementing e.g.



4.4 In compliance with the MOD Welsh Language Scheme, safety signs which contain text displayed on MOD sites in Wales shall be provided in both Welsh and English versions. Alternatively bilingual versions may be used.

4.5 It may be necessary to consider displaying text in other languages where the use of English may not be a first language or easily understood.

4.6 The size of pictograms and text should be sufficient to allow easy recognition at normal working distances. Table 2 provides guidance on pictogram and text sizes; however sizes may need to be increased to ensure readability e.g. where employees have visual impairments.

Height of signs and maximum viewing distances		
Max viewing distance (m)	Min symbol height (mm)	Recommended letter height (mm)
7	60	5
9	80	7
14	120	10
21	180	15
28	240	20

Table 2
Information extracted from BS5499-1

4.7 Care shall be taken when positioning safety signs to ensure they are not obstructed, and are maintained. Care should also be taken to ensure the intended audience are not overwhelmed by too many signs, which can result in sign blindness.

4.8 Signage may also be used to mark obstacles, dangerous locations and traffic routes e.g., highlighting the edge of a raised platform or area where objects may fall using markings consisting of yellow and black (or red and white) stripes as shown below.



5. PURCHASE OF SIGNS

5.1 The preferred method of obtaining safety signs is through the M&GS IPT central enabling contract which can provide both standard and bespoke signage.

5.2. In accordance with Defence Information Note:2008DIN04-138 dated 1st Nov 2008, a single Tri-Service contract has been placed with Sign Plus Limited for the supply of signs, labels and bespoke signage.

- **ARMY/NAVY – NATO CODIFIED ITEMS**

- Demanders should go through the normal channels i.e. SCOC at Bicester for the army and issue control at the Naval Bases.

Demanders are not to place direct orders on Sign Plus for such items.

- **DIRECT DELIVERY (Non-NATO Codified Items)**

- Any unit wishing to become an approved demander on the contract will need to email the following details to Sign Plus Limited at: mod@signplus.co.uk

- 1) Address of unit
- 2) Unit Identity Number (UIN)
- 3) A point of contact (POC)
- 4) Civilian telephone and fax number.

Sign Plus Limited will then provide units with a user name and password for the Sign Plus online catalogue along with a CD ROM catalogue if requested

- **BESPOKE SIGNAGE ONLY**

- For bespoke items only, all units may order direct from Sign Plus by providing details of their unit (as above) and bespoke items required. Sign Plus will provide a quotation to the unit for acceptance or decline. If accepted, Sign Plus will then proceed with the order.

Contract No. M&GS/GAMA/401 should be quoted on all correspondence.

Any questions or problems with the requisitioning process are to be raised with the M&GS IPT:

Tel	Civ 01225 883853
	Mil 9355 83853

5.3 Local purchase of safety signs may be considered where a delay in supply creates an unacceptable risk.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

6.1 The following documents should be consulted in conjunction with this leaflet.

JSP 375 Vol 2

- a. Leaflet 5 –Substances Hazardous to Health
- b. Leaflet 39 – Risk Assessment

Other JSPs

- a. JSP 392 - Radiation Safety Handbook Vol 2 Leaflet 4
- b. JSP 426 - MOD Fire Safety Policy
- c. JSP 800 - Defence Movements and Transport Regulations

Guidance and Legislation

- a. Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations
- b. Safety Signs and Signals – HSE guidance L64
- c. British Standard 5378 – Safety Signs and Colours
- d. British Standard 5499 – Safety Signs, including Fire Safety Signs
- e. Def Stan 02-784 - Requirements for Safety Signs and Colours

7. DEFINITIONS

Engineering controls	A physical means of managing risks, e.g. barriers, interlocks or guards etc.
Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm.
Pictogram	A picture representing an action, warning or information
Safe system of work	A formally recorded system of safely conducting a work activity, so far as is reasonably practical
Signboard	A sign which provides information or instruction by a combination of shape, colour and a symbol or pictogram
Supplementary text	Additional wording to assist understanding.