



Occupational Health & Safety Authority

Press Release

Computer Screens and Workstations

20.11.03

The Occupational Health and Safety Authority would like to voice its concern about various television spots depicting people, especially reporters, sitting in front of a computer screen. Although television reporters may not necessarily be defined as frequent and habitual users in terms of the relevant legislation, there are issues relating to workstation layout and ergonomics that one must take note of.

In these spots, the reporters are usually seated at a desk, looking down at the computer monitor. This is not the ideal position for the monitor to be situated or the person to be seated. In fact, according to good practice guidelines, the top of the computer screen should be level with the eyes of the person using the computer. Given that these television spots are aired targeting the general public, one might get the misconceived idea that that is the way one should position the screen. Such posture could in fact lead to various problems related to musculoskeletal disorders or repetitive strain injuries.

The Authority would like to draw the attention of all employees and employers using computer screens (also known as visual display units) to the local legislation dealing specifically with this subject. There are various issues covered in this legislation including computer glare, eye tests, work environment and consultation with employees, amongst others. This piece of legislation is in force.

Copies of the regulations may be downloaded from the OHSA website at <http://mt.osha.eu.int/legislation> or the Ministry for Social Policy at http://www.msp.gov.mt/services/health_safety.asp