

Improving Safety and Health Management at our office in Portugal

Five years ago, we set ourselves the challenge to improve safety and health management at our Portuguese corporate offices and enhance staff motivation and well-being by providing good workplace conditions.

Since then, we have enhanced ergonomic conditions for staff by installing new ergonomic chairs and supports for screen height, wrists and feet where needed. We have delivered monthly training on safety, health and ergonomics and induction training on these topics for all new employees.

We have taken actions to reduce risks for the facilities management team, such as installing mirrors at corridor corners and windows in the most frequently used doors, making improvements to signage and storage areas and purchasing protective equipment.

We have introduced procedures for shared vehicles in Sonae sierra's company car fleet, including monthly safety checks and the introduction of safety and fire extinguisher kits for vehicles.

We have improved our preparedness for different emergency scenarios by performing drills (with the participation of the Lisbon Civil protection), upgrading signage, providing first aid training and making first aid kits available in each area of the office buildings. Comprising a total investment of €167,819, the introduction of these measures has enabled us to:

- reduce the offices' average evacuation time for emergency drills from 30 minutes to 13 minutes.
- increase the proportion of employees with First aid training to 15% (Lisbon offices) and 10% (Maia offices).
- provide safety and health induction training to 100% of new employees in 2010.
- Correct 27% of ergonomic non-conformances identified at workstations in the Lisbon office and 94% of non-conformances identified in the Maia office.



- We also learned some valuable lessons as part of this process:
 - audit and certification processes help us to maintain disciplined procedures and to constantly strive for improvement.
 - external parties' involvement in S&H activities improves awareness and credibility.
 - improving S&H within a limited budget is challenging but it increases creativity.
 - Commitment from senior management is essential for success.

In 2010, one accident occurred among staff in one of our corporate offices in Portugal resulting in 11 lost work days. this accident occurred outside our premises, but since it occurred during lunch time period it is considered in our key performance indicators.

