



LETTER AGREEMENT

No.

92-24-PGE



Pacific Gas and Electric Company
Industrial Relations Department
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San Francisco, California 94106
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International Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO
Local Union 1245, IBEW
P.O. Box 4790
Walnut Creek, California 94596
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Ronald L. Bailey, Manager or
David J. Bergman, Director and Chief Negotiator

Jack McNally, Business Manager

February 19, 1992

Mr. Jack McNally
Local Union No. 1245
International Brotherhood of
Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO
P.O. Box 4790
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Attention: Mr. Jack McNally, Business Manager

Pursuant to the 1990 General Negotiations' settlement, the Company and Union agreed to establish a subcommittee to examine relevant issues relating to Video Display Terminals and develop recommendations to be adopted by the Company and Union as minimum requirements to protect the health and safety of employees using Video Display Terminals and other electronic video equipment.

The attached recommendations were submitted to the Joint Company/Union and were reviewed and approved.

The effective date of this agreement will be the date of signature.

If you are in accord with the foregoing and attachment and agree thereto, please so indicate in the space provided below and return one executed copy of this letter to the Company.

Very truly yours,

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

By 
Director and Chief Negotiator

The Union is in accord with the foregoing and attachment and it agrees thereto as of the date hereof.

LOCAL UNION NO. 1245, INTERNATIONAL
BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS,
AFL-CIO

, 1992

By 
Business Manager



**VDT SUBCOMMITTEE
PROPOSAL**

The VDT Subcommittee proposes that the following guidelines be adopted by the Company as minimum requirements to protect the health and safety of employees using Video Display Terminals and other electronic video equipment.

To ensure the health and safety of VDT operators, Company agrees to address the following areas:

- Ergonomically designed equipment, furniture and accessories,
- Proper maintenance of equipment and furniture,
- Proper illumination and reduction of glare,
- Notifying employees of vision care benefits,
- Work Breaks/Alternate Work,
- Education and training programs.

1. Definition

"Employees" or "Operator" as used in this agreement means any person who may be expected, because of the employee's duties, to use video display terminal equipment four (4) hours or more, inclusive of breaks, per shift.

2. Risk Management

Company shall be responsible for the implementation of the provisions of this agreement and ensure that all departments provide, maintain, and replace terminal equipment and furniture in accordance with Attachment I. Company shall encourage its supervisors to consult with their employees on equipment and furniture selections.

Company shall coordinate the health and safety training for terminal operators, provide information on equipment, and monitor departments to ensure compliance with this agreement.

3. Training

All VDT operators and their supervisors shall be provided with an education and training program. Each department shall maintain records identifying those employees who receive such training.

A. Contents of Training Program

1. All VDT operators shall be provided oral and written training on the basic concepts of VDT ergonomics, the potential ergonomic health hazards of working at VDTs including symptoms. As part of the training package, each employee will be provided with a VDT Employee Manual which summarizes the course material and provides a self-help guide.

2. The training will include materials on how the employee's work station should be adjusted and how to perform the adjustments. A hands-on demonstration will be included. In addition, the training will include a brief discussion on the availability of vision care and corrective lenses.
3. This training shall fully describe the requirements of all applicable rules and regulations.

B. Frequency of Training

1. This training should be provided to current operators and supervisors within 6 months of the effective date of this Agreement or sooner if required by law.
2. After training has been provided to current operators and supervisors as specified above (B.1), all new employees, employees newly transferred, or newly assigned into positions as VDT operators or supervisors, should receive this training within 30 days of employment or transfer.
3. Repeat training should be offered as needed, but not less than on an annual basis. In addition, as other topics or new information arise, they will be communicated to all affected employees.
4. Company shall maintain records identifying those operators provided with information and training under this Agreement.
5. Company shall provide Union such records upon request.
6. The program shall also include a means for adequately evaluating its effectiveness. This might be achieved by using employee interviews, testing, and observing work practices to determine if those who received training understand the material and the work practices to be followed.
7. The VDT Subcommittee shall meet on a quarterly basis to evaluate the status of training and other VDT related issues.

4. Alternate Work/Work Breaks

PG&E shall provide an operator, who may be expected because of the employee's duties to routinely perform repetitive keyboard motions four (4) hours or more, inclusive of breaks, per shift, with a minimum of fifteen (15) minute, aggregate alternative work break during or immediately after every two hours of routinely performing repetitive keyboard motions, except where reasonable alternative work cannot be practicably provided.

Alternate work is essentially non-VDT activity and can include, but is not limited to, a regularly scheduled work break, returning phone calls, making copies or any combination of the above.

Other operators (those who are not defined as performing repetitive keyboard motions in these guidelines) are encouraged to take their regularly scheduled breaks.

5. Vision Care

Operators, as defined in item 1 above, shall be encouraged to have an annual visual examination as provided in the Vision Care Plan, and to obtain corrective lenses if necessary for VDT work.

If investigations or studies performed by NIOSH or some other reputable organization(s), agreed upon by both, parties conclude that eyestrain or other visual problems result from operating Video Display Terminals, either party may request to re-open bargaining on additional vision care benefits.

ATTACHMENT 1

VDT RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES:

"Terminal" or "VDT" means any stationary electronic video screen data presentation machine, commonly referred to as a video (or visual) display terminal (VDT), cathode ray tube (CRT), word processor, personal computer (PC), mini-computer or data entry terminal.

"Work station" means the furniture, equipment and accessories related to use of the VDT which make up the VDT operator's immediate work environment.

A. VDT Equipment

1. Keyboards

- a. The design of the keyboard should permit it to be easily repositioned on the work surface (i.e., detachable).
- b. Angle adjustment should be integral to the keyboard.
- c. There should be a matte finish on keys and other keyboard surfaces.
- d. The keys should have a light touch requiring little force to type on them.
- e. Newly purchased keyboards should have a low profile design. (This reduces, but does not entirely eliminate, the need for wrist rests.)

2. Visual Display Unit or Monitor

- a. There should be a matte finish on the monitor case, knobs and screen.
- b. Display screens should be maintained clean, clear and be without visually perceptible flicker.
- c. The display unit should be adjustable for tilt and swivel, or on a device which allows for these adjustments.
- d. The display unit should have adjustable contrast and brightness controls.

B. Work Station Furniture and Accessories

1. Chairs

- a. Chairs should be provided that allow the operator to place feet comfortably on the floor or, if necessary, a foot support surface.

- b. The height of the seat and the angle of the seat back should be adjustable by the operator in a seated position.
 - c. The maximum seat depth (forward edge to backward edge of seat pan) should permit contact with the seat back in the lower back area and be designed to avoid pressure on the back of the lower leg (such as a "waterfall" front edge design). (Figure 1)
 - d. The seat width should be at least the thigh breadth of the seated person.
 - e. A back rest which supports at least the low back region or above with a minimum width of 12 inches in the low back region should be provided. A contoured lumbar (low back) support should be provided on the back rest.
 - f. The angle between the seat back and the sit pan shall permit the user to assume a firmly supported working posture with a torso-to-thigh angle of at least 100 degrees but not less than 90 degrees. (Figure 2)
 - g. Chairs with seat pans that tilt forward should be designed so as not to constrain the upper body to a position forward of vertical.
 - h. Chairs should be stable and capable of swiveling. Where mobility is required, chairs should be fitted with casters. Chairs with casters shall have a five (or more) prong base.
 - i. Chairs should be upholstered with absorbent fabric.
 - j. Armrests should be provided, upon the request of the operator, and if provided, should be at least the width (between armrests) of the operator.
2. **Work Surfaces (desks, tables where VDT equipment is positioned)**
- a. The depth should be adequate to allow knees and feet to fit under the work surface.
 - b. The width for leg clearance should be larger than the thigh breadth of the operator by at least one inch.
 - c. The height of the space for leg clearance should be at least equivalent to the highest point on the thigh or knee, with operator wearing shoes and the lower legs in a normal working position. (Figure 3)

- d. Height adjustable tables are recommended especially for work stations used by more than one operator. If a single keyboard and display support surface is used, the primary determinant for height of the work surface should be the keyboard height. The monitor can be elevated by use of risers or other support surfaces. Alternatively, a keyboard arm attachment may be used to provide a lower keyboard surface.
- e. The placement of the keyboard should allow the operator to adopt a posture such that the angle between the upper arm and the forearm is greater than 70 degrees and less than 135 degrees. Placement of the keyboard should promote a neutral (flat) position of the wrist so as to avoid extension or flexion of the wrist. (Figure 4)
- f. The height of the display support surface should permit the entire viewing area of the display to be located between zero and 60 degrees below the horizontal line of sight. This means that the top of the screen should be about eye level or slightly below. The operator should not have to twist to look at the screen. (Figure 5)
- g. The work surface, keyboard and display support surfaces should be sufficient to accommodate the VDT components and other task-dependent items such as hard copy.

3. Accessories

- a. Wrist or palm rests should be provided to support the hands and forearms or to reduce wrist extension at the keyboard if requested by the operator.
- b. Articulated keyboard arms may be provided to allow adjustment of the height of the keyboard.
- c. Display support stands or risers may be provided to meet the requirements in Paragraph II, Section B.2(f) for height of display.
- d. Foot rests should be provided for operators whose feet do not rest comfortably on the floor with existing furniture.
- e. Document holders should be provided on request by the operator to allow placement of documents in the same viewing angle as specified for display screens in Paragraph II, Section B.2(f).
- f. Anti-glare treatment for the display screen (anti-glare or etched screen, diffusing surface, anti-reflection coating, or face plate filter) should be provided at the request of the operator.

C. Work Station Environment

1. Light levels should be controlled to minimum glare with individual work station lighting provided for jobs requiring higher levels due to visual demands. Lighting may be controlled by use of shielded luminaries, indirect luminaries, or collimating luminaries.
2. Equipment should be located, or the room arranged, so that bright sources are not in visual field while viewing the screen, or so that the source documents or light colored materials are not seen by the VDT user as reflections on the screen.
3. Light from windows should be controlled by using drapes, blinds, reduced transmission glass, louvers, baffles, or a combination of these controls.

