

Health and Safety tips

Some health and safety tips for working in a radio environment; such as a newsroom or production studio.

Hearing

- Listen to your audio at a comfortable level – you need to hear the sound quality but you don't want to go deaf
- Take breaks from listening to audio
- Use speakers if you can – your ears weren't designed to have sound sources (i.e. headphones) so close to them

Eyes

- Make sure your computer monitor is at the right height and distance so it's not causing eye strain
- Make sure that the computer monitor displays crisply and has good contrast
- Take regular eye breaks – look away from the computer monitor
- Exercise your eyes by changing your focus; focus on near and far objects

Technology

- Be aware of your posture when using computers or sitting at a desk
- Try to relax your muscles as much as possible, avoid tension and stress
- Watch for tension headaches, back and shoulder, arm or wrist pain. Sometimes the pain may not be in the same part of your body that is active
- Take regular breaks (e.g. 10 minutes per hour)
- Try and use a mixture of mouse, keyboard and hotkeys to alter the type of movements that your body is doing
- Don't rest your hand on the mouse (as it's actually stretching around your wrist). If you're not using the mouse move your hand away
- Stop if you're feeling pain and follow your organizations procedures around health and safety

Stress and mental health:

Stress and mental health issues can be caused by many things – some of which will be beyond your control:

- Pressured work environment
- Fast deadlines
- Working on prolonged events (like the Christchurch earthquakes)
- Working on emotional stories

Some suggestions for limiting stress:

- Pace yourself over the day, and over the week so that you don't burn out
- Time management: don't leave things to the last minute
- Be prepared (know your interviewee and equipment)
- Break your work into steps (write a to-do list or checklist)
- Identify the minimum elements that you need to do to process a story – do those and then work on refining it