

Risk Assessment

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Regulation 3, requires every employer to make suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to health and safety in the workplace.

1. Policy

The County Council requires managers at all levels, (Area Directors, Headteachers, Line Managers etc) to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are undertaken of the activity under their control.

Failure to do so could lead to criminal and civil proceedings.

They will also ensure that significant risks are recorded and a regular monitoring and review process is undertaken. Where a written risk assessment is produced a copy should be forwarded for information to the Unison Branch Office and other appropriate representatives.

More detailed information on "The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992" can be found in Section 4 of the KCC Framework.

For contact names and addresses please see Section 9 of the KCC Framework for Health and Safety.

2. Management Responsibility

It is a management responsibility to ensure that the risk assessments are carried out; the manager may delegate the task to another person whom must be competent (see page 12.5).

A risk assessment does not have to be duplicated in order to satisfy identical requirements under a different set of regulations.

eg: a risk assessment for a noise hazard is the same under both these regulations

Regulation 3 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992

Regulation 4 - Noise at Work Regulations 1989

only one assessment has to be undertaken

3. Risk assessment is:-

- ◆ no more than an examination of the workplace and work activities;
- ◆ to identify the measures that need to be taken to minimise work-related injury or disease.

4. Scope and Extent of an Assessment

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment is one that:-

- ◆ correctly and accurately identifies a hazard;
- ◆ disregards trivial risks associated with life in general;
- ◆ determines the likelihood of injury or harm arising, and to whom;
- ◆ quantifies the severity of the consequences and the numbers of people who would be affected;
- ◆ takes into account any existing control measures;
- ◆ identifies any specific legal duty or requirement relating to the hazard;
- ◆ will remain valid for a reasonable period of time;
- ◆ provides sufficient information to enable the employer to decide upon appropriate control measures;
- ◆ enables the employer to prioritise remedial measures.

What is a Risk and what is a Hazard?

5. Hazard

- ◆ Anything with the potential to cause harm.

6. Risk

- ◆ It is the chance, high, medium or low that someone will be harmed by the hazard and the measurement of that harm.

7. Ensure that all relevant risks or hazards are addressed;

In particular a risk assessment should:

- ◆ aim to identify the significant risks in the workplace, (but not obscure those risks with an excess of information or by concentrating on trivial risks);
- ◆ identify first the hazards, ie those aspects of work (eg substances or equipment used, work processes or work organisation) which have the potential to cause harm;
- ◆ comply with any specific Acts or Regulations;
- ◆ assess the risks from the identified hazards; if there are no hazards, there are no risks. Some risks may already be controlled in some way, whether by deliberate measures or by the circumstances in which they are found. The effectiveness of those controls needs to be taken into account in assessing the residual risk;
- ◆ be systematic in looking at hazards and risks. For example it may be necessary to look at hazards or risks in groups such as machinery, transport, substances, electrical etc. In other cases, an operation by operation approach may be needed, eg materials in production, dispatch, offices etc; and
- ◆ ensure all aspects of the work activity are regularly reviewed, or when there is significant change to the activity.

8. Address what actually happens in the workplace or during the work activity;

- ◆ actual practice may differ from the Departmental manual; indeed this is frequently a route whereby risks creep in unnoticed;
- ◆ think about the non-routine operations, eg maintenance operations, loading and unloading, changes in production cycles;
- ◆ interruptions to the work activity are a frequent cause of accidents. Look at management of such incidents and the procedures to be followed;

9. Ensure that all groups of employees and others who might be affected are considered; do not forget office staff, night cleaners, maintenance staff, security guards, contractors, visitors and members of the public;

10. Identify groups of workers who might be particularly at risk; for example young or inexperienced workers; those who work alone; any staff with disabilities;

11. Take account of existing preventive or precautionary measures; they may already reduce the risk sufficiently in terms of what needs to be done to comply with relevant statutory provisions. But are they working properly? Does action need to be taken to ensure they are properly maintained?

12. Generic Assessments

The employer may produce a generic or "model" risk assessment where similar activities are undertaken in similar places of work.

The generic assessment should be able to account for the majority of hazards and risks that arise, but will require more detail to cater for individual circumstances.

There is no single correct way of undertaking a risk assessment:-

- ◆ but it has to involve a systematic consideration of the various factors involved in order that better informed decisions can be made about prioritising risks and minimising/eliminating them.

Health and Safety Executive

There are hazards and there are risks.

What are the hazards in undertaking this task?

- ◆ Anything with the potential to cause harm.

What are the risks?

- ◆ It is the chance, high, medium or low that someone will be harmed by the hazard and the measurement of that harm.

When do I undertake a risk assessment?

- ◆ Where no previous risk assessment has been undertaken for a task.
- ◆ Complete your first or initial assessment of the total workplace keeping a note of what you find.
- ◆ Then depending on the complexity of your operation, you will decide how often you need a further risk assessment. For "normal or average" work situations a suggested period of 6-12 months between assessment would be reasonable or where significant change to equipment, workplace, or changes in staff (eg new or transferred staff) takes place.

13. A Competent Person

Regulation 6 states that every employer shall, appoint one or more competent persons to assist them in undertaking the measures they need to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed upon them by or under the relevant statutory provisions.

A person shall be regarded as competent when they have sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them properly to assist in undertaking the measures referred to.

It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that those carrying out assessments are competent to do so.

Competence may be defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, experience and personal qualities.

How do I become Competent?

- ◆ In essence it is a common sense approach to the workplace, a form of housekeeping.
- ◆ With training, knowledge, skills and experience you become more proficient.
- ◆ However if you do not know about a particular task or piece of equipment - seek advice from those who do.

Do I need special training to be "Competent"?

It is essential for you to attend a basic course in understanding how to carry out risk assessments.

Who Undertakes My Risk Assessment?

- ◆ You may delegate the assessment to others with specialist knowledge, but at the end of the day the risk assessment is yours.
- ◆ It is a good idea to ask a colleague not involved in your area but who is competent to undertake the initial process for you - or even work with you to undertake the assessment.
- ◆ As often you may be too closely involved to work area to spot the risks and hazards.

The person undertakes the Risk Assessment (sometimes called the Assessor) should have:-

- ◆ an understanding of the workplace;
- ◆ an ability to make sound judgement; and
- ◆ knowledge of the best practicable means to reduce those risks identified.

Who Do I Contact for Assistance/Advice?

Refer to:

- ◆ Section 9 - KCC Framework;
- ◆ your local maintenance engineer;
- ◆ your local Health and Safety Adviser; and
- ◆ your Departmental Health & Safety Adviser.

Do I Need to Record Those Risks I Have Found?

- ◆ YES - but only significant risk.
and only in simple form, such as an exercise book, register or similar.
- ◆ or see guidance notes later in paragraphs 14, 15 and 16.

14. Completing the Risk Assessment Form.

The risk assessment form should be completed by the appropriate competent person in the department or operational section.

It is intended to be a standard document, which will, in time be audited as part of the overall Health and Safety programme.

It is not intended that managers and supervisors alike should immediately undertake another evaluation or risk assessment, where one has already been completed. But to use this documentation in any new or further risk assessment that is to be undertaken.

The risk assessment form or documents consists of 10 rows or boxes and should be completed in the following manner:-

1.

The name of the department in which the assessment is being undertaken and the name of the person carrying out the risk assessment (the assessor).

2.

The location ie Admin offices, workshop 1, Principals office, Room 15 etc. within the department where the risk assessment is undertaken. Also the date and time of the risk assessment should be recorded.

3.

This part is for any other relevant information that the assessor may wish to make.

4.

The hazard that has been observed.

5.

The possible risk that might arise.

6.

The group or individual whom might be harmed from 4 and 5. This will often help to target the action that is intended to be taken to remove the hazard and ultimately the risk.

Sections 7, 8 and 9 are explained in wider detail under paragraph 16 Risk Analysis.

10.

Outline the action the department intends to take resulting from its risk assessment.

15. Action Plans

An action plan document is included at the end of this section which will aid the priority planning process.

Ideally this action plan should be prepared within seven days of completing the risk assessment and shared with other managers, members of staff and through appropriate routes with trade union representatives.

16. Risk Analysis

Looking at risk assessment in some detail and using a numerical approach can make it easier to measure. This is sometimes called risk analysis.

Risk analysis means a numerical value is given to the likelihood of a risk occurring and the potential severity of that risk.

How is this done?

It is simply a process whereby a "value" is given to a particular observation.

There is no particular standard, however guidelines are given here.

Risk can be defined as a combination of the hazard severity, with the likelihood of it occurring.

Risk	=	Hazard	x	Likelihood of
Score		Severity		occurrence

The values are:-

16.1 Likelihood of Occurrence

1 = Improbable (Highly Unlikely)
2 = Possible: (Could happen)
3 = Probable: (Is likely)

16.2 Hazard Severity

1 = Low - doubtful to have any effect or effect will be minimal.
2 = Medium - could cause injuries resulting with 3 or more days absence.
3 = High - it could occur resulting in possible hospitalisation.

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Risk Assessment

DEPARTMENT:

NAME OF ASSESSOR:

1

LOCATION:

DATE:

TIME:

2

OTHER INFORMATION

3

HAZARD	RISK	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED	PROBABLE FREQUENCY	HAZARD SEVERITY	ANALYSIS	PROPOSED ACTION
4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Risk Assessment

LOCATION:	
DATE:	
PREPARED BY:	

ACTION PLAN

DATE	Risk Identified	Action	Priority	Completed

A = As soon as possible
B = In next 2 months
C = Within 6 months

KCC Framework to Health & Safety

Risk Management

This part of the section concentrates on the broader area of Risk Management. Which in terms of Health and Safety is not a legal requirement, but is more of an aim of KCC in targetting the reduction of accidents.

Risk Management

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Risk Assessment

Risk Management is about the control of Risk in an organisation, and although the principles look very similar to health and safety risk assessment the fundamental difference that exists is that risk assessments in health and safety terms is a legal requirement whereas risk management is not.

Nevertheless it is just as an important a role to fulfil.

In KCC, Risk Management is described as

◆ The planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and control of risk.

As a local authority Kent County Council provides a wide range of public services and, in so doing, is exposed to a correspondingly wide range of risks.

For the purposes of these guidelines risk is defined as the chance or possibility of loss, damage or injury caused by an unwanted or uncertain action or event.

Insurance has always been seen as the traditional means of protecting against loss but this cannot be seen as the complete answer. By reducing, or even preventing, the incidence of losses (whether they result from crime or accident) the County Council will not only benefit from reduced costs of providing insurance cover but will also limit the drain on scarce resources so that funds can be allocated to those areas that will improve the level of services provided to the public.

1. AIMS

The aim of this section is to:

- ◆ Assist managers in identifying risks to which their staff are exposed.
- ◆ Take appropriate action to control these risks.

2. MAIN ELEMENTS

The main elements of risk management are:

2.1 IDENTIFY

It is necessary to understand the nature and extent of actual and likely risks.

The risk identification questionnaire is set out later in this section, and is included in the KCC FINANCIAL MONITORING ACTION PLAN/MONITORING MANUAL, and is designed to help all managers to assess their management of risk.

Risk Assessment

2.2 EVALUATE

After consideration the risks must be evaluated in order to:

- ◆ arrange them in order of priority; and
- ◆ provide information for deciding the most appropriate way of handling them.

2.3 CONTROL

Only rarely is it possible to avoid a risk completely and generally risk avoidance is only feasible at the planning stage of an operation.

- ◆ In many ways prevention is the best possible way of dealing with any risk, and it is usually possible to take steps to reduce either the probability of loss or its severity, should it occur.

2.4 MONITOR

No risk reduction strategy can be formulated and then left to work by itself.

- ◆ It is vital to ensure that its operation is monitored and evaluated on a continuing basis.
- ◆ Unless this happens changing conditions will inevitably render the strategy out of date or incomplete.

and further, more in depth detail is available from the KCC FINANCIAL MONITORING ACTION PLAN.

3. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- ◆ Financial Services Insurance & Risk Management Section
- ◆ Highway Related
- ◆ Non-Highway Related
- ◆ County Lease Cars

The County Council's "WHY TAKE THE RISK" video training package is designed to assist managers in raising their risk awareness of employees. Copies of this video are available from financial services Insurance Risk Management group on extension 4632 and Departmental Health and Safety Advisers also hold a copy, for training purposes.

Risk Management and Health and Safety Issues should be discussed regularly at management and individual section meetings.

4. RISK IDENTIFICATION ANALYSIS

Risk Assessment

In aiming to measure the risks within the organisation a range of questionnaires have been developed as a guidance for staff when they begin to consider the risk management approach.

This process is similar to risk assessment but is not a legal requirement.

You may of course wish to use the risk management questions as a "prompter" when you've undertaken your legal responsibility in relation to risk assessments.

Similar to the risk assessment process risk management questionnaire uses a standard numerical response value system which is briefly described below.

The document asks a question for which the response should be Yes or No but abbreviations such as N/A (Not Applicable), OK or similar could be used.

In respect of the "condition" column the following numerical values are given.

These are:

- | | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 1. | = Good Condition |
| 2. | = Needs Consideration |
| 3. | = Needs Review |

Remember that this "condition factor" is only a numerical value of your observation.

It is a quick reference value and no more.

An example of a document is given on the following pages, which you can use when carrying out your risk management review.

The "Action" column is the area where you should note what your plan of rectification is.

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