



RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDE

THE REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER 2005 – FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

These Regulations came into force on the 1st October 2006 and have implications for all UK businesses.

Who do they apply to?

- All businesses with employees (full time, part time, temporary, casual and work experience)
- Sole traders

Some trades and activities are excluded from complying - construction sites, ships, means of transport, mining and offshore risks being the main ones.

What do they mean for me?

The legislation makes it compulsory to

- Carry out an assessment of the risk of fire within your premises and whether you have effective safeguards in place to protect yourself and your staff should a fire occur.
- Take action to improve precautions where they are shown to be inadequate.
- Record your assessment findings and the action taken if you employ 5 or more people. It would be useful if you carry out this recording process if you employ less than 5 people as you can produce it as evidence that you have carried out an assessment if you are challenged.

Do I need to carry it out personally?

Not necessarily, you could delegate the task to

- A suitably qualified member of your staff
- A company specialising in Fire Risk assessments
- Where a number of businesses share the same premises, you can agree that one of the businesses will carry the assessment on behalf of all – but subject to the qualifications above. They could be the building owner, another occupier, the landlord, the head lessee or the managing agent – it is up to all to decide who will do it collectively.

What should I do to carry out such an assessment?

Stage 1 – Identify the fire hazards

- What sources of ignition exist in your premises?
- Are there materials around that could fuel a fire?
- Are there any hazardous processes that could result in a fire?

Stage 2 – Identify the people who are at risk

- Are they at risk because of their location within the premises?
- Are they at risk because of the process they carry out?

Stage 3 – Evaluate and remove or reduce the risk where possible

- Control sources of ignition and fuel
- Review the means of detecting/warning and fighting any fire,
- Review the means of escaping from a fire including emergency lighting
- Review the maintenance and testing of fire precautions
- Review the provision of fire safety training.

Stage 4 – Record your findings

- Prepare an emergency plan based on what you have learned
- Test the plan to ensure it works
- Train your employees in operating the plan and in fire safety generally.

Stage 5 – Don't rest on your laurels!

- Review the assessment regularly
- Make appropriate adjustments if the situation changes.

Are there penalties for not complying?

Yes – these range from goodwill advice, enforcement notices, prohibition notices and formal cautions to prosecution.

Where can I get more information to help me comply?

The Fire Protection Association have produced a "Business Fire Risk Assessment Guide" that will be a useful model for any small business. You can access it at www.fpa-fireriskassessment.com/checklist.htm

IMPORTANT

The information set out in this document constitutes a set of general guidelines and should not be construed or relied upon as specialist advice. Therefore **MORE THAN** accepts no responsibility towards any person relying upon these Risk Management Guidelines nor accepts any liability whatsoever for the accuracy of data supplied by another party or the consequences of reliance upon it.