

## **RISK MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

# **Guide to the Production of Risk Assessments**

## **Introduction**

This brief guide is primarily directed at small or medium businesses that have duties under health and safety law to assess risks in the workplace.

### **Why do Risk Assessments?**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Section 2, advises that “it shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all his employees”. This duty, under other sections, encompasses others, such as visitors, contractors, cleaners and members of the public, who may be affected by “his undertaking”.

It is also an absolute duty under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999, for employers to carry out assessments of the risks to persons in workplaces under their control.

That aside, it is good management to ensure the workplace is safe. A safe place of work normally produces a safe and happy work force who are likely to be more efficient.

### **What is a Risk Assessment?**

An assessment is no more than a careful examination of what conditions or practices in your workplace could cause harm to people. Adequate assessments will enable you to determine if sufficient precautions have been taken or if more can be done to prevent harm. The aim of assessments is to prevent injury or illness.

### **The Benefits of Risk Assessments**

Accidents and ill health can ruin lives as well as affect businesses due for example to production being lost, machinery and equipment being damaged.

Depending upon the incident, the outcome can range from an increase in insurance premiums to attendance at court, possible fine or, in the most serious cases imprisonment.

It is self evidently more cost effective to prevent an employee being injured or becoming ill in the first place rather having to meet the accident costs, many of which are not insured e.g. replacing machinery, training other staff, loss or working time.

## How to Assess the Risks in the Workplace

There are **five** basic steps:

<p><b>1) Look for the hazards</b></p>	<p>Ignore the trivia and concentrate on significant hazards e.g. electricity, substances that may cause harm, unsafe machinery, etc.</p>
<p><b>2) Decide who may be harmed and how</b></p>	<p>Your employees, (young workers, new and expectant mothers who may be at particular risk), visitors, cleaners, contractors, members of the public. Allowing young and untrained people to operate machinery. Not fencing a site and having no control on who enters the area.</p>
<p><b>3) Evaluate the risks</b></p>	<p>Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. Decide whether, after all precautions have been taken, significant risks remain and whether the existing precautions are adequate. For example, machinery may be properly guarded, but the level of operator training may not be adequate.</p>
<p><b>4) Record your findings</b></p>	<p>The Risk Assessments must be suitable and sufficient. You are required under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to record your findings should you have 5 or more employees.</p> <p>In addition a record of your findings will be very helpful when you come to review the assessments.</p> <p>An example of a risk assessment record form is attached</p>
<p><b>5) Review your assessment and revise it if necessary</b></p>	<p>Your machinery, process and tooling will change / wear in time which could lead to new or increased hazards. You will need to review your controls and amend where necessary.</p>

### **Other tips**

When carrying out risk assessments it is important to talk to your employees and, if available their safety representatives, as they can be a valuable source of information and advice. This will help to ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and the appropriate controls chosen.

In addition remember that risk assessments should take into consideration others, such as contractors and visitors who may be in your workplace and exposed to hazards.

### **Further Information**

Check out the HSE website:  
[www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm](http://www.open.gov.uk/hse/hsehome.htm)

HSE priced and free publications are available from:

HSE Books, PO Box 1999,  
Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 2WA  
Tel: 01787 881165  
Website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)

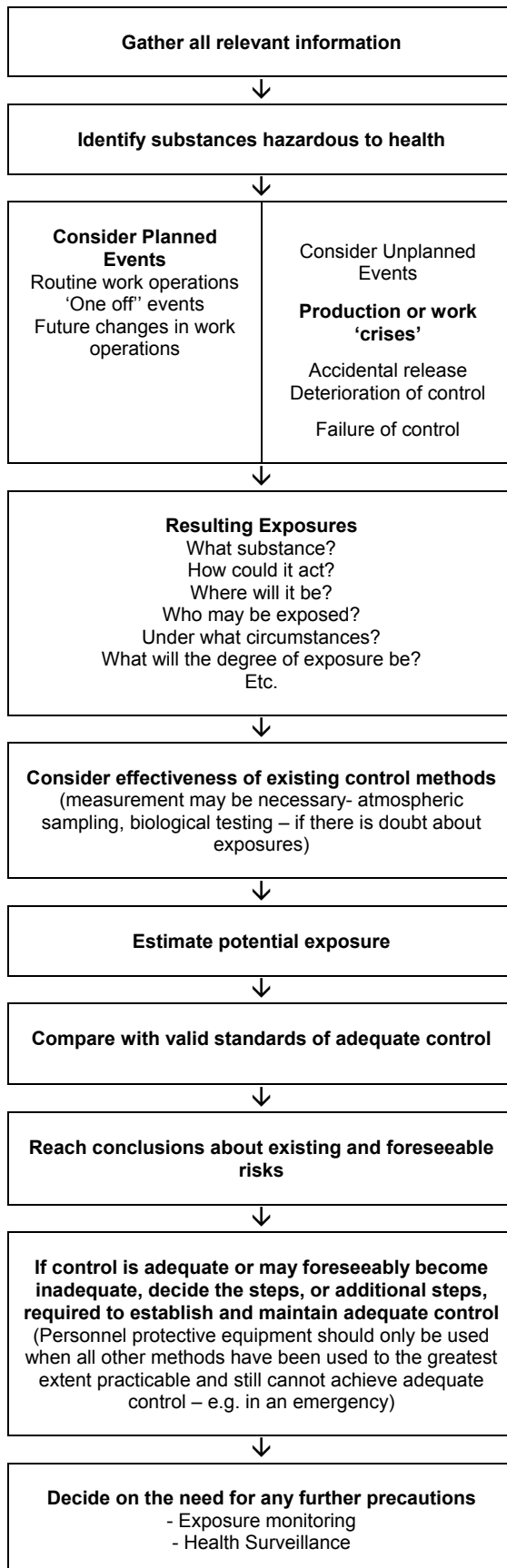
HSE leaflet 5 Steps to Risk  
Assessment INDG16 (rev1)

HSE A Guide to Risk Assessment  
Requirements IDNG218

HSE Good Health is Good Business,  
Employers Guide MISC130

For further assistance on this or any other risk control topic please contact the Regional Survey Control Unit through your Royal & SunAlliance Regional Centre or through your insurance adviser.

## Steps in Making an Assessment



### Note 1 to the flow chart

The existing legislation may include the following:

- a. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations;
- b. Control of Lead at Work Regulations
- c. Control of Asbestos Regulations
- d. Ionising Radiation Regulations
- e. Noise at Work Regulations
- f. Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations

### Note 2 to the flow chart

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations requires the review of the assessment if:

- a. There is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid, or;
- b. There has been a significant change in the matters to which it relates.

Now you will know the broad areas that have already been dealt with and can turn to what has to be assessed.

## Risk Assessment Checklist

(please tick as appropriate)

1. What hazards are present?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a. Physical properties such as gravity (falls of people and objects); manual handling; hand tools; vehicles; electricity; pressure; radiation (ionising and non-ionising); noise?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Chemical properties such as fire, explosion, contamination (direct and indirect); see also the COSHH assessment procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Biological properties of animals, micro-organisms and plants; this may include COSHH assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Natural phenomena including heat, cold, water and weather (e.g. wind, lightning, fog, bright sunshine)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Work equipment hazards (see the separate sheets for assessing work equipment and display screen equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Manual handling risks (see the separate form for assessing manual handling risks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Can any of the above combine to make some other condition worse or different?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Can the hazards be completely removed from the workplace or substituted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Who uses or is exposed to the hazards?		
5. Are any employees, visitors or "others" particularly at risk?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Note:</b> – Consider characteristics such as age, weight, sex, state of health, pregnancy, etc. – Consider visitors such as work experience students, contractors, salesmen, etc.		
6. What is the likelihood of an injury happening? (not has an injury ever happened!)		
7. What is the level of exposure?		
8. What are the possible consequences?		
9. What control measures are currently in use?		
10. Are they adequate?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. What improvements could be made or introduced?		
12. How much would those improvements cost?	£	

## Risk Assessment Checklist (continued)

13. What effect would failure of the existing precautions have on;

a. likelihood of injury or damage?

b. exposure to injury or damage?

c. consequences?

14. How are the existing control measures maintained?

15. What records are kept?

16. Where are the records kept?

17. How will the employees who are affected be informed of the outcome of the assessment:

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
a. induction or further training (by whom, when, where, records);	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. information (written by whom, kept where, when and how given, records);	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. supervision (supervisor training, records);	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. employee handbook, quality procedures, safety manual.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Record of Risk Assessment

**Probable Frequency**

**Severity**

Improbable occurrence	1	Trivial Injuries
Possible occurrence	2	Minor Injuries
Occasional occurrence	3	Major injury to one person
Frequent occurrence	4	Major injuries to several people
Regular occurrence	5	Death of one person
Common occurrence	6	Multiple deaths

Location, activity or other subject of assessment


Person(s)/Group(s) at risk


Date  Assessment leader

Review date  Or any earlier date on which a change may effect validity of this assessment.

	Hazard/Harm Potential	Frequency	x	Severity	=	Risk Rating
A			x		=	
B			x		=	
C			x		=	
D			x		=	

Existing control measures


Proposed action


To be completed by: date:  Signature

Reassessment carried out: date:  Signature

## Specimen Assessment of Risk

Hazard	Who might be harmed?	Is the risk adequately controlled	What further action is necessary to control the risk?
<p>Look only for hazards which you could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace. Use the following examples as a guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slipping/tripping hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs)</li> <li>• Fire (e.g. from flammable materials)</li> <li>• Chemicals (e.g. battery acid)</li> <li>• Moving parts of machinery (e.g. blades)</li> <li>• Work at height (e.g. mezzanine floors)</li> <li>• Ejection of material (e.g. from plastic moulding)</li> <li>• Pressure systems (e.g. steam boilers)</li> <li>• Vehicles (e.g. fork lift trucks)</li> <li>• Electricity (e.g. poor wiring)</li> <li>• Dust (e.g. from grinding, poor housekeeping/ventilation)</li> <li>• Fume (e.g. welding)</li> <li>• Manual handling</li> <li>• Noise</li> <li>• Poor lighting</li> </ul>	<p>There is no need to list individuals by name – just think about groups of people doing similar work or who might be affected e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office staff</li> <li>• Maintenance personnel</li> <li>• Contractors</li> <li>• People sharing your workplace</li> <li>• Pay particular attention to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff with disabilities</li> <li>• Visitors</li> <li>• Inexperienced staff</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Have you already taken precautions against the risks from the hazards you listed? For example, have you provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequate information, instruction and training?</li> <li>• Adequate systems or procedures</li> </ul> <p>Do the precautions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet the standard set by a legal requirement?</li> <li>• Comply with a recognised industry standard?</li> <li>• Represent good practice?</li> <li>• Reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable?</li> </ul> <p>If so then the risks are adequately controlled but you may need to indicate the precautions you have in place. You may refer to procedures, manuals, company rules etc.</p>	<p>What more could you reasonably do for those risks which you found were not adequately controlled?</p> <p>You will need to give priority to those risks which affect large numbers of people and/or could result in serious harm. Apply the principles below when taking further action, if possible in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove the risk completely</li> <li>• Try a less risky option</li> <li>• Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by guarding)</li> <li>• Organise work to reduce exposure to the hazard</li> <li>• Issue personal protective equipment</li> <li>• Provide welfare facilities (e.g. washing facilities for removal of contamination and first aid)</li> </ul>

## Risk Assessment Record & Action Plan

Date of Assessment/Review

Assessor

Subject of Assessment

### Hazard 1

Type of hazard

Likelihood

Exposure

Possible consequences

Risk Rating

Level of Acceptability

### Hazard 2

Type of hazard

Likelihood

Exposure

Possible consequences

Risk Rating

Level of Acceptability

**Note:** describe the control measures for the hazards in terms of storage, transport, movement, methods of use, safe operating procedures, personal protective equipment, maintenance systems, heating, lighting, ventilation, first aid, fire fighting waste disposal etc.