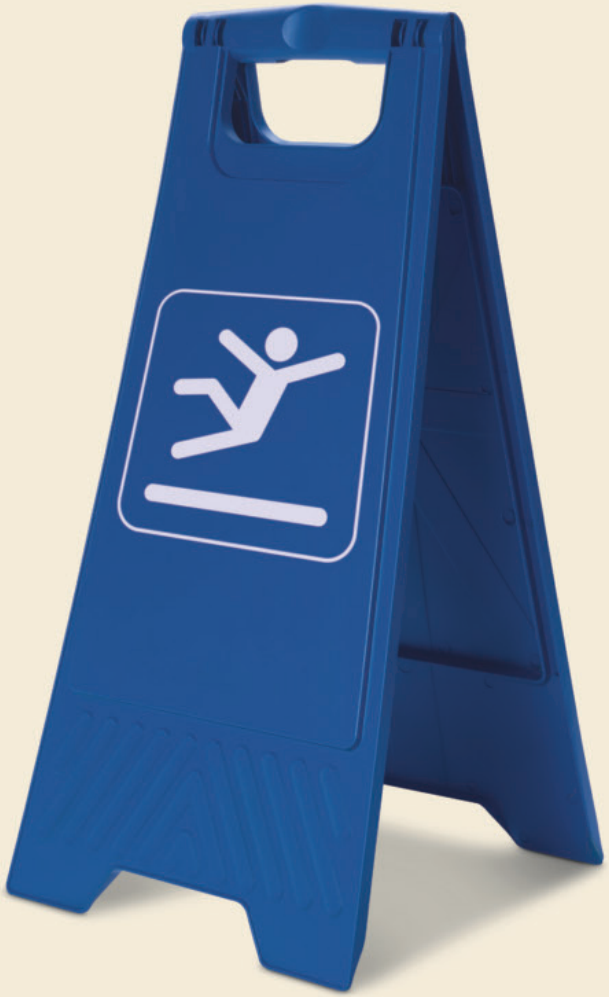
ZURICH

Guide to Risk Management

Local Community Advisory Service



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Welcome

Zurich has been working with the public and voluntary sectors for many years. All of this extensive knowledge and experience of working with these sectors has been brought together in the Local Community Advisory Service (LCAS).

This service is open to all Zurich local community customers and its main goal is to raise your awareness and understanding of the broad scope of the potential injuries, accidents and incidents that can potentially occur within you organisations, facilities and activities.

LCAS gives your organisation access to:

- This interactive guide containing all the tools you need to undertake assessments of the operational risks your organisation faces
- A specialist health and safety advice line (open Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm)
- Regular risk updates for the local community sector.

Within this guide we have suggested actions you can take to prevent risks, protect your property, avoid potential liabilities and protect your staff, service users, visitors and contractors. You can use the information in this guide again and again to achieve a greater level of risk management within your organisation. We hope you find it valuable and urge you to share it across your organisation so that all employees and volunteers are aware of the issues surrounding risk management as you go about providing services, etc. for your local communities.

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Why manage risk?

Managing risks is important because it affects how local councils, charities and social organisations deliver local services to acceptable standards.

In our experience, the majority of risks (approximately 80%) faced by public sector organisations are uninsurable. For example:

- Damage to an organisations reputation following a major incident or accident
- Loss of key staff together with retraining and further recruitment costs
- Legal costs of non-compliance with statutory requirements
- Stress and low moral of staff involved in an incident.

In addition, pressures to provide a valuable service within tight budgetary constraints can also be intensified by:

- Increased public awareness of rights to compensation
- Claims companies actively encouraging employees and members of the public to claim for compensation
- Increased insurance premiums as a result of a "bad claims record."

This Guide examines how local community organisations can understand the obstacles or risks they face in order to prepare plans to mitigate barriers and reduce risks and thereby achieve their objectives.

Key risks faced by most local community organisations include:

- Financial risks
- Political risks
- Environmental risks
- Operational risks, e.g. risk associated with:
  - Outdoor facilities
  - Buildings – village and town halls, pavilions, public conveniences, etc.
  - Land – car parks, woodland, grazing pastures, etc.
  - Contractors
  - Hiring of facilities
  - Events
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Risk management

Numerous definitions of risk management exist. One describes it as "a process that allows individual risk events and overall risk to be understood and managed proactively, optimising success by minimising threats and maximising opportunities." Therefore you can see the aim of risk management as quite simply to identify and manage those things that could prevent your organisation from achieving its objectives. In the case of LCAS customers these would be the things that stop you from providing best value with the limited resources available.

By practising good risk management, an organisation can reduce the amount of time and money it spends on handling losses associated with accidents, incidents and personal injuries.

To achieve this benefit, your organisation will need to put measures in place to prevent incidents. These could include more frequent inspections, better equipment maintenance and closer supervision of on-site contractors.

Another potential benefit of risk management is that the process of assessing risks gives you an excellent opportunity to improve your organisation by bringing about new initiatives like developing better health and safety procedures.

Risk management is increasingly recognised as being concerned with both positive and negative aspects of risk. Health and safety and insurance are therefore just two distinct parts of the process of risk management. If an incident occurs, the true cost can be several times that which is insured. Consider the cost of investigating an accident, the loss of key staff through injury and illness (e.g. stress), the cost of overtime payments to keep services running and replace lost information, and possible fines.

LCAS customers face a wide range of liability risks and purchasing insurance is not the best or most practical way to manage these risks. For example, a member of staff suffers an injury at work as a result of an unguarded piece of equipment. Normal activities will be disrupted as first aid will have to be administered, the first aid book and a RIDDOR report form completed. The incident could result in a visit from the Health and Safety Executive and even a prosecution. The injured party might not make a claim, but the incident could have already cost you a substantial amount of money due to the time devoted to preparing the required documentation and investigating the circumstances.

Statistics indicate that the actual cost of wasted time can be as much as eight times the cost of any claim made, rising to approximately thirty six times if a court case follows.

This is why putting risk assessment and risk management processes into practice should always be a first consideration against unforeseen events.

To be effective, risk management requires support and commitment from all levels of an organisation.

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Tips for good risk management

- Be proactive and complete assessments of risk for all premises and activities.
- Manage your risks and put measures in place to prevent incidents.
- Assess the costs your organisation would have to meet for handling an incident which isn't covered by insurance. Then try to predict how these could affect your budgets.

Take into account the potential benefits of risk management. It gives you opportunities to closely scrutinise what the organisation is doing and gives a solid foundation for making improvements in policies, procedures and/or processes that will help you to do things more efficiently, effectively and/or safely.

Get risk management right and you won't have to cancel or curtail activities just because they involve elements of risk.

The Government has supported this view with the introduction of The Compensation Act 2006, which is partly designed to provide statutory reassurance. It is part of the Government's wider programme to tackle what it believes is a "disproportionate fear of litigation and risk averse behaviour". If evidence can be presented in policy documents to show that the organisation is fully aware of the risk situation, has considered both the downside and upside of risk and has taken the appropriate steps it will be a useful tool for defending claims. These and other documents need to be readily available in view of the limited time allowed to investigate liability claims since the Ministry of Justice reforms to the civil justice procedures in 2013.

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Legal considerations

Understanding legal requirements is a vital part of the risk management process. You need to be fully aware of and ensure your organisation is complying with relevant legislation. Please be aware that there may be updates to legislation subsequent to the latest update to this Guide.

Throughout this section we will use the following definitions:

- ***Employer*** is your organisation
- ***Employees*** are the staff, e.g. managers, caretakers, administration assistants, temporary staff
- ***The Public*** are service users, visitors, contractors, and anyone using the properties and facilities operated by the organisation including trespassers.

Common law/civil law

This refers to a set of legal principals which have developed since the 11th century through precedence and decisions made by judges in individual cases (known as case law). Common Law is used in civil disputes (those between people and organisations such as local community organisations) and provides the foundation for most health and safety civil claims.

Civil law cases are heard by the County and High Courts although high profile cases may be escalated to the Court of Appeal, House of Lords or European Court of Justice.

Duty of care

Under common law everyone has a duty of care which stipulates that we must not endanger any other person by our acts or omissions (or in other words by what we do or don't do) and must take *reasonable* care not to cause foreseeable injury or loss.

For example, a duty of care is involved in the following relationships:

- Employers to employees, contractors, volunteers, members of the public
- Employees to employers, colleagues, contractors, volunteers, members of the public
- Occupiers to members of the public
- Contractors to other contractors, employers, employees, members of the public.

In the case of employers, their duty of care is to:

- Provide safe plant and equipment
- Ensure a safe working environment, with safe systems of work
- Provide adequate training
- Ensure effective supervision
- Select competent people.

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Negligence

In cases where a duty of care has not been fulfilled, claims of negligence can be made.

Negligence is a 'civil wrong', or tort. This is where breach by one party entitles another to damages. The three main torts are negligence, trespass and nuisance (the torts of trespass and nuisance are not dealt with in this Guide). An injured employee may sue his employer under the tort of negligence or for breach of statutory duty.

Negligence arises when:

(a) A person **does** something that a reasonable person wouldn't do

(b) A person **doesn't** do what a reasonable person would be expected to do

and this results in loss, damage or injury.

To substantiate a claim for negligence, the injured person (claimant) must prove all of the following elements:

(a) That a duty of care was owed

(b) That the duty was breached

(c) That damage, injury or loss was a direct result of that breach of duty

Breaches of certain statutory duties can also be cited as negligence.

Contributory negligence

Where someone has contributed to their own injury or loss, the Law Reform (Contributory Negligence) Act allows for their fault to be taken into account. For example, if an employee sustained an injury through using a faulty piece of electrical equipment in contravention of his employer's specific instructions, it may be held that the employee contributed towards his own injury. Any settlement is then reduced accordingly.

Damages

Following an accident, ill health or property damage, damages may be awarded against you arising from a breach of statutory duty or negligence. Compensation will usually consist of special damages and general damages.

Special damages include losses such as wages, damaged clothing, transport expenses, etc.

General damages refers to an award made in compensation for injury, pain and suffering as a result of the accident.

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Vicarious liability

If an employee acts in a negligent manner and this results in injury or loss to another employee or a member of the public, the employer may be held liable. This is known as vicarious liability and many accidents at work are actually caused in this way. A simple example is an employee causing stone damage to parked cars when carrying out strimming operations, by failing to clear the area of stones before starting work. The employee may have been instructed by his employer to ensure that stones are removed from an area (as far as practicable) before strimming near parked vehicles. However, if the employee disregards this instruction and causes damage, the employer may be held "vicariously liable" for the damage.

Statutory law

Parliament has created various Acts, Statutory Instruments and Regulations which impose specific duties and confer liabilities if those duties are breached – hence the term, *statutory duty*.

Criminal or statutory law cases are heard by the Magistrates and Crown Courts. Fines and/or imprisonment are available penalties for breaches of statutory duty. Both organisations and individuals may be prosecuted and organisations cannot insure against fines and legal costs resulting from breaches of statutory law.

Acts of Parliament take precedence over common law duties and they too may use the word 'reasonable' when describing an obligation. Depending on the way a Statute is constructed, the duty may be of a specific nature or it may be an implied requirement.

Statutes of which you should be aware:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Regulations
- Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 & 1984
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005

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Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The most important piece of legislation that relates to health and safety is the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The four main aims of the Act are to:

- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of workers
- Protect other persons from dangers arising from the work, activities or premises
- Ensure safe storage, use and transport of dangerous substances
- Control the emission of noxious and unpleasant substances into the air.

There are four main sections of which you need to be aware.

Section 2

Employers' duties to employees (clerks, caretakers, administrative assistants, temporary staff, etc) are to 'ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of employees' by providing and maintaining:

- Safe systems of work
- Safe working environment and premises
- Safe plant and equipment
- Safe methods for handling, storing and transporting substances
- Adequate training and supervision
- Provision of health and safety information
- Safe access and egress for the premises
- A written health and safety policy
- Consultation with employees' safety representatives.

Section 3

Requires your organisation to protect the health, safety and welfare of non-employees (contractors, visitors and members of the public).

Section 4

There is a duty on persons in control of premises to ensure the premises are safe, with safe access and egress and that plant and substances in the premises do not present an unreasonable danger.

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Section 7

Employees' duties:

- To take reasonable care of themselves and/or others who could be affected by their acts or omissions
- To co-operate with employers so that they can comply with their legal duties.

Temporary staff and volunteers must be treated as if they were permanent employees in all health, safety and welfare matters.

The Health and Safety at Work Act is an enabling Act, meaning subsequent Regulations can be made under the Act to deal with specific subjects in greater detail. Health and safety legislation is in many cases supported by Approved Codes of Practice (ACoPs) and Guidance Notes. Non compliance with ACoPs may be taken into consideration by the courts and a defendant would have to demonstrate that an equivalent standard of care was provided even though reference was not made to the relevant ACoP.

Health and safety enforcement

Health and safety legislation is enforced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities. If the Health and Safety at Work Act is breached, there are three forms of enforcement:

- Prosecution
- Improvement notice
  - Requires improvement in a potentially hazardous situation where there is a breach of a statutory requirement, e.g. where defective equipment is supplied. A period of time is given to allow compliance
- Prohibition notice
  - If there is the risk of serious personal injury from activities being carried out this notice can be served. This prohibits the activity being resumed until compliance with the notice requirements.

Penalties and fines

For any criminal offence under the Health and Safety at Work Act, the Magistrates Court may impose a fine of up to £20,000 or a prison sentence of up to 6 months.

In the Crown Court, unlimited fines are available and offences can be punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to two years.

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Regulations

There are many sets of regulations for health and safety. We have detailed the main requirements of some of the most common regulations. If you require detailed information we suggest you call our helpline or check out the additional sources of information.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations

- Risk assessment
- Principals of prevention
- Health and safety arrangements
- Health surveillance
- Health and safety assistance
- Procedures for serious and imminent danger
- Information for employees
- Co-operation and co-ordination
- Persons working in host employers premises
- Capabilities and training
- Employees duties
- Temporary workers
- New or expectant mothers
- Young persons.

HSE information leaflet

- Health and safety training – what you need to know
- Five Steps to risk assessment
- Managing for health and safety HSG65.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)

- Risk assessment
- Identifying precautions
- Preventing or adequately controlling exposure
- Using and maintaining control measures
- Health surveillance
- Procedures for accidents, incidents and emergencies
- Information, training and supervision.

HSE information leaflet

- Working with substances hazardous to health: A brief guide to COSHH
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Essentials guidance publications.

Electricity at Work Regulations

- Risk assessment
- Reducing the risk
- Provision of safe and suitable equipment
- Reducing the voltage
- Proving safety devices
- Preventative maintenance
- Competency of staff.

HSE information leaflet

- Electrical safety and you: a brief guide INDG231
- Maintaining portable electrical equipment in low-risk environments INDG236.

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Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations

- Ventilation
- Temperatures in indoor workplaces
- Work in hot or cold environments
- Lighting
- Cleanliness and waste materials
- Room dimensions and space
- Workstations and seating
- Maintenance
- Floors and traffic routes
- Falls into dangerous substances
- Transparent or translucent doors, gates or walls and windows
- Windows
- Doors and gates
- Escalators and moving walkways
- Sanitary conveniences and washing facilities
- Drinking water
- Accommodation for clothing and facilities for changing
- Facilities for rest and to eat meals.

HSE information leaflet

- Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare – A short guide for managers INDG244.

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations

- Analyse workstation
- Risk assessment
- Minimum requirements for workstation
- Breaks and work activity
- Eye and eyesight tests
- Training and information.

HSE information leaflet

- Working with Display screen equipment (DSE) INDG36.

Manual Handling Operations Regulations

- Avoiding manual handling
- Risk assessment
- Reducing the risk of injury
- Considering the load, task and environment
- Individual capacity
- Handling aids and equipment
- Work organisation factors
- Training and information.

HSE information leaflet

- Manual handling at work: a brief guide ING143.

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Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

- Definition of work equipment
- Suitability
- Maintenance
- Inspection
- Information, instruction and training
- Safety measures, e.g. protective devices, markings, warnings
- Safe systems of work
- Training and information
- Mobile work equipment requirements
- Power presses requirements.

HSE information leaflet

- Providing and using work equipment safely: a brief guide INDG291.

Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations

- Risk assessment
- Provision and use
- Training and instruction
- Maintenance and storage
- CE marking
- Correct use
- Inspection.

HSE information leaflet

- A short guide to the personal protective equipment regulations 1992 INDG174.

The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations

- Risk assessment
- Appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel
- Contents of a first aid box
- Appointed persons
- First aiders
- Information to employees.

HSE information leaflet

- First aid at work: your questions answered INDG214
- Basic advice on first aid at work INDG347.

Noise at Work Regulations

- Risk assessment
- Reducing noise exposure
- Hearing protection
- Legal limits on noise exposure
- Information, instruction and training
- Health surveillance.

HSE information leaflet

- Noise at work: A brief guide to controlling risks INDG362.

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Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations

- Management in non-domestic premises
- Identification
- Risk assessment
- Plans of work
- Licensing
- Notification
- Information, instruction and training
- Prevention or reduction of exposure
- Control measures
- Protective clothing
- Accidents, incidents and emergencies
- Prevent and reduce spread
- Cleanliness of premises and plant
- Designated areas
- Air monitoring
- Certification
- Analysis
- Health records and medical surveillance
- Washing and changing facilities
- Storage, distribution and labelling of waste.

HSE information leaflet

- Managing asbestos in buildings: A brief guide INDG223.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

- Reportable deaths and major injuries
- Reportable over seven day injuries
- Reportable disease
- Reportable dangerous occurrences
- Reportable gas incidents
- Records to keep
- Incident contact centre.

HSE information leaflet

- Reporting accidents and incidents at work: A brief guide to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations

- Gas Safe Registration
- Competent persons
- Maintenance
- Safety checks.

HSE information leaflet

- Gas appliances. Get them checked. Keep them safe. INDG238.

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Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order

- Responsible persons
- Competent persons
- Risk assessment
- Possible causes of fire
- Methods to minimise risk of fire occurring and spreading
- Methods to minimise risk to people in case of fire
- Means of fighting fire
- Fire detection and warning
- Emergency routes and exits
- Information, instruction and training in fire precautions
- Maintenance and testing of fire precautions.

Useful websites

- www.fire.gov.uk

The Work at Height Regulations

- Dutyholders' responsibilities
- Planning
- Weather
- Staff training
- The place where work is carried out
- Equipment, temporary structures and safety features
- Inspections
- Fragile surfaces
- Falling objects.

HSE information leaflet

- Working at height: A brief guide INDG401
- Safe use of ladders & stepladders INDG455.

Confined spaces Regulations

- Avoid entering confined spaces
- Safe systems of work
- Emergency procedures.

HSE information leaflet

- Confined spaces: A brief guide to working safely INDG258.

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Construction (Design and Management) Regulations

- Appointing the right people
- Allowing adequate time
- Providing information
- Communication and co-operation
- Management arrangements
- Welfare facilities
- Correct design
- Principal Designer role
- CDM co-ordinator role
- Principal contractor role
- Health and safety plan
- Health and safety file.

HSE information leaflet

- Need building work done? A short guide for clients on the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 INDG411.

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Occupiers Liability Acts 1957 & 1984

The **1957 Act** stated that an occupier has a common duty of care towards all lawful visitors. The term occupier in relation to this Act means someone in control of premises or land. This means that the Act will apply not only to your buildings but to almost all of your outdoor activities which involve the use of your land. It is therefore important to realise that you not only have a common law duty but a statutory duty as well.

The **1984** update widened the duty of care owed by occupiers to include trespassers. This means that you have a responsibility to ensure that there are no hazards which could endanger anyone – whether or not you consider them to be trespassers. It is important to note that you do NOT owe a trespasser a greater duty of care than lawful visitors.

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Defective Premises Act 1972

The purpose of this Act is to impose duties in connection with the adequate building and maintenance of dwellings and premises, and to provide for liability for injury or damage caused to persons through defective premises.

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Equality Act 2010

The Act is intended to protect people from discrimination in the workplace and elsewhere, and replaced existing legislation such as the following:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995

It makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone because of a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender, etc.) in a wide range of areas, including employment and the provision of services. There is an exception that allows a charity to limit its benefits to people who share a protected characteristic (subject to certain restrictions).

The Act includes a public sector Equality Duty under which public bodies have to consider all individuals (including employees) when carrying out their day-to-day work with regard to setting policies and delivering services. They are required to:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

This duty also applies to voluntary organisations that are carrying out public functions on behalf of a public authority.

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Contract law

When appointing contractors you should check health and safety issues and provision of adequate insurance.

Types of contract that could be encountered include:

- **Building** – tenancy, repair and maintenance.
- **Hiring out** – halls/gymnasiums, playing fields.
- **Leasing** – vehicles, office equipment, etc.
- **Services** – technical, financial.

Do not sign any document to accept additional liability from a contractor without referring it for legal consideration. For example you would certainly not wish to be in the situation of having accepted that you are responsible for the failure of hired equipment.

Other legal considerations

Claims Response Deadlines: Court protocols

The timescales for the processing of liability claims are governed by the Court Procedure Rules (CPR). Failure to meet these timescales means you could lose the case and you could also be liable to pay a penalty (fine) for failing to comply.

Under the pre-litigation protocols applicable to liability claims, the disclosure of relevant documents to the claimant's advisers is a key requirement where a denial of liability is being issued on an injury claim. These documents are likely to include risk assessments and inspection and repair reports.

For any public liability claim involving a personal injury with an accident date from 31st July 2013 onwards and a reserve of between £1,000 and £25,000, there is forty *working* days in which to make a decision on liability. This is reduced to thirty *working* days in the case of employers' liability claims.

If the insurer decides to withdraw from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) process to undertake further, more detailed investigations, then the normal Civil Procedure Rules (CPR) apply, i.e. ninety *calendar* days is allowed for investigation.

Also in 2013, the claims process reforms were amended by the MOJ to include road traffic accident personal injury claims valued between £10,000 and £25,000. Where the insurer can make a liability decision within the 15 *working* day time scale, a set scale of fees will be chargeable by the claimant solicitors. This is significantly lower than the 'predicted fees' that solicitors can charge.

Where the decision is made outside of the fifteen *working* days, the claimant solicitor will be able to revert to an increased fee.

There are huge savings in claimant legal costs to be made if insurers can make early decisions on liability. Restricted timescales means that organisations must be able to gather evidence efficiently and respond. Therefore it is vital that relevant documentation such as health and safety policies, risk assessments, safe working procedures and inspection and maintenance records are retained and are readily accessible. Unfortunately, the insurer can't reclaim any legal costs even if we win at Court (barring fundamental dishonesty or gross abuse of process, etc.).

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Limitation of actions

Generally there is a time limit for claimants to begin legal proceedings. This is three years for injury and six years for other loss or damage. However, judges have discretion to allow actions to proceed if they consider it to be just and equitable.

The limitation of actions allows children to bring proceedings three years after reaching the age of eighteen, reinforcing the requirement to complete an early investigation and retain relevant documentation for as long as possible.

A higher duty of care for children

In practice, courts will expect a higher duty of care to be afforded to children. There can also be a reluctance for the courts to hold a child guilty of contributory negligence.

Judicial sympathy

The courts often sympathise with a victim, especially a child, who has sustained permanent and distressing injuries. In these circumstances defendants often face a difficult task in proving their case.

Legal costs

If a claimant has had the benefit of Legal Aid, costs have been met by the taxpayer out of the Legal Aid Fund. This means, however, that a defending local council will not normally be able to recover costs against the claimant even if the case is successfully defended.

Many actions are now brought on the Conditional Fee basis. Solicitors are entering schemes for legal expenses insurance where for a small premium a claimant's costs will be met by an insurer.

Out of court settlements

There are a number of reasons why it is sometimes wiser to settle a case out of court:

- The barrister/counsel may consider that the witness for the defence would not perform very well in court.
- Experts representing the defence may not be convincing or sufficiently supportive.
- It is sometimes prudent to settle a claim out of court because a judge may make a ruling which would set a precedent and thereby open the floodgates to many future claims.

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The role of Zurich

Zurich has dedicated teams which specialises in risk management in the public and voluntary sector.

With a wide range of risk management products and bespoke services, we provide effective solutions for both strategic and operational risks that are specifically focused on the public and voluntary sector.

We have accumulated vast amounts of knowledge and experience from more than a century of working with UK public services.

As a result we can deliver awareness seminars and training programmes on a broad range of subjects including:

- Risk assessments
- Health and safety issues
- Risk management.

Within the team there are specialist units, Property, Liability/ health and safety and Business/strategic risk, so customers have access to a team of specialists in all aspects of public and voluntary sector risk management.

Why manage risk?
- Risk management
- Legal considerations
- The role of Zurich

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Managing your risks

Organisations face a wide range of risks relating to the potential hazards which could cause personal injury or death. These risks can affect everyone who is employed by, who volunteers for or comes into contact with the work of the organisation, e.g. employees, volunteers, members of the public, contractors and trespassers.

In addition, there are risks associated with hiring out facilities owned or managed by organisations.

The important aspect is to be aware of the different risks involved and the controls you can put in place to minimise the chance of an accident happening.

In our experience it's relatively easy and inexpensive to get your risks under control in most cases. In managing your risk effectively you can continue to provide activities and facilities for your communities.

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Outdoor facilities

Organisation own or manage a wide variety of outdoor facilities. The risks associated with outdoor facilities are extremely varied.

This section covers best practice measures which should be considered in managing risks associated within a range of outdoor facilities.

- Allotments
- BMX and skateboard parks
- Car parks
- Cemeteries and closed churchyards
- Lakes and ponds
- Outdoor swimming and paddling pools
- Parks and recreation grounds
- Playgrounds
- Public conveniences
- Sports pitches

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Allotments

Description

Local councils are often the allotment authority with responsibility for managing allotments.

Control measures

- Ensure that all appropriate clauses are covered by the allotment tenancy agreement. For example, it would be advisable for the agreement to cover maintenance, glazing safety, storage of unmarked and or highly flammable chemicals, duty to remove any structures on vacating of the plot, etc.
- Ensure that allotment tenants hold appropriate public liability insurance cover (usually covered by home contents insurance) to ensure that in the event of injury a claim can be made against the most appropriate person rather than solely falling to the Council
- Allotment Association block insurance schemes to cover all allotment tenants (which can be recharged through the tenancy agreements) should be considered
- Allotment facilities should undergo risk assessment. For example identifying hazards such as explosion from keeping of LPG, unsafe storage of hazardous chemicals, etc. This will also determine the criteria to be included in the Tenancy Agreements as well as frequency for inspection
- Carry out periodic plot inspections to check that plotholders are adhering to their tenancy agreement
- Record and repair any defects for which you are responsible.

Example incident

A young child was badly stung by bees on a local allotment. It was found that the local council were not aware that a plotholder was keeping bees on his allotment plot, contrary to the tenancy agreement.

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› Good management procedures

› Grounds maintenance

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BMX and skateboard parks

Description

Organisations provide BMX and skateboard parks within communities. It should be noted that a greater duty of care is owed to children, who are not able to perceive risks to the same extent as adults.

Control measures

- Risk assessments should be carried out for all BMX and skateboard parks
- Site the area away from other facilities which could present risks to users, e.g. football pitches. Overhead cables and other service utilities equipment should be avoided, as should poisonous plants and shrubs. If possible, an emergency telephone should be available nearby. General landscaping and drainage considerations should be taken into account, as should ease of access for the emergency services
- Implement a policy on cleanliness taking into account litter collection, dog fouling and vandalism
- Information and safety signage should be displayed.
- The equipment itself should be designed to be free of any finger, hand or foot trapping hazards
- All equipment should be manufactured and installed by reputable companies and comply to the appropriate British or European Standards
- If installed, safety surfaces should comply with the appropriate British or European standard on installation and safety performance
- Skateboard installations should comply with the appropriate British Standard
- Equipment should be inspected by specialists (preferably independent) at least annually. Depending upon the amount of use and/or vandalism may increase to six-monthly
- Any defects noted should be repaired immediately and both the report and details of action taken should be kept
- Carry out brief visual inspections on a daily basis to check for any obvious vandalism, wear and tear, broken glass, dog fouling etc.
- More detailed inspection should be undertaken weekly (determined by risk assessment)
- All inspections should be recorded
- Any defective equipment should be taken out of use. In some cases it may be sufficient to cordon off the area in others it may be necessary to remove the item completely
- Repairs should always be carried out by a competent person.
- Where a safety surface has been installed, more regular inspection and maintenance may be required to ensure that it remains in good condition.

› BMX and skateboard parks continued

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Example incident

A child sustained a broken arm whilst playing on a skateboard ramp. It was found that the organisation had carried out a risk assessment and had an inspection system in place with all records kept. No further action was taken against the organisation.

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› Contractors
› Good management procedures
› Parks and recreation grounds
› Work equipment

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Car parks

Description

Most local community organisations have some formal or informal parking areas that they either own or manage. Quite often these are attached to other facilities such as recreation grounds or cemeteries.

Control measures

- Ensure that the organisation is aware of the car parking facilities it owns or is responsible for inspecting and maintaining
- Carry out a risk assessment for car parking facilities to identify particular hazards e.g. vulnerable to flooding, ice build-up, etc, and to prioritise inspection and maintenance regimes
- Provide efficient means of access and egress for vehicles e.g. one way systems and segregate pedestrian walkways where possible
- Provide adequate lighting for frequently used car parking facilities
- Identify car parks which should be gritted during icy weather conditions e.g. workplace car parks
- Set the standard of inspection for car parking facilities ensuring that inspection checklists can also demonstrate where appropriate that no defect was identified
- Ensure that repairs carried out are documented to ensure an effective inspection and maintenance audit trail
- Instruct/train employees to carry out car park inspections.
- Retain inspection records
- Carry out risk assessments for employees who empty payment machines and where possible this activity should not be carried out alone.

Example incident

A Parish Council employee fell over on a pothole in the employee car park. It was found that no system of inspecting and maintaining the car park was in place.

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Cemeteries and closed churchyards

Description

Local councils are responsible for grounds maintenance work and substantive maintenance, i.e. maintenance of the memorials in closed churchyards when they have been transferred from the Parochial Church Council.

Control measures

Installation of new monuments

- New installations should comply with NAMM standards and BS8415
- Memorial stonemasons should be approved by the local council to ensure that they are competent to install to NAMM standards and work safely
- Assessments should be made as to the appropriate space to be left between graves (the midfeather). Assessments should take into account the composition of the ground, the water table, any sloping ground and the use of mechanical excavators.

Memorial maintenance

- Responsibility for maintenance of monuments should be formally established and agreed
- A Faculty should be obtained from the Parochial Church Council (as the land and memorial owner) to carry out any maintenance work on memorials
- Carry out a risk assessment
- A system of regular documented inspections should be established. They should be carried out in accordance with BS8415. The frequency is dependent upon the age and condition of the memorials and the ground conditions
- Each monument should be physically checked as well as visually examined. Employees should be given training to ensure they do not endanger their own safety whilst carrying out inspections
- Any unstable monuments should be temporarily made safe until repairs are carried out.

Grave digging

- A risk assessment should be carried out
- Any environmental factors which are likely to cause a hazard should be considered
- If not fully automated, all graves should be excavated by two persons
- Grave diggers should be trained to carry out the task safely. Training should include excavating, shoring, filling and manual handling techniques
- Shoring should always be used and this should be regularly inspected by a competent person and a record kept
- If excavations are deeper than four feet, no one should enter the grave without taking precautions to ensure the atmosphere is free from harmful gases
- Protective restraints should be used to ensure that only authorised people are permitted near the site while digging is in progress and to prevent falls when the grave is left unattended
- A ladder should be used for access and egress
- Personal protective equipment must be provided as well as adequate washing facilities.

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Paths and access ways

- Any vehicular access to the site should be signed and segregated from pedestrian access and paths wherever possible
- All roadways and paths should be free from major defects such as potholes
- Regular documented inspections should be implemented to ensure that all areas remain in good condition. Any action taken to rectify a defect should also be documented
- Condition inspections should be extended to include all walls, gates, fences, benches and other furniture provided by the council, as well as water taps, waste bins and signposts, etc.

Example incident

A gravestone, in a cemetery where the Local Council was responsible for maintenance, fell onto the foot of a young girl resulting in the amputation of three toes. It was found that the Local Council were aware that children used the graveyard, had received numerous complaints regarding the state of gravestones and were aware of vandalism but had done nothing about the situation.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Manual handling
› Work equipment
› Work at height

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Lakes and ponds

Description

Organisations may own and manage lakes and ponds which are provided for many positive reasons, e.g. wildlife, natural beauty, recreational facility, etc.

Control measures

- Carry out risk assessments
- Balance risk assessments with the positive aspects of providing lakes and ponds
- Lakes and ponds should be inspected periodically and records kept. The frequency of inspections will depend on the use of the area and if it is prone to high levels of vandalism. Any slipways, platforms etc. should be included in the inspections
- If lifesaving equipment is provided it must be checked regularly to ensure that it is present and in good condition. If it is damaged or missing it must be replaced
- If safety signage is provided e.g. to prohibit swimming or diving, it should be displayed in pictorial format and comply with the current safety signs regulations and included in the inspection regime
- If swimming is actively encouraged, then further guidance should be sought.

Example incident

A youth fell into a pond sustaining serious injuries. It was found that the organisation inspected the pond every three months and kept records. In addition they carried out routine maintenance work in the area. The action taken by the organisation was deemed to be reasonable as they are not required to provide measures for the foolhardy.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures

› Grounds maintenance

› Parks and recreation grounds

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Outdoor swimming and paddling pools

Description

Parks and recreation areas sometimes contain swimming or paddling pools.

Control measures

- Management of outdoor swimming and paddling pools should be in compliance with health and safety guidance
- Carry out a risk assessment
- Consider any known misuse
- Normal Operating Procedures (NOP) and an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) should be formalised and employees/ volunteers trained
- Swimming facilities should be properly supervised by persons holding nationally recognised life saving qualifications
- Life saving and first aid equipment should be available
- All pools should be inspected daily for defects and hazards and these should be formally recorded. The inspections should include the area around the pool and any changing facilities to ensure there are no defects such as tripping hazards
- Provide safety signage
- Prohibited activities such as diving or running must be enforced. This is particularly important in tidal pools in coastal areas where there are varying depths which makes diving dangerous
- Pools should be secured when not in use. Unofficial access to pools and lone swimming should be prohibited
- COSHH assessments should be completed for hazardous chemicals used in pool maintenance and control measures implemented
- Outdoor swimming and paddling pools should be located in self contained secure areas in order to avoid unauthorised use, vandalism and contamination
- Signs indicating the water depth, conditions under which the use of the pool is likely to become unsafe, prohibiting unauthorised use and indicating emergency contacts (e.g. Emergency Services on 999) should be displayed
- For outdoor swimming pools consideration should be given to the provision of a pool cover which can be secured around the edge and can support the weight of a person
- If pools are emptied a protective barrier should be provided to prevent falls
- Paddling pools should be supervised unless it can be demonstrated by a risk assessment that supervision is not required. This will depend on the hazards of the pool, the characteristics of the users and management arrangements in place
- Paddling pools should be inspected before use
- Appropriate signs and rules should be displayed for example to indicate that paddling pool is to be used only by young children under supervision of a responsible person

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- The water should be treated with a disinfectant. Continuous circulation and a simple filtration system with automatic dosing system should be provided
- Pool circulation line outlets should be protected with permanently fixed grilles with apertures of no more than 8mm and the flow rate should be less than 0.5m/second
- Paddling pools without any water circulation are not recommended
- Checks should be made to ensure that the pool is not polluted during closure and that there is no broken glass or other hazards in the pool
- Whilst most paddling pools are emptied over winter, it may be necessary to leave some water in the pool to prevent structural damage. In this case pools with deep areas should be securely covered
- Pre-season preparation and planned maintenance should be carried out to ensure that the pool is fit for purpose. Electrical equipment, switchgear etc should be inspected by a qualified electrician before the supply is used. The efficiency of the water treatment plant should also be inspected and tested.

Example incident

A child cut her foot on the broken surface of a paddling pool. It was found that the organisation did not have a formal procedure for inspecting the pool and could not demonstrate that all reasonable precautions were in place.

Relevant sections

› Arson and vandalism
› Good management procedures
› Hazardous substances
› Lakes and ponds
› Parks and recreation grounds

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Parks and recreation grounds

Description

Organisations own and manage a variety of parks and recreation grounds.

The extent to which precautions are required varies according to the facility, the users and the local conditions. However, the judiciary, enforcing authorities and central government are accepting that all risks cannot and in some cases need not be eliminated.

Control measures

- Pedestrian paths and play areas should be segregated from car parking areas and roads
- Pedestrian and vehicular access routes need to be clearly defined. An organised flow of traffic should be provided
- All facilities should be regularly inspected
- All inspections, any defects noted and any action taken should be recorded. Even if there are no defects, this fact should be recorded
- All defects found must be rectified. The repair response time may be dependent on the severity of the defect. In some circumstances, immediate action will be required to make the area safe before permanent repairs can be carried out. If defective equipment belongs to another party e.g. a bowling club, they should be notified promptly and asked to undertake necessary repairs. If they fail to do this, or ownership is in doubt, the organisation may have to carry out the repairs
- The frequency of inspections will depend upon many factors including the nature of the facility and the general usage. Some areas may need additional inspections during the summer when the number of users increases. An initial assessment should determine the frequency required. Checklists should be used to ensure that items are not overlooked.

Example incident

A teenager was playing football on a football pitch owned and maintained by a local authority when he injured his arm on a protruding bolt on the goal post. It was found that the goal post was defective. The local authority had not carried out any regular inspections of the area and no defects had been reported.

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› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Hiring of facilities
› Playgrounds
› Public conveniences

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Playgrounds

Description

Organisations provide a variety of playground equipment from a simple swing to a complicated multi-play activity site. It should be noted that a greater duty of care is owed to children, who are not able to perceive risks to the same extent as adults.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment for all play areas
- Carefully consider the design and layout of playgrounds. Reference should be made to all relevant British or European Standards including BS EN 1176-7. This Standard covers the design and layout of the play area, installation, inspection and maintenance regimes, and the general layout of the facility
- General landscaping and drainage considerations should be taken into account, as should ease of access for the emergency services
- Play areas should be distanced from other facilities, such as football pitches etc which could present risks to users
- Proximity to overhead cables and other service utility equipment should be avoided
- The planting of poisonous plants and shrubs should be avoided
- If possible, an emergency telephone should be available nearby
- Equipment for younger children should be distanced and segregated from that for older ones. Careful consideration should be given to segregating different types of equipment and there should always be a safety zone of at least 1.8 metres (or 6 feet) around moving items such as swings and roundabouts
- Wherever possible, play areas should be fenced to ensure segregation from other facilities and safety from roads, rivers, lakes, car parks, etc.
- Gates should have self-closers to keep out dogs
- A policy on cleanliness of play areas should be implemented taking into account litter collection, dog fouling and vandalism
- Information and safety signage should be displayed where necessary
- The equipment itself should be designed to be free of any finger, hand or foot trapping hazards
- All equipment should be manufactured and installed by reputable companies and comply with appropriate British or European Standards. Home-made equipment should never be installed in playgrounds
- If installed, safety surfaces should comply with the appropriate British or European standard on installation and safety performance

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- All play equipment should be subject to a detailed inspection by specialists (preferably independent) at least annually. Depending upon the amount of use and/or vandalism, this may have to be increased to six-monthly inspections. At this time chains, nuts and bolts, shackles and weld joints should be inspected and a detailed report produced
- Any defects noted should be repaired immediately and both the report and details of any action taken should be securely filed
- Detailed inspections should be supplemented with more frequent inspections by the organisation's own employees/volunteers. The frequency of inspection should be determined by the risk assessment for the facility
- All inspections should be formally recorded and we recommend the use of a checklist which can then be kept with the records
- Any equipment found to be unsafe should be taken out of use. In some cases it may be sufficient to cordon off the area in others it may be necessary to remove the item completely to ensure the safety of users
- DIY repairs should not be carried out unless they are endorsed by the original manufacturer or installer
- Repairs should always be carried out by a competent person. Where a safety surface has been installed, more regular inspection and maintenance may be required to ensure that it remains in good condition.

Example incident

A child suffered serious injuries when she fell onto steel stumps in a playground which had been left following the removal of a piece of play equipment. It was found that the organisation had not carried out any checks to ensure the work had been completed after contractors had been used to remove a piece of equipment.

Relevant sections

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› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Parks and recreation grounds

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Public conveniences

Description

There are a number of issues which need to be considered in terms of liability regarding public conveniences. These include risks to members of the public, employees/volunteers and contractors in terms of safety and security, as well ensuring as far as possible provision for disabled persons. In addition, public conveniences are often subject to vandalism and misuse.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment
- Carry out a COSHH assessment for cleaning activities where employees or volunteers are employed to clean facilities
- Where a cleaning contractor is employed ensure that the contractor has appropriate public liability insurance, has completed COSHH assessments and carries out the task in a safe way
- Monitor the work of the contractor periodically to ensure that they clean to an acceptable standard and implement safe systems of work
- Ensure that systems are in place to segregate or close the public convenience during cleaning activities to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls to members of the public
- Ensure that strict controls are in place for handling and disposal of items contaminated with body fluids, e.g. syringes. Controls should include the use of personal protective equipment, tongs and clinical waste boxes
- Ensure that a programme of inspection and maintenance is implemented. Remember, cleaning employees/ volunteers can also carry out regular safety inspections
- Close public conveniences at night and ensure there is no lone working where it is known that misuse, vandalism and other criminal activities take place.

Example incident

A member of the public suffered significant burns after sitting on a toilet seat in a public convenience which had recently been cleaned with concentrated solution of cleaning product. It was found that the organisation had not carried out a COSHH assessment and did not realise that the cleaning products they were using should have been diluted.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures

› Hazardous substances

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Sports pitches

Description

Some organisations own and manage sports pitches such as football pitches and cricket greens. The range control measures required will depend on the activities carried out, the equipment used and the age of the user.

Control measures

- Activities carried out on sports pitches should be risk assessed
- Sports pitches should be sited away from other facilities such as playgrounds, e.g. cricket wickets on a cricket green should be sited so as to reduce the risk of injury or damage being caused by flying balls
- Advice regarding the correct installation, siting, inspection and maintenance should be sought from the equipment suppliers
- Advice on the correct use, pre use, inspection and misuse should be given to the hirers of facilities or equipment, both indoors and outdoors
- All pitch marking materials should be non-hazardous.
- The proximity of nearby roads must be considered and fencing provided if necessary
- Regular inspections should be undertaken of all sports pitches including equipment such as cricket nets, score boards, goal posts etc.
- Pest control problems, such as moles damaging pitches etc. should be dealt with using trapping methods and/or low-hazard substances
- Free standing goal posts should be securely anchored to ensure they cannot topple forward and safe storage should be provided
- Socketed goal posts must be cemented into the ground (to a minimum 600mm x 600mm x 600mm cube and 500mm deep) and not stand proud of ground level
- All goalposts require ongoing maintenance and checking
- Nets in goals should be fixed by synthetic, purpose made soft fixings rather than metal or otherwise hard fixings, such as nails, tabs or hooks
- Safe manual handling techniques should be used when moving the posts
- Portable goalposts should be dismantled and removed to secure storage after use and secured together face to face or to a substantial permanent structure such as a wall or fence. Netting should be well fitted and not extend outside the area of the frame base
- The use of wooden goalposts is not recommended.

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Example incident

A Community Council was prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive when a defective goal post on a football pitch collapsed and fell onto a young boy causing severe head injuries. It was found that the council had no system for inspecting and maintaining the goal posts although irregular checks were carried out by grounds maintenance employees.

Relevant sections

- Good management procedures
- Grounds maintenance
- Parks and recreation grounds
- Halls and pavilions
- Hiring of facilities

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Good management procedures

This category relates to ensuring that best practice is observed when it comes to general management procedures that organisations should follow.

Deficiencies in these areas can affect levels of risk across all the other risk categories.

- Accident reporting
- Age of workers
- Cash handling
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
- Contractors
- Coping in a crisis
- First aid
- Fraud
- Health and safety policy
- Health risks
- Hiring of facilities
- Information, instruction and training
- Inspections regimes
- Insurance
- Safety signs
- Voluntary and temporary workers

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Accident reporting

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) require you to report certain accidents to your enforcing authority. The easiest way to do this is by completing the report online on the HSE website – www.hse.gov.uk. If you need to report a fatal/ specified and major incident this can be done by calling the Incident Contact Centre (ICC) on 0345 300 99 23 (local rate).

Accidents that should be reported are:

- Fatalities
- Specified major injuries, such as fractures (other than of fingers or toes), amputations, loss of sight and injury from electric shock
- Accidents which lead to incapacity from normal work for more than seven days (including being unfit for work on non-work days)
- Injuries caused by violence to employees
- Reportable industrial diseases, e.g. Weil's disease and Legionnaire's disease
- Dangerous occurrences, e.g. the collapse of scaffolding over five meters in height, or a boiler explosion
- If a member of the public is killed or taken to hospital as a result of an accident on your land or premises.

It should be noted that the Social Security Administration Act 1992 also requires you to keep details of accidents to employees for industrial injury benefit purposes.

Accident investigation

It is important that if any accidents do occur they are investigated. By investigating accidents you will be able to learn lessons and therefore prevent workplace injury and ill health.

To investigate an accident you must:

- Gather information
- Analyse this information
- Identify risk control measures
- Produce and action plan and implement it.

When an accident occurs there are many hidden costs, which often can't be quantified. An example would be the loss of expertise if an employee had an accident and was unable to work for a long period of time.

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Age of workers

Description

Young employees are people who are under eighteen years old. It is considered that these people are inexperienced in the work environment, and known that they have a higher accident risk.

There is no upper age to define an older employee. In research it has been established that older employees are not at a greater risk of having accidents than other employees.

There are advantages and disadvantages associated with both younger and older employees. Older employees are often more conscientious and reliable, think before acting, are loyal, have better interpersonal skills, are good at team working, have good knowledge of the work activities, etc. In contrast, younger workers are usually better at grasping new ideas, have greater adaptability to change and accept new methods and technology, learn more quickly, and are more interested in training.

Control measures

- Identify through your risk assessments where young workers are at risk from the hazards associated with your activities
- If you are unable to adequately reduce risk and a significant risk remains, consideration should be given to transferring the young worker to another activity and replacing them with a more experienced adult. Young persons should not be allowed to operate any machine without direct supervision by a competent person
- Consider the accidents that may occur to an older worker, e.g. strains, sprains and falls, and implement measures to protect them from these accidents. This will have a positive impact on all workers
- Age-friendly job design should include adapting the workplace, premises, equipment, working hours and processes to the employee's changed capacities. You need to ensure that training opportunities are in place for older workers and that age discrimination is not an issue within your organisation.

Example incident

An organisation provided work experience in their office for a student from the local secondary school. The student damaged his back whilst moving some boxes of archive material. It was found that the student had received no training or instruction on how to lift items correctly.

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Cash handling

Description

Cash may be handled by organisations as part of their day to day activities, e.g. payment for the hire of a village hall, or as part of one off events such as an event.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment for the handling of cash
- Use cheques, credit cards or tokens instead of cash to make robbery less attractive
- Bank money frequently, but not on a regular basis, e.g. not every Tuesday morning between 9am and 10am. Vary the route taken to reduce the risk of robbery. Carry cash in an inconspicuous container. Consider making this a two person task
- Store cheques and cash securely, e.g. in a safe
- Ensure that keys for the safe are taken away from the location of the safe overnight and are kept in a secure location throughout the day
- Give instructions to anyone handling cash to hand over the cash if they are challenged
- For one off events where cash will be taken:
  - Encourage purchasing of entry tickets prior to the event
  - Collect cash generated at the event frequently
  - Provide a secure area for the storage of cash
  - Bank the cash as soon as possible after the event. If large amounts of cash are to be generated consider banking during the event.

Example incident

A voluntary organisation put on a summer fair every year to raise money. Cash was stolen from the event. It was found that the security of the cash had not been considered during the planning of the fair, resulting in cash building up at each stall, thus giving the thief an opportunity to steal a large sum.

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Construction (Design and Management) Regulations

Description

The regulations place duties on those involved in construction work. This includes organisations where they are clients to a building contract. A 'client' is anyone having construction or building work carried out as part of their business.

Control measures

- As a client you should:
  - Appoint the right people at the right time
  - Ensure there are arrangements in place for managing and organising the project
  - Allow adequate time
  - Provide information to your designer and contractor
  - Communicate with your designer and building contractor
  - Ensure adequate welfare facilities on site
  - Ensure a construction phase plan is in place
  - Keep the health and safety file
  - Protect members of the public, including your employees
  - Ensure workplaces are designed correctly
- Check the competence and adequacy of resources (including insurances) available in the case of everyone you appoint to the project
- Ensure that there are arrangements for project welfare facilities
- Allow sufficient time and resources for all stages of the project
- Provide pre-construction information to designers and contractors (e.g. regarding the presence of asbestos in the existing building).

Further detail is contained in INDG411 (rev 1).

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Contractors

Description

Organisations use contractors for a variety of tasks, including minor repairs, major building projects, and ongoing activities such as grounds maintenance. Contractors working on an organisation's premises or sites are a potential source of injury to employees, volunteers and members of the public. Therefore, they should be required to meet safety standards which conform to or exceed those of the organisation.
In return, the organisation has a duty to protect the safety of the contractor and his employees. The contractor must be informed of any significant hazards of which the organisation is aware, e.g. a fragile roof or the presence of asbestos.

Control measures

- Ask the contractor for a method statement showing how the work will be carried out and what measures will be taken to minimise the risk of personal injury (or property damage) to your employees/volunteers and members of the public
- For major work, request a copy of the contractor's safety policy and codes of practice. These documents should be checked by a competent person, i.e. someone with adequate knowledge of health and safety
- For some hazardous types of work, a permit to work may be necessary, e.g. working at height or with electrical systems. A permit to work details the work involved and the necessary safety precautions. The main aim is that work cannot commence until a specific person has signed the permit to the effect that the precautions have been taken
- Ask for proof of electrical testing before electrical equipment is used on your property. With "hot working", i.e. the use of flames or any heat-producing equipment, fire precautions are of great importance and the contractor should have the appropriate type of extinguisher available
- Throughout the contract, the contractor's performance should be monitored to check on compliance with the agreed safety arrangements. If contractors are acting unsafely, the work should be stopped. As the principal to the contract, you have not only the power to do this but the responsibility, in order to ensure the safety of employees, volunteers, visitors and the contractors themselves
- Check that the contractor has adequate public liability insurance, allowing for the type and scale of the work involved and also the value of the building on which they are working, where appropriate.

Example incident

A young girl was badly injured when she fell from a defective swing in a playground. A contractor had been employed by the owner of the playground to carry out inspections and maintenance of the playground equipment. It was found that the swing was defective and that the contractor had not been carrying out the inspections. The owner of the playground was criticised as they were not monitoring the performance of the contractor.

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Coping in a crisis

Description

Crises such as fire, damage to buildings, illness of key employees or IT system failure could all make it difficult or even impossible to carry out your normal day to day activities.

Examples of crises are:

- Natural disasters, e.g. flooding or wind damage
- Theft or vandalism, e.g. of computer equipment
- Fire
- Power cut
- IT system failure
- Restricted access to premises
- Loss or illness of key employees
- Outbreak of disease or infection
- Terrorist attack.

Control measures

- Identify potential crises that might affect you
- Determine how you intend to minimise the risk of these occurring
- Set out how you will react if a disaster does occur in a business continuity plan, e.g. if you're reliant on computer information a back-up system should be in place so there is a copy of key data in the event of a system failure
- Ensure you have good electrical and gas safety to protect your premises against fire
- Arrange for alternative premises that can be used if your premises aren't accessible
- Arrange maintenance plans with call outs for breakdown of critical pieces of equipment
- Install anti-virus software and back-up data. Keep copies of important documents away from your main office, e.g. contact details
- Try to ensure you are not dependent on a few key employees/individuals for key skills by getting them to train other people
- Plan how you will deal with an emergency
- Test your plans and keep them up to date.

Example incident

A gas leak prevented a Town Hall from being accessed for two days. It was found that there was no back-up IT system and the work of the Town Council virtually came to a standstill until they could gain access. Severe disruption was caused.

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First aid

Description

First aid requires treatment of injured people for the purpose of preserving life and minimising the consequences of injury and illness until medical help is obtained. It also includes treatment for minor injuries which would otherwise receive no treatment or do not need treatment by a medical practitioner.

- A **first aider** is someone who holds a current certificate approved by the HSE
- An **appointed person** is someone who is authorised to take charge when there is an injury or illness and will usually have received emergency first aid training.

Control measures

- Carry out an assessment to determine the level of first aid provision that your organisation requires. The provision must be adequate and appropriate for your employees/ volunteers, e.g. you may decide that you will provide a first aid box for each of your grounds maintenance vehicles
- Display the names of any first aiders or appointed persons in strategic locations at your premises, e.g. an employee's notice board and on or adjacent to the first aid box
- First aid boxes should be marked with a white cross on a green background
- Regularly check the contents of your first aid box and replenish any items used
- Suggested contents of a first aid box are detailed in the table. First aid boxes should not contain medicines, pills or ointments in case of allergic reaction.

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First aid boxes – recommended type and quantity of items

Item	Number of employees		
	1 – 5	6 – 10	11 - 50
Guidance cards	1	1	1
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings	20	20	40
Sterile eye pads, with attachments	1	2	4
Triangular bandages	1	2	4
Sterile coverings for serious wounds	1	2	4
Safety pins	6	6	12
Medium sterile unmedicated dressings	3	6	8
Large sterile unmedicated dressings	1	2	4
Extra large sterile unmedicated dressings	1	2	4

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Fraud

Description

Fraud is the deliberate changing of financial statements or other records by someone who works for the organisation, carried out to hide theft or use of equipment, money or services for personal gain. Fraud dishonestly takes money from the organisation.

Control measures

- Ensure that opportunities for fraud are minimised
- Ensure that potential fraudsters believe they will be caught
- Consider if someone wanted to make some money by defrauding the organisation how would this be achieved
- Look out for some telltale signs:
  - Suppliers insist on only dealing with one individual
  - Excessive habitual overtime is worked without relation to workload
  - Unduly friendly relations between an employee/volunteer and a supplier
  - Organisation assets are not checked against a fixed asset or stock register
  - Inadequate reconciliation of balance sheet reserves
  - Management and supervision are remote from those they control
- Monitor sickness absence
- Where practical, segregate duties so that no one person is responsible for approving expenditure and authorising payment
- Employees must take their annual leave entitlement, with their work being covered by others in their absence
- Fixed assets must be tagged and checked periodically
- Provide details on when an external interest may give rise to a conflict of interests
- Require employees/volunteers to report suspected fraud to a named individual
- Obtain references for new employees/volunteers.

Example incident

The village hall caretakers' timesheets showed excessive working hours. It was found that he had been exaggerating the hours that he worked to claim more pay. This situation had been ongoing for several years and over that time the caretaker had received a large amount of extra pay for hours that he had not worked. The situation only came to light when a new manager queried the hours that the caretaker was working against the duties that he carried out.

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Health and safety policy

Description

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA) requires all employers to have a Health and Safety Policy, and those with five or more employees must have a written policy. Even if you have fewer than five employees, it is suggested that you should still have a written policy as this is the best way to ensure that you have considered health and safety and a good way to communicate health and safety to all the relevant people.

Policies usually consist of three parts:

1. A general statement of intent
2. Information on responsibilities for implementing health and safety within your organisation (often referred to as the Organisation section)
3. Arrangements for implementing the aims and objectives of the statement.

General statement of intent

This should specify your organisation's aims and objectives relating to health, safety and welfare. In this section, the organisation formally recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to take all reasonably practical steps to protect employees and all others who could be affected by its activities, and to comply with legal requirements.

The related objectives can be set out here, such as the provision of safe workplaces and equipment, adequate information, instruction and training, and the carrying out of all necessary risk assessments.

Organisation

This section states the duties of particular people within the organisation and where appropriate the chain of command or reporting structure. Most duties will fall upon the senior management, including implementation of the Policy, accident investigation and reporting, and ensuring the provision of appropriate information, instruction and training for employees.

Depending on the size and structure of the organisation, similar duties may be allocated to other supervisory employees/volunteers in respect of grounds maintenance, community centre, etc.

The responsibilities of all employees should also be set out here, including their duties under the HSWA to take reasonable care of both their own and other people's safety and to cooperate with their employer on safety matters.

Arrangements

The systems and procedures developed to promote safety should be detailed here, including accident reporting, first aid, emergency procedures, manual handling, etc.

Once a Policy has been produced it should be signed and dated, usually by the relevant Director/Senior Management of the organisation. It must be regularly reviewed and updated when there are changes in legislation, activities, job titles, etc.

Relevant sections

› Example health and safety policy

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Health risks

Dermatitis

Inflammation of the skin caused by exposure to substances, e.g. detergents.

Control measures

- Minimise exposure of the skin to substances
- Consider using an alternative substance which does not cause dermatitis
- Gloves to be provided along with other appropriate personal protective equipment (the condition does not solely occur on the hand)
- Provide adequate ventilation
- Ensure high standards of hygiene
- Ensure employees/volunteers are informed of the risks and are properly trained in avoiding them
- If dermatitis develops avoid all contact with the irritant both at work and at home
- Continue to avoid contact after the dermatitis has cleared up as further exposure could cause a recurrence.

Legionnaire's disease

Serious form of pneumonia caused by the legionella pneumophila bacteria. It is usually associated with an infected water supply in public buildings. The symptoms include muscle ache, headache, fever and coughing.
It is contracted through the inhalation of water droplets or vapours, e.g. from a shower.

Control measures

- Identify potential systems where water is stored and therefore where bacteria could grow, e.g. dead legs in water pipes
- Identify where there are the means of creating and transmitting water droplets that may be inhaled
- Heat water to 55-60°C and carry out regular checks
- Treat the water systems with biocides and chlorination of water
- Ensure that all systems are regularly used
- If you have a cooling tower quarterly sampling is required
- Obtain competent advice if significant issues identified.

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Toxocariasis

A disease that affects the lungs, spleen and eyes and has been known to cause blindness in children. Arises through contact with the faeces of cats and dogs which contain the eggs of the toxocara worm. Symptoms include asthma, headaches, sore throats, aching limbs, stomach pains, pneumonia and sleep and behaviour disturbances.

Control measures

- Provide dog bins in public areas, e.g. parks
- Prevent and prohibit dogs from play areas
- Prior to carrying out grounds maintenance activities areas should be checked for faeces
- All faeces should be removed and disposed of correctly.

Weil's disease (Leptospirosis)

A disease that arises through contact with bacteria in rat's urine that can be found in bodies of water, e.g. lakes or ponds. In particularly it is a problem with stagnant or slow moving water. The bacteria can enter the body through the mouth, nose or eyes or via breaks in the skin. Symptoms are initially flu-like and can develop into jaundice and conjunctivitis. If left untreated, the condition can be fatal through kidney or liver failure.

Control measures

- Employees/volunteers working in or near water bodies should cover any cuts, scratches or sores with a waterproof plaster
- Provide waterproof footwear and gloves
- Provide hand washing facilities
- Provide showers for employees/volunteers substantially exposed to water
- Dead animals, especially rats, should not be touched unless gloves are worn
- Issue employees/volunteers with an information card drawing attention to their work with water and advised to inform their doctor of this if they develop any of the relevant symptoms. (Cards are available from the Health and Safety Executive).

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Hiring of facilities

Description

Organisations often hire out their facilities, e.g. the village hall, to other organisations or private individuals for special events. This can be on a regular basis or as a one-off event.

Control measures

- All hirers must have a contract
- No inappropriate functions or entertainment should be allowed
- Organisation representative meets hirer and discusses health and safety arrangements
- Caretaker checks premises once hirer has gone. Damage is immediately reported and repaired, if possible, or alternative arrangements made with next hirer prior to them using the premises
- Where required, the premises licence is renewed every year
- Premises are kept locked when not in use
- Premises are cleaned after every function and any defects identified
- All hirers are issued with 'Instructions and Information for Persons in Charge of Function' or similar. This includes basic safety information, emergency procedures, and fire safety instructions
- Carry out checks on regular users to ensure they are complying with the organisations standards
- Ensure hirers have adequate public liability insurance. This may be through a policy in their own name or a special policy taken out by the organisation to cover all hirings. The advice of the organisation's insurers should be sought in this respect
- Hirers' should be asked to provide proof of electrical testing for their electrical equipment.

Example incident

An accident occurred to a member of the public whilst they were attending an indoor Christmas fair organised by a group of private individuals at a village hall owned by an association. It was found that the organisers did not have any public liability insurance and the claim that the injured person made had to be covered by the organisations own policy.

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Information, instruction and training

Description

To enable employees and volunteers to carry out their tasks in a safe manner they must receive adequate information, instruction, training and supervision.

Control measures

- Provide employees and volunteers with relevant health and safety training when they are first employed and when there are changes in the work that they carry out, e.g. when a new piece of equipment is introduced. It is likely that you will need to provide general health and safety training and specific training dependent on the roles of your employees and volunteers
- Keep full records of all training provided, including attendance records
- Provide employees and volunteers with easy to understand and relevant information on risks to their health. It is likely that you will have identified this as a control measure in your risk assessments
- Display the HSE approved poster 'Health and Safety Law – What you Should Know' (alternatively you can issue your employees with individual copies of the same information in a leaflet). The poster should be displayed in a place accessible to all employees. Fill out the blanks on the poster detailing the contact details of the enforcing authority, details of any trade union, and details of the competent person you use to assist you with health and safety
- Ensure that employees and volunteers are supervised as required.

Example incident

An inexperienced employee of a local authority suffered a severe injury to his hand after attempting to clear a blockage on a piece of grounds maintenance machinery without switching it off. It was found that the employee had received no training in the use of the equipment as it was assumed that he could work out how to use it on his own.

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Inspection regimes

Description

One of the main ways of preventing losses is to identify potential problems as early as possible. An effective method of achieving this is to implement an inspection regime.

An inspection regime will identify potential hazards before they cause damage or injury and can help your defence, even if injury or loss occurs, to show that the organisation has done everything that can reasonably be expected.

Good practice

- Identify all facilities and areas for which the organisation is responsible
- Risk assessments should identify where an inspection regime is required as a control measure
- Consider the frequency of the inspection, e.g. daily, weekly or monthly, etc. Ensure that you can achieve the frequency you set
- Establish how you will carry out the inspection. A checklist is a good method
- Establish the standard you expect from the facility or area, and therefore when it becomes defective, e.g. you would not expect unmade paths on a piece of common land to be in the same condition as a pedestrian entrance to a village hall
- Establish how quickly you will respond to defects that the inspections reveal, e.g. within twenty-four hours for emergency repairs, within seven days for less hazardous defects, and within three months for minor repairs
- Establish how you will record the inspections. A record sheet or a daily diary are both good methods. It is important to ensure that a record of every inspection is made, even when no defects are found. It is often more important to show that at the time of the inspection there was no defect
- Train the people responsible for carrying out the inspections on the reason for the inspection, what they should be inspecting, what is a defect, what to do if they find a defect and how to complete the written record
- Check that the inspection regime is controlling, reducing or eliminating risk as you intended. Are inspections being done in practice at the set frequency and to the standard required? Also, is the frequency adequate?
- Retain inspection and repair records for an adequate length of time, and in such a way that they can be linked. Remember that a minor has until three years after their eighteenth birthday to make a claim, so this is particularly important in the case of play areas
- Produce an inspection policy or code of practice that sets out the above.

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Example incident

A member of public fell over a broken paving slab in a car park, resulting in a broken leg and other injuries. It was found that the owner of the car park had not inspected it and was therefore unaware of its condition. They could not demonstrate that they had adequate maintenance procedures in place.

Relevant section

› Example inspection forms

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Insurance

Description

Whilst the main aim of risk management is to prevent accidents and losses, they will still occur. Insurance cover is therefore required to provide financial compensation and the main categories of cover are summarised below.

Public liability

If you are in contact with members of the public, volunteers, or other people from outside your organisation you can cover against accidental damage to third party property and compensation for injury to third parties where you are at fault. Here the injured party claims against the organisation.

Employers liability

If you employ people then you are required by law to have this insurance, which provides compensation for your employees if they are injured through work and your organisation is at fault. The injured employee claims against the organisation.

Money

If your employees/volunteers handle money on site, take money to the bank and/or if you have an overnight safe on your premises you may consider taking out insurance to cover loss of notes, coins, uncrossed cheques, Giro cheques, etc. belonging to you or for which you have responsibility. Specified limits will be set for each category.

Personal accident

If you have employees or volunteers who work in vulnerable situations you may want to consider taking out this insurance to protect them. This provides compensation for injury or assault while working for you, irrespective of blame on your part. Unlike the liability covers, the claim is made by the organisation.

Material damage

You can cover damage to buildings and/or contents for repair or reinstatement.

All risks

This can be added to material damage insurance to protect either all or specified valuable items against loss or damage. The cover is not restricted to the premises, but includes items in the open or portable items for loss, damage, theft and accidental damage.

Engineering

In addition to material damage, cover can be arranged for damage to equipment such as hot water boilers, lifts and lifting tackle that require regular inspections by a specialist person. Such inspections are also provided for play equipment.

Motor

This type of insurance is a legal requirement for motor vehicles owned or leased by you or hired to others.

There are various other types of cover available that you may need to consider depending on your particular circumstances.

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Safety signs

Description

Where there is a risk to health and safety that cannot be avoided or adequately controlled by other means, the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations require safety signs to be displayed. In other words, warning people of a hazard is the last resort and not an acceptable substitute for taking remedial action.

Safety signs must include a pictogram illustrating the subject of the sign and conform to British Standard BS5499. Guidance on the regulations is available in L64 from the HSE.

Title of sign	Message	Description
Prohibition	To stop someone from doing something dangerous or accessing a dangerous area.	Red circle and diagonal line through a black image.
Warning	To alert someone to a dangerous activity or area.	Black triangle with yellow background.
Mandatory	To prescribe a specific behaviour, e.g. requiring someone to wear ear defenders in a certain area.	White image on a blue disk.
Safe condition	To advise someone of the location of a safe area or safety equipment, e.g. the location of a first aid kit.	White image on a green square or rectangle.
Fire fighting	To advise on the location of fire fighting equipment.	White image on a red square or rectangle.
Fire exits	To advise on the safe route from a building or area in the case of a fire.	Text with a directional arrow and a picture of a running man. It should glow in the dark.

The requirements relate only to the workplace. However, it is suggested that a similar format is used for non-work areas, e.g. prohibition of dogs from playgrounds. A consistent approach is logical.

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Control measures

- Identify areas which require the installation of safety signs
- Install safety signs to the appropriate British Standard
- Periodically inspect the safety signs and carry out maintenance when needed.

Example incident

A practice fire drill was carried out at a community centre. Members of public inside the building all left by the same way that they had entered, through the main entrance doors. It was found that this was not the quickest way of exiting the centre but the fire exit signage was limited and hidden behind wall coverings.

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Voluntary and temporary workers

Description

Employers are required to assess a risk to others who come into contact with their activities and that includes voluntary and temporary workers. A voluntary worker is someone who carries out work for an organisation, for which they receive no financial reward.

Control measures

- Ensure that risk assessments identify where voluntary/ temporary workers are at risk from the hazards that have been identified
- In general, the same health and safety standards should be applied to voluntary/temporary workers as they would to employees exposed to the same risks. However, if risk assessments identify that the risks to voluntary/temporary workers are different, the preventive and protective measures taken should reflect the different risks
- Voluntary/temporary workers need to be provided with adequate supervision, instruction and training to carry out their activities safely. Remember that volunteers or temporary workers may well have a lower level of expertise than employees
- Accidents involving volunteers/temporary workers need to be recorded and reported
- Adequate first aid provision should be ensured.

Example incident

A voluntary worker was hit by a reversing vehicle whilst providing assistance with the parking arrangements for a fete organised by a local charity. It was found that the volunteer had received no training or instruction on how to manage traffic and had not been provided with any high visibility clothing.

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Buildings

Organisations may own and/or manage and hire out a wide variety of buildings.

The risks associated with such facilities will vary; however, there are a number of common risk management issues which need to be addressed for all buildings.

These common topics are outlined in this category.

- Arson and vandalism
- Asbestos
- Cleaning
- Electricity
- Fire safety
- Gas safety
- Halls and pavilions

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Arson and vandalism

Description

Isolated buildings are often the target of vandalism and arson.

The extent to which control measures are implemented will depend on the level of crime in the community, the location of buildings and the use of the building.

Control measures

- New facilities should incorporate fire resisting materials such as brick and block rather than timber or other lightweight, combustible construction materials
- Regular premises inspections should be used to identify risks, weaknesses and unsafe practices and allow improvements to be made
- Install physical security measures such as steel entrance doors and steel roller shutters windows
- Improve security of the roof by fitting roof-light grilles, anti-climb barriers and paint, etc. These should be accompanied by suitable warning signs in view of the hazard to persons with no malicious purpose, such as children retrieving a ball
- Improve visibility of the building by cutting back surrounding vegetation and improving lighting where the building is overlooked by neighbours
- Install an appropriate intruder alarm, installed and maintained by a National Security Inspectorate (NSI) approved company with signalling to an alarm monitoring station
- Alarm systems should incorporate a high decibel interval sounder to discourage intruders from remaining in the building
- If the alarm is activated consider arranging for the police or a security firm response. Keyholders should not respond to an alarm activation alone
- Install a fire detection system which alerts the local fire authority.

Example incident

A cricket pavilion was burnt down after waste bins were pushed up against the building and set alight. It was found that this fire could have been prevented if the waste bins had been secured at a distance of 8 metres or more away from the building.

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› Good management procedures

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Asbestos

Description

Asbestos is most likely to be present in a building if it was built or refurbished between the 1950's and 1980's, if it has a steel frame, and/or it has boilers with thermal insulation.

Control measures

- Find out if asbestos is present in any of your buildings by using a licensed asbestos contractor
- Establish what condition it is in and assess the health risk posed e.g. whether it is likely to release fibres
- Keep a register of the location, type and condition of asbestos
- Develop, implement, monitor and review a plan to manage the risk posed by the asbestos in each building. If asbestos containing materials within buildings are in good condition, they can be left in place, unless it is likely to be damaged or disturbed by routine repair and maintenance work. If the asbestos is in poor condition, it could release fibres and should only be encapsulated or removed by specialist licensed contractors. Anyone likely to disturb asbestos e.g. employees contractors, facility users etc, must be prohibited from disturbing, working on or disposing of asbestos
- Presume that materials contain asbestos in the absence of evidence to the contrary
- Provide information on the location of asbestos containing materials to anyone who may come into contact with the material, e.g. maintenance workers and contractors
- If damaged asbestos is discovered in a building or on your land you should contact the Environmental Health Department of the local Borough or District Council, the HSE, or an independent asbestos surveyor for further advice.

Example incident

Asbestos fibres were released into a building from some insulating boards when a contractor drilled into them. It was found that the occupiers of the building were aware of the asbestos contained within the insulating boards but had not displayed any warning signs or informed the contractor.

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Cleaning

Description

Cleaners are often employed directly or under contract by organisations. They are likely to use a variety of chemical substances and equipment such as vacuum cleaners and floor polishers. Cleaners are also likely to move furniture and other items.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment
- Carry out a visual check of equipment prior to use
- Maintain equipment, e.g. vacuum cleaners, floor polishers and incorporate equipment into the portable appliance testing regime
- Ensure that employees/volunteers use equipment properly
- Provide information, instruction and training
- Carry out COSHH assessments for the chemicals used
- Provide personal protective equipment as identified in the COSHH assessment
- Do not mix chemical substances
- Design cleaning activities to minimise manual handling
- Provide manual handling training, if necessary
- Provide warning signs when cleaning operations are taking place
- Clear any chemical/water spillages immediately
- Ensure that floors are not made too slippery with cleaning
- Ensure that contract cleaners are competent and have carried out their own COSHH assessments.

Example incident

A cleaner splashed a cleaning product into her eyes which resulted in her having to take several weeks off work. It was found that the cleaner had received no instruction on how to use the cleaning product and had not seen the safety data sheet. The cleaning product should have been diluted prior to use.

Relevant sections

› Electrical safety
› Good management procedures
› Halls and pavilions
› Hazardous substances
› Manual handling
› Office activities
› Public conveniences

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Electricity

Description

The vast majority of organisations premises will be provided with electricity, e.g. the fixed wiring installation. There will also be a number of portable electrical appliances.

Control measures

Electrical equipment

- Carry out a risk assessment
- Suitable electrical equipment must be provided for the task. Electrical tools used outdoors may become wet or be prone to damage and may increase the risk of electric shock. Therefore, appropriately weather proof or robust equipment should be provided. Battery-operated tools are preferable, but failing this you should select those that can be operated at a reduced voltage of 110 volts
- A register of portable electrical equipment (all items with a plug) should be maintained
- Portable electrical appliance (PAT) testing should be carried out by a competent person. That is, someone who has received training to carry out PAT testing. This testing will include checks on the continuity of conductors, insulation resistance, earth electrode resistance, earth-fault loop impedance etc. Frequency for inspection and testing of appliances are dependent on the type and use of the equipment. Records should be retained
- Any items which have not been tested should not be connected to your electrical supply
- User checks should be carried out prior to use. This should include damage to the plug, cable or equipment casing, use of tape to join wiring and scorch marks indicating overheating
- Fuses and circuit-breakers (residual current devices or RCDs) should be used to provide protection against excess current
- Employees/volunteers using electrical equipment should have sufficient training and experience to undertake the work safely
- Hirers of facilities e.g. village halls or contractors working within facilities, should use the organisations PAT tested electrical equipment or provide evidence that their own equipment has undergone PAT testing.

Electrical installations

- Electrical installations should be installed to current Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) standards.
- A programme of formal electrical installation inspections to current IET standards should be carried out by competent electricians. All workplace electrical installations should be inspected at least every 5 years (3 years for industrial premises)
- Electrical installation inspection records should be retained.

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Example incident

A member of the public received a severe electric shock in a public toilet. It was found that the metal cubicle and pedestal had become live due to damage to the electrical wiring that had not been suitably repaired and the installation was not earthed.

Relevant sections

› Cleaning
› Fire safety
› Good management procedures
› Office activities
› Work equipment

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Fire safety

Description

All facilities will need to have fire safety provision.

A feature of current legislation is the emphasis on fire risk reduction and fire prevention instead of fire precautions. The legislation places responsibility on all organisations in control of premises and it applies to almost all non-domestic premises including buildings, structures and open spaces.

Responsible person – is required to ensure that an assessment of the risk in relation to fire is carried out and to take necessary steps to reduce, remove or control the risks. They should be named for each building. The person with management responsibility for the premises will usually be the responsible person.

Competent person – appointed by the responsible person to carry out the risk assessment should be someone with sufficient training, experience and knowledge.

The responsible person will still hold the overall responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Order.

Control measures

- Establish responsible persons and where appropriate appoint competent persons
- Carry out and record a site specific fire risk assessment to identify possible fire hazards and evaluate the risks. Retain any existing fire certificates to assist in completion and review of fire risk assessments
- Consider those who may be especially at risk including employees, volunteers, visitors (including emergency services personnel), children, disabled facility users, contractors and members of the public
- Eliminate or reduce risks from fire as far as reasonably possible (for example secure external waste bins at least 8 metres from the building, store flammable substances in a purpose built store away from sources of ignition) and provide general fire precautions to deal with any residual risk (for example fire detection and fire extinguishers)
- Formalise fire safety procedures, e.g. fire safety restrictions placed on hirers of halls
- Formalise a plan to deal with any fire emergency and practice the fire emergency plan periodically including drills
- Provide appropriate information in relation to fire risks, safety procedures and emergency procedures to all relevant parties including employees, volunteers, members of the public, emergency services and contractors

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- Carry out regular inspections to ensure that preventative measures are maintained (for example fire detection and fire fighting equipment maintenance, ensure emergency escape routes remain clear, safe storage of waste, etc.)
- Considerations with fire extinguishers:
  - Employees/volunteers should only attempt to extinguish small fires and even then only if it is safe. Before doing this, they should make sure that the alarm has been raised, items such as gas cylinders or aerosols are not nearby, and that there is a clear escape route. Fires involving burning gas should not be tackled
  - If an employee/volunteer does try to put out a fire, the correct extinguisher should be used for the particular type of fire as indicated below. Water or foam extinguishers should never be used on electrical fires
  - Providing training in the correct use of fire extinguishers is essential.

Colour of extinguisher	Type	Ignition source
Red	Water	Wood Paper Cloth
Cream	Foam	Burning liquids
Blue	Dry powder	Burning liquids Electrical fires
Black	Carbon dioxide	Burning liquids Electrical fires
Green	Halon	Electrical fires

Make reference to Fire Safety Guides produced by the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Relevant sections

› Fire risk assessment

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Gas safety

Description

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations require that all work on gas appliances is carried out by contractors who are competent and registered with the Gas Safe Register. Employers and landlords must ensure that gas appliances are inspected at least once a year by a Gas Safe registered contractor.

Control measures

- Only employ Gas Safe registered contractors to or carry out maintenance work on your gas appliances
- No gas appliance should be used if there is any doubt as to its safety and registered installers should disconnect any item deemed to be dangerous
- Portable heaters are more likely to cause fires than fixed heating systems, usually due to being positioned too close to combustible materials. Care should be exercised in this respect, but ideally they should be replaced by fixed systems where possible
- Bulk quantities of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) should be stored in accordance with the UKLPG's Code of Practice 7. Flammable compressed gas and liquefied gas cylinders should be stored in an upright position, in the open air but out of direct sunlight. Oxygen cylinders must not be stored next to flammable-gas cylinders. Also, compressed-gas cylinders should be secured in a vertical position. The amount of LPG kept in a workroom should be reduced to a minimum and empty cylinders removed as soon as possible
- If a gas leak is detected, disconnect the gas supply, including sources of ignition such as pilot lights and heaters and ventilate. A leaking cylinder should be moved outside, well away from the building. The cylinder should be suitably marked with a warning notice and the fire authority informed
- Boiler rooms should be kept clear of combustible materials.

Example incident

A number of employees working in an office complained about severe headaches. It was found that the boiler had not been maintained and was defective leaking carbon monoxide. This incident could have had a far more serious outcome.

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› Good management procedures

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Halls and pavilions

Description

Organisations often own and manage facilities such as meeting rooms or sports pavilions. These facilities are used for regular and one off community events.

Control measures

- A risk assessment should be carried out for each facility taking into account the specific hazards created by the different users
- Electrical installations should be inspected by a qualified electrician every five years
- Gas installations should be inspected every twelve months by a Gas Safe registered gas engineer
- A formal fire risk assessment should be carried out for each facility and fire precautions such as fire detection systems, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting should be subject to regular inspection and maintenance
- Emergency procedures should be established and employees/volunteers and hirers made aware of how to carry out such procedures
- Items and chemicals required at the facility should be stored safely, e.g. a locked cupboard
- Glazing in doors, walls and partitions should be of safety glass rating or adequately protected against breakage where it is at shoulder level or below and where there is a risk of collision
- External areas such as car parking facilities should be maintained
- External traffic routes should be organised to prevent vehicle and pedestrian collision
- A maintenance regime should be in place to ensure that the structure is in good condition and any repairs carried out within a reasonable time period
- A defect reporting system (including a suitable defect report form) should be in place to ensure that employees/volunteers, hirers and members of the public can highlight problems
- An inspection regime should be in place. The frequency and nature of inspections will depend on the facility and the level of use
- Inspections should include:
  - Floors
  - Stair nosings and hand-rails
  - Fire exit obstructions
  - Furniture
  - Equipment.
- Floors should not be too highly polished and spillages should be cleared up quickly
- Cleaners to cordon off floor areas whilst being cleaned
- Sports pavilion changing rooms should be cleaned regularly to remove mud, grass and water
- Non – slip surfacing should be installed in shower facilities and surrounding areas
- Hirers of facilities should be observed to ensure that the appropriate safety measures are in place.

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Example incident

A fire broke out in a community hall whilst a playgroup was using the facilities. It took a long time for everyone to be evacuated from the hall resulting in several people suffering from smoke inhalation. It was found that pushchairs had been stored in front of the fire exits. A risk assessment had not been carried out.

Relevant sections

- Arson and vandalism
- Cleaning
- Electricity
- Fire safety
- Good management procedures
- Hiring of facilities
- Sports pitches

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Employee/Volunteer activities

Employees and volunteers carry out a wide variety of activities.

Volunteers must be afforded the same standard of protection as conventional employees.

This section covers some of the most common issues which relate to activities carried out by employees and/or volunteers.

- Display screen equipment
- Grounds maintenance
- Hazardous substances
- Lone working
- Manual handling
- Noise and vibration
- Office activities
- Personal protective equipment
- Stress
- Vehicles at work
- Work at height
- Work equipment

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Display screen equipment

Description

Most office based employees/volunteers are required to use display screen equipment, e.g. a computer or a laptop as part of their day to day activities.

Control measures

- Identify your users and carry out workstation assessments
- To determine who is a user consider whether:
  - The job depends on the use of display screen equipment
  - The employee/volunteer has any discretion whether or not to use display screen equipment
  - Significant training and/or particular skills in the use of display screen equipment are required
  - The employee/volunteer normally uses the display screen equipment for continuous spells of an hour or more
  - The employee/volunteer uses display screen equipment more or less daily
  - Fast transfer of information is required between the user and the screen
  - High levels of attention and concentration are required
- It may be easier to designate every employee/volunteer who uses display screen equipment daily as a user
- Screens must be adjustable, free from flicker, have brightness and contrast controls and be free from glare and reflections
- The use of keyboards should not cause discomfort and the keys should be legible
- Desks or work surfaces must be large enough for all the equipment so it is convenient to use
- Document holders may be necessary
- Workstation chairs must be comfortable and adjustable in height and tilt
- Footrests may be necessary
- There must be adequate space around the workstation
- Consider lighting. Avoid reflections and glare
- Consider noise, heat and humidity levels
- Ensure adequate breaks or changes of activity occur during prolonged use
- Arrange eye tests for users and provide corrective glasses if needed specifically and solely for use with display screen equipment
- Provide information, instruction and training.

Example incident

An administration assistant developed a wrist strain which prevented him from carrying out normal day to day activities. It was found that no workstation assessment had been carried out and the use of a different mouse could have prevented the injury from occurring.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures

› Office activities

› Stress

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Grounds maintenance

Description

Organisations often own and maintain various outdoor facilities e.g. parks, sports pitches, etc. At these facilities grounds maintenance operations such as grass cutting or pesticide spraying are carried out. These activities pose risks to employees/volunteers and members of the public.

Control measures

- Carry out risk assessments of all activities
- Consider the landscape and its effect on the work activities, e.g. a slope
- Provide information, instruction and training for employees/volunteers on the safe use of work equipment
- Provide supervision
- All work equipment should be maintained
- All work equipment should be checked before use by the user, e.g. the blade on a mower is in good condition and the handles are secure
- Prior to carrying out grounds maintenance activities areas should be checked and cleared of debris such as glass and stones, which could be thrown up and cause injury or damage
- All work equipment should be cleaned and checked for damage after use
- Any defects of the work equipment should be reported.
- Safety guards should be correctly fitted and in good condition
- Vehicles must be properly maintained
- The use of vibrating work equipment should be avoided if possible, or low vibration items selected, e.g. chainsaws with anti-vibration mountings
- When using vibrating work equipment ensure regular changes of activity and hands are kept warm
- Ensure procedures are in place for spillages of hazardous substances, e.g. petrol
- Ensure pesticides and poisons have been considered in your Control of Substances Hazardous to Health assessment
- Adequate means of containing escaped substances, e.g. a bund must be provided
- When dealing with vermin, trapping is preferable to poisoning. If poison is used it must be positioned in controlled conditions and not left in a public place
- Substances with a low toxicity to people should be used
- Warning signs should be displayed when carrying out work activities. In some cases all other persons should be excluded from the area, e.g. when carrying out tree work
- Consider using contractors for specialist work, e.g. tree felling
- Storage areas must be secured against unauthorised access and have appropriate warning signs, adequate lighting and ventilation
- Mess rooms should have adequate lighting, heating and ventilation and be provided with adequate hygiene and sanitation facilities

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- Work activities should take into account the weather conditions, e.g. spraying of pesticides should not take place when it is windy
- When working outdoors in cold or warm weather protective clothing should be provided, e.g. gloves or sun hat
- High factor sunscreen should be provided for exposed skin
- Suitable personal protective equipment should be worn including, eye and hearing protection
- Provide suitable clothing e.g. overalls
- Provide a first aid kit.

Example incident

A grounds maintenance worker sustained a severe injury to his hand whilst unblocking the mower he was using. It was found that the guards had been removed from the mower and he had received no instructions on how to remove blockages.

Relevant sections

› Cemeteries and closed churchyards
› Good management procedures
› Hazardous substances
› Lakes/ponds
› Lone working
› Manual handling
› Noise and vibration
› Parks/recreation grounds
› Personal protective equipment
› Sports pitches
› Vehicles at work
› Work at height
› Work equipment

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Hazardous substances

Description

Hazardous substances include cleaning materials, weed-killers, pesticides, solvents, fixatives, toners, wood dust etc. Such substances can be designated as toxic, very toxic, harmful, irritant or corrosive and are labelled as such with an orange square containing a black symbol and one of these terms.

Control measures

- Carry out an assessment of the risks to health involved in working with the substance
- Obtain information in the form of hazard datasheets from the supplier
- The assessment should consider factors such as:
  - The substance and the form in which it is used e.g. powder, dust, bacteria, liquid, gas, etc.
  - Possible harmful effects
  - Details of the actual use of the substance
  - Harmful by-products of the substances used
  - Who may be affected and under what circumstances
  - The likelihood of exposure to the hazardous substance
- Record the assessment
- Any equipment used to reduce exposure must be properly maintained (e.g. regular formal testing of local exhaust ventilation)
- When transporting substances they should be sealed and secured
- Containers need to be labelled and carry safety and emergency instructions
- A system for dealing with leaking containers and spillages is recommended
- Provide information, instruction and training to employees
- Provide appropriate protective clothing
- Provide accessible washing facilities
- Review the assessment if the work changes significantly
- Exposure to a substance may need to be monitored and health surveillance arranged.

Example incident

A cleaner contracted dermatitis after using a new detergent. It was found that the organisation had not obtained information from the supplier which advised that protective gloves were needed.

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› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Outdoor swimming and paddling pools
› Personal protective equipment
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Lone working

Description

Organisations may have employees/volunteers who work on their own in isolated situations.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment, considering both normal working and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. a fire
- Identify if the workplace and/or the work activity present a special risk to the lone worker
- Consider the individuals capability for lone working, e.g. their medical fitness
- Safe means of entry and exit should be provide for employees/volunteers working alone within buildings
- Employees/Volunteers must be provided with equipment and materials which can be handled and operated safely by one person
- Lone workers should be checked on regularly (in person or by telephone) so you are aware of their location
- Provide information, instruction and training to ensure safe working
- Checks should be in place to ensure that employees/volunteers working outside normal working hours have returned home safely
- Lone workers should be provided with formal procedures for action to take in the event of incidents, accidents or ill health and adequate first aid provision must be in place
- Provide lone workers with a means of communication, e.g. a mobile telephone
- A lone working policy setting out the systems and precautions employed to protect lone workers should be in place.

Example incident

A temporary stand-in gamekeeper suffered serious injuries to his pelvis when the quad bike he was driving overturned on a slope. His absence was not noticed until fifty-two hours later, at which point a search was initiated. The gamekeeper was found some distance from the scene of the accident, in a separate field. He had no means of raising the alarm although there was a mobile phone signal and the regular gamekeeper had been issued with a mobile telephone.

Relevant sections

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Manual handling

Description

Many activities carried out by organisations' employees/ volunteers will involve manual handling. This includes lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving, by hand or by bodily force. A load can be any moveable object and therefore includes movement of any person, animal or inanimate object.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment must for all manual handling tasks
- The assessment must take into account the task, the load, the working environment, individual capability and other specific factors e.g. movement being hindered by personal protective equipment
- All manual handling activities which involve a risk of injury must be avoided wherever possible
- Consider automated or mechanical handling aids as an alternative
- Improve the environment, e.g. layout of office
- Ensure proper storage is provided, with no heavy items on high or low shelves and no item stored out of reach
- Provide information and training on safe lifting techniques
- Provide and maintain all necessary equipment, e.g. trolleys
- Refer to any industry specific guidance
- Employees have a duty to make use of equipment and systems of work provided to them, and to carry out manual handling operations in accordance with any training and instructions given. This should also be extended to volunteers
- Issue appropriate personal protective equipment.

Example incident

An administration assistant developed a back injury from being required to carry boxes of stationery up three flights of stairs on a regular basis. It was found that a manual handling risk assessment had not been carried out and no instruction or training had been provided.

Relevant sections

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› Cleaning
› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Halls and pavilions
› Office activities
› Personal protective equipment
› Work equipment

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Noise and vibration

Description

Exposure to excessive noise and vibration can be experienced by employees/volunteers carrying out grounds maintenance and other activities e.g. daily use of mowers, tractors and strimmers.

Control measures

Noise

- If there is a significant level of noise in the workplace carry out an assessment
- You may have a noise problem if you have to shout to be clearly heard by someone two metres away or if employees/volunteers use noisy powered tools or machinery for more than half an hour each day
- Consider noise levels emitted when purchasing new equipment
- Provide the correct type of hearing protection
- Maintain the hearing protection, ensuring that it remains in a good, clean condition, earmuff seals are undamaged, the tension of the headbands is not reduced and there are no unofficial modifications
- If other personal protective equipment is to be used at the same time, e.g. a hard hat, ensure that it is compatible with the hearing protection
- Properly maintain 'noisy' work equipment
- Provide employees/volunteers with information on the reasons why they must wear hearing protection
- Carry out spot checks on employees/volunteers
- Provide health surveillance for any employees/volunteers you consider are at particular risk
- Restrict the amount of time each day that an employee/volunteer spends using a piece of 'noisy' work equipment.

Vibration

- Assess the vibration risk to employees/volunteers against set exposure limits
- Avoid or limit the use of the use of vibrating equipment
- Select low vibration equipment when purchasing new items
- Ensure work equipment is properly maintained
- Provide relevant information and training
- Provide health surveillance for persons at particular risk.

Example incident

A grounds maintenance employee developed tinnitus from using a chainsaw on a regular basis. It was found that the earmuff seals on the ear defenders provided were damaged and therefore had not protected the employees hearing.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Personal protective equipment
› Vehicles at work
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Office activities

Description

Many organisations have an office. Generally these are regarded as low risk working environments.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment of the office
- Design workstations to maximise user efficiency and comfort
- Furniture and equipment should be sensibly positioned so as not to impede movement around the office
- Ensure that leads from telephones, computers, etc. are not tripping hazards
- Stairs, corridors and doorways should not be obstructed
- All defects should be reported and repaired
- Heavy items should be placed in the lower filing cabinet drawers to avoid making cabinets unstable
- Adequate storage facilities should be provided
- A "kick-stool" or suitable stepladder should be provided
- Portable electrical appliances should be tested periodically
- Visual inspections of cables should be carried out
- Defective electrical equipment must be taken out of use and repaired/replaced
- Photocopiers should be in a well-ventilated position to avoid the build-up of ozone
- Developers and toners must be used in accordance with the instructions and skin contact should be avoided
- Fire extinguishers should be available
- Escape routes should be signposted and fire exits should be unobstructed
- Provide access to sanitary conveniences, washing facilities and drinking water
- The Health and Safety Information for Employees notice should be completed and displayed.

Sometimes an office will be within a home. This then becomes their work place and in this instance similar precautions should be taken.

Example incident

An office worker tripped on the carpet in an office and sustained a twisted ankle. It was found that the carpet was worn and damaged in places. This had not been replaced although several employees had reported it as a problem.

Relevant sections

› Cleaning
› Display screen equipment
› Electricity
› Fire safety
› Good management procedures
› Manual handling
› Stress
› Work equipment

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Personal protective equipment

Description

Personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to all equipment (including wet weather clothing) which is intended to be worn or held by a person and which protects them against risks to their health or safety. Personal protective equipment must only be used as a last resort, with other methods to protect against risks to health and safety, such as safe systems of work or engineering controls being implemented first.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment to determine suitable personal protective equipment. The following must be considered:
  - The location
  - Ergonomic requirements, e.g. the nature of the job and the demands it places on the individual.
  - It must fit correctly and if necessary be adjustable
  - It must be effective in preventing or adequately controlling the risk and not increase the overall risk
- Employers must provide personal protective equipment and cannot recharge employees
- Where more than one item of personal protective equipment is required it must be compatible
- It must be maintained (including cleaning and replacement) in a hygienic condition and in good repair
- Provide appropriate storage facilities
- Provide information, instruction and training on the risks, why and how the personal protective equipment is to be used, and any action required by the employee to ensure it remains effective
- Employers must ensure that any personal protective equipment provided is actually used. It is not sufficient to simply make it available
- Volunteers maybe required to provide their own personal protective equipment. The organisation should check that the PPE they provide is suitable.

Example incident

A volunteer carrying out grounds maintenance activities dropped a shoring board on his foot. It was found that he had been provided with steel toe capped boots but chose not to wear them. The organisation had not enforced the wearing of the boots.

Relevant sections

› Asbestos
› Cleaning
› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Hazardous substances
› Manual handling
› Noise and vibration
› Work at height
› Work equipment

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Stress

Description

Stress occurs when an individual perceives an imbalance between the demands placed upon them and their ability to meet those demands. It often occurs in situations where there are low levels of control and support.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment to identify potential stressors, e.g. job insecurity, isolation, lack of training, etc.
- Establish a stress policy this should include information on prevention, recognition, investigation and rehabilitation
- Provide access to a counselling service
- Monitor workloads
- Include the subject of stress in appraisals and team briefings and encourage communication
- Investigate complaints and show that the matter is being taken seriously
- Keep records of incidents and conversations
- Offer employees/volunteers training on time management.

Example incident

A Town Clerk was signed off work for three months with stress. It was found that she had been under a lot of pressure but the issue of stress had not been addressed by the Town Council. No risk assessment had been carried out and there was no stress policy in place.

Relevant sections

› Good management procedures

› Lone working

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Vehicles at work

Description

Organisations often own or lease vehicles. This could include small tractors, ride on mowing machines, cars, trucks and minibuses, etc.

Control measures

- A designated person should be given responsibility for the running and maintenance of all vehicles and arranging the provision of training
- Vehicle checks should be made on a regular basis and should include:
  - Oil level
  - Water level
  - Screen wash
  - Interior and exterior checked for damage
  - Tyre damage
  - Lights
  - Fuel level
  - Battery fluid level
  - Brake fluid level
  - Clutch fluid level
  - Power steering fluid level
  - Tyre pressures
  - Wheel nuts (visual inspection)
  - Safety guards on mowing machines
  - Any safety features, such as emergency power cut-out to prevent blades turning, etc.
- A record of these checks should be kept
- Keep a record of all maintenance and repairs. (These should be kept at least for the life of the vehicle.)
- The driver of the vehicle should also carry out basic checks on a daily basis
- Ensure that drivers have received training and are competent to drive. Consider their fitness and health
- A checklist should be used which can be left with the vehicle. This should be dated and signed
- Ensure seat belts are worn
- Individuals required to drive a specialist vehicle should be trained. This includes all horticultural vehicles, such as ride-on mowers and all terrain vehicles which have poor stability and are prone to overturning
- Only individuals with valid driving licences should be allowed to drive vehicles on the public highway
- Individual's driving licences should be checked annually for endorsements and to ensure they remain valid. Only original copies of paper type licences should be accepted for inspection. A record of these checks should be maintained. Individuals should be instructed to report any licence endorsements immediately
- Provide first aid kits in vehicles
- Consider excessive noise levels from vehicles
- All vehicle repairs should be carried out by a mechanic
- Where necessary all road vehicles must have an annual MOT certificate and be road taxed

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- Any collisions involving injury must be reported to the police and may also require reporting to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the terms of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
- If employees or volunteers use their own vehicles for council business, a check should be made of their insurance certificate to ensure that their policy provides business use
- Ensure vehicles are insured
- The use of hand-held mobile telephones whilst driving must be prohibited and enforced
- Pedestrian and traffic routes should be clearly marked and segregated
- Banksmen and/or reversing assistants should be provided when reversing large vehicles
- For drivers of privately owned vehicles check that driving licenses remain valid, that they have business use insurance cover and MOT certificates where applicable.

Example incident

A 19 year old grounds maintenance employee was injured when he crashed his ride on mower. It was found that an assumption had been made that the employee could drive vehicles. In fact he had not passed his driving test.

Relevant sections

› Car parks
› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Manual handling
› Noise and vibration
› Personal protective equipment
› Work equipment

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Work at height

Description

Work at height includes work carried out in any place from which a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury. It includes access and egress and work at or below ground level, but not stairways or slips or trips on level ground.

Equipment used to work at height includes ladders, step ladders, mobile elevated work platforms (MEWPS), and scaffolds.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment for all work at height
- Properly plan the work and provide appropriate supervision
- Do not carry out work if weather conditions jeopardise health and safety
- Those working at height should be competent or if being trained supervised by a competent person
- A hierarchy of control must be employed;
  1. Avoid work at height – if you don't have to go up there – don't
  2. Prevent falls by:
     - Using an existing place or means of access
     - Using the most suitable way of working
     - Selecting the most suitable equipment
     - Following specific health and safety guidance for particular types of equipment
  3. Minimise the distance and consequences of potential falls:
     - Provide instruction, information and training
     - Provide collective protection, e.g. guardrails, nets, airbags, etc.
     - Provide personal protection, e.g. work restraints, fall arrest systems, etc.
- In order to select the most suitable work equipment, consideration should be given to:
  - The task/work to be carried out
  - Working conditions
  - Access and egress
  - Distance and consequences of a fall
  - Duration and frequency of use/task
  - Ease of rescue/evacuation
  - How the equipment will be used, installed and removed
- Avoid risks from fragile surfaces, e.g. use of crawl boards
- Prevent falling objects, e.g. use of toe boards
- Provide exclusion zones around the work area
- All equipment should be inspected prior to use and appropriately maintained
- Obtain specific guidance for individual equipment
- The Approved Code of Practice 'Work at Height Regulations – A brief guide', INDG 401 provides guidance on compliance.

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Ladders

- Ladders may be used to work at height if justified by a risk assessment, e.g. low risk and short duration or site conditions necessitate the use
- Ladders must only be used on a suitable surface
- Ladders must be maintained and regularly inspected
- When using a ladder always follow good practice, e.g. choose the right ladder for the task, make sure it is in good condition, secured where possible, and is positioned properly to allow good access to the work area.

Example incident

A worker sustained multiple injuries in a seven-metre fall whilst using a ladder when replacing roof sheets. It was found that a tower scaffold should have been used as this would have provided a base on which to lay roof boards. Instead, the boards were passed to an employee on the roof who subsequently fell through the fragile roof.

Relevant sections

› Cleaning
› Good management procedures
› Grounds maintenance
› Halls and pavilions
› Manual handling
› Work equipment

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Work equipment

Description

The term work equipment applies to almost any equipment used by a worker or volunteer at work. Examples vary widely from office chairs and photocopiers to ladders, hand tools and mowing machines.

Control measures

- Ensure equipment is suitable for the work that is to be carried out
- Make an inventory of all work equipment
- Carry out visual inspections prior to use to ensure equipment is suitable and in a safe condition
- Establish a programme for future regular inspections and planned preventative maintenance regimes
- Equipment that could pose a significant risk through incorrect installation, significant deterioration and/or following significant damage, should be inspected by a competent person
- The inspections and maintenance logs should be recorded
- Provide information to users of work equipment regarding its safe operation. This should also include the actions to be taken in abnormal circumstances
- Provide health and safety training in the use of work equipment
- Dangerous parts of machinery must be guarded or movement stopped before any person can access the danger zone. Protection should be achieved using this hierarchy:
  1. Fixed guards
  2. Other guards, interlocking or automatic guards
  3. Protection devices, e.g. jigs, holders, push sticks, etc.
- All guards and other control measures must be suitable for the purpose, be maintained
- Guards must not be easily overcome or disabled and must not restrict view or give rise to increased risks
- Work equipment should be provided with easily accessible starting and stopping controls, and, if necessary, emergency stops
- Identification of the function of each control and its effect on the equipment must be provided
- Where necessary, work equipment must be capable of being isolated from its source of energy
- All equipment must be stable
- Ensure suitable and sufficient lighting
- Any markings or warnings on equipment must be clearly visible and easily understood
- Procedures must be established to ensure that any maintenance work can be carried out safely, preferably when the equipment is shut down
- For further guidance refer to The Approved Code of Practice 'Using Work Equipment Safely', INDG 229.

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Example incident

An employee lost a finger after using woodworking equipment. It was found that the piece of equipment was inadequately guarded.

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- Electricity
- Grounds maintenance
- Good management procedures
- Lone working
- Noise and vibration
- Office activities
- Vehicles at work
- Work at height

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Events management

Organisations often organise a wide variety of events for the public. In addition there may be facilities that an organisation hires out for other organisations to put on events.

The risks associated with events are extremely varied.

This section covers best practice measures which should be considered in managing risks associated with events.

- After the event
- Attractions – provision and siting
- Car park arrangements
- Choosing the right location
- Crowd and traffic management
- Emergency procedures
- Event safety management plan
- Firework displays
- Getting in and out of an event
- Street carnivals
- Temporary demountable structures
- Vendors, exhibitors and performers

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After the event

Description

After the event is finished the site has to be made safe. A debrief meeting after the event is a valuable learning experience.

Control measures

- The site should be returned to the condition that it was in prior to the event. An agreement should be made with all of the vendors, exhibitors and performers detailing responsibilities
- All participants must be advised what is expected of them e.g. what facilities they provide, what they can leave, what they have to take with them and what time they have to vacate the site
- The dismantling of equipment should not take place until all members of the public have left the site unless this can be carried out in a segregated area
- Litter should be collected and refuse taken off the site
- Remove any temporary signage
- After the event, a site inspection should be carried out to identify any defects that will need to be rectified
- Carry out a review of the event with all of the parties involved. Consider what went well and what lessons can be learnt if similar events are to be held in the future.

Example incident

During an annual Christmas market a stall blew over injuring a member of the public. It was found that the same had happened the previous year but no action had been put in place to prevent the reoccurrence.

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Attractions – provision and siting

Description

The selection and positioning of attractions is very important in the planning of an event. The organiser must be satisfied that an attraction is safe and does not expose any persons to danger.

Control measures

- Produce a plan to include everything that is part of the event, e.g. the siting of amusements, attractions, exhibitors, catering, demonstrations and facilities
- Select attractions carefully and pre-check for potential hazards
- Obtain advice from the operator regarding particular hazards associated with an attraction
- Check the competence (experience and qualifications) of the attraction operator. References should be obtained from previous users or organisers of other events
- Ensure that suitable space has been provided around and between the attractions. This should also include overhead obstacles, e.g. trees and cables
- Check the condition of the ground to ensure attractions are in a stable position. Weather conditions must be considered
- All plant and machinery, e.g. generators and fuel supplies should be segregated and fenced
- Plan realistic times for the erection and dismantling of attractions and facilities
- Height and age restrictions are often required and should be enforced
- Bouncy castles or other inflatable devices should comply with relevant codes of practice and should be appropriately supervised. Also consider:
  - The number and type of people
  - The removal of all footwear
  - The use of whistles to stop any dangerous activities
  - The safety matting at the points of entry/exit are in the correct position
  - Any person suspected of being intoxicated through drink or drug use denied access
- Banners, flags and bunting should be securely fixed and checked immediately prior to and during the event. Consider the effects of weather conditions
- Ensure that adequate space is provided for demonstrations e.g. archery or combat re-enactment
- Provide adequate arena areas depending on the activity, e.g. animal events, motor cycle displays, etc.
- Segregate demonstration and arena areas from members of the public
- Caution should be exercised with any demonstration involving the use of pyrotechnics or explosives both in terms of adequate space and the exposure to surrounding areas from flammable material and falling embers.

Example incident

During a motorcycle demonstration a twelve year old child was injured. It was found that the demonstration was not being carried out in a segregated arena and the child had wondered into the area.

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Car park arrangements

Description

When organising an event car parking needs to be considered. Often not enough attention is given to the safety requirements within car park areas.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment of the site at the planning stage
- Ensure the area allocated for parking is appropriate; consider ditches, uneven ground, potholes and possible flooding
- The site should be easily accessible for both vehicles and pedestrians
- Ensure the entrance/exit is clearly signed
- Moving vehicles and pedestrians should be kept segregated
- Ensure that you have arrangements in place for possible traffic queues
- Establish a traffic control and parking plan and extend to park and ride provisions if required
- Ensure you have an adequate number of trained stewards. It is suggested that persons under the age of eighteen are not employed in car parks
- Adequate lighting should be provided if necessary
- Parking spaces should be allocated for disabled person's vehicles
- For larger events a traffic management co-ordinator should be appointed and the police consulted. The employment of a professional contractor should be considered
- Provide parking facilities for the emergency services, vendors, exhibitors and performers. Ideally, these should be kept separate from the facilities provided for members of the public
- When cash is being taken for car parking ensure there are regular cash collections and that cash is taken to a safe point by at least two persons
- Check insurance arrangements for cash collection
- Carry out site safety inspections immediately prior to and on the day of the event. Sign, date and record these and keep on file
- Carry out a final inspection after the event.

Example incident

A member of the public tripped on a pothole in the car park when attending a car boot sale. It was found that the land used was covered in potholes and not suitable for use as a car park, no inspection had been carried out prior to use.

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Choosing the right location

Description

The site chosen for an event must allow for enjoyment by those attending in a safe and comfortable atmosphere. It is also important to consider neighbours and the impact the event may have on them.

Different site considerations will apply depending upon the type of event being planned and it is therefore essential to visit the proposed site before making a decision.

Control measures

- Carry out a risk assessment on the location and the site to determine if it is appropriate
- When choosing the location consider:
  - The size of the site together with the number of people to attend and the type of event
  - Whether there are any potential hazards such as water, ditches, sloping land, pollution, condition of footways, extreme weather problems, pylons/overhead power lines and underground hazards
  - Ease of access by public transport and the provision of rail and bus links
  - Access to emergency services
  - Major road links
  - Availability of parking facilities
  - Local services and facilities such as accommodation and food and drink outlets
  - Safe entry to and exit from the site, for both pedestrians and vehicles
  - Whether the existing site services are adequate
  - Provision of adequate lighting if the event will continue into the hours of darkness or be in the late evening
  - For larger events you should consider the location of local hospitals, fire stations and police stations
  - Whether or not attendees will be standing or seated should be considered
- Once a site is chosen:
  - Ensure adequate space is available for all the intended facilities and attractions
  - Obtain a map of the site and mark proposed areas considering any temporary structures, audience comfort and safety, entertainment, meeting points, welfare facilities, disabled requirements and car parking
  - Ensure there are segregated routes for the movement of pedestrians and vehicles
  - If there is to be one main attraction, such as a concert, sight lines and the general topography of the area should be considered
  - If there are to be several attractions, the movement of visitors between attractions must be safe and comfortable
  - Liaise with the fire and ambulance services

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- Consider the general ground conditions. If the ground is uneven, steeply sloping or with poor drainage, the site may prove unsuitable, particularly in poor weather conditions
- The provision of fencing for safety and security reasons may be required
- At larger events, additional facilities may be necessary such as electricity, gas, telephones and sewage arrangements
- All events should provide drinking water. Where these facilities are not already provided on the site, additional arrangements may have to be made
- Site inspections should be carried out prior to, during and after the event using an agreed checklist. This should be signed, dated and kept on record. Any defects found should be noted and remedial action taken
- A final inspection should be made after the event to establish the condition of the site
- It may be useful to request that the highways agency carry out a safety inspection of the footways, roadways, car parks and street lighting prior to the event.

Example incident

A concert was planned on a piece of land adjacent to a lake. Two days prior to the event there was heavy rain and the land was flooded resulting in the concert being cancelled. It was found that no assessment had been done of the location prior to organising the event.

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Crowd and traffic management

Description

Crowd and traffic management is important at all events. It will help ensure that groups of people can move unobstructed, that emergencies can be swiftly dealt with and will generally ensure a safer venue for visitors.

Control measures

- If road closures, traffic diversions and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulation order and/or consent from the highway authority
- Be aware of the profile of the attendees based on the type of event, this may effect how the crowd will behave
- When planning the layout of the site consider:
  - The needs of disabled people, in particular wheelchair users
  - Access to and from entry and exit points
  - Access and egress for the emergency services
  - Cash handling at the entry point(s)
  - Arrangements for queuing and provision of barriers
  - Pedestrian circulation within the event area
  - Training of stewards
  - Use of a public address system
  - Suitability of the traffic route surface
  - Risks particular to the type of event e.g. crushing at concerts
  - For large events, the emergency services should be involved in the pre-event discussions
- If the event is subject to a Premises Licence then the 'occupant capacity' (i.e. the maximum number of people that the event can cater for) is usually determined by the licensing authority and will have regard to the type of venue and the provision of means of escape in case of fire
- Where a licence is not required, you should assess what you consider to be a safe number of persons either in the event area overall and/or within separate areas. When carrying out this assessment, the type of venue, the type of event and the provision of adequate means of escape must be taken into account
- Use a method of controlling the number of visitors into the premises to ensure that the occupant capacity is not exceeded, e.g. ticket holders only or counting people in and out of the event
- If ticket holders only ensure that tickets cannot be easily forged
- If cash is taken on the door, it is advisable to keep the price to a rounded figure as this will avoid time delays and a growing queue of customers
- To assist visitors in navigating themselves around a large site, a simplified site layout could be printed on the reverse side of the tickets
- It may be necessary to search people on entry to the event. All searches need to be quick, thorough and carried out by supervised and trained personnel
- Ensure all stewards are trained, easily identifiable and have means of communication, e.g. radios

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- Where possible, the entrances and exits for members of the public should be kept separate from those for vendors, exhibitors and performers
- Ensure that all fire exits and escape routes are clearly marked and unobstructed and emergency lighting is operating correctly
- Ensure that the public address system is clearly audible in all areas of the event
- For timed events, you should make some safety announcements before the event starts e.g. advise the location of fire exits, identification of stewards, location of welfare facilities and emergency services, etc. For un-timed events, safety announcements should be issued as appropriate, throughout the duration of the event
- Try to keep traffic and pedestrians separate.

Example incident

A member of the public was hit by a car at a charity organised event. It was found that no procedures were in place for managing traffic and pedestrian and traffic routes had not been separated.

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Emergency procedures

Description

The consequences of a major incident at any event can be catastrophic, therefore for all events it is essential that emergency procedures are established.

Depending on the size and type of your event you should consider advising, consulting and co-operating with organisations that will provide assistance in the event of an emergency.

If an event is to be held every year then a template of an emergency plan can be created for use in the future. The complexity of the plan will depend on the size and nature of the event. For smaller events a simple easy to follow plan will be sufficient.

Good practice

- Establish an emergency plan which will involve the organiser, the police, the local hospital and ambulance service, fire and rescue service, the local emergency planning officer (based at the District/Borough Council), first aid providers and stewards
- Advise the police of all events
  - For larger events, the police can advise and provide assistance on issues such as parking, road closures, traffic control, access and egress, crowd control, security and emergency planning
  - Police presence at events may be requested but this may involve a charge
- Consult the fire and rescue service where appropriate
  - For larger events the service can advise and provide assistance on issues such as fire precautions, potential fire hazards, emergency procedures, firework displays and bonfires
- For larger events consider advising the local hospital(s) in advance, in case there is a major incident
- The ambulance service should be consulted on the provision of ambulance units, paramedics at larger events and first aid points
- The St. John Ambulance (St. Andrew in Scotland), British Red Cross or other voluntary first aid providers should be invited to provide a level of attendance at all events
- The HM Coastguard should be contacted for waterborne events at sea
- If your event involves aircraft or accessing airspace, e.g. hot air balloons, you must consult with the civil aviation authority
- Establish a planning committee from people and agencies who would be involved in the event of an emergency. The person chairing the committee should be the event organiser. For larger events, sub groups may be necessary for specific areas such as health and safety

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- The event risk assessment should determine the potential major incidents that could occur. Some of the key areas to consider are:
  - The size of the event and the estimated crowd
  - Identification of decision makers
  - Identification of the roles and responsibilities of those involved
  - Evacuation procedures
  - Access for the emergency services
  - Collection points
  - Location of the control point
  - Public address systems
  - Scripts for public announcement
  - Coded messages to alert those involved
  - Details and provision of emergency equipment and location
  - A contact and communication list
  - Briefing prior to the event
  - Dealing with the media in the event of an emergency
- Larger and specialised events will need further consideration such as temporary mortuaries, survivor rest areas and specific considerations
- The recorded plan should be easy to understand and give clear instructions to those involved
- The recorded plan should be circulated to all those concerned well in advance of the event
- A procedure should be in place if cancellation has to be made immediately prior to the event. The procedure needs to be planned in detail including a cancellation after persons have entered the venue and when persons are entering the venue as others are leaving
- Bomb threats should be reported immediately to the police for advice. The decision to evacuate or cancel an event would be taken by the police in conjunction with the organiser
- A nominated and trained employee/volunteer should deal with the media in the event of an emergency. No admissions of liability should be made
- The plan should be tested, prior to the event, using a table top exercise.

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Event safety management plan

Description

An event safety management plan should be prepared for every event. The following are examples of the information that should be included. You may find that additional sections are necessary depending upon the nature and complexity of the proposed event.

Event details

- Description of the event
- Any special requirements
- How it is to be organised
- Intended venue
- Target audience and likely numbers expected to attend
- Public information and communications
- Details of liaison with the relevant authorities, e.g. the local authority, the highways agency and the emergency services.

Programme of the event

- Proposed agenda and timings
- Specify who will be performing and exhibiting.

Site safety

- Site regulations or restrictions
- Any special requirements imposed upon any of the performers and/or exhibitors
- Safety responsibilities of designated individuals
- Structural safety calculations and drawings of any structures.

Crowd management

- Numbers of stewards
- Methods of working and chains of command for the stewards
- Training requirements and briefing notes for stewards.

Contractors/performers/exhibitors

- A list of all contractors/performer's/exhibitor's names and contact details
- Details of insurance cover and health and safety arrangements, including policy statements and risk assessment.

Licensing arrangements

- Detail permission granted such as road closures and the premises licence.

Event safety policy

- General statement of intent outlining the commitment to health and safety at the event
- The organisation and arrangements that will be established to ensure the policy is implemented
- Specific duties of all people involved
- Details of training, safety inspections, risk assessment arrangements and accident reporting procedures
- The policy should be regularly reviewed and updated throughout the planning stages of the event.

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Risk assessment

- All risk assessments that you undertake should be documented in this section
- Details should also be provided of any risk assessments that are required to be carried out on the day of the event, including whose responsibility it is to carry them out.

Fire precautions

- Details of all necessary fire precautions and evacuation procedures.

First aid

- Procedures for administering first aid on site
- Arrangements with local hospitals.

Site security

- Details of all security arrangements including the collection and banking of cash.

Catering

- Specify all catering requirements for the event
- Names, addresses, phone numbers and insurance arrangements should be noted
- Arrangements for electricity supplies, generators and gas storage should be included.

Transport management

- Details of the surrounding area and on site traffic arrangements, including parking facilities and entry and exit points.

Waste control

- Details of waste management and clearance, both during and after the event.

Employee details

- Specify all those with designated responsibilities
- Provide a contact list of key personnel.

Planning meeting minutes

- Minutes of all meetings, including a full list of attendees.

Insurance arrangements

- Details of the insurance cover provided, names and addresses of insurers and copies of insurance certificates and policy schedules.

Media communication

- Agreed procedure for all aspects of dealing with the media
- Should include contact details of the nominated and trained employee(s)/volunteer(s) who would be involved in all communications.

Emergency plan

- For smaller events the emergency plan can be included within this section. For larger events a separate document should be produced
- Action to be taken by designated people in the event of a major incident.

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Firework displays

Description

The use of fireworks is a potentially dangerous and hazardous activity if it is not carefully planned and managed correctly.

Control measures

- Establish an event committee with individuals responsible for dedicated tasks including overall safety
- Carry out a risk assessment of the proposed event
- Advise the emergency services in advance. Their involvement will depend on the size and type of event
- Contact the local ambulance service and the first aid providers regarding the provision of first aid facilities
- Establish an emergency plan
- When choosing the site consider:
  - Access and egress
  - Crowd segregation
  - Condition of the site
  - Provision of temporary lighting
  - Effect of extreme weather
  - Exposure to surrounding property
- Local airports should be advised of the intention to hold an event
- Carry out site safety inspections before and after the event. These should be signed, dated and kept on record
- Provide suitable numbers of trained stewards. It is recommended that a professional private contractor be employed for larger events
- Stewards should be provided with fluorescent clothing, torches and a means of communication. If they are stationed near to the firing or drop zone areas, then hard hats and ear defenders should be worn
- Signs are needed to guide members of the public to correct routes and spectator areas
- Prohibit spectators using their own fireworks
- Designated car parks should be well away from the firework drop zone
- All potentially hazardous leaves and vegetation should be cleared or cut back prior to the event
- At any organised event, the firing should only be undertaken by a fully qualified and competent person or by a professional contractor
- Only competent contractors should be used. To assess competencies check:
  - References from previous events
  - Risk assessment
  - Health and safety policy
  - Health and safety arrangements – method statement, safe systems of work, etc.
  - Public liability insurance with a minimum limit of indemnity of £5 million
  - Training records
  - Professional qualifications
  - Previous health and safety convictions

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- Obtain a risk assessment from the firer or contractor to include the firing arc, drop zone, fire spotters, that the fireworks comply with British Standards and the storage of the fireworks is adequate
- The site should be divided into four separate areas with minimum distances between each
  - The spectator area
  - Safety area
  - Firing area
  - Drop zone area
- If the wind should change direction or increase substantially before the event then consider cancelling the event
- Establish a procedure for the close down of the event
- If cash is to be collected on the night then security and the safety of employees and/or volunteers must be considered.

Example incident

A local authority organised a fireworks display. Near the beginning of the event a spark ignited several of the fireworks and most of the fireworks went off in one go. It was found that no checks had been carried out on the competency of the contractor that was employed to set up and manage the fireworks.

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Getting in and out of an event

Description

When organising an event you need to consider how visitors, emergency services and contractors (performers/exhibitors/vendors) are going to get in and out. This could be in normal circumstances or in cases of an emergency.

Control measures

- Ensure there are adequate numbers of entrances and exits for the number of persons estimated to attend the event
- Provide separate vehicle and pedestrian entrances/exits
- Provide an adequate number of stewards that are trained to get people in or out of the event as efficiently as possible
- Provide signs to direct people to entrances/exits
- Agree any signs placed on the highway (including roads and footpaths) with the highway authority
- If road closures, traffic diversions and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulation order and/or consent from the highway authority
- Develop an emergency plan and communicate it to all those involved
- Ensure a route is established and kept clear at all times for emergency service vehicles. You may hear this route called a 'blue route'
- Ensure people at your event can evacuate in the event of an emergency. Consider people with pushchairs or disabled people
- Vehicles only to be allowed in before the event starts or after the event finishes
- If it is necessary for vehicles to be on a site during an event ensure they use specified routes and that pedestrians are segregated from the vehicles at all times.

Example incident

A member of the public collapsed at a summer fete and needed urgent medical attention. It was found that no route had been established for the emergency services so it took them much longer than necessary to reach the patient.

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Street carnivals

Description

Carnival processions if organised and managed correctly can be safe events. However, there have been a number of serious incidents in the past and therefore safety issues have to be addressed at the planning stage.

Control measures

- Establish a committee with individuals responsible for dedicated tasks including overall safety. This may involve other organisations such as the borough or district councils
- Carry out a risk assessment
- Advise the emergency services in advance. Their involvement will depend on the size and type of event
- The police can provide assistance on crowd control, security and traffic management
- The fire service can provide advice on emergency access, fire safety of floats and fire fighting equipment
- The local ambulance service and first aid providers should be contacted regarding the provision of first aid facilities at the start, along the route and at the finish of the procession
- An emergency plan should be established in the event of an incident and/or if areas need to be evacuated. This should be a simple, easy to understand procedure
- The route selected should be suitable for the type of procession planned. Consider:
  - The road surfaces
  - Slopes
  - Crowd vantage points
  - Sufficient space must be allowed for collection points at the start and finish areas
  - Effects of extreme weather conditions
- Sufficient safe viewing areas will need to be available to cope with the anticipated crowd numbers
- Designated areas should be provided for the disabled
- Any potential crowd pressure points will need to be identified and the provision of barriers assessed
- The number of trained stewards will be dependant on crowd numbers and control points
- If road closures, traffic diversions and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulations order and/or consent from the highway authority and discussed with the authority
- All potential entrants should complete an application form which will request details of their display and equipment. Each entrant should be sent a “rules of entry” statement which should include all safety requirements and also request them to nominate a co-ordinator who will be responsible for all safety issues

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- All floats should be inspected by a representative of the organiser prior to the event commencing checking for:
  - Stability
  - Road worthiness
  - Safety of occupants, including any possible height restrictions
  - Any amplified sound systems or electrical equipment is sufficiently earthed
  - Generators and amplifiers to be anchored to the floor and securely fixed
- Entrants should provide evidence of their public liability insurance cover with a minimum indemnity limit of £5 million
- Where motorised vehicles are being used, then the entrants should check that their own motor insurance covers participation in the event, particularly if the vehicle has been modified
- A build-up/collection embarkation area should be established which is free from traffic and with enough space to collect all participants together
- Departure of individual floats on to the route should be strictly controlled with sufficient space between them to avoid a back-up along the route
- Consideration should be given to the order of participants in the procession
- Allowances must be made for animals such as horses which could become agitated in certain circumstances
- The throwing of coins on to floats should be discouraged. Cash should be collected by participants walking at the side of the procession, preferably in plastic buckets or containers. At the end of the procession cash collected should be taken immediately to a safe place for counting by at least two persons
- A dedicated traffic free area should be provided for disembarkation and dispersal of the floats, such as a car park or a closed road.

Example incident

A group of scouts were hit by a car whilst taking part in a procession. They had turned the wrong way at a T junction onto a road that was not closed. It was found that they were inadequately supervised as there were not enough stewards and no information had been given to them.

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Temporary demountable structures

Description

Many organisations hold events that use temporary demountable structures, e.g. stages, seating, marquees, tents, etc.

Control measures

- Select competent suppliers. To assess competencies check:
  - References from previous events
  - Risk assessments
  - Health and safety arrangements
  - Public liability insurance
  - Training records
  - Evidence that the structures will comply with British Standards where applicable.
- When siting structures consider:
  - Possible flooding
  - Uneven ground
  - Slopes
  - Overhead cables
  - Exposure to and from adjacent vegetation, buildings or structures
- Stages should be facing in the direction where the noise nuisance to local residents will be minimised
- Stages and marquees should be no less than 6m apart to allow access for emergency vehicles and minimise the spread of fire
- Use tents and marquees that do not have guy ropes and tent pegs. Where these are used then they should be marked to avoid tripping hazards
- All staging and structures should be positioned so as not to obstruct any entrances or exits from the site
- Cover stages to prevent equipment being exposed to the elements
- No flammable material should be stored under the stage or in marquees
- The safe evacuation of stages, seating areas, marquees etc. should be included within the event safety management plan. Adequate exits need to be marked and kept clear at all times
- All temporary demountable structures should be checked after the installation is completed to ensure that they have been erected safely. This can either be carried out by a competent local authority officer or the contractor
- Obtain a completion certificate following erection where appropriate
- A check should be made that barriers and other protections against hazards are securely in place and that there is no risk of falling from the structures.

Example incident

A voluntary organisation had organised a small concert in the market square of a town and a stage had been put up by contractors. Prior to the concert beginning the stage collapsed. It was found that the contractors used had never put up a stage before and the voluntary organisation had not carried out any checks on the competency of the contractors.

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Vendors, exhibitors and performers

Description

It is likely that you will be using other businesses to vend, exhibit or perform at your event.

Control measures

- Liaise with local enforcement authorities, vendors, exhibitors and performers prior to the event
- Draw up formal agreements between the event organiser and the vendors, exhibitors and performers
- Check certification, risk assessments and licences (where applicable)
- Agree stewarding and communication arrangements
- Establish what facilities are needed by all vendors, exhibitors and performers such as power supplies, changing and washing facilities, artificial lighting etc. Special care must be taken if any high risk items such as flammables are going to be brought on to the site
- Agree how much space needs to be provided around each activity and the space above the activity e.g. obstructions from over hanging trees and overhead cables
- Agree arrival and departure times, who is responsible for cleaning up the area, the entry and exit points which ideally should be separate from those provided for the general public and the number of vehicles which are to be brought on to the site
- Provide vendors, exhibitors and performers with the necessary safety information.

Example incident

A local council organised a show in a marquee with several different performers. One of the performers was juggling fire and set light to some hay bales that were being used in the next act. It was found that the organiser of the event was not aware that the performers were going juggle fire and therefore had not controlled the risks.

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Conducting your own risk assessments

This section is designed to assist you with conducting your own risk assessments using a logical 5-step process.

Risk assessments are an integral part of managing health and safety in any organisation, and it is a legal requirement to conduct them.

They are carried out to prevent injury and illness to anyone connected with your organisation or its activities. This includes employees, volunteers, members of the public and also any contractors working on your premises.

To get you started we have provided some example risk assessments. Your hazards, people at risk and control measures may differ depending on your individual organisation, also there may be more risk assessments that you need to complete for your activities.

Definitions

Hazard

- Something that has the potential to cause harm, e.g. objects with sharp edges, toxic substances and electrical wiring.

Risk

- The likelihood of harm occurring from a potential hazard. To judge the extent of a risk, you need to consider:
  - How likely it is that harm could occur and
  - The severity of the impact if it does.
- **Suitable and sufficient**
  - Assessments should focus on trying to identify the significant risks. What is it about your activities that are going to cause harm? By 'significant' we mean those risks that have the potential to cause serious injury or loss or in extreme circumstances, death
  - They should ignore trivial risks such as those related to routine tasks that you would come across in life generally, e.g. an employee walking around an office
  - Risk assessments should be kept as simple and as straightforward as possible

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- **Generic risk assessments**
  - Can be carried out on a typical activity e.g. grounds maintenance. This would apply to grounds maintenance activities wherever they are carried out thus avoiding the need for a separate risk assessment for every site
- **Site-specific risk assessments**
  - Can be carried out on a premises with specific hazards, e.g. a playground where there are problems with anti-social behaviour.

Generic risk assessments can save you time. However, they don't address specific hazards. Therefore, you would likely have to do both types to ensure all your risks have been sufficiently assessed.

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The 5-step risk assessment process

A risk assessment should be conducted in a logical way. This can be done by following the five-step process summarised here.

Step 1: identify potential hazards.

This involves identifying all significant hazards associated with a selected aspect of your premises or the activities carried out at those premises, e.g. plant, equipment, manual handling, special events, etc.

Tips

- Walk around your premises and talk to the people working on the premises and carrying out its activities
- Consider what's going on both inside the buildings and outside elsewhere around the premises
- Think about any accidents and incidents that have already occurred to help you pinpoint areas and activities of greatest potential hazard
- Analyse the specific tasks that are being carried out by people as well as the individuals carrying out the tasks and the environment in which they have to work. Make sure you understand the way someone carries out a task.

Insert the identified significant hazards into COLUMN 1 of the risk assessment form.

Step 2: evaluate all people potentially affected.

This requires identifying the different groups of people who could potentially be harmed by the hazards identified.

Tips

- Consider groups who use your premises, e.g. employees, volunteers, members of the public and children
- Think about any particularly vulnerable groups such as people who work on their own, inexperienced staff or people with disabilities
- Include those who come onto the premises temporarily such as contractors, visitors and members of the public.

Insert the groups of people affected into COLUMN 2 of the risk assessment form.

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Step 3: assess the level of risk and control measures required.

Assess whether the hazard identified represents a high, medium or low level of risk bearing in mind the control measures which you already have in place. This is based on judging both the probability of an incident occurring and the severity of the impact if it does occur. You then need to determine whether there are more control measures that you can implement to reduce the level of risk. Remember you should always be aiming to reduce the risk to the lowest level possible.

Tips

- Identify and record the control measures already in place
- Consider what other measures could be implemented to reduce the risk posed by the hazard
- Establish priorities for the future control measures identified
- Assign responsibility for implementing the control measures to a specified individual
- Think about carrying out tasks in a different way.

Insert your current control measures into Column 3 of the risk assessment form.

Insert your future control measures required to adequately control the risk into Column 4 of the risk assessment form.

Insert the risk level identified (high, medium or low) into Column 5 of the risk assessment form.

Insert the person responsible and the target date for completion of the control measures into Column 6 of the risk assessment form.

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Step 4: document and save risk assessments.

If there are 5 or more employees at your organisation then the regulations require you to record the significant findings of your risk assessments in writing.

Tips

- Use a standardised risk assessment form to record your findings
- Be sure to note the date when the review was carried out and record who carried out the risk assessment. Signing off of the risk assessments is good practice
- Keep the form on file in either hard copy or an electronic format for an agreed number of years. (In the event of the organisation's involvement in any legal proceedings associated with an incident, solicitors or insurance companies may ask for copies of any relevant risk assessments carried out. Remember that a child can make a civil claim for compensation up to three years after their eighteenth birthday).

Step 5: review and monitor.

This step involves you reviewing your risk assessments. It is good practice for risk assessments to be reviewed on an annual basis and/or when any changes occur, e.g. involving a change of venue for an annual community event or changes in personnel responsible for certain activities. In addition, if an accident or incident occurs the relevant risk assessment should be reviewed.

The review process should look at whether the risk assessment is still valid and monitor that the control measures are in place and are working to control or reduce the risk.

Tips

- Commit to a review schedule with specific dates and deadlines for completion and ensure key employees/ volunteers are all aware of their responsibilities
- Document any changes in a risk assessment conducted on the original form used and write down the date when those changes were noted
- Ensure that responsibility for conducting the risk assessment reviews is assigned to the most appropriate individual(s) at your organisation
- Ensure the risk assessment review process is properly coordinated to completion.

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Blank risk assessment form

Double click the icon below to open a blank copy of the risk assessment form which you can print out and use to conduct your own risk assessments.

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How to use the risk assessment examples

For each of the risk assessment examples we have provided we recommend you use them in the following way:

To open the risk assessment

- Click on the appropriate risk assessment from the menu
- The risk assessment will open in Microsoft Word.

To save the risk assessment

- Left click on FILE in the top left hand corner of the screen.
- Left click on SAVE AS
- Choose where you would like to store this risk assessment on your computer system
- Give the risk assessment a name and left click on SAVE
- You can now modify and change the risk assessment for your specific circumstances.

To use the example risk assessments

- We have provided you with a list of 'Current Controls'. This is not an exhaustive list and you may identify additional controls
- For each of the current controls you need to decide if they are to be implemented. If there are any controls that you think should be implemented in the future these should be in the 'Future Controls' column.

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Outdoor facilities

To open documents, double-click on the icon next to the text.

- Allotments
- BMX and skateboard parks
- Car parks
- Cemeteries and closed churchyards
- Lakes and ponds
- Outdoor swimming pools
- Parks and recreation grounds
- Playgrounds
- Public conveniences
- Sports pitches

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Good management procedures

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- Age of workers
- Cash handling
- First aid
- Hiring of facilities
- Use of contractors
- Use of volunteers

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Buildings

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- Cleaning
- Electricity
- Fire
- Gas safety
- Halls and pavilions

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Employee activity

To open documents, double-click on the icon next to the text.

- Display screen equipment
- Grounds maintenance
- Hazardous substances
- Lone working
- Manual handling
- Noise and vibration
- Office activities
- Stress
- Vehicles at work
- Work at height
- Work equipment

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Events management

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Useful documents

In this section we have provided you with some example checklists, templates and guidance to assist in managing your risks.

We recommend that you read through the other sections of the guide before downloading any of the forms or checklists.

These documents should be customised to the individual requirements of your organisation.

Please note the documents open in Microsoft Word and can be edited and saved using word functions in the usual manner.

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General forms and checklists

To open documents, double-click on the icon next to the text.

- Blank risk assessment form
- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) checklist
- Display screen equipment risk assessment checklist
- Health and safety policy
- Manual handling risk assessment checklist
- Personal protective equipment checklist

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Inspection forms

To open documents, double-click on the icon next to the text.

- Inspection form – events
- Inspection form – external
- Inspection form – internal
- Inspection form – play areas

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- Inspection forms

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Frequently asked questions

Q1 I appreciate that risk management is important, but will it cost the organisation a lot of money?

Q2 The term 'control measures' is used throughout the guide. Where does it come from, and what does it mean?

Q3 Would we be advised to stop certain activities which carry elements of risk?

Q4 Am I or an employee a competent person to carry out risk assessments?

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Q1 I appreciate that risk management is important, but will it cost the organisation a lot of money?

A The majority of risk management control measures involve policies and procedures such as housekeeping, supervision, safety inspections and record-keeping, and these can be carried out at a relatively low cost. However, there may be certain risks identified which could involve considerable cost to control. It is therefore a question of evaluating the probability and consequences of a hazard turning into an incident and then determining if the cost of the risk control measure would be justified.

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Q2 The term 'control measures' is used throughout the guide. Where does it come from, and what does it mean?

A The term is used by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Institute of Risk Management. It simply means the measures you have in place or need to introduce to reduce the level of risk. Terms like 'prevention' and 'protection' suggest that this will eliminate a risk completely. 'Control measures' is therefore the preferred wording as it reflects the fact that you may not be able to completely eliminate a risk even with extra measures in place.

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Q3 Would we be advised to stop certain activities which carry elements of risk?

A Remember that there is often a positive side to a risk as well as a downside. For example, you may worry about the perceived risk of a community centre. However, such facilities are popular and have significant recreational benefits for the community. Therefore, stopping an activity or removing a facility that can be managed safely by instituting appropriate risk control measures would not be in your interest or that of the public.

› Return to questions

Q4 Am I or an employee a competent person to carry out risk assessments?

A Yes, with some basic training you or one of your employees should be capable of carrying out risk assessments. You will have considerable knowledge of your work activities, facilities and activities, and therefore you should be able to identify both potential hazards and risk control measures required. The involvement of appropriate employees in the process is essential in most circumstances.

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Q5 Is an inspection the same as a risk assessment?

A No, although the two terms are often confused. An initial inspection is useful as part of the assessment process as it ensures that the assessor is familiar with the area in question and the activities undertaken. An inspection can also be used to check that control measures identified by a risk assessment are still being employed. However, a risk assessment identifies all potential hazards associated with an activity, the likelihood and severity of the risk occurring and then goes on to consider whether existing control measures adequately control the risks. The final part of the risk assessment process identifies what additional control measures should be in place (policies, procedures, training, machine guards, etc.) to reduce the risks to an acceptable level, who should implement the control measures and by when.

› Return to questions

Q6 Why do I need to be aware of all the potential liability risks we are exposed to? We have not had many incidents reported.

A It is true that in any one year you may not expect to have many incidents or accidents. However, incidents and accidents occur periodically to local community organisations elsewhere throughout the UK so it is advisable to learn from the experience of others and be prepared to minimise the likelihood of incidents and accidents in your own organisation.

› Return to questions

Q7 Why do I need to implement risk management control measures if the organisation is insured?

A Firstly, local community organisations do not want to injure employees, contractors or members of the public. Insurance is only one form of protection, and it only covers certain aspects of liability such as damages and court costs. You cannot claim for administration, accident investigation time costs, loss of key employees, costs of prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), or for damage to an organisation's reputation. The HSE calculates that these uninsured risks can be eight or more times that of the actual insurance claim itself, therefore organisations cannot rely on insurance alone.

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Q8 Why are liability risks so important to identify and control?

A Morally, local community organisations do not want to injure people in the course of their activities. Personal injury suffered by an employee or third party can damage an organisation's reputation and can lead to prosecution by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). In addition, personal injury claim costs can be significant and raised public awareness about the right to compensation due to negligence has resulted in more legal cases being pursued.

› Return to questions

Q9 We are always looking out for risks and the condition of equipment and if a problem exists it is reported. Is this sufficient?

A In the event of a claim you will need to be able to prove that action has been taken and that you are managing risks. A judge will often ask for evidence that policies and procedures exist. For example, you will need to be able to provide documented inspection procedures and records to prove that inspections are being carried out and that any repairs and/or other remedial actions have been implemented, or scheduled.

› Return to questions

Q10 I have been told that we have a responsibility towards employees using their own vehicles on our business. Is this true?

A Yes, even if the organisation does not own or maintain the vehicle you still have a duty to make sure persons driving on your behalf are travelling legally and in a roadworthy vehicle. Consider checking business use insurance cover, driving licences and MOT certificates where applicable.

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Other sources of information

- Local Community Advisory Service
  lcashelpline@uk.zurich.com
  0121 697 9131
- HSE – Health & Safety Executive
  www.hse.gov.uk
  0300 003 1747
- Free HSE information leaflets
  www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/leaflets.htm
- Useful publications
  www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/index.htm
- EMAS – Employment Medical Advisory Service
  Local contact details via HSE website

Useful websites

- ALARM – National Forum for Risk Management in the Public Sector
  www.alarm-uk.org
- BSI – British Standards Institute
  www.bsi-global.com
- ROSPA – Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
  www.rospa.com
- Department of Communities & Local Government
  www.communities.gov.uk
- Charity Commission
  www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission
- NSI – National Security Inspectorate
  www.nsi.org.uk
- ABI – Association of British Insurers
  www.abi.org.uk
- FBCA – Federation of Burial and Cremation Authorities
  www.fbca.org.uk
- CIEH Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
  www.cieh.org
- Equality & Human Rights Commission
  www.equalityhumanrights.com
- Fields in Trust
  www.fieldsintrust.org
- Suzy Lamplugh Trust
  www.suzylamplugh.org

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First Published 16.01.2008

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Help

Word document links in this guide

Some sections in this guide contain links to examples, forms and checklists. These are Microsoft Word documents which you can customise and use to assist in managing your risks.

To open and save the Word documents

- Double-click the icon to the left of the example, form or checklist you want to use
- The document will open in Microsoft Word
- Click **File > Save As**. Choose where to save the file on your computer, rename the file if required, and click 'OK' to save a copy of the document
- You can now edit and customise the document for your own organisation's requirements using Word functions.

Warning message

When you open the Word document links in this guide, you may get a message warning that 'The file attachment may contain programs, macros or viruses that could potentially harm your computer'.

This is a default warning only and does not indicate that the files actually contain anything harmful to your computer. However, please note that, while all the documents in this guide have been virus checked before being included, we strongly recommend that you use anti-virus software on your own computer before opening any files.

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- To print only the page you're viewing, click **'Current page'** then click **'Print'**
- To print only specific pages, enter the page numbers required into the **'From'** and **'To'** boxes then click **'Print'**.

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- From the pop-up menu click **'Save...'**
- Choose a location on your computer to save the file, rename it if required, and click **'OK'** to save a copy of this guide.

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NP720370003 (07/19) CMS

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