

RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

· The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1992) places a duty upon employers to:

"Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of their employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work, and the risks to the health and safety of persons not in their employ but arising out of or in connection with the conduct of their undertaking"

· This translates into the provision of a safe place of work, safe systems of work plus the provision of safe equipment and appropriate information and instruction to the workforce. The workplace must be monitored and any significant changes or findings must be notified to employees.

IMPLEMENTATION

· The regulations do not specify in detail any one system of assessing risk. They do state that there must be consistency of approach and assessment. They also indicate the dangers of overstating as well as understating a particular risk. The former results in wasteful expenditure of time and resources and the latter does little or nothing to reduce a risk and may introduce additional risk by concealing the true nature of the hazard.

· Risks stem from hazards. A hazard is something with the ability to cause harm. Risk is that harm and the amount of risk will depend on the very nature or severity of the danger or harm and the likelihood of that incident arising together with the extent of the harm. The Hazard Ratings attached, give guidance on scoring for:

a) The likelihood of harm (L)

b) Severity (S)

c) Extent (E)

· To avoid an exercise in futile bureaucracy, first of all, ignore all minor risks.

Then using a blank risk assessment record form score each identified risk under the three headings L, S, E (scores 1 to 4 under each) and decide which 'Action Category' and which 'Control Arrangements' apply.

Using blank risk assessment action forms produce your action plan which will include detailed control arrangements for each risk and will specify the elimination of the hazard and risk, the risk reduction measures, or will underwrite ignoring the risk if it is minor. Scores and resultant actions can be summarised as follows:

9-12 Eliminate the hazard

4-8 Eliminate or control the risk

1-3 Insignificant - no action other than to log the result

· The risk assessment scale gives examples of assessment scores and their meanings.

· One of the essentials of this exercise, using the Risk Assessment Record form, is to identify the people at risk who may be children in our care, employees and/or members of the public. This will affect your score under Extent.

THE ACTION PLAN

· The assessments are completed by the staff, and converted into a action plans, which will detail the action necessary to eliminate the hazard or control and reduce the risk.

Assessments should be reviewed regularly and as hazards change.

The more general risks identified as part of the exercise will be prioritised according to the sum of the three scores.

As part of the action plan, you must identify the future action which may include one or more of the following:

- Staff Training
- Written safe systems of work
- Equipment guards
- Safety signage
- Special arrangements for vulnerable groups
- Personal protective equipment
- Modifications to a building or room
- Provision of specialised equipment

HAZARD RATINGS FOR RISK ASSESSMENT

LIKELIHOOD OF HARM

Certain

It is certain that harm will result whenever exposure to the hazard occurs.

Score 4 points

Probable

Harm will probably result in most cases when exposure to the hazard occurs, although there may be exceptions.

Score 3 points

Possible

Harm may occur in some cases when exposure to the hazard occurs, although there are likely to be many exceptions.

Score 2 points

Slight

Unlikely that harm will occur, except in a very small minority of cases.

Score 1 point

SEVERITY

Major

Death or major injury is probable.

Score 4 points

Serious

Injuries, though not formally classified as major, which are likely to result in absences in excess of 72 hours

Score 3 points

Minor

Injuries may cause some absence, but probably for not more than 72 hours.

Score 2 points

Slight

Any injuries, which are unlikely to result in time off work.

Score 1 point

EXTENT

Very Extensive

Likely to affect all the staff and/or significant numbers of the clients and public.
Score 4 points

Extensive

Likely to affect a group of people, and might affect some members of the public.
Score 3 points

Limited

Likely to affect only a small number of people.
Score 2 points

Very Limited

Likely only to affect single individuals
Score 1 point