

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

It is a legal requirement that every employer, and all self employed people, undertake a Risk Assessment.

Exhibitions and Events are deemed as hazardous environments and all Companies must assess the risks to workers and others, who may be affected by their work business. This will enable them to identify the measures they need to take to comply with Health and Safety law.

As such, a Risk Assessment must be carried out for both the **build-up** and **dismantling** of the stand (to be carried out by the stand builder e.g. Contractor, Exhibitor) **AND** for the management of the stand and **open period** of the show (to be carried out by ALL exhibitors, regardless of size or complexity).

Shell Scheme Exhibitors; Have to produce a Risk Assessment for any activities identified by the Health & Safety Form as to carrying a risk or if they are building any structure within their shell scheme stand. The erection of shell scheme will be covered by the shell scheme contractor's assessment.

Space Only Exhibitors; Have to produce a Risk Assessment for their activities onsite and once the stand is in use. This may include; fire, exhibits, displays and demonstrations, slips/trips, raised floors, Equality Act, catering, Items of special risk such as water features/vehicles, travel distance etc. See template form for guidance.

Space exhibitors must also provide a Risk Assessment and Method Statements for the safe erection and dismantling of their stands, although this may be submitted on their behalf by their appointed stand builder.

Contractors/Stand builders; are the subject matter experts in their own field and must produce a show specific Risk Assessment and Method Statement for their activities onsite and the construction and dismantling of stands.

The most widely accepted approach, is the 'five steps' format as follows:

Step 1: Identify the Hazard & who might be harmed

Step 2: Assess the risk

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and Develop Controls

Step 4: Record your findings and implement controls

Step 5: Monitor and Review

If you're not confident, get help from someone who is competent; perhaps an H&S advisor. In all cases, you should involve other staff or representatives in the process, as they may have useful information about how the work is done that will make the assessment more thorough and effective, but remember it's you who is responsible for seeing the assessment is carried out properly.

There are two key definitions which are an important part of the risk assessment vocabulary:

1. A '**hazard**' is something with the potential to cause harm, injury loss or damage such as electricity, working at height, chemicals.
2. A '**risk**' is the potential for harm to be realised and how serious this can be. This is usually seen as a combination of likelihood and severity and which is detailed in step two below.

The key is recognising that whereas there are a great many things which are hazardous, it is the context in which they arise which dictates whether or not they are actually a risk.

By Law, your Risk Assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient': A suitable and sufficient Risk assessment is one that:

- Correctly and accurately identifies the hazard;
- Asks who might be affected and involve staff and representatives;
- Disregards inconsequential risks and those trivial risks associated with life in general and includes reasonable precautions are reasonable;
- Determines the likelihood of injury or harm arising;
- Quantifies the severity of the consequences and the numbers of people who would be affected;
- Takes account of any existing control measures;
- Identifies any specific legal duty or requirement relating to the hazard;
- Will remain valid for a reasonable time;
- Provides sufficient information to enable the employer to decide upon the appropriate control measures, taking into account the latest scientific developments and advances; enables the employer to prioritise remedial measures.

It must also be simple to understand, implement and communicate to all your staff and contractors. Below are some guidelines to assist you with writing a Risk Assessment.

Step 1: Identify the hazards & who may be harmed

This is the hardest part, as it involves predicting everything that could reasonably and foreseeably go wrong. There are various approaches to this, based on the type of hazard or the type of harm as follows:

Types of Harm

- Hazards that cause injury, e.g. broken bones
- Hazards to health, e.g. noise

Type of Hazards

- Physical, e.g. a vehicle
- Chemical, e.g. carbon monoxide in exhaust fumes
- Biological, e.g. food poisoning
- Ergonomic, e.g. upper limb disorders from working at a key board
- Psychosocial, e.g. violence, tiredness

It is important to consider the potential consequences and who could be harmed. For example with an electrical fault the consequences are both potential injury from the shock or a fire.

Consider the working environment and your stand. Consider what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ask your colleagues or representatives for their opinion.

What equipment, materials and chemicals will be used? How much noise and dirt will there be? What are the ground conditions? What vehicle movements and lifting operations have to be considered? Do you need to schedule a 'Late Working Rota' to avoid tiredness and accidents. How will you be disposing of waste? Are there any electrical installations? What hazardous vehicles/exhibits do you have? Can visitors fall from a height? Can Visitors harm themselves on any of your exhibits/standfitting? What fire prevention measures will be put in place? Will anyone be undertaking any heavy lifting? Is there any working at height taking place? Are any power/hand tools being used? Will there be catering on the stand that will result in food waste? Will there be any hot surfaces? Are you having any live displays on the stand that will require additional safety measures? Is there anything that could pose a slip/trip hazard?

Decide who could be harmed and how:

Who will be affected by your work and most at risk? Think of identifying groups of people such as Employees, Contractors, Cleaners, Maintenance workers or Exhibitors on or near your stand, through to the Visitors themselves. Safe working depends on co-operation and exchange of information between firms on site, so take this into account and consider necessary precautions on every aspect of the work being carried out, which may include training and the provision of relevant information.

Some workers may have particular requirements, e.g. new and young workers, new or expectant mothers and people with disabilities.

Step 2: Assess the Risk:

This depends on the complexity of the operation. For simple processes it is often sufficient to award a straightforward LOW, MEDIUM or HIGH.

Most event risk assessments require more detail. It is necessary to assess both the potential likelihood of an incident or accident and the potential severity if it does happen. A widely used format is shown below.

Likelihood	Severity
1. Very Unlikely	1. Minor/First Aid
2. Unlikely	2. RIDDOR 3-Days recorded internally; 7 days reported to HSE
3. Possible	3. RIDDOR Major Injury
4. Likely	4. Death or very serious injury to one person
5. Almost Inevitable	5. Death or serious injury to many persons

Risks are assessed both before and after controls are put into place. Before controls, we are assessing what would happen if there were no controls. It is important when considering severity to assess the most likely outcome. For example, consider a rigging operative falling from 3m onto concrete. The operative could be killed or they could get away with no injuries. The most likely outcome however, would be a major injury such as a broken bone.

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and develop Controls:

Having determined what the hazards are and to what extent they pose a risk, we now need to do something about it. We are required by the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) to take a methodical approach which attempts to reduce risk at source and do everything 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm. This can be comparing what you are doing with good practice, of which there are many good sources, such as HSE website. This can also be considered under the following headings:

- Eliminate the risk at source: There is a point at which any operation is simply too risky. An alternative is to find a different approach. A good example of eliminating risk at source is a mother grid. It eliminates the risk of riggers falling from height by lowering the grid to the floor and carrying out a fix and hoist.
- Substitute for a safer method or product: A good example is to use emulsion paints as a substitute for the more hazardous solvent paints in stand build, or substituting a glass bottle with a plastic bottle for drinks.
- Reduce the risk in a quantifiable way: A good example is the prolific use of centre tapped earth transformers for temporary power (the yellow boxes). This reduces the voltage risk from 230V to a safer 100V or below on the event floor.
- Isolate from the hazard: This is a common form of control at event build ups. Workers are isolated from the risk of falling objects when raising a lighting rig by taping off the area under the rig to prevent access.
- Control the risk: All too often this is the start point in many poor risk assessments. Notice how far down the order this is. The most common form of control on the event floor is the use of security and floor management. Another example; is an agreed safe system for the lowering of stand panels (i.e. not just letting them fall!)
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are items such as hard hats and safety shoes: They are only effective if something goes wrong. A hard hat is only of use if something falls on your head. It also only protects you and not the person next to you unless they are wearing one too. Far better to prevent the object falling in the first place.
- Discipline is also a method on which there is far too much reliance: It is fairly self evident that simply telling people not to do things that are unsafe and then punishing them when they do, is not an effective way of controlling risk.

The example below illustrates the general layout of a risk assessment using the example of vehicle access. P=Probability of an injury, S=Likely severity should an injury occur, R=Risk rating (i.e. P x S=R).

With no controls the risk rating is assessed to be 8, which is MEDIUM. After controls are put into place it is assessed to be 4, which is LOW and acceptable.

Hazard	Consequence	Who is at Risk	P	S	R	Controls	P	S	R
Access and egress of vehicles	Impact of Collision injuries	Staff Exhibitors Contractors Members of the public	2	4	8	Isolate pedestrians with barriers Competent traffic marshals to ensure even flow of traffic and marshalling of routes and cargo doors Abide by house (venue) traffic rules	1	4	4

Key

Action Level

1- 4 LOW no further controls required

5 -14 MED – justify /review

15+ HIGH –immediate action/ further controls needed

The MHSWR and associated guidance also requires that risks should be mitigated with a view to achieving maximum reduction in the level of risk within the bounds of what is reasonably practicable. This means that the employer should do what is reasonable within the constraints of the available resources in terms of time, money and personnel. This is not a licence to do nothing on the basis that it is too expensive, but should be the result of careful consideration. The key word here is ‘reasonable’. The question to be asked is have you made reasonable provision to control the risks relative to the costs of controlling them?

Step 4: Record your findings and Implement controls

This is the business of implementing controls on the event floor itself. It is worthwhile considering all the practical implications of control measures before they are put into place.

However, putting the results into practice will make a difference when looking after people and your business.

Writing down the results of the Risk Assessment and sharing them with staff encourages you to do this. When writing results, keep it simple, e.g. ‘tripping over rubbish’: bins provided, staff instructed, regular housekeeping checks.

Step 5: Monitor and Review:

It is important to monitor the event floor to ensure that prescribed controls are actually in place.

You also need a system of reviewing Risk assessments. Event Risk assessments have a natural review cycle and a new one is required for each event. For routine operations every risk assessment should have a review date. Other times when Risk assessments need to be reviewed are:

- When there has been an accident or incident
- When there is a significant change in personnel or process
- When there is a change in the law
- When monitoring reveals problems.

Record and notify the findings. Write down the findings of your Risk assessment. Pass on information about significant risks to those people identified in **Step 1** and record what measures you have taken to control those risks. Write it all down, then do it on site and remember to keep it simple.

This allows you to learn by experience and take account of any unusual conditions or changes that occur on site.

All safety documentation produced by Exhibitors and Contractors must be shared with all relevant parties in advance of the Show and can be updated when required such as if new work practices are brought in or new staff employed or the working environment changes. Handwritten changes are quite acceptable and remember to implement the changes required for next time.

For further guidance relating to Health & Safety matters, your responsibilities as well as the MHSWR, Working at Height, Manual handling, RIDDOR and COSHH, please refer to www.hse.gov.uk

For further guidance relating to industry regulations and the Equality act/Accessible stands, please refer to the eGuide http://www.aeo.org.uk/Content/eGuide/3_34/

Remember that you must communicate any changes to your Risk assessment to all those that are involved.