

Suitable & sufficient - A short guide to Risk Assessment

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I have been considering the subject of Suitable & Sufficient Risk Assessments for some time now. Having worked on many installations and construction sites, you encounter varying ways that companies consider risks when carrying out work. The majority tend to be focused on their own job and tend to be generic risk assessments, and it seems that only the date of issue and the address of the work location makes them specific, which is not in keeping with what the law requires.

The risk assessment is the document that is considered in court if there is an accident on site. The risk assessment needs to take into account the workers environment as well as the job they do. When a project progresses very quickly the working environment can change on a daily basis: other work being carried out and contractors in the area can affect the project and need be accounted for. Therefore, the assessment should be reviewed on a basis that reflects the progress of work and whether the work being carried out is high or low risk.

Why should we risk assess?

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 state under general principles that this regulation requires all employers and self-employed people to assess the risks to workers and any others who may be affected by their work or business. This will enable them to identify the measures they need to take to comply with health and safety law. All employers should carry out a systematic general examination of the effect of their undertaking, their work activities and the condition of the premises. Those who employ five or more employees should record the significant findings of that risk assessment.

A risk assessment is carried out to identify the risks to health and safety of any person arising out of, or in connection with, work or the conduct of their undertaking. It should identify how the risks arise and how they impact on those affected. This information is needed to make decisions on how to manage those risks so that the decisions are made in an informed, rational and structured manner, and the action taken is proportionate.

How do we define a hazard and a risk?

A **hazard** is something with the potential to cause harm; this can include articles, substances, plant or machines, methods of work, the working environment and other aspects of work organisation.

A **risk** is the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard being realised. The extent of the risk will depend on:

- (i) the likelihood of that harm occurring
- (ii) the potential severity of that harm, i.e. of any resultant injury or adverse health effect
- (iii) the population which might be affected by the hazard

How do we determine whether the risk assessment carried out is suitable and sufficient?

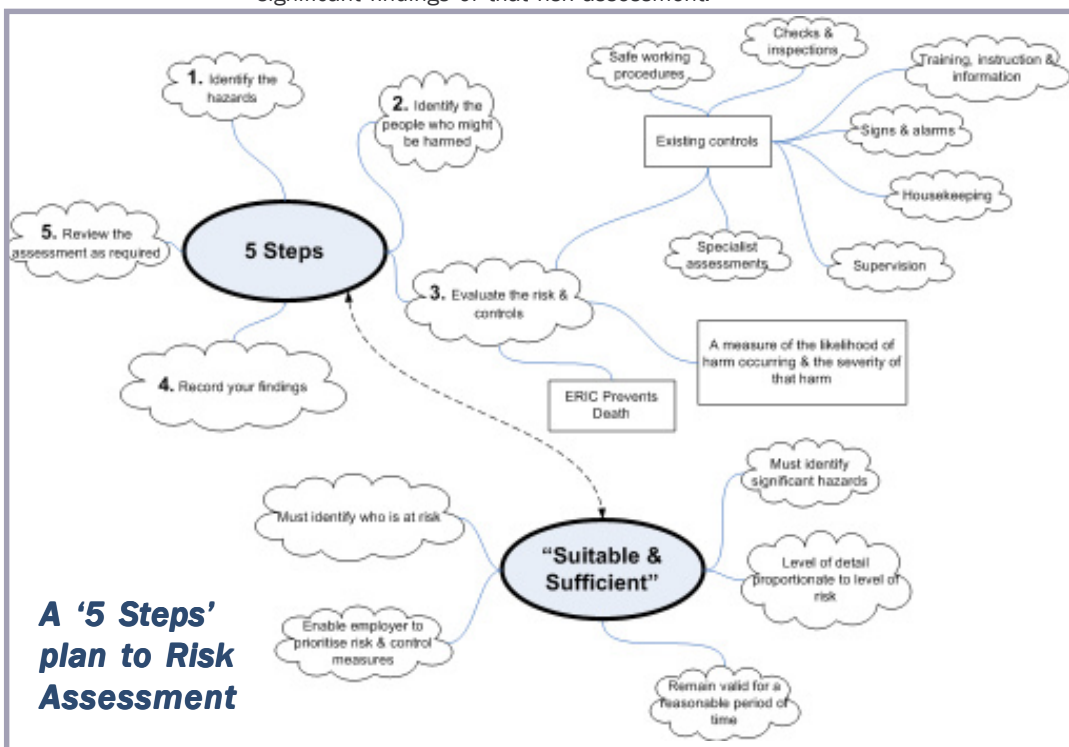
The risk assessment should identify the risks arising from or in connection with work. The level of detail in a risk assessment should be proportionate to the risk. Once the risks are assessed and taken into account, insignificant risks can usually be ignored, as can risks arising from routine activities associated with life in

general, unless the work activity compounds or significantly alters those risks. The level of risk arising from the work activity should determine the degree of sophistication of the risk assessment.

INDG163 is an HSE leaflet that takes the assessor through the 5 steps of risk assessment. Also, the simple diagram reflects the methodology of carrying out a risk assessment.

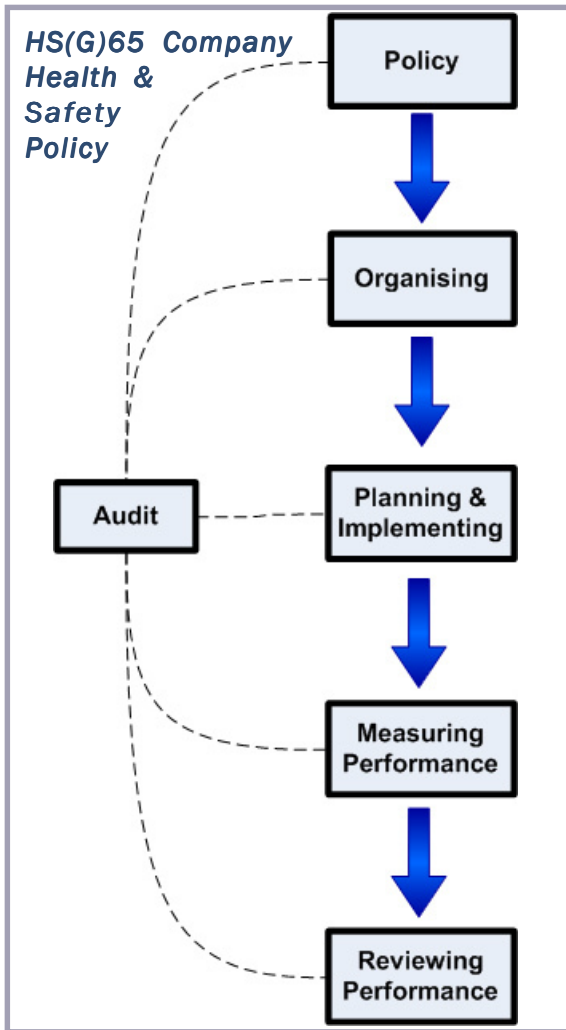
However, what makes that person competent to carry out a risk assessment? Competency is based on the persons **Skills, Knowledge, Attitude, Training and Experience (S.K.A.T.E)** of the work or situation. For example, preparing a risk assessment on confined spaces or live electrical work means that the

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www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm
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A '5 Steps' plan to Risk Assessment

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requirements of **S.K.A.T.E** must be fulfilled. It is important for the assessors to know their limitations. Competence is also covered in detail in the 2007 Construction Design & Management Regulations.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that: "The employers general duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety & welfare of all his employees." If a company has 5 or more employees companies should adhere to the HS(G)65 Company Health & Safety Policy, as outlined above. As well as the Policy Statement, the company needs to consider how its health and safety is carried out which incorporates risk assessments & method statements.

- Associated reading and references:**
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
 - Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
 - HS(G)165 Young People at Work
 - HS(G)151 Protecting the Public
 - HS(G)65 Company Health & Safety Policy
 - HS(G)48 Reducing Error & Influencing Behaviour
 - 2007 CDM Regulations
 - INDG163 5 Steps of Risk Assessment
- Go to www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/raindex.htm

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Corporate Manslaughter Act

The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 came into force on 6 April 2008, across the UK.

The Ministry of Justice published that Corporate Manslaughter (known as Corporate Homicide in Scotland) is an offence of which an organisation (whether in the UK or incorporated abroad), and government bodies, may be convicted where a gross failure in the way that activities were organised or managed resulted in a person's death.

Juries will consider how Health and Safety was managed throughout the organisation and in particular relation to the fatal activity. This will include examination of systems, procedures and working practices.

Those found guilty will face unlimited fines, a remedial order (which requires the organisation to take steps to address the failures that led to the death) and a publicity order, requiring the organisation to publicise details of the details of its conviction and the fine imposed.

Now the law does not apply to individual directors, senior managers or other individuals: it is concerned with the corporate liability of the organisation itself

The Act does not affect the current health and safety legislation which all employers must comply with. However, the Ministry says that the introduction of the new offence is an opportunity for employers to satisfy themselves that systems and processes for managing health and safety are adequate.

The offence is aimed at cases where management failures lie across an organisation and it is the organisation itself that will face prosecution. However, individuals can already be prosecuted for gross negligence manslaughter/culpable homicide and for health and safety offences. The Act does not change this and prosecutions against individuals will continue to be taken where there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest to do so.

Seminar
Machinery Risk Assessment
 see page 20

i Corporate Manslaughter
www.opsi.gov.uk
www.justice.gov.uk
www.nio.gov.uk



Members' willing to help other members



Peter Still, UK Standards Manager, Industrial Systems & Solutions Schneider Electric

PROFILE

Technical expert in the packaging, printing and converting industries:-

- Electrical and safety legislation
- Drafting standards
- TC44

QUESTIONS

If you have a technical question that you would like to put to Peter, please email peter.still@gb.schneider-electric.com

PPMA members will be keen to learn that Peter Still of Schneider Electric is keen to provide his wealth of knowledge in electrical and safety legislation to the Association and its members.

Recently, in recognition of the exceptional contribution he has made to the work of the organisation, the International Electrical Commission (IEC) honoured him by presenting him with the prestigious IEC 1906 Award. The award was established to honour IEC technical experts around the world whose work is fundamental to the IEC. Peter's citation for the IEC 1906 award refers specifically to his contribution as a highly experienced expert, to all fields of activity in TC44, the committee that deals with electrotechnical aspects of safety of machinery. In particular, it highlights his expertise in drafting standards.

The citation also recognises that, as Convenor of Maintenance Team MT62046, Peter has driven the work of the application standard for electrosensitive protection equipment to a successful conclusion, and that his outstanding commitment has contributed significantly to the reputation of TC44.

Many of the aspects of Peter Still's work may strike salient notes within the packaging, printing and converting industries. We look forward to Peter's regular contributions on machinery safety issues affecting the industry. Recent points of interest:-

BSI merges machinery safety committees

For some time the BSI has had a committee called MCE/3 that looks after the 'Safeguarding of Machinery'. This is not to be confused with the GEL/44 'Safety of Machinery - electrotechnical aspects' committee and neither will it be in future, since the BSI is merging the two committees. This will create a more joined-up approach from the UK, and greater participation in work on mechanical standards, since MCE/3 was relatively inactive prior to merger.

BSI has also launched a new website for commenting on drafts for public comment (DPCs). Of particular interest in the present list of DPCs are: BS OHSAS 18002, Guideline for the implementation of OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health & Safety management systems; BS 18004 Guide to occupational health & safety management; and BS 6739 Code of practice for instrumentation in process control systems.

ISO Activities Update

- Revision of ISO 13855 Positioning of protective equipment, will replace EN999
- Revision of ISO 14119 Interlocking devices, will replace EN1088
- Merging of ISO 12100-1 Basic concepts, general principles for design, and ISO 14121-1 Risk assessment. The UK committee does not object to the merge, but has concerns that this might be seen as an opportunity to change the requirements of one or both standards.

Seminars and Training

Presented by PPMA Consultant Martin Keay

11 September, Northampton

The new Machinery Directive

The Directive (2006/42/EC) comes into force 29/12/09 and will impact machine and assembly manufacturers, and machine importers. The seminar will address the specific requirements on partly complete machines and the issuing of a Declaration of Incorporation, and how new requirements for the technical file impact importers.

20 November, Northampton

Machinery Risk Assessment

This course is intended for both engineers who want to learn how to do risk assessment, and safety professionals who need to learn how machinery risk assessment differs from other assessment techniques. This training gives hands-on experience using structured techniques that are based on European standards.

For more details and to book: www.ppma.co.uk
T 020 8773 8111 - E technical@ppma.co.uk

Passport Training & Renewal

2008 Two day courses in Manchester:-

13 & 14 October; 10&11 November; 8&9 December

2008 Renewal courses in Manchester:-

6 October; 3 November; 1 December

GSS Training Ltd can also travel to a client's site if they have 8 or more delegates.

To book contact Clare Earp or Kerry Jones

0161 926 9510 enquiries@gsstraining.co.uk

Orgallme's mechanical engineering branch pushes for change

In a recent position paper presented to the European Commission, Orgallme's mechanical engineering branch highlighted some of the key areas for review:-

- The need for a further harmonisation of workers' protection legislation where it impacts the design and manufacturing of products
- The greening of industrial policy where mechanical engineering plays a significant role as provider of a large range of technologies and equipment
- The area of market surveillance; having adopted the marketing of goods package, we then highlight the need for effective implementation
- The importance of the promotion of EU standards around the globe, which, with an effective IPR system and market access play a key role in our exports
- The issue of skills and human resources, where we encourage the Commission to further develop benchmarking so as to highlight areas of shortages
- EU funded R&D, which still remains an issue for our companies.

Orgallme, the European Engineering Industries Association, speaks for 35 trade federations representing some 130,000 companies in the mechanical, electrical, electronic, metalworking & metal articles industries of 23 European countries.

i BSI - DPCs

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