

RISK ASSESSMENT

A GUIDE
FOR SAFETY
REPRESENTATIVES



A properly managed workplace should be both safe and healthy. The employer has a responsibility to identify risks and take reasonably practical measures to minimise them. The law says that every employer has to conduct a risk assessment on the work their employees do and take 'reasonably practical' measures to ensure their workers are not put at risk. That means removing or reducing the hazards that can put people at risk.

Risk assessment is the process used to identify hazards in the workplace and assess the likelihood that these hazards will cause harm to employees and others. It is part of a systematic approach employers are required by law to adopt in order to manage health and safety effectively. Workplace risks should never be seen as inevitable and if risk assessments are done correctly – and employers implement them fully – then it means that hazards are identified and removed or considerably reduced.

The TUC has produced this guide to risk assessment to ensure that safety reps have the necessary tools to ensure their employer has done a suitable risk assessment, as well as taken appropriate measures to implement the measures required. It should also help

safety reps to challenge the employer if they do not do a suitable assessment or do not act to remove the hazards identified in the risk assessment.

It is important that union safety reps are involved and consulted on the process of risk assessment, and they should always be asked to comment on assessments, although the responsibility for doing a risk assessment lies fully with management.

What is risk assessment?

The risk assessment process is simple. It is:

- an examination of the work and workplace to identify what could cause harm to people (a **hazard**); and
- an assessment of the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by the hazards identified, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be (the **risk**).

On the basis of this assessment a decision is made as to what prevention or control measures should be taken to prevent the possibility of harm.

There is no single method of risk assessment that covers all types of workplaces and different employers will use different methods. Some of these are explained later in this booklet. However, every method involves decisions being made on how acceptable a risk is. This, whatever management may say, is not a scientific process but instead is one based on the value that they place on the safety and health of their workers.

It is therefore important you understand the method of risk assessment your employer is using and ensure that the process deals with the issues that concern members promptly and reflect the real risks in the workplace, including long-term health risks.

Although there is no single correct way of doing risk assessments, what is important to remember as a safety rep is that, whatever process is used, the risk assessments should be systematic and thorough and must look at what actually happens in the real workplace – not just at what the employer thinks happens.

This means no real risk assessment can take place unless the people that actually do the jobs and who have a practical understanding of the hazards and risks involved have been consulted.

Of course the role of the safety rep doesn't end when the risk assessment is completed and written up. When this is done, the rep will need to ensure that the employer takes action to remove those hazards that have been identified through the risk assessment process.

What the law says

There is a general duty on all employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees. This is laid out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This duty is expanded in later regulations which spell out the specific requirements on employers to undertake risk assessments for every job and process, and also to act on them.

The main requirement to conduct a risk assessment is in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, which places a legal duty on all employers to carry out risk assessments. Where there are five or more workers employed the employer must record the main points of the assessment. These regulations implement a European Directive which makes risk assessment the main way of identifying and controlling risks throughout the European Union.

The Management Regulations require all employers and self-employed people to assess the risks created by their undertaking so as to

identify the measures they need to have in place to comply with their duties under health and safety laws. This makes the Management Regulations risk assessment provisions wide-ranging and all-embracing. In a nutshell, no employer can comply with the law unless they have done a comprehensive and suitable risk assessment. However big or small, however safe they may consider their workplace to be, unless there has been a suitable risk assessment conducted then the employer is in breach of the law.

The Management Regulations lay down what your employer must do:

- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to the health and safety of employees and others who may be affected (such as contractors or the public).
- Where there are five or more employees, keep a written record of the findings of the assessment and any groups of employees particularly at risk.
- Identify and then introduce the preventive and protective measures needed to improve workplace health and safety.
- Have arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures.
- Review the assessment if there is any reason to believe that it is no longer valid (e.g. if there have been changes in the way work has been done, such as new work processes or equipment). The employer should also review the risk assessments after any injury, near miss or ill health caused by work.
- Provide any health surveillance identified in the risk assessment.
- Establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger.
- Provide health and safety information, instruction and training for all employees.
- Have competent health and safety assistance. This can either be in-house or using an external advisor.

The guidance to the Management Regulations also recommends that management consult with workers on the risk assessment. In addition, there is a general requirement under the Safety Representatives Regulations for the employer to consult with safety representatives. The TUC has argued that safety representatives should always be consulted on risk assessments.

In addition to the legal requirements in the Management Regulations to conduct general risk assessments there are many other regulations which require a particular risk assessment to be done. These include regulations on chemicals, noise, manual handling, display screen equipment, personal protective equipment, asbestos, work at heights, and fire safety. In most cases an employer will meet the requirements of the other regulations by conducting just one risk assessment and it is not always necessary to produce different risk assessments for each individual regulation – so long as they are clear that they are complying with each set of regulations.

Suitable and sufficient

The law states that an employer's risk assessment must be "suitable and sufficient". It is important that safety representatives understand a little about what this means. To be "suitable and sufficient" the risk assessment has to identify all the hazards and decide whether they have the potential to cause harm in the workplace. Employers have to familiarise themselves with the hazards and risks through using Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance, materials available from manufacturers, suppliers, trade bodies and professional associations, as well as from employees and trade union safety reps. If necessary they should also consult outside expert advice.

The HSE's approved code of practice to the Management Regulations give advice on what is "suitable and sufficient". It makes it clear that the method used has to be appropriate to the complexity of the work activities and risks involved and that the risk assessment must enable the employer to identify and prioritise the measures that need to be taken. It also makes clear that 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.

Sometimes management will avoid assessing every individual job and workplace, and instead do a "generic" risk assessment based on a sample which they then apply to all similar situations. The HSE has said that these generic risk assessments are acceptable if all the workplaces and jobs they apply to are very similar, but safety reps should be cautious about this approach, as no two workplaces are ever the same. In addition, many employers will use an example risk assessment, often downloaded from the internet or from a trade association, and simply adopt that without making any real effort to see how well it applies to their situation. Safety reps should be on guard for this too, as unless management goes through the process of looking at every element of the work, the risk assessment will not be suitable or sufficient in law.

To be suitable and sufficient a risk assessment has to identify all the potential causes of harm in the workplace. This includes not only dangerous substances and equipment, but also work processes and work organisation. It must cover not only the risk of immediate injury but also the long-term risks to health. The risk assessment must be systematic, comprehensive and address what actually happens in the workplace, not what the employer says should happen. It should also cover non-routine activities

such as spillages and cleaning, what happens during breakdowns, loading and unloading and maintenance operations.

The assessment must cover everyone in the workplace, including groups like maintenance staff, security staff, cleaners, and visitors, and it should take account of preventative or precautionary measures that have already been introduced and check that these are effective in reducing risk.

Competent persons

The Management Regulations say that an employer must appoint “competent persons” to assist them. The TUC believes that, for most organisations, it is best to have the “competent persons” employed directly within the organisation rather than using outside consultants who may have no real knowledge of the workplace. In fact, the regulations state that if a “competent person” is already employed then that person must be used rather than an outside body or consultant.

When an employer does use an outside consultant they often end up with unnecessary and costly paperwork or a process that is too complex, or unsuitable for that workplace. Some consultants also use their own copyrighted method, which means that whenever the employer wants to do a new risk assessment, or even update the existing ones, they have to go back to the consultant.

There is no simple definition of what a “competent person” is as it will vary from employer to employer. In large organisations the competent persons will not only need to be qualified in health and safety management, but also may have to have a detailed knowledge of the processes involved. This is particularly the case in areas like manufacturing, chemicals and high hazard industries. In some smaller workplaces – in particular those with only a



small number of staff where the risks are well regulated – a lower level of competency might be acceptable. However, in most medium and large sized organisations the minimum level of expertise would normally be Chartered Membership of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. This is the main professional body in the field and Chartered membership is an indication that the person is qualified and that their experience is up-to-date. However, the employer should still check the experience of the person.

The HSE says that ‘competent people’ should have a knowledge and understanding of:

- the work being assessed
- the principles of risk assessment and prevention of risk
- up-to-date health and safety measures; and
- how to identify hazards at work.



In addition they should be able to:

- identify health and safety issues
- assess the need for action
- design, develop and implement strategies and plans
- check the effectiveness of these strategies and plans
- promote health, safety and welfare advances, and good practice
- know their limitations and when to call for others with specific skills and expertise.

Written risk assessments

Where there are five or more employees the law says that the significant findings of the risk assessment must be recorded. The TUC believes that even when there are fewer than five a written record is important.

A written risk assessment is a vital document. Not only is it evidence that the risk assessment has been carried out, but it is a record of what the employer has ascertained needs to be done to control any risks.

It should include details of any significant hazards identified, any existing control measures in place and how effective they are,

and outline any aspects that need improving, as well as spell out the measures that have to be introduced. Risk assessment records do not necessarily need to be long, but they do need to be systematic and identify clear actions.

Written risks assessments should always be given to safety reps so they can check all risks are being covered. Employers have a legal duty to provide safety reps with a copy of any document that the law requires them to keep. The written assessments can also prove useful during routine inspections of the workplace.

Specific groups

The law says that assessments have to specifically cover risks to certain groups, in particular pregnant women and young people. Safety reps should ensure that they do.

Employers must consider the special position of new and expectant mothers and conduct a specific risk assessment in any workplaces where there are women of child-bearing age. This should take account of any risks where the worker may be exposed to any process, working condition, or physical, chemical, or biological agents, which might adversely affect the health and safety of the worker or baby. Risk assessments should also include consideration of the risks for those who are pregnant, those who have given birth or miscarried in the previous six months, or those who are breastfeeding. The TUC has produced a specific briefing on pregnant women and risk assessment.

In addition, employers are required to make special consideration of the risks faced by young workers. This should include trainees, apprentices and those on work experience schemes. In particular, they must take account of young workers' lack of experience, absence of awareness of existing or potential risks, or their immaturity when they assess the risks to

their health and safety. The assessment must be made before the young person begins work and must address certain specific factors. Employers must take account of the results of risk assessment in determining whether the young person is prohibited from doing certain work. In addition, if the young person is below the normal school leaving age – which includes many people on work experience – the employer must inform the parents of the child of the risks identified and the protective measures used.

Risk assessment must also take account of workers with disabilities or long-term health conditions. The HSE has produced detailed advice to help employers ensure that risk assessments cover workers with disabilities, while at the same time not discriminating against them. Employers have often used health and safety as an excuse for not employing disabled people in certain areas by claiming they may be a ‘fire risk’ or that their epilepsy may put them at risk in the workplace. In fact, it is important that risk assessment is seen as a way of protecting disabled people rather than preventing them from work. Employers should never make assumptions about the health and safety implications of a person with a disability, as even if it does make a difference to the workplace risks, the risk can usually be controlled through simple adjustments or changes.

Methods of risk assessment

The HSE approach

The HSE have outlined the basic steps to risk assessment in their free publication *Five steps to risk assessment*, which is also available on their website (see page 15). The guide provides simple advice on what to do and is a useful starting point for undertaking a risk assessment in any workplace. It is aimed primarily at small businesses and some medium or larger employers would need a

more in-depth approach, but the principles apply to all organisations.

The five steps identified in the guidance are:



The guide makes it clear that organisations should not overcomplicate the process, especially when the risks are well known and the necessary steps to control them are easy to apply.

The guide also provides a sample form for recording the risk assessment and its outcomes.

The TUC believes this straightforward approach is the best, although for larger workplaces a more in-depth approach is needed. There are a number of these and different employers will use different systems. It is important that you are aware of, and understand, the method of risk assessment your employer uses.

The HSE have produced a number of example risk assessments in different workplaces, mainly covering sectors with smaller employers like retail, but also including areas like call centres, warehouses and office-based businesses. These can be found on the HSE website (see **information and resources**, page 15).



Hazard identification

While most risk assessment methods are fairly effective at identifying physical hazards such as those related to electrical safety, chemical hazards, fire safety, etc., they may be less good at dealing with risk factors that arise from issues such as lone working, shift working, or the effect of work organisation on stress or the threat of violence. It is therefore important that safety reps ensure that the method used covers not only physical hazards but also tasks, organisational factors, and varying locations, including off-site work or home working.

It is more likely that physical hazards alone will be identified if an employer only uses a form with a list of hazards on it supplied by a trade body or from the internet. In order to identify other hazards, the employer needs to look at injury and sickness records to see what problems have been reported in the past. They also have to talk to workers and safety reps – it is not enough to simply walk around and tick boxes.

Assessing the risk

Once the hazards have been listed, the employer has to assess the risk. This is extremely subjective and there is no right or wrong approach. The regulations simply say that the method used must be “suitable and sufficient”. What is suitable and sufficient to an employer may not be suitable and sufficient to a worker.

The most common method of ranking risk is scoring a hazard in relation to its perceived risk. An example would be:

- 0 = no risk
- 1 = slight risk
- 2 = moderate risk
- 3 = high risk

This system is very simple and easy to use but is limited in that it does not take into account the likelihood of an injury or illness occurring, or the numbers exposed to the hazard.

A more complex system is to use a chart called a matrix. Along one side of the matrix are a series of numbers relating to the likelihood of something happening and along the other side a second set of numbers indicating the level of harm that will come about if the risk happens. The chart can have as many steps as you like, but most use either 3, 5 or 7 levels (see figure 1).

The likelihood of something happening is then multiplied by the level of harm it would cause. The resulting number is then measured against a risk rating table – see figure 3 as an example. Again, this system is quite simple to use and easy to understand but also has flaws. It is often less useful in assessing the dangers to long-term health, rather than immediate injuries, and is also extremely subjective. It also may not take into account the number of workers involved.

Figure 1: A five level matrix might look like this. The figures in grey give the overall Risk rating (see figure 3).

Harm	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5
		Likelihood				

Figure 2: The scoring might go like this:

Category	Harm	Likelihood
1	Non-injury	Almost impossible
2	First aid	Unlikely
3	Fewer than 3 days off work	Possible
4	More than 3 days off work	Likely
5	Major injury	Almost certain

Figure 3: An example of what an employer might set as standard for action arising out of the assessment:

Risk rating	Action
1-4	No further action
5-9	Re-assess after next review
10-16	Within three months
17-25	Immediate

There are other systems that build in other factors, such as the cost of accidents. An example of this is the 'risk calculator' used in some industries. Many high-risk industries such as chemical plants are likely to use an extremely specialised system, which also takes into account societal risk. These systems are covered by regulations dealing with major accident hazards and nuclear installations. While they are sophisticated they are often

very poor at identifying occupational health issues, as opposed to specific safety risks.

Although risk assessments can generate a lot of paperwork it is a very imprecise science and many of the decisions made about levels of risk reflect little more than the view of the person doing the assessment, which is then presented as fact. Safety reps should feel that they can always challenge assessment assumptions.



Risk assessment to risk management

Risk assessment is about identifying risks that need to be tackled in the workplace and prioritising them. In itself it is just a paper exercise. The other key part of the exercise is deciding what action will be taken to remove or reduce the risks identified. Decisions over whether to take action, and how quickly action should be taken is completely subjective, and often more down to cost than anything else.

Health and safety reps must be aware of the limitations of this process and use their rights to challenge any decisions they do not agree with.

In evaluating risks and deciding whether to take action the employer is essentially putting a value on a person's health. No system will ever be able to remove all risk; instead what it will attempt to do is to reduce the risk to what the employer believes is an acceptable level. In law this should be "as low as is reasonably practical". However, what is reasonable to management may not be reasonable to the workers who face the risks. The way management makes decisions on what to do following a risk assessment is often based on cost.

All systems do this to some extent, and some of the more hazardous industries are open about it. They will compare the cost to the company of a worker dying against the cost of introducing safety measures. This means they will put a cost on a human life, or injury, and if the cost of taking action is less than that, they will introduce control measures; if it is greater they will not. This figure often reflects the likely cost of compensation and the loss of confidence in the industry that would arise from a fatality.

Despite the fact that many employers make decisions on this basis, the law is quite clear: they must reduce the risk to "as low as is reasonably practical". This does not mean what is affordable; it means a balance between the size of the risk and the size of the 'sacrifice' (in time, trouble and money) to prevent the risk. Only if the cost is grossly out of proportion to the risk has the employer done what is 'reasonably practicable'.

Safety reps must therefore try to understand and question the assumptions that are being made over whether or not action should be taken. They should be able to challenge the decisions on what measures to take after a risk assessment – even if the decisions have been made apparently 'scientifically'.

Safety reps should also ensure that employers do not try to ignore some of the lower-level risks by concentrating on hazards that are likely to cause a fatality. 75 per cent of all work-related sickness absence is caused by musculoskeletal disorders and stress-related illnesses. Because employers often concentrate on controlling hazards that they see as being potential killers – such as those related to electrical safety – issues such as stress, dust, and repetitive injuries are often not prioritised, despite the fact that they are far more likely to occur and will affect more people.

Prioritising prevention

The first aim of risk management should always be to remove the hazard. Unfortunately employers often forget this and see their goal as controlling hazards. Again, the law is clear, with the Management Regulations laying down principles for prevention that must be followed when deciding what to do about potential hazards. This means, where possible, the first step must always be to *remove* the hazard altogether.

Only if that is not possible should management look at how to *control* the hazard. This must be done in a certain order. Management will first have to look at reducing the risk, for example by using a less hazardous process or chemical. If that is not possible then they should prevent access to the hazard, such as by guarding. If that is not possible then they should try to organise work to remove or reduce exposure to the hazard and finally, if no other control methods work, and as a last resort, they should issue personal protective equipment such as hearing protection, goggles, footwear, etc.

Unfortunately many employers go straight to providing personal protective equipment rather than removing or reducing the hazard by other means.

The Management Regulations also state that employers should adapt the work to the individual rather than the other way round. This is particularly the case when designing workplaces, but employers should always use risk assessment to see whether it is possible to improve work organisation by alleviating monotonous work or stressful processes.

The control measures should also look at issues around training and information for employees and the provision of welfare facilities.

Not a one-off process

Whichever risk assessment system your employer uses it is important that the assessments are reviewed regularly. This means looking at them again if there is a change in working methods, new procedures, equipment, or even sometimes personnel. They also have to be reviewed after any injury or work-related illness.

There should also be procedures to ensure that the control methods that have been chosen for introduction have been put in place correctly, and are working effectively.

Most importantly, if your injury and illness rates are not going down then your risk management process is not working. It may be that you are using the wrong method, or have not covered all hazards, or the methods to remove or reduce risks have not worked; whichever, if you still have problems with injuries or illness then the problem is with your risk assessments. That may mean starting from scratch again. Remember there is no single right or wrong method. Although risk assessment is a tried and tested method of removing risk, there will always be ways of doing it better.

Union involvement

The legal responsibility to carry out a risk assessment lies with the employer. Nevertheless, it is important that health and safety reps are involved in the process and play an important part in ensuring that they are done properly. This means safety reps should be given a copy of all draft risk assessments and asked to comment on them. Safety reps should make sure that risk assessments have been done for all workplaces, that they cover all areas and activities, that they are up-to-date, and they are comprehensive.

In 'high hazard' workplaces the employer may have sophisticated risk assessment processes. Rather than be put off by this, it is important that safety reps demand proper training in the employer's methods so that they can understand them, and challenge them where appropriate.

Employers have a duty to consult with safety reps on all health and safety issues, and to give safety reps information about health and safety matters relevant to their members. This

includes information about risk assessments. They must permit safety reps to take time off with pay during working hours to undertake their functions, and dealing with risk assessments is a valid safety rep function.

One of the most crucial roles of a health and safety rep is in the role of checking and challenging their employer's risk assessments and ensuring appropriate control measures are in place and working.



Other risk assessment concepts

In addition to the standard risk assessment forms your employer may have other safety management systems that link in with the risk assessment process. A number of these are listed below. Most of them are relatively simple but if your employer uses any of them you should ensure that you receive training on how they operate in your workplace.

- **Permits to work** – This is a system for identifying a safe system of work and ensuring that it is followed. These are usually used in ‘high risk’ activities and involve a detailed risk assessment being carried out before a specific activity. This is likely to lead to a list of specific requirements that have to be adhered to during the activity.
- **Safe systems at work** – Although this is a general term and all employers are required to provide a safe system of work, some employers use the phrase to mean the way in which certain jobs have to be done. A safe system at work can only be established through the process of risk assessment. The phrase is particularly used for working within confined spaces and lifting operations, although it can be used in any industry.
- **Safety plan** – This is a particular requirement within the construction industry where there has to be an assessment of the risks involved in the overall project, with the identification and eventual implementation of appropriate precautions.
- **Safety case** – This is the body of evidence that is produced so that a system is adequately safe for a specific process. It is commonly used in the rail, nuclear and offshore oil and gas industries.
- **Method statements** – Method statements are descriptions of how a particular task or operation should be carried out. The statement identifies all the components of a safe system of work arrived at through a risk assessment. If a method statement identifies the risks and the actions to be taken to control them, it can be an adequate legal record of the risk assessment.
- **Dynamic risk assessment** – This term is often used to describe the day-to-day judgments that employees have to make in respect of health and safety. They cannot be written down because they are about making specific judgments in a certain situation. They are certainly not a substitute for risk assessment and can only be used to complement a risk assessment where someone is appropriately trained. They are used in the emergency services.

Risk assessment – health and safety rep checklist

1 Has your employer carried out risk assessments?

- ✓ If not, are arrangements in hand for them to be done?

2 Who carries out risk assessments?

- ✓ Are they 'competent' (do they have knowledge and understanding of the work involved, of the principles of risk assessment, prevention and control, and of current health and safety applications)?
- ✓ What qualifications/experience do they have?
- ✓ What information, instruction and training have they been provided with?
- ✓ Do they have the necessary time, resources, and authority to do proper risk assessments?
- ✓ Are outside consultants being used?
- ✓ Are specialists, such as ergonomists, brought in where necessary?
- ✓ Have safety reps been consulted over the appointment of the competent persons?
- ✓ How will safety reps be involved in checking the assessments?
- ✓ Do assessments cover all the hazards and risks at work?

3 Do assessments cover all areas, activities, processes, substances, equipment and departments?

- ✓ Do assessments cover systems of work, training, supervision and working environment?
- ✓ Do they cover work organisation and content?
- ✓ Do they cover hazards which you or those that do the work have identified?
- ✓ Do assessments look at what actually happens in practice and include non-routine operations such as maintenance?

4 Do assessments cover all those who could be affected?

- ✓ Are those working outside normal hours such as security staff and cleaners, visitors and sub-contractors covered?
- ✓ Have those particularly at risk (such as lone workers) been identified?
- ✓ Are specific risk assessments done for pregnant workers?
- ✓ Do individual assessments need to be carried out for some activities (for example, those working outside the main place of work)?

5 Are existing preventive measures being used properly?

- ✓ Are the control measures followed?
- ✓ Do the control measures work?
- ✓ Are they monitored?
- ✓ Is information, instruction and training provision adequate?

6 Have measures been identified to prevent or control the risks to health and safety?

- ✓ Can hazards be eliminated (for example, by not using a hazardous substance if not essential or removing a bullying manager)?
- ✓ If any hazardous chemicals cannot be eliminated can they be substituted with less dangerous substances?
- ✓ If any hazards cannot be removed can they be controlled at source (for example, by using anti-slip flooring rather than using a warning sign)?
- ✓ If not, can hazards be isolated (for example, moving noisy equipment or isolating a dusty area)?
- ✓ If not, is suitable personal protective equipment provided as a last resort?
- ✓ Is health surveillance necessary?
- ✓ Have procedures for serious and imminent danger been drawn up?
- ✓ Have safety representatives been consulted about the employer's plan to control risks?

7 Have safety representatives been given copies of, or access to, the written records of the risk assessments?

- ✓ Do they explain the hazards?
- ✓ Do they accurately grade the level of risk?
- ✓ Do they clearly outline the proposed control measures?
- ✓ Do they identify who is at risk?
- ✓ Do they contain sufficient detail to allow safety representatives to judge whether they are adequate?

8 Are control measures being implemented?

- ✓ Has a plan of action been drawn up for implementing the control measures identified in the risk assessment?
- ✓ Does the plan identify priorities?
- ✓ Does the plan set out an agreed timetable for action?
- ✓ Does the plan identify who is responsible for taking the action?
- ✓ Has money been made available to implement the measures?

9 Are risk assessments kept up-to-date?

- ✓ Do planned reviews of risk assessments take place at regular intervals?
- ✓ Are risk assessments redone before changes, such as new equipment or new ways of working, are introduced into the workplace?
- ✓ Are risk assessments reviewed if evidence suggests that control measures are not adequate, for example following accidents, near misses, reports of ill-health, or findings from safety representatives' inspections?
- ✓ Are risk assessments reviewed if there are other reasons to suspect they are invalid, for example in the light of new legislation or new medical evidence?

Information and resources

The HSE has a useful guide to risk assessment at www.hse.gov.uk/risk. This includes a link to 'Five steps to risk assessment'. They have also produced a number of useful example risk assessments for a range of sectors.

The TUC website has a large number of resources on health and safety at: www.tuc.org.uk/healthandsafety

It also publishes *Hazards at Work*, a detailed guide for safety reps on all aspects of health and safety called. This is available at www.tuc.org.uk

The quarterly magazine *Hazards* is an invaluable resource for all safety reps. www.hazards.org



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