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Aide Memoir



Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment can appear to be quite an onerous task but once understood, it becomes a simple and very useful tool in helping to keep people safe. (And in preventing damage to valuable machinery!)

It's just a matter of grasping the fundamentals, which in themselves are quite easy to understand, as shown in the Five steps below -

MHSWR (1992) General Risk Assessment Form

Section: _____ Assessor: _____ Date: _____

Event: _____ Signature: _____ Review Date: _____

No	Task/Plant/ work area	Hazard	Risk*			Persons at risk	Precautions	Remarks	Residual Risk <i>Sm</i>	Last reviewed Date / by
			S	L	Sev					
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										

Risk* = Severity [S] multiplied by Likelihood = [L]

Risk Ratings		
Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
1 Slight	1 Seldom	1 Low
2 Over 3 days	2 Often	4 High
3 Major	3 Certain	9 High

Risk reduction - Precautions should be taken to reduce medium risks and must be taken to reduce high risks.

Note to Employer: Regulation 12 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 places a duty on all employers to inform the employer of any circumstances which might indicate a shortcoming in an assessment. Therefore, you must understand and be in agreement with the assessment's.

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Hierarchy of Control:

Use one of these steps to reduce a Risk; obviously, elimination is at the top, as if you don't do it, it can't hurt anyone!

- Elimination
- Substitution
- Change in work method/patterns
- Reduce or limit time of exposure
- Engineering controls (i.e. Isolation, insulation & ventilation etc)
- Good housekeeping
- Safe Systems of work
- Training & information
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Welfare
- Monitoring & supervision
- Review

Risk Rating: How to decide? Its relatively simple, just make some simple decisions! If something goes wrong, how severe would the consequences be, Slight = 1, Over 3 days injury = 2, Severe = 3. Then think of the Likelihood of it occurring, Seldom = 1, Often = 2, Certain = 3, and then simply multiply to two numbers. (i.e. $1 \times 2 = 2$ and is **Low** risk, where $3 \times 3 = 9$ and is **High** risk).

Referring to the 3x3 matrix on the form; The objective is to reduce the risk of something "bad" occurring, so if the initial risk (if nothing is done) is either - Medium or High, then steps need to be taken to reduce that risk, hence the precautions.

NOTE! Everyone involved with the task/s must be familiar with and in agreement with the Risk Assessment.

It's no good as a "Paper" exercise filed away in a draw merely to satisfy an auditor. It needs to be real and workable.

[Ref; Reg 12 of the Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1992]

It's also important that those who have read the RA sign it to indicate their agreement (i.e. last Page)

The HSE's Five Steps to Risk Assessment:

1. **Identify the Hazard.** Hazard is the Potential of a substance, activity, or process to cause harm. Don't get bogged down; concentrate on "significant" Hazards such as falling from height, manual handling, electrocution & fire etc, and not minor things like a paper cut!
 - Use your experience & knowledge to decide if the Hazard (Potential) is 1 Low, 2 Med or 3 High.
2. **Decide who might be harmed and how -** Person carrying out task, operator, passer-by, member of public etc. i.e. falling debris, fume or dust cloud etc. if the Hazard/risks are different for each category of person at risk, a new line should be used to detail the different necessary controls. I.e. Passes by = fence off area/restrict access etc.
3. **Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.** Risk is the Likelihood of a substance, activity, or process to cause harm. Risk (or strictly the level of risk) is also linked to the severity of its consequences.
 - Use your experience & knowledge to decide if the Risk (Likelihood) is 1 Seldom, 2 Often or 3 Certain.
 - Multiply the two together for the combined figure. If that combined figure is Medium or High, precautions/controls must be implemented to reduce the Hazard/Risk significantly.
 - After precautions have been identified, record the reduced residual figure in the "Residual risk" column.
4. **Record your findings and implement them.** Risk assessment form. Make sure precautions are carried out.
5. **Review your risk assessment and update if necessary.** If there is a significant change or at least annually.

The accompanying Risk Assessment gives examples of what you are likely to encounter, but as each event will need its own tailored RA, please delete any line not applicable, or add anything you think may be relevant, thus making the RA yours!