

Guidance Note 03a

RISK ASSESSMENT



Introduction

The risk assessment aims to identify what can go wrong when carrying out work activities which, could result in accidents, harm or injury to employees (or other persons). Anything with the potential to cause an incident is called a hazard, and the key element of any risk assessment is to consider the risk that any identified hazard presents. Risk is the relationship between the likelihood of the identified hazard occurring with the severity of the result of the incident occurring. Most importantly, it is essential that any risk assessment determines (and records) the measures required to reduce/control the risk).

Legal Duty

Failure to comply with the current legislative requirements may result in criminal prosecution or a prohibition of that work activity until safety standards have been suitably improved. The prosecution can result in fines and or imprisonment dependant on the seriousness of the breach or the incident outcome.

Compliance with the Requirements

All accidents, injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences involving employees, contractors and visitors on the organisation's premises, should be reported immediately. You should first assess the situation to ensure that the potential risk for further injury has been removed.

In developing and then implementing appropriate control measures, you must ensure that you record and document those control measures which will reduce risk (e.g. safe systems of work).

It is therefore important that you have documented procedures that cover those situations where the risk of incident warrants it and which, if those procedures were not there and not followed would mean risks were uncontrolled and you would therefore fail to comply with Sodexo's health and safety policy.

Procedures should stipulate operating criteria (e.g. minimum levels of equipment, protective equipment, number of persons, weather conditions, etc.) Procedures should take into account local considerations including, design of workspace along with installations and machinery operating procedures, including their adaptation to human capabilities

The overall objective being to reduce or eliminate risk at source with the following principles:

- Identify the things that may cause harm - the hazards
- Consider the likelihood and possible consequences of that harm actually occurring - the risks
- Take preventive action to ensure that the risks are adequately controlled at all times – safe systems of work

EXAMPLES OF HAZARDS

HAZARD	EXAMPLE
Slips, Trips, Falls	Spillages, debris on floor, litter, obstructions, worn carpets, holed/overlapped floor coverings, pipe work/ scaffolding across walkways, equipment power leads
Burns from Hot and Harmful Substances	Cooking equipment such as ovens & fryers, hot pipe work, dishwasher machines, water boilers, hot liquids, fires and heaters, cleaning chemicals
Cuts and Amputation	Knives, food slicing machines, food processors, paper guillotines, sharp edges to equipment
Handling, Lifting, Carrying	Carrying heavy awkward loads, moving equipment and furniture, lifting food boxes and refuse bags
Struck by Moving Object	Doors, trolleys, wheeled bins, falling objects from shelves, thrown objects, etc.
Fall from Height	Use of ladders, climbing on racking, high level cleaning, use of loading bay/tail gates
Struck against a Fixed Object	Low headroom e.g. on cellars or stairs, low pipe work, racking or scaffold poles
Moving Machinery	Cutting blades, e.g. on slicers and food processors, Drive mechanisms e.g. on dishwashers, Rotating machinery, e.g. on bowl mixers
Electrocution	Electrical installation (plugs, sockets and switches and electrically powered equipment
Moving Vehicles	Delivery vehicles, pedestrian routes in car parks or by doors, loading bays, fork lifts
Personal Violence	The public, irate staff, psychiatric patients, robbery
Explosions, Bomb Threats	Pressure boilers, CO ₂ cylinders, LPG cylinders, incendiary devices
Fire	Flammable liquids/chemicals, gas use and storage, room heaters, etc.
Chemical Accidents	Misuse of chemicals, mistaken identity, e.g. chemicals in unmarked containers, chemical burns, lack of PPE, poor storage facilities. Chemical control of pests
Airborne Contamination	Fumes from ventilation systems, CO gas
Micro-organisms	Legionella in air conditioning, disposal of contaminated /clinical waste
Plants/Vegetation	Poisonous plants
Humans	Crowd control, security generally, staff facilities and toilet accommodation. Young persons inexperience
Weather	Snow, ice, fog, wind, heat, and their relation to work activities i.e. driving in snow or fog, ice build up in entrances, wind at high level
Flood	Storage tank burst, flooding from heavy rain, rivers, watercourses, sea

FACTORS AFFECTING RISK

FACTOR	LOW RISK EXAMPLES	HIGH RISK EXAMPLES
Severity of the hazard	Minor cut	Death
How the hazard is controlled	Well controlled e.g. faulty electrical equipment clearly labelled and isolated	Poorly controlled, e.g. faulty electrical equipment not labelled and still in use

How the job is done, or how the equipment/chemical etc is used	Carefully, e.g. person using strong oven cleaning chemical is concentrating and following safe systems of work	Dangerously, e.g. person using strong oven cleaning chemical is rushing, trying to cut corners, & is not paying full attention to task
Who is exposed to the hazard/for how long	Short exposure to few people e.g. loose carpet is on a rarely used staircase	Long exposure to many people, e.g. loose carpet is on main staircase used throughout the day
Training/experience exposed person has had	Good training and experience, e.g. to clean meat slicers	No training or experience, e.g. to clean meat slicers
Human capabilities	Failure of employee, contractor / visitor to report a near-miss event	Unreliability of employees to follow safe systems of work
What protective guarding/equipment is used	Good guarding, regularly checked for effectiveness, e.g. on compactor. Correct PPE provided and worn when using harmful cleaning chemicals	Broken, missing or bypassed guards, e.g. on compactor. PPE not provided/ worn when using harmful cleaning chemicals

How to Complete Risk Assessments

Risk Assessment for any activity, hazard or group of persons is a simple procedure. Although there is no defined criteria for completing risk assessments the following logical steps have been developed and could be used in conjunction with the forms available within the Core Guidance section of the Management system to assist you completing assessments for your work area.

1. Divide the working environment into clearly identifiable areas, e.g. kitchen, stores, servery, dining room. List them on the 'Risk Assessment Register' form. Ensure that all the areas where employees work are included in the list. You could appoint a responsible person or small representative group to identify all the hazards in each area.

Example of a Completed Risk Assessment Register

Ref No.	RA Type	Area/Activity/Hazard	Created	By	Reviewed On	By
1	General Area	Kitchen	01/01/11	C. Dark	01/01/11	C. Dark
2	General Area	Servery	01/01/11	C. Dark	01/01/11	C. Dark
3	General Area	Dining room	01/01/11	C. Dark	01/01/11	C. Dark
4	General Area	Office	01/01/11	C. Dark	01/01/11	C. Dark

2. List all the hazards in each area on the 'General Area/Activity Risk Assessment' form. Think carefully about your working environment and list the hazards that are specific to you.

When considering Manual Handling hazards (strains and sprains) remember that Manual Handling is not simply lifting items. It includes pushing, pulling, lifting, carrying, tilting, etc.

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED GENERAL AREA/ACTIVITY RISK ASSESSMENT

SHEET No: _____ Assessor	Date _____	1 Negligible 2 Minor injury 3 Major injury 4 Single death 5 Multiple death 6 Multi-offsite	1 Impossible 2 Possible 3 Occasional 4 Fairly frequent 5 Frequent 6 Certainty	9+ further immediate assessment needed	Further Assessment Needed	Safe System of Work Ref No(s)
EXAMPLE FOR YOUR GUIDANCE						
Persons at Risk:		Staff, customers, visitors and contractors				
IDENTIFIED HAZARDS	SEVERITY X	PROBABLE FREQUENCY =	RISK RATING	YES/NO		
A. FALLING FROM HEIGHT						
Cleaning extract canopy	4	3	12	YES	3.02 3.03	
Use of step ladders	etc					

3. Now give a severity score to each of the hazards using the following scale – think of the worst-case scenario.

SCORE	SEVERITY of HARM
1	Negligible injuries - bruises
2	Minor injuries – injuries that need 1 st aid treatment e.g. cuts and burns
3	Major injuries – injuries needing hospital treatment e.g. broken bones
4	Single fatality – e.g. due to electrocution
5	Multiple fatality – e.g. due to fire or explosion
6	Multiple fatality offsite - e.g. involving members of the public

4. Next give a frequency score to each of the hazards using the following scale – think about the controls that you already have in place to control the hazard.

SCORE	PROBABLE FREQUENCY
1	A highly improbable occurrence
2	A remotely possible but unknown occurrence – could happen once every 2 – 3 years
3	An occasional occurrence – could happen once a year
4	A fairly frequent occurrence – could happen once every 6 months
5	A frequent and regular occurrence – could happen once a month
6	Almost a certainty – could happen at any time on any day

5. Multiply the severity and frequency scores together to achieve a Risk Rating for each hazard. If the score is less than 9, the risks are already satisfactorily controlled. Now list the number(s) of the relevant supporting 'Safe Systems of Work' in the last column of the table, or you may need to write your own Safe System of Work if a standard form is not available
6. If the Risk Rating score is 9 or more, now complete a 'Detailed Risk Assessment' form for each of those hazards. Follow the example shown. Specify the controls or procedures that will reduce the risk to an acceptable level, i.e. a risk score below 9. This may include writing a detailed, unit specific Safe System of Work as stated.

EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED DETAILED RISK ASSESSMENT

RISK ASSESSMENT CARRIED OUT AT: Main Kitchen
 UNIT MANAGER: John Smith
 RISK ASSESSED: Cleaning kitchen canopy

DATE: 1/01/11
 LOCATION: Catering Block

HAZARD/HARM POTENTIAL	SEVERITY X	FREQUENCY =	RISK RATING
1 Falling from heights of approximately 8 feet (Type of accident)			
2 Possible death if person fell against a piece of heavy equipment (worst potential)			
3 Bruises, fractures, concussion if head hits floor, flesh wounds (other potential)			
4			
RISK POTENTIAL SCORE	4 x	3 =	12
FACTORS WHICH INCREASE RISK			
1 Poor quality step ladders – not tall enough with no grab rail			
2 No training given to staff			
3 Standing on equipment			
4 Only one person involved in activity			
CONTROLS NEEDED TO REDUCE POTENTIAL			
1 Staff training, clear instruction on how to clean using safe system of work			
2 Provision of proper step ladder			
3 Minimum of two persons to carry out duty. One to foot steps and hand up equipment			
4			
REVISED SCORE IF CONTROLS PUT IN PLACE	4 x	2 =	8
OTHER MEASURES RECOMMENDED			
1 Use of professional contractor			
2			
REVIEW DATE: 1 Jan 2011			

7. Implement the controls that you have identified as necessary to reduce the risk of an accident or injury to an acceptable level. The controls will often include training. Ensure the training is given and recorded on Learner record cards.

If you cannot identify suitable controls, or it is not possible to implement them, the activity may be too dangerous for to undertake. Contact your line management/Safeguard for further assistance.

8. Periodically review the Risk Assessments.

Reviews should be undertaken:

- At least annually
- In the event of an accident or incident
- If Safeguard audits or Local Authority EHO inspections identify key controls are not in place, e.g. inadequate training or dangerous practices
- There are significant changes to the equipment, layout of the premises, type of work being undertaken in the unit, whether permanent or temporary
- Any other change in circumstances that impacts on your work activities and which may alter the risk assessment currently in place, whether that change is permanent or temporary

Record the fact that you have undertaken a review of the Risk Assessments on the Risk Assessment Register.

Risk assessments also need to be undertaken for specific hazards and activities. These include:

- Dangerous Substances & Explosive Atmospheres, e.g. LPG

- Employee Pregnancy/Nursing Mothers
- Fire (to be undertaken in conjunction with your client)
- Manual Handling
- Noise and Vibration
- Use of Chemicals
- Use of Visual Display Equipment
- Working at Heights
- Young Persons