

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL POLICY- RISK ASSESSMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

The identification of hazards and the assessment of risks are key parts of the Isle of Wight Council's policy for securing good standards of health and safety and a statutory requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Risk assessment will be carried out on an ongoing basis and to be effective it is important that all Council employees understand and co-operate, wherever they can, in the process of risk assessment.

The purpose of risk assessment is to find out if the council is managing health and safety effectively and to see if improvements can be made. The assessments will cover the tasks undertaken by staff, procedures, plant, substances and workplaces.

Staff are encouraged to help assessors by telling them exactly how the work they are involved in is carried out and to point out ways which may improve the way those tasks are undertaken. If at any time you consider that there is a serious hazard in your work area or there are problems with existing safety measures, you must tell your manager as soon as possible.

2. GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT - RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Directors will be responsible for ensuring that reference is made in Directorate safety policies to the arrangements within that Directorate for risk assessments to be carried out.

Managers will be responsible for undertaking risk assessments in their own workplace. It may be helpful, when undertaking complex risk assessments to form a risk assessment teams, comprising of a manager, a supervisor and a member of staff who regularly undertakes the activity being assessed.

Heads of Services will ensure that those members of staff who are given the task of undertaking risk assessments are provided with adequate training, sufficient time and resources to complete the risk assessments. The names of those members of staff will be included in workplace safety policies.

Managers are responsible for informing all members of their staff of the findings of their risk assessments together with the preventive measures that they expect staff to observe.

3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARRYING OUT RISK ASSESSMENTS

All members of staff who are given the task of undertaking risk assessment teams will receive training in risk assessment techniques and refresher training should be provided

Heads of Services will ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all areas for which they are responsible, producing a prioritised list based on existing knowledge of hazards, accident and ill health statistics and safety inspection results.

The techniques, forms and records for risk assessment are set out in the Council's Safety Manual, a copy of which is available on the internet. Advice and assistance in completing risk assessments will be available on the internal Health and Safety web page and on request from the Health and Safety Section.

Risk assessment records will be maintained by managers in such a way that allows all personnel to have access to the information relevant to them. A copy of all complete risk assessment forms will be sent to Directorate Safety Liaison Officers.

All general risk assessments will be reviewed at intervals of not more than **two years** or if the initial assessment is shown to no longer be valid.

Managers are responsible for informing their Head of Service of the findings of their risk assessments and for producing an action plan of remedial measures required to remove or reduce risks identified.

RISK ASSESSMENT - GUIDANCE

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require all employers to assess the risks to which their employees and non-employees may be exposed as a result of their undertaking. Any organisation employing five or more people must record the significant findings of their risk assessment. The attached forms provide a suitable format to record risk assessments, examples of completed risk assessment records will also be posted on the intranet home page.

When assessing risks it will be necessary to identify the hazards present and evaluate the extent of the risk, taking into account whatever precautions are already in place. Some health and safety legislation requires the assessment of other specific hazards, these include:

- Manual Handling
- Display Screen Equipment
- Substances Hazardous to Health
- Noise
- Personal Protective Equipment

If the above assessments have already been undertaken and remain valid it is not necessary to repeat them. However, reference should be made to those assessments in your general risk assessment together with information on where details of the completed assessments may be found.

It is also necessary to understand some of the terms that are used when considering risk assessment:

Hazard	Something with the potential to cause harm, this may be a substance, machine, an activity undertaken or another aspect of work activity.
Risk	The likelihood that the harm from a hazard will be realised.

When assessing risks it is necessary to consider the number of people who may be affected, both employees and non-employees and the consequences for them; therefore risk reflects not only the likelihood that harm will occur but also its severity. There are no set rules as to how risk assessment should be carried out, but the following general principles should be observed:

1. Ensure that all relevant risks or hazards are addressed:
 - (a) Aim to identify the significant risks in the workplace, do not concentrate on trivial risks or compiling an excess of information. Risk assessment should not be purely an administrative exercise.
 - (b) Identify first those hazards, which have the potential to cause the greatest harm.
 - (c) Where there are Specific Acts or Regulations to be complied with, these should be used to identify hazards.
 - (d) Assess the risks from identified hazards; if there are no hazards there are no risks. Look at the effectiveness of existing control measures when deciding if there is any residual risk be realistic, are those control measures observed.
 - (e) Be systematic in looking at risks and hazards, it may prove most effective to look at the hazards and risks in specific work groups such as machinery, substances, electrical, etc.
 - (f) Ensure all aspects of work activity are assessed.

2. Observe and address what actually happens in the workplace:
 - (a) Actual practice may differ from that which the manager/supervisor perceives, often the route whereby risks creep in unnoticed.
 - (b) Consider non-routine operations such as maintenance work, delivery of loads, etc.
 - (c) Interruptions to the work activity, how these may cause accidents and how they are managed.
3. Ensure that all groups of employees who may be affected are considered, such as cleaners, caretakers, visitors, etc.
4. Identify groups of workers and non-employees who may be affected by your activities and may be particularly at risk. Consider young and inexperienced staff, lone workers and staff with disabilities. Non-employees who may be especially at risk could be children or older people. Do not forget groups of other workers such as volunteers, contractors or temporary staff.
5. Take into account the existing preventative measures, do these measures effectively control the risk? Also, do they meet statutory standards or what is accepted good practice?

Staff nominated to undertake risk assessments will need training to enable them to do this competently.

Managers may find that when they actually come to undertake risk assessments it is best to follow the steps listed below:

1. Look for hazards.
2. Decide who may be harmed, and how.
3. Evaluate the risks arising from the hazard, and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or should more be done to prevent harm.
4. Record your findings, the attached form provides a suitable format for this.
5. Review your assessment from time to time and revise it as necessary, this would be required for example if you introduce a new machine, undertake a new activity or in light of an accident/near-miss.

The preventative and protection measures that have to be taken following a risk assessment should follow the principles below:

1. Where possible it is always best to avoid a risk altogether, for example, by not using a dangerous substance unless it is essential to do so.
2. Risks should be controlled at source rather than by palliative measures, it is better to treat a slippery floor than provide a warning sign.
3. Wherever possible work should be adapted to suit the individual, especially when considering the choice of work equipment and working methods.

4. Take advantage of technical and technological progress, when this offers the opportunity to reduce risks.
5. Make sure that risk prevention measures are part of a cohesive policy and approach, this will mean considering how work is to be organised, working conditions and the work environment, in order to have the progressive effect of reducing risks or avoiding them altogether.
6. Give priority to measures which will protect the whole workplace except in circumstances where your assessment has identified a risk which could result in serious injury or death, and would require immediate preventative action.
7. Ensure that staff understand what they need to do in order to minimise risks.
8. The avoidance, prevention and reduction of risks at work needs to be an accepted part of the approach and attitude to health and safety in all activities.

Managers are required to provide employees with information regarding the risks to health and safety identified by the risk assessment and the preventative and protection measures which they should observe.



RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD HS2.28

WORK AREA/WORK ACTIVITY COVERED BYASSESSMENT.....

PERSONNEL INVOLVED.....

NON-EMPLOYEES AFFECTED.....

ASSESSOR'S NAME.....DATE OF ASSESSMENT.....

ITEM NO	HAZARDS IDENTIFIED	RISKS IDENTIFIED	EXISTING PRECAUTIONS	REMEDIAL ACTION	PRIORITY FOR REMEDIAL ACTION*

*THE REMEDIAL ACTION REQUIRED MUST REFLECT THE RATING GIVEN FOR THE RISK.
REMEMBER! RISK ASSESSMENT IS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS, ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE WILL REQUIRE RE-ASSESSMENT

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