

Specialist Risk Assessments



Introduction

The fundamental cornerstone of an organisation's health and safety arrangements is the identification of potentially hazardous areas and activities, together with the health and safety risks to people involved in each of those areas and activities, having regard to health and safety law (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3).

Risk assessment is the process whereby hazards are identified on site. The likelihood of the hazard resulting in harm is then assessed for each of the hazards. The rating of risk can then be used to prioritise controls which will reduce the risk of injury to a tolerable level.

Once the hazards have been identified, the first consideration is to determine whether it is possible to remove the hazard completely. Where it is not possible to remove the hazard then it must be controlled.

William Martin can deliver a range of specialist risk assessments, which support clients meet their legal requirements in this area. The specialist risk assessment report will detail any identified deviation from statutory legislation, approved codes of practice, guidance, or industry standard practice. It also includes advice considered necessary in order to control risk to an acceptable level to prevent accidents or ill health to any persons on or in the vicinity of the property.

Employee Risk Assessment

The aim of the employee risk assessment is to assist the client in meeting their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999 and associated legislation.

The employee risk assessment will be an assessment of any health and safety risks and associated issues arising from activities undertaken by the employee / job role at the site. The assessment will include, but will not be limited to, assessments for the following:

Manual handling Assessments

According to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (MHOR), manual handling is defined as 'any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force'. These Regulations establish a clear hierarchy of measures for dealing with risks from manual handling:

- avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable;
- assess any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided; and
- reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable.

The manual handling assessment will consider risks arising from the task, making sure account is taken of the individual requirements of the working who may be at risk. The assessment will also take into account psychosocial risk factors.

Display screen equipment

The aim of a display screen equipment assessment is to ensure employees are protected from the health risks of working with display screen equipment (DSE) such as PC's, laptops, tablets and smartphones. The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations apply to workers who use DSE daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more.

The legislation requires employers to complete a DSE workstation assessment. The DSE assessment includes a review of documentation held followed by a physical inspection of the individual employee workspace and an assessment of any identified health and safety risks. The process also includes a review of the existing control measures, policies and procedures to ensure that they are being effectively implemented, insofar as this can be checked during the time on site.

Hazardous substances

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) requires employers to adequately control exposure to materials in the workplace that cause ill health. Health hazards are not limited those substances that have hazard warning symbols on, they also include substances produced by processes e.g. wood dust from sanding, silica dust from tile cutting.

The Regulations require that hazards are identified, by reading labels and safety data sheets, please note that the later are not COSHH assessments. Substances with workplace exposure limits (WEL's) are hazardous to health. The COSHH assessment will consider how workers are exposed, for how long, others potentially affected, what is being done to control the risks and what further action is needed, by whom and when.

Lone working and personal safety

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers must manage the risk to lone workers. This will require an assessment of who will be involved, and which hazards could harm those working alone.

The assessment will consider risks that particularly affect lone workers, such as violence in the workplace, stress and mental health or wellbeing, high risk work or a person's medical suitability to work along and the workplace itself.

Personal protective equipment

The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 place a duty on employers to ensure that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is:

- properly assessed before use to make sure it is fit for purpose
- maintained and stored properly
- provided with instructions on how to use it safely
- used correctly by workers

Employers must do a risk assessment. The PPE assessment will consider whether PPE is needed, using the hierarchy of controls. Some hazards may still remain after engineering controls and safe systems of work have been applied and as a result PPE may then be needed, as a last resort to reduce the risk of injury.

First aid

As an employer, you must undertake a first aid needs assessment. You are best placed to understand the exact nature of your workplace and decide what you need to provide.

First aid provision must be 'adequate and appropriate in the circumstances'. This means that you must provide sufficient first aid equipment (first aid kit), facilities and personnel at all times.

The first aid needs assessment will consider the circumstances of your workplace, workforce and the hazards and risks that may be present. The findings will help you decide what first-aid arrangements you need to put in place.

General work activities

Some work activities pose a higher risk than others. To ensure compliance with legislation, it may be necessary to complete a risk assessment for a specific work activity e.g. use of equipment or machinery.

The assessment would follow the general principles of risk assessment, to identify hazards and control them so far as is reasonably practicable.

The above assessments will detail any identified deviation from statutory legislation, approved codes of practice, guidance, industry standard practice and client procedures. It also includes recommended actions considered necessary in order to control risk to an acceptable level and prevent incidents, accidents or ill health.

The process also includes an audit of existing control measures, policies and procedures to ensure that they are being effectively implemented, in so far as this can be checked during time on site.

Work at Height Risk Assessment

Falls from height are one of the biggest causes of workplace fatalities and major injuries. As such, work at height activities are deemed to be high risk and therefore require more specific focus and risk assessment.

The aims and objectives of a work at height risk assessment are to increase the awareness of employers, so they identify when they, their employees or others are working at height and any precautions they need to take.

The risk assessment will be completed in line with the requirements of Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Work at Height Regulations. The former require that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment be undertaken.

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 (WAHR) focuses on managers to organise and plan work at height, ensure competence of all involved, ensure risk avoidance with appropriate selection of work equipment and appropriate inspection of work equipment used for work at height.

The work at height risk assessment consists of:

- A physical inspection of the property by a competent consultant
- Assessment of any previous reports and actions therein
- Additionally identified risks or actions
- Review of control measures and procedures to ensure effective implementation.

The assessment will identify all relevant statutory health and safety failings pertaining to the site and identify the necessary preventative and pro-active steps to correct these. In addition to the failings, the report will identify all areas of potential risk checked and assess performance against each and all of these areas.

Workplace Transport Risk Assessment

Every year, about 50 people are killed and over 5000 injured in incidents involving workplace transport. The most common causes are people being struck by a vehicle, objects falling from a vehicle or vehicles overturning. As a result, there is a need for a more focused approach to risk assessment where there is greater risk posed by workplace transport.

The aim of the workplace transport risk assessment is to assist the client in meeting their duties under the following and associated legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996

The workplace transport health and safety risk assessment and audit process includes a review of documentation held followed by a physical inspection of the property by a competent consultant and an assessment of any identified health and safety transport risks. The risk assessment will consider the site, vehicles, drivers and pedestrians.

The process also includes a review of the existing control measures, policies and procedures to ensure that they are being effectively implemented, insofar as this can be checked during the time on site.

Wherever possible the consultant will require physical evidence, such as documented records, to demonstrate that a control exists. If evidence is not available, the consultant will raise an action to provide this.



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 0203 819 8829

 enquiries@wmcompliance.co.uk

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London Office, 20 Grosvenor Place, London, SW1X 7HN

Registered Office, C/O Marlowe Plc, 20 Grosvenor Place, London, England SW1X 7HN

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