

How to complete a Risk Assessment (RA)

All Exhibitors/Contractors are reminded of their duty in law to undertake written RAs on behalf of their employees and to develop safe working practices arising from this process.

Safe working depends on co-operation between all the firms on-site. Take this into account and consider necessary precautions on every aspect of the work being carried out, which include training and the provision of information to all the different parties who are at risk e.g. the workman, other people working on the stand, other exhibitors, porters moving furniture, visitors etc.

- The Legal requirement under the management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires that the Employer make a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to the health and safety of employees and non-employees (the assessment is to be carried out with a view to identifying what measures need to be implemented, to comply with legal requirements).
- There should be particular emphasis placed on assessment of risks for:
 1. new and expectant mothers, both at work and visiting
 2. fire
 3. children
- The RA should identify hazards, their existing control measures and all additional controls required to reduce the likelihood to a level that is reasonably practicable. Additional factors are to be considered, that take into account the location and temporary nature of the event.
- The aim of the RA is not to list every possible hazard but to identify hazards that may present a significant risk. It may be that a control measure is already in place and if this is the case this should be identified and if sufficient, no further action is required, provided that the control measures are undertaken. If further control measures are required these should be identified and the action/processes undertaken. A RA is not only a paper exercise designed to eliminate risk but a living document that can change to meet changes in work practices, new processes and materials.
- Help and advice on risk assessments is available from the Health and Safety Executive: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk>
- You may also wish to consult with the eGuide, which is an industry guide covering all aspects of an international Exhibition or Event: <http://theg-guide.org/>

- A RA is nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill. Accidents and ill health can ruin lives, and affect your business, machinery is damaged, insurance costs increase and a potential court case could arise.. You are legally required to assess the risks in your workplace.
- The important things you need to decide are whether a hazard is significant, and whether you have it covered by satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. For instance, electricity can kill but the risk of it doing so in an office environment is remote, provided that 'live' components are insulated and metal casings properly earthed.
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have designed a simple process for undertaking risk assessments. Extracts and instructions from this process have been included for your information and guidance. The use of this system is by no means compulsory or indeed mandatory and many organisations have developed systems that meet their own needs, however, this guide will make use of the HSE's Five Steps to RA.

STEP 1: LOOK FOR THE HAZARDS

1.1 Look only for hazards that you would reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace. Ask yourself the questions below and view some of the items we have listed as a guide:

- What equipment, materials and chemicals will be used?
- How much noise and dust will there be?
- What are the ground conditions?
- What vehicle movements and lifting; operations have to be considered?
- How are you disposing of waste?
- Are any electrical installations being carried out?
- What hazardous exhibits do you have?
- A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm e.g. a worker falling from a ladder, dropping tools, moving large and heavy loads etc.
- Slipping/tripping hazards (eg poorly maintained floors or stairs)
- Fire (eg from flammable materials)
- Chemicals (eg battery acid)
- Moving parts of machinery (eg blades)
- Work at height (eg from mezzanine floors)
- Ejection of material (eg from plastic moulding)
- Pressure systems (eg steam boilers)
- Vehicles (eg fork-lift trucks)
- Electricity (eg poor wiring)
- Dust (eg from grinding)
- Fumes (eg welding)
- Manual handling
- Noise
- Poor lighting
- Low temperature

STEP 2: DECIDE WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW

2.1 Ask yourself the questions below. There is no need to list individuals by name. Think about groups of people doing similar work or who may be affected, eg

- Who will be affected by your work and most at risk?
- Who are your employees, contractors or exhibitors on or near your stand,
- How will your visitors be effected?
- Groups:
 - Office staff
 - Maintenance personnel
 - Contractors
- People sharing your workplace
- Operators
- Cleaners
- Members of the public with particular attention to:
 - Staff with disabilities
 - Visitors
 - Inexperienced staff
 - Lone workers

STEP 3: EVALUATE THE RISKS

3.1 A risk is the likelihood of a hazard happening. Decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done for the hazards listed, do the precautions already taken:

- meet the standards set by a legal requirement?
- comply with a recognised industry standard?
- represent good practice?
- reduce risk as far as reasonably practicable?

Once you have done this adequately, you can then decide on the appropriate action. Ask yourself:

- Can the hazards or risk be removed completely or done in a different way?
- If the risk cannot be eliminated, can it be isolated, controlled or reduced?
- Can protective measures be taken that will protect the entire workforce on-site? Protective clothing should only be the last step to take, and is often not the only solution.

Have you provided?

- Adequate information, instruction or training?
- Adequate systems or procedures?

If so, then the risks are adequately controlled, but you need to indicate the precautions you have in place. (You may refer to procedures, company

rules, etc.)

Where the risk is not adequately controlled, indicate what more you need to do (the 'action list')

Examples of common risks associated with exhibitions:

- Multiple contractors working in a single workplace
- Fall from working at heights and working on a live edge
- Slips, trips and falls on a level surface
- Manual handling – lifting or moving of heavy/awkward loads
- Falls on stairs or escalators
- Injury from electric shock
- Objects falling from height or loads falling from vehicles
- Impact injury from moving vehicles
- Injury from use of work equipment e.g. circular saws
- Hanging wires
- Structural collapse of seating or an exhibition stand
- Outbreak of Legionnaires disease from a water feature
- Food poisoning incident from temporary catering outlet
- Fire and fire related incidents
- Major incident and civil emergency
- Excessive working hours
- Stress
- Alcohol and drug misuse related incidents

STEP 4: RECORD THE FINDINGS

4.1 Write down the significant hazards and conclusions. Examples might be 'Electrical installations: insulation and earthing checked and found sound' or 'Fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked' (These examples are guidelines only). You must also tell your employees about your findings.

4.2 Risk assessments must be suitable and sufficient - not perfect! You need to be able to show that:

- a proper check was made
- you asked who might be affected
- you dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved
- the precautions are reasonable
- the remaining risk is low

STEP 5: REVIEW YOUR ASSESSMENT

5.1 Review your assessment and revise it if necessary. Inevitably, you will bring in new machines, substances and procedures, which could lead to new hazards. If there is any significant change, add this to the assessment to take account of the new hazard. Do not amend your assessment for every trivial change, or still more, for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards of its own, they will need to be considered in their own right in order to keep the risks levels low. It is good practice to review your assessment from time to time to make sure that the precautions are still working effectively. This allows you to learn by experience and take account of any unusual conditions or changes that occurred on-site.

5.2 We require a written risk assessment from all Exhibitors/Contractors, if after undertaking the risk assessment no significant hazards have been identified that require control measures please annotate this on the risk assessment.

NEXT STEP – WRITE A RISK ASSESSMENT