

'Sensible Risk Management and Risk Assessment'

Dave Guyers

HM Inspector Health & Safety

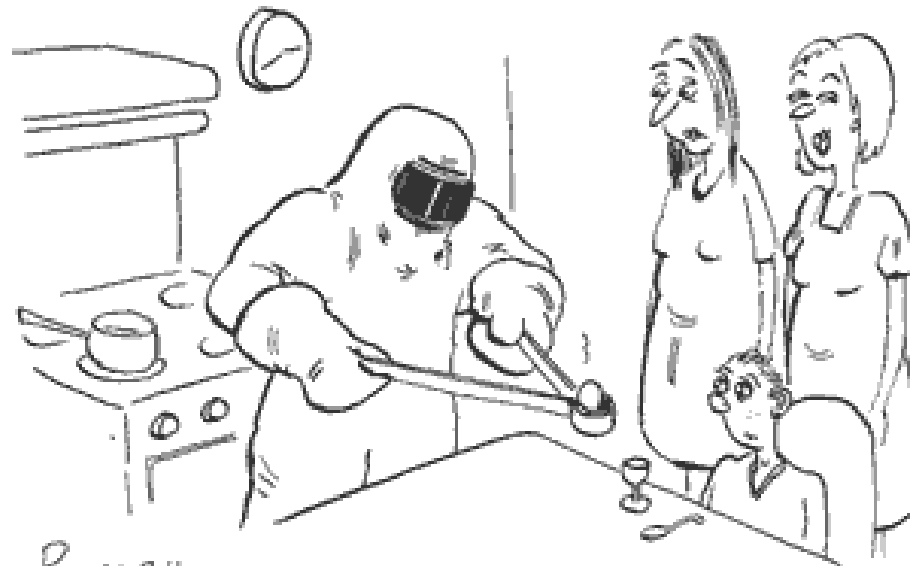
Roger Barker

Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council

Today.....

- Sensible risk management
- Myths and reality of risk assessment
- Help with risk assessments

'Elf and Safety'



Russell

*"My husband works for the Health and
Safety Executive"*

What is sensible health and safety?

- Ensuring workers and the public are properly protected
- Benefiting society
 - balancing benefits and risks, with a focus on reducing *real risks*
 - Risks which arise more often and those with serious consequences
- Enabling innovation and learning *not* stifling them
- Those who create risks manage them responsibly
 - failure to manage real risks responsibly is likely to lead to robust action
- Ensuring individuals understand that as well as the right to protection, they also have to exercise responsibility

Sensible risk management *is not* about:

- Creating a totally risk free society
- Generating useless paperwork mountains
- Scaring people by exaggerating or publicising trivial risks
- Stopping important recreational and learning activities for individuals where the risks are managed
- Reducing protection of people from risks that cause real harm and suffering

Why Risk Assess?

Key Statistics – 2007-08

- 229 workers killed at work
- 136,000+ reported major & over-3-day injuries but subject to under reporting and estimated to be around 300,000
- 2.2 million people with work-related illnesses
- 34 million working days lost (6m – injuries : 28m ill health)

MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK REGULATIONS 1999

- **Regulation 3(1) Every Employer Shall Make a Suitable and Sufficient Assessment of-**
- **a) the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and**
- **b) the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking**

Hazard v Risk

- **HAZARD** - is anything that can cause harm (eg chemicals, electricity, moving parts of machinery, transport) etc
- **RISK** - is the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard (eg chemical burns, electric shock, injury from moving machinery, impact with moving vehicle) etc

“Risk? What risk?”



Myths - Risk Assessments must always be long & complex



The right message??



Common Principles

- **Focus on health and safety**
- **Avoid risk in first instance**
- **Assessment of risk which cannot be avoided**
- **Control risk at source**
- **Substitute dangerous by less dangerous or non dangerous**
- **Collective protection measures have priority over individual protective measures**
- **Provide information, instruction and training**

Significant Risks

- Not all risks – prioritise/context
- Who can identify the risks?
- Generic risks made site specific
- Which risks can you control?
- Have you done enough?

How to do a risk assessment

HSE Five steps to risk assessment

1. Identify the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on the precautions you need to take
4. Record your findings and implement them
5. Review your assessment and update it if necessary

Risk assessment in practice

- Size – 1-2 A4 pages
- Content – need to acknowledge different risks in a process – break it down
- Group similar risks together
- Use of tick boxes/risk scores – beware!
- Good basis for SOP or training script
- ‘Hit the target but miss the point’

Risk Assessments



- **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**
- **Manual Handling**
- **Display Screen Equipment**
- **Noise**
- **Workplace**
- **Work Equipment**
- **Transport**
- **Fire**
- **General**

Examples of when Risk Assessments go wrong!

- **RA not carried out**
- Driver crushed between lorries
- Contractor falls through fragile skylight
- **RA not suitable/sufficient**
- Gardener using mower on a slope
- Operative loses fingers when cleaning a machine

Risk Assessment - Summary

It is not about:

- stopping people from doing things
- creating long, complex and bureaucratic arrangements

It is about:

- identifying ways of enabling people to do things in a safe way
- identifying practical steps to protect people from the risks that cause real harm and suffering

Conclusion

- **1. Risk assessment is a legal requirement and it is the route by which you ensure that the workplace is safe;**
- **2. By following the systematic approach outlined most people who can run their own business can carry out risk assessments**
- **3. Risk assessments lead to better business control which in turn leads to a safer and more profitable business**

Further help

- www.hse.gov.uk
 - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/index.htm>
 - Five steps to risk assessment
 - Example risk assessments
 - Your industry
 - Myth of the Month!
- HSE Infoline 0845 345 0055