

# Introduction – Fire Risk Assessment (How to complete)

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## Introduction

This document suggests information that should be contained in a fire risk assessment record. When completed in accordance with all suggestions it may serve as a record of a fire risk assessment as required by **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**

When these Regulations came into force there is now a requirement for all employers to:

- Carry out a fire risk assessment of the workplace taking into consideration all employees and all other people who may be affected by a fire in the workplace, and to make adequate provision for any disabled people with special needs who use or may be present in the premises;
- Identify the significant findings of the risk assessment and the details of anyone who might be especially at risk in case of fire. If more than five people are employed it is a requirement that these significant findings are recorded; *(However it is recommended that a written record is produced on all occasions to assist with the process of on going reviews)*
- Provide and maintain such fire precautions as are necessary to safeguard those who use the workplace; and
- Provide information, instruction and training to employees about the fire precautions in the workplace

***The recording of information within this document should be in a narrative format and not simply a Yes or No answer to a question.***

## Fire Risk Assessment (How to complete)

Divide the premises into areas/rooms/floors as necessary and carry out a fire risk assessment for each part. During the assessment and evaluation of the findings you should bear in mind the following.

### Significant Findings:

Upon completion of the fire risk assessment, the significant findings should be recorded. The significant findings should include:

- a record of the protective and preventative measures already in place to control the risks;
- what further action, if any, needs to be taken to reduce risk sufficiently;

### Review and Revision

The assessment should be reviewed or revised following any of the following:-

- *Any significant change of work practices*
- *Any significant change in staff levels*
- *Any structural or material alteration to the premises*
- *Any near miss or fire*
- *Reviewed at least annually*

## 1 Premises Particulars

Specify the following particulars:

- *Name and Address of Premises:*
- *Use of Premises:*
- *Owner/Employer/Person(s) in Control of the Workplace:*
- *Telephone Number:*
- *Date of Risk Assessment:*
- *Date of Review:*
- *Name & relevant details of the person carrying out the Fire Risk Assessment:*

## 2 Provide a general statement of policy

A safety policy is a written statement of an employer's intent to ensure the safety of their employees. The purpose of the safety policy is to give clear commitment to comply with the relevant Regulations.

*Example:*

*"It is the policy of (employer/company/etc.) to protect all persons including employees, customers, contractors and members of the public from potential injury and damage to their health which might arise from work activities.*

*The company will provide and maintain safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees, and to provide such information, training and supervision as they need for this purpose.*

The company will give a high level of commitment to health and safety and will comply with all statutory requirements.

### 3. Management Systems

Provide a statement specifying the planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the fire risk assessment.

- **Planning** – *How the employer proposes to complete the Fire Risk Assessment and determine priorities in eliminating any hazards and reducing risks to persons*
- **Organisation** – *How the organisation is structured. To include how Health and Safety information is communicated to all employees, and what their involvement has been in complying with all aspects of the Fire Risk Assessment*
- **Control** - *Identify the people (at all levels) who may have responsibility for carrying out the Management of Health and Safety issues throughout the workplace.*
- **Monitoring** – *Identify how the employer will measure the success of the Health and Safety policy. This should include regular checks of fire precautions, investigation of causes of incidents and the recording of other relevant information.*
- **Review** – *Identify a regular review procedure to include any identified deficiencies and a process by which they can be rectified.*

### 4 General description of the premises

Give a general description of the premises and the use to which it is put  
Include the following details:

- *Construction detail of the premises (i.e. Brick/Timber/Concrete)*
- *Approximate age of premises*
- *Times in use*
- *Total number of persons employed in the premises at any one time*
- *Total number of persons who may resort to the premises at any one time*
- *Size of the premises (Length and Width and/or area)*
- *Number of floors and staircases*

## 5 Fire Safety Systems

Give details of any fire safety systems in the premises such as fire warning systems, escape lighting, sprinklers, etc.

*(e.g. Fire alarm break- glass system to British Standard 5839, escape lighting to British Standard 5266)*

If none are to be provided briefly state the reasoning for that decision.

*(e.g. Small open workshop, only three people at any one time, clear visibility, word of mouth sufficient to raise the alarm).*

## 6 Plan drawing

To assist the assessor in completing an assessment, and employees in understanding the findings and evacuation procedures/plans it is recommended that a single line drawing of the premises/area/room/floor is prepared, which should be attached to the risk assessment.

The plan should show:

- *Escape routes,*
- *Number of exits,*
- *Number of stairs,*
- *Fire resisting doors,*
- *Fire resisting walls and partitions,*
- *Places of safety etc.*
- *Fire safety signs and notices (i.e. pictographic fire exit signs, fire action notices etc.*
- *The location of fire warning devices (i.e. break-glass alarm points, sounders, rotary gongs)*
- *The location of emergency lights (to include hand held torches if provided)*
- *The location and type of fire fighting equipment (i.e. water extinguishers, foam extinguishers, etc.)*

## 7 Identify Fire Hazards within the Area/Room/Floor

Consider any fire hazards within the area/room/floor:

- **Ignition sources**
  - *Smoking materials /matches, lighters etc.*
  - *Naked flames /hot work processes,*
  - *Fixed /portable heaters,*
  - *Boilers /engines /machinery,*
  - *Cooking,*
  - *Lighting equipment,*
  - *Friction /sparks,*
  - *Arson,*

- **Fuel Sources**

- *Flammable liquids /solvents /oils etc,*
- *Chemicals,*
- *Wood /paper /cardboard etc,*
- *Plastics /rubber /foam,*
- *Furniture and furnishings,*
- *Flammable gases*
- *Textiles,*
- *Display materials,*
- *Waste materials,*

- **Work Processes**

Can any fire risks identified be removed, replaced or reduced?

- **Structural Features**

*Consider any structural features that could promote the spread of fire (e.g. open staircases, openings in walls and floors, large voids above ceilings and below floors). Additionally consider the potential combustibility of any structural features.*

## **8 People who would be at Risk from Fire**

*Consider:*

- *Employees*
- *Visitors / Customers*
- *Employees, visitors, and other persons whose mobility, hearing or eyesight is impaired*
- *Other persons in the premises if the premises are multi-occupied · Varied working practices (i.e. areas of your premises occupied when others are not)*
- *Areas where employees/others are isolated*
- *Contractors*
- *Persons who may be asleep in your premises*

## 9 Means of Escape – Horizontal Evacuation

**Consideration of the following factors should be recorded in a narrative format and not simply a Yes/No answer to a question.**

Consider:

- *How fire hazards are controlled within the area/room/floor*
- *The need to control and monitor the number of occupants*
- *The number of occupants in the area/room/floor and their familiarity with the premises*
- *The likely spread of fire*
- *The time it would probably take to escape (2-3 minutes?)*
- *In the event of a fire can all persons safely evacuate the premises after taking into account the fire risks in the area?*
- *Travel distances. How far to the nearest exit?*
- *Definition and number of escape routes. Easily identified and available at all times?*
- *Number and widths of exits. Sufficient to evacuate all occupants quickly and easily?*
- *Inner rooms situations. Is there exit only available through another room?*
- *Corridors. Do they need to be protected by fire resisting walls and doors?*
- *Dead-end conditions. Is there only one way out?*
- *Door openings and door fastenings. Can door(s) be opened easily without the use of a key?*
- *Do all escape routes lead to a place of safety (e.g. not to an enclosed yard)?*
- *Housekeeping. Is there storage of combustibles or obstructions in escape routes?*
- *Sufficient number of stairways.*
- *Provisions for people with disabilities (Deaf, Blind, Mobility issues or special needs) etc.*

## 10 Means of Escape – Vertical Evacuation

Consider:

- *Are there sufficient stairways to get all occupants out of the premises even if one stairway is*
- *Inaccessible due to fire?*
- *Are the stairways wide enough to get all occupants out of the premises? (including disabled persons)*
- *Do the doors, walls and partitions to the stairways need to be fire resisting (i.e. could a fire spread to the Staircase(s) before occupants have evacuated taking in to account the fire hazards present)?*
- *Do the exits from the stairways lead to place of safety (e.g. not to an enclosed yard)*

## **11 Fire Safety Signs and Notices**

- *Do all fire safety signs comply with the current standard (pictogram – symbols)?*
- *Are there sufficient fire exit signs on the escape routes?*
- *Are internal fire resisting doors indicated with “Fire Door-Keep Shut” notices?*
- *Are internal fire resisting doors to cupboards indicated with “Fire Door –Keep Locked Shut” signs?*
- *Where necessary are fire exit doors marked with “Fire Exit-Keep Clear” notices? (outside face)*
- *Are there signs indicating how to use door opening mechanisms e.g. “Push Bar to Open”?*
- *Are general fire action notices displayed stating what to do in a fire situation?*
- *Is fire-fighting equipment indicated?*

## **12 Fire Warning Systems**

- *Is there a suitable fire warning system to alert occupants in the event of a fire?*
- *If the premises are large and/or complex an electric fire alarm should be installed to the current British Standard.*
- *Can all occupants be alerted when the alarm when it is sounded? (Including persons with hearing difficulties)*
- *Is there a need for automatic fire detection i.e. sleeping risks, multi-occupied premises, varied working, inner rooms situations, mezzanine floors?*

## **13 Emergency lighting System**

- *If the premises are in use during the hours of darkness (consider winter months) escape lighting should be provided. (However, adjacent Street lighting through external glazing, may be considered)*
- *Areas of the premises with no natural light (internal spaces) should be provided with escape lighting.*
- *If the premises are large and/or complex an escape lighting system should be installed to the current British Standard.*
- *Where the premises are small a number of hand held torches strategically located may be sufficient?*
- *When operated is there sufficient illumination for occupants to see the external escape routes clearly?*
- *Does the system operate on sub-circuit failure?*
- *Is there sufficient illumination at changes in level and changes in direction?*
- *Is there sufficient illumination to show fire exit doors and their operation?*
- *Is there sufficient illumination to show fire alarm call points and fire fighting equipment?*

## 14 Fire Fighting Equipment

- *Is there sufficient fire fighting equipment provided for the area/room/floor?*
- *Is the fire fighting equipment appropriate for the risks?*
- *Is the fire fighting equipment simple to use?*
- *Has a competent person checked fire extinguishers within the last twelve months?*
- *Does it conform to a standard?*
- *Is the fire fighting equipment located on the escape routes and near to exit doors?*
- *Is it securely hung on wall brackets or suitable floor plates, unobstructed and easily accessible?*

## 15 Maintenance

The means of escape and other fire safety provisions must be maintained, at suitable intervals, by a competent person and the maintenance recorded.

Produce a maintenance schedule that covers the means of escape, signs and notices, fire warning system, escape lighting if provided and fire fighting equipment.

Specify who will carry out the maintenance and where it will be recorded. (*Fire Log Book*)

Use the table opposite to check that all the fire safety provisions have been covered in the maintenance schedule. Attach the maintenance record to the risk assessment.

### Recommended maintenance schedule

Equipment	Period	Action
Fire detection and fire warning systems including self-contained smoke alarms and manually operated devices.	Weekly	Check all systems for state of repair and operation. Repair or replace defective units. Test Operation of systems, self-contained alarms and manually operated devices.
	Six monthly	Check and test of system by competent service engineer. Clean self-contained smoke alarms and change batteries.
Emergency lighting equipment including self-contained units and torches.	Weekly	Operate torches and replace batteries as required. Repair or replace any defective unit;
	Monthly	Check all systems, units and torches for state of repair and apparent working order.
	Annually	Full check and test of systems and units by competent service engineer. Replace batteries in torches.
Firefighting equipment including hose reels.	Weekly	Check all extinguishers including hose reels for correct installation and apparent working order.
	Annually	Full check and test by competent service engineer.

## 16 Method of Calling the Fire Service

Establish and record the method by which the fire service would be called in the event of a fire.

*i.e. (Automatic/person)*

## 17 Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Produce an emergency action plan, which details procedures in the event of a fire in the workplace.

*The EAP should cover:*

- *all foreseeable events*
- *the action employees should take if they discover a fire*
- *how people will be warned*
- *how the evacuation is carried out (action on hearing fire warning)*
- *to include the evacuation of visitors and people with disabilities*
- *assembly points*
- *procedures for checking the premises have been evacuated*
- *identify escape routes*
- *fire fighting equipment*
- *duties and identities of persons with specific responsibilities in the event of a fire*
- *where appropriate the isolating of machinery and processes*
- *how the fire service are called and by who*
- *liaison with fire service on arrival*

Attach the EAP to the risk assessment

## 18 Training

All employees should receive fire safety training including a full explanation of the EAP. This should be carried out on induction and other regular periods. (Usually once or twice a year)

The training programme should also include the following:

- *who receives training,*
- *what training is given,*
- *how often it is given,*
- *where it is recorded. (to include staff acknowledgement of training given)*

Attach the training programme to the risk assessment.

## Fire Drills

Regular fire drills should be carried out to both support the training given and to test the procedures work appropriately.

## **19 Rectification of Fire Safety deficiencies**

- Make a list of the fire safety deficiencies found from the fire risk assessment.
- Prioritise and rectify the deficiencies.
- Once fully rectified, amend the fire risk assessment sheets and fire safety records.
- Review the fire risk assessment as appropriate

## **20 Significant Findings**

From the outcomes of the risk assessment record the significant findings.

The significant findings should include:

- A record of the protective and preventative measures currently in place to control the risks.
- What further action, if any, needs to be taken to reduce risk sufficiently.  
(As identified in Section 19 Fire Safety deficiencies)

## **21 Additional Hazards**

Although not forming part of the risk assessment persons in control of a workplace are requested to inform the Fire Authority of any additional hazards within the workplace.

Emergency crews entering the site/building should be made aware of any hazards which may affect their safety, particularly those which may require special procedures for fire fighting.

Specify any such hazard and inform the Fire Authority in order that an appropriate operational plan can be undertaken.