

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Summary

A complete set of forms to assist in undertaking fire risk assessments is included in this pack.

Introduction (FRA1)	- This sheet, an introduction to fire risk assessment
Guide (FRA2)	- Guidance notes for undertaking the assessment
Ratings (FRA3)	- How to generate a risk rating, with examples
Overview (FRA4)	- Summary analysis form
Detailed (FRA5)	- Detailed analysis form

These forms should be used when completing all new fire risk assessments and when reviewing existing assessments. They are available to photocopy or print as required.

1. Introduction

When a fire occurs in the workplace there is a risk that the fire will trap or injure people as they attempt to escape. In every workplace a fire risk assessment must now be carried out. The purpose of this assessment is to identify where fires may start and the consequences in terms of possible injury to anyone who may be affected by that fire, either directly or during the subsequent evacuation.

2. Legislation

The Fire Precautions Act 1971 covers the requirement for fire certificates for certain buildings, the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, made under that Act, place an absolute duty on every employer to comply with the Regulations in all work premises (including temporary structures). The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require a risk assessment to be carried out to identify any measures required by the Fire Precautions Regulations.

These Regulations mean that all workplaces may be subject to an inspection by the Fire Authority.

3. Responsibilities

Those appointed responsible for Health and Safety should satisfy themselves that risks to health and safety arising within their sphere of control are properly assessed and controlled so far as is reasonably practicable. Competent persons should conduct fire risk assessments, and a register of assessments should be compiled and maintained.

4. Administration / Record Keeping

All original FRAs should be signed by the person compiling the assessment, and should be retained with existing fire certificates for inspection by the authorities if required.

GUIDE NOTES

Important note

All of the significant combustible materials within a building should be identified and their hazards assessed.

Special attention should be made to those materials, which are easily ignited such as large quantities of paper, contents of waste bins, flammable liquids or other materials or powders. Some potential fire hazards are easily identified and may be obvious, particularly where heat or flames are already involved (welding, driers, ovens etc.). Others, because naked flames are not directly involved, can be easily overlooked.

There are many sources of ignition, including flames, sparks, electricity, frictional heat, electrostatic discharge, direct heat, spontaneous combustion, and oxidation, as well as arson which in itself is still one of the most common causes of fires.

Step 1 Identify the Hazards

- Assess the fire risks; consider sources of ignition, combustible material and structural features that could promote the spread of fire.
- Check that a fire can be detected in a reasonable time and that people can be warned.
- Check that people who may be in the building at the time can get out safely.
- Ensure that reasonable fire fighting equipment, of the correct type, is available.
- Check that those in the building know what to do in the event of a fire.
- Check that the fire safety equipment is correctly located and maintained.

Where hazards are identified steps should be taken to reduce the risks by removing or reducing the ignition sources and quantities of combustible materials. To reduce the risk to people there should be adequate fire escape routes, fire detection, alarms and fire fighting equipment. There is little you can do about the structure of the premises but take note of any ducting, which is not adequately sealed, or fire doors that are broken. Take steps to rectify these matters.

Step 2 Estimate the Risk

With this information a risk assessment can be produced using the fire risk assessment ratings (FRA3), and forms (FRA4 and FRA5), to identify and record the level of risk within the workplace. Estimate the likely risk and the consequences should a fire occur using the guidance given in FRA3, and then calculate the overall risk rating. Where there are several areas with similar hazards, the summary form FRA4 can be used in conjunction with form FRA5. This process will allow an overall assessment of the building or area to be given on the summary assessment form, whilst identifying specific risks in individual workplaces using the more detailed form FRA4.

Step 3 Further Actions

Once completed the FRA Forms should be signed by the person carrying out the assessment. Where a risk rating higher than 'Low' has been identified appropriate action must be instigated to reduce risks as low as practicable.

Step 4 Review the Assessment

Assessments must be reviewed if there is any significant change to the workplace or its use; it is also good practice to review assessments regularly to ensure their continued validity. Do not amend the assessment for every trivial change, but if a new task or procedure is introduced into the work area consider the effects it may have on existing assessments. Each time the assessment is reviewed, the appropriate section of the form should be completed.

FRA2

RISK RATINGS

In order for a subjective risk analysis to be made, consideration should be given to identifying the hazards, establishing the likelihood of an ignition occurring and determining the consequences of a fire (harm caused, duration of interruption and financial loss).

<u>Risk - A</u>		<u>Consequences - B</u>	
1	Minimal	1	Negligible
2	Low	2	Slight
3	Possible	3	Moderate
4	Likely	4	Severe
5	High	5	Major

A * B = RISK RATING (C) - Multiply the values together to get the **Risk Rating (C)**

C = 1-4	LOW	Low risk, probably no action needed
C = 5-10	MEDIUM	Reduce the risk and increase awareness.
C = 11-16	HIGH	Provide alarm and/or automatic fire extinguishing equipment
C = >16	EXTREME	Very urgent, evacuate this area until a major reduction in the risk rating has been achieved.

Risk - A

This rating takes into account the possibility of a fire occurring. Consideration is given to identifying any combustible materials, and the possible ignition sources. These ratings may vary for specific hazards such as arson, which will make most scenarios high risk.

- A = 1 Minimal:** (Very low combustible materials, no obvious source of ignition)
- A = 2 Low:** (Some combustible materials, no obvious source of ignition)
- A = 3 Possible:** (Amounts of combustible materials, possible sources of ignition)
- A = 4 Likely:** (A large source of combustible materials, likely sources of ignition)
- A = 5 High:** (Large source of combustible materials and/or multiple sources of ignition)

The consequences - B

This takes account of installed protection, the training of staff in appropriate procedures (especially those associated with the proper use of the installed safeguards) and overall management support and control.

- B = 1 Negligible:** (Virtually no damage, very localised)
- B = 2 Slight:** (Limited damage, no risk to life safety)
- B = 3 Moderate:** (Some fire and smoke damage, possibility of fire spread, 'controlled' danger)
- B = 4 Severe:** (Likely fire or smoke spread, potential danger to personnel and property)
- B = 5 Major:** (Probable building loss, significant and immediate danger to personnel)

Example

Area	Hazard	A	B	AxB=C	Risk Rating
Disposal stores	Packaging materials		4	12	HIGH

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT DETAILED FORM

SITE ADDRESS.....

Area assessed by this form:.....

Numbers of staff in areas:.....

Possible numbers of visitors in area:.....

Specific Hazards Identified: (Flammable materials, sources of ignition)

Means of Raising Alarm and Escape: (Fire detectors, escape routes)

Fire fighting Equipment: (Sizes and types of extinguisher, fire sprinklers, automatic suppression)

Control measures

Assessment

Reviewed by:

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Date:

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