

Example risk assessment for a road haulage company

Setting the scene

The owner/manager did the risk assessment at this road haulage company, which is located on an industrial estate near the docks on the outskirts of a major city. It has a fleet of three 44-tonne, flat-bed, curtain-sided articulated lorries and two rigid flat-bed lorries. It does general haulage, locally, and UK trucking (long haul). The company does not carry goods covered by the Carriage of Dangerous Goods Regulations 2007.

The yard contains sufficient parking for the lorries and staff cars, and a separate area for a diesel tank.

There is a small office with toilets and washing facilities attached.

Seven people work for the company – a manager/owner, five drivers and an administrator. If a driver is absent, the owner will normally cover for him. Agency drivers are occasionally used.

How was the risk assessment done?

The owner/manager first looked at relevant guidance on the HSE website including:

- The health and safety toolbox: How to control risks at work (www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/index.htm)
- Haulage (www.hse.gov.uk/logistics/index.htm)

He then identified the hazards in his business. He did this by:

- walking around the premises, including the office and the yard, noting what might cause harm
- talking to members of staff to learn from their knowledge and experience and listen to their concerns and opinions about health and safety
- looking at the accident book to learn what had previously resulted in incidents or near misses.

As he identified the hazards he thought about who could be harmed by them and how accidents might happen.

He noted what he was already doing to control the risks and considered whether he needed to do anything more. He then recorded any further action required.

How to use this example

This example risk assessment shows a wide range of hazards that might be present in this type of small business. It can be used as a guide to help you think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks.

However, this is not a generic risk assessment. Every business is different. To satisfy the law you must identify and assess the hazards your business poses, think through the controls required to provide effective protection to people who may be affected by them, and record the significant findings from your risk assessment of your business.

Putting the risk assessment into practice, the manager set out what actions needed to be taken, who would do them and by when. He displayed a copy of the risk assessment in the office where all staff could see it and discussed his findings with them.

He decided to review the risk assessment whenever there were any significant changes such as new work equipment, work activities or staff.

Company name: Smith's Road Haulage UK

Date of risk assessment: 01/07/12

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Vehicles	Staff and others may suffer serious, possibly fatal, injury if struck by a vehicle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One-way traffic management system ■ Vehicles parked in designated bays away from office and staff cars ■ Safe, well-marked pedestrian routes ■ All areas well lit ■ High-visibility tabard worn by all those entering the yard ■ All visitors receive site rules/ site map 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action at this stage 			
Unfamiliarity with risks at customer sites Reversing policy, load handling arrangements, sheeting etc	Drivers may suffer injury or ill health through lack of awareness of risks on site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers regularly visit most pick-up/drop-off sites and are aware of relevant safety issues ■ Drivers given a safety checklist to complete for new sites ■ Order-taking staff ask for information on site rules, unloading arrangements etc and fix this to delivery note ■ Drivers told to stay in a safe area when lift trucks etc are working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure agency drivers are told about relevant safety issues at the sites they are visiting or, if no safety information is available, are instructed to telephone site to get the safety information 	Owner	31/7/12	30/7/12
Falls from vehicles	Drivers may suffer serious, possibly fatal, injuries if they fall from the cab or vehicle of a trailer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loading and unloading is planned. Working on the bed of the trailer is avoided ■ Suitable access equipment is used to access the trailer unit and drivers trained how to use it safely ■ Drivers trained in safe system of work for sheeting loads, eg safe use of PPE ■ Fall arrest equipment inspected by a competent person prior to use ■ Drivers instructed not to walk backwards on the trailer or to jump from the cab/trailer ■ Fixed steps and grab bars allow drivers to access cab safely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind drivers of need for good housekeeping in trailer and in cab 	Owner	31/7/12	15/7/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retrofit foldable steps to improve access to trailer bed on two vehicles 	Owner	31/10/12	19/10/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider using other forms of access equipment where appropriate, eg mobile elevating working platforms (MEWPS) or podium steps 	Owner	31/10/12	21/10/12
Slips and trips	Staff may suffer injuries such as fractures or bruising if they slip on spillages or trip over objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers wear strong, comfortable footwear with a good grip ■ Good housekeeping in yard, offices and on vehicles ■ Diesel tank banded, shovel and sand kept nearby to clear up spillages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consider use of non-slip materials on vehicles 	Owner	Ongoing	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Manual handling Lifting and moving heavy objects or objects that are difficult to grasp	Staff risk injuries or back pain from handling heavy or awkward objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Most loads handled mechanically, eg lift truck, crane etc ■ Sack trucks kept in trailers for certain jobs ■ Drivers trained in safe manual handling techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind drivers to report defective and poorly loaded roll cages to customer, eg too much weight at top of cage 	Owner	31/7/12	15/7/12
Load securing	Drivers and others may suffer serious injury if a load moves unexpectedly whilst in transit or during unloading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers and loading staff trained in line with guidance from the Department for Transport's Code of Practice on load safety ■ Spot checks prior to vehicle departing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action at this stage 	Owner		
Coupling and uncoupling	Drivers/others may suffer serious crush injuries if trapped by moving trailer or tractor unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers follow safe systems of work for coupling/uncoupling ■ Spot checks to ensure drivers following safe system of work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Train agency workers in safe system of work 	Owner	31/7/12	30/7/12
Driver fatigue	Driver/other road users may suffer serious injury if road accident results from fatigue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shift schedules are designed to minimise the risk of driver fatigue ■ Drivers instructed to take breaks if they become tired whilst driving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind drivers to report when they are feeling ill, have developed a medical condition or are taking medication that could affect their driving 	Office secretary	31/7/12	15/7/12
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regularly review shift schedules with drivers to ensure the risk of fatigue is minimised 	Owner	31/7/12	30/7/12 current schedules adequate
Fire During refuelling of vehicles.	Drivers/others risk possibly fatal injury from burns/smoke inhalation if there is a fire in the yard or on a vehicle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fire risk assessment has been done, and any necessary action taken, see www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No 			

Assessment review date: 01/07/13