

Buildings used for locations or temporary studios in film and television

HSE information sheet

Entertainment Information Sheet No 18 (Revision 1)

Introduction

In this information sheet, '**must**' denotes a legal obligation. Words such as 'do', 'should' etc are used to give advice on good practice.

This information sheet is one in a series produced in consultation with the Joint Advisory Committee for Entertainment (JACE). It gives advice on the safe use of buildings used as locations or temporary studios in the film and television industries. It does not deal with permanent studios or locations.

Legislation

The main legal requirements covering locations and temporary studios are contained in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations).

The Management Regulations require a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to be carried out by employers (or self-employed people) to assess the risk to themselves, their employees and to others who may be affected by their activities, to determine the control measures necessary to avoid risk or reduce it to acceptable levels. Risk assessments should cover the application of any other relevant health and safety legislation, including the requirement to consider fire precautions and emergency procedures.

Depending on the nature of the building and any work that requires to be carried out in preparation for filming, the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM Regulations) may apply. More information on the CDM Regulations can be found in Further reading.

Hazards

Some buildings may be derelict, in poor repair or designed for other functions. This may create risks to the health and safety of people working there, so these risks must be controlled. The use of buildings

for location work or studios brings with it a number of potential hazards that may require assessment and control. Typical hazards may include:

- unsafe structures;
- voids in floors
- inadequate fire precautions or means of escape;
- unguarded, faulty or derelict machinery;
- non-availability of, or poor or unsafe services (eg electricity or water);
- hazardous substances or materials, eg asbestos;
- debris and litter;
- pests or vermin;
- lack of welfare facilities;
- additional hazards introduced by the production's activities.

A checklist is included in this information sheet. You do not need to use this but it may assist you in checking locations. There may be hazards present not on the list and not all listed hazards will be present in every location. Where an item on the list is found to be unsatisfactory, you should, if competent, rectify it yourself or seek the advice of an appropriate competent person.

Responsibility

The owner, landlord or agent for the building has a responsibility to:

- provide all reasonable information to the producer, including any results of any reports or risk assessments relating to the safety of the building structure, eg presence of asbestos or known weak floors etc;
- make sure that all contractual conditions of any lease, contract or agreements are abided by, including having adequate public liability insurance in place.

In many cases, adequate information will be available through the owners or agents for the building; always take advice on the suitability and state of repair of such buildings. If in doubt regarding the safety of any building, seek advice from a suitably qualified structural engineer.

The responsibility for production health and safety rests with the producer, who must make sure that a suitable and sufficient risk assessment is carried out and that the findings are made known to all affected parties. This should cover all stages of the production at the temporary studio, such as recce, construction, setting, filming, striking and reinstatement. The producer should also make sure that any additional control measures beyond those required for a normal set are implemented. These may include:

- the employment of competent contractors and specialists;
- communication arrangements between all parties involved;
- information concerning risk exchanged between all affected parties;
- adequate security, emergency and first aid arrangements are made, including for lone workers.

Contractors or specialists, including special effects and stunt artists, need to make sure that:

- risk assessments are conducted for the work to be done, taking into account the nature and condition of the location and ensuring that risks are adequately controlled at all stages of the production;
- the significant results of their risk assessments are passed on to the producer;
- they cooperate with the producer and other contractors.

Control measures

The building structure should be made safe for its intended use. Steps should be taken to ensure walls and roofs cannot fall either wholly or partly. Areas with loose or unstable flooring, unsafe staircases and unprotected edges may need to be repaired to ensure a satisfactory standard or to be clearly indicated as being unsafe and have access prevented or restricted to prevent injury to any person. Access should be prevented to dangerous or redundant areas.

Workplaces are required to have safe means of access and egress. Care should be taken to ensure that all routes for vehicles and those for pedestrians are suitable for the intended traffic and that both can circulate safely.

Adequate illumination should be provided whilst work is being undertaken.

Fire

The risk of fire should not be underestimated and there are numerous ways a fire could start on location. Measures should be taken to minimise the risk of fire which could lead to loss of life or location. Factors involved in starting or perpetuating fire may include:

- use of flammable substances;
- special and visual effects;
- faulty electrical equipment or poor quality wiring within the building;
- untreated scenery and dressing;
- heaters;
- hot work (eg welding or gas burning during construction or setting phases);
- poor housekeeping;
- smoking.

A fire risk assessment should be carried out to identify any hazards and ensure that adequate precautions are taken to reduce the risk of fire to an acceptable level. The producer must make sure that adequate emergency procedures are in place for the production as a whole and contractors need to make sure that there is adequate control of their activities. Smoking (where allowed by law) should only be permitted in specified areas away from combustible materials.

The producer must make sure that:

- adequate fire extinguishers are provided given the nature of the location, the type of fire risks present etc and that the crew know their location and how and when to operate them;
- a method for alerting all to the outbreak of a fire is in place and known to all;
- where there is existing fire detection equipment, that it works and that the production's activities will not interfere with its safe operation;
- an appropriate and suitable evacuation plan is developed to ensure everyone can be safely evacuated from the building. The number and distribution of emergency exits should be adequate, having regard to the premises and the maximum number of people who may be present there at any one time. There should be a means of accounting for everyone on the location at any given time;
- where emergency procedures are already in place, that such procedures are suitable and the information is clearly communicated to all parties.

It may be necessary to consult with the local fire brigade if a complex site is in use.

Contractors, such as special effects designers, are to make sure that the need for potential sources of ignition is considered fully when conducting their risk assessments. They should also consider factors that

may increase the fire loading of the location, such as storage of large amounts of paper, flammable liquids etc and any potential sources of ignition such as temporary heaters or any hot work being undertaken.

Machinery and equipment

All work equipment used must be suitable for the task and in good working order. Any protective devices, or equipment such as guards, must be fitted and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.

The producer must make sure, where appropriate, through the contractors employed that all equipment (whether owned or hired) is suitable for the task. They must also make sure it is adequately maintained and, where required, that testing or inspection has been carried out.

Utilities

If it is intended to use the existing utilities, a competent person should make sure that these are compliant with the current standards. Electrical supplies should meet either BS 7671 and/or BS 7909 as appropriate (see Further reading). Gas supplies should preferably meet L56 (see Further reading), or be certificated by an engineer registered on the Gas Safe Register or other organisation approved by the Health and Safety Executive.

There should be an assessment by a competent person or contractor of the electricity, gas and water supply to the building. In many disused buildings, the wiring may be unsafe or unsuitable and stand alone power will need to be provided using a generator, with the obvious attendant risks and controls. Similar controls may be needed for gas supplied from tanks or cylinders.

Hazardous materials

Some locations may contain hazardous materials or substances, for example chemicals, asbestos or microorganisms that could potentially be a risk to people working on the production.

Steps should be taken to control such risks by ensuring these areas are isolated or by safely removing the material from the location. Removal should only be undertaken by specialist waste contractors. Local authorities keep detailed records on land/buildings which are contaminated and may cause harm. Information should be sought from the Environmental Health department of the local authority if you have any concerns over the former use of the land. Removal of any suspect material should only take place after appropriate advice has been obtained.

Asbestos was used widely until the mid-1970s in building applications. Many older buildings may have asbestos within their structures or associated services, eg pipe lagging and the building should be assessed to trace and isolate/make safe any asbestos. Owners and agents for such properties must be able to provide information regarding the presence and condition of any asbestos within the building. Only licensed waste contractors should be used to remove asbestos.

The building should be vacated immediately if it is suspected that loose or disturbed asbestos is present. In this circumstance, the building owner should be advised.

In a building where asbestos has been encapsulated and declared safe by a suitable expert, care should be taken to ensure that the encapsulation is not compromised by the production's activities, for instance by drilling, cabling etc.

Rubbish and debris

Debris such as broken glass, hypodermic needles, bird droppings and rubbish should be removed by competent contractors before the location is used. If the production requires the appearance of an area badly contaminated with rubbish, debris etc, it should be achieved by dressing.

Vermin

If a building has been infested with pests or vermin, eg pigeons or rats, the risk assessment should consider the possibility of personnel contracting diseases such as psittacosis or weill's disease (leptospirosis). The building should be thoroughly cleared and cleaned by specialist contractors and staff reminded to maintain scrupulous hygiene standards.

Welfare facilities

Adequate welfare facilities must be provided at all times. The number of people involved and the intended duration of the production will determine the exact nature of these facilities. These include:

- toilets;
- washing facilities;
- clean drinking water;
- heating and ventilation;
- storage for clothing and possibly the means of drying it;
- catering, dining and rest facilities.

All the above facilities can be provided in temporary accommodation such as mobile vehicles.

Safety checklist for buildings used as locations and temporary studios

If the premises are occupied then seek advice from the occupier's representative to help you complete this form. The occupier may have already prepared a risk assessment of the site and the activities undertaken there.

This document is not a risk assessment.

NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE AND CONTACT NAME AT LOCATION/PREMISES:

.....

NAME OF PRODUCTION:

ALL BUILDINGS:

SUPPORTING COMMENTS:

✓ Satisfactory ✗ Unsatisfactory

Fire

Risk assessment (part of production risk assessment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire certificate for building (if required, owner supplies)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Smoking (no smoking policy, designated areas)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire alarm system	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire extinguishers (number and type)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency exits (means of escape)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire drills and wardens	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency telephones and medical/first-aid facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety of visitors and general public	<input type="checkbox"/>

Structure and facilities

Maintenance of building	<input type="checkbox"/>
Access (adequate and unobstructed)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asbestos (condition, encapsulation)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fragile roofs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Falls or falling objects	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enclosed/confined spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doors and gates (signage)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Windows, transparent/translucent door, gates and walls	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lifts, escalators and moving walkways	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floor and stairs (sound condition, inspection certificates, load limit)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cleanliness and waste materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electric/gas/water supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lighting (adequate working lights)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ventilation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Equipment

Maintenance of equipment, devices and systems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Machinery (guards)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sources of non-ionising radiation (UV lights, lasers etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sources of ionising radiation	<input type="checkbox"/>
High noise levels	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal protective equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>

Hazardous substances

Hazardous processes (procedural safety guidelines)
Hazardous substances

Welfare

Catering, dining and rest facilities
Toilet and washing facilities
Drinking water
Heating (indoor temperature of 16 °C)
Facilities for changing and storing clothing

Derelict buildings

Heating adequate and safe (boilers certificated)
Unsafe areas (eg structural faults, unsafe floors, roofs)
Broken glass and general rubbish
Vermin (pigeons, rats, mice etc)

Signature _____

Date _____

Further reading

Management of health and safety at work. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L21 (Second edition) HSE Books 2000 ISBN 978 0 7176 2488 1 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l21.htm

Workplace health, safety and welfare. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Approved Code of Practice L24 HSE Books 1992 ISBN 978 0 7176 0413 5 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l24.htm

Safety in the installation and use of gas systems and appliances. Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance L56 (Third edition) HSE Books 2011 ISBN 978 0 7176 6419 1 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l56.htm

Managing health and safety in construction. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007. Approved Code of Practice L144 HSE Books 2007 ISBN 978 0 7176 6223 4 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l144.htm

Health and safety in construction HSG150 (Third edition) HSE Books 2006 ISBN 978 0 7176 6182 4 www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg150.htm

BS 7671: 2008 *Requirements for electrical installations. IEE Wiring Regulations. Seventeenth edition* British Standards Institution

BS 7909: 2008 *Code of practice for temporary electrical systems for entertainment and related purposes* British Standards Institution

Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit www.hse.gov.uk/. You can view HSE guidance online and order priced publications from the website. HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

British Standards can be obtained in PDF or hard copy formats from BSI: <http://shop.bsigroup.com> or by contacting BSI Customer Services for hard copies only Tel: 020 8996 9001 email: cservices@bsigroup.com

This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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