

# Maps and plans

## Workplace transport site safety information sheet WPT14

This information will be useful to anyone who uses workplace transport or who works where it is used. It will help employers, managers and supervisors to assess their workplace and make improvements. The checklists will help you to prepare your risk assessment.

Maps and plans give important information about your site and can be used to make sure that people working at and visiting your site are fully aware of all the site issues.

Maps are used to show the location of your site and to provide directions to it. Plans provide more specific detailed information about your site such as 'no-go areas', turning and loading areas, and pedestrian and vehicle routes. By using maps and plans, site users should know how to safely travel to and within the site, reducing the number of accidents they are likely to have.

Maps and plans can be in a fixed, paper, digital or web format. They can be used by a wide range of people – those in vehicles, those on foot, those familiar to the site and those who are only occasional site visitors.

## Common problems

When producing a map or a plan, consider who it is being drawn for and what information you want to give them – problems occur when these things have not been considered properly.

While some common problems can apply to all types of maps and plans (eg out-of-date information), each format has its own individual problems:

**General problems:** Maps and plans often provide information that is out of date and therefore incorrect. This can happen when a change in site layout has taken place and a new site plan has not been produced. When out-of-date information is given, people and vehicles can get lost or go into areas of a site that are dangerous.

Often maps and plans are poorly drawn and don't provide the correct information in a clear and understandable way. This happens when not enough consideration is given to



who the map or plan is for and what information it is meant to show.

Site visitors often need to use more than one map or plan, which can lead to problems – people can get confused or be unsure. Paper plans and or maps need to be the same as those that are fixed on site and/or provided on the web.

**Fixed:** Fixed maps or plans are of limited use. They can become worn, faded or smudged because of their age or environmental conditions and, as a result, are no longer useful. If they are not in the right place they can give the wrong information for the location or may not be easily viewed. For example, a site plan placed at the side of the road at a site entrance often can't be read without stopping the vehicle and blocking site access.

**Paper:** Paper plans and maps can be sent in advance of someone visiting the site to make sure they know how to gain access to it and are familiar with site layout. When this is not done it can make it difficult for people to find the site and when they enter the site they can behave dangerously because they are unfamiliar with the layout.

### Checklist – what to look out for

- Maps and plans that do not present the correct information clearly.
- Fixed maps and plans that have become worn, faded or smudged because of age or environmental conditions.
- Maps and plans that don't show the same information as other maps, plans, markings or signs on a site (ie they are inconsistent).
- Maps and plans that show out-of-date information about the site layout.

**Web or digital:** Digital maps and plans are not ideal on their own as they can't be used by people without access to a computer.

## How can you deal with common problems?

**Provide people with the correct information before they get to site:** Maps showing the location of your site and providing directions should be made available to site users, either digitally or printed, before they come to the site. Either before or during a site induction, suitable site plans should be given out so that people can familiarise themselves with the site layout.

**Regularly update maps and plans:** Make sure that all maps and plans are updated regularly so that they remain accurate. For example every time there is a change in site layout, revise your plans to show these changes. This can be done more simply and quickly if plans are kept electronically. If a site has an out-of-date map or plan or doesn't have any at all then you need to provide a new one.

**Provide digital maps and plans that are viewable and printable:** When producing web-based maps make sure images are good enough to enlarge and print. Make sure that the maps and plans being used can be viewed by those who will be trying to access them.

**Replace a fixed map with a paper map:** If you give site visitors a paper map, they will have a point of reference with them at all times and before their site visit. They are easier to read than fixed maps and, if produced digitally, easier to update and reprint.

**Remove unnecessary maps and plans:** If a map or plan is unnecessary, eg because it is fixed and is poorly located, then it needs to be removed. This prevents the wrong information being presented to site users.

**Replace existing maps or plans that are worn or faded:** If fixed maps or plans become worn and faded to the extent that they are no longer fit for purpose then they need to be replaced and updated. It is important for site users to have access to correct information about the site.

**Replace a fixed plan or map with road marking(s) or sign(s):** Is a map or plan the best way to provide information on the layout of your site? Information may be presented more clearly through the use of road marking(s) and or sign(s).

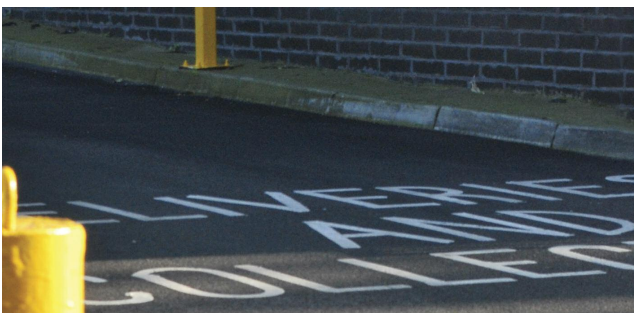


Photo Jackie Stevens

### Checklist

- Replace a fixed map or plan with a paper map that is given to site visitors before they arrive on site.
- Remove unnecessary fixed maps and plans that provide the wrong information.
- Provide a new map or plan where there isn't one.
- Replace an existing worn or faded map or plan.
- Replace plans with road markings or signs that clearly present the correct information.
- Regularly update site plans.

## Checking your site

A site inspection is a quick way of identifying whether your site has any problems. Walk around your premises, make notes and take photographs of problems. In particular, look for where maps have worn or faded and where they are out of date or provide the wrong information.

You may want to do this yourself or you could ask someone who doesn't know your site to do it as they might recognise more problems with a 'fresh pair of eyes'.

Consider producing a questionnaire for staff and site visitors to identify the suitability of the maps and plans they use. You may also want to gain further feedback through staff training, inductions and web-based feedback forms. Making a record of when workers have been lost or unsure about finding their way about site will also help identify any potential problems.

If you need a more detailed and wider-reaching guide to site safety in general, see the *Site inspection: Workplace transport checklist* at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk).

If it is cost effective and you don't think you can complete an inspection yourself, you may want to commission a professional inspection or survey.

### Checklist

While you walk round the site, consider:

- Where are maps and plans located?
- Is the map located in the right place?
- Who is going to be reading the maps or plans?
- What information is the map or plan showing?
- Is it showing what is intended and what is needed?
- Is it highlighting safety issues and no-go areas?
- Is the information up to date?
- Is/should it be fixed or paper?
- Can the information be given by another means?

## What makes a good map?

Maps and plans should be designed with the anticipated needs of users in mind. A good map is accurate, up to date, clearly drawn and labelled. It should give enough information for users to locate a site and the working areas within it.

Fixed maps should be positioned in safe areas where they can be easily viewed. If necessary they should be lit so that they can be used in poor light or when it is dark. Paper maps should be small enough to handle easily.

When producing a map, consider the following.

- **Title:** This should describe clearly what the map shows.
- **Orientation:** This refers to the key directions and is shown by an arrow or compass rose. It is important to indicate where north is on your map.
- **Date:** This informs readers when the map was produced.
- **Legend or key:** This defines the maps symbols. Make sure that the symbols used are easy to understand and appropriate for what you want to show.
- **Border:** This separates the map from any text and defines the edge of the map.
- **Author:** This enables the individual or institution that created the map to be identified.
- **Copyright information:** If you are reproducing Ordnance Survey or any other maps make sure that you provide the correct copyright information.
- **Relationship with the site:** Show land and water features.
- **Grid:** A set of intersecting lines show the location of individual places.
- **Scale:** A scaled map shows distances accurately. The scale should be clearly marked on each map.
- **Index:** Consider whether your map needs an index presenting an alphabetical list of places shown on the map and giving the grid location of each place.

### Checklist

- Carry out a site survey to identify locations, conditions and suitability of maps and plans used by site workers and visitors.
- Produce a questionnaire for site workers and visitors to find out how suitable and effective the maps and plans are.

## Where to get help

If you have a problem with the maps and plans for your site, you might be able to fix it yourself, eg remove unnecessary plans. If you are unsure, speak to your health and safety workplace representative or contact HSE for advice. In most cases, if you are unable to do the work yourself, you will need to employ a printer or sign writer to produce the new maps and/or plans you require.

You can also get advice by speaking to other similar local businesses – look for examples of good practice. Contact your local trade association or Chamber of Commerce for recommended local suppliers or look in the *Yellow Pages* for listings of printers and sign writers.

## What might it cost?

- A new fixed site plan can cost £200–£500. The price will depend on plan size and whether it is lit or unlit.
- Paper site plan £1 each.
- Web-based directions map £25.
- A professional site inspection or survey can cost around £2000.

(These costs are a guide and may vary for individual sites and circumstances.)

### Checklist

- Can you or your company do the work?
- Speak to your workplace health and safety representative about any issues.
- Consult HSE about any problems if necessary.
- Speak to others within the industry that are known for their best practice.
- Employ a sign writer or printer to carry out the work you require.

## Find out more

*Workplace transport safety: An employers' guide* HSG136 (Second edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 6154 1

## Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, visit [www.hse.gov.uk/](http://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.

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

This document is available at:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wpt14.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/wpt14.pdf).

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