

Example risk assessment for a road haulage company

Setting the scene

This road haulage company 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 trunking (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.

Important reminder

This example risk assessment shows the kind of approach a small business might take. Use it as a guide to think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks. Please note that it is not a generic risk assessment that you can just put your company name on and adopt wholesale without any thought. This would not satisfy the law – and would not be effective in protecting people.

Every business is different – you need to think through the hazards and controls required in your business for yourself.

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 did the risk assessment for drivers at the company. He followed the guidance in *Five steps to risk assessment* (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf). For the office-based staff at the company, the owner used the example risk assessment for office work at a manufacturing company.

1 To identify the hazards, the owner:

- looked at the haulage pages on HSE's website and the pages for small businesses to learn where hazards can occur;
- walked around the premises, noting what might pose a risk and taking HSE's guidance into consideration;
- talked to the safety representative and other members of staff to learn from their knowledge and experience, and to listen to their concerns and opinions about health and safety issues; and
- looked at the accident book, to understand what previous problems there have been.

- 2 The owner then wrote down who could be harmed by the hazards and how.
- 3 For each hazard, the owner wrote down what controls, if any, were in place to manage these hazards. He then compared these controls to the good practice guidance on the HSE website. Where he did not consider existing controls good enough, he wrote down what else needed to be done.
- 4 The owner discussed the findings with the safety representative and with staff. He set out when the actions that were needed would be done, and who would do them, and then implemented the findings, ticking off each action as it was completed. He put a copy of the risk assessment up in the mess room, and made it part of the induction process for new staff, including agency drivers.
- 5 The owner decided to review and update the risk assessment every year, or straightaway if major changes in the workplace happened.

Company name: Smith's Road Haulage UK Date of risk assessment: 1/7/07

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Vehicle movement in the Smith's depot	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. ■ All staff wear high-visibility tabards in the yard and tabards are also provided for visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No further action at this stage. 			
Unfamiliarity with risks at customer sites Eg reversing policy, load handling arrangements, sheeting etc.	Risks to drivers include serious, possibly fatal, injury if struck by a vehicle, bruising and fractures from slips on unfamiliar surfaces etc.	<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 that site to get that information. 	Owner	31/7/07	30/7/07
Falls from vehicles	Drivers may suffer serious, possibly fatal, injury should they fall from a vehicle, eg from the trailer or cab.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loading/unloading process organised to minimise time spent on trailer. ■ Strong, commercial ladder provided on each vehicle to access the trailer unit and drivers trained how to use it safely. ■ Drivers trained in safe system of work for sheeting loads, including safe use of fall arrest systems. ■ Fall arrest equipment inspected and maintained according to manufacturer's instructions. ■ Drivers told not to walk backwards on a trailer, or to jump from cab or 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	31/7/07	15/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retrofit foldable steps to improve access to trailer bed on two vehicles. 	Owner	31/10/07	19/10/07

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Slips and trips	Staff may suffer injuries such as fractures or bruising if they slip on wet surfaces or trip over objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers wear strong, comfortable boots 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"> ■ Check HSE footwear review to get advice on best slip-resistant footwear. 	Office secretary	31/7/07	30/7/07
Manual handling	Staff may suffer from back pain from handling heavy or awkward objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Most loads carried are handled mechanically, eg lift truck, crane etc. ■ Sack trucks kept in trailers for certain jobs. ■ Drivers trained in safe manual handling and safe systems of work, eg for undoing curtains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remind drivers to report defective and poorly loaded (eg too much weight at top of cage) roll cages to customer. 	Owner	31/7/07	15/7/07
Load securing	Drivers and others may suffer serious injury if a load moves in transit or during unloading.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drivers and loading staff trained in and instructed to follow the latest Dept for Transport Code of Practice for securing loads. 	<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, eg always ensuring that both trailer and cab brakes are on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Train agency workers in safe system of work, including the location of the trailer brake in each vehicle. 	Owner	31/7/07	30/7/07
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 so that they don't put driver at risk of fatigue. ■ Drivers instructed to take breaks if they become tired while 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 effect their driving. 	Office secretary	31/7/07	15/7/07
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss with drivers whether current shift scheduling effective in not putting them at risk of fatigue and take action as necessary. 	Owner	31/7/07	30/7/07 current system adequate

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	What further action is necessary?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
<p>Fire Eg during refuelling of vehicles.</p>	<p>Drivers/others risk possibly fatal injury from burns/smoke inhalation if there is a fire in the yard or on a vehicle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fire risk assessment done, as per instructions at www.fire.gov.uk/workplace+safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure actions, including safe systems of work, arising from fire risk assessment are done. 	<p>Owner</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	

Assessment review date: 1/7/08