

# Management of health & safety in construction

## UK Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015

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## Principles

Did you know that although only 5 percent of UK employees are involved in construction, this sector is responsible for 31 percent of all UK work related fatalities? Immediate causes, for example falls from height or electrocution may be readily identifiable, but the underlying causes of construction accidents generally arise from:

- failures to manage the risks existing on site or inherent in construction processes;
- design failures;
- inadequately defined roles and responsibilities and;
- failures to co-ordinate various contractors on site.

The UK Health and Safety Executive guidance identifies the following as key elements to securing construction health and safety:

- managing the risks by applying the general principles of prevention;
- appointing the right people and organisations at the right time;
- making sure everyone has the information, instruction, training and supervision they need to carry out their jobs in a way that secures health and safety;
- duty holders cooperating and communicating with each other and coordinating their work; and
- consulting workers and engaging with them to promote and develop effective measures to secure health, safety and welfare.

## UK Legislation and Implementation

To apply the above principles, UK legislation sets out a formal framework for the management of construction projects. This includes the appointment of people to specified roles, the **client, designer, principal designer, contractor, principal contractor and workers**. It sets out their duties for planning and implementing management processes, including the provision of **pre-construction information**, preparation and implementation of a **construction phase plan** and creation of a **health and safety file**.

The regulations also include general requirements for all construction sites including safe places of work, site security, stability of structures, demolition, excavations, energy distribution installations, vehicles and traffic routes, fire risk, emergency procedures, working environment and welfare provision.

In 2015 the **Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM)** were revised and these supersede the CDM Regulations 2007. A key change has been the elimination of the CDM coordinator role with its duties being variously split between designers and contractors. Interim requirements are in place for projects started under CDM 2007.

IET members with duties under the CDM regulations are advised to read the HSE guidance document **“Managing health and safety in construction”** a link to which is included below.

## Scope and definitions

Construction work is defined as the carrying out of any building, civil engineering or engineering construction work and includes the construction, conversion, fitting out, commissioning, repair, upkeep, redecoration, maintenance, de-commissioning, demolition and dismantling of a structure.

It includes the installation, commissioning, maintenance, repair or removal of mechanical, electrical, gas, compressed air, hydraulic, telecommunications, computer or similar services fitted within a structure.

A structure is virtually anything man made including parts of a structure and fixed plant. Construction projects of any scale are covered by the regulations although the level of documentation should reflect the scale and complexity of the work to be done.

## Notification

If work is to last longer than 30 days and involves more than 20 people on site at any one time, or involves more than 500 person-days on site the client must notify the project to the HSE.

## Pre-construction information

These are documents which describe the project, the construction site and the hazards and risks that may be found on it, for example, ground stability, existing structures and services in addition to any hazardous materials which may be present. The client is responsible for preparing this, but is likely to require designer and contractor input. The HSE have produced a short guide to clients, (**indg411**), a link to which is included below.

## Construction phase plan

All projects must have a written construction phase plan. The contractor, or principal contractor must prepare this document that describes how they will manage health and safety during the construction phase. The HSE have designed a simple format construction phase plan which they suggest could be used for projects that do not meet the notification criteria above. The CITB have developed an example of how a construction phase plan for a larger project could be developed. Links to these documents are included below.

## Health and safety file

This is required if more than one contractor is involved in the construction. It provides a record of the work, including health and safety information gathered during the construction phase. The principal designer should prepare this file and present it to the client on completion of the project. The file should be maintained and updated as it will contain information useful when managing maintenance and other ongoing work.

## Welfare

CDM also mandates minimum levels of welfare provision for the construction workers on site.

The main legal requirements are set out in the

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/51/contents/made>
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. Guidance on Regulations  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/index.htm>
- Welfare facilities for construction work  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/og/og-00002.htm>

Further help and information can be found on the

- CITB website  
<http://www.citb.co.uk/health-safety-and-other-topics/health-safety/construction-design-and-management-regulations/>

and in

- How to prepare a construction phase plan  
<http://www.citb.co.uk/documents/cdm%20regs/construction-phase-plan-example.pdf>

The above linked HSE documents may also be obtained by mail order (for which there may be a charge) from:

HSE Books,  
PO Box 1999,  
Sudbury,  
Suffolk  
CO10 2WA  
Tel: 01787 881165  
Website: [www.hsebooks.co.uk](http://www.hsebooks.co.uk)

HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops and free leaflets can be downloaded from HSE's website: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

For information about health and safety ring HSE's Infoline: Tel: 0845 3450055 Fax: 0845 4089566 e-mail: [hseinfo@connaught.plc.uk](mailto:hseinfo@connaught.plc.uk)

or write to:

HSE Information Services,  
Caerphilly Business Park,  
Caerphilly  
CF83 3GG.

The IET is unable to provide further information on this topic. Please contact the HSE: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

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