

Principles

Did you know that...

It is vital to engage fully with your contractors to ensure that health and safety is properly managed throughout any contract let. Contractors are increasingly being used for a wide range of activities from installation of plant and equipment to service and maintenance of equipment. The employer retains (in the UK) responsibility for the health and safety of contractors and sub-contractors. It is therefore important to ensure that they do not create unnecessary risks to themselves, to direct employees or to the public, whilst employed.

This briefing note is intended as an aide-memoir for management responsible for Safety Health and Environmental (SHE) activities. More detailed information can be found in the documents listed at the end of this Briefing Note. It will be beneficial for the employer to have written policy and guidance for staff, on the selection, management, and use of contractors employed as well as for the safe management of contracts planned to be let.

A lot of contractor work involves the construction, demolition, alteration and maintenance of buildings and structures. It should be noted that this type of work may (in the UK) fall under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. Work falling under the CDM regulations requires that both the employer and the contractor undertake the work in a specific way.

The main elements of contractor management in terms of SHE are:

- Contractor Selection
- Contractor Management Onsite
- Post contract assessment

Contractor Selection

Contractor Competence

- A contractor should be selected who demonstrates competence to manage SHE issues.
- The contractor should provide references and information on their ability to manage SHE issues.
- The contractor should also be able to provide personnel who have received training in SHE management to recognised standards e.g. IOSH Managing Safely Courses: <http://www.iosh.co.uk/Training/Our-training-products/Managing-safely-course.aspx>
- It is useful if contractor selection SHE criteria are developed to assist selection. These should be appropriate to the type of work to be contracted e.g. "high risk" activities such as construction will warrant more demanding criteria.
- Independent checks should be conducted if possible - an audit of one of the contractor's existing projects can help confirm they have an adequate SHE policy.
- The quotation price should adequately reflect the ability of the contractor to meet SHE commitments.
- Independent organisations can be engaged to carry out competence checks. Independent auditor schemes are also available for checking contractor's SHE management.
- Another consideration is the use of pre qualification systems such as CHAS (The Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme). This is an independent check on safety and is very useful for smaller clients who do not have the resources to use a more elaborate system.
- When CDM is applicable the client should be clear as to what duty holders role each contractor will be undertaking and that they are competent in those roles

Risk Assessment

A hazard identification and risk assessment of the project must first be carried out. The contractors can then be matched with the risk rating.

- A more detailed risk assessment of the activity should be undertaken involving both the company, the contractor and sub-contractors (if applicable) before the work starts.
- The contractor should assess the risks for the contracted work.
- Contractor/company should assess the risks from each others' work.

Contractor Management

Contract Co-ordination and Pre-Job Meetings

- Overall activities involving the contractor should be managed by a co-ordinator.
- Pre-job meeting(s) should be conducted to clarify and agree company/contractor responsibilities, communication lines, statutory requirements, compliance issues etc. These meetings should include subcontractors if used.
- SHE targets can be set for each contract e.g. meeting schedules, the frequency of housekeeping tours, the number of equipment condition checks, the inspection regime etc.

Site Induction & Access Control

- All contractor employees should receive induction training, appropriate to the risks identified, and for the welfare safety arrangements applicable, before commencing work on the site.
- Training should include details of site arrangements, conditions for work, emergency procedures, medical welfare, position of safety equipment, special hazards, permit arrangements etc.
- Site induction will probably not include the SHE issues related to each work activity. It is therefore essential that contractor staff are told of issues in their specific work activity or area, possibly through the use of "Tool Box Talks".
- Training should be reviewed and repeated at intervals.
- Training/induction records should be kept.
- An access control system may be required to deal with the on-site presence of the contractor, their tools, equipment and materials. Access control should encompass site security, adequacy of tools/equipment and control of hazardous materials.

Meetings, Auditing and Monitoring

- Health and safety systems and procedures should be regularly monitored to ensure they are effective and do not put people, production, plant or environment at risk.
- The contractor should implement a procedure for reporting and investigating accidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Regular meetings should be held between all parties to discuss safety issues.
- Records should be kept of all issues affecting SHE.
- Contractor/Company/Subcontractor responsibilities should be clear and agreed.

Post Contract Assessment

Following good project management practice, it is useful to review the performance of contractors after the end of the project. Rating the performance of each contractor against the targets set at the beginning of the project, noting strengths and weaknesses (whilst they are fresh in the memory), will help in the selection of competent contractors for the next project.

Third Party Manufacturing

Slightly different requirements will be necessary for Third Party Manufacturers than contractors working on company sites:

Third Party Manufacturer Selection

- A manufacturer should be selected who demonstrates competence to manage SHE issues.
- The Third Party Manufacturer should demonstrate that they have an effective system for Environmental Care and Occupational Health and Safety.
- Current and past performance e.g. enforcement action by regulatory authorities, should be reviewed/audited.
- The company should review the Third Party Manufacturer's ability to operate in compliance with applicable company SHE standards.

Management

- The Third Party Manufacturer should be monitored/audited at regular intervals.
- Arrangements should be in place for the Third Party Manufacturer to report consumer safety incidents and serious accidents/incidents to the company.
- The company should have an incident management plan to deal with a reported serious Third Party Manufacturer incident.

UK Legislation and Implementation

Useful Documents

Available from the Health and Safety Executive:

- Use of Contractors – A Joint Responsibility, INDG368, ISBN 0717625664, HSE Books
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg368.pdf>
- Managing Contractors - A guide for employers HSG159, ISBN 9780717664368, HSE Books
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg159.htm>
- The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 – L153
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l153.htm>
- A short guide for clients on the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 INDG411 (rev1)
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.htm>
- Health and safety in construction (HSG150)
29 Jan 2015 ... This third edition of Health and safety in construction explains the essential tasks for achieving healthy and safe construction sites.
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg150.htm>

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<https://books.hse.gov.uk/hse/public/home.jsf>

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