

Example risk assessment for a road haulage company

Setting the scene

The owner/manager did the risk assessment at this road haulage company, which 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 trucking (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.

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/manager first looked at relevant guidance on the HSE website including:

- The health and safety toolbox: How to control risks at work (www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/index.htm)
- Haulage (www.hse.gov.uk/logistics/index.htm)

He then identified the hazards in his business. He did this by:

- walking around the premises, including the office and the yard, noting what might cause harm
- talking to members of staff to learn from their knowledge and experience and listen to their concerns and opinions about health and safety
- looking at the accident book to learn what had previously resulted in incidents or near misses.

As he identified the hazards he thought about who could be harmed by them and how accidents might happen.

He noted what he was already doing to control the risks and considered whether he needed to do anything more. He then recorded any further action required.

How to use this example

This example risk assessment shows a wide range of hazards that might be present in this type of small business. It can be used as a guide to help you think through some of the hazards in your business and the steps you need to take to control the risks.

However, this is not a generic risk assessment. Every business is different. To satisfy the law you must identify and assess the hazards your business poses, think through the controls required to provide effective protection to people who may be affected by them, and record the significant findings from your risk assessment of your business.

Putting the risk assessment into practice, the manager set out what actions needed to be taken, who would do them and by when. He displayed a copy of the risk assessment in the office where all staff could see it and discussed his findings with them.

He decided to review the risk assessment whenever there were any significant changes such as new work equipment, work activities or staff.