



Questions and Answers Directory of Information

Information Sheet 2
Health and Safety for small, one-off
and infrequent clients



**Construction
Clients' Group**
CONSTRUCTING EXCELLENCE

Questions and Answers Directory of Information

This Information Sheet is for all companies and organisations that carry out or are likely to carry out construction work as part of their business. It provides a business case for addressing health and safety, key issues they should address and answers to common questions. It also gives a directory of sources of further guidance and information.

New Health and Safety regulations¹ have been implemented that seek to improve the poor record of construction and unnecessary suffering associated with accidents and ill health.

As a construction client, you have legal duties under these regulations in making sure you play your part with designers, contractors and product suppliers in securing the safety and health of workers on your project. Failure to meet your duties may make you liable for prosecution, incur fines and other penalties. Getting it right will bring benefits in a well run and safe project which delivers a building that is safe to operate. Guidance on what you do and do not have to do under these regulations is set out in Information Sheet 1 of this series.

Construction work does not simply mean a new building – refurbishment, maintenance, repair and demolition are all included.

Good construction clients

- Treat others as they wish to be treated themselves
- Provide safe, healthy working conditions for themselves and for those that work for them
- Respect the communities in which they work
- Create and sustain a positive image that attracts and retains committed and skilled people
- Require all those who work for them to be competent.

Why is managing health and safety important for clients?

Benefits to your business

Members of the Construction Clients' Group (CCG) and many others know that projects that have a good health and safety record are more likely to deliver a quality product, be on time and within budget. Accidents cause delays and have a cost. HSE's research has pointed to accidents and ill health costing up to 8.5% of tender price.

Investing in health and safety will also help enhance your brand image and may make your business more attractive than others to investors; health and safety management is often a good indicator of how you generally manage risk.

Constructing Excellence's Demonstration projects have shown that embracing health and safety can give rise to: greater productivity, fewer defects at handover, higher customer satisfaction scores, a lower impact on the environment. Want to know more? – check out www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resources/demonstrationprojects; HSE's business benefits page - www.hse.gov.uk/businessbenefits.



With an average of 70 deaths per year and 1 million days lost due to ill health, despite improvements, the image and record of the industry is not as good as it could be. The unnecessary loss of life and suffering should end. Although it is accepted that smaller and one-off clients might not have the same degree of influence as larger, repeat clients, they do have a significant role to play. All clients can set standards and ensure work is carried out without risking the long-term health and the safety of those on site.

CCG strongly supports the Government's zero tolerance approach to accidents and ill health in the industry.

¹The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM 2007) www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm

What you must do

- Find out about your duties under CDM 2007 (see Information Sheet 1) and make sure that you carry them out. There is an Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) and guidance produced by CCG to help support you. See the full list at the end of this sheet.
- Work together with your project team on health and safety – don't just leave it to others. Get involved, so you can give your views as and when required. Encourage your team to plan ahead and solve problems together as opposed to in isolation.

CCG strongly recommends you to obtain competent health and safety advice BEFORE undertaking construction work.

What else you can do

- Decide who in your organisation will represent you as the client. This will avoid confusion as the project develops over who does what and when.
- Carry out construction health and safety training for your own staff, via a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) or equivalent skills card, CDM Client or other courses, so you have the competency in house to deal with construction issues.
- Set out your expectations of the competency of workers on your project – ie: they all have a relevant CSCS or equivalent card and, if not, seek a timely response on when this will be done
- Ensure that contractors have arrangements in place to consult workers on site – make this part of the pre-qualification requirements when you appoint them.
- Ask during pre-qualification how occupational health will be addressed for your project and see if you need to allocate any specific resources to support this area
- Consider the benefits of carrying out external monitoring of your project using eg: Considerate Constructors Scheme. This will give you an independent external view of how things are going, and early indicators of possible risk areas for you and your team to manage.

Common questions

Surely it's all red tape and bureaucracy, I'll never actually see the benefits of getting involved?

CCG has backed a national industry code called 'Respect for People'; this is not a government requirement but is something that the industry has collectively decided that it needs to do. Without your support and that of many others like you (given that the bulk of businesses in the UK are from the SME sector), the construction industry will continue to have significant loss of life and unnecessary suffering associated with it. You may be able to reduce direct costs through insurance premiums and minimise the risk of enforcement and civil action if you have arrangements in place to manage health and safety.

It is now a legal requirement under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 that, on all projects, clients take responsibility for appointing competent designers and contractors, providing information on potential hazards on the site and ensuring there is sufficient time and resource for risks to be addressed. See Information Sheet 1 in this series.

Isn't it all down to the contractors?

No, although contractors have prime responsibility for managing health and safety on site, as a client you have clear legal responsibilities.

Why bother, I've never seen an enforcing authority before?

Good clients proactively manage health and safety as if it were one of the many other risks they need to manage, such as marketing, finance, human resources etc. This proactive approach allows you to get on and do what you're really in business for. You'll certainly see the impact if you risk doing nothing and then the HSE or local authority do pay a visit.

It's so complicated, there is so much regulation, I really find it overwhelming

This is where it is important to make sure that you receive competent health and safety advice. A good competent advisor will identify the key issues specific to your project and business and prioritise these with you.

It's all about getting rid of as much risk as possible isn't it? ie: If I can push as much onto others in the team then I'll be ok?

There are some responsibilities that you cannot delegate in law. CCG believes that good clients will not adopt this approach, as there is really no benefit in an adversarial approach. Working together, particularly on health and safety, so everybody knows who is responsible for what, cannot be over-emphasised.

Health and Safety is really aimed at the bigger companies, why bother me, I'm struggling as it is?

No! Health and Safety legislation applies to everyone, employers, employees and the self-employed. CCG has produced this and other Information Sheets and guidance to help SME businesses in particular.

How much is it going to cost me in implementing all of this?

This is very difficult to quantify. There are known ranges of costs for some of the matters identified in this sheet, but a lot can be achieved at zero or minimal cost, merely by integrating health and safety in what you already do and, as a client, genuinely showing an interest in the working conditions on your project and doing something about it if you are not satisfied.

Isn't this just an industry fad? There will be something else next year won't there?

No, the commitment to improve the health and safety record of construction originated from an industry summit in 2001, and is part of a 10 year industry and government action plan. This summit was followed up in 2005 and further reviews and initiatives will inevitably follow.

Where can I get more help and support?

Area of assistance	Who can assist you	Reference details
<p>1 General understanding of health and safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Link. • Health and Safety Executive. 	<p>www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073858799&r.s=tl</p> <p>www.hse.gov.uk/smallbusinesses/gettingstarted.htm and www.hse.gov.uk/smallbusinesses/index.htm</p>
<p>2 Managing construction projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Clients' Group. <p>Information on 'Starting to Build' and 'Procuring Successful projects'.</p> <p>Register on the Constructing Excellence website to access these guides.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Government Commerce. <p><i>Achieving Excellence in Construction Procurement.</i></p> <p>A series of freely downloadable guides to support client organisations in the public sector which contain useful advice for privately funded projects.</p>	<p>www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/sectorforums/constructionclientsgroup</p> <p><i>Building Success: lessons from occasional clients who got it right – eleven case studies</i> www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resources/publications/view.jsp?id=1255</p> <p><i>Building Success: lessons from frequent clients who got it right – ten case studies</i> www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/resources/publications/view.jsp?id=3341</p> <p>www.ogc.gov.uk/ppm_documents_construction.asp</p> <p>In particular: <i>Guide 2 Project organisation – roles and responsibilities</i>, deals with the key players in the client organisation.</p> <p>www.ogc.gov.uk/documents/CP0062AEGuide2.pdf</p>
<p>3 Managing risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing Excellence. 	<p>Factsheet www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/pdf/fact_sheet/risk.pdf</p> <p><i>Collaborative Risk Management Guidance</i>, Constructing Excellence, 2005 www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/sectorforums/buildingstatesforum/downloads/RiskGuideNov05.pdf</p>

Area of assistance	Who can assist you	Reference details
<p>4 Enforcement issue – Need a lawyer?</p> <p>What's HSE's protocol?</p> <p>Want to check the records of a supplier?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Safety Lawyers' Association. • HSE Enforcement protocol. • HSE Public register of enforcement notices and convictions. 	<p>www.hsla.org.uk.</p> <p>www.hse.gov.uk/enforce/index.htm www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsc15.pdf</p> <p>www.hse.gov.uk/notices www.hse.gov.uk/prosecutions</p>
<p>5 Advice from HSE on CDM 2007.</p>	<p>Business benefits, roles and responsibilities, and practical advice, including a link to the CDM 2007 Regulations.</p> <p><i>Managing Health and Safety in Construction, Approved Code of Practice. (ACoP) Hard copies only, available from HSE Books, £15.</i></p> <p>Other relevant Regulations from the Office of Public Sector Information.</p>	<p>www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm</p> <p>www.hsebooks.com/Books/product/product.asp?catalog%5Fname=HSEBooks&category%5Fname=&product%5Fid=4867</p> <p>Freely downloadable from www.opsi.gov.uk/stat.htm</p>
<p>6 Tools and tips to comply with CDM client duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Clients' Group. <p>Information sheets, online web tool <i>Guidance on CDM for small, one-off and inexperienced clients.</i></p>	<p>www.constructingexcellence.org.uk/sectorforums/constructionclientsgroup</p>
<p>7 Training for clients in Health and Safety.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH). <p>A member organisation providing authoritative advice and guidance as well as training on health and safety issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Study Centre. • Construction Health and Safety Group – CDM course for clients in preparation. 	<p>List of training courses www.iosh.co.uk/index.cfm?go=courses.main 0116 257 3100</p> <p>www.constructionstudycentre.co.uk</p> <p>CDM 'in practice' www.chsg.co.uk/courses/coursedetails.php?course_ID=4 01932 561 871/563 121</p>

Area of assistance	Who can assist you	Reference details
8 Finding a reputable CDM Co-ordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Association for Project Safety. <p>Directory and register of members assists clients to select and appoint a competent CDM Co-ordinator.</p>	<p>www.associationforprojectsafety.co.uk/page.php?page=dirregmem</p>
9 Finding a reputable contractor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constructionline. <p>Register of pre-qualified local and national construction and construction related suppliers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chartered Institute of Building. <p>Includes links to Trustmark and Chartered Building Companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Federation of Builders. 	<p>www.constructionline.co.uk/static/html/static_page/BuyerList.htm</p> <p>www.ciob.org.uk/advice/choosebuilder/findingabuilder</p> <p>www.builders.org.uk/nfb/public/select.asp</p>
10 Finding a reputable designer or engineer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Institute of British Architects. Institution of Structural Engineers. Association for Consultancy and Engineering. Association of Consultant Architects. 	<p>www.architecture.com/go/Architecture/Using/Finding_291.html</p> <p>www.findanengineer.com</p> <p>www.acenet.co.uk/index_cfm?page=10</p> <p>www.acarchitects.co.uk/directory.htm</p>
11 Accreditation of competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS). <p>A single card for professionals and site workers which confirms their skills and qualifications and that they have passed a test showing they have awareness of health and safety. Many organisations and companies are committed to 100% of their staff holding an appropriate CSCS card.</p>	<p>www.cscs.uk.com 0870 4178777</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme (CHAS). <p>Provides vetting of relevant Health and Safety systems in companies to avoid multiple submissions to public bodies.</p>	www.chas.gov.uk
<p>12 Getting professional help, advice and support on planning issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Aid. <p>Provides free independent help to people and communities who cannot afford to hire a planning consultant.</p>	www.planningaid.rtpi.org.uk
<p>13 Obtaining a third party monitor for site relations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considerate Constructors Scheme or local equivalent. 	www.ccscheme.org.uk
<p>14 Potential Financial Support for Health and Safety and other issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small Business Service. <p>(part of the DTI) – for potential loans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Link. <p>– for tax relief and other advice (eg: on potential relief for removing asbestos).</p>	www.sbs.gov.uk/sbsgov/action/home www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/layer?topicId=1073858808&r.s=tl
<p>15 Health and Safety Benchmarking – how do you compare with others?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBI Contour – Environmental, Health and Safety. Business Link Health and Safety Performance Indicator. HSE Corporate Health and Safety Performance Index (for larger organisations). 	www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/macont.pdf www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/haspi www.hse.gov.uk/corporateresponsibility/performanceindex.htm
<p>16 Worker rights and trade union issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trades Union Congress (TUC). 	www.worksmart.org.uk/health/viewsection.php?sen=6

This sheet is not...

- A substitute for legal or professional advice
- A substitute for business specific arrangements for complying with the Construction Design and Management or other Regulations, Approved Codes of Practices etc.

Who are the Construction Clients' Group?

We are a representative body of UK construction clients in both the public and private sectors, large and small, repeat and inexperienced. As part of Constructing Excellence, we work with other members of the supply team to deliver better value, better managed and safer construction across the UK.

Acknowledgements

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