



## RISK ASSESSMENT

### WHAT IS RISK ASSESSMENT?

Risk Assessment can be described as the 'systematic examination of work activities to determine if there are any 'hazards' that are likely to expose workers to the threat of harm or injury'.

The HSE document '5 steps to risk assessment' outlined the following process:

1. Look for hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done
4. Record your findings
5. Review your assessment and revise it if necessary

A 'hazard' can be described as anything with the potential to cause harm; including people, objects and situations.

To be effective any Risk Assessment must identify:

- The nature of the hazard and potential for harm
- The factors that increase the likelihood of staff exposure to the hazard
- The measures necessary to eliminate, reduce or manage the risk of exposure to the named hazard

The requirement to complete risk assessments is driven by reg 3 of the management of health and safety at work regs 1999.

### GETTING STARTED

The involvement of staff is crucial to ensuring that any risk assessment accurately reflects the nature of the problem. Staff can tell you where they have encountered hostility, confronted or attacked, and where they feel vulnerable. This will also encourage staff to 'buy into the process', this is crucial if the assessment is to be accepted and its findings implemented.

If your organisation has any Trade Union representation, they should also be involved. In some cases it may be appropriate to convene focus groups, distribute questionnaires or even form a safety committee.

A study of previously recorded incidents can also highlight issues, although you must remember that not all incidents are recorded. In some instances there may be published data on the subject available. The assessor/s themselves can provide valuable input if they work locally or have some specialist knowledge.

#### **LONDON REGIONAL OFFICE**

Devlin House 36 St George Street, Mayfair  
LONDON W1R 9FA  
Tel: +44 (0) 207 529 1451

**Fax:** +44 (0) 1904 494608 **E-mail:** [trainers@securicare.com](mailto:trainers@securicare.com)

#### **YORK HEAD OFFICE**

Martin House, Barley Rise, Strensall  
YORK YO32 5AA  
Tel: +44 (0) 1904 492 442

## MONITORING SYSTEMS

Arrangements may then be monitored by a suitable variety of methods including:

- A review of incident reports
- Incident investigations where appropriate
- Scheduled tours or inspections
- Unscheduled tours or inspections
- Annual reviews or audits
- Focus groups, questionnaires or surveys
- Periodical inspection by nominated external agency

## REVIEWING AND REVISING ASSESSMENTS

Risk assessments are 'live' or 'organic' documents that need to reflect the current reality of the threat that staff face in order to be useful and effective.

It is recommended that assessments be reviewed annually at the very least. They should also be reviewed following:

- A major incident or series of minor incidents
- A significant change to the nature of trading/operating procedures
- A significant change to the design, structure or location of the work place
- A significant change to working practices
- A significant turnover of staff

### **LONDON REGIONAL OFFICE**

Devlin House 36 St George Street, Mayfair  
LONDON W1R 9FA  
Tel: +44 (0) 207 529 1451

**Fax:** +44 (0) 1904 494608 **E-mail:** [trainers@securicare.com](mailto:trainers@securicare.com)

### **YORK HEAD OFFICE**

Martin House, Barley Rise, Strensall  
YORK YO32 5AA  
Tel: +44 (0) 1904 492 442