



Unit 9 Rerecord, Plan, Inform, Instruct and Train

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Understand the importance of keeping accurate and up to date risk assessment records
- ✓ Discuss the kind of information that should be recorded and retained on site
- ✓ Identify the most important points that must be covered in an emergency plan

Unit 9

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Fire Safety Records & Training

Keeping up-to-date records of your fire risk assessment can help you effectively manage the fire strategy for your premises and demonstrate how you are complying with fire safety law.

Even if you do not have to record the fire risk assessment, it can be helpful to keep a record of any co-operation and exchange of information made between employers and other responsible people for future reference.

In larger and more complex premises, it is best to keep a dedicated record of all maintenance of fire-protection equipment and training.

There is no one 'correct' format specified for this. Suitable record books are available from trade associations and may also be available from your local enforcing authority.

In all cases the quality of records may also be regarded as a good indicator of the overall quality of the safety management structure.

Your records should be kept in a specified place on the premises (for example, in the management's office), and should include:

- details of any significant findings from the fire risk assessment and any action taken (see Part 1, Section 4.1);
- testing and checking of escape routes, including final exit locking mechanisms, such as panic devices, emergency exit devices and any electromagnetic devices;
- testing of fire-warning systems, including weekly alarm tests and periodic maintenance by a competent person;
- recording of false alarms;
- testing and maintenance of emergency lighting systems;
- testing and maintenance of fire extinguishers, hose reels and fire blankets etc.;
- if appropriate, testing and maintenance of other fire safety equipment such as fire-suppression systems and smoke control systems;
- recording and training of relevant people and fire evacuation drills;
- planning, organising, policy and implementation, monitoring, audit and review;
- maintenance and audit of any systems that are provided to help the fire and rescue service;
- the arrangements in a large multi-occupied building for a co-ordinated emergency plan or overall control of the actions you or your staff should take if there is a fire; and
- all alterations, tests, repairs and maintenance of fire safety systems, including passive systems such as fire doors.
- Other issues that you may wish to record include:
 - the competence, qualifications and status of the persons responsible for carrying out inspections and tests;
 - the results of periodic safety audits, reviews, inspections and tests, and any remedial action taken;

- all incidents and circumstances which had the potential to cause accidents and monitor subsequent remedial actions; and
- a record of the building use, the fire prevention and protection measures in place and high-risk areas.

You should ensure that no other management decisions or policies compromise safety.

Your documentation should be available for inspection by representatives of the enforcing authority.

Figure 9.1 is an example of how to record some individual stages of the process in more detail.

Risk Assessment – Record of significant findings			
Risk assessment for		Assessment undertaken by	
Company	abc stores	Date	02/02/2006
Address	2 The High St Any Town AB12 3CD	Completed by	J Smith
		Signature	J Smith
Sheet number	Floor/area	Use	
One	Ground floor sales area	Shop	
Step 1 – Identify fire hazards			
Sources of ignition		Sources of fuel	Sources of oxygen
Hot lamp in display area Electrical heaters Microwave/kettle in tea bay		• Fabrics and textiles • Display material • Packaging • Stationery	No additional sources
Step 2 – People at risk			
6 full time staff members 2 part time staff members 60 customers at peak periods		1 Clerical assistant working in first floor office (1 wheel chair user)	
Step 3 – Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk			
(3.1) Evaluate the risk of the fire occurring		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot lamps too close to display materials • 1 wall heater close to shelving/goods • Tea bay routinely use for storing packaging material 	
(3.2) Evaluate the risk to people from a fire starting in the premises		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predominantly open plan so fire in sales area quickly evident • Fire in rear store could go undetected • Fire on sales floor could effect first floor office 	
(3.3) Remove and reduce the hazards that may cause a fire		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace hot lamps with overhead low wattage track lighting • Remove wall heater as other 2 heaters considered adequate • Tea bay to be moved to first floor • Packaging material to be placed in secure refuse store to rear of premises 	
(3.4) Remove and reduce the risks to people from a fire		<p>The current fire precautions measures (refer to floor plan A) have been assessed in view of the findings recorded above. They are considered adequate with the following exceptions</p> <p>Additional measures considered necessary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide automatic fire detection to rear store • Fire door protecting staircase to 1st floor office requires new self closer • Ramp to rear fire exit requires repair • Fire extinguishers require maintenance • Introduce periodic staff refresher training • Replace damaged fire exit sign above rear exit 	
Assessment review			
Assessment review date	Completed by	Signature	
Review outcome (where substantial changes have occurred a new record sheet should be used)			

Figure 9.1: Example record of significant findings

Notes:

1. The risk assessment record of significant findings should refer to other plans, records or other documents as necessary.
2. The information in this record should assist you to develop an emergency plan; coordinate measures with other 'responsible persons' in the building; and to inform and train staff and inform other relevant persons. In premises with 'engineered fire safety strategies', a fire policy manual should be provided in addition to any other records. Enforcing authorities would expect a fire engineering policy manual to conform to the structure set out in BS 7974-0 section 5: Reporting and presentation.

Fire Safety Audit

A fire safety audit can be used alongside your fire risk assessment to identify what fire safety provisions exist in your premises.

When carrying out a review of your fire safety risk assessment, a pre-planned audit can quickly identify if there have been any significant changes which may affect the fire safety systems and highlight whether a full fire risk assessment is necessary.

Plans and Specifications

Plans and specifications can be required to assist understanding of a fire risk assessment or emergency plan. Even where not needed for this purpose they can help you and your staff keep your fire risk assessment and emergency plan under review and help the fire and rescue service in the event of fire. Any symbols used should be shown on a key. Plans and specifications could include the following:

- essential structural features such as the layout of function rooms, escape doors, wall partitions, corridors, stairways etc. (including any fire-resisting structure and self-closing fire doors provided to protect the escape routes);
- location of refuges and lifts that have been designated suitable for use by disabled people and others who may need assistance to escape in case of fire;
- methods for fighting fire (details of the number, type and location of the firefighting equipment);
- location of manually-operated fire alarm call points and control equipment for fire alarms;
- location of any control rooms and any fire staff posts;
- location of any emergency lighting equipment and the exit route signs;
- location of any high-risk areas, equipment or process that must be immediately shut down by staff on hearing the fire alarm;
- location of any automatic firefighting systems, risers and sprinkler control valves;
- location of the main electrical supply switch, the main water shut-off valve and, where appropriate, the main gas or oil shut-off valves; and
- plans and specifications relating to all recent constructions.

This information should be passed on to any later users or owners of the premises.

Emergency Plans

Emergency plan and contingency plans: Your emergency plan should be appropriate to your premises and could include:

- how people will be warned if there is a fire;
- what staff should do if they discover a fire;
- how the evacuation of the premises should be carried out;
- where people should assemble after they have left the premises and procedures for checking whether the premises have been evacuated;
- identification of key escape routes, how people can gain access to them and escape from them to a place of total safety;
- arrangements for fighting the fire;
- the duties and identity of staff who have specific responsibilities if there is a fire;
- arrangements for the safe evacuation of people identified as being especially at risk, such as those with disabilities, lone workers and young persons;
- any machines/appliances/processes/power supplies that need to be stopped or isolated if there is a fire;
- specific arrangements, if necessary, for high-fire-risk areas;
- contingency plans for when life safety systems such as evacuation lifts, fire-detection and warning systems, sprinklers or smoke control systems are out of order;
- how the fire and rescue service and any other necessary services will be called and who will be responsible for doing this;
- procedures for meeting the fire and rescue service on their arrival and notifying them of any special risks, e.g. the location of highly flammable materials.
- what training employees need and the arrangements for ensuring that this training is given;
- phased evacuation plans (where some areas are evacuated while others are alerted but not evacuated until later); and
- plans to deal with people once they have left the premises.
- As part of your emergency plan it is good practice to prepare post-incident plans for dealing with situations that might arise such as those involving:
 - unaccompanied children;
 - people with personal belongings (especially valuables) still in the building;
 - people wishing to rejoin friends;
 - getting people away from the building (e.g. to transport); and
 - inclement weather.

You should therefore prepare contingency plans to determine specific actions and/or the mobilisation of specialist resources.

Guidance on developing health and safety management policy has been published by the HSE.

Information, Instruction, Co-Operation and Co-Ordination

Supplying Information

You must provide easily understandable information to employees, the parents of children

you may employ, and to employers of other persons working in your premises about the measures in place to ensure a safe escape from the building and how they will operate, for example:

- any significant risks to staff and other relevant persons that have been identified in your fire risk assessment or any similar assessment carried out by another user and responsible person in the building;
- the fire prevention and protection measures and procedures in your premises and where they impact on staff and other relevant persons in the building;
- the procedures for fighting a fire in the premises; and the identity of people who have been nominated with specific responsibilities in the building.

Even if you do not have to record the fire risk assessment, it would be helpful to keep a record of any co-operation and exchange of information made between employers and other responsible people for future reference.

You need to ensure that all staff and, where necessary, other relevant persons in the building, receive appropriate information in a way that can be easily understood. This might include any special instructions to particular people who have been allocated a specific task, such as shutting down equipment or guiding people to the nearest exit.

Duties of employees to give information Employees also have a duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of other people who may be affected by their activities. This includes the need for them to inform their employer of any activity that they consider would present a serious and immediate danger to their own safety and that of others.

Dangerous Substances

HSE publishes guidance⁸ about specific substances where appropriate information may need to be provided. If any of these, or any other substance that is not included but nevertheless presents more than a slight risk, is present in your premises, then you must provide such information to staff and others, specifically you must:

- name the substance and the risks associated with it, e.g. how to safely use or store the product to avoid creating highly flammable vapours or explosive atmospheres;
- identify any legislative provisions that may be associated with the substance;
- allow employees access to the hazardous substances safety data sheet; and
- inform the local fire and rescue service where dangerous substances are present on the premises.

Information to the fire and rescue services In addition to providing information to the fire and rescue service when dangerous substances are present in sufficient quantities to pose an enhanced risk, it will also be helpful to inform them of any short term changes that might have an impact on their firefighting activities, e.g. in the event of temporary loss of a firefighting facility and temporary alterations.

Procedures should also include meeting and briefing the fire and rescue service when they arrive.

Instruction

You will need to carefully consider the type of instructions to staff and other people working in your premises. Written instructions must be concise, comprehensible and relevant and therefore must be reviewed and updated as new working practices and hazardous substances are introduced. Inclusive access and employment policies mean that people with learning difficulties may now be present in a range of premises and your fire risk assessment should consider whether further instruction or guidance is necessary to ensure that your evacuation strategy is appropriate and understood by everyone.

Instructions will need to be given to people delegated to carry out particular tasks, for example:

- removing additional security, bolts, bars or chains on final exit doors before the start of business to ensure that escape routes are accessible;
- daily, weekly, quarterly and yearly checks on the range of fire safety measures (in larger premises some of the work may be contracted out to a specialist company);
- safety considerations when closing down the premises at the end of the day, e.g. removing rubbish, ensuring enough exits are available for people that remain and closing fire doors and shutters;
- leaving hazardous substances in a safe condition when evacuating the building;
- the safe storage of hazardous substances at the end of the working day; and
- ensuring everyone in large organisations with many buildings within a curtilage and a security zone know how to use internal emergency telephones.
- Specific instructions may be needed about:
 - how staff will help members of the public/ visitors to leave the building;
 - 'sweeping' of the shop floor by staff to guide people to the nearest exit when the fire alarm sounds;
 - designating particular areas of a shop/ office for supervisors to check that no one remains inside;
 - calling the emergency services;
 - carrying out evacuation roll calls;
 - taking charge at the assembly area;
 - meeting and directing fire engines; and
 - cover arrangements when nominated people are on leave.

Co-operation and Co-Ordination

Where you share premises with others (this includes people who are self-employed or in partnership), each responsible person, i.e. each employer, owner or other person who has control over any part of the premises, will need to co-operate and co-ordinate the findings of their separate fire risk assessments to ensure the fire precautions and protection measures are effective throughout the building. This could include:

- co-ordinating an emergency plan (see Step 4.2 for features of an emergency plan);
- identifying the nature of any risks and how they may affect others in or about the premises;

- identifying any fire-prevention and protection measures;
- identifying any measures to mitigate the effects of a fire; and
- arranging any contacts with external emergency services and calling the fire and rescue service.

Fire Safety Training

Staff Training

The actions of staff if there is a fire are likely to be crucial to their safety and that of other people in the premises. All staff should receive basic fire safety induction training and attend refresher sessions at pre-determined intervals.

You should ensure that all staff and contractors are told about the emergency plan and are shown the escape routes.

The training should take account of the findings of the fire risk assessment and be easily understood by all those attending. It should include the role that those members of staff will be expected to carry out if a fire occurs.

This may vary in large premises, with some staff being appointed as fire marshals or being given some other particular role for which additional training will be required.

In addition to the guidance given in Part 1, Step 4.4, as a minimum all staff should receive training about:

- the items listed in your emergency plan;
- the importance of fire doors and other basic fire-prevention measures;
- where relevant, the appropriate use of firefighting equipment;
- the importance of reporting to the assembly area;
- exit routes and the operation of exit devices, including physically walking these routes;
- general matters such as permitted smoking areas or restrictions on cooking other than in designated areas; and
- assisting disabled persons where necessary.
- Training is necessary:
 - when staff start employment or are transferred into the premises;
 - when changes have been made to the emergency plan and the preventive and protective measures;
 - where working practices and processes or people's responsibilities change;
 - to take account of any changed risks to the safety of staff or other relevant person to ensure that staff know what they have to do to safeguard themselves and others on the premises;
 - where staff are expected to assist disabled persons; and
 - if a member of staff may take on the role of duty manager.

Training should be repeated as often as necessary and should take place during working hours.

Whatever training you decide is necessary to support your fire safety strategy and emergency

plan, it should be verifiable.

Enforcing authorities may want to examine records as evidence that adequate training has been given.

Fire Marshals

Staff expected to undertake the role of fire marshals (often called fire wardens) would require more comprehensive training. Their role may include:

- helping those on the premises to leave;
- checking the premises to ensure everyone has left;
- using firefighting equipment if safe to do so;
- liaising with the fire and rescue service on arrival;
- shutting down vital or dangerous equipment; and
- performing a supervisory/managing role in any fire situation.

Training for this role may include:

- detailed knowledge of the fire safety strategy of the premises;
- awareness of human behaviour in fires;
- how to encourage others to use the most appropriate escape route;
- how to search safely and recognise areas that are unsafe to enter;
- the difficulties that some people, particularly if disabled, may have in escaping and any special evacuation arrangements that have been pre-planned;
- additional training in the use of firefighting equipment; an understanding of the purpose of any fixed firefighting equipment such as sprinklers or gas flooding systems; and
- reporting of faults, incidents and near misses.

Fire Drills

Once the emergency plan has been developed and training given, you will need to evaluate its effectiveness. The best way to do this is to perform a fire drill. This should be carried out at least annually or as determined by your fire risk assessment. If you have a high staff turnover, you may need to carry them out more often.

A well-planned and executed fire drill will confirm understanding of the training and provide helpful information for future training. The responsible person should determine the possible objectives of the drill such as to:

- identify any weaknesses in the evacuation strategy;
- test the procedure following any recent alteration or changes to working practices;
- familiarise new members of staff with procedures; and
- test the arrangements for disabled people.

Who should take Part?

Within each building the evacuation should be for all occupants except those who may need to ensure the security of the premises, or people who, on a risk-assessed basis, are required

to remain with particular equipment or processes that cannot be closed down.

Premises that consist of several buildings on the same site should be dealt with one building at a time over an appropriate period unless the emergency procedure dictates otherwise.

Where appropriate, you may find it helpful to include members of the public in your fire drill ensuring that all necessary health and safety issues are addressed before you do so.

Carrying out the Drill

For premises that have more than one escape route, the escape plan should be designed to evacuate all people on the assumption that one exit or stairway is unavailable because of the fire. This could be simulated by a designated person being located at a suitable point on an exit route. Applying this scenario to different escape routes at each fire drill will encourage individuals to use alternative escape routes which they may not normally use.

When carrying out the drill you might find it helpful to:

- circulate details concerning the drill and inform all staff of their duty to participate. It may not be beneficial to have 'surprise drills' as the health and safety risks introduced may outweigh the benefits;
- ensure that equipment can be safely left;
- nominate observers;
- inform the alarm receiving centre if the fire-warning system is monitored (if the fire and rescue service is normally called directly from your premises, ensure that this does not happen);
- inform visitors and members of the public if they are present; and
- ask a member of staff at random to set off the alarm by operating the nearest alarm call point using the test key. This will indicate the level of knowledge regarding the location of the nearest call point.

More detailed information on fire drills and test evacuations are given in BS 5588-12.

The roll call/checking the Premises have been Evacuated

Where possible, you should ensure that a roll call is carried out as soon as possible at the designated assembly point(s), and/or receive reports from wardens designated to 'sweep' the premises. You should note any people who are unaccounted for. In a real evacuation this information will need to be passed to the fire and rescue service on arrival.

Check that people have assembled at the evacuation point.

Once the roll call is complete or all reports have been received, allow people to return to the building. If the fire-warning system is monitored inform the alarm receiving centre that the drill has now been completed and record the outcomes of the drill.

Monitoring and Debrief

Throughout the drill the responsible person and nominated observers should pay particular attention to:

- communication difficulties with regard to the roll call and establishing that everyone

- is accounted for;
- the use of the nearest available escape routes as opposed to common circulation routes;
- difficulties with the opening of final exit doors;
- difficulties experienced by people with disabilities;
- the roles of specified people, e.g. fire wardens;
- inappropriate actions, e.g. stopping to collect personal items, attempting to use lifts etc.; and
- windows and doors not being closed as people leave.

On-the-spot debriefs are useful to discuss the fire drill, encouraging feedback from everybody. Later, reports from fire wardens and observations from people should be collated and reviewed. Any conclusions and remedial actions should be recorded and implemented.

Quality Assurance of Fire Protection Equipment and Installation

Fire protection products and related services should be fit for their purpose and properly installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or the relevant British Standard.

Third-party certification schemes for fire protection products and related services are an effective means of providing the fullest possible assurances, offering a level of quality, reliability and safety that non-certificated products may lack. This does not mean goods and services that are not third-party approved are less reliable, but there is no obvious way in which this can be demonstrated.

Third-party quality assurance can offer comfort both as a means of satisfying you that goods and services you have purchased are fit for purpose, and as a means of demonstrating that you have complied with the law.

However, to ensure the level of assurance offered by third party schemes, you should always check whether the company you employ sub-contracts work to others. If they do, you will want to check that the sub- contractors are subject to the same level of checks of quality and competence as the company you are employing.

Your local fire and rescue service, fire trade associations or your own trade association may be able to provide further details about third- party quality assurance schemes and the various organisations that administer them.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Fire Drill Log Book: Fire Alarm Safety Organiser & Log Book - For Workplace, Schools Etc | Health And Safety Compliance | Record Over 1000 Drills, Schedules, Evacuation Plan, Important Information. Paperback – July 20, 2020 by Your Safety First Publishings*
- ✓ *fire alarm log book 2021: Fire Alarm Testing Log Book, Health And Safety Compliance Record Book , Fire Alarm Checklist (Fire Inspection And Testing Log) Paperback – April 7, 2021 by MoodLog Books (Author)*