



Health and Safety

Risk Assessment

Minimum Standard

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1 Aims and Principles

The aim of this Minimum Standard is to ensure that managers and employees understand their responsibilities regarding undertaking, implementing, monitoring and reviewing risk assessments.

All Departments should develop their own arrangements for ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken, recorded and reviewed as required. The procedures must include the standards set out in this document or be of an equivalent or higher standard.

Any risk assessment methodology used within the GoJ must take account of guidance produced by the Jersey Health and Safety Inspectorate (HSI) which includes the Jersey “Five steps” approach.

Departments must prioritise their hazard identification and assessment to ensure the areas or activities with the greatest risk have suitable control measures in place.

The methodology and level of detail in risk assessments must reflect the level and complexity of the hazards.

2 Legislation and Guidance

[Health and Safety at Work \(Jersey\) Law, 1989](#)

[Risk Assessments \(HSI\)](#)

[Risk Assessment – Employers’ Guide \(HSI\)](#)

3 Who this Minimum Standard Applies to

Applies to:

- All Government of Jersey (GoJ) and States’ employees
- Voluntary staff or those on honorary contracts where there is no implied contract of employment

4 Links to other GoJ Policies, Minimum Standards and Guidance

a) Policies

Government of Jersey - Health and Safety Policy

b) GoJ Minimum Standards

All Minimum Standards

c) Other Internal Guidance

Further guidance may be available from other departments and contact should be made with your department Health and Safety Manager/Adviser “Professional” for assistance with preparing departmental procedures.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s risk assessment procedures must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved and must be kept up to date.

Reference should be made to the Government of Jersey - Health and Safety Policy for general responsibilities.

6 Purpose of Risk Assessment

The primary purpose of risk assessment is to identify what could go wrong and what actions can be taken to prevent this from happening BEFORE an incident actually occurs.

Implementing a program of risk assessments will help GoJ Departments to:

- Identify the hazards and risks associated with their activities
- Prioritise those risks through the process of evaluation
- Identify suitable control measures which can be implemented to control those risks to an acceptable level.
- Prepare an action plan to ensure the control measures are implemented within a suitable time frame.

If the control measures identified are implemented and maintained, then the risk of incidents occurring is significantly reduced.

7 The Risk Assessment Process

The risk assessment process, otherwise known as the Jersey ‘five steps to risk assessment’ is as follows:

1	Identify hazards and those at risk
2	Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions ('control measures')
3	Record your findings and make a plan of action
4	Implement any additional control measures identified
5	Review your risk assessment

It should be noted that this is not the same as the UK Health and Safety Executive's 5 steps approach as it includes a requirement for an action plan to be produced.

Step 1 - Identifying hazards and those at risk

The person carrying out the risk assessment should consider what has the potential to cause harm to employees and others including visitors, contractors, agency staff, etc.

Those who undertake the work activity should be asked for their input as they can often identify potential hazards that could otherwise be missed.

Harm may already have occurred which could be identified by looking at past accident reports, near miss data, and sickness absence.

When identifying hazards and assessing risks the following should be considered:

- routine and non-routine activities
- the risks associated with GoJ activities to persons other than employees (e.g. general public, service users, contractors and any other third parties) having access to the workplace
- hazards originating outside of the work location i.e. equipment purchasing, design specifications, recruitment etc.
- hazards created in the vicinity of the work location by work-related activities under the control of the organisation
- infrastructure, equipment and materials at the work location, whether provided by the GoJ or others
- modifications to the health and safety management system, including temporary changes, and their impact on operations, processes and activities

- the relevant aspects of the design of work areas, processes, installations, machinery & equipment, operating procedures and work organisation
- different work locations where the same work activity is carried out

For each hazard identified it's important to be clear about who might be harmed and how. The nature of the party at risk can have a big impact on the level of risk e.g. a trip hazard will pose a much greater risk if the exposed population is elderly.

It is therefore very important that the vulnerability of the persons who could be exposed to the hazard is properly understood.

Step 2 - Evaluating risks and deciding on precautions (control measures)

- Evaluating risks

To help decide what should be put in place to protect people from a hazard, the level of risk should be evaluated.

The level of risk depends on the likelihood of the harm occurring and how serious the outcome (severity) could be. A numbering system/risk matrix is often used to help with this process which can then be used to prioritise the risks.

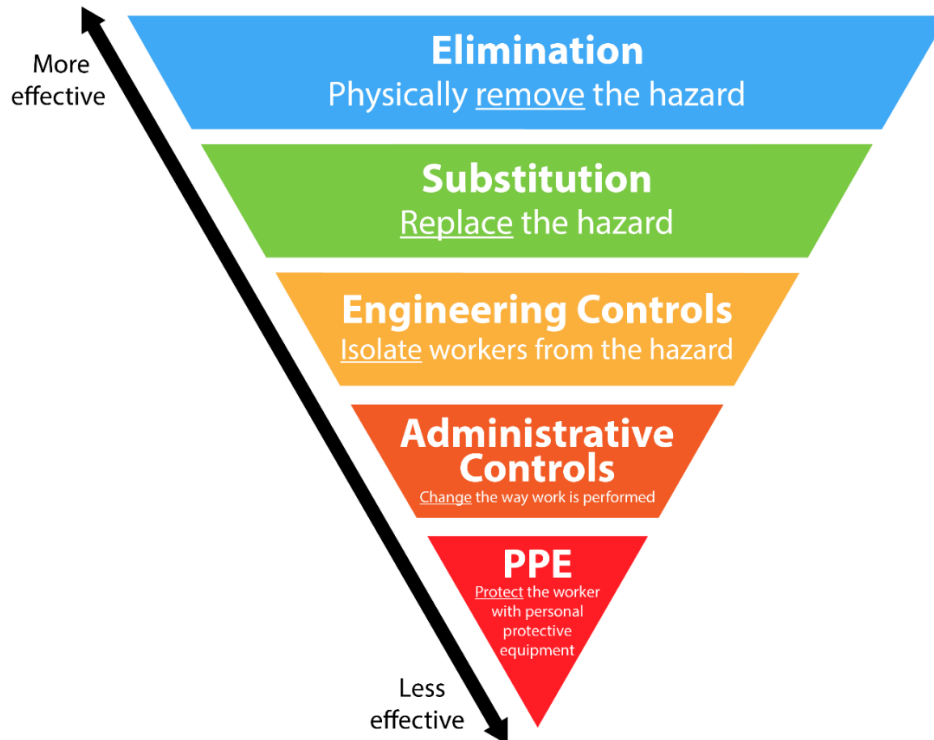
If a working practice is already established, then it is likely that some control measures will already be in place. As part of the risk assessment process, these should be reviewed to make sure that they are adequate and meet best practice as newer and more effective controls may be available.

When evaluating risk, the level should be determined using the most vulnerable category of person likely to be exposed. The evaluation should also be based on the most serious outcome which could occur, taking a sensible approach. Any control measures subsequently identified and implemented, should ensure that all exposed persons are protected.

- Deciding on precautions (control measures)

There is often more than one control measure available to help reduce the risk and consideration should be given to what would be most effective and what is practicable. In many cases, a combination of control measures is needed to ensure the risks are properly controlled e.g. if a machine guard is required, then systems also need to be in place to ensure that it is used and checked periodically.

The following hierarchy should be considered when deciding what would be the most suitable controls although it should be noted that some hazards have their own specific hierarchy of controls e.g. COSHH, working at height etc.



The control measures become less effective as the hierarchy is descended as they rely more on the actions of people to ensure they are effective. Therefore priority should be given to options with greater reliability with the minimum of reliance on people following instructions or 'doing the right thing'.

As seen in the hierarchy, the provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is considered to be the last line of defence against hazards as its purpose is to protect the person from any residual risks that cannot be controlled by any other reasonably practicable means.

Where feasible, automated control systems should be considered rather than manual systems e.g. drones for roof inspection instead of employees working at height.

Control measures may not be required, for example, where the risk is so low that risk control measures are already adequate, or where further control measures are not considered reasonably practicable. In such cases it is important this is documented.

Departments must implement safety measures which manage the risks identified and which comply with applicable legal requirements or the requirements of other standards and guidance. Safety measures must be integrated into the overall HS&W management system and be evaluated regularly to verify their effectiveness.

When determining and implementing operational safety measures account should be taken (but not exclusively) of:

- GoJ policy objectives
- Departmental policy objectives
- Legal and other requirements to which the GoJ subscribes
- Results of hazard identification and risk assessment and the evaluation of existing controls
- Existing operational procedures
- Feedback and participation from employee consultation

Control measures must also take into account human factors, attitudes to risk and existing business practice and behavioural aspects of compliance.

Control measures must be supported with specific written criteria relevant to the department and the operation. For example:

- For hazardous tasks - The use of specific equipment and procedures/work instructions for its use (determined by a safe system of work which includes instructions for use, the order of works, competence, PPE, etc.)
- For hazardous chemicals or materials - Approved chemical lists – Material Safety Data Sheets - COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessments - Storage locations and conditions
- For working in hazardous areas - Specific conditions of entry - Site specific induction requirements - Specific PPE
- For work performed by contractors - Specification of HS&W performance criteria - Specification of competency and or training requirements of personnel
- For Visitors - Entry controls / signs / Emergency Plans

It is important that the relevant employees are made aware of the control measures in place. Therefore this information must be brought to their attention using training sessions or other methods which ensure it has been received and understood.

Step 3 - Record your findings and make a plan of action

- Record your findings

This section details the action which needs to be taken in respect of generic and specific risk assessments to record and analyse the findings. Dynamic risk assessments are dealt with in a different manner due to their unique nature and further information is contained in section 7 of this document.

The findings of risk assessments must be recorded to provide information to employees and ensure that the GoJ can demonstrate that the risks have been properly considered e.g. in the event of an incident.

They should be recorded and stored in a physical or electronic location which is readily available to those undertaking the work activity.

General [risk assessment templates](#) are available to record all of the significant findings.

Departments can develop and use different systems for recording and accessing risk assessments.

- **Make a plan of action**

Once control measures have been identified, a plan of action should be prepared. This can be incorporated into the risk assessment record or be a separate document if preferred.

The plan of action is a simple record to ensure the following details are recorded:

- Date by which a control measure should be implemented
- Who is responsible for implementing the control measure
- Confirmation that the control measure has been implemented

Step 4 – Implement any additional control measures identified

Best practice and standards change over time with new control measures becoming available to make tasks safer. Just because no incidents have occurred to date, it doesn't mean that the task is being carried out in the safest way available. The assessment may therefore identify that new additional control measures are available which should be considered.

Where it is determined through risk assessment that it is reasonably practicable to implement additional control measures or improvements, these should be implemented and a record of this kept in the plan of action.

Step 5 - Review your risk assessment

Risk assessments are living documents and will need to be reviewed to ensure that they still cover the working activity adequately and take into account best practice standards.

Risk assessments should be reviewed periodically e.g. every 1-2 years (depending on the risk level) but additional reviews may be necessary such as when any of the following occur:

- An accident, incident or near miss
- A complaint is received

- A change in the system of work, equipment or material of the particular activity
- A change to guidance issued by trade bodies
- New information is received from the manufacturer or supplier e.g. safety alert
- A change in legislation
- New guidance is published

8 Types of Risk Assessment

There are three types of risk assessment which can be used:

Generic

These cover the hazards and control measures which are associated with a particular task and are general in their nature as they do not take into account any site specific information which may be relevant.

This type of assessment is helpful in that it removes the need to keep reproducing the same information for different tasks. However, it is important to recognise that a generic assessment is unlikely to be sufficient on its own and a specific assessment (and possibly dynamic assessment) will be required.

Specific

These can be specific to a task, equipment, location, a person etc. When preparing specific risk assessments, reference should be made to any relevant generic risk assessment. The information is then expanded upon, taking into account the specific factors of what is being assessed.

Site specific or task specific risk assessments (location or person should ideally be prepared for all tasks. However, where this is not reasonably practicable, generic risk assessments can be used and can be supported by a written “point of work” risk assessment. The generic risk assessment should be reviewed before the activity is carried out.

Dynamic

In emergency situations or work situations where on-site hazards may be present which could not have been captured in the generic or specific risk assessments, “dynamic” or ‘point of work’ risk assessments can be used by suitably trained and competent managers and employees.

When carrying out dynamic risk assessment, the emphasis shifts from ‘safe place, safe equipment, safe system of work and safe person’ to ‘safe person, safe equipment and safe system of work’ as a safe working environment cannot be guaranteed. This ‘safe person’ approach relies on human factors such as motivation, experience, competence, attitude and perception of risk.

Any department which uses dynamic risk assessments to fully manage the risks to GoJ employees must have specific arrangements in place for recording sufficient information on the decisions made. The information should include the hazards that were taken into account and the reasoning behind the

action taken. Some of this information will be recorded after the event e.g. in emergency situations where action is time critical.

Where 'point of work' risk assessments are used, there are likely to be generic and/or specific risk assessment already in place for the task. However, due to potential changing circumstances at the work location, a simple checklist of typical potential hazards and control measures or something similar is usually completed by an employee before the work starts.

9 Training

Employees who are required to carry out risk assessments must be competent in the methodologies being used and have both knowledge and experience of the activities and hazards being assessed.

Individuals responsible for preparing risk assessments or managing the process must have attended a GoJ-approved risk assessment course appropriate to their level of involvement in the process.

All employees required to follow understand and follow risk assessments should receive training from their department.

10 Consultation and Communication

Employees should be consulted when carrying out risk assessments as they will often be able to provide valuable information regarding the activities and workable solutions for addressing hazards.

The findings of risk assessments must also be communicated to them and the documents should be in a format which is readily accessible and in the format set out in the department's procedures.

A procedure should be in place which enables employees to raise any concerns they may have regarding any risk assessments.

11 Retention of Risk Assessment Records

There are no set rules on retention times for risk assessments but departments will need to take into account a number of factors when determining suitable periods.

The first step is to determine why a superseded risk assessment may be needed. The primary reason is usually because a claim has been received in connection with an accident or ill health.

In the event of an accident, the person involved has up to 3 years from the date of the incident to start proceedings and therefore it may be prudent to keep the record for 4-5 years.

If a child is involved in the accident, then they have 3 years from the time they turn 18 years old to commence proceedings and therefore it may be prudent to keep the record for 22 years, although this can be reduced depending on the age of the child involved.

If the activity involves hazards which pose a risk to health, such as noise, manual handling, vibration, hazardous substances etc., then it would be prudent to keep these records for 40 years as injuries of this nature can take many years to occur.

Where no known incidents have occurred during the period the risk assessment was valid, it would be reasonable to only keep that risk assessment for a period of 12 months. However, it should be recognised that an incident may have occurred which is not notified at the time and only comes to the attention of the department when proceedings are commenced much later.