Risk estimation and evaluation guide

You can estimate the risk from your hazards using table 1. Guidance on the likely harm consequence of the hazardous event is given in table 2. Find out what you need to do to control the risk using table 3.

**Table 1: Risk estimation.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Likely Consequence** | Catastrophic | Medium | High | Very High | Very high | Very High |
| Major | Low | Medium | High | High | Very High |
| Moderate | Very low | Low | Medium | Medium | High |
| Minor | Very low | Low | Low | Medium | Medium |
| Insignificant | Very low | Very low | Low | Low | Low |
|  | Very unlikely | Unlikely | Fairly likely | Likely | Very likely |
| **Likelihood of identified event / hazardous event occurring** | | | | |

**Table 2: Consequences guidance (examples).**

| **Impact category** | **Insignificant** | **Minor** | **Moderate** | **Major** | **Catastrophic** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Harm to health** | No significant harm to health | Nuisance and irritation; temporary ill-heath leading to discomfort  Stress / distress | dermatitis; asthma; work-related upper limb disorders  Short term sickness absence  Diagnosable mental health condition (e.g. post-traumatic stress) | Ill- health leading to permanent minor disability. Partial hearing lost.  Long term sickness absence (7 days +)  Diagnosable mental health condition significantly affecting day to day life  Self harm or harm to others due to mental health condition | Acute fatal diseases; severe life shortening diseases; permanent substantial disability.  Ill health retirement  Suicide or serious harm to others due to mental ill health |
| **Injury** | Minor injuries not requiring first aid | Minor injuries requiring first aid.  Superficial injuries, minor cuts and bruises; eye irritation from dust. | Incapacitated or absent from work for less than 7 days.  Lacerations; minor burns; sprains | Worker incapacitated or absent from work for 7+ days.  Lacerations; burns; concussion; serious sprains; minor fractures. | Fatal injuries. Permanent substantial disability (life changing). Amputations.  Multiple serious injuries; serious burns; loss of sight; Major fractures.  Loss of consciousness caused by head injury, inhalation of substance or asphyxia. |

**Table 3: Risk-based control plan (risk evaluation).**

|  |  |
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| **Risk level** | **Guidance on necessary action and time scale** |
| **Very low** | No further action. These risks are considered acceptable. Ensure controls are maintained and reviewed regularly. |
| **Low** | No additional controls required unless they can implemented at very low cost, time and effort. Actions to reduce risks are low priority. Ensure controls are maintained and reviewed regularly or if there is a significant change. |
| **Medium** | Consider whether risks can be lowered, but the costs of additional risk reduction should be taken into account.  Where additional risk reduction measures need to be implemented, specify a defined time period for action and keep under review.  If risk cannot be lowered below medium (e.g. because consequence is catastrophic), ensure rigorous controls are maintained and reviewed regularly, or where there is a significant change. |
| **High** | Substantial efforts to reduce the risk.  Risk reduction measures to be implemented urgently within a defined time period. It may be necessary to suspend or restrict the activity or put into place short term mitigations.  Considerable resources might have to be allocated to additional controls. Maintain existing controls rigorously and keep under regular review until risk reduced. |
| **Very high** | Stop activity and take immediate action. Unacceptable risk and substantial risk control improvements are necessary to reduce the risk.  Work should be halted until risk controls are implemented that reduce the risk so it is no longer very high.  If it is not possible to reduce the risk, work should remain prohibited. |