

How To Undertake A Suitable and Sufficient Dockside Risk Assessment

All Dockside Operators are required to undertake a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment (RA). The purpose of a RA is to show how your safety control measures will eliminate, reduce, isolate, or control identified main hazards. The RA essentially requires you to look closely at your **main hazards** and determine how you will make them safe. Don't list trivial hazards.

Operators, if found negligent, risk heavy fines, prosecution and even imprisonment by Harbour or Local Authorities if suitable safety control measures are not in place.

To help you, a **sample Risk Assessment** is below...but please don't copy it. Your own RA should contain your own words and should be more comprehensive. Please bear in mind that the RA has to be 'suitable and sufficient'. Professional safety advice can be obtained from a competent person.

By Law, the risk assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient' – but the findings and control measures you decide on must be simple to understand, implement and communicate to all your staff, visitors and passengers. Hazards must be eliminated or controlled to an acceptable level so as to prevent accidents.

Step 1: Look for the Task/Hazard:

DOCKSIDE BERTHS: Ask yourself:

Have you read, understood and implemented all the details contained in the Harbour/Marina Rule Book?

Do you have your life-saving and MOB equipment onboard and along the dock and link ways?

How do you contact the Harbour/Marina management in emergency?

Do you inspect all safety equipment regularly?

Do you inspect the dock, link ways, pontoons, guardrails, lighting, etc. before allowing visitors on the dock?

Do you make a thorough inspection of the vessel before allowing visitor access?

Are radios, lights and safety gear checked before visitor boarding?

Do you escort all visitors and ensure they wear non slip shoes?

Have you banned visitors from wearing just socks on their feet?

Have you instructed staff on emergency procedures and that under 16's are not allowed onboard unsupervised?

Have you considered people with all forms of disability and ensured that safe access to the vessel is available?

Have you considered parents and carers who may accompany children and people with disabilities?

Have you provided safety equipment suitable for people with a range of disabilities?

Do you warn people against carrying babies around onboard vessels?

Do you provide adequate training for staff in interacting with people with disabilities and their companions?

Do you provide suitable training for staff in supervision of young children onboard and along the dock?

Are you keeping the pontoon fingers free of rubbish and trailing cables?

Have you assessed the vessel's stability and passenger capacity? (Individuals' weight has risen (2005) to an average of 11st 8lb (73.48kg) and the combined weight increase on a passenger ferry of say 100 customers could cause stability problems, says the MAIB. We note that many people with disabilities may be heavier especially when combined with wheelchair weight)

Step 2: Decide who could be harmed and how:

1. Who is most at risk? Think of your employees as well as your passengers including children, older and disabled people.
2. Is additional training necessary and/or information required for any parties identified at risk?
3. Who is affected?
4. How will the passengers be briefed? (remember people with hearing impairment and learning difficulties)
5. Are there any non-swimmers onboard?
6. Is the crew or helmsman trained, experienced and competent in the boat and area of operation?
7. Is there sufficient crew onboard to control the passengers?

Step 3: Evaluate the risks and write down the Control Measures:

Measures:

Decide what reasonable action you are going to take to eliminate the risks/hazards.

1. Can the hazard or risk be removed completely?

2. If the risk cannot be eliminated, can it be isolated, controlled or reduced and how?
3. Can protective measures be taken that will protect the crew and passengers?

Step 4: Record and notify the findings:

Write down the findings of your Risk Assessment and pass the information on about the significant risks to those people outlined in Step 2.

1. Record the measures you have taken to control those risks for future reference.
2. Write it all down...then notify, train and inform the relevant people. A simple Safety Bulletin can easily be produced and distributed to all your relevant stand staff – or give safety advice verbally as part of the daily briefings.

Step 5: Review your findings:

This allows you to learn by experience and take account of any unusual conditions or changes that occurred while demonstrating your boats. Update your RA as and when required i.e. if new regulations have been brought in, or new staff employed, or dock area changes in any way. Do you need to change the way you are doing things since last time?

Refer to the various printed guidance available from the RYA & RNLI. Further, the following HSE guidance pamphlets offer excellent general advice:

HSG65 - Successful Health & Safety Management (HSE Books* ISBN 0 7176 1276 7)

INDG163 - 5 steps to Risk Assessment (Available FREE from HSE Books*)

*See your local Yellow Pages for the telephone number of your nearest HSE branch.

Croft Consultants

72 Ridgewood, Cimla, Neath, SA11 3QG. Tel. 01639 681876.

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