

Use of contactors

Common issues?

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Introduction

- Not going to deal with the law in detail
- The role of the employer
- Guidance
- Common issues and pitfalls



The use of contractors generally

- The employer organisation retains H&S responsibilities even though a contractor has been engaged to undertake specialist work
- This is not controversial – the difficult bits are:
 - How far does that responsibility stretch?
 - How can they be discharged?
 - “Approval” of contractor RAMS?
 - The inter-relationship with duties for employer’s own workers
- Added complexity if the employer is a CDM client and the contractor is carrying out “construction” work

Guidance



You should already have a risk assessment for the work activities of your own business. Make sure your assessment covers risks to contractors from your business (e.g. asbestos, on-site vehicles). The contractor must assess the risks for the contracted work and then both of you must get together to consider any risks from each other's work that could affect the health and safety of the workforce or anyone else.

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And additional thinking

In CDM context:

“Principal contractors do not have to undertake detailed supervision of contractors’ work” – L153 Managing H&S in Construction

Common issues

- Provision of adequate information about potential hazards
- Many of the incidents we deal with involve activities of contractors/sub-contractors not employees
- Remember competency is not a guarantee of anything – competent people can perform work incompetently
- Absolute classic - inadvertent disturbance of ACM's – inadequate survey/register – failure to communicate properly: Leads to closure, waiver, decontamination and HSE intervention!
- Consider fragile roofs!!
- Failure to co-ordinate activity with own staff
 - Collapsing ceilings on workers below etc.
 - Vehicle movements
 - Power isolations
- Mismatch in expectations/understanding

A final thought?

- Competency assessment on appointment is a beginning and not an end
- In deciding how you co-ordinate with or monitor contractors ensure that it is realistic and achievable



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