

FIRE SAFETY

A Guide to Fire Safety at Work



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INTRODUCTION

The following guide is a précis of the guidance to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 a full copy of which can be found here:

www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/1541/contents/made

Sitting under the Fire Safety Order are a number of sector specific Guidance documents. The Guidance for Transport Premises and Facilities is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-transport-premises-and-facilities

This Guidance sets out the steps that must be taken by the employer to ensure compliance with the Order. The primary step being to appoint a Responsible Person whose duties cover fire safety and who will be responsible for carrying out appropriate fire risk assessments.

This guide is for all employers, managers, occupiers and owners of premises and all others who have responsibility for the management of fire safety on a day-to-day basis in transport premises and facilities. It tells you what you have to do to comply with fire safety law and helps you carry out a fire risk assessment and identify the general fire precautions you need to have in place.

This guide is intended for transport premises and facilities, which is important for the RMT as we have members working in the following areas:

- airport terminals (passenger and freight);
- ferry/shipping ports (passenger and freight);
- rail (surface – train/light rail/tram – and sub-surface) terminals, stations and platforms;
- bus/coach terminals and stations;
- transport interchanges;
- tunnels (road and rail); and
- similar premises not included in the above list

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The responsible person must carry out a fire risk assessment which must focus on the fire safety of all ‘relevant persons’ who could be affected by a fire. It should pay particular attention to those at special risk, such as disabled people or those with special needs, children, and non-English-speaking users of the premises. It must include consideration of any

dangerous substance liable to be on the premises. The fire risk assessment will help the employer identify risks that can be removed or reduced, and decide the nature and extent of the general fire precautions that need to be taken.

More complex facilities may need to be assessed by a person who has comprehensive training or experience in fire risk assessment with input from a number of sources, including local staff or their safety representatives. However, this guide can be applied to individual parts of the facility to address fire safety issues within individual occupancies by a person with the appropriate level of formal training or experience relevant to managing that specific premises or facility.

If the organisation employs five or more people, premises are licensed or an alterations notice is in force, the employer must record the significant findings of the assessment. It is good practice to record significant findings in any case.

OTHER FIRE SAFETY DUTIES OF THE EMPLOYER

There are other fire safety duties with which the employer needs to comply:

- The employer must appoint one or more competent persons, depending on the size and use of the premises and facilities, to carry out any of the preventative and protective measures required by the Order. A competent person is someone with enough training, knowledge, experience and other qualities to be able to implement these measures properly.
- The employer must provide employees with clear and relevant information on the risks to them identified in the fire risk assessment, about the measures that have been taken to prevent fires, and how these measures will protect them if a fire breaks out.
- The employer must consult employees (or their elected representatives) about nominating people to carry out particular roles in connection with fire safety and about proposals for improving the fire precautions.
- The employer must inform non-employees, such as temporary or contract workers, of the relevant risks to them, and provide them with information about who are the nominated competent persons and about the fire safety procedures for the premises.

- The employer must co-operate and co-ordinate with other responsible persons in the transport premises, inform them of any significant risks found and how they will seek to reduce/control those risks that might affect the safety of their employees.
- The employer must provide the employer of any person from an outside organisation who is working in the premises (e.g. a contractor providing temporary staff) with clear and relevant information on the risks to those employees and the preventative and protective measures taken. The employer must also provide those employees with appropriate instructions and relevant information about the risks to them.
- The employer must consider the presence of any dangerous substances and the fire risk that this presents to relevant persons from fire.
- The employer must establish a suitable means of contacting the emergency services and provide them with any relevant information about dangerous substances.
- The employer must provide appropriate information, instruction and training to employees, during their normal working hours, about the fire precautions in the workplace, when they start working for them (induction training) and from time to time throughout the period that they work for the employer.
- The employer must ensure that the premises, facilities and any equipment provided in connection with fire-fighting, fire detection and warning, or emergency routes and exits are all covered by a suitable system of maintenance, and are maintained by a competent person so that they are in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.
- Employees must co-operate with the employer to ensure that the workplace is safe from fire and its effects, and they must not do anything that will place themselves or other people at risk.

The above outlines some of the main requirements of the Order. The full guide as detailed above will explain how the employer can meet these requirements.

CHECKLIST FOR HEALTH & SAFETY REPS

① Check existing fire precautions and ask to see risk assessments.

② Check evacuation procedures in all places of work. Representatives are advised to ensure the following:

- all fire extinguishers are in place and have been appropriately serviced**
- all fire alarms and automatic detection systems are regularly tested, are fully operational and are audible throughout the workplace.**
- all fire routes are clearly marked, clear of obstruction and easily navigated.**
- all fire procedures are up to date and all staff are aware of evacuation routes etc.**

③ All fire extinguishers on board trains are in place and have been properly serviced.

④ Ensure that during FBU industrial action, all fire precautions are reviewed to take into account any added risk. In the case of industrial action, further advice will be issued by Head Office.

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