

# **Snowdonia National Park Authority**

## **Risk Assessment Policy and Procedure**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of risk assessment is to identify hazards and evaluate any associated risks to health and safety arising from the Authority's activities. This will enable informed decisions to be taken to eliminate or minimise any risk of harm to those who may be affected.

## 2. Who does this policy apply to?

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Snowdonia National Park Authority staff and volunteers (all are referred to as 'employees' in this policy).

## 3. The legal position

- 3.1 Risk assessment is a legal requirement for every employer. The purpose of the assessment is to identify what needs to be done to control health and safety risks (Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1999).
- 3.2 In addition, topic specific risk assessments are required by associated legislation for: fire, manual handling, computer use, substances hazardous to health, noise, young persons, new and expectant mothers, provision and use of work equipment, asbestos, lead, radiation and pesticides.

## 4. Definitions

- 4.1 For the purpose of this policy and procedure the following definitions apply:
- **Risk Assessment** – is a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm.
  - **Hazard** – something with the potential to cause harm.
  - **Risk** – risk is the chance, high or low, that someone could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.
  - **Risk Rating** – the overall judgement of the level of risk which may arise from the hazard, based upon the likelihood of the event occurring and the potential severity of the consequence.
  - **Generic Risk Assessment** – is an individual assessment covering the common significant hazards that staff and others who may be affected by the Authority's activities face on a day to day basis. These may include low risk activities such as general office activities or repeated activities that can be documented in another way such as safe systems of work.
  - **Dynamic Risk Assessment** – is an assessment that takes into account unexpected or short temporary changes that require immediate amendments to be made to risk assessment control measures. Examples would include changes in weather conditions or breakdown of heating systems.
  - **Suitable and sufficient risk assessment** – is an assessment that is proportionate to the risk and ensures that all relevant hazards are addressed, complies with statutory requirement, ensures all groups who are affected are considered and takes account of existing control measures and identifies further measures as necessary.

## 5. Responsibilities

### 5.1 Employees are responsible for:

- Assisting with and participating in the process of risk assessment / undertaking risk assessments.

### Heads of Service / Line Managers are responsible for:

- Undertaking risk assessments, identifying and implementing control measures, effectively communicating the outcomes to employees and others as appropriate.

### Heads of Service are responsible for:

- Ensuring risk assessments for activities are undertaken, control measures identified and implemented, and the outcomes communicated to employees and others, as appropriate.
- Ensuring that those tasked with completing risk assessments within services are suitably trained to do so.
- Making suitable representation to Directors if risk assessments identify an outstanding need which cannot be resourced within existing service resources.

### Directors are responsible for:

- Allocating resources in response to risk assessments completed within directorates and determining a course of action should it be identified that a risk cannot be suitably controlled so far as is reasonably practicable.

## 6. Risk Assessments in practice

- 6.1 This guidance sets out the general principles that should be followed and follows the Health and Safety Executive guidance 'Risk Assessment – a brief guide to controlling risks in the workplace' *INDG 163 (rev 4)*

### Step 1 Identify the Hazards

Walk around your area of responsibility and look afresh at what could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ask the staff and any trade union representatives what they think – they may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious. Manufacturers instructions or data sheets can also help – so can accident and ill health records.

Look only for hazards that could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions in your workplace. Use the following examples as a guide:

- Slipping / tripping hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs)
- Fire (e.g. from flammable materials)
- Chemicals and how they are used and stored
- Moving parts of machinery
- Work at height
- Vehicles
- Electricity (e.g. poor wiring, portable appliances)
- Dust (e.g. metal grinding, cement etc.)
- Fume (e.g. welding, chemicals)
- Manual handling
- Noise (noisy machinery or process)
- Poor lighting, low temperature etc.
- Biological hazards

**Step 2      Decide who might be harmed, and how. In addition to staff, think about people who may not be in the workplace all the time e.g. cleaners, visitors, contractors etc.**

There is no need to list individuals by name – just think about groups of people doing similar work or who may be affected, e.g.

- Office staff
- Cleaners
- Contractors
- Members of the public

Pay particular attention to the following as they may be more vulnerable:

- People with disabilities
- Inexperienced staff
- Visitors
- Lone workers
- Pregnant workers
- Young people on work experience

Staff have a responsibility to report to their line manager any personal circumstances that would change the risk assessment, for example, any temporary or permanent disability or health condition that would mean that they are at greater risk.

**Step 3      Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done.**

Having identified the hazards, you then have to decide how likely it is that harm will occur, i.e. the level of risk and what to do about it. Risk is part of everyday life and you are not expected to eliminate all risks. What you must do is make sure you know about the main risks and the things you need to do to manage them.

Generally, you need to do everything ‘reasonably practicable’ to protect people from harm. Your risk assessment should only include what you could reasonably be expected to know – you are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

If you find something that needs to be done, ask yourself:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- If not, how can I control the risks to ensure that harm is unlikely?

Some practical steps you could take include:

- Trying a less risky option
- Preventing access to the hazard
- Organizing work to reduce exposure to the hazard
- Issuing protective equipment (only use personal protective equipment when there is nothing else that can reasonably be done)
- Providing welfare facilities such as First Aid and washing facilities
- Involving and consulting with workers.

Reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable (a balance between the risk and the cost of preventative measures in time, money and effort i.e. it would not be reasonably practicable to invest substantial amounts of money and time where the risk and injury level are very low but it would be reasonably practicable to introduce all measures possible where the risk is high and the possible results are death or major injury).

#### **Step 4 Record your findings**

This means writing down the more significant hazards and recording most important conclusions e.g. 'Portable electrical equipment inspected and tested and found sound' or 'fume from welding: local exhaust ventilation provided and regularly checked'.

Staff must be informed about the risk assessment findings.

A risk assessment must be suitable and sufficient i.e. it should show that:

- A proper check was made
- You asked who might be affected
- You dealt with all the obvious significant hazards, taking into account the number of people who could be involved
- The precautions are reasonable, and the remaining risk is low
- You involved your employees or their representative in the process.

If your risk assessment identifies a number of hazards, you need to put them in order of importance and address the most serious risks first.

Identify long-term solutions for the risks with the biggest consequences, as well as those risks most likely to cause accidents or ill health.

This guidance includes a risk assessment template for the purpose of recording findings. See Appendix 1 for the general template and Appendix 2 for the Footpath Teams template.

#### **Step 5 Review your assessment and revise it if necessary**

The risk assessment should be reviewed at least on an annual basis or whenever new equipment, substances or procedures are introduced that could lead to new hazards.

To make sure your risk assessment stays up to date, ask yourself the following questions when reviewing them:

- Have there been any significant changes?
- Are there any improvements you still need to make?
- Have staff spotted a problem?
- Has anything been learnt from accidents or near misses?

Remember to note, sign and date the risk assessment when it has been reviewed and ensure that it is brought to the attention of all relevant members of staff and others who may be affected.

## 7. Guidance on Risk Evaluation and Estimation

Once hazards associated with activities have been identified, it becomes necessary to establish what the potential hazardous outcomes or events could be associated with the hazard.

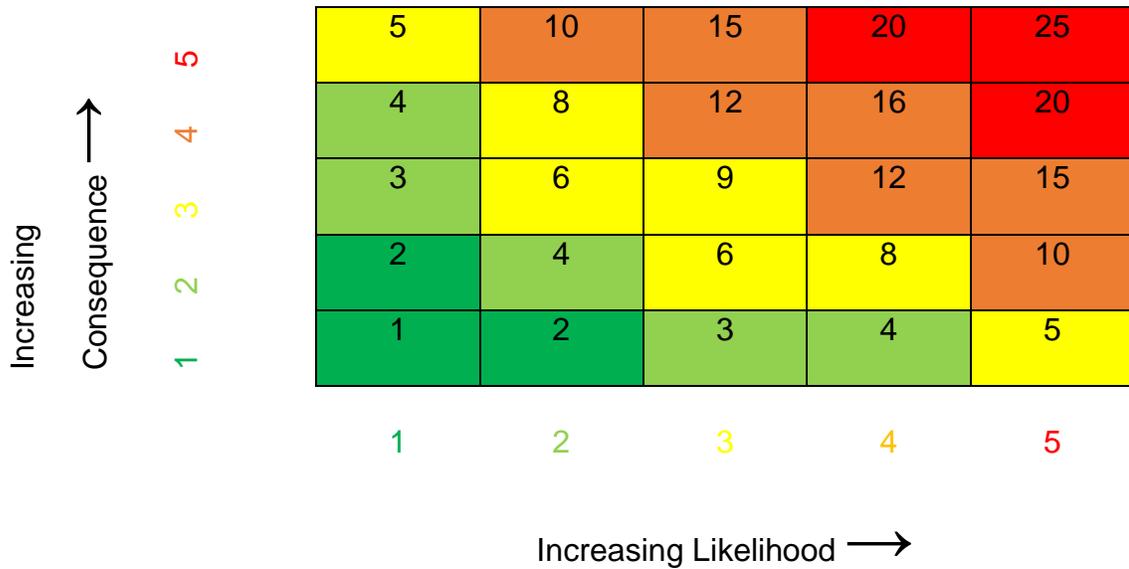
The next stage is to examine the likelihood of a hazardous event occurring.

Once the likelihood has been determined the probable severity of the hazardous event should be considered.

The first point model below is reflected in our risk assessment template:

	<b>Likelihood</b>		<b>Severity</b>
1.	Very remote. Has never happened.	1.	Cuts or bruises, minor temporary irritations.
2.	Unlikely. Happened once.	2.	Deep cuts, minor burns, eye, skin or lung irritation, small electric shock, temporary problems from repetitive tasks, small scalds. Short term infection risks which will not lead to lost time. Broken finger / toe. One or two-day bad back pain. Multiple people experiencing multiple level 1 cases.
3.	Possible. Happened once, a few near misses.	3.	Broken limb, potential short-term eye or lung damage, or minor repetitive problems, sensitisation, short-term back pain > 2 days, large electric shock, infection risks which whilst not life threatening may lead to lost time. Chemical burns to skin with lasting effects for up to one month, multiple level 2 cases.
4.	Likely. Injury has resulted a few times.	4.	Total / partial disablement, loss of fingers, serious head injury, long term eye injury, long term lung damage, long term / chronic health effects inc. back problems, hearing damage, potentially serious long term health risks from infection, coma, chemical burn with permanent scarring, multiple level 3 cases.
5.	Almost certain. Injury happens regularly.	5.	Death, major fire, explosion, multiple level 4 and 5 cases.

The matrix below shows how risks can be evaluated using the five-point model to arrive at a risk rating:



Once the risk rating has been determined, it is then possible to use the table below to establish the appropriate actions required:

Risk Rating	Description	Actions
<b>1 – 5</b>	<b>Very low risk</b>	Consider remedial action only where excessive costs are not incurred.
<b>6 – 15</b>	<b>Low to medium risk</b>	Plan remedial action over the medium term, balancing costs and risk.
<b>16 – 20</b>	<b>High risks</b>	Treat as a priority for action to reduce the risk / eliminate the risk.
<b>21 – 25</b>	<b>Extremely high risk of imminent serious injury</b>	Recommend prohibiting the work until remedial action undertaken

## 8. Risk Control

Suitable and sufficient risk control measures will be identified and implemented to ensure that all risks are appropriately controlled and meet legal requirements as a minimum. All risk control measures will follow the hierarchy of risk control as stated in this procedure.

Risk control measures are methods used which reduce / control arising from the hazard.

<b>Hierarchy of risk control</b>	
Eliminate the risk	Avoid the risk altogether by removing the hazard or no longer undertaking the activity.
Substitute the risk	Reduce the risk by replacing the hazard or activity with one which entails a lower risk.
Control the risk (Physical)	Control the risk by physical isolation or separation of people from the hazard.
Control the risk (Procedural)	Control the risk by procedural methods which are understood and effectively implemented; safe systems of work, information, training, instruction, supervision etc.
Protect the individual	Protect the individual by the provision of personal protective equipment.

When considering additional control measures it should be ensured that they will not introduce any new hazards.

When control measures have been identified and agreed they must be prioritised, placed into an action plan and implemented. The action plan needs to be clear about exactly what needs to be done, when and by whom with SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed). Implementation of the action plan must be monitored and reviewed.

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