

A Simple Guide to Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS)

The Risk Management process are the steps a Company or Individual are required to undertake to identify and control risks to create and maintain a safe working environment - Accidents can devastate lives and have a damaging effect on your business.

Risk Assessment

What is a Risk Assessment – It is the process of identifying hazards and detailing them.

By studying the risks, you can reduce their impact by establishing a means of controlling any risks that remain.

When carrying out a risk assessment you must include all probable risks that could arising from or in conjunction with the task being assessed.

The assessment should be carried out before any work is started and should be reviewed as required.

A review should be carried out when work starts on a new site or when introducing new machinery or procedures into a process, this must include any new hazards and/or a change in risk.

- Hazard - A Hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm.
- Risk - A Risk is the likelihood that a hazard may/or will cause a specified harm to someone or something.
- Legal requirement - Keep a record of the risk assessment, so that you can check to see if anything has changed when you come to review it.

Method Statement

The method statement should contain sufficient detail to enable everyone involved in an operation to be clear about what has to be done, where and with what.

To identify hazards arising from the work and the precautions that have to be taken and by whom.

For this reason the method statement is sometimes called a 'safe system of work'.

A comprehensive method statement should address the majority if not all of the following:

- The details of the task to be undertaken
- A formal risk assessment for the job
- Clear understanding and identification of the area in which the task will be carried out
- Clear understanding and identification of the supervisory responsibilities for the task to be carried out including contact details
- A list of plant and equipment that will be used detailing their power sources and authorised users
- Details of any permit to work system that will be implemented
- A clear statement of the identified hazards and the controls in place. This should include: hazardous substances, noise exposure, electrical hazards, interaction with other contractor's activities, site emergency plans, first aid provision any other hazards created by the job or present on site.

No matter how well the risk assessment and method statement have been prepared, it is important it is communicated to the operatives who will carry out the task.

When briefed on a safe system of work, operatives should be instructed to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and questioned to check that they have understood what they have been told

They should also be encouraged to ask questions if unclear on any aspect of the information they have been given.

Finally, the person who prepares the method statement should have a monitoring role to ensure that the requirements of the method statement are being properly implemented.