

Preparing for visitors

Workplace transport site safety information sheet WPT17

This information will be useful to anyone who uses workplace transport or who works where it is used. It will help employers, managers and supervisors to assess their workplace and make improvements. The checklists will help you to prepare your risk assessment.

Visitors to a site need to be well informed and aware of any risks to their health and safety – they should be able to work as safely as employees.

Help people prepare for their visit to your site by making sure they receive any required equipment, information and training before and during their visit. The time and meeting place for the visit should be agreed between those involved. Any health and safety documents, such as a risk assessment, should be produced before the visit takes place.

Staff receiving visitors should be aware of their responsibilities and whether they are required to give a site induction or any supervision.

Common problems

Problems occur when sites are poorly managed, inaccessible and lack any clear procedures.

Visitors don't receive the necessary information: Visitors may not receive all the information they need before and during their visit.

Visitors who are not provided with a site plan before their visit will be unfamiliar with the layout, and are likely to be unaware of hazards and key locations on site, such as the site office. This may cause them to behave dangerously by parking in unsuitable areas and by travelling away from safe vehicle and pedestrian routes.

Poor communication between the visitor and those responsible for the site they are visiting can cause further problems. Information should be shared about the time and location of the visit. Visitors should also, where possible, agree the purpose of their visit, and who and where they are visiting. This will allow them to be accountable, their movements to be clearly tracked and the necessary preparations to take place.



Visitors unaware of the site's layout, rules and procedures: Visitors who don't receive the correct information before and during their visit will be unaware of the site's layout, rules and procedures. As a result, they are more likely to behave in a dangerous way that puts themselves and others at risk of an accident. For example, they may park in an area that has not been designated for parking or, on leaving their vehicle, they may walk on an unsuitable route.

Visitors not given a site induction: Site inductions are an important way of making sure people using a site become familiar with its layout, procedures and rules. They also allow visitors to become aware of those using the site and the activities they are involved in. Visitors who don't receive the necessary induction are more likely to use unsafe working practices which put themselves and others at risk of having an accident.

Visitors unable to understand English: If your site has visitors for whom English is not their first language, you should be aware that they may not be fluent in English. This can lead to confusion and make it difficult for visitors to follow safe working practices as they may not fully understand the site rules or procedures.

Visitors not competent to work on site: Site visitors who are unfamiliar with the site, or not experienced in the work they are doing, may not be competent to carry out the work safely on their own. This may lead them to endanger themselves by using incorrect and unsafe working practices. Visitors who are not competent should be prevented from

visiting a site unsupervised until they have received the appropriate training and experience.

Visitors not receiving appropriate supervision:

Sometimes visitors may not be correctly supervised. This can lead them to work in a dangerous way and, when vehicles are involved, lead to conflicting movements.

Visitors who require supervision may be either new to the site or may be making a special delivery that needs to be carefully managed.

Visitors have not prepared the necessary risk

assessment: Visitors to hazardous sites such as construction sites should produce a risk assessment. When visitors do not prepare a site-specific risk assessment they are less likely to be aware of the hazards on the site they are visiting and the risks that those hazards pose to their health and safety.

Sites that are not accessible or ‘user friendly’: Sites that are not clearly marked and signed can be difficult to work on safely even for the most informed and experienced visitors. For example, if hazards are not clearly marked and signed then visitors are likely to be unaware of them and are more likely to injure themselves or damage vehicles, equipment and buildings.

Visitors don’t have the necessary safety equipment:

Visitors may be required to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) during their visit – they can put themselves at risk of personal injury if they don’t wear the correct clothing. For example, people not wearing high-visibility clothing when visiting areas where there are turning vehicles or where deliveries are being made, or those at risk from falling objects or low structures not wearing a hard hat.

Unauthorised visitors entering a site: Unauthorised visitors are less likely to be competent. They will be unfamiliar with the site layout, operations, procedures and rules. They are also likely to be unaware of any site hazards and the risks they pose to their health and safety. Unauthorised visitors are more likely to put themselves and others at risk by behaving in a dangerous way.

Checklist – what to look out for

- Visitors don’t receive relevant information before and during their visit.
- Visitors not given a site induction.
- Visitors unable to understand English.
- Visitors unaware of site layout, rules and procedures.
- Visitors don’t receive appropriate supervision.
- Visitors have not prepared the necessary risk assessment.
- The site is not accessible or ‘user friendly’, particularly for the disabled.
- Visitors are not competent to work on site.
- Visitors don’t have the necessary safety equipment.
- Unauthorised visitors entering site.

How can you deal with common problems?

Most common problems can be easily prevented by considering how visitors are dealt with and the appropriate working procedures and practices that should be used. Prepare for visitors by making sure your site is accessible, and you have effective site management and clear procedures.

Send information packs to visitors before they come to site:

Visitors should be provided with information about the location and layout of the site before they make their visit. In many cases they will also need to be given specific information about:

- the vehicle and pedestrian routes they will be required to use;
- specific hazards such as height and weight restrictions;
- the vehicles and equipment on site; and
- where site offices, staff facilities and other likely destinations are.

Appropriate information should be given to them both before and during their visit.

Make sure all visitors undergo a site induction:

Visitors should be given a site induction to make sure they are familiarised with the site layout, procedures and rules. The nature of an induction will be site specific but they should always be given by a competent and experienced site user.

Make all the relevant, suitable site information available

online: As well as sending information packs it may help visitors to have information readily available online for them to view and print. The web may be suitable for basic information such as directions and a map but, it may be unsuitable for more confidential or detailed information.

Provide visitors with information in a language they understand:

International visitors should be provided with information in a language they understand. If your site has regular international visitors you may need to provide signs in more than one language. You may also need to have someone who can either supervise them or act as a translator.

Supervise visitors, when necessary:

Visitors who are not capable of competently working on site on their own should be supervised by someone who is experienced and familiar with the site. This will ensure their safety and help them become competent and familiar with the site.

Those new to the site should be inducted and overseen by an experienced site user. In the case of visiting vehicles it may be necessary to employ a site supervisor or a banksman (signaller) to oversee vehicle movements.

Make sure your site is accessible and user friendly: Sites should be made accessible and user friendly so that visitors can use them safely. Clearly mark and sign the site entrance,

vehicle and pedestrian routes, site offices and other likely destinations so that visitors can safely enter and travel around site. Visitors should be made to feel safe and comfortable on site – this will reduce the likelihood of dangerous behaviour and breaches of site rules.

If the public have access to the site they should ideally be separated from work activities and be as close as possible to the place they want to go. Public routes should be clearly signed at the site entrance. Wherever possible, people with disabilities should be able to access a site, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. For example, you may need to provide level or ramped access to allow for wheelchairs to access the site.

Make sure that visitors have the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE): If visitors have to wear PPE at your site, you should provide them with the appropriate items of PPE such as a hard hat, strong boots and a high-visibility jacket. For example, those working with moving vehicles should wear high-visibility clothing.

Make sure the site is secure and unauthorised visitors cannot gain access: Your site should be secure so that people who are not authorised to be on site don't gain access to it. The level of security required should be site specific and dependent on those who require access to the site. Areas within the site where access needs to be restricted should be given additional security.

Consider using some of the following measures:

- At the main entrance provide a barrier or gate that is controlled by a security guard or automatically with an intercom-based system.
- Use appropriate, well-maintained barriers, bollards and fencing to restrict access to your site and specific areas within it.
- Provide clear warning signs that state who is and who isn't allowed access to your site and to restricted areas within your site.
- Minimise the number of site entrances so that they can be easily managed and so access to the site can be easily controlled.
- Make sure that your site is locked up and, if necessary, guarded at night.
- Make sure all authorised visitors have a form of identification so that they are easily identified.

Sites should be secure so that only those who are authorised to do so can enter the site. Where it is necessary public access should be restricted or prevented. In the same way different areas of a site need to be accessed by different people; site users should be authorised to have different levels of access based upon the work they undertake on site and their individual competency.

Clear procedures for dealing with visitors: Your site should have a clear set of procedures for dealing with site visitors, including:

- a clear checking-in procedure that states where visitors are to report to on their arrival on site. For example, the

requirement to book themselves in at reception or the site office;

- what responsibilities the visitor has. In particular whether they will be responsible for their own PPE and for producing a risk assessment;
- a clear process by which visitors can be provided with the information they require before, during and after their visit. This process should include the necessary site induction;
- the different levels of access to site that different groups of visitors are allowed – which visitors need to be supervised and how;
- how unauthorised visitors can be prevented from entering your site and how they should be dealt with if they do gain access; and
- the arrangements and facilities that should be provided for the disabled and those who are not fluent in English.

Checklist

- Send information packs, including site plans and location maps, to visitors before their visit.
- Make sure relevant site information is available online.
- Provide visitors with the information they require in a variety of appropriate languages.
- All visitors should undergo a site induction.
- When necessary, make sure visitors are supervised.
- Make sure your site is accessible and user friendly.
- Make sure visitors have the necessary PPE.
- Make sure the site is secure and unauthorised visitors cannot gain access.
- Have clear procedures for dealing with visitors.

Checking your site

First, review your sites rules and any procedures you may have relating to visitors to make sure they are complete and up to date. If there are no procedures relating to visitors, you should create some – they need to be specific to your site and should take into account your site layout, access and the activities that take place on your site.

As part of this process you should ask for feedback from people who have visited your site. It is important to find out whether visitors feel comfortable and safe when visiting your site. Before visiting, did they receive the information needed to make a safe visit? Use this feedback to help you to revise your site rules and procedures. Address any specific issues and problems identified by site visitors.

It may be helpful to review your site induction process. Is everyone who would benefit from a site induction receiving one? Check that those going through the induction process are receiving the information they need to work safely and make sure inductions are given by experienced site users.

When it is necessary visitors should produce a risk assessment for their site visit. This will enable them to

identify hazards and their associated risk. They should carefully examine what, in their work, could cause harm to people, so that they can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. They need to decide whether a hazard is significant, and whether they have it covered with satisfactory precautions so that the risk is small. You need to check this when you assess the risks. Completing a site inspection may provide a good opportunity to complete a risk assessment.

More information on how to complete a risk assessment is in *Five steps to risk assessment*.

Carry out a visual inspection of your site to find out how accessible it is for visitors. Walk around the premises (you may also consider driving), and make notes and take photographs of any problems. In particular, look for routes which are not clearly defined, signed and whether the site layout is easy to follow and understand. Mark the problem areas on a site plan.

When completing a visual inspection it is important to think as if you were a visitor so that you can identify the issues that they may have when visiting your site. To help you to do this you may want to complete the inspection with someone who is new to your site. Consider:

- Are vehicle and pedestrian routes clearly marked and signed?
- Is the site entrance clear and easy to enter?
- Has necessary parking provision been made for visitors?
- Are any public visitors kept clear of those working on site?
- Can the site office be easily and safely accessed?
- Do visitors require any specific items of PPE?
- Are there any unauthorised visitors?
- Is access to the site adequately controlled?

If a more detailed and wider-reaching guide is required, see the *Site inspection: Workplace transport checklist* at www.hse.gov.uk.

If it is cost effective, you may want to commission a professional inspection or survey of your site to assess how safe it is for visitors.

Checklist

- Ask for feedback from those visiting the site about how well prepared they were for their visit and how they felt during their visit.
- Review the site rules and procedures.
- Review the site induction process.
- Complete a site inspection to assess how 'user friendly' your site is.
- Ask visitors to produce a risk assessment before their visit.



Photo Jackie Stevens

Where to get help

If you have a problem on your site, you might be able to solve it yourself, eg by sending visitors information about the site before their visit. If you are unsure, speak to your health and safety workplace representative or contact HSE for advice. It may be more cost effective to have a professional assess your site and carry out any work.

You can also get advice by speaking to other similar local businesses – look for examples of good practice. Contact your local trade association or Chamber of Commerce for recommended local suppliers or look in the *Yellow Pages* for listings of highways contractors.

Checklist

- Can you do any work yourself or do you need professional help?
- Seek the advice of your workplace health and safety representative.
- Consult with HSE about your problem if necessary.
- Employ the relevant professional to carry out necessary work.

What might it cost?

- Implementing good site management and clear procedures is unlikely to generate any additional costs. In many cases it can reduce overall operational costs.
- If you commission a professional inspection or survey of your site to assess how safe it is for visitors, this is likely to cost around £2000.

Find out more

Workplace transport safety: An overview Leaflet INDG199(rev1)
HSE Books 2005 (single copy free or priced packs of 5
ISBN 978 0 7176 2821 6) www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg199.pdf

Workplace transport safety: An employers' guide HSG136
(Second edition) HSE Books 2005 ISBN 978 0 7176 6154 1

Designing for deliveries Freight Transport Association 1998
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This document contains notes on good practice which are not compulsory but which you may find helpful in considering what you need to do.

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