

Repairs and Maintenance: Management Briefing

The responsibility and requirement for repair and maintenance of premises and all plant and equipment put to use in the company is clearly set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

What are the key risk areas associated with repair and maintenance?

These are the safety issues of the task itself and also the risks associated with failure to adequately repair and maintain plant, equipment and premises.

Consideration must also be given to the business impact of plant and equipment failure due to poor maintenance regimes.

Repair and maintenance activities can be broken down into a number of types of maintenance:

- statutory inspections
- planned preventative maintenance
- breakdown maintenance

These can all be complimented by a regime of regular user/operator checks and inspections.

How should the risks be managed?

- Establish a procedure for the selection of plant and equipment which is fit for purpose
- prepare a full inventory/asset register of all plant and equipment
- identify the plant and equipment required to have statutory inspections
- identify all plant and equipment requiring planned preventative maintenance
- establish breakdown maintenance arrangements based on risk assessment and foreseeable risks
- establish shut down and lock out procedures for maintenance on moving machinery ensure that the business impact of any plant and equipment failures is recognised

Case Study

In PRP Architects v Reid (2007) an employer organisation was found to be in breach of its statutory duty following an injury sustained by a member of staff using the lift to exit the building. Although the lift was theoretically under the control of the building owner the courts found that it did come under the definition of work equipment.

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