

Safety Corner

What is CDM?

The introduction of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM) in 1994 represented a major change in the way health and safety was managed in UK construction projects. Aiming to reduce the number of serious accidents in the construction industry, the CDM Regulations apply to any project where there are 5 or more construction workers on site at any one time; and mandate projects to be notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive if their construction phase is longer than 30 days.

CDM attempts to improve the overall management and co-ordination of health, safety and welfare throughout all stages of a construction project – from conception, design and planning to the execution of works on site, commissioning, and subsequent maintenance and repair of the finished structure.

The basic idea of CDM is that specific duties are placed upon those who can contribute to the health and safety of a construction project; i.e., clients, designers (which include the architect, consulting engineer quantity surveyor, or even a contractor who is responsible for the design aspects of the project), principal contractor, and contractors. And the Regulations create a new duty holder – the planning supervisor. These duty holders are required to rethink their work approach so that health, safety and welfare are taken into account, and then co-ordinated and managed effectively

CDM also introduced two important new documents – the health and safety plan during a project and the health and safety file at the end of a project to ensure that safety information about a building is available for construction workers and users of the building after construction has ended.

After more than 10 years of operations, CDM has been recently revised in 2007. While the on-site safety requirements are largely unchanged, there are some changes to CDM. Readers can obtain additional information from

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm.htm>

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