



EVAC+CHAIR

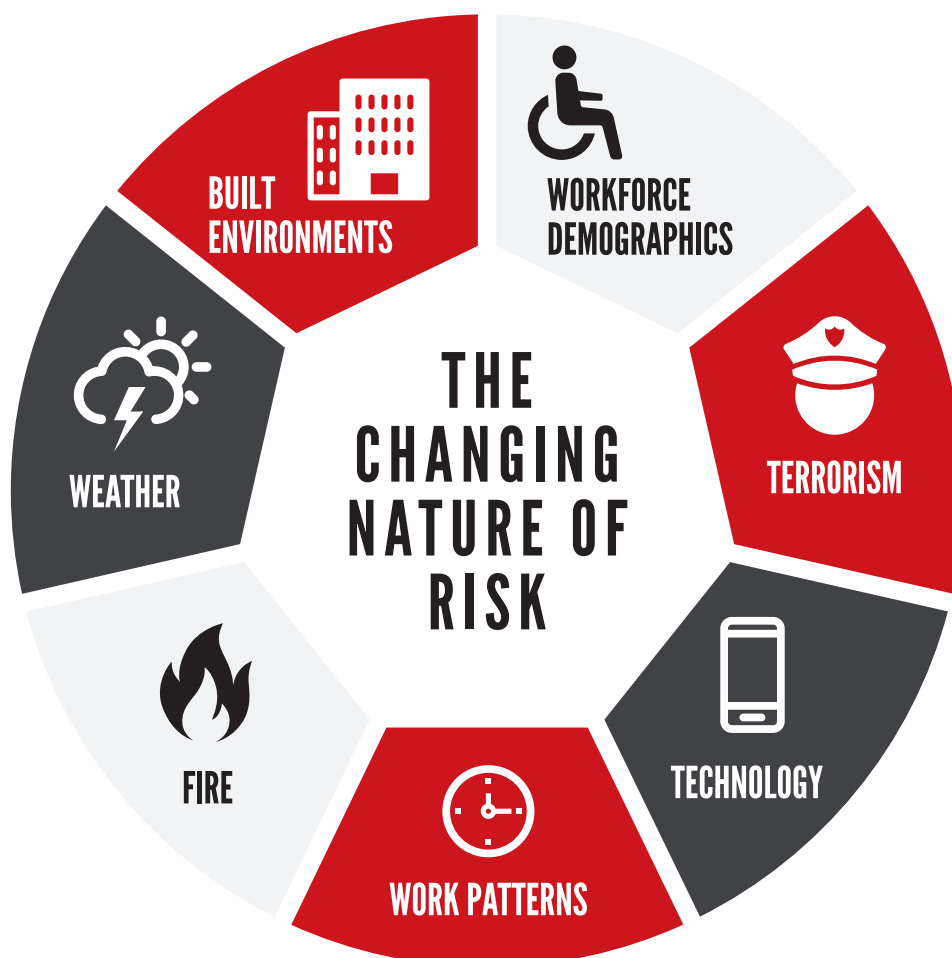
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ABSTRACT



Experts from fire, facilities management and health and safety, joined Evac+Chair, the world's leading supplier and manufacturer of evacuation chairs, to debate the Changing Nature of Risk at a roundtable event in Birmingham.

Guests were invited to consider how the modern workplace is changing, where and how the terrorism threat is impacting on policy and behaviours, what impact the design and accessibility of the built environment is

having on emergency procedures and training, as well as how to meet the needs of workforces which now feature aging and more mobility-impaired people among their numbers.

Their views helped to inform this white paper which explores the Changing Nature of Risk and how this should inform health, safety and evacuation planning in the future.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF RISK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHEN EXPERTS FROM THE FIRE, HEALTH AND SAFETY AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT SECTOR JOINED EVAC+CHAIR INTERNATIONAL, THE WORLD'S LEADING SUPPLIER AND MANUFACTURER OF EVACUATION CHAIRS, TO DEBATE THE CHANGING NATURE OF RISK, SEVERAL THEMES EMERGED.

It's not just fire, flooding or even terrorism that is influencing the changing nature of risk. There are more subtle changes at play. From building design, maintenance and refurbishment through to workforce diversity, there are many reasons why businesses and organisations need to rethink their approach to risk especially when it comes to the safety and wellbeing of the people visiting, working or living in buildings of all types.

When safe evacuation fails, lives can be lost, or people can be seriously injured. It is not the responsibility of

the emergency services to evacuate people, so the group felt clear leadership and ownership of emergency planning and evacuation is essential as is 'top down' communication.

The days of a 'tick box' response to risk are over. As buildings, their occupiers, technology and threats evolve, then so should planned responses adapt and be rigorously tested.

WHAT ARE THE EMERGING RISK FACTORS?

1. TECHNOLOGY

The world of health and safety is changing. Technology is allowing more flexibility and remote working, helping to manage the movement of people in all sorts of buildings but it has its limitations.

An accurate head count is an essential part of ensuring the safety of people on site. The group discussed how this presented challenges with people circumventing advances in access control technologies in some cases or sign in and sign out procedures not being rigorously maintained.

Businesses should test their systems are working and that they can account for everyone that uses their building, thus assisting with the emergency services when called to an incident.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provides a useful checklist and online systems are available to keep track. You can register for the HSE's e-news, RSS feeds and podcasts to enable your business to keep up to date with the latest guidance.

2. INCLUSIVITY

Changes to retirement ages, the Equality Act 2010, as well as improved building design and accessibility are ensuring that work and living spaces are more inclusive. This means more people who are mobility-impaired must now have greater opportunities to access and move around buildings. This is increasing the scope and requirement for people-centred emergency and evacuation planning.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) states that every responsible team member must know their role in an emergency and be well-educated to ensure everyone is evacuated safely from a building. Pre-planning for an evacuation is essential.

Ensuring the needs of all residents, staff and visitors including the mobility-impaired must be identified. A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan, known as a 'PEEP', has to be devised by the relevant person responsible to comply with the Fire Safety Order. This ensures consideration of the key arrangements for evacuating individuals with disabilities.

The PEEP should consider people who are mobility-impaired, visually-impaired or hearing-impaired.

THE IDEAL PEEP



HOW THE INDIVIDUAL WILL BE
ALERTED TO AN EMERGENCY
EVACUATION

NAMES OF PEOPLE DESIGNATED
TO GIVE ASSISTANCE IN AN
EMERGENCY



THE METHODS OF ASSISTANCE
THAT WILL BE USED

ANY EQUIPMENT
PROVIDED



THE EVACUATION
PROCEDURE

SAFE
ROUTES



THE CHANGING NATURE OF RISK

3. TERRORISM

While terrorism was not seen as a universal business threat, the group did identify certain sectors that remain on high alert to such threats, namely transport, hotels and the leisure sector.

In these cases, how organisations can adapt to such threats comes down to individual building risk assessments. For example, some transport hubs and hotels are putting up barriers to prevent vehicles from being able to drive into buildings while others have increased bag searches, especially for visitors to events and exhibitions.

The Kerslake Report : an independent review into the preparedness for and, emergency response to, the Manchester Arena attack on 22nd May 2017, released in March 2018, highlights the importance of having 'access to basic frameless canvas stretchers to enable rapid movement and evacuation of casualties during terrorist attacks or other high-threat or dynamic-hazard incidents' as described under the Recommendations for National Emergency Responses Arrangements under Health Services Section K.

A highly effective and fast approach to horizontal evacuation - to help injured or mobility-impaired individuals out of a building in such an emergency - can be provided by Evac+Chair's range of ResQProducts. ResQProducts is a dedicated range of specialist emergency evacuation equipment that helps ensure compliance with health and safety regulations. The range is backed up by expert advice from our team on the legalities surrounding evacuation planning and deployment.

Leisure and tourism establishments have to balance

the need to be open and welcoming and deliver a positive customer experience with the rigour needed to ensure safety for all. Since 2001, VisitBritain has established an expert team called 'Tier' to specifically respond to terrorism threats.

Planning emergency evacuation procedures for security threats is different to preparing fire evacuation plans. For example, evacuating a building to a nearby car park or to a clearly marked evacuation point in a public area is standard fire evacuation procedure. However, a security threat may mean evacuating people to an alternative safe location within 500m of a building.

According to the National Counter Terrorism Security Office, in a fire scenario, it may be appropriate to use all available exits; in a terrorism scenario consideration should be given to directing people via alternative routes to avoid exiting into a potentially hostile situation.

As the high-profile investigation and inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire has highlighted, the evacuation of all buildings is coming under scrutiny. The reality is that there is no 'one size fits all' approach and confidence in instructions to 'stay put' must be balanced with the potential likelihood of a whole building vs a phased evacuation. Full risk assessment must include scenario planning so that alternatives are available. The Local Government Association - which represents councils - reiterates that message in its 2012 guidance which says a 'stay put' policy does not imply those who wish to leave a building should be prevented from doing so if they feel "threatened".

Ultimately, there is no 'one size fits all' approach. Guidance and plans need to be tailored to individual buildings and their occupants.

**WHEN ASSESSING RISK, IT IS ALWAYS ADVISABLE TO SEEK EXPERT GUIDANCE
TO ENSURE IT MEETS THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF A BUILDING AND ITS OCCUPANTS**



WHAT IS DRIVING BEST PRACTICE?



LEGISLATION

Legislation provides the framework for risk management and compliance. For many businesses, this remains the main driver. Many businesses are looking for the most cost-effective solution and how to meet the minimum requirements whilst being a responsible business owner.



SUPPLY CHAINS

Large tenders and contracts will often demand stringent risk management and safety compliance e.g. HS2 which is running workshops and programmes to help businesses in the supply chain meet and adhere to high standards.



REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

It's reassuring for prospective employees, employers and customers to know that safety is a priority.



COMMERCIAL

Best practice health and safety goes hand in hand with quality and productivity. High-performing businesses integrate H&S as part of their culture. Leadership is a deciding factor as it facilitates the real risks - including downtime, lost-time - and helps embed a safety culture.



HR

Human resources departments can play a vital role in both the communication of health and safety plans and procedures, identification of key health and safety representatives and in ensuring that plans reflect the diverse needs of the workforce.

It can also be massively influential in communicating what good evacuation practice looks like and

ensuring that appropriate training is applied. There is evidence that investing in health and safety can increase staff morale, loyalty and contribute to an organisation's reputation. Illustrating the 'psychological contract' between the employer and worker, research shows that approximately 60% of workers said they would work harder for an employer who invested in their health.

TOP TIPS



PUT PEOPLE AT THE HEART

Put people at the heart of planning and make sure your plan is not a 'one-size fits all' solution but caters for the different needs of individuals, especially those who are mobility-impaired, elderly or visually-impaired.



EMBED & COMMUNICATE BEST PRACTICE

Health and safety teams must have strong persuasive skills and not just be 'box tickers'. They must be willing to influence the culture of an organisation and emphasise the benefits that effective planning can have on business reputation both internally and externally.



VISUAL CUES

Use visual cues to enhance communication and identify issues. Photos offer a more practical way of identifying and addressing risk and, with Smartphone technology, it is easy to share with people what 'good' looks like and ask them to report anything they feel could impede a safe evacuation such as blocked fire exits or fire doors wedged open.



ENSURE SITES ARE 'TOUR READY'

They should have everything in place that demonstrates to building users that the landlord, business owner and/or manager, takes their safety and security seriously. This is reassuring and increases confidence in plans ensuring they are implemented smoothly and effectively.



MULTI-SITE BUSINESSES

Multi-site businesses should identify where best practice is happening and share this across all locations. Rewarding good practice can help to instil a positive culture towards health and safety.



PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENTS

Procurement departments can insist on best practice from their suppliers, reinforcing the business benefits of having robust systems in place.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

- Need to change behaviour and attitude towards risk through strong leadership and communication.
- Need to carry out full audit risk for all buildings and take account of people's individual needs as well as the physical structure and keep this up-to-date.
- Need to 'join-up' decision making across management and frontline teams to take into account all concerns and issues as well as jointly plan solutions.
- Need to be absolutely clear about accountability and responsibility down to the individual level.
- Need to ensure communication of procedures - and how they affect everyone in the building - communication is transparent and highly visible within the organisation.
- Need to continuously adapt to changing needs of the workforce and ensure that evacuation planning meets the needs of all those who have access to the building.
- Need to ensure evacuation procedures are tested regularly and all relevant personnel are fully trained and understand their role in an emergency.
- Need to ensure that all fire safety and evacuation equipment is well-maintained and checked regularly by assigned personnel.

CONCLUSION

Organisations may feel that they need to only do the minimum but health and safety, emergency planning and evacuation procedures should never be just a 'tick box exercise'.

While many wrongly assume that fire and rescue services are responsible for the safe evacuation of people in a building, the reality for every organisation,

every business and every building is that each must have a responsible person assigned formally or through legal duty to manage and take control in an emergency.

They will be judged on whether they did everything they could to prevent loss of life and it is important that they keep up to date and ensure plans and procedure evolve to meet the changing nature of risk.



USEFUL INFORMATION

FIRE REGULATIONS - REGULATORY REFORM

Article 4 of Regulatory Reform Fire Safety Order (general fire precautions). All employers and building owners must carry out fire risk assessments.

BS 9999 : 2008

Provides guidance and measures that enable disabled people to be assisted to safety in the event of fire.

POWER - FIT FOR PURPOSE REGULATIONS

Work equipment must be adequately maintained and used by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training.

CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER

Sets out a new offence for convicting an organisation where a gross failure in the way activities were managed or organised resulted in a person's death.

MANUAL HANDLING

Regulation 5 of manual handling regulations requires employees to make full and proper use of safe work systems introduced by their employer to reduce injury risks from manual handling.

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Part B places the requirement upon the building owner to ensure compliance with full protection measures. Part M covers the requirement with respect to access to and use of buildings.

EQUALITY ACT 2010

Adjustments must be made to ensure that a disabled person is not put at a substantial disadvantage compared to persons who are not disabled.

Places of employment, schools, clubs, shops, offices and public buildings must provide adequate access and egress facilities for all persons with disabilities who may enter or exit a building.

HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK ACT : 1974

Employers must protect the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees as far as is reasonably practicable.

VICARIOUS LIABILITY

An employer can be deemed liable for the action of another, i.e an employee or a third party, and any subsequent accident at work.

AGEISM

Age is no longer a barrier to employment and may require a greater level of consideration in respect of ability to escape a burning building.

ARE YOU AWARE OF YOUR OBLIGATIONS?

HOW WILL EVERYONE ESCAPE

As a person responsible for business premises you have an obligation to your staff and the people who use your building to ensure there are adequate fire precautions in place.

HAVE YOU PLANNED YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE?

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 a responsible person must carry out a Fire Risk Assessment on the building as part of the compliance and identify all appropriate escape routes for use in emergency.

HAVE YOU MADE SURE PEOPLE CAN ESCAPE SAFELY, EVEN AT NIGHT IF NECESSARY?

This means having the correct safety equipment in place, ensuring all emergency exits are clearly identified and emergency lighting is installed to aid escape in the dark or during a power failure.

DOES ALL YOUR SAFETY EQUIPMENT WORK?

There is no point in having safety equipment if it is not in full working order. All equipment should be properly maintained and regularly checked and serviced by approved contractors

WILL PEOPLE KNOW WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO USE THE EQUIPMENT?

Ensure that all your members of staff are fully aware of the evacuation procedures and the designated people are fully trained on how to use the safety equipment. Refresher courses and practice sessions should be held on a regular basis.

EVAC+CHAIR - FEATURES & BENEFITS

- ✚ SINGLE PERSON OPERATION*
- ✚ LIGHTWEIGHT, QUICK AND EASY TO USE
- ✚ VERSATILE - USE ALONG CORRIDORS
- ✚ FOLDS AWAY - READY TO USE IN SECONDS
- ✚ WALL MOUNTED WITH DUST COVER

*Additional assistance and practice is recommended for heavy passengers

THANK YOU



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