

## **What? Fire risk assessments and more legislation?**

In 2006 the Regulatory Reform Fire (Safety Order) 2005 ("RRO") came into effect. While the RRO does not apply to fields, woods or other land forming part of an agricultural undertaking, owners and occupiers of premises such as barns and other buildings that are used for the shoot will need to consider the RRO and its requirements.

## **Why do I need to know this?**

The premises where keepers and under-keepers work and carry out maintenance etc. and where your beaters meet in the morning or stop to take their lunch or use the WC facilities (if you are lucky enough to have them) fall under the remit of the RRO.

## **Who exactly needs to give consideration to the RRO and its requirements?**

The RRO identifies those who need to consider the RRO who are known as the Responsible Person/s

## **Who is the responsible person?**

This will largely depend on the set up of the shoot, for small DIY syndicate shoot where the guns are also the beaters and share all the work with no payment for beaters or picker uppers there will be limited effect of the RRO.

Where syndicate shoots use barns to meet in, have lunch etc. and sell days and pay for beaters, picker uppers etc. the responsible person role may fall to the shoot Captain.

For larger commercial shoots that uses the barn or building for the shooting season, the responsibility will fall to the owner of the shoot or the person who has day to day control of the premises, that will be responsible.

## **What do I need to know to stay on the right side of the law?**

You must carry out a fire risk assessment and act on any findings is the simple answer.

The risk assessment should;

1. identify the fire safety hazards,
2. identify how you can remove or reduce the risk posed by the hazards and;
3. identify what fire precautions you need to take to manage the risks that remain in order that people can safely escape if a fire does occur

## **Who do I need to include in the fire risk assessment?**

You need to consider everyone that will frequent the premises where you meet up to attend the shoot, e.g. the guns, the keepers, the beaters, the picker uppers and of course others such as the wives and husbands of the guns and the helpers that are not paid to be there.

## **Some questions to consider in your fire risk assessment?**

1. Consider all ignition sources, is smoking banned inside the barn that you all meet in that just happens to have several tonnes of fertiliser stored in the same place?
2. Do you have untested electrical supplies to the premises or gas appliances for hot water, heating etc.?
3. If so, has your electrical and gas installations been checked by a suitably qualified engineer?
4. Include consideration of any flammable substance likely to be on the premises, typical examples will be full petrol cans for the quad bike or chain saws or fertilisers that are

oxidising agents and can rapidly become involved in a fire. Does the petrol etc. need to be stored in the same premises used by your shoot?

5. Can you remove the fire risks?
6. Do you have unguarded heating sources in the premises?
7. Identify who will be at risk should a fire develop, who will have difficulty in escaping quickly, have you considered children on site, those in remote parts perhaps in a toilet facility or people with a disability?
8. Ask yourself if you can all easily get out should a fire occur?
9. This will not be a problem where you are in a large open barn with plenty of ways out however; where there is only one entrance into the barn and the keeper has conveniently parked his vehicle in the entrance which subsequently catches fire; can you all still make your escape?
10. Consider the layout of your premises carefully. If your premises have a complicated layout such as a barn with a ground and first floor, how will you know that there is a rapidly developing fire downstairs while you are all upstairs?
11. Do you need to consider installing smoke detectors?

If you do not feel that you understand the risks fully you can appoint a 'competent person' to help, who may be a professional risk assessor.

Your local fire and rescue authority can give you some advice and guidance, but they cannot come out and do the risk assessment for you as the responsibility rests with responsible persons.

### **Further guidance**

**Most** shoots are likely to fall within the "Fire Safety Risk Assessment - *Small and medium places of assembly*". The guide can be downloaded from

<https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities/who-is-responsible>