

Chapter 2

Safety Responsibilities

Your organisation must identify safety responsibilities and put them in writing. It must keep records of the transfer of safety responsibilities and must make sure that anyone taking on safety responsibilities understands and accepts these responsibilities. It must make sure that anyone who is transferring responsibility for safety passes on any known assumptions and conditions that safety depends on.

2.1 Guidance from volume 1

You need a structured organisation with good communications to carry out successful ESM. Everyone should have clear responsibilities and understand them.

In particular, anyone whose work creates a risk should be responsible for managing it. They should have the knowledge they need to understand the implications of that risk and to put controls in place.

Your organisation should identify who is accountable for the safety of work. They will stay accountable even if they pass on responsibility, for parts of the work, to others.

The organisation that takes the lead in introducing a change should make sure that the other organisations are clear on their safety responsibilities. If you hand over infrastructure changes to an infrastructure controller or hand over rolling stock to a train operator, you may also transfer some safety responsibility.

2.2 Introduction

ESM is a team activity, involving people with different backgrounds from across the organisation and outside it. Therefore, an important part of ESM is the allocation of safety roles with clearly defined safety responsibilities.

These safety roles may be separated into fixed, organisation-related roles and those that are specific to a particular project.

This chapter describes some common safety roles and the related responsibilities, and explains how they can be allocated and transferred, both within an organisation and between organisations.

Responsibility is not necessarily the same as accountability. You are responsible for something if you are entrusted with making sure that it happens. To be accountable for something means that you can be called to account if it does not happen. Generally, managers remain accountable for ESM performance even though they delegate responsibility for ESM activities.

There are certain legal obligations placed on employers and employees with regard to defining responsibilities. See volume 1 for further details.

This chapter is written for:

- managers responsible for the appointment of staff to safety-related tasks or for determining organisational structure, and
- anyone performing an assessment of personnel competence.

2.3 Different types of safety responsibility

A basic principle of ESM is that those whose activities create a risk should be responsible for managing and reducing that risk.

These activities may be related to a particular system or piece of equipment (such as development, operation, maintenance, or modification), or to the provision of resources or information. The safety responsibilities related to these activities may include reducing the risk of component failure, providing accurate technical manuals, ensuring that maintenance is performed in a timely and efficient manner, and so on.

Whatever the activity may be, it is important to:

- clearly define the safety roles and responsibilities;
- gain agreement from all parties on their allocation; and
- pass on any relevant safety-related information.

When responsibility for the system's operation is handed over to another party, risk may then be created by the organisation accepting the system, and therefore some safety responsibilities are also transferred. However, the Project Manager will retain accountability for the development work.

An organisation also needs certain ESM roles that are independent of any particular project. Their responsibilities will include setting safety policy and safety goals, defining other safety responsibilities, granting authority and approval, providing resources, and establishing communication channels.

The following sections therefore suggest two types of safety role: organisation-related roles (Safety Authority, Line Manager); and project-related roles (Project Manager, Project Safety Manager).

Safety roles and their responsibilities should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they are still relevant.

2.3.1 Safety Authority

An organisation performing safety-related work will commonly appoint a senior person as a Safety Authority, responsible for dealing with general safety issues throughout the organisation. They will typically have a high level of authority within the organisation and considerable operational experience and technical knowledge. Train Operating Companies, in particular, will usually appoint an officer with such responsibilities in order to meet railway safety case requirements.

Their role is to promote ESM within the organisation, and to ensure that the work produced by the organisation meets the required safety standards. They will also report on any shortcomings in safety, and provide independent advice on safety issues.

The Safety Authority's responsibilities may include:

- setting, maintaining and monitoring safety policy;
- ensuring that an Engineering Safety Management System is effectively implemented and maintained;
- agreeing the safety classification of projects;
- endorsing key safety documentation for a project;
- monitoring the ESM performed on a project; and
- appointing Independent Safety Auditors and Assessors for projects.

For larger organisations, there may need to be multiple Safety Authorities, with knowledge and experience in different areas.

2.3.2 Line Manager

An organisation may assign a Line Manager to a group of staff and/or a group of projects, to ensure that their activities are run effectively and safely. The Line Manager should assure himself or herself that ESM is performed correctly by the staff and on the projects that they manage. The Line Manager should be familiar with the safety issues relating to these projects.

The Line Manager's safety responsibilities may include:

- assigning sufficient ESM resources (both personnel and other) to the project manager, according to the intended integrity of the project;
- ensuring that the staff allocated to the project have the skills necessary for the tasks to which they are assigned (providing training if needed); and
- ensuring that the ESM performed on a project is monitored.

2.3.3 Project Manager

Some of an organisation's work may be grouped into projects, with Project Managers taking overall responsibility for the work. The Project Manager's safety role is to ensure the safety of the work done under their direction.

The Project Manager's safety responsibilities may include:

- ensuring that the project conforms to all relevant ESM standards and procedures;
- ensuring that all safety activities are carried out and documented in accordance with good engineering practice; and
- ensuring that the risk associated with all project deliverables is reduced 'As Low As Reasonably Practicable'.

The Project Manager will generally report to the Safety Authority on all safety issues and to the Line Manager on all management issues.

2.3.4 Project Safety Manager

For larger projects, there may be a need for a Project Safety Manager, who will take the safety responsibilities from the Project Manager. However, the Project Manager will typically retain overall accountability for the safety of the project.

2.3.5 Other roles

There may also be a requirement for Independent Safety Auditors and Assessors. These roles and their responsibilities are described fully in chapter 14.

2.4 Allocating safety responsibilities

Responsibilities for ESM should be allocated from the top of the organisation downwards. The senior manager in an organisation or department appoints the Safety Authority and assigns responsibilities to them. The senior manager should also assign safety responsibilities to the Line Managers. In turn, the Line Managers should assign a Project Manager to a particular project. The Project Manager may then delegate safety responsibilities to a Project Safety Manager (if one is to be appointed).

It is essential that safety roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and documented. The responsibilities assigned to individuals should be explicit and understood by everyone in the organisation. In this respect, they should be documented and made freely available within the organisation.

The documentation should identify:

- the various organisational positions;
- the associated responsibilities and authorities for ESM; and
- the communication and reporting channels.

Safety roles and responsibilities should be put in writing.

When someone is proposed for safety-related work, they should be given a task description, detailing their specific responsibilities, the authority that they will carry, and their lines of reporting. They should confirm that they understand and accept the task description before their assignment is confirmed.

There should be some form of organisational structure chart available to all employees, containing details of the organisation's safety roles.

The definition of safety responsibilities should be periodically reviewed.

2.5 Transferring safety responsibilities within an organisation

Transfer of safety responsibilities may occur within an organisation in a number of circumstances including, the following:

- one Project Manager replaces another;
- (within a product organisation) a Project Manager hands over a completed development to a manager with a product support role; and
- (within a railway operator) a Project Manager hands over a completed project to the operating function.

Typically the manager accepting responsibility will take on all the safety responsibilities that the relinquishing manager had, although the relinquishing manager will remain accountable for his or her past actions.

Many different situations may occur but two fundamental points should be observed:

- No responsibility should be transferred until the accepting manager confirms in writing that he or she is prepared to accept it.
- The relinquishing manager should make sure that all relevant safety information is recorded and that the records are up-to-date (see 2.7 below).

Typically, the relinquishing manager will do this by assuring himself or herself that the Hazard Log for the project is up-to-date and comprehensive, and, in particular, that it records all assumptions and unresolved issues and then by endorsing the Hazard Log (see chapter 13 for more details on the Hazard Log).

2.6 Transferring safety responsibilities between organisations

Typically this occurs when a supplier completes a contract for the supply of a safety-related system. Exactly which areas of safety responsibility are transferred to the customer and which remain with the supplier will be determined by the law and the contract. The contract may leave the supplier with responsibility for maintenance, for instance, in which case associated safety responsibilities will also remain with the supplier.

In any case, the supplier will remain accountable for their past actions.

Many different situations may occur but two fundamental points should be observed:

- No responsibility should be transferred until the accepting organisation confirms in writing that it accepts the responsibility.
- The supplier should make sure that all relevant safety information is recorded and that the records are up-to-date (see 2.7 below).

Typically, the supplier will do this by delivering a Safety Case. The Safety Case should include a comprehensive list of assumptions, limitations on use and any other caveats on which the conclusions of the Safety Case are based (see chapter 10).

ESM is concerned with controlling the risk associated with *changes* to the railway. Once the change has been made, there is still a need to control risk but this falls outside the scope of this book.

2.7 Passing on information

When a system is handed over, all information relevant to the safe operation of the system should be passed on to the organisation accepting the system. This is the responsibility of the Project Manager. There is a legal obligation in the '*Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974*' for suppliers of safety-related articles to ensure that there is adequate information for the articles to be put into safe use.

The information handed over will typically include the following:

- system description, including details of interfaces and environmental requirements;
- hazards, precautions and safety features of the system;
- safety information for operators of the equipment or system;
- detailed instructions for the operation, servicing and maintenance of the equipment, including operating and technical handbooks, parts and spares identification lists, drawings, and so on;

- installation details, including calibration, verification testing, training requirements, inspection schedule, and decommissioning requirements;
- details of responsibilities to be transferred, including hazard log maintenance, training, system maintenance, and so on;
- details of items to be transferred, including hardware, software, and documentation;
- procedures for fault reporting and change control, including approval;
- details of training requirements, including routine operation, emergency procedures, maintenance, and so on.

The Hazard Log and the Safety Case are often the most important documents. They describe the risks and how they are controlled. The system suppliers usually retain a copy and some agreement may be needed on who will hold the master document.

2.8 Related guidance

Competency and training requirements for the roles outlined in this chapter are dealt with in chapter 4.

Safety Cases and Safety Approval are discussed in chapter 10.

Hazard Logs are discussed in chapter 13.

The roles of the Independent Safety Auditors and Assessors and their responsibilities are described fully in chapter 14.