

Management of Contractors

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QPA Code of Practice



The trade association for all aggregates, asphalt, ready-mixed concrete, mortar, silica sand and lime

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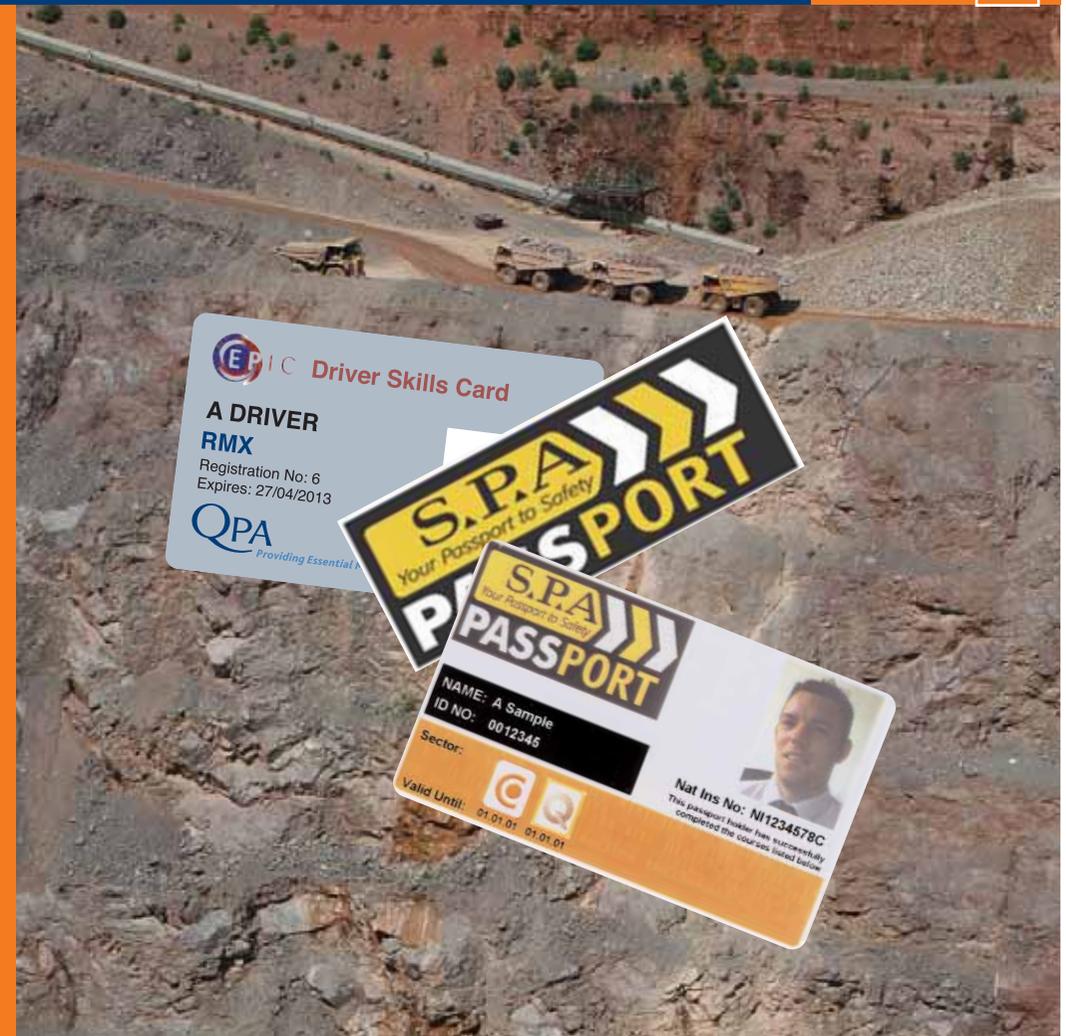
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Introduction

Contractors offer a significant benefit to the industry in terms of their specialist skills and equipment in meeting short term requirement for additional resources. When brought into a workplace, however, they can introduce additional risks as a result of the tasks being undertaken, or their lack of awareness of existing site hazards and safe systems. Where inappropriate contractors are selected, risks can also arise from inadequate competency levels of personnel, poor specification and/or maintenance of equipment. Whilst recent years have seen a marked decrease in the number of employee injuries, this has not been the same for contractors and sadly the majority of recent fatal accidents have involved contractors.

If we are to improve contractor safety, it is essential that clear management procedures are in place, with accountabilities defined. Everyone involved in the selection and management of contractors should be competent by virtue of their experience and formal training so that they understand their role and responsibilities. This QPA Code of Practice details the minimum standards that must be in place for the management of contractors engaged in short term and general contracting activities, including the requirements for:

- Approved lists of contractors
- Safety passports
- Planning of work
- Site inductions
- Permits for all but the most minor of low risk tasks
- On site supervision, and
- Detailed investigation in the event of an accident

For more complex projects or those involving the Construction Design and Management Regulations more stringent controls will be required.

Selecting Contractors

Only competent contractors shall be employed and therefore an "Approved List" of companies must be established for supervisors to select from. In order to be included on the list, relevant information must be reviewed to verify contractor competence. This information shall include, as appropriate; proof of trade organisation membership, health & safety policy documents, participation in relevant health and safety passport schemes, examples of risk assessments, method statements, copies of employer's and public liability insurance certificates, qualifications, references etc.

Contractors whose competence has been verified shall be included on the "Approved List", which is communicated to all personnel who are responsible for placing orders with contractors. The information used to verify contractor competence must be reviewed at least every 12 months and a sufficient number of verified contractors shall be available to cater for foreseeable events, such as emergency breakdowns.

Formal feedback systems must be in place to ensure that contractors who fail to demonstrate safe working practices are

removed from the "Approved List" and no longer employed until they can demonstrate that their safety standards have improved to a suitable level.

Contractors' Safety Passports

Contractor passport schemes offer significant benefits in terms of improving health and safety awareness and reducing the length of induction programmes. There are a range of passports in existence throughout UK industries and it is important that contract personnel hold the correct passport for the activities being undertaken. From the 1st July 2008, as a general rule all contractors working within quarrying environments, on concrete, mortar and asphalt plants or wharfs are strongly recommended to hold an EPIC Contractor Safety Passport. This requirement shall extend to, for example, contractors involved in:

- Maintenance of mobile and fixed plant
- Calibration and testing and statutory inspections
- The hire of labour, mobile plant and cranes
- Contract drilling and blasting; crushing; screening; and earthworks
- Landscaping in the proximity of the working area

The flowchart (Appendix 1) is intended to help determine the activities where contract personnel should hold the EPIC Contractor Safety Passport. Any deviation from the holding of a passport should be authorised by a senior manager, preferably at Director level.

Where specific activities such as demolition or construction are taking place within a designated area, it may be more appropriate for contract personnel to hold the relevant industry passport.

The requirement for the EPIC Contractor Safety Passport should not extend to logistics operations. It is more appropriate for logistics personnel to hold the EPIC Driver Skills Card, the requirement for which should encompass all contractors whose activities primarily involve the operation of on-highway vehicles, including those such as road sweeping operations.

Further details about the Contractor Safety Passport are available from the EPIC website at: www.epicltd.com.

Planning the Work

Effective planning is essential when engaging contractors to ensure efficient and safe working. The extent of any planning should be proportionate to the complexity, duration and risks associated with the activity. For simple lower risk tasks, it may be appropriate to rely primarily on a site induction and permit to control the work activity, however for more complex/hazardous works it will be necessary to establish the following well in advance of the works:

- Responsibilities and points of contact
- Competency requirements for contract personnel
- Coordination requirements with other on site activities or contractors
- Arrangements for matters such as site demarcation, site access, the use of on site equipment, facilities, toilets, canteens, etc.
- Two-way communication of the significant findings of risk assessments
- Awareness of all pertinent site rules and emergency procedures

Method Statements will always be required from a contractor where the work is of a higher risk nature.

Control of Contractors on Site

Before starting work, contractors must receive an appropriate period of induction to ensure that all relevant health and safety requirements are addressed. Items included in the induction should include the requirement to sign in and out of the site, site contacts and responsibilities, pertinent site rules and emergency procedures, accident and 'near hit' reporting requirements and the use of on site equipment/facilities. Evidence of Contractor Safety Passports and other relevant competencies should be verified at this stage. Where method statements have been provided, it should be established that contract personnel understand the requirements laid down.

The Manager or Supervisor in control of the area of the site must be familiar with company guidelines for the issue of Permits to Work. Some companies operate a general Permit to Work system for the majority of activities, whilst others have specific permits for higher risk activities such as hot work, confined space entry, work at height, etc. The Permit issuer must be competent by virtue of their experience and training and must complete the required permits, in conjunction with the contractors, prior to the work commencing.

The minimum requirements for a Permit to Work System should include the following:

- Location of the work to be carried out.
- Names of all personnel who are to be covered by the Permit.
- Description of the work to be carried out.
- Provision for recording the exchange of information between the contractor and employing company. This must include details of all hazards, the control measures required and the name of the person(s) responsible for carrying these out.
- Reference to other information that has been provided, in particular, Contractor's Method Statements, Site Rules, Site Induction Booklets / Information, Checklists and Emergency Information.
- Signature of the person in charge of the work for the contractor and the person who is authorised by the employing company to issue the Permit, together with the date and time of authorisation.
- A sign-off procedure declaring that all areas are left in a safe condition following the completion of the work.

It is good practice for permits to be issued in duplicate so that one copy can be given to the contractor before the work commences and the other can be retained for site records.

The level of supervision by the employing company and the need for a formal inspection scheme and periodic progress review meetings throughout the duration of the works should be established at the beginning of any contract. The requirements will be dependent upon the duration, complexity and risks associated with the activities being undertaken.

A Pre-Start Check list for reference prior to a contractor starting work on site is attached as Appendix 2.

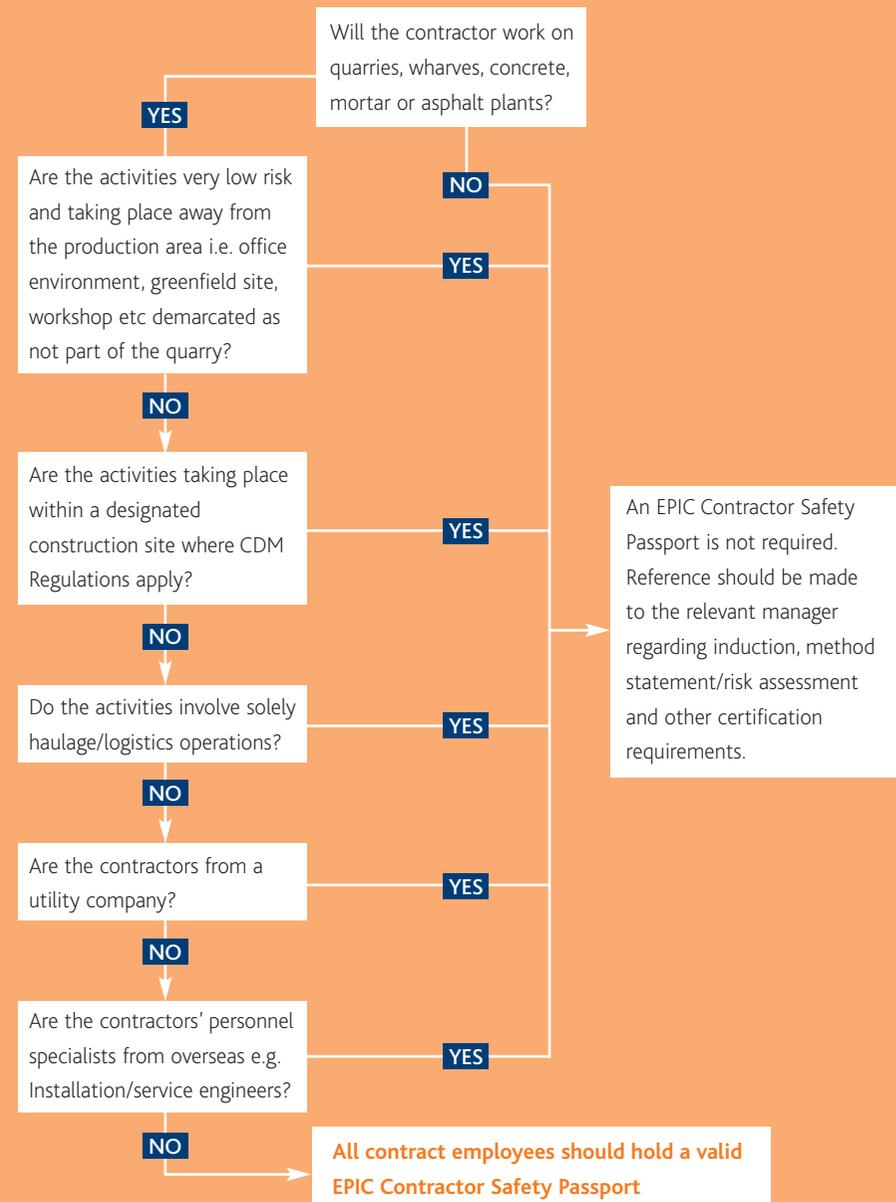
Incidents

During induction, contractors need to be made aware of first aid provisions and procedures for reporting accidents/incidents, significant hazards and 'near hits'. In the event of an accident an investigation must be undertaken by the employing organisation to identify root causes and the necessary remedial measures. The extent of the investigation shall depend upon the actual injury / loss, or the potential injury / loss. In the event of a lost time incident, senior management for the contractor shall be asked to attend a meeting with their counterparts in the employing organisation to present the conclusions of their own investigation.

Appendix 1 EPIC Contractor Safety Passport

Establishing whether a Contractor requires a safety passport

Site personnel should require the routine production of a valid EPIC Contractors Safety Passport upon the Contractor's arrival on site



Appendix 2

EPIC Contractor Safety Passport

Contractor Pre-Start Checklist

- | | | | | | |
|---|--|--------------------------|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | Valid EPIC Contractor's Safety Passport seen? | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 | Clarification of person in charge of work? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | Other proofs of competence seen e.g. driver/operator competence? | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 | Permit to Work issued? (where necessary) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | Employer's Liability and Public Health insurances valid? | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 | Hot Work Permit completed? (if required) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | Relevant risk assessments seen and reviewed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 | Limit of Work area defined? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | Method Statement seen and reviewed? (where necessary) | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 | Current certificates for Lifting equipment and accessories inspected? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 | Site induction completed? <i>As a minimum this should include:</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 | Staff and other contractors affected by the works informed and work co-ordinated? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | • Requirement to sign in and out of the site | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Site contacts and their responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Pertinent site rules | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Company PPE policy and its relevance to proposed work area | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Emergency procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Accident and 'Near Hit' reporting requirements | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Use of on-site equipment and facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |
| | • Relevant CoSHH information | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | |