

CDM REGULATIONS 2015: PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR INFORMATION SHEET



This Principal Contractor Information Sheet has been prepared by Marpal and is intended to inform those acting as Principal Contractor of the duties imposed upon them by the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015. The information provided here is designed to capture the fundamental aspects of the Regulations so as to enable you, as Principal Contractor, to comply with your statutory duties.

CDM REGULATIONS 2015

The CDM Regulations 2015 came into force on 6th April 2015 and replaced the CDM Regulations 2007; these being the main set of regulations for managing the health, safety and welfare on construction projects.

The CDM Regulations applies to all building and construction work and includes new build, demolition, refurbishment, extensions, conversions, repair and maintenance. The CDM Regulations place responsibility for managing health and safety of a construction project on three main duty holders, these being the **Client**, **Principal Designer** (responsible for co-ordinating the *pre-construction phase*) and the **Principal Contractor** (responsible for co-ordinating the *construction phase*).

The overall aim of the regulations is to make health and safety an essential and integral part of the planning and management of projects, so as to reduce the health and safety risks of those who work on the structure, those who will use it as a work place, or others who work on the structure once it's complete.

WHAT PRINCIPAL CONTRACTORS NEED TO KNOW

The Principal Contractor is the organisation or person that coordinates the work of the construction phase of a project involving more than one Contractor, so that it is carried out in a way that secures health and safety. The appointment of a Principal Contractor is made by the Client, which must be in writing. The Principal Contractor must possess the skills, knowledge and experience, as well as the organisational capacity to carry out their role effectively given the scale of the project and the nature of the health and safety risks involved.

Good management of health and safety on site is crucial to the successful delivery of a construction project. In liaison with the Client and Principal Designer, Principal Contractors have an important role in managing the risks of the construction work and providing strong leadership to ensure standards are understood and followed.

YOUR DUTIES AS A PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR

Planning, managing, monitoring and coordinating the construction phase

- **Planning** - When planning for construction work, the Principal Contractor must take into account the risks to all those affected including workers, members of the public and the Client's employees; if working in an occupied premises. The planning must also cover the risks likely to arise during construction work and the measures needed to protect those affected and the resources required to organise and deliver the work including its management, monitoring and coordination.

The Principal Contractor must also take into account the Pre-Construction Information and any key design information, identifying risks that need to be managed during the construction work and will be useful when developing the Construction Phase Plan.

- **Managing** - In managing the construction phase, Principal Contractors must ensure: (a) that those they engage with to carry out the work are capable of doing so (b) effective, preventative and protective measures are put in place to control the risks; and (c) the right plant, equipment and tools are provided to carry out the work.
- **Monitoring** - Health and safety standards should be checked regularly given the rapidly changing nature of a construction site. Effective monitoring involves the allocation of sufficient resources, providing routine checks and taking prompt action where necessary.
- **Coordinating** - A Principal Contractor has a specific duty to ensure that Contractors under their control cooperate with each other so the risks to themselves and others affected by the work are managed effectively.

The Construction Phase Plan

Before setting up a construction site, the Principal Contractor must draw up a Construction Phase Plan, or make arrangements for the plan to be drawn up. The Construction Phase Plan must set out the health and safety arrangements and site rules taking into consideration the Pre-Construction Information. The Client must ensure that the Construction Phase Plan has been suitably developed before allowing works to commence on site and the Principal Contractor must ensure that it is developed during the construction phase to reflect the changing conditions on site.

Providing welfare facilities

The Principal Contractor must ensure that suitable and sufficient welfare facilities are provided and maintained throughout the construction phase. What is suitable and sufficient will depend on the size and nature of the work involved in the project. Facilities must be made available before any construction work starts and should be maintained until the end of the project.

Providing suitable inductions

The Principal Contractor must ensure every site worker is given a suitable site induction. The induction should be site specific and highlight any particular risks and control measures that those working on the project need to know about; this should also be updated accordingly to reflect the changes in on site activities.

Preventing unauthorised access

The Principal Contractor must ensure reasonable steps are taken to prevent unauthorised access onto the construction site and should also take steps to ensure that only those authorised to access the site do so.

General requirements for all construction sites

The CDM Regulations also sets out a number of provisions that only relate to work carried out on a construction site. Such provisions include safe places of construction work, good order and site security, stability of structures, demolition and dismantling, excavations, reports and inspections, traffic routes, vehicles, emergency procedures, emergency routes and exits, fire detection and firefighting, fresh air, lighting etc.

The Health and Safety File

The Principal Designer must prepare the file, and review, update and revise it as the project progresses and issue the completed file to the Client at the end of the project. If the Principal Designer's appointment finishes before the end of the project, the file must be passed to the Principal Contractor for the remainder of the project. The Principal Contractor must then take responsibility for reviewing, updating and revising it and passing it to the Client when the project finishes.

Liaising with the Principal Designer

The Principal Contractor must liaise with the Principal Designer for the duration of the project on matters such as changes to the designs and the implications these changes may have for managing the health and safety risks. The Principal Contractor will need to liaise with the Principal Designer regarding Pre-Construction Information which will be needed to develop the Construction Phase Plan and also the information required for the Health and Safety File.

Consulting with workers

Principal Contractors has a duty under CDM 2015 to involve the workforce in matters of health, safety and welfare. This is in addition to the duty on all employers to consult with their employees (or their representatives) on health and safety matters under separate legislation.

Working for domestic Clients

A Principal Contractor's role when working on a project for a Domestic Client is no different to their role when carrying out work for a Commercial Client. They must still carry out their own duties in proportion to the risks involved in the project. However, the Client's duties for Domestic Clients are transferred and carried out by the Principal Contractor, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Client.

MARPAL, YOUR CDM CONSULTANT

As a Principal Contractor, you have specific health and safety responsibilities, however, as your CDM Consultant we can work with you to fulfil your obligations.

IF IN DOUBT ABOUT YOUR CDM OBLIGATIONS, CONTACT MARPAL

