Assessing The Risks At Your Customers' Delivery Points

During a routine inspection by the Local Authority (LA) at one our members' premises, an important issue was raised that we felt would be of interest to the majority of the BFFF members. This relates to the LA inspector questioning our member on how they perform **risk assessments** for each of their delivery points.

The majority of our members, and indeed companies operating within the food industry, will be engaged with delivering goods to some extent. Obviously within the foodservice industry there is the added complication that numerous daily deliveries are required often to fairly inaccessible locations for delivery vehicles and the delivery profile is constantly changing. Many foodservice companies will also find that even if they have delivered to a certain location before, the delivery situations experienced by the drivers are often different on each occasion.

Even though this is a difficult subject to tackle, all employers have a duty by law to ensure so far as reasonably practicable the health and safety of their employees at work. This includes the assessment of the risks both to employees and others who may be affected by their companies operation. Therefore this is not an area that can be left unattended and all companies should take steps to tackle the issue.

One way of overcoming this issue, which is undertaken by many companies, is to train the delivery drivers to perform their own delivery point risk assessments. However, if this approach is taken, there are several **key areas** that must be taken into consideration:

1. As the delivery points will be diverse, then the training must be tailored to cover this point.
2. The culture of your business should allow and expect drivers to turn away rather than deliver if the driver assesses the site as too dangerous.
3. In addition to training, providing drivers with simple delivery safety checklists may help them check that reasonable precautions have been taken, and help them decide if it is reasonable for them to refuse to continue with a particular delivery or collection.
4. Businesses should make sure that any agency drivers they use are familiar with the company's arrangements for delivery safety.
5. Businesses must monitor and audit the effectiveness of the training to ensure that drivers are able to highlight the dangers and indeed they do not feel obliged to deliver in unsafe conditions.
6. All training and monitoring undertaken should be documented and sufficient records kept.

BFFF raised the issue of point of delivery risk with both the HSE and LA. They re-emphasised the importance of monitoring the effectiveness of training should companies wish to train their drivers to perform their own risk assessments. They also highlighted that determining how companies perform risk assessments at their delivery points is likely to be brought up during inspections in the future.

For further information, HSE has produced a useful information sheet to help businesses and their workforce to work together and reduce workplace accidents. The information sheet is called 'Delivering Safely: co-operating to prevent workplace vehicle accidents', which is available directly from the HSE web site http://www.hse.gov.uk/fallsfromvehicles/wpt06.pdf

If you would like to contact BFFF on this subject then please do not hesitate to contact Joanna Hancock at the BFFF offices on telephone 01400 283090 or e-mail joannahancock@bfff.co.uk .