Health & Safety in the Seafood Industry

This DVD is only available with an English language sound track.

For non English speakers we have translated the scrip into other languages.

Each section of the script has a number. The same number appears on the screen of the DVD when that part of the script is being spoken.

This is not an ideal solution, but we hope it enables you to have a better understanding of the subject of this DVD.

1. **Onscreen Image** Title: **Health & Safety in the Seafood Industry**

2. Health & safety in the workplace is a vitally important part of running and working in any business. Some people see it as inconvenient, over-bureaucratic and an obstacle to getting the job done, but it really isn't.

3. We have to keep in mind that sometimes accidents are just that, an accident, unpredictable and unforeseeable. But the whole point of health and safety is that we can all aim to avoid all of the predictable and foreseeable risks in the workplace and do everything that is practicable, reasonable and possible to avoid accidents.

4. The rules and regulations we are going to discuss in this programme are not only effective, proven means of protecting your safety but strict legal requirements which, if applied effectively, will continue to ensure that the UK is the safest working environment in Europe. They could also save your life. Got to be worth paying attention to, hasn't it?

5. **Onscreen Image** Title:: Accidents at work

6. In general accidents in the workplace are caused by one of two things – unsafe acts or unsafe conditions. Unsafe acts are things like wearing the wrong personal protective equipment or bad manual handling techniques, something which you or someone else hasn't done

correctly. Unsafe conditions may include slippery floors or litter which can cause a trip hazard, general oversights which are everybody's responsibility to correct.

7. Both unsafe acts and unsafe conditions are easily avoided through common sense and good housekeeping. If you see something unsafe or someone behaving or working in an unsafe manner make it your responsibility to do something about it. This doesn't just mean clearing up spills or picking up litter, although of course these are important. It also means checking that guards are fitted properly before starting work, that people are fully trained on the equipment they are using and so on and so on. Almost all common sense but nevertheless easily overlooked.

8. Never be afraid to challenge someone you think may be acting in an unsafe manner and always report anything untoward to a supervisor or manager.

9. Following are a few examples of unsafe acts and conditions. Have a look and decide whether they are an unsafe act or an unsafe condition.

10. **Onscreen Image** : View the material from the *Hazard Spotting* section on the main menu before proceeding. Look for any possible or potential unsafe acts or unsafe conditions

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11. **Onscreen Image** Title:: Risk assessment

12. Risk Assessment is key to health & safety. Risk Assessment is in many ways the starting point for managing health & safety at work and while it is primarily the responsibility of the employer to carry out these assessments, we can all contribute to the risk assessment process.

13. First of all we need to consider two things – what makes up a hazard and what makes up a risk?

14. It’s a bit tricky to grasp at first but basically a hazard is something that could cause and accident and a risk is an estimate of the chances of that accident actually occurring and how bad it would be I it did. Confused? Maybe an example might help explain.

15. A sharp filleting knife could cause harm – we can all agree on that. But it can only cause harm if it’s being used. So, the knife is the hazard, the chances of cutting yourself when using it, the risk.

16. Now, we have to consider the extent of the risk to decide if it is acceptable. If the knife is correctly stored on a rack then there is little to no risk of it causing harm. If the knife is being used correctly by someone trained to use it who is wearing the correct personal protective equipment then the risk is increased but still acceptable. If someone is running around the workplace waving the knife in the air this is clearly entirely unacceptable. An extreme example but it illustrates the basic methods of assessing risk.

17. A potential risk in the frying arena is chips which have not been properly drained after soaking in dry white solution. The water residue left on the chips will heat up extremely quickly when the chips are put in hot oil. This causes the oil to boil up and there is a real risk of the hot oil overflowing. This also highlights the problem of having to much oil in the fryer in the first place.

18. Once you start thinking about hazards and the potential likelihood and severity of the results you quickly realise that there are many factors that can multiply the size of the risk, and sadly many of these factors are all too avoidable, if only we used more common sense.

19. So now onto the risk assessment process. There are five basic steps.

20. Step one: Look at a particular task or activity and accurately identify all the hazards that may arise from that task or activity.

21. Step two: Identify anyone who might be affected by these hazards. This includes anyone carrying out the task. It also could include other persons working near them, visitors and others.

22. Step three: What existing control measures are in place? Are there guards around dangerous machinery? Are people properly trained? Do they wear protective equipment? And so on.

23. Step four: Quantify the risk by working out the likelihood and severity.

24. Step five: Decide what further action is necessary to reduce the level of risk, and prioritise this action.

25. The law states that if more than five persons are employed in the business then all significant findings must be recorded. It’s always a

good idea, though, to record all significant findings whatever the size of the company, if anything does go wrong then written records may prove useful in many circumstances. Risk assessments need not be long, detailed documents. They are usually little more than a side or two of A4.

26. The more observant among you may have noticed that in step three we mentioned “existing controls”, what are these?

27. Existing controls are the rules and practises which you already have in place, things like staff training and regular maintenance, which will be adequate to deal with the risk you are assessing. Risks that are minor and tolerable usually require no further action as existing controls are adequate. Risks that are moderate or substantial, even with controls in place, require you to take further action to reduce the level of risk.

28. In practice this usually means something simple like additional protective equipment or more extensive staff training but every new hazard has to be assessed and dealt with on an individual basis.

29. The best way to deal with a hazard is to eliminate it but if this is not possible then the other options for reducing its risk potential are substitution or isolation. So, for instance, substituting 240 volt lighting with 12 volt lighting around a wet fish counter. Or putting a guard on dangerous machinery will isolate the hazard from the employee.

30. If you can’t eliminate, substitute or isolate a hazard then maybe you can control it. Ventilation could be used to control dangerous fumes. Personal protective equipment can control things like extreme temperatures. There is always a way of reducing the risk. The final control is discipline – rules, regulations, signage, posters and appeals to common sense are all forms of discipline.

31. Now, look at these examples of work in progress and do a risk assessment on them.

32. **Onscreen Image** : View the material from the *Hazard Spotting* section on the main menu before proceeding. Look for any possible or potential unsafe acts or unsafe conditions

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33. **Onscreen Image** Title: Personal Protective Equipment

34. Personal protective equipment, or PPE as it’s commonly called, has been designed and developed over many years to ensure the best possible protection to potential hazards without making the job impossible while wearing it. We’re all aware of things like goggles, ear plugs and steel toe-capped boots and what they are effective against

but in the sea food industry there is more specialist PPE of which you should be aware.

35. Chain mail or Kevlar gloves are extremely effective protection when using sharp knives. Rubber gloves protect against corrosive chemicals and as there are extremes of temperature associated with the job, particularly extreme cold, body warmers and other insulated clothing is often essential.

36. Your employer has to provide all necessary PPE free of charge and you have to wear it – it's not optional, it's a legal requirement. You should inform a supervisor if any of it is damaged, worn or in any inadequate for it's intended purpose.

37. In a slight twist, the wearing of white coats, a hat and a hair net are not to protect you while at work, nor are they a kind of traditional uniform. They are worn to protect the food from you during the manufacturing process. There should be plenty of signage around the workplace to remind you what PPE you should be wearing in any given part of the workplace so always be aware of where you are, what you should be wearing and why.

38. Here's someone in a work situation wearing the correct PPE – what does each piece protect him from.

39. **Onscreen Image** Title: Workplace Safety.

40. There's something called the workplace, open brackets, health, safety and welfare, close brackets, regulations 1992. It's a government regulation and basically it lays out in very clear terms your employers responsibilities regarding your safety while at work. It covers things like the stability and suitability of the building you're working in, making sure it's maintained properly, is the workplace adequately lit, is it well ventilated, that sort of stuff.

41. Now, while your employer has a responsibility to make sure your as safe as possible, you have to do your bit as well. Inform your supervisor of anything you see which is dirty or dangerous or out of place or even if something just doesn't seem right. Vigilance is vital in maintaining the workplace. Also vital is good housekeeping. This is all about common sense and tidying as you go. Store and stack things correctly and safely, clean up or make safe and report spills or trip hazards. Keep walkways and traffic routes clear, look for wear and tear on equipment or PPE and if areas like the toilets, kitchen or hand washing facilities are dirty or in any way not up scratch, tell someone.

42. Just a quick mention of safety signs. There come five different shapes and five different colours and work along similar lines as road signs. There's far to many to go through in detail in short programme like this

but basically - Red is for danger, Yellow or Amber means please take care, Green is for safety and blue means “you must do”.

43. In terms of shape: circular with a red border means prohibition, no smoking for instance, triangular is a warning, circular and blue denotes something is compulsory and emergency signs are green. There are also fire signs which warn of potential fire hazards and tell you where fire equipment can be stored.

44. I know all of this is a lot to take in but all of the signs are clear and unambiguous and you’ll pick up the meaning of all of them very quickly. The important thing is that you take notice of them whenever you see them.

45. Here are some signs in situ, identify them and outline what they mean.

46. **Onscreen Image** Title: Work Equipment

47. Almost everybody works with some sort equipment every day. And virtually every piece of equipment has the capacity to harm you in some way. The dangers of working with a knife or cutting tool are obvious but there are potential dangers even with seemingly innocuous things. Even a cardboard box, if it contains something heavy enough can crush your hand or fingers.

48. In your workplace the equipment hazards can broadly be separated into two groups – mechanical hazards and non-mechanical hazards. Mechanical hazards might include band saws or conveyor belts, something which has dangerous moving parts. Think about the equipment you see every day. You are potentially exposed to crushing, shearing, cutting, entanglement, impact, stabbing or puncture.

49. Sounds grim and it is. Mechanical equipment is extremely dangerous and completely unforgiving – if you do something wrong the machine doesn’t know it’s hurting you and will not stop. The injuries you could sustain can seriously affect you for the rest of your life. Use your training, use your PPE and most of all use your common sense to avoid putting yourself in harms way.

50. Non mechanical hazards are a little less apparent and a little less dramatic but just as dangerous. Again they come in many forms – electric shock, burning, excessive noise, low temperatures, vibration. Again, all of these are all around and all of them can cause you long term harm. They often take a subtler form than mechanical hazards and so in some ways take more looking out for.

51. Regulations designed to control work equipment hazards are in place at your workplace and must be practiced thoroughly. They are made up of four main areas. Firstly all work equipment must be appropriate for

the purpose its intended and the environment it's being used in. Secondly all equipment must be inspected and maintained, this is done regularly and to government standards. Next, training – anyone who is to use the equipment has to be properly trained in its operation. And finally, safety measures have to taken. This means that band saws must have guards on and conveyor belts must have emergency stop buttons, that sort of thing.

52. Have a look at these pieces of work equipment and identify the nature of the hazard and quantify the risk it presents. What measures would you use to control the risks.

53. **Onscreen Image** Title: Fire

54. To understand how to prevent fire we need to first understand what causes it to start and how it spreads. We can explain this by using something called the fire triangle. For a fire to start it needs three things – fuel, oxygen and heat. Fuel can be either a solid like paper or wood. Oxygen is all around us in the air we breath and heat can come from things like flames or sparks. These three things make up the fire triangle and you need only to remove one of them for the fire to be extinguished.

55. You remove the oxygen by smothering the flames. You remove the heat by cooling and you remove the fuel by starving the fire. There are several ways of achieving this and they are determined by the type of fire you are tackling. To help you decide fires are divided in several categories.

56. Class A fires are mostly solid materials such as wood, paper, fabric and plastics. These are best extinguished with a water or foam extinguisher although dry powder extinguisher is also acceptable.

57. Class B fires involve burning liquids and gases such as petrol, oil, and grease. You tackle these with a foam or dry powder extinguisher.

58. Class C fires involve live electrical equipment and the danger of electrocution. You must not use a water extinguisher on a class c fire. Use a carbon dioxide or CO2 extinguisher.

59. Class D fires almost certainly won't affect your workplace as they involve burning metals.

60. However Class F fires will be of specific interest to anyone using cooking oil and fats. Fryer fires are an obvious and constant risk in fish shops and restaurants. They must be tackled a wet chemical extinguisher. The chemical reacts with the fat or oil in the fryer and forms a crust which smothers the fire.

61. Apart from fire extinguishers you may also find fire blankets or hose reels. Hoses obviously do the same job as a water extinguisher and should be used on category 1 fires. Fire blankets should only be used on small solid material fires, clothing fires or an oil fire within something like a chip pan. They are totally unsuitable for use on larger fires.

62. All staff should be trained in the use of fire extinguishers, emergency exits and your firm's emergency response procedure which covers things like fire alarm use, muster point locations and roll calls.

63. The basic rule to remember in the event of fire is – get out, get the fire brigade out and stay out.

64. OK, that's about it from me. The next step for you to take is a short test or exam. I know you don't like examinations, few people do, but if you want one of these, a Foundation Health and Safety certificate then you need to take the test. If you are doing this course through open learning then you should get in touch with your training contact to arrange for the test. If you are doing this as part of a taught course then the test will be with you soon……

65. Don't worry, good luck and stay safe.