

Assessing the Safety of Staffing Arrangements for Process Operations in the Chemical and Allied Industries Health & Safety Executive

This study has been completed on behalf of the Hazardous Installations Directorate (HID) of the Health and Safety Executive, who have observed that a number of chemical sites are taking steps to reduce staffing levels in their operating teams. There is a concern that such reductions could impact the ability of a site to control abnormal and emergency conditions, and may also have a negative effect on staff performance through an impact on workload, fatigue, etc.

A method has been developed that emphasises when too few staff are being used to control a process. It is not designed to calculate a minimum or optimum number of staff, however, if a site finds its staffing arrangements 'fail' the assessment, it is not necessarily the case that staff numbers must be increased as other options may be available. The method also allows duty holders to benchmark how they manage staffing arrangements.

The method has been trialed and from the experience and comments of those participating, it is judged that the method brings staffing issues into the open, is practical, useable and intelligible to duty holders and inspectors, and is robust and resistant to manipulation and massaging of its output.

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*Systematic method to address safety issues
associated with staffing arrangements*

