FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is a Safety Management System?
Often referred to as SMS for short, a Safety Management System is a document that details the arrangements a business has in place to ensure the safety of their customers.

Why do I need a Safety Management System?
In the UK, by law, every business with 5 or more employees has to have a SMS. There is no law that says that you must have a SMS in respect of your customers. However, should something go wrong and you face either a civil action claims or a criminal prosecution, a robust SMS will assist your defence and could defeat the claim and defend the prosecution. You need to be able to demonstrate that you did all that was reasonably practical to keep your customers safe.

What should a Safety Management System include?
A SMS is often broken into 3 key parts to include:

1. The business's policy statement/commitment to customer health and safety
2. The organisational responsibilities
3. The arrangements for the implementation of measures in place to reduce the risk to customers and others affected by the business's activities.

What classifies as a 'package' under The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018?
A Package Holiday is when more than one part of the holiday is booked through the same Organiser under a single contract.

A Linked Travel Arrangement is a holiday that includes two or more travel services but applies when the customer makes a single visit to a shop or website, and selects and pays for each service separately within 24 hours.

For the purposes of the Regulations, a package or linked travel arrangement is defined as a pre-arranged combination of at least two of the following:

- Transport (including car hire)
- Accommodation
- Other tourist services not related to transport or accommodation and accounting for a significant proportion of the package

A combination of transport, accommodation and/or other tourist services and selling them together at an inclusive price, form a package within the meaning of The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018. In this case, the company has specific responsibilities that go beyond any contractual obligations. The Tour Operator supplying the package will be liable to the customer even if what went wrong was someone else's fault.

What is meant by 'reasonably practicable'?

'Reasonably practicable' is a term that requires a computation by the duty holder in which the quantum of risk is placed on one scale and the sacrifice involved in the measures necessary for averting the risk (whether in money, time or trouble) is placed in the other; i.e. risk versus cost. If it is shown that there is a gross disproportion between them, the risk being greater than the sacrifice in mitigating the risk, then increased liability could be incurred.

Where do I start with Auditing?

You wouldn't be expected to audit all properties/services used at once but would be expected to prioritise these according to potential risk. Risk likelihood increases with more passengers or any known risk of the property/service from existing incident reports/complaints. The prioritisation should be discussed and decided internally within your company, keeping in mind the term "reasonably practicable".

How can I audit?

Intertek Checkpoint offers two types of auditing depending on a client's requirements; self-assessments and physical audits.

How does the self-assessment process work?

Self-assessments are undertaken by your suppliers. They are completed on our online database known as "Checkpoint". Completed assessments are risk scored. Recommendations are generated by Checkpoint and communicated to suppliers via email. Suppliers are automatically followed up after 7 and 14 days to prompt completion of the assessment.

Once completed this assessment is accessed by you and the supplier through Checkpoint and the grading can assist clients in establishing the risk of their properties and further prioritisation for possible physical audit.

What is a physical audit?

A physical audit is when a trained Intertek Checkpoint Auditor visits the supplier and undertakes a physical audit of the service provided. These audits fall in line with industry best practice and Intertek Checkpoint's H&S technical guidance.

Once the audit is completed it will be viewable on Checkpoint. Clients are able to see the overall grading of the report, any safety concerns that have been raised (referred to as escalations) and the recommendation report communicated to suppliers.

What in house resource do I need?

Whilst Intertek Checkpoint can assist and undertake the auditing process for you there needs to be someone within your business who is designated as the person responsible for health and safety. This person would be responsible for ensuring that the auditing programme is implemented as outlined within your SMS. This person would also be responsible for interpreting the information obtained from the auditing programme and implementing the necessary actions.

How do I monitor the progress of my self-assessments and audits?

The Checkpoint system can run regular Management Information (MI) Reports. These can be self-service reports or a member of the team can run bespoke reports, depending on your business requirements. The MI will display the status of the audits that you have requested, "are they pending or completed?" Once the audit is completed it can be viewed on the Checkpoint system.

How do I get started?

Please get in touch with victoria.ross@intertek.com or contact the office on 01707 244 731 to speak with one of the team.