



Guidance for Independents on the Safety of their Productions

Definition of “Independent Production”

An Independent production is defined in Article 3 of the Broadcasting (Independent Productions) Order 1991 as amended. An Independent production is a programme, series of programmes or part of a programme commissioned by the BBC from a Producer or Production company operating as a separate business. The BBC retains final editorial control over the production, but managerial control rests with the Production company or Producer.

Independent’s Safety Rules

If there are significantly high risks, the BBC will want to know the sources of specialist safety advice for the production.

We want to know that the Independent has proper management arrangements for managing risk. We may ask them for details of the methods used in dealing with risk assessment, including past practice. **NB All employers, in law, are required to have appropriate Health and Safety arrangements.** Where an employer has 5 employees or more they must have a Safety Policy. The systems in place will depend on the size of the company and the nature of the undertaking/production.

The Independent will **NOT** be required to follow the BBC’s safety rules. They should have their own arrangements, including any rules they find necessary. In practice, many people in the independent sector have worked for the BBC and know the BBC rules, so it would not be surprising if some of the rules turned up in the Independent’s rule book. (**But** it is still the Independent’s rule book not the BBC’s).

The Independent will not have access to BBC Occupational Risk Management. It should be responsible for organising its own sources of competent safety advice.

When the Independent is working on BBC premises they will be required to follow basic site rules. This may include compliance with BBC permit to work systems and may also include some operational arrangements, for example, the rules covering studio grids.

The BBC will provide the contractor with site specific information such as fire evacuation procedures and welfare facilities. The BBC will also inform the contractor of all known hazards arising out of the BBC premises or activities that may affect them. The Independent must assess the risks of their work and exchange relevant information about the risks to BBC staff, visitors, equipment and the BBC’s activities.

Essentially the BBC and other employers are each responsible for their own undertakings and for ensuring adequate co-ordination of the safety arrangements including adequate exchange of information. We would monitor compliance where their activity affected the safety of BBC staff, visitors, facilities etc but this is not the same as "hands on" management of their safety arrangements.



Monitoring and Review of Safety Performance

The BBC will establish safety competence for the specific production at the commissioning stage.

Under the contract terms the BBC is entitled to be provided with evidence of compliance. In practice this means the BBC is entitled to carry out monitoring of the Independent's operations or obtain records at any reasonable time.

The Independent will be required to provide details of all accidents and incidents reportable under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

In response to adverse reports or any other unsatisfactory feature, the BBC will reserve the right to monitor compliance through:

- visits to the production site/offices by BBC Safety, and /or BBC management, to observe the safety arrangements and,
- to check the adequacy of Independent safety documentation and records.

This may include checks on:

- compliance with Health & Safety Regulations and the Independents own safety policy
- risk assessment and method statements
- training
- sources of competent safety advice
- assessments of substances used/released
- equipment inspection and test
- personal protective equipment
- site inspections
- accident/incidents and investigations
- action by enforcing authorities
- health surveillance
- arrangements for vetting and managing contractors.

The safety performance of the Independent will be reviewed by the commissioner upon closing the commission.