



**SEL ENVIRONMENTAL LTD**

**SELECTION AND MANAGEMENT  
OF SUBCONTRACTORS**

Supported by







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## Review and Revisions

Review Date	Reviewed By	Signed	Revisions
28/09/2020	M Gilsenan		N/A
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## **Selection and Management of Subcontractors**

### **Introduction**

This Guidance Note is intended to cover the appointment of subcontractors carrying out works for SEL. A pre-qualification questionnaire must be completed by all subcontractors for assessment prior to any appointment.

### **Legal Requirements**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires employers and others in control of buildings to ensure the safety of employees and others who work or visit there. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 also require those in control of buildings to co-operate with subcontractors or self-employed persons to ensure that they are not exposed to unacceptable health and safety risks.

Although the responsibility to work safely rests principally with the subcontractor, SEL also have a duty to do all that is within our control to make sure that this happens.

This means that SEL have a duty to ensure that a subcontractor is competent to perform the task safely and without unacceptable risk to other employees, members of the public and any others on the site.

Where accidents occur on site through the incompetence or negligence of a subcontractor, SEL could also be held liable if you had not taken steps to appraise the subcontractor or carry out management checks to ensure that agreed standards of operation were actually being carried out correctly.

Subcontractors should only be allowed to carry out work on site if they have been vetted and approved by SEL. Even if you have used the same subcontractors for the past 10 years you still need to regularly assess them in order to ensure you are adhering to your legal obligations.

You will need to consider the nature of the work that the subcontractor is expected to carry out. Those whose work poses a greater risk will need to be treated in a different way from those carrying out low risk work that will not have a significant safety impact upon the site.

The following points need to be considered:

- Are hazardous substances used?
- Are portable electrical tools or other powered machinery used on site?
- Are contractors going to be working at height?
- Are contractors carrying out hot works?
- Are materials and/or hazardous equipment to be stored on site?



- Are members of the public or other third parties going to have access to the work area?
- Are you, your employees or other contractors at risk due to the work to be carried out?

Once the potential risks posed by the subcontractor's work have been evaluated, you should request the following information before considering using them for a particular job:

- A copy of the contractor's health and safety policy
- Details of qualifications and experience relevant to the task which they are to perform.
- Copies of detailed risk assessments produced in the last 12 months covering the full range of work activities pertinent to the job.
- d) Safe systems of work or method statements for a similar job as tendered for.
- Details of any job/task monitoring arrangements
- Details of any formal health and safety enforcement action taken against the contractor or his organisation (i.e. Improvement Notice, Prohibition Notice or Prosecution)
- Confirmation of Employers (where applicable) and third party liability insurance cover
- References from previous jobs carried out in the last 12 months

One way of collating the aforementioned information is via the SEL subcontractor questionnaire.

When assessing the information provided by the potential subcontractor you should take due consideration of the following points:

- Has the safety policy statement been signed by the most senior person in the company?
- Does the policy clearly set out the organisational structure, responsibilities and detailed arrangements for putting it into effect?
- Has the policy been reviewed in the past 12 months and updated if necessary?
- Do the contractor's employees have sufficient and appropriate experience and qualifications to carry the work out safely and legally?
- Do the risk assessments provide suitable information of the risks associated with the task and identify appropriate control measures?
- Do the contractor's safe systems of work and method statements provide sufficient detail of the procedures that will be followed?
- Will the contractor be able to ensure, through supervision and monitoring, that their employees on site perform to health and safety standards?
- Has the contractor a good record of safe and competent work? Do references substantiate this?
- Does the contractor's insurance provide adequate cover?

All contractors who work for SEL must be put through the same assessment procedure which needs to be conducted on an annual basis. It is important not only to consider new contractors but also those who have worked for you in the past or currently, this continuing appraisal safeguards your reputation and own safety record. When assessing contractors



who have worked for SEL in the past, their work history should be an important factor, although not necessarily the most significant.

## Monitoring and Supervision

Your responsibilities do not stop with the assessment of the contractor. To comply with your legal obligations, you must also carry out certain checks to ensure that the subcontractor puts their written procedures into practice.

The extent to which the subcontractor is monitored will depend upon the risk level of the work that they are undertaking for you. For example, a subcontractor carrying out soft landscaping tasks in a private area will require less supervision than a glazier replacing a shop front while members of the public still have access to the area.

The most straightforward way of monitoring a subcontractor's work is by direct onsite supervision, however, this is not always possible, so consideration must be given to regular site visits and for low risk activities liaison with the client may be suitable. You must make a judgement based on the type of work the subcontractor is doing for you, as to the most appropriate form of monitoring to implement/

If subcontractors are seen not to be operating safely, or are in breach of their own procedures and/or site rules, you must take appropriate action. This may range from an on-site chat through to formal correspondence with the offending company, to dismissal from site and expulsion from SEL's approved list of subcontractors.

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