



Health & Safety Contractor rules



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1. Introduction

BT believes that health, safety and wellbeing are critical contributors to our future commercial success.

BT cares about its people and will take a positive approach to their health, safety and wellbeing through the promotion of healthy behaviours to help them avoid illness or injury arising from their work or their lifestyle.

Our goal is 'zero avoidable harm'. To achieve this goal, we will commit resource and effort as well as measuring ourselves against publicly available targets.

This document sets out how we believe our contractors and their employees should conduct themselves and the specific rules you must follow when working for BT.

We're sure you will want to work with us to improve safety for everyone's sake.

To help us reach everyone involved in the work, you will also need to pass on these important messages to your employees and anyone else working on your behalf, including your sub-contractors.

In the UK where you are working on behalf of Openreach you are required to comply with SFY/HSH/A009 – Openreach Supplier Health, Safety and Environmental Mandatory Policy requirements. This will form a central part of any contract made with Openreach.

In the UK where you are working on a former EE Switch / Core / Data Centre you will need to refer to the EE Quality and Health Safety Work Schedule and EE Mobile Analytic Document Register.

2. The legal bit – explaining our terminology

'Company' - means BT, or any associated company.

'Client' - means any company for which BT has been appointed as its agent, and has the authority to act on its behalf, with regard to the *Work*.

'Site' - means any premises, property or site which is either owned, occupied or under the control of the *Company*, and where the *Work* is to be carried out.

'Contractor' - means any other company, or any employee, representative or agent of that company, who is appointed to undertake *Work* on behalf of BT or its *Client*.

'Company Representative' - relates to any representative of the *Company* authorised to place contracts, give instructions to the contractor, or permit the *Contractor* on the *Site* to carry out work.

'Work'- the activities to be carried out by the Contractor in relation to a specific contract or instruction.

2.1 Legal requirements

Contractors working for BT must comply with all relevant health, safety and environmental legislation at all times.

3. Our health and safety requirements

3.1 Access to BT premises

Access arrangements need to be agreed with your Company Representative.

On arrival Contractors will report to either site reception or directly to the Company Representative as agreed.

Contractors will comply with any local site security arrangements and site rules and will be required to undertake a Site Induction. Photo ID cards will be worn at all times in conjunction with their access cards (where issued).

Contractors will implement robust lone working arrangements where applicable.

3.2 Accident prevention and hazard reporting

Hazards that become apparent which are not under the control of the Contractor must be reported immediately to the Company Representative for action.

3.3 Accident, incident and near miss reporting

Accidents, incidents and near misses must be reported as soon as possible but within 24 hours to BT on:

UK tel: 0800 671 345 -
HR Services outside the UK: +44 203 684 7021
Within the Republic of Ireland: 01 656 9016

or through their Company Representative.

Contractors will investigate all accidents, incidents and near misses as soon as practicable and submit a report to BT within 7 days.

3.4 Asbestos

Contractors must not cut, drill or otherwise disturb materials suspected of containing asbestos.

If intrusive work is planned the Contractor will review asbestos surveys and available site information.

The Contractor will ensure that all its employees, and those of any sub-contractor, are made aware of any asbestos on site and of the precautions that must be taken to prevent exposure.

If during work, the Contractor discovers previously unidentified asbestos containing materials, or believe that their work will disturb suspected asbestos, they must stop work and inform the Company Representative. The affected area must be made safe and secured to prevent further access.

3.5 Chemical safety

Hazardous, flammable or radioactive substances are not to be brought or stored on site without prior consultation and authorisation from the Company Representative.

Where hazardous substances are permitted appropriate risk assessments must be available. All chemicals must be kept in their original containers and be properly labelled.

The Contractor is responsible for the safe and appropriate disposal of any waste containers.

3.6 Consultation and co-operation

Contractors will ensure effective communication of working arrangements / safe systems of work etc with their people.

3.7 Documentation

A copy of all relevant documentation, drawings or information relating to health and safety of the work must be held on site by the Contractor. All such documentation must be available for examination by the Company Representative or the Enforcing Authority at any time.

3.8 Dust control

Where contractors are carrying out activities that generate dust (eg drilling/building works/unpacking equipment) they will implement all practicable measures to avoid the spreading of dust and of dust accumulating on telecoms equipment, or being ingested into air handling equipment, including:

Minimising debris from packing materials, cabling work, construction works including drilling and demolition

Unpacking equipment delivered in disposable packaging, including cardboard outside the apparatus room/technical space. Where this is impracticable a clear, screened area, which is not in proximity to operational equipment, should be designated for this purpose. Under no circumstances should cardboard packaging be stored within the equipment room/technical area.

Applying the above controls will help minimise the level of contamination that can quickly disperse through the room and structures within it.

3.9 Electrical work

Only competent and qualified Contractors may work on electrical equipment and systems.

Unless otherwise agreed by the Company Representative, on site portable equipment will be supplied at 110v AC or less by means of mains isolation transformers. Where this can't be achieved, double insulated tools will be used in conjunction with a residual current device with a trip rating not exceeding 30mA.

3.10 Environmental management

BT takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously. To do this we operate an ISO14001 certified Environmental Management System. We also publically commit to comply with Environmental Legislation and prevent pollution in our Environmental Policy Statement (search BT environmental Policy).

BT manages its impact on the environment by focusing on its significant environmental aspect; namely Fuel, Emissions to Air, Waste, Transport, Energy, Procurement, Product Stewardship, Network and Specialist Assets.

BT also operates an ISO50001 Certified Energy Management System and we are committed to using energy efficiently. All staff, including contractors, contribute to BT achieving its goals and must be mindful to turnoff equipment when no longer in use.

The contractor has an important part to play in supporting BT deliver its commitments. Contractors will comply with all local environment laws, regulations, guidance and BT instructions and report all incidents involving spillages and where there is an environmental impact are to report this through the BTFS helpdesk on 0800 223388 in GB and 028 9021 5555 in Northern Ireland and seek advice from their host.

Failure to comply with local rules could lead to environmental damage and penalties imposed on the company or the individual by the regulatory authorities and increase operating costs.

3.11 Equipment

All equipment used must be fit for purpose, properly maintained and where necessary tested. Evidence of testing should be available on request.

Equipment and tools will be stored safely when not in use.

Where practicable, Contractors will select equipment which reduces the risks associated with noise and vibration.

3.12 Excavation

Contractors must comply with the requirements of HSE guidance [HSG 47 Avoiding danger from underground services](#), which requires the use of plans, detection devices and safe digging procedures including where appropriate hand digging trial holes to confirm the line and depth of services. The contractor must have in place a permit to dig system prior to any excavations commencing.

Excavations must be adequately supported to prevent falls of material or earth, which may endanger any person. Where excavations are undertaken close to buildings or structures due regard must be taken of the additional loads imposed. Excavations must have suitable barriers and where appropriate lights and signs.

Reasonable steps must be taken to prevent unauthorised access to excavations, including trespassers.

BT have specific procedures for working within 75 meters of hazardous pipelines – you must seek advice from the Company Representative if this is relevant to your work.

3.13 Fire

Contractors will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with site fire safety procedures
- Take all appropriate measures to prevent fire
- Not smoke on site
- Not restrict fire escape routes by the storage or use of plant, equipment or materials

- Not interfere with any fire systems or wedge open internal smoke doors without express permission of the Company Representative
- Only use Fire Exit doors with the express permission of the Company Representative
- Agree fire precautions with the Company Representative before conducting 'hot work'
- Ensure that sources of ignition have been extinguished and non-essential electrical apparatus switched off before leaving site

Where work requires the isolation of fire detection / fire-fighting systems, these must be reinstated and tested at the end of each working day, unless agreed with the Company Representative.

Any damage to fire detection or fire-fighting systems or false alarms must be reported to the Company Representative immediately.

3.14 Fire-stopping

Any breach between compartments (rooms or other separated areas, including walls, floors and ceilings) must be made good to the appropriate standard.

Temporary fire-stopping arrangements must be in place for any significant breach left unsupervised.

3.15 First aid

The Contractor will need to discuss with the Company Representative, what First Aid facilities are available for use at the site, if any. The ultimate responsibility remains with the Contractor to provide adequate first aid arrangements for its staff.

3.16 Gas safety

Work involving the installation, maintenance or modification of any gas systems will only be carried out by Contractors who are competent and qualified.

All transportable gas containers must be correctly stored and quantities kept to a minimum. All such bottles must be stored at ground level, or above and away from underground pits or confined spaces or sources of ignition.

Freestanding cylinders must be stood upright and securely restrained to prevent toppling.

Redundant gas containers must be removed from site as soon as is possible.

Any containers used must be returned to the designated storage area.

3.17 Grinding operations

Contractors will not carry out metal or stone grinding operations in an Exchange Equipment area without prior authorisation from the Company Representative.

3.18 Housekeeping

Contractors must maintain a tidy work site at all time to reduce the risk of slips, trips and falls.

Walkways, exits and fire points must not be obstructed.

Materials must be stored to prevent them falling on others.

On completion of work, the Contractor must clean up the work area and dispose of any waste.

3.19 Induction

Contractors will complete an appropriate induction before working on site. Evidence of this induction must be retained.

3.20 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment

Contractors will have lifting plans in place to ensure safe lifting operations.

Lifting equipment will have statutory inspection records as required.

Where Contractors use BT owned lifting equipment and accessories, including work restraint systems associated with lifting operations, they will first obtain confirmation of its up to date statutory inspection and test status.

3.21 Overhead work

Contractors will implement arrangements to ensure the safety of people below any area of work, including where necessary the use of barriers, tool restraints and suitable means of access.

Tools, equipment or materials must not be thrown up or down from the work area.

3.22 Permit to work

We expect to see a permit to work system in place for the following activities:

- Hot work (including use of electrical welding equipment)
- Confined spaces
- HV electrical work
- LV electrical work adjacent to live equipment
- Work on pneumatic / hydraulic / pressure systems
- Work at height near unprotected edges
- Work within 75 meters of hazardous pipelines
- Work with lasers
- Radio Frequency / EMF

Lock Out Tag Out procedures should be implemented where required. Contractors should consider the use of permit systems for other high risk activities.

3.23 Personal Protective Equipment

Contractors will provide their own PPE and comply with any on site PPE rules. PPE must be appropriate for the task, provide the necessary level of protection and considered a last resort where risks can't be controlled by other practical measures.

The Company Representative will provide information on local site rules.

3.24 Plant and machinery

Contractors will provide their own plant, machinery and equipment required for their work unless there is prior written agreement from the Company Representative.

3.25 Pressure vessels

The use of pressure systems, such as compressors must be authorised by the Company Representative before being brought onto site.

Any pressure vessel brought onto site must have a current Test Certificate with it.

3.26 Pre-start meetings / discussions

Pre-start meetings / discussion must be held with all parties involved in the work. These should be on site meetings for larger, more complex work but otherwise can be telephone meetings.

These meetings will establish and confirm:

- Lawful Customer Access Requirements
- Areas of work, boundaries
- Parking, storage, delivery arrangements
- On site protection measures
- Welfare facilities
- Site rules
- Safe systems of work and on site hazards
- Emergency arrangements etc

3.27 Project safety management / CDM

BT believes that good project safety management produces positive health, safety and wellbeing outcomes, reduces quality issues at source, ensures on-time delivery and is a significant factor in reducing costs.

We expect our contractors and suppliers to work together and co-operate with each other where necessary to reduce any risks from over-lapping or simultaneous operations at all times.

Where you are responsible for design, we expect you to reduce risks to people who install, commission, maintain and de-commission systems or equipment to as low as possible. Where design does not allow for this, you must ensure that people are aware of any residual risks associated with the equipment or system.

BT will enable site visits and make every effort to provide information related to hazards associated with our buildings or network assets, wherever possible. Our expectation is that you will use this information and communicate it effectively to your own, and sub-contracted people, who need to know.

Where work is undertaken in the UK specific requirements apply and we will engage in discussions about specific roles and responsibilities at the earliest opportunity.

3.28 Risk assessments and Method Statements / Safe systems of work

Contractors will conduct suitable and sufficient risk assessments of their work. These should be made available to the Company Representative on request before work commences.

Method statements must identify and explain the method by which each task will be undertaken and any safety precautions that must be implemented.

3.29 Road works

Contractors will complete risk assessments before any work starts on public highways. The risk assessment will consider:

- The type of service planned
- Hazards along the route and any physical constraints
- Survey requirements
- Underground services in the vicinity of any cable routes or poles
- Traffic flow and pinch points
- Traffic and population density
- Local authority rules
- Access / egress routes for plant, people and materials

Contractors will comply with local authority rules whenever working on the highway. This will include rules regarding permits and authorisation, guarding, barriers, signage, lighting etc.

3.30 Signage and notices

Contractors will ensure that all required signage and notices are available and prominently displayed.

Markers or barriers which clearly indicate areas which need to be kept clear will be in place.

Where appropriate, signage will also indicate any PPE requirements, and contact details of how to gain access into the area.

3.31 Sub-contracting

Contractors must have a system in place for the selection and approval of sub-contractors to ensure they are competent.

The requirements of these rules must be cascaded to any sub-contractors used.

Contractors are responsible for the monitoring of sub-contractor performance. Evidence of monitoring arrangements should be made available on request.

3.32 Supervision

Contractors will ensure they have adequate risk based supervision arrangements in place.

3.33 Training

Contractors must ensure that all its employees have the necessary skills, knowledge, training and experience to carry out their work.

Where work is specifically licenced, Contractors will carry evidence of their training (eg fork lift truck driving, rope access).

Evidence of training must be made available to the Company Representative on request.

3.34 Work at height

Work at height must be avoided wherever possible. Where it can't be avoided measures should be in place to prevent falls. Where the risk of falling can't be eliminated measures should be in place to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall.

With the exception of travelling and fixed ladders, Contractors must not use BT access equipment.

Contractors will take account of the following within their risk assessments:

- Fragile surfaces
- Risk of falling objects
- Access equipment – type / inspection regimes / measures to prevent unauthorised use
- Electricity
- Radio Frequency / EMF hazards
- Emergency rescue arrangements

Contractors will be responsible for providing their own fall restraint equipment when working in UK operational areas where the risk from fall from height exists (such as equipment access doors) and for ensuring suitable Risk Assessments and Method statements are in place.

Eye bolts or fixings used for the attachment of fall restraint equipment must be tested prior to use. Requests for testing should be made to the Property Helpdesk on 0800 22 33 88 allowing sufficient time for these to be completed.

Ladders

Use of ladders is only acceptable where:

- Work is short duration (work in one position does not exceed 30 minutes)
- The activity is deemed to be 'light' work
- Three points of contact can be maintained at all times
- The ladder can be positioned on suitable firm ground and is stable

Mobile Elevated Work Platforms (MEWPs)

Contractors must be competent in the use of any MEWP.

Scaffold

Scaffolding must be erected by competent persons and inspected before being brought into use. A register of inspections will be maintained.

Roof work

Contractors will agree arrangements for roof access and roof work with the Company Representative.

Contractors will ensure they are aware of any Radio Frequency hazards on roof tops and implement appropriate measures.

Work platforms

Work platforms must be put up and used by competent persons.

Work at or near unprotected edges

Contractors must use appropriate fall prevention measures when working at or near unprotected edges. For example, work at or near loading bay doors.

Contractors must be able to demonstrate that they have the appropriate working at height competence and training which provides both theoretical and practical content to support the use of safety harness fall protection equipment when working near unprotected edges.

4. Amendment record

Date of review	Description of changes
22 March 2016	Amendment record and document owner added
26 August 2016	New para added Environmental Management 3.10
17 January 2018	New paras added Induction, Fire-stopping. Work with Lasers added to Permit to Work requirements. EMF hazards added to Work at Height para
25 May 2018	1. Reference to former EE sites 3.34 – new section – Work at or near unprotected edges. Contractors not to use BT access equipment 3.16 – Returning cylinders to designated storage areas 3.22 – RF hazard added to list
31 May 2019	3.34 – new second para
4 November 2019	3.10 – para updated Document rebrand
13 October 2020	New section 3.1 inserted – Covid- 19
29 January 2021	Introduction updated to include reference to Openreach Document. Para 3.35 updated to include responsibility for fall restraint equipment and eye bolt testing
24 September 2021	Minor change to site access wording – Section 3.27 bullet 1
June 2024 T.Taylor	Section 3.1 – Covid controls removed. Section 3.9 - Dust control – extended.
November 2024	Only amendment is a correction to the footer date which was incorrectly stated as April 2024 when it should have said June 2024