

Why do we need Legionella Training?

In [ACOP L8 \(reference page 14 of the electronic copy\)](#) clearly states that in order to manage the risk of legionella, training and competence is an important part of controlling Legionella. Under regulations COSHH Regs' 8 & 12, Management Regs' 5,7 and 13 and HSW Act sections 2,3 and 4 the L8 states the following:

These Regulations require **employers** to take reasonable steps to ensure that any control measures are **properly used and applied**. They require employees to make full and proper use of those control measures. Employers are also required to have arrangements in place for the management of health and safety, to have access to competent health and safety advice and to provide employees with **suitable and sufficient information, instruction, and training**.

So training is required by Law

So who should be trained?

ACOP L8 states: Inadequate management, lack of training and poor communication are all contributory factors in outbreaks of legionnaires' disease. It is therefore important that the people **involved in assessing risk and applying precautions** are **competent, trained and aware of their responsibilities**.

The duty holder should be trained to allow them to make assertive and sound decisions on budget allowance and the designation of the responsible person and deputy and what is required of them.

The responsible person and their deputy specifically appointed to implement the control measures and strategies should be suitably informed, instructed and **trained** and their suitability assessed. They must be properly **trained** to a level that ensures tasks are carried out in a safe, technically competent manner; and receive regular **refresher training**.

Those involved in the control scheme as well as contractors and sub-contractors are given suitable and sufficient information, instruction and **training**. This includes information, instruction and **training** on the significant findings of the risk assessment and the appropriate precautions and actions they need to take to safeguard themselves and others. This should be reviewed and updated whenever significant changes are made to the type of work carried out or methods used. **Training is an essential element** of an employee's capability to carry out work safely, but it is not the only factor: instructions, experience, knowledge and other personal qualities are also relevant to perform a task safely.

What about the contractors and sub-contractors providing remedial works and other plumbing tasks such as fitting/replacing TMVs, taps pipework etc.

Any person involved in the servicing and repair of water systems should have had a basic course of training in Legionella. ACOP L8 (reference page 20 of the electronic copy) under Regulation HSW Act, sections 3 & 6 places a duty on any person who designs, manufactures, imports or supplies articles or substances for use at work, to ensure that they are safe and without risks to health at work and that any information related to the article or substance is provided. They will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the water system is so designed and constructed that it will be safe and without risks to health when used at work and their staff have the necessary ability, experience, instruction, information, **training** and resources to carry out their tasks competently and safely.

So what sort of training is required?

That depends on the complexity of the systems involved and the actions required of the individual concerned. A responsible person and deputy as well as the engineering department of a large

hospital may need a 5 day course which is a very in depth course accredited against an exam. For those of lesser complicated systems, modules of the above e.g. risk assessing and logbook courses in Legionella control may be more applicable. At Eplus Global we run accredited courses one of which is a comprehensive one day course in Legionella Awareness that trains for a good sound knowledge of Legionella with **training** in temperature control for hot and cold water systems (not cooling towers or other systems) fit for most persons involved in control measures. Further courses as identified then can be added.

What sort of a certificate will show proof of adequate training?

None. However, a graded certificate, demonstrates that a course which should be supported with a syllabus has been carried out in conjunction with an exam/assessment on completion. The certificate should show details of the course, duration and an advantage in indicating dates for refresher training. The details of the course should be available for audit in the event of an incident. An attendance certificate is **not proof of training** but rather attendance that day at that venue.

Does training make me competent?

No. It adds to your competence. Competence is the ability, education, attitude and experience as well as training.

How often should refresher training in Legionella e considered?

The frequency of **refresher training** for those involved in Legionella control activities is not specified and depends, to some degree, on the nature and complexity of the activity in question. Factors that should be considered in deciding when refresher training is required include, but are not limited to:

- an ongoing assessment of any changes to the system and control scheme that would require additional training in order that tasks can be performed effectively;
- changing roles of individuals involved in the control scheme within an organisation;
- developments in technologies that might allow more effective management of risks;
- additional training identified in a formal risk assessment review.

Adequate instruction, information and **training** of staff is an important element contributing the competence of those involved in Legionella control. The duty to ensure competence of staff lies with the operator of the risk system in question, the duty holder, so ultimately the decision as to when refresher training is required lies with them. Keeping tabs on all of the various factors that might elicit refresher training can be challenging and so it is common practice for duty holders to set a frequency for themselves and they may seek advice from their service provider in this respect.

The above statement supports Eplus Global Ltd decision in making the decision to at least 3 years to refresh but this decision always lies with the responsible person/duty holder and as a company that supplies services has decided that it is reasonable to advise on fresher training at least 3 yearly intervals.

Conclusion

Any persons involved in the control of legionella (DH, RP, Monitoring, Flushing, Fitting, and Maintenance) must be trained to the level applicable to their actions required in the systems they are responsible with.

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Excerpts used from the HSE and ACOP L8