

EXPLOSIVES HAZARDS

Fact Sheet No 14: Storage of Explosives.

The storage of explosives creates a number of specific risks, and there are a number of common measures, that apply to most storage situations, which minimise those risks:

The explosives must be clearly identified with sufficient information to enable them to be stored safely and securely.

The explosives must be stored in a licensed building, or location, that meets the required security standards, and in accordance with the requirements of the licence (description, hazard type and quantity).

The explosives must be protected from sources of ignition, for example sources of heat (radiators, heating pipes, lights, etc.), naked flames, static electricity, lightning, etc.

The storage conditions should prevent deterioration in the condition, stability or increase the sensitiveness of the explosive, for example extremes of temperature, exposure to strong sunlight, contamination with chemicals, grit or foreign matter, excessive damp or wet conditions, etc.

Explosives should be segregated during storage from explosives which pose specific or higher risks, for example, segregation of detonators, 'in process' unstable or sensitive explosives from finished product, suspect or deteriorating explosives, research and development explosives, or any other explosives or materials where accepted compatibility issues arise (Compatibility groups for the purposes of transport can be used as a guide).

Explosives should be segregated from other hazardous substances that could increase the extent and severity of an accident, for example flammable liquids, reactive substances, etc.

There should be a system of stock control that ensures that explosives do not exceed their storage life.

Appropriate security measures must be implemented and maintained, including physical security measures (locks and where necessary alarms), and that accurate stock records are maintained.

Packages should be stored so that gangways and exits are clear and unobstructed, and that stack heights minimise the risk of collapse of the packages or the stack.

Good housekeeping standards should be maintained, including the timely and safe cleaning up of spillages, and the segregation and prompt disposal of waste materials.

Minimising the number of people in a store or magazine, and ensuring that all exits are unlocked, and accessible when the building is in use.

Other specific measures may be necessary for specific locations and types of storage activity. Reference should always be made to the specific risk assessment and written instructions, or rules for the particular storage activity, including the Explosives Licence for the building or location.