

EXPLOSIVES HAZARDS

Fact Sheet No 1: Explosives Licence

It is a legal requirement, with some minor exceptions, for anyone who wishes to manufacture and store explosives to hold a Licence, issued by the Health and Safety Executive.

The Licence serves two purposes:

- a) To set out certain preventative and protective measures, conditions and limitations on the explosives storage or manufacturing operation.
- b) To provide assurance to employees and to the general public that the operation is subject to Regulatory control.

The Licence is for the whole site, and is subject to agreement by the Licensing Authority (Health and Safety Executive), and to 'assent' by the Local Authority.

The Licence consists four of parts:

- a) Terms of Licence: General terms and any special conditions or limitations.
- b) Plans: Detailed scaled plans show the layout of the site and its location relative to populated areas.
- c) Explosives Schedule: A list of the classes of explosives, or specific explosives that may be stored or manufactured.
- d) Building Schedule: For each building, its identity, its use, its construction, the maximum quantity of each Hazard Type of explosives and other dangerous substance that may be present, the maximum number of persons who may be present and the building separation distances to other buildings both on and off the site. The relevant building explosives limits must be displayed in each building.

Licensed sites are also subject to General and Special Rules:

- a) General Rules: Rules that are common to and apply to all Explosive Licensed sites, for example the provision of lightning conductors, the standards of housekeeping, and the exclusion of grit.
- b) Special Rules: Rules for employees that are specific to a site. These include the prohibition of matches, lighters, alcohol, etc. All employees need to be familiar with the Special Rules.

Compliance with the conditions of the Explosives Licence, and the General and Special Rules is critical to the health and safety of employees, contractors and the general public, and is a legal requirement.