

Contractors – Opportunities and Responsibilities

Who is a contractor?

“contractor” means any person (including a client, principal contractor or other person referred to in these Regulations) who, in the course or furtherance of a business, carries out or manages construction work.

Person or organisation carrying out construction, installation, alteration, isolation, diversion, maintenance, commissioning or removal works.
Contractor includes Principal Contractor and any sub-contractor.

What can a contractor add?

The standards that you set around information, instruction, training, competence, tools and equipment, planning, communication, change management and leadership will define your future safety performance. You are responsible for ensuring your supply chain are competent and that you have set clear expectations with regard to meeting your standards.

What are contractors’ responsibilities?

You are responsible for planning, managing and monitoring work under your control. You are responsible for the competence of your workforce and for ensuring the competence of your supply chain and for Controlling the work in a way which ensures that, so far as is reasonably practicable, it is carried out without risks to health and safety. This requires excellent communication, organisation, supervision and leadership.

The following checklist provides a simple guide to help contractors review whether they are following best practice.

If it is not possible to confirm that an item has been carried out, this should provide a prompt to identify what further action should be taken as appropriate.

Contractors' checklist (items 1-18)

- 1 You have clearly defined and communicated roles and responsibilities for the management of risks associated with underground services
- 2 You have a clearly defined and established communication route to your designers, planners, clients and ultimately the relevant service owners for the provision of information, communication and support.
- 3 You have accounted for the management of risks associated with underground services within your price and made this clear to your client.
- 4 You have ensured that your supply chain have accounted for the management of risks associated with underground services within their price.
- 5 You have clearly assessed the competence of your supply chain with relation to the management of risks associated with underground services
- 6 You have signed the USAG Charter and have conducted internal audits to ensure compliance with its requirements
- 7 You have allowed sufficient time in your programme for the positive identification of underground services.
- 8 You are working with the designer(s) to assist with the formulation of designs which eliminate risk. Where designs fall short of your expectation to eliminate, substitute or reduce and provide information on risks you actively challenge the relevant designer
- 9 You have captured and shared information, to identify service clashes and potential diversions using BIM or other appropriate techniques
- 10 You have identified the underground services coordinator and have an effective working relationship. Where you fulfil this role you have formally appointed this function.
- 11 You are satisfied that a clear communication process is in place for the provision of relevant information on underground services including information and advice.

- 12** You understand the process to be adopted when conditions on site change or where design changes are required.
- 13** You have obtained confirmation that all services requiring diversion or isolation have been diverted or isolated appropriately and evidence recorded.
- 14** All underground services which could potentially be disturbed have been positively identified.
- 15** Where any service is encased or surrounded in concrete work is to stop until a safe system of work is identified.
- 16** No service buried in concrete is to be disturbed/exposed unless isolated or pressure relieved (or other specific controls authorised and put in place)
- 17** Workforce understand that if they are in doubt that a service is live, or that safe working practices are not taking place they must STOP and obtain instructions.
- 18** Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) are being followed and monitored by competent supervisors and managers