

Regulatory Services Case Study

Businesses	Several Textile Businesses from around Leicestershire
Type	Textile Industry Fire Safety
Topic	Proactively aiding the textile industry within Leicester and Leicestershire to meet fire safety compliance standards and work towards complying with the Ethical Trading
Date	February 2016



Background

The Better Business for All Regulatory Services Partnership within Leicester and Leicestershire works together to support growth within the business sector, whilst ensuring that statutory requirements of legislation are met to ensure that a variety of standards are maintained. The partnership is made up from regulators across a broad range of sectors including; Trading Standards, Environmental Health, the Fire Service and many more.

In January 2016 the partnership was approached by Altaf Ahmed, who is a Business Investment Manager at Leicester City Council. Altaf explained that part of his responsibility was to provide help and support to textile businesses within the local area. Most of the large retailers have strict audit compliance requirement that our manufacturers are required to comply with. This audit process includes assurance that businesses meet ethical trading practices. Altaf was asking the partnership if they could work with him to support the local textile industry in complying with some of these standards.

It was also at this time that a devastating fire took place in the Belgrave area of Leicester. This incident had a major economic and emotional effect on a number of local textile businesses who were either directly or indirectly affected by the fire.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Services Fire Protection Department saw this as an excellent opportunity to support these local businesses by delivering free fire safety advice. The advice was based around providing

the information required for businesses to understand the Fire Risk Assessment process and in some cases even produce their own. A Fire Risk Assessment is a legal requirement under the 2005 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.

Advice and Support

Within a short period a training package was compiled by Watch Manager Andy Daybell. Andy worked with a local textile manufacturer, Mick Cheema from Basic Premier Ltd to produce an educational video. The video was a walkthrough of an establishment where safety was of a particularly good standard. This was used during the workshop to emphasise these good practises and to show how proactive management is key to producing a safe and satisfactory assessment of risk.

In addition the businesses were given fire safety log books, access to the appropriate fire safety guides, a fire risk assessment template to assist them in making their workplace a safer place and also a business continuity check list.

“The workshop was the finest example of working together, sharing intelligence and resources and making the Health & Safety to be everyone’s business. The workshop was appreciated by the attendees and feedback has been encouraging for further workshops for textile businesses. A big thank you to Andy Daybell and his team for the hard work that went in developing the workshop and making it relevant to textiles sector.” – Altaf Ahmed, Leicester City Council

"The feedback received was incredibly positive with requests made to host future events." – Andy Daybell, Fire Protection Officer, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service

Amongst the businesses who attended, comments were,

"The workshop was a great idea to engage with our industry".

"The workshop has been very useful".

"An abundance of knowledge for a free course. This is well worth attending. A very good introduction to fire risk safety".

The advantages of the workshop are:

- Delivering free quality input with a minimum disruption to the businesses.
- Being on hand to listen to and answer any specific questions about individual businesses.
- Raising fire safety awareness in private businesses.
- Developing positive working relationships between regulators and the private sector.



"This is another example of where Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service have listened to the needs of the business sector and worked hard to support them.

Although we will make every effort to enforce the fire safety legislation where appropriate, it is also important that we make every effort to reach out and support businesses. It is essential that as a regulator we are also seen as someone who can assist in helping a business to thrive rather than hindering its progress.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service are proud of its work with business and keen to maintain this supportive approach provided public safety is in no way compromised." – Andy Galway, Head of Fire Protection, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service