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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

ASSURED
SAFE
CATERING

A Management System For Hazard Analysis

A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PUBLICATION

INTRODUCTION

1 The manager or owner of each catering or food business has to be able to satisfy each customer's demands and expectations that food:

- Arrives as ordered
- Is at the right temperature
- Looks appetising and tastes good
- Gives value for money

BUT ABOVE ALL - IT MUST BE SAFE

2 Food poisoning may occur even when food has been prepared in clean kitchens if the food is not stored, prepared, cooked and served properly.

Assured Safe Catering is a system developed **for** caterers and **with** caterers to control food safety problems. It is based upon the principles of the system



used in food manufacturing sometimes called **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP)**.

Assured Safe Catering looks at the catering operation **step by step**, from the selection of the ingredients right through to the serving of the food to the customer. By carefully analysing each step of the catering operation, anything which might affect the safety of the food is identified. You can then decide when and how to control that hazard.

Assured Safe Catering helps **prevent** safety problems by careful planning in easy steps.

HAZARDS

3 A **HAZARD** is anything that may cause harm to a consumer.

A **HAZARD** may be:

- **Biological;** e.g. salmonella in chicken;
- **Physical;** e.g. glass in food of any kind;
- **Chemical;** e.g. cleaning chemicals in any kind of food.

HOW TO DEVELOP

AN ASSURED SAFE CATERING SYSTEM

4 The diagram below shows the stages to go through to set up an Assured Safe Catering system. This can be applied to **any** size of catering business.

Stage 1	Planning
Stage 2	Getting Organised
Stage 3	Draw a flow chart of the operation showing the catering steps
Stage 4	For each catering step: a. list hazards b. identify controls c. determine critical control points d. monitor/record e. put into action f. check
Stage 5	Repeat Stage 4 (For Each Catering Step) Full System in Action
Stage 6	Full System Check
Stage 7	Review

Stage 1: Planning

You will have to do some planning and preparation before developing the system. You will also have to make sure that your staff know about, and understand, any changes to your catering operation made because the system has been brought in. You must keep them up to date with changes as the system grows and develops.

Don't try and introduce the system all at once. Set it up for each step of your operation, and make sure it is working properly before moving on the next step.

Stage 2: Getting Organised

To set up an Assured Safe Catering system, you will need to decide how many people will be needed. This will depend on the size of your business; in a small business, this may be only one or two. In larger businesses, it may be



necessary to set up a team. You should include people who can recognise hazards, control measures and the critical control points without too much difficulty. This means that they will need to understand each step of the catering operation as well as food hygiene principles.

For a team, you should have a Team Leader (this may be you) who will have the job of setting up the system and getting it running. You may also need to bring other people on to the team, depending on which step in the operation you are looking at.

Stage 3: Drawing up a flow diagram

You will need to draw up a diagram to show each step of the operation from when you buy the ingredients to when the food is served to the customer. A simplified example is shown on the next page. Once the diagram has been drawn up, you will need to check that all the foods produced in your operation are covered. You will need to take copies of the diagram to check that it really shows what is going on in the kitchen and that steps have not been missed.



Stage 4:

Listing the hazards (a) to checking the system (f)

For this stage you should use the flow chart to deal with each step in the operation already identified. With the first step work through Stages 4(a) to 4(f) before moving on to the next step on the flow chart.

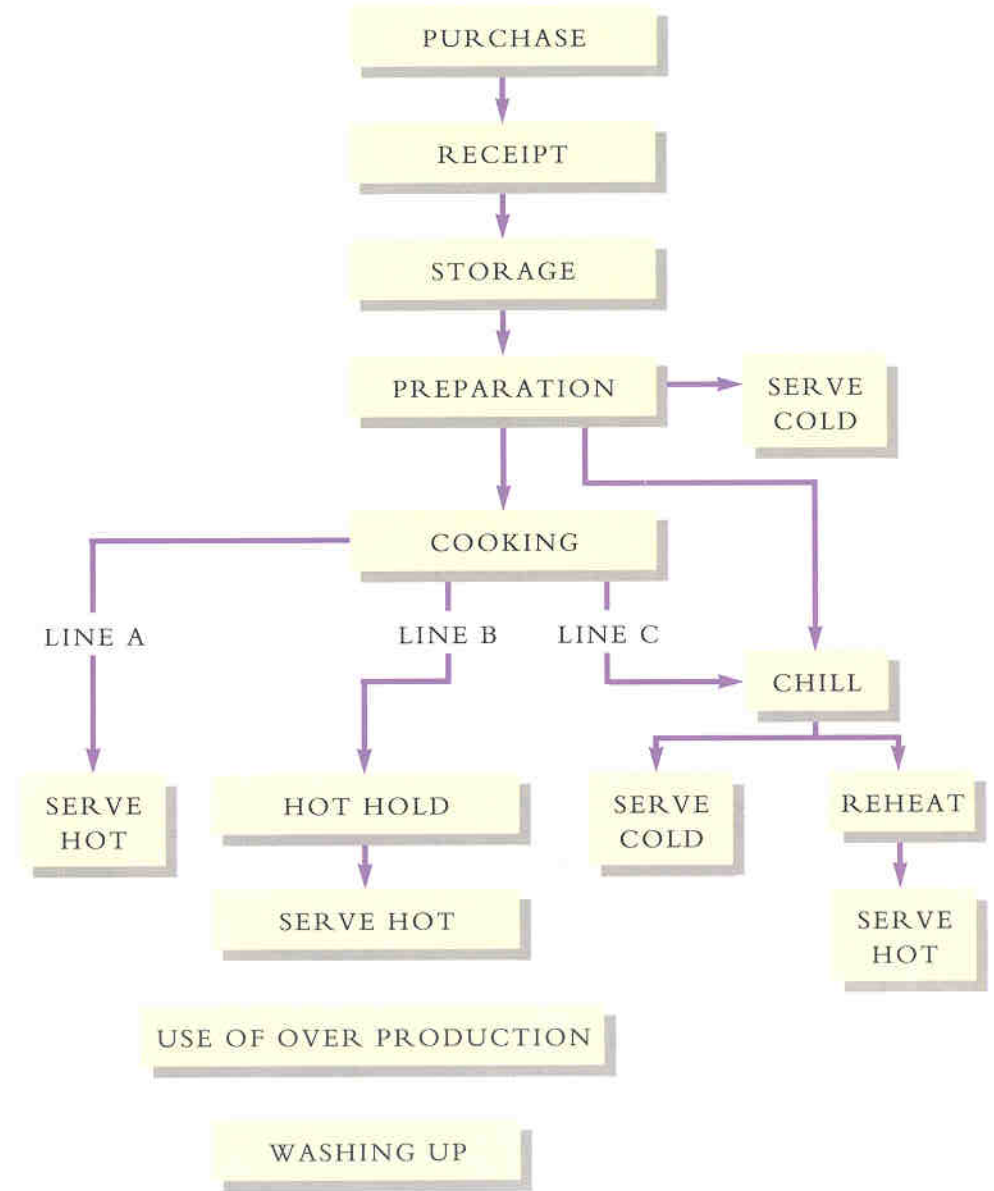
Stage 4(a):

Listing the hazards

The Assured Safe Catering Team need to be able to recognise a hazard or get help from someone else who is able to do so.

Remember: **A HAZARD** is anything that may cause harm to a consumer.

FLOW DIAGRAM OF ANY CATERING OPERATION



Stage 4(b): identify the control measures

List the things you need to do to remove the identified hazards or reduce them to safe levels. Some hazards may be controlled at a later stage of the catering operation. *You must be able to carry out the control measures in the kitchen where they are to be operated, otherwise you may not be able to use them.*

Stage 4(c): Critical Control Points

A critical control point is the step in the preparation of the food which has to be carried out correctly to make sure that a hazard is removed or reduced to a safe level.

You should control the hazards shown in the Critical Control Points Chart. You will need to identify the Critical Control Points that apply to your operation. *There may be other Critical Control Points in your operation that are not shown in the Chart.*

Stage 4(d): decide how to check and if necessary record that the controls have been applied.

Checking: Keep the methods you use to check as simple as possible, e.g.

- On delivery, check what the food looks like, its packaging, and the best before or use by dates;
- Check that all equipment, e.g. knives and chopping boards, is cleaned before it is used.

Recording: Where possible, and where it will be useful, keep records to check that the food safety controls are adequate and that they work. Records will also give useful information if there is a query from an environmental health officer or a customer.

Stage 4(e): putting the system into action

You will need to prepare any necessary record sheets. You may need to produce instructions for controls and checking procedures for staff to refer to.

Instructions should say:

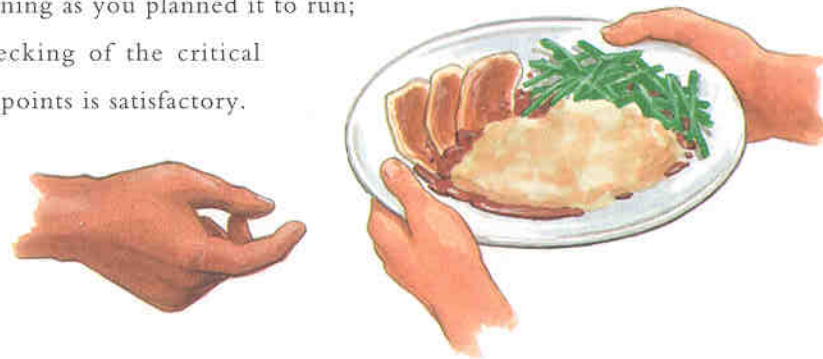
- **What** is to be done;
- **How** it is to be done;
- **When** it is to be done;
- **Where** it is to be done;
- **Who** is to do it.

Make sure all staff know and understand what they have to do so that the system works properly.

Stage 4(f): checking the system

Once you have the system in place for the first step of the operation, check it through to make sure that:

- It is running as you planned it to run;
- The checking of the critical control points is satisfactory.



Stage 5: repeat stage 4 for each step of the operation

You may now move on to the stage of the operation as shown on the flow chart. You should carry out the same procedures from 4(a) to 4(f) for this step in the operation.

Stage 6: Full system check

Once the system has been set up for all the steps on the flow chart, you will need to check that the whole system is working as you intended it to.

This means making sure that the critical points you identified are:

- Being applied correctly;
- Being checked as often as necessary;
- Accompanied by adequate instructions.

Stage 7: full system review

After the system has been developed and is running you may make changes to the way you carry out your business, or to your premises; and there may be staff changes that affect the Assured Safe Catering system.

If this happens you will need to look at the whole system to make sure that it is still working or to see if any alterations or improvements are now needed.

You should also review the system fairly soon after it has been put fully in to operation to make sure that any teething problems can be tackled and put right.

Reviews may be needed:

- When checks show that the system is not working correctly;
- When there are significant changes to the types of food being served, the layout or design of your premises, changes in the way you buy or prepare the food, or;
- From time to time to see that the system is working.

**ASSURED SAFE CATERING WILL HELP YOU,
YOUR BUSINESS, AND YOUR CUSTOMERS**

For further information about food poisoning, hazards, hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point, refer to
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ASSURED SAFE CATERING,
A MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR HAZARD ANALYSIS.**

