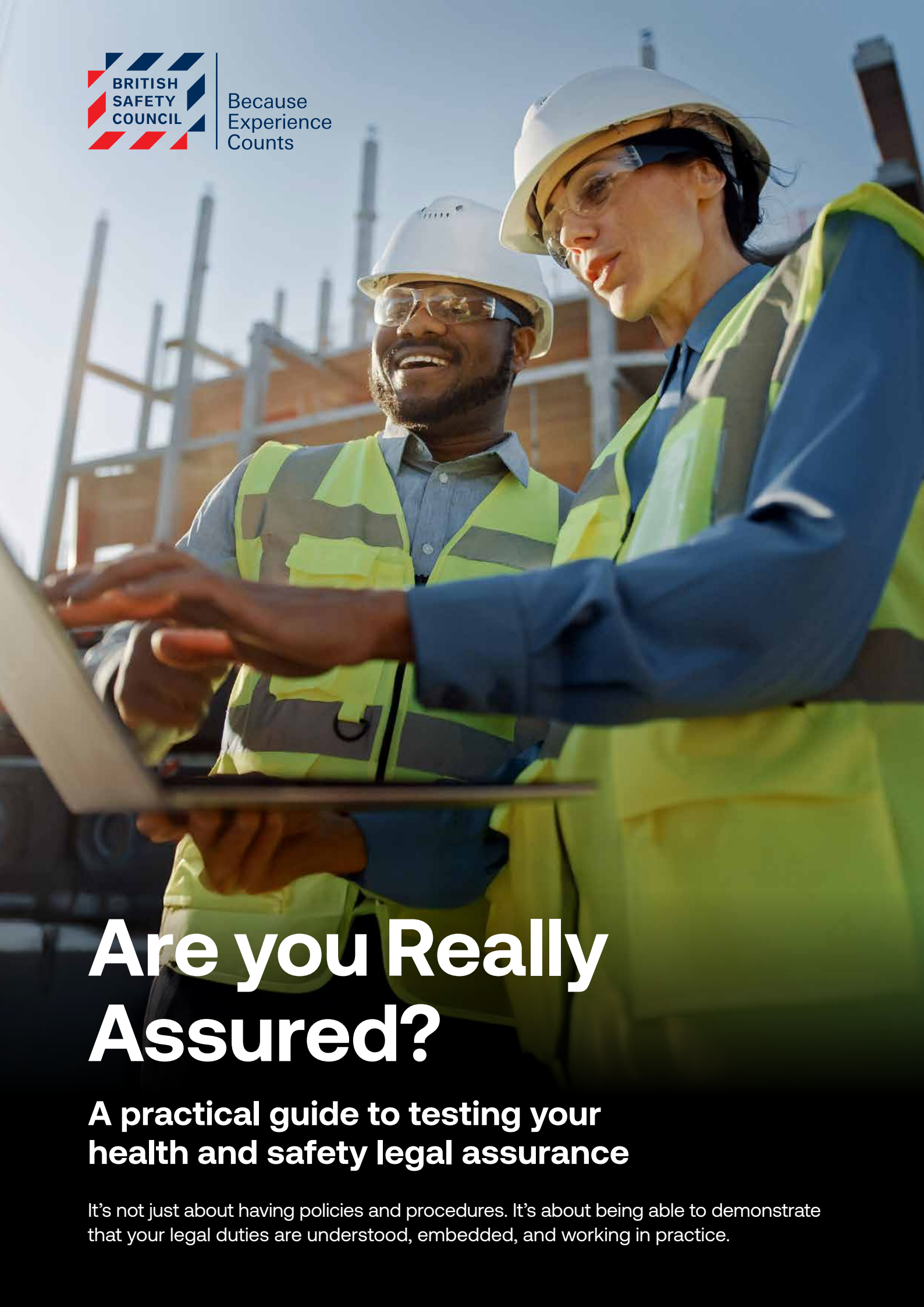


BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL

Because Experience Counts

Are you Really Assured?

A practical guide to testing your health and safety legal assurance

It's not just about having policies and procedures. It's about being able to demonstrate that your legal duties are understood, embedded, and working in practice.

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1. How assured are you?

You may have policies, risk assessments, trained people and established procedures.

But could you demonstrate how your legal duties are identified, who is responsible for them and how you know they are being implemented in practice?

Having arrangements is not the same as having assurance.

2. What does legal assurance mean?

Legal assurance is about having confidence that:

- Relevant legal duties have been identified
- Responsibilities are clear
- Requirements are embedded into your arrangements
- People understand and can fulfil their responsibilities
- There is evidence that arrangements are working
- Gaps are identified and acted upon

It is not simply about checking whether you are compliant. It is about understanding how well your arrangements work in practice and where greater assurance may be needed.



3. The legal assurance reality check

How confident are you in the following?

Choose	YES	PARTLY	NO	DON'T KNOW
1. We know which health and safety legal duties apply to us.				
2. Responsibilities for managing those duties are clear.				
3. Our legal duties are reflected in our policies and procedures.				
4. We know our arrangements are being followed in practice.				
5. People understand their health and safety responsibilities.				
6. We regularly check that our arrangements are working effectively.				
7. We can provide evidence when asked how a legal duty is being managed.				
8. When gaps are found, we know what needs to happen next.				
9. What are your answers telling you?				

Mostly YES

You may have a strong foundation. The next question is whether you are regularly testing that your arrangements remain effective.

Mostly PARTLY

There may be gaps between what is documented, who is responsible and what happens in practice.

Mostly NO or DON'T KNOW

You may benefit from establishing a clearer picture of your current legal duties, responsibilities and arrangements.

There is no pass or fail. The value is in identifying where you have confidence and where you may need to look closer.

4. The assurance gap

ASSESS
What legal duties apply to us?

↓

EMBED
How are they built into our systems and responsibilities?

↓

IMPLEMENT
Are those arrangements working in practice?

↓

ASSURE
How do we know they are effective?

Where is your organisation strongest? And where is the evidence weakest?



5. Six signs you may need a closer look

1. Your legal register is up to date, but people struggle to explain what has changed.
2. Your policies are comprehensive, but implementation varies between teams or sites.
3. Leaders receive health and safety reports but lack visibility of underlying legal risks.
4. You rely heavily on internal checks without independent challenge.
5. Gaps are repeatedly identified through audits, inspections or client assurance requests.
6. You are confident in your systems but struggle to demonstrate that they work in practice.

6. From documentation to demonstration

It's one thing to have...	It's another to demonstrate...
A health and safety policy	How those arrangements work in practice
A legal register	How legal duties are translated into action
Defined responsibilities	That people understand their responsibilities
Procedures	That procedures are followed
Training records	That people are competent
An audit programme	That issues are identified and addressed

This is the difference between having arrangements and being able to demonstrate assurance.

7. When might independent assurance help?

It may be worth taking a closer look if your organisation has:

- Experienced significant growth or change
- Changed responsibilities or ways of working
- Multiple sites or complex operations
- Established systems but limited independent challenge
- Increased external scrutiny from clients, regulators or stakeholders
- A need for greater confidence that arrangements work in practice



8. From confidence to assurance

Do you have a clear picture of how well your health and safety arrangements work in practice?

A Legal Assurance Review from British Safety Council provides an independent, structured assessment of your current health and safety legal assurance position. Through document reviews, conversations with key people and on-site assessments, our consultants help you understand how your legal duties are being managed, what is working well and where improvements may be needed.

You'll receive a clear baseline of your current position, constructive feedback and prioritised recommendations to help you identify the right next steps and strengthen your approach to health and safety.

Take the next step towards greater assurance.

Find out how a Legal Assurance Review can help you gain a clearer understanding of your current position and where to focus your efforts.

Find out more about a Legal Assurance Review



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