



South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council

# The Cutting Edge of Risk Assessment

Presented by Geoff Keerie  
Principal EHO



# Preliminary Objectives

- My brief regarding objectives was quite straight forward:
  1. Be opinionated about the subject
  2. Be controversial
  3. Be a little outrageous
  4. Be mischievous in the process



## Chernobyl April 1986

**Helicopter pilots dropped 5000 tonnes of boron, dolomite, sand, clay and lead on the burning core of the nuclear reactor.**

**200,000 people from all over the Soviet Union were used to clear up the site. (Liquidators) They received high doses of radiation**

**The next 600,000 liquidators received lower levels of radiation**



‘You cannot make a job so safe  
that you cannot do it’





## Cull of Macaque Monkeys at Various Safari Parks

- Over a number of months in 2000 Woburn Safari Park, West Midlands Safari Park and Blair Drummond Safari Park killed all of their macaque monkeys.
- 334 in total were shot.

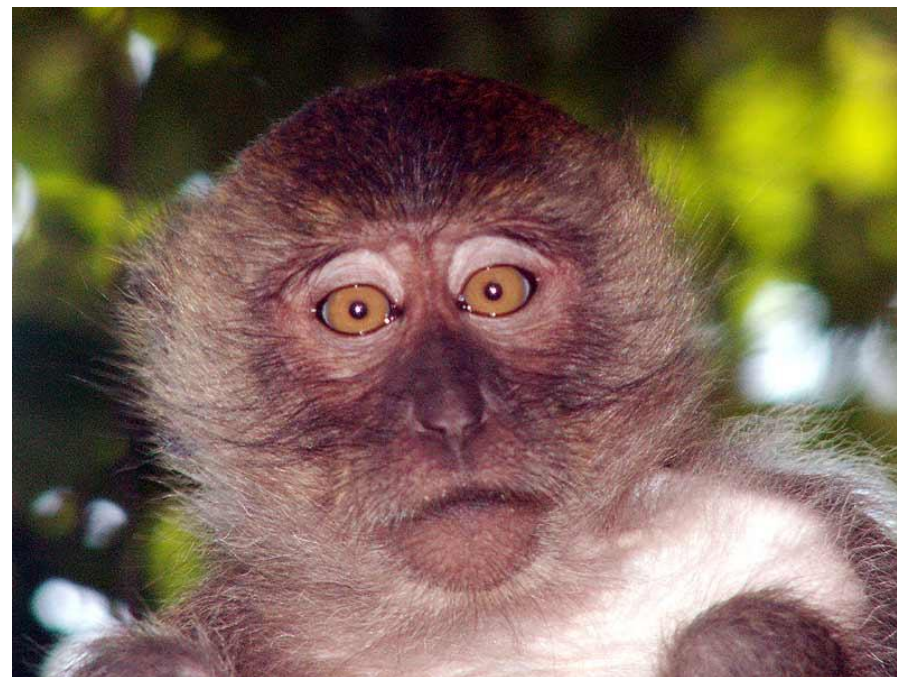




## Cull of Macaque Monkeys at Various Safari Parks cont....

- This occurred due to the death of a young woman laboratory worker in America who was spat at by a macaque monkey who was carrying the Herpes B virus.
- This virus is fatal to us but not the monkeys.

Herpes B is found in wild macaques and most captive colonies





## My question to you is:

- Who did the risk assessments' that resulted in the managers of these parks taking this obviously drastic and final action?
- My second question is weren't these monkey troops safe by position?





## National Trust Farm - E.coli outbreak 2005

- 100's of animals on the farm.
- Undoubtedly, the lambs were the source of the outbreak. Risk being assessed with the assistance of vets and a decision was made to put down the 5 farmyard cats as they had the ability to roam freely around the farm and might carry infection from place to place.
- EHO's were not consulted about this decision. Managers were a little taken aback when I asked them what they intended to do about the other free roaming animals which included rabbits, hedgehogs, deer, foxes and a huge rodent infestation.



Due to examples like this I personally consider the art of 'risk assessment' to be questionable.

If managers or business owners look to consultants for safety advice and they don't like what they are being told then perhaps they should seek the advice of another consultant who may give them a more palatable alternative.



Even though we as a profession have been heavily involved with the concept of risk assessment since 1992 (remember the six pack) I believe the ideology is still unrefined.

- Let's do something 'risky' and then risk assess it.

**I need a volunteer!**





# Questions

- 1. Does HASAWA apply?
- 2. Does the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 apply?
- 3. Does RIDDOR apply?
- 4. Where do you start if you need to do a “Risk Assessment”?



# Questions

- a) How many people can be affected?
- b) Likelihood of them being injured? (certain, likely, probable, evens, possible, unlikely or impossible)
- c) Worst consequences of being injured? (death, permanent disability, temporary disability, permanent minor disability, mild or trivial injury)
- d) How often could they be affected? (constantly, hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, yearly or rarely)



# Control Measures

- Don't do it – seek alternative
- Skilled operative – what knowledge does the operative have that you may not be aware of
- Damage limitation issues – e.g. trained first-aider to hand





# Skilled Operative Issues for consideration

- Repetitive tool movement practice (10,000 times minimum) Parallel with floor
- Quality well balanced tool. Knowledge that the back hand controls tool tip movement
- Critical issue of height adjustment. Good quality footwear, non-slip surface



# Skilled Operative Issues for consideration

- Basic physics – 2” diameter cucumber 90% plus moisture-cutting penetration power low.
- Adult male stomach 12” diameter (or more in this case) 60% moisture. Significantly higher cutting penetration required.
- To cut without sawing motion requires significant power. Therefore, technique must be executed without such movement



- *ONLY* by consulting with the workforce can you get all the facts to assist and facilitate your risk assessment.
- In this instance it is essential to discuss the subject with the operative to get all the facts.
- In my view the same criteria applies to all risk assessment work.





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# Any Questions

