RSK has provided asbestos consultancy and related services to Tesco since 1993. We have undertaken Type 2 surveys on all stores opened before 1992, primarily the Tesco Metro stores.

We have also surveyed and then re-inspected around 2000 stores on a routine basis. Where required, we have undertaken about 300 Type 3 surveys prior to store refresh projects involving the installation of mezzanine floors.

Our largest remediation project for Tesco was designing an eight-week asbestos removal operation conducted in the ceiling void of an operational store while it remained open.

Key to the success of the project was our close communication with Tesco’s health and safety division, and its trading and law team, the shopping centre management and the Health and Safety Executive in order to produce an acceptable scheme.

RSK has followed up its commitment to Tesco by providing asbestos awareness training to all 200 regional maintenance managers over a six-week period.

This training covered legislation, health effects, assessment of contractor method statements and risk assessments, licensed and non-licensed activities, and an “asbestos essentials” task manual. In addition, we have provided training to Tesco’s trading and law team and given them regular updates on changes in legislation from 1996 onwards.

RSK’s pragmatic approach was recognised by Tesco’s senior management when we were commissioned to design a study to reassess an alleged contaminated ceiling void. From this study, we graded the zones within the void by their levels of contamination. This enabled the client to phase the remediation work out of hours over a 12-week period and avoid closing the store. This reduced the costs for the remediation from the expected £1.2 million to about £80,000 and lessened the impact on trading.

Consultancy work and other asbestos-related services are ongoing and continue to go from strength to strength. RSK provides ad-hoc surveys of premises. The annual value to RSK of the Tesco work is approximately £2.5 million.

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