Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) requires operators to demonstrate that they have taken all necessary measures to prevent or mitigate the impact of Major Accidents To The Environment (MATTE). Operators must provide environmental risk assessments as part of their COMAH safety reports.

The COMAH regulations 1999, and their 2005 amendments, are aimed at preventing and mitigating the effects to people and to the environment from major accidents involving dangerous substances. COMAH regulations apply mainly to the chemical processing industry, but also to some storage activities, explosives and onshore oil and gas installations depending on the quantities of dangerous substances being stored or used.

The COMAH regulations require all top tier sites operators to submit site safety reports to the Competent Authority (CA) that demonstrate that the environmental risk for the whole COMAH establishment has been reduced to a tolerable level. Lower tier operators must prepare risk assessments making a demonstration proportionate and appropriate to the environmental risk, and whilst these are not required to be submitted to the CA these need to be available during the CA inspection.

It is a legal requirement that safety reports at top tier COMAH sites are reviewed when changes are made on site or at least every five years.

What we offer
ABB offer to undertake COMAH Environmental Risk Assessments (ERA) and MATTE reviews for site safety reports in accordance with relevant guidance; including the latest CDOIF guideline on environmental risk tolerability. In undertaking the ERA, ABB will complete the following four step process:

1. Confirm the environmental receptors in the vicinity of the site
2. Identify all possible scenarios which could impact upon the receptors
3. Qualitatively screen out all those scenarios which are not considered to be credible and give rise to a MATTE
4. Apply the latest guidance for assessing environmental risk tolerability for COMAH establishments is full to all credible scenarios

ABB will undertake a full desk based study of available environmental information for the site in order to complete step 1. For steps 2 and 3 ABB will conduct a site based Environmental Hazard Review (EHR).
Following the completion of the ERA, ABB will determine what (if any) additional measures are required to demonstrate that the risk has been reduced to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP). More detailed risk assessments can also be carried out where necessary. ABB can also provide support to resolve recommendations and implement any actions arising from the ERA.

Benefits
- Compliance with legislation
- Assurance that process safety hazards are effectively managed
- ‘One-stop shop’ with expertise in process safety and environmental risk
- Creating a document that is suitable for release into the public domain

Why ABB?
ABB have been involved in COMAH from the very beginning and have completed many successful assessments for a number of the UK’s top and lower tier installations from chemical manufacturing sites to tank farm installations. As a result of this we:

- Have vast experience of undertaking ERA’s and MATTE reviews to support COMAH Safety Reports for COMAH establishment
- Understand what the CA requires of a COMAH safety report and its’s relevance to our client’s situations and needs
- Have in house process safety engineers and environmental consultants, so can assist with the preparation of the entire safety report
- Are able to use ABB’s extensive knowledge of the oil and gas, petrochemical, chemicals, consumer and pharmaceutical industries
- We have all the specialist skills required to collect, analyse and present to inform decision-making processes

Our consultants have a variety of environmental industry backgrounds and make pragmatic technical judgements based on their experience. It’s an approach that ensures cost-effective, practical-to-implement solutions which work.