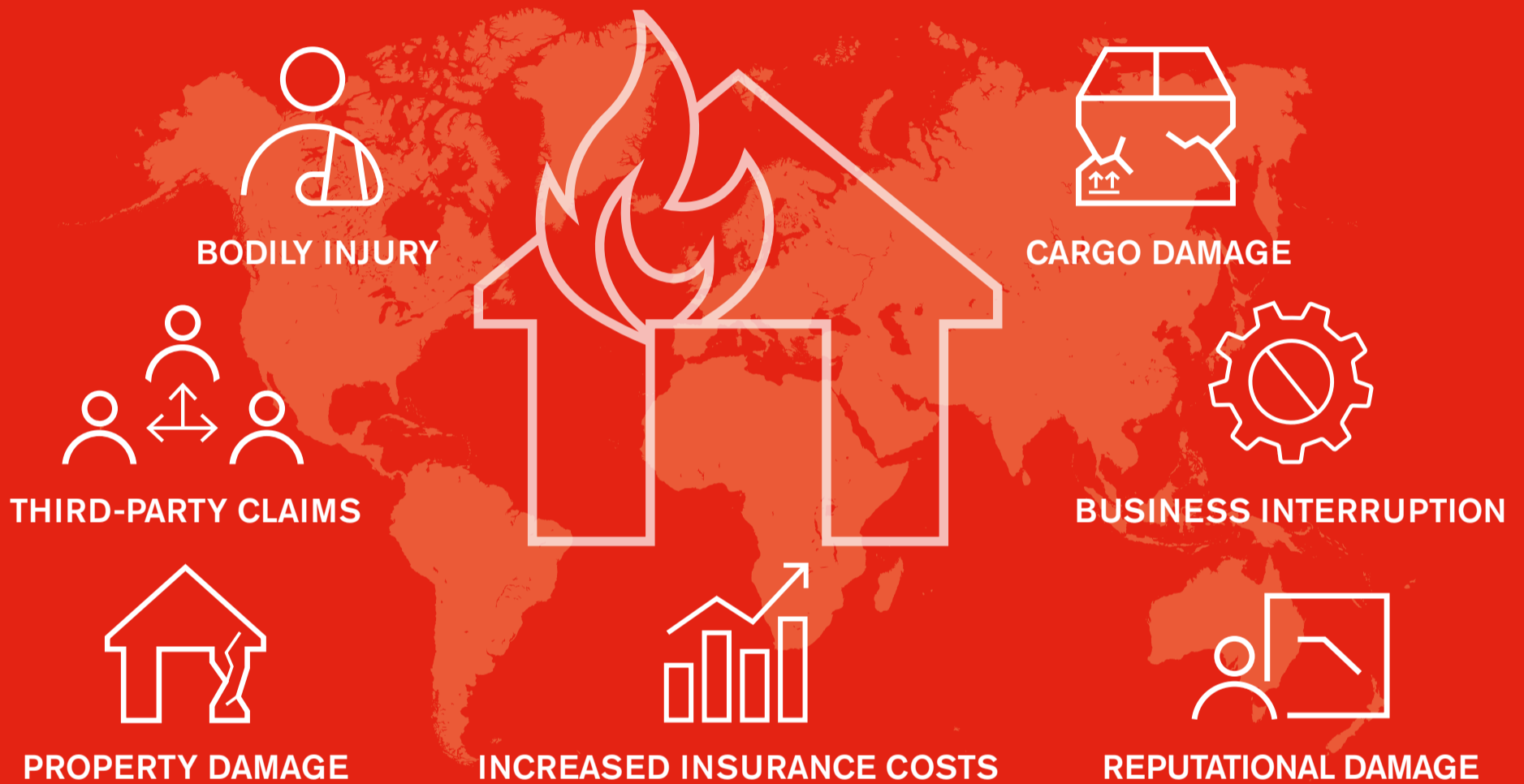


Preventing warehouse fires

Are you taking the necessary precautions to protect your premises?

Many incidents can be avoided entirely by periodic risk assessments, effective maintenance and training, enforcement of policy and good housekeeping.

What are the risks?



How can you mitigate these risks?

HANDLING EQUIPMENT

Most handling equipment and vehicle fires are caused by hydraulic leaks or electrical faults.

- Procure well-designed equipment and maintain with quality spare parts
- Install fire suppression technology in engine compartments and electrical cubicles
- Implement predictive and preventative maintenance
- Do not leave equipment charging unattended

HAZARDOUS CARGOES

- Follow regulatory and manufacturer requirements for the handling of dangerous goods, taking into account ignition point, chemical stability, proper storage and bulk cargo risks
- Ensure staff are trained and competent in dangerous goods matters – this is a mandatory requirement of the IMDG Code
- Conduct thorough due diligence – know your customer and ensure that cargo is correctly declared

- Establish plans for monitoring and, as necessary, safe removal/disposal of goods that have been uncollected, misdeclared or stored for an extended period of time

FIRE RISK AND RESPONSE ASSESSMENT

- Appoint a Fire Control Officer and consider an annual external assessor to conduct thorough risk assessments including sources of ignition, fire escape routes, fire response and emergency response times
- Enforce a no smoking policy
- Regularly test and review the fire alarm, fire detection and firefighting equipment and placement, water pressure and flow and water pumps, thermographic inspections of electrical installations and PAT testing
- Record preventive work completed
- Install thermal cameras to detect fires
- Ensure fire doors remain closed
- Avoid (through use of LED) or protect lighting that generates heat

ARSON

According to the National Fire and Protection Association (US) around 15% of warehouse fires are intentionally started.

- Implement strong security (such as perimeter fences, lighting, CCTV, access controls)
- Install thermal camera technology to detect fires and people
- Monitor all third parties entering the site
- Carry out due diligence and screening on all staff and contractors
- Remove readily available fuel sources such as industrial refuse bins and pallets to prevent opportunist attacks

WATCH OUT FOR RED FLAGS

- Hazardous cargoes – adhere to manufacturers' storage instructions
- Be alert to the risks of misdeclared shipments
- Assess security vulnerabilities
- Ensure all property and equipment is well maintained
- Maintain good housekeeping

