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Insurance and Care NSW

# Hazard Identification & Risk Management Procedure

## Purpose

This document outlines the procedure for effectively identifying hazards, assessing the associated risks, implementing appropriate control measures and monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the controls.
This procedure is intended to assist with:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks with the view to preventing incidents and injuries
- ensuring consultation and communication with stakeholders about hazards and the potential risks that may affect safety in the workplace
- complying with relevant legislative requirements for hazard identification, assessing risks and implementing effective risk control measures
- demonstrating commitment to continual improvement of workplace health and safety.

## Scope and definitions

Everyone has a responsibility to report identified workplace hazards to ensure that appropriate actions can be taken to prevent incidents and injuries.

A **hazard** is a situation or thing that has the potential to cause harm to a person, the environment or property.

**Risk** is the likelihood of something happening that will cause harm (death, injury or illness, property damage, pollution). Risks are expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of the event (the harm that could be caused) and the associated likelihood of occurrence.

Effective hazard and risk management involves five key steps:

1. Identify hazards - find out what could cause harm.
2. Assess risks - understand the likelihood of a hazard causing harm and how serious it could be.
3. Control risks - implement the most effective control measures that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances.
4. Review control measures to ensure they are working as planned and that the controls implemented have not created any further hazards.
5. Develop written Safe Work Instructions (SWIs) where needed to manage the hazards.

## Responsibilities and Accountabilities

| Position | Responsibility/Accountability |
|---|---|
| Business owner/ Manager/ Supervisor/ Safety Coordinator (if applicable) | • Ensure that all employees are aware of the requirements of this procedure<br>• Ensure appropriate immediate action is taken where a reported hazard presents a significant clear and present risk of an injury, damage or loss event<br>• In consultation with key stakeholders, recommend reasonable actions to prevent any incidents of injury, damage or loss<br>• Ensure appropriate feedback is provided to the report originator in a timely manner<br>• Report hazards<br>• Arrange risk assessment activities as required<br>• Monitor the progress of the implemented improvement initiatives<br>• Develop and maintain a system for the effective identification and reporting of hazards and improvement opportunities<br>• Provide guidance and support to other workers relating to hazard identification and control activities |
| Safety Representatives (if applicable) | • Participate in risk assessment activities and the implementation of preventative measures and improvement initiatives as required<br>• Provide feedback on the progress of risk treatment and improvement initiative implementation to represented employees as required<br>• Communicate key hazards and preventative measures to employees as required |
| Employees | • If safe to do so take immediate action to prevent any incidents of injury, damage or loss<br>• Report all hazards to their supervisor/manager<br>• Participate in risk assessment activities and the implementation of preventative measures and improvement initiatives as required |

## Procedure

Our procedure for hazard identification, risk assessment and risk controls involves 6 key steps:

1. **Hazard Identification** (mandatory)
2. **Risk Assessment** (mandatory)
3. **Risk Controls** (mandatory)
4. **Risk Control** Monitoring and Review (mandatory)
5. **Safe Work** Instructions (if needed)
6. **Risk Register** (recommended).

## Step 1 How to identify hazards

Hazards can be identified in many ways, including:

- Workplace inspections;
- Observation of the work environment;
- Reviewing available information from regulators including codes of practice, industry associations and technical specialists;
- Obtaining information about equipment, plant, products and processes, such as safety data sheets and operating manuals; and
- Analysing records of workplace incidents, investigations and other safety reporting.

Hazard identification is consultative in nature where possible, drawing on the experience, knowledge and ideas of workers not only to identify hazards but also to assess their risk and choose effective controls. Physical hazards should be identified and removed as soon as possible to prevent them posing a risk.

Hazards should be reported to

The hazard identification and risk management process should be applied to both physical and psychological risks. Psychosocial hazards that may cause psychological or physical injury or illness should be reported to

Examples of common hazards are in Appendix 1.

## Step 2 How to assess risks

Risk assessment is a proactive approach to hazard identification and risk management. It is a planned, systematic process that aims to identify hazards so their risks can be assessed, and controls implemented to minimise harm.

Risk Assessments are used to understand the likelihood of a hazard causing harm and how serious that harm could be. Effective risk assessment allows us to prioritise actions such as:

- allocation of resources (human, financial, technical and infrastructure);
- training of employees;
- implementation of risk control measures;
- emergency response actions;
- monitoring and measurement processes (including audits and inspections); and
- reporting.

A risk assessment involves considering what could happen if someone is exposed to a hazard and the likelihood of it happening.

A risk assessment can help you, as a business with legal obligations to maintain a safe workplace, to determine:

- how severe a risk is
- whether any existing control measures are effective
- what action you should take to control the risk
- how urgently the action needs to be taken.

Many hazards and their associated risks are well known and have well established and accepted control measures. In these situations, the second step to formally assess the risk is not required. If after identifying a hazard you already know the risk and how to control it effectively, simply implement the controls.

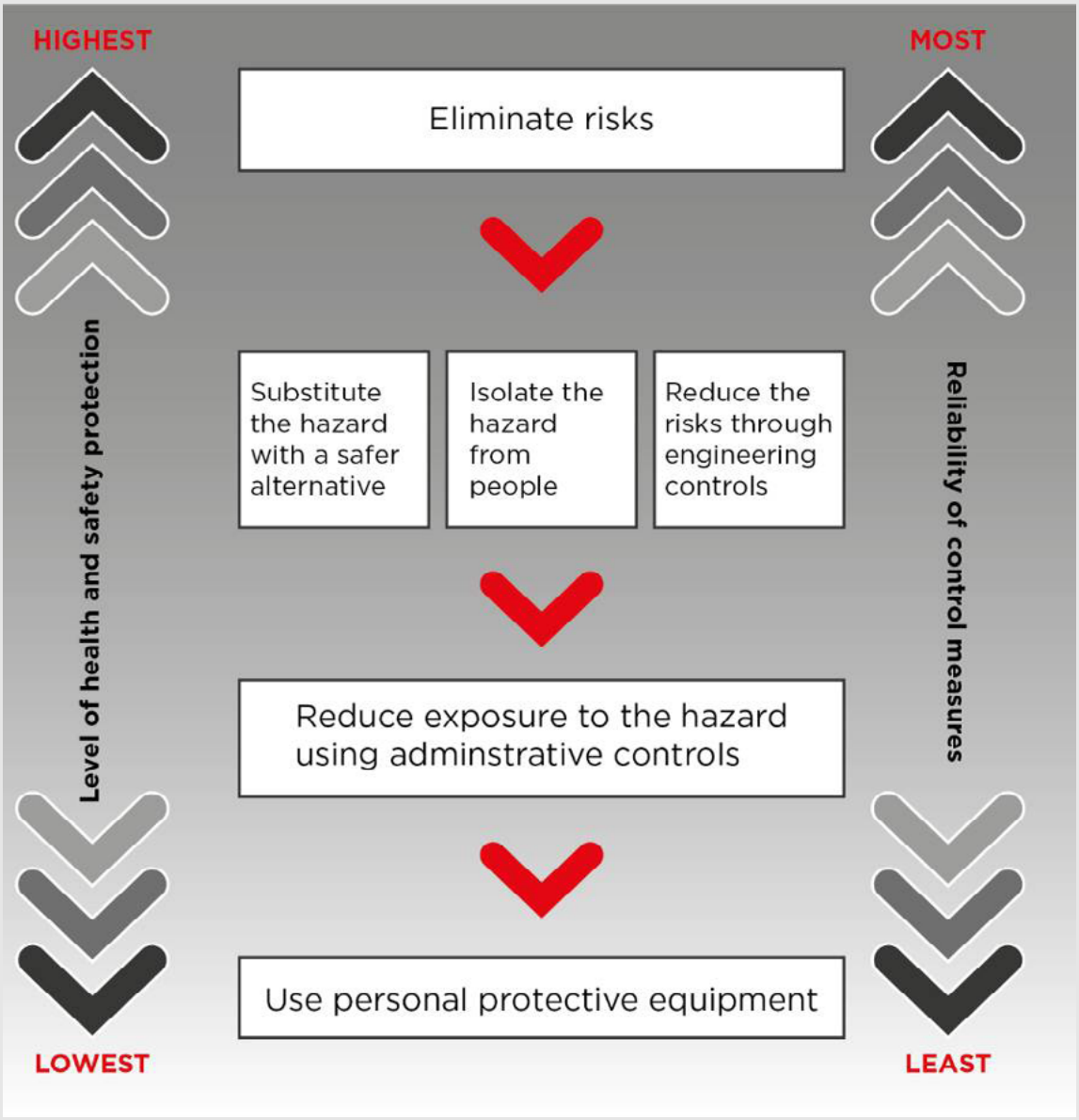
A risk assessment can be undertaken with varying degrees of detail depending on the type of hazard and the information, data and resources that you have available. It can be as simple as a discussion with your workers or involve specific risk analysis tools and techniques developed for specific risks or recommended by safety professionals. For some complex situations, expert or specialist advice may be useful when conducting a risk assessment. (Reference: SafeWork NSW Code of Practice How to manage work health and safety risks).

## Step 3 How to control risks

[ ] shall ensure that once a risk is assessed and if the hazard and risk cannot be eliminated, appropriate risk controls are implemented to eliminate, or reduce so far as practicable, the risks associated with work activities. Safety risks must be controlled using the Hierarchy of Controls as follows:

1. Elimination
2. Substitution
3. Isolation
4. Engineering Controls
5. Administrative Controls
6. Personal Protective Equipment.

A combination of the above measures may be implemented to ensure the risk is minimised to as low as reasonably practicable.



## Step 4 How to monitor and review risk controls

Managing work health and safety risks is an ongoing process that needs attention over time, but particularly when any changes affect work activities.

Risk control measures will be reviewed regularly to ensure they are working as planned. If they are not or if there is doubt about the effectiveness of risk controls, further decisions about risk controls will be made.

## Step 5 Safe Work Instructions (SWIs)

SWIs shall be developed for planned, routine tasks and activities which pose a high level of risk to employees such as the operation of machinery.

SWIs define the minimum requirements for conducting work safely. They provide employees with the information to perform a job properly and define risk controls which must be implemented to perform the job safely.

Where hazards and risks are identified in the future, relevant control measures will be added to existing SWIs or new SWIs will be developed.

## Step 6 Risk Register

A risk register that identifies the hazards, what action needs to be taken, who will be responsible for taking the action and by when, should be developed.

The risk register should be reviewed at least on an annual basis or when new or modified activities, products or services become apparent. Reviews shall be undertaken by appropriate personnel and records of reviews should be maintained.

# Appendix 1 - Workplace Hazards

## Types of common hazards at work

From the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks.

- Manual tasks
- Gravity
- Psychosocial
- Electricity
- Machinery and equipment
- Hazardous chemicals
- Extreme temperatures
- Noise
- Radiation
- Biological

## Common psychosocial hazards at work

From the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice: Managing psychosocial hazards at work.

- Role overload (high workloads or job demands)
- Role underload (low workloads or job demands)
- Exposure to traumatic events
- Role conflict or lack of role clarity
- Low job control
- Conflict or poor workplace relationships between workers and their supervisors and managers and co-workers
- Poor support from supervisors and managers
- Poor co-worker support
- Workplace violence
- Bullying
- Harassment including sexual harassment
- Inadequate reward and recognition
- Hazardous physical working environments
- Remote or isolated work
- Poor procedural justice (processes for making decisions)
- Poor organisational change consultation