BSBWHS521
Ensure a safe workplace for a work area
Release 1

Learner guide

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Version control and modification history

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Release 1, version 1.1	December 2019	First release
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Contents

Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *BSBWHS521 Ensure a safe workplace for a work area*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at:
www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Icon	Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
	Learning content	• Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
	Examples	• These highlight key learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
	Practice tasks	• Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
	Summaries	• Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
	Learning checkpoints	• There is a learning checkpoint at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Foundation skills

As you complete learning using this guide, you will be developing the foundation skills relevant for this unit. Foundation skills are the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills and the employability skills required for participation in modern workplaces and contemporary life.

The following table provides definitions for each foundation skill.

Foundation skill area	Foundation skill description
Reading	• Organises, evaluates and critiques ideas and information from WHS laws, policies, procedures and programs
Writing	• Produces WHS policies, procedures and programs using appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structure and conventions • Records WHS decisions according to organisational requirements
Oral Communication	• Presents and seeks information from others using structure and language suitable for the audience • Provides information about WHS policies and procedures and on resolution of WHS issues, varying the level of technical vocabulary to suit the audience
Numeracy	• Selects from, and applies, an expanding range of mathematical and problem-solving strategies in identifying financial and human resources required to support WHS requirements
Navigate the world of work	• Monitors adherence to legal and regulatory rights and responsibilities for self and others in relation to WHS • Develops, implements and reviews WHS-related policies, procedures and processes according to legislative and organisational requirements
Interact with others	• Plays a lead role in situations requiring effective collaboration, demonstrating the ability to guide discussions and negotiate agreeable outcomes • Provides feedback to others in forms they can understand and use
Get the work done	• Develops plans or processes to manage relatively complex WHS management tasks, with an awareness of how they contribute to operational and strategic goals • Uses systematic and analytical processes, setting goals, gathering relevant information, and identifying and evaluating options against agreed criteria • Considers whether, and how, others should be involved, using consultative or collaborative processes as an integral part of the decision-making process • Uses digital systems and tools to enter, store and retrieve relevant information

What do you already know?

Use the following table to identify what you may already know. This may assist you to work out what to focus on in your learning.

Topic	Key outcome		Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 1: Establish a WHS management system in a work area	1A	Locating and communicating WHS policies	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1B	Identifying duty holders and their responsibilities	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	1C	Determining resources and approval processes for a WHS management system	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 2: Establish and maintain consultative arrangements in a work area	2A	Setting up and maintaining consultative arrangements	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2B	Resolving issues raised through participation and consultation	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	2C	Informing workers about participation and consultation outcomes	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
Topic 3: Establish and maintain procedures for risk management	3A	Developing procedures for hazard identification and risk control	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3B	Selecting and implementing risk controls	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3C	Monitoring and reviewing risk controls	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident
	3D	Seeking expert WHS advice	❑ Confident ❑ Basic understanding ❑ Not confident

Topic	Key outcome		Rate your confidence in each section
Topic 4: Evaluate and maintain a WHS management system	4A	Developing and providing a WHS induction and training program	❏ Confident ❏ Basic understanding ❏ Not confident
	4B	Maintaining WHS records to identify patterns of injury and illness	❏ Confident ❏ Basic understanding ❏ Not confident
	4C	Evaluating the WHSMS	❏ Confident ❏ Basic understanding ❏ Not confident
	4D	Implementing improvements to the WHSMS	❏ Confident ❏ Basic understanding ❏ Not confident
	4E	Ensuring compliance with WHS legislation	❏ Confident ❏ Basic understanding ❏ Not confident

Topic 1
Establish a WHS management system in a work area

Work health and safety (WHS) is a principle that means every worker should have their health, safety and wellbeing protected while at work or performing work-related duties.

This principle exists all over the world; however, not every country has the laws to enforce it.

In Australia, a range of Commonwealth, state and territory laws exist to uphold the principle of WHS, ensuring the basic rights of people are preserved in the work environment.

These WHS laws provide protection for all Australian workers and place legal obligations on employers and others in the supply chain.

In this topic you will learn about:

1A   Locating and communicating WHS policies
1B   Identifying duty holders and their responsibilities
1C   Determining resources and approval processes for a WHS management system

1A Locating and communicating WHS policies

The WHS policy is the driver for achieving strong performance in health and safety in the workplace.

It is also the starting point for an effective WHS management system. The policy is the statement of intent from senior management that shows that the organisation has made a commitment to the health and safety of its workers and other people that are impacted by the business operations.

Under WHS law, every workplace needs to have detailed WHS policies and procedures that workers have access to and can understand. These documents should be based on the latest laws, relevant to the state or territory that the employer is based in.

Model WHS laws

The model WHS laws began in January 2012 as part of the national harmonisation process, which aimed to bring Australia together under one uniform set of WHS laws.

It includes common standards and legal duties for the people involved in the supply chain.

Led by Safe Work Australia, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth), the *Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011* (Cth) and a set of model codes of practice were developed. Currently, all states and territories have adopted the model laws, except Western Australia and Victoria.

Here is a list of WHS legislation in each state and territory.

Commonwealth	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth)
ACT	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (ACT)
NSW	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW)
NT	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NT)
Queensland	*Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Qld)
SA	*Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA)
Tasmania	*Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (Tas)
Victoria	*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic)
WA	*Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* (WA)

Note: For simplicity, all health and safety laws, including those governing Victoria and WA, will be referred to as WHS laws, unless otherwise specified.

Your role in relation to WHS

In your role as a manager, you must be aware of and know how to access current information about WHS laws.

This includes the relevant laws, regulations and codes of practice, together with your organisation's health and safety policies and procedures.

The WHS laws are made of three main parts:

1. The WHS Act
2. The WHS Regulations
3. Approved codes of practice

Keeping up to date with this information is essential in ensuring your workplace is safe and free from risks of harm to your workers, as well as other people who may be impacted by the operations of your business.

As a manager, you have a legal duty to provide current and accurate information to your work team about their WHS rights and obligations.

WHS legal requirements

The WHS Act describes the legal requirements for a safe and healthy workplace.

In particular, it outlines the requirements and duties of key parties in relation to health and safety, and the penalties for non-compliance.

Within the Act, workers and others are given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks arising from work, so far as is reasonably practicable. The WHS Act defines an employer's legal requirements.

WHS legal requirements
• Managing risks to workers' health and safety, including risk assessment and control processes
• Protecting people at work from injury and illness, including psychological injury
• Protecting the health and safety of the public in workplaces
• Consulting with workers and encouraging participation in maintaining health and safety, including establishing health and safety committees
• Providing rehabilitation and maximum recovery for injured workers
• Providing training in safe operating procedures
• Having procedures for identifying workplace hazards
• Having emergency and evacuation procedures
• Having requirements for maintenance and confidentiality of records of occupational injury and disease

WHS Regulations

The WHS Regulations support the WHS Act by stating more specific requirements and duties that apply to different areas of work, including those classed as high-risk.

Some regulations, such as first aid and emergency response, apply to all workplaces, while others, such as asbestos and working at heights, apply only to specific industries or work tasks.

Regulations explain how some duties under the WHS Act must be met and the key administrative processes that employers must have in place.

Regulations to maintain a safe workplace
• Identifying hazards
• Performing risk assessments for workplace hazards
• Specifying controls and/or processes to minimise hazards
• Representing and participating with workers on health and safety issues
• Maintaining safe plant and structures
• Monitoring hazardous work involving noise, hazardous tasks, confined spaces, risk of falls, demolition work or electrical safety
• Monitoring requirements for licensing and accreditation
• Monitoring safety in construction work or mining
• Monitoring safety when working with asbestos or hazardous materials and chemicals

The following sites provide further information:

- http://aspirelr.link/whs-act-australia
- http://aspirelr.link/model-whs-regulations
- http://aspirelr.link/whs-in-business

Codes of practice

Codes of practice address specific issues related to health and safety risks in the workplace.

They provide detailed practical guidance on how to comply with requirements under the WHS Act and Regulations.

Codes are not regarded as mandatory; however, they are the minimum standards that should be followed by employers and managers.

The guidelines contained in each code should be followed unless a better standard can be implemented by the employer.

Developed through consultation	• Codes of practice are developed through consultation between industry representatives, persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs), workers, special interest groups, government agencies and professional associations. • They provide practical guidance on how organisations can meet the standards contained in the WHS Act and Regulations. • Each code of practice must be approved separately in a state or territory jurisdiction in order to have legal effect.
Not enforceable by law	• Although they are not enforceable by law, codes of practice should be followed unless there is an alternative course of action that achieves the same or better standards. • PCBUs (employers) and workers fail to meet their obligations if they do not adopt a method as safe as, or safer than, what is set out in the code. • If an organisation applies the code of practice, it is likely they will be deemed to have complied with the obligations prescribed by the WHS Act.

Areas covered	• Some of the areas included in codes of practice are:
	  – compliance information
	  – practical guidance for people who have WHS duties
	  – explanations of effective ways to identify and manage risks
	  – control of hazardous substances in the workplace
	  – workplace amenities
	  – workplace consultation
	  – falls in construction.

Further information	• Information on the codes of practice that apply to your industry and workplace is available on the websites of your relevant industry association and WHS regulator in each state and territory.

Safe Work Australia

Safe Work Australia has developed guidance material to provide advice to duty holders on how to apply legislation and meet their obligations.

The organisation also provides information on WHS laws to assist in compliance with the Act in each state and territory. In specific areas, guidance material is provided to cover certain groups, such as volunteer workers. Guidance material may consist of factsheets, information sheets and guidelines that can be used to support the WHS management system, policy and procedures.

For example, the *Guide to the Model Work Health and Safety Regulations* provides an overview of WHS Regulations and cross-references the information to other relevant Regulations. This guide is designed to help identify duties and rights that apply within the regulations.

You can read the *Guide to the Model Work Health and Safety Regulations* at: http://aspirelr.link/model-whs-regulations.

Duty of care

The model laws describe the principle of duty of care that applies to all employers, workers and other members of the supply chain.

Duty of care means that any person who has an impact on the conduct of a workplace must:

- anticipate possible causes of injury and illness
- take reasonable steps to either eliminate or minimise the risk of harm.

Every person in the workplace must play a part in keeping the workplace safe. They must also ensure their own behaviour does not place others at risk of harm, injury or illness.

PCBUs have the primary duty of care to develop and maintain a healthy and safe workplace, which includes ensuring workers, visitors and others are safe from harm.

Health and safety regulators

In each state or territory, a principal regulator exists to administer the WHS laws in their jurisdiction.

Each regulator provides up-to-date information to employers, managers and workers to ensure they are aware of the laws that must be followed, as well as their rights and obligations in the workplace.

This should be your first point of reference in accessing quality information about WHS matters.

In addition, Safe Work Australia provides excellent resources to help you understand your role and responsibilities in maintaining a safe workplace.

You can access their website at: http://aspirelr.link/safeworkaustralia.

Here is a list of WHS regulators.

Commonwealth	Comcare
	http://aspirelr.link/comcare
ACT	WorkSafe ACT
	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-act
NSW	SafeWork NSW
	http://aspirelr.link/safework-nsw
NT	NT WorkSafe
	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-nt
QLD	Workplace Health and Safety Queensland
	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-qld
SA	SafeWork SA
	http://aspirelr.link/safework-sa

TAS	WorkSafe Tasmania http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-tas
VIC	WorkSafe Victoria http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-vic
WA	WorkSafe WA http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-wa

Applying WHS laws in the work environment

A key part of your role in maintaining a safe workplace is to ensure the WHS laws are correctly applied in the work environment.

Well-written policies and procedures will explain how the laws should be carried out on a day-to-day basis. They should explain the responsibilities of workers, supervisors and managers and describe the safest way to complete everyday work tasks.

As a manager, you need to make sure all policies and procedures are current and reflect the requirements of the WHS Act, Regulations and codes of practice.

You must also ensure workers are aware of and are following their duties under the WHS policies and procedures, to ensure these laws are correctly implemented in the organisation.

Here are some points to consider when applying WHS policies, procedures and laws.

Adopting new WHS legislation
• Include WHS matters as well as updates in regular team meetings.
• Check that policies and standard operating procedures are up-to-date and reflect any changes to WHS laws.
• Distribute communications to all workers advising of their duties under the WHS policies and procedures.
• Provide training and refresher training in areas of WHS impacted by the WHS policies, procedures and laws.
• Update workplace signage and other information to reflect the any changes to WHS policies, procedures and laws.

Communicating WHS information

Under the WHS laws, a primary duty of the PCBU is to inform and update workers on all matters that could impact their health and safety.

You are required to ensure this legal duty is carried out by:

- conducting induction sessions
- providing information to workers on new policies, procedures or legislation
- updating the organisation's WHS policies and procedures manual
- ensuring all workers are familiar with the procedures.

You need to use effective communication skills to make sure all WHS information is clear and easy to understand. Consider the following points.

Audience

Think about the audience, including:

- what they should know
- their language, literacy and numeracy skills
- the technology limitations that may influence the way you disseminate information.

Diversity

Consider the diversity in the group and make sure you cater for the different needs of individuals. Workers should have an opportunity to clarify any information that is communicated. Follow up with them afterwards to ensure the communication has been successful.

Specific issues

Be aware of specific issues in your organisation. Here are two examples:

- An office environment may focus on working ergonomically, ensuring aspects such as noise and air quality are monitored and ensuring walkways are free from hazards and risks.
- A factory may focus on ensuring that all workers wear correct personal protective equipment (PPE).

Here are some examples of how to effectively communicate WHS information to workers.

Induction

- Delegate a capable team member or supervisor to provide a health and safety induction for all new workers.
- Include WHS information in organisational induction documents.
- Create an induction checklist to ensure all aspects of WHS have been covered for new workers.

Training

- Arrange training or demonstration sessions for new equipment or hazardous workplace tasks, such as manual handling.
- Provide regular refresher training to ensure worker skills and knowledge are current and appropriate under WHS laws.

Meetings and presentations

- Provide regular reminders of WHS issues at team meetings.
- Schedule a weekly WHS meeting with all team members, or set aside 15 minutes as part of the regular team meeting.
- Arrange meetings to discuss and reinforce specific aspects, such as identifying hazards or completing an incident report.
- Run a full monthly WHS meeting with an electronic presentation and a guest speaker to explain a WHS issue.

Written and visual information

- Request health and safety representatives to prepare booklets that address specific issues for the work group.
- Include WHS information in company newsletters or bulletins.
- Arrange for relevant WHS information to be prepared visually (for example, posters of emergency procedures or how to contact an ambulance).
- Regularly send internal emails, memos and intranet notices to remind workers of their health and safety obligations.

WHS policies and procedures

Workplace policies aim to show, in clear and simple terms, what the organisation plans to achieve.

WHS policies outline how management will achieve workplace safety, along with the specific responsibilities of the PCBU, the organisation's officers, management and its workers.

Here is an outline of what organisations need to include in their policies.

Statement

A statement committing the organisation to providing a safe and healthy work environment

Objectives

Objectives of the policy, including how WHS will be integrated into all organisational activities on a daily basis

Strategies

Strategies the organisation will use to achieve its WHS objectives, such as:

- emergency evacuation procedures
- identifying and reporting hazards
- WHS audits
- reporting incidents

Roles and responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of key positions, such as health and safety officers, managers and supervisors with specific accountability for implementing health and safety practices and procedures

Function of the health and safety committee (HSC)

The function of the HSC, and a commitment to consultation and cooperation between management and workers

Review processes

Review processes for assessing the policy's effectiveness, stating a commitment to regularly monitor and review the policy to ensure health and safety in the workplace

A well-written WHS policy and procedure will clearly explain the principles that need to be followed and the standards that need to be upheld.

They will explain what needs to happen if an incident occurs in a variety of topics or areas.

Areas covered by WHS policy and procedures

- Hazard identification and management
- Induction, training and supervision
- Incident reporting and investigation
- Consultation and participation
- Emergency planning and response
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Smoking
- Bullying and harassment
- Manual handling
- Environmental management
- Safety procedures relating to visitors and contractors

Example

WHS policy and procedures

With the changes in WHS legislation, EZY Construction must develop a policy to ensure the business is legally compliant. Its general policy statement broadly covers its responsibility to ensure the health and safety of all workers, whether directly employed or visiting the organisation. The policy outlines resources that will be made available to ensure compliance with the WHS Act and Regulations.

The policy includes information about the health and safety committee (HSC) and the committee membership, which includes a PCBU representative, construction union representative and worker representative. It outlines how the HSC will make decisions and how often the committee will meet. It also states who has the authority to action responses to the committee's recommendations.

The WHS procedures outline how the policy will be implemented, including:

- training and education
- work design and standard work methods
- changes to work methods, procedures and practice
- safety rules, including penalties
- emergency procedures and drills
- provision of health and safety equipment, services and facilities
- workplace inspections and evaluations
- reporting and recording incidents, accidents, injuries and illnesses.

Record-keeping requirements

PCBUs must maintain and monitor records of the health and safety of workers and others who enter the workplace.

Procedures should be in place for collecting, filing, storing, retrieving and disposing of WHS records. All WHS records must be readily available for workers who deal with hazardous materials or substances.

The WHS Regulations set out the time frames for how long certain records need to be kept for. The Regulations should be checked to ensure your workplace record-keeping procedures are in line with the requirements of the WHS Act.

WHS records should include the following:

- Risk control plan
- First-aid register for minor injuries
- Register of incidents
- Workplace incident report forms
- Hazard report forms
- Hazard checklists and audit results
- Workers' compensation report forms
- Records of WHS consultation and committee meetings
- Incident investigation reports
- Safety data sheets (SDSs)

Reporting notifiable incidents

A PCBU must report to the regulator as soon as they become aware of any work-related death, serious injury or illness, or other serious incident.

Reporting an incident must be done by the fastest possible means, which is usually by phone or in writing, such as an email.

If the regulator is notified by phone, they may request a written notice of the incident from the PCBU. The written report must be provided within 48 hours of the request by the regulator. A record of each notifiable incident must be kept by the PCBU for at least five years.

Here are some examples of notifiable incidents.

Notifiable incidents

- Incident resulting in death
- Incident resulting in immediate hospital treatment as an in-patient
- Incident requiring immediate treatment for serious injuries, such as amputation, scalping, spinal injury, loss of a bodily function or serious laceration, burn, head injury or eye injury
- Incident requiring medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- Dangerous incidents, such as a fire, uncontrolled escape of gas, electric shock, inrush of water, mud or gas, collapse of shoring or excavation, or collapse of a structure

Privacy and confidentiality

The WHS laws state that PCBUs need to report and store a range of information relating to workers, including health, fitness for duty and other medical information.

As a manager, you must be mindful of your obligations under WHS laws, as well as the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). Ensure you understand the purpose for which information is obtained.

Depending on the organisation, worker records may be stored and maintained in a human resource management system or files in the administration or payroll area. Ensure that records pertaining to workers are stored securely and are only made available to appropriate personnel in the workplace for the purpose for which they were collected.

Any policies and procedures regarding worker WHS records should include considerations for privacy, protection and security of personal and sensitive information.

Practice task 1

Question 1

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

a) Codes of practice are mandatory and must be followed in all situations as required by law.　　✶ Yes　　✶ No

b) WHS laws mandate that all employers implement systems that ensure their workplaces are safe, so far as is reasonably practicable.　　✶ Yes　　✶ No

c) Duty of care means that any person who has an impact on the conduct of a workplace must take reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the risk of harm.　　✶ Yes　　✶ No

d) The WHS laws require PCBUs to retain WHS records, including any notifiable incidents.　　✶ Yes　　✶ No

e) The primary duty of workers is to apply and adapt WHS laws to meet the unique requirements of their workplace.　　✶ Yes　　✶ No

Question 2

What can you do to make sure your work team applies the WHS laws to ensure their ongoing safety?

Question 3

Identify **three** ways you can communicate the requirements of WHS laws to your team. What communication methods would you use?

1B | Identifying duty holders and their responsibilities

Duty of care means that all duty holders are required to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable.

This means the PCBU and every worker in any organisation must do everything that is reasonable to remove or minimise the possible cause of harm.

Duty of care states that everyone in the organisation has a responsibility to look after their own safety, and the safety of other workers, customers, contractors and visitors to the workplace.

WHS duty holders

Under WHS laws, the PCBU and managers must clearly set out and communicate the legal responsibilities of duty holders.

Duty holders and their legal roles and responsibilities are outlined in the following table.

PCBU
A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is the principal duty holder and has the primary duty of care in the workplace.

Officer
An officer is a senior person who makes decisions that affect the whole or substantial part of the organisation's activities, including how finance is spent. An officer may be a chief executive officer (CEO), director, executive or general manager in an organisation. Note that this is different to a health and safety officer, which is a person with a WHS qualification or expertise.

Worker
A worker is any person who carries out work for a PCBU. This includes direct workers at all levels: contractors, subcontractors, self-employed people, outworkers, apprentices, trainees, work experience students, workers placed by labour hire companies and volunteers.

Volunteers
Volunteers are not directly employed by the PCBU, but work with an organisation on an unpaid basis. Volunteers are classed as workers under the model WHS laws.

Others
This includes visitors to a workplace and customers of a PCBU who enter the workplace.

Key duties

The key duties of duty holders are set out in Safe Work Australia's Guide to the Model Work Health and Safety Act.

Key duties of a PCBU
• Provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health, including safe access in and out of the workplace. • Provide and maintain plant, structure and systems of work that are safe and do not pose health risks. • Provide training in the safe use, handling, storage and transport of plant, structure and substances. • Provide adequate facilities for workers' welfare. • Provide information, instruction, training or supervision to workers to enable them to work without risks to their health and safety and that of others. • Monitor workers' health and workplace conditions to prevent injury or illness arising out of the conduct of the business or undertaking. • Maintain accommodation owned or under their management and control to ensure the health and safety of workers occupying the premises. • Consult with other duty holders, including workers and their representatives. • Ensure that any fixtures, fittings and plant do not put at risk the health and safety of any person. • Ensure all workplace activity relating to plant or structure, including its decommissioning or dismantling, is, so far as is reasonably practicable, without risks to health and safety.

Key duties of an officer

- Acquire knowledge and keep up to date on WHS matters.
- Understand the nature and operations of the work, and associated hazards and risks.
- Ensure the PCBU uses appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks.
- Ensure the PCBU has appropriate processes to receive and consider information about work-related incidents, hazards and risks, and to respond in a timely manner.
- Ensure the PCBU implements processes for complying with their duties and obligations (for example, reports notifiable incidents and consults with workers on health and safety).
- Verify the provision and use of the relevant resources and processes.

Key duties of workers

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Follow any reasonable instruction given by the PCBU to allow the PCBU to comply with WHS laws.
- Cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the PCBU relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been communicated to workers.

Key duties of volunteers and others

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their omissions.
- Comply with any reasonable instruction given by the PCBU, including a manager.

You can read more about the duties in the workplace at: http://aspirelr.link/model-whs-act.

Non-compliance

Failure to comply with WHS Regulations, policy and procedures may result in prosecution by authorities under the WHS Act.

Failure by contractors to comply with or observe a direction is considered a breach of their contract. It is sufficient grounds for termination of that contract, and could result in immediate ejection from the premises or worksite.

Prosecutions under the WHS Act can result in fines being paid by companies as well as individuals. Prison is also a possible outcome of non-compliance where reckless and deliberate misconduct results in (or could have resulted in) death or serious injury.

WHS roles and responsibilities

In order to meet their obligations under the WHS Act, a large consulting business decides that their WHS policy should note the key role and responsibilities for their staff.

Managers are identified as having responsibility for ensuring WHS policy and procedures are implemented and are also accountable for supporting supervisors in their role of implementing the policy. Managers also hold a vital role in reporting incidents to the board and emergency services.

Supervisors are responsible for the practical measures to ensure a safe work environment. This includes ensuring the behaviours of others don't pose risks to health and wellbeing. Supervisors also have a responsibility to act promptly to reduce any hazards.

Workers have a responsibility to adhere to the policies and procedures to ensure their own health and wellbeing is maintained, including reporting near misses, incidents, risks and hazards using the organisation's reporting mechanisms. A near miss is an incident that did not result in injury or illness, but had the potential to do so.

Contractors and subcontractors engaged to perform work on the organisation's premises are required to comply with WHS policies, procedures and programs, and to observe directions from managers, supervisors and any other designated health and safety officers of the organisation.

Use the QR code to access a video of the example.

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Practice task 2

Question 1

Which of the following duty holders has the primary duty of care under the model WHS laws?

☐ Officers

☐ Workers

☐ Volunteers

☐ Person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU)

☐ Suppliers

Question 2

Match each duty holder to a key responsibility of their role.

✱ PCBU

✱ Follow all reasonable instructions and policies from management and the PCBU.

✱ Officer

✱ Ensure equipment, plant and materials provided to the PCBU are safe.

✱ Worker

✱ Develop and maintain a safe working environment.

✱ Supplier

✱ Ensure the PCBU meets their legal duties under the WHS laws.

Question 3

Which of the following responsibilities apply to managers? Select all that apply.

☐ Provide training, instruction and supervision to workers across the whole organisation

☐ Ensure that WHS policies and procedures are effectively implemented in their area

☐ Support supervisors and hold them accountable for their specific responsibilities

☐ Manage the health and safety of workers in their immediate work area

☐ Report any incidents they become aware of directly to the senior management team

Question 4

Provide **two** examples of the repercussions to an organisation for workers who do not comply with WHS laws.

1C Determining resources and approval processes for a WHS management system

To ensure compliance with WHS legislation and regulations, a planned, systematic and well-documented WHS management system (WHSMS) should be implemented.

A WHSMS is a set of orderly activities that aim to produce consistent and compliant outcomes for the organisation. It includes:

- a WHS policy
- organisational structure
- planning activities
- responsibilities for key people in the organisation
- work procedures
- processes
- resources for developing, implementing and maintaining the WHSMS.

A systematic approach to WHS requires goal setting, planning, monitoring and review of all aspects of work health and safety.

The system must be appropriate for the organisation and its activities, including the hazards and risks associated with business operations.

For WHS management systems to work effectively, enough funds and other types of resources must be allocated to all parts of the system. WHS should be a key part of an organisation's strategic planning. This should be reflected in all management decisions and allocation of resources, responsibilities and accountabilities.

WHS planning process

The WHS planning process involves developing policies, procedures and standards.

You must identify the organisation's WHS needs and priorities and prepare a plan to show how the WHSMS will be implemented in the workplace.

When developing a WHS plan, consider:

- strategies to achieve the WHS objectives and performance measures
- WHS priority areas
- human resources required
- physical resources required
- time lines for priorities
- WHS budget, which forms part of the organisation-wide budget.

Identifying resources

Whether you are developing a new WHSMS or redeveloping an existing WHSMS for a work area, recommendations for resources and expenditure will need consultation and approval.

As a manager with WHS responsibilities, you will need to consult with your team and other stakeholders to identify key issues, including the hazards and risks that need to be managed. You must discuss these as part of a WHS planning process.

Insight and suggestions for the WHSMS should come from a variety of sources, including individual workers, health and safety committee (HSC) members, health and safety representatives (HSRs), senior management, external subject matter experts and/or unions.

The WHSMS may require additional resources to ensure it is correctly implemented and achieves its objectives.

WHS resources include people, equipment, systems and funding, as outlined in the following table.

Human resources
People are the most important resource for any WHS activity. Managers must consider the human resource (HR) requirement and training for: • the HSC • HSRs • emergency wardens • first-aid officers • compliance officers or auditors • managers, supervisors and workers.
Equipment
Equipment includes any piece of hardware that helps to identify and manage workplace hazards and risks. Examples include: • health monitoring tools, such as noise level detectors • computing and mobile devices to capture information and report on hazards, risks and incidents • tools and machinery, including safety guards • personal protective equipment (PPE), such as safety glasses, steel-cap boots and high-visibility vests.
Systems
Systems are needed to work within the WHSMS. This includes online, electronic or paper-based information management and record-keeping systems. Examples include: • incident reporting and investigation system • hazard reporting and monitoring system • HR management system to retain information about worker training, licensing and safety performance.

Financial resources

Most WHS management systems require financial support. For example, finances are needed to pay the salary of a health and safety officer, to fund training courses, to purchase physical WHS resources (such as safety helmets or first-aid kits) and to upgrade and maintain equipment.

Sufficient finances must be budgeted to allow for these ongoing costs, as well as an allowance for unforeseen WHS events. This should be covered in a contingency plan. This concept is an accepted practice in the broader risk management field.

Approving expenditure

Depending on the organisation, most resourcing decisions require a formal approval, according to organisational procedures.

Authorisation for financial decisions may involve the HSC, health and safety officer, the accountant, senior management and others involved in the WHSMS.

Approval processes generally require the manager to present a cost breakdown of exactly what the WHSMS involves and the expected outcomes that will be achieved once it is implemented. Some approval processes require:

- a time line for when the money will be spent
- the process of implementing the WHSMS
- a detailed analysis of the functions of the WHSMS
- alternative propositions to allow the panel to select the most cost-efficient and appropriate outcome.

Questions to ask when approving a new WHSMS initiative

- Will this initiative assist the organisation to meet the requirements of the WHS laws?
- Will this initiative assist the organisation to meet its strategic WHS objectives?
- Are all the costs associated with planning, implementing and evaluating accounted for?
- What benefits will the organisation gain from this initiative?

Example

Establishing a WHS management system

Barrow Hill Iron Ore Pty Ltd operates an open-cut mine in the Pilbara region in Western Australia. Senior management has recently been reviewing the organisation's WHS performance and has undertaken a strategic planning exercise.

They are committed to and are supporting cultural change in the organisation, including:

- revising and developing WHS policies and procedures to incorporate environmental sustainability

- retraining supervisors and department managers in risk management procedures

- ensuring adequate resources (including financial and human resources) are provided to support all WHS strategic objectives

- involving the entire workforce in planning, implementing and monitoring WHS initiatives.

Senior management has established WHS standards, objectives and priorities, allocated management responsibilities and accountabilities, and appointed a health and safety advisor for each worksite. Each worksite has developed a WHS plan based on their management priorities.

The priority standards for implementation at each of the processing plants are:

- hazard management

- consultation mechanisms

- incident reporting and investigation

- training

- fitness for work

- emergency management.

Use the QR code to access a video of the example.

v1485

Practice task 3

Question 1

Identify a WHS priority for a work area that requires a formal plan to improve how it is managed.

Question 2

Identify an activity you can organise that will help you address the issue you identified above. Include the following:

- A brief description of the activity
- Who the activity would involve
- The cost of the activity
- The expected outcomes of the activity
- The time line for this activity

Summary

- PCBUs and managers need to understand and comply with their WHS obligations.
- They need to learn how to adapt the laws to the work areas and communicate WHS information effectively to all workers.
- Duty-of-care provisions outline the general responsibilities of PCBUs and all workers and visitors to a workplace.
- All organisations should establish a system of managing WHS matters, which is outlined in their policies and procedures, and WHSMS.
- WHS roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined for the PCBU, officers, managers and workers.
- WHS needs to be included as an integral part of an organisation's strategic planning.
- WHS should be reflected in all management decisions and allocation of resources, responsibilities and accountabilities.
- PCBUs and managers need to consult with workers and other relevant stakeholders to determine WHS priorities and incorporate these in the WHSMS planning processes.

Learning checkpoint 1
Establish a WHS management system in a work area

Part A

1. Why must a manager understand WHS legislative requirements? Select all that apply.

   ☐ To comply with general duty of care requirements

   ☐ To ensure the health and safety of all workers in the organisation, not just those they are responsible for

   ☐ To provide effective consultation and participative arrangements for workers in their area

   ☐ To provide information and training to potential workers, as part of a recruitment process

2. In which of the following situations would a manager need to apply knowledge of WHS laws in their work area? Select all that apply.

   ☐ A new team member joins the team and requires induction and WHS training.

   ☐ A worker is not performing their job to the required standards and is a hazard to others in the area.

   ☐ A supplier has not provided the right materials for a purchase order and the manager needs to escalate a complaint.

   ☐ When conducting regular team operational meetings to discuss productivity and service performance.

3. For each of the following policies, provide an example of who it should apply to and how it could be communicated effectively.
   a) WHS policy
   b) Manual-handling policy
   c) First-aid policy

4. Match each role to the general WHS duties listed on the right.

*   Worker

* Ensure the PCBU uses appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks.

*   Officer

* Participate in WHS audits and risk analyses.

*   PCBU

* Follow safe work instructions, policies and procedures to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

*   Manager

* Provide and maintain a safe workplace, plant and equipment.

5. List **five** records that PCBUs must maintain and track to meet their WHS legal obligations.

6. Outline the process you would follow as a manager to identify and approve financial and human resources for WHS activities in your work area.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Sleep Tight is a family-run business that specialises in the manufacture and distribution of mattresses. It has manufacturing plants in three states across Australia, with the largest in South Australia.

Sleep Tight employs a total workforce of over 800 people. About two-thirds of the workforce are women, primarily employed in the non-trade areas of the plant, including packaging and quality control. The workforce comes from a wide variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In recent years, the WHS culture has declined, leading to increases in workplace injuries. Senior management is reviewing the organisation's WHS performance and is involving managers of each department in the process. It wants to carry out a strategic planning exercise, in consultation with managers and workers, and is committed to achieving an improved WHS culture in the organisation.

1. What legal obligations of the PCBU may apply to this organisation? Select all that apply.

   ☐ Consult with workers on all matters that impact their health and safety.

   ☐ Issue penalties for workers and managers who do not adhere to the organisation's WHS policies and procedures.

   ☐ Maintain safe work systems for all workers.

   ☐ Monitor and maintain the work environment to ensure the ongoing safety of workers.

   ☐ Report notifiable incidents to the WHS regulator by the fastest possible means.

2. Managers at Sleep Tight are required to consult with workers in their department as part of the strategic review process. How could the WHS review process impact on the allocation of resources and funding for managers in order to carry out a thorough consultation process?

3. Which of the following strategies could managers use to effectively communicate WHS information to workers during the review process? Select all that apply.

☐   Adapt communication to suit the linguistic capabilities of the audience.

☐   Translate information to languages spoken by workers in the organisation.

☐   Email all workers summarising the details of the strategic review.

☐   Make copies of the WHS review plan and leave it on the tables in the meal areas for all workers to read.

☐   Hold face-to-face meetings, followed by a question and answer session to evaluate the level of understanding and adaptation that may be required.

Topic 2
Establish and maintain consultative arrangements in a work area

To ensure ongoing health and safety in the workplace, the PCBU and managers must regularly engage with workers in WHS matters.

Under WHS laws, a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to consult with workers, health and safety officers, consultants and other key personnel to manage hazards and risks.

Consultation ensures workers are involved in making decisions about issues that could impact their health and safety. It also ensures workers are able to perform their roles in a safe manner.

WHS performance will improve if management regularly consults with workers and uses their workplace knowledge and experience when making decisions. Consultation encourages workers to actively contribute to workplace safety. By listening to and valuing workers' responses, you can create a two-way communication process that enables health and safety issues to be raised and discussed with a view to addressing any identified problems or concerns.

In this topic you will learn about:

2A Setting up and maintaining consultative arrangements
2B Resolving issues raised through participation and consultation
2C Informing workers about participation and consultation outcomes

2A | Setting up and maintaining consultative arrangements

WHS laws require PCBUs to regularly consult with workers regarding health, safety and welfare issues.

Consultation is an important part of developing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Consultation is a two-way process involving the PCBU and workers. In some cases, it also involves health and safety committees (HSCs), health and safety representatives (HSRs) and/or unions.

For consultation to be effective, four key elements must exist. PCBUs and workers must do the following:

- Talk to each other about health and safety matters.
- Listen to each other's concerns.
- Seek and share views and information.
- Consider what the other party says before making decisions.

An effective consultation process should encourage workers to participate in discussions about any workplace matter that has an impact on their personal health and safety.

Consulting with workers

Worker consultation is a legal obligation of the PCBU under WHS laws.

You need to regularly engage with workers to have a good understanding of the team's duties, work practices and procedures, the equipment they use and the work environment.

As workers are the people performing tasks on a daily basis, they know better than most the hazards and risks associated with their job. In addition, workplace issues such as bullying may not be apparent in a safety audit if it is conducted by people outside the workforce.

You are more likely to gain support if workers feel they have made a contribution to the decisions, and that they are not just made by management. Therefore, developing and effectively implementing health and safety policies and procedures requires the input of workers.

Consultation can also improve overall relations between PCBUs and workers as it helps to establish an environment of open communication, trust and mutual respect, which decreases the chance of incidents occurring.

Questions to ask when consulting with workers
• What parts of the job are of most concern to you?
• Have there been any near misses or other incidents that have been unreported?
• Is there anything about the doors, floors, wheeled furniture, lifts and other moving parts in the work environment that could be dangerous?
• Is there anything about the way chemical substances are stored or used that could be dangerous?
• Is there anything about the way equipment is stored or used that could be dangerous?
• Is there anything that you or others do that could be hazardous?
• Is there anyone inexperienced or inadequately trained working in the team?
• Are work procedures being followed correctly?
• Could anyone be hurt by modifications that have been made to tools or equipment?
• Are cleaning, maintenance and repairs done on a regular basis?

You can read more about consultation in Part 5 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) at: http://aspirelr.link/whs-act.

Benefits of consulting with workers

A safer workplace and improved morale and productivity can be achieved when the PCBU and workers regularly collaborate on health and safety issues.

Under WHS laws, workers have a legal right to consult with the PCBU on matters affecting their health and wellbeing.

A strong health and safety culture is one where workers believe their leaders are committed to health and safety. As such, any input workers have into the development or review of systems, policies and procedures should be valued.

Here are several benefits of participating in the consultation process.

Benefits of consultation
• Helps PCBUs to become more aware of hazards and health and safety issues experienced by workers.
• Improves management decisions regarding health and safety as the information comes from a wider source.
• Enables workers to provide suggestions about how to address health and safety problems, and contribute to determining how the work can be done safely.
• May result in greater commitment to health and safety and increased ownership of work outcomes.
• Promotes increased openness, respect and trust between management and workers through developing an understanding of each other's points of view.
• May help reduce injury and illness because of timely intervention.

Improving worker consultation

Health and safety consultation is a two-way process.

Workers need a mechanism to provide ongoing feedback regarding health and safety matters. The organisation should also use internal systems to provide health and safety updates to workers.

Workers should be aware of how the PCBU will deal with health and safety information they receive.

Management may:

- make decisions about the adequacy of facilities for worker welfare
- monitor workers' health and workplace conditions based on information received
- provide further information and training
- propose changes to the work performed at the workplace that may affect the health and safety of workers.

If you want consultation to be truly participative, consider:

- where workers are located and how they can contribute to health and safety issues; for example, consider whether they are on site, in a remote location or working from a home office
- the nature of the work; for example, whether it is flexible, inflexible or systematic
- times workers are available for consultation; for example, consider whether they work during business hours or are rostered onto shifts
- diversity of workers; for example, consider whether any workers have intellectual and physical impairments that may increase their safety risks.

Monitor all consultative arrangements by asking workers for feedback and discussing the ways in which the arrangements can be improved. You may also seek advice from a health and safety specialist to determine whether your arrangements are as effective as they can be.

Maintaining ongoing consultation with workers

Establishing and maintaining ongoing consultation between management, HSRs, health and safety officers, HSCs and workers is crucial for ongoing safety performance and compliance.

Ensure workers understand how they can provide input about WHS matters and the type of information they may be able to contribute.

They will need to know who the health and safety personnel are that they can speak to on a daily basis and the strategies used in the organisation to give and receive information so the process is as transparent as possible.

Whichever method you choose to apply, ensure the principles of effective consultation are followed.

Documents

- Current health and safety policies and procedures
- Health and safety surveys, checklists and audits
- Lists of identified hazards
- Complaint forms
- Incident, injury and near-miss reports
- Workers' compensation forms

Strategies

- Regular meetings with HSRs and HSC members
- Regular workplace inspections
- Hazard identification and risk assessments
- Health and safety issues on the agenda for every staff meeting
- Regular consultation with the health and safety officer
- Intranet notification system for WHS issues
- Suggestions box
- Health and safety signs and notices throughout the workplace
- Formal health and safety issue resolution processes

Principles

- PCBUs are responsible for consulting with work teams on health and safety matters.
- Information is regularly shared with workers.
- Workers are able to understand the information.
- Workers are given a reasonable opportunity to express their views about the matter.
- Workers' views are taken into account.

Committees and representatives

HSCs and HSRs can be utilised to help improve consultation with workers, particularly in organisations where workers have limited access to senior management and the PCBU.

A health and safety committee (HSC) may be appointed to facilitate consultation and work toward improving health and safety standards across the whole organisation. HSCs exist to ensure workers and management meet regularly and work together to improve health and safety performance across the organisation. HSCs are considered useful for planning and continuous improvement, particularly for larger businesses with multiple levels in the organisational structure. In most cases, HSRs are also members of the health and safety committee.

HSRs represent members of their work group on health and safety matters. They have a number of legal powers and functions under the WHS Act, including:

- stopping unsafe work
- issuing provisional improvement notices (PINs)
- assisting with incident investigations.

HSRs are commonly used in large organisations with multiple departments, shifts or teams with greater safety risks.

The following table provides further information on these roles and responsibilities.

Health and safety committees (HSCs)
HSCs bring together management and workers to focus on WHS issues. Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth), a HSC must be set up within two months of being requested by a HSR or at least five workers in the organisation. A HSC is also required to meet every three months and at any reasonable time if requested by at least half of the committee members. PCBUs must allow each committee member to attend a scheduled meeting. The HSC is required to: • facilitate cooperation between the PCBU and workers on health and safety • discuss identified WHS problems • consult with workers and make recommendations to improve health and safety in the workplace • help to develop health and safety standards, rules and procedures • monitor and report on WHS performance (including compliance with legislation and workplace policies and procedures).

Health and safety representatives (HSRs)
The role of HSRs is to consult with workers to identify WHS issues that need to be resolved. HSRs provide information to managers, supervisors and workers. They usually represent workers in relation to WHS issues and may have power in some cases. All organisations must ensure that WHS issues are dealt with promptly and according to the law. Legislation does not require all organisations to have a HSR. However, a HSR must be appointed if requested. HSRs should have a wide range of WHS knowledge, including: • the organisation's current requirements and obligations in accordance with legislation, regulations and codes of practice • how to conduct WHS induction • the types of incidents that are notifiable • requirements for consultation in the workplace • how to advise on safe work practices • the process for WHS audits and incident investigations.

Example

Implementing participative arrangements

Here is a simple action plan for implementing effective participative arrangements.

Action plan for developing participative arrangements				
Ref #	Task	Responsibility	Target date	Sign-off
1	Establish a HSC, outlining membership, purpose, function procedures and supportive documentation.	HR Manager	19/04	RF – 17/04
2	Ensure members of the HSC attend an external training course relevant to their participation in the committee.	Operations Manager	20/05	

You can watch a video of the example here.

v1487

Practice task 4

Question 1

Which of the following duty holders has the primary duty to consult with workers under the model WHS laws?

- [ ] Managers

- [ ] Officers

- [ ] HSRs

- [ ] PCBUs

- [ ] HSC members

Question 2

Which of the following statements are correct? Select yes or no for each one.

a) Workers must be consulted on all matters relating to their health and safety at work.　　＊ Yes　　＊ No

b) The main benefit of worker consultation is to ensure compliance with the law.　　＊ Yes　　＊ No

c) Consultation involves telling workers what they need to do in order to work safely.　　＊ Yes　　＊ No

d) The WHS laws state that worker consultation can include consulting with HSRs and HSC members.　　＊ Yes　　＊ No

e) Consultation can help improve relationships between PCBUs and workers, promoting an environment of open communication, trust and respect.　　＊ Yes　　＊ No

2B Resolving issues raised through participation and consultation

WHS issues will arise at some point in every workplace. The frequency and severity of issues will depend on the nature of work and the work environment.

When these issues occur, management must take all concerns seriously and act on them quickly. Workers must feel that their opinions are valued and that management views health and safety as a top priority, which is demonstrated through their actions – not just their words.

Under WHS laws, a PCBU cannot dismiss any worker or change their work function or role to that worker's detriment simply because the worker has raised health and safety issues or is legitimately concerned about their personal health and safety. There are significant penalties for breaching this section of the WHS Act.

Health and safety issues

PCBUs should encourage workers and HSRs to deal with everyday problems as they occur.

For example, PCBUs should instruct workers to clean up non-toxic spills as soon as possible.

HSCs and HSRs are responsible for taking follow-up action to resolve serious issues. However, if a HSC or HSR has not been appointed, the PCBU is directly responsible for taking action to resolve such issues.

Health and safety issues may also arise. These occur when:

- a worker identifies a new or existing hazard or danger
- a worker identifies a potential hazard or danger
- a worker feels as though their suggestions about a safety matter have not been heard
- a dangerous incident, including a near miss, is reported.

Watch this video to learn more about health and safety issues.

v1486

Resolving WHS issues

Your workplace must develop and implement appropriate policies and procedures to address the requirements for reporting and resolving WHS issues.

These should provide direction and guidelines for all workers to comply with issue reporting requirements, and should include detailed health and safety procedures.

Here are several points that need to be considered when resolving WHS issues and concerns.

Reporting issues

WHS policies and procedures must enable workers to report issues immediately and include steps to ensure the organisation responds appropriately and in a timely manner. This includes providing the appropriate forms needed to report these issues. If there is a high risk, workers should be encouraged to stop work immediately, report the incident to their manager, then complete a health and safety incident report form.

Notifiable incidents

Workplace incidents that are classified as 'notifiable' must also be reported to the appropriate state or territory health and safety regulator. Notifiable incidents are incidents resulting in death, serious injury or illness, or dangerous incidents arising from work carried out by a PCBU.

Resolving issues

Whenever possible, health and safety issues should be resolved in the workplace through ongoing communication and consultation between workers, management and the relevant HSRs. However, in some situations, issues may need to be escalated to a senior manager or a subject matter expert from outside the organisation. The PCBU may seek advice from a health and safety specialist or health monitoring expert, or may consult with the relevant health and safety regulator for advice and assistance.

Example

Hazard reporting and response procedure

XYZ Communications developed a staff guideline outlining the steps in a hazard reporting and response procedure. This provides a formal way of resolving a particular safety issue in the workplace

Hazard reporting and response procedure
• If a serious hazard or incident is identified, workers must report the matter to the PCBU, their direct supervisor or HSR as soon as possible. Where appropriate, the worker and their supervisor should take all reasonable steps to contain the hazard within the bounds of personal safety.
• When the hazard is controlled, an incident report must be submitted to the PCBU. It must include hazard details, associated risks, location, anyone who may have been affected (including workers who have been exposed) and recommendations regarding how to treat or rectify the problem.
• A hard-copy hazard report form must also be submitted to the HSR or supervisor. The manager should receive a signed notification that the form has been received.
• The HSR must provide a written response within seven working days. A final response is required within 14 working days after the report has been received. It must detail all decisions made and why, consequent actions taken and proposed outcomes.
• If the original person making the report is dissatisfied with this response, they can request more information. The manager must respond within seven days of this appeal. If the person making the report is still dissatisfied, they can appeal to the HSC, their HSR, or contact the health and safety regulator.

Practice task 5

Question 1

Number each step from 1 to 5 in the order you would follow to report and respond to issues in your organisation.

☐ The manager assesses the risks of the hazard and puts in place temporary controls to ensure workers are safe from harm.

☐ The manager consults with the PCBU, officer and the workers on how best to manage the hazard and takes on board all feedback when deciding on appropriate hazard controls.

☐ The manager completes a hazard report form and submits it to the PCBU for review.

☐ The manager implements an appropriate solution to ensure the ongoing safety of workers.

☐ If a serious hazard is identified, workers must notify the manager using the fastest possible means.

Question 2

Describe a recent WHS issue that was identified in your work area. Was the consultation procedure used in your workplace effective? If not, how was the issue resolved?

2C | Informing workers about participation and consultation outcomes

Under WHS laws, the PCBU and its managers have a responsibility to give feedback to workers about the ideas and concerns they have raised from health and safety discussions.

They must communicate decisions and results to all participants involved in consultation, as well as to the wider organisation in a timely manner.

To achieve this outcome, managers need effective communication skills to ensure information is easy for workers to access and understand.

Types of information

Effective communication involves providing the right information to the right people in a timely and appropriate manner.

Once a manager makes a decision about a WHS issue, information needs to be provided to workers, HSRs, health and safety officers and HSC members.

Managers must provide clear feedback about how workers' ideas and concerns were considered in a decision-making process, in particular when there are impacts on workers' health and safety. This is a legal obligation of the PCBU under the model WHS laws and one of the manager's key requirements to maintain high levels of engagement with workers.

The following outlines the types of information that may need to be distributed to workers, HSRs, health and safety officers and HSC members.

Legislation and codes of practice

Used to:

- interpret and apply new legislation to the workplace
- initiate staff training to ensure the organisation is fully compliant with the legislation.

Health and safety policies and procedures

Used to:

- develop and document all procedures
- provide staff training and refresher courses.

Safety data sheets (SDSs)

Ensures all relevant staff know how to manage hazardous materials and follow instructions on SDSs.

Incident reports

Used to investigate causes of workplace incidents and put risk controls in place.

Minutes of health and safety meetings

Disseminates meeting information and decisions to all members of the work group and staff in general.

Auditing results and workplace inspection reports

Aims to address all deficiencies in a timely manner.

Action plan outcomes

Used to evaluate performance outcomes and update plans.

Records of health and safety issues

Records all issues and outcomes raised via informal discussion or the suggestions box.

Health and safety plans, targets and statistics

Used to analyse and evaluate results to formulate future plans.

Copies of memos or communication from management

Contains all correspondence indicating a need for health and safety participation and consultation.

Records of disciplinary action

Records all verbal and written warnings, and dismissals in accordance with privacy requirements.

Questions to consider

When giving feedback and communicating the outcomes of health and safety consultation, consider the specific needs of workers.

Before you communicate health and safety information, consider the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the communication?
- What outcome are you trying to achieve?
- What are the information requirements of the audience (for example, what do they already know and what do they need to know)?
- What format will suit the audience?
- What diversity exists in the area? Do you need to communicate information in a language other than English?
- Do you need to provide the communication verbally and in writing, or use diagrams and pictures?
- Does the communication need to be supported by appropriate workplace signage, such as warning signs?

Health and safety information should be in a format that is accessible to all those who need it.

To ensure information is accessible to all workers, consider the following:

- Does everyone have access to the internet or the staff intranet?
- Can everyone use email?
- Do remote and home-based workers have special requirements?
- Are there any shift, casual or contract workers who may be affected?
- Do any workers have language barriers or diverse levels of understanding?
- Should information be presented as signs, symbols, pictures or graphics?

Communicating in a timely manner

Always provide health and safety information as soon as possible. This way workers will be more inclined to absorb the information and respond appropriately.

When a worker raises a genuine concern about a health and safety matter, managers should provide feedback once a decision has been made and communication systems should provide information directly to each affected person.

Information of a less urgent nature, such as outcomes of a recent committee meeting, can be communicated to recipients at regular intervals via the organisation's standard communication procedures, such as a staff meeting or electronic bulletin board.

Improving health and safety systems

A large civil and engineering construction firm is investigating ways it can improve its health and safety system. At an organisational level, management reviews the health and safety management system and sets objectives for the next two years. One of its goals is to improve the participation rate of staff and contractors in health and safety decision-making.

The organisation employs an external health and safety advisor, who establishes a task force to set priorities consistent with the organisation's strategic goals.

The first priorities for action are identified as:

- electing health and safety representatives
- setting up a health and safety committee
- reporting health and safety hazards
- inspecting workplaces
- investigating incidents.

New policies and procedures are written in plain English to assist in communicating to everyone. Regular consultation groups are run to test draft procedures to ensure they are realistic. Training targets are then identified and action plans for on-the-job and external training options are selected.

Finally, an action plan for implementing and maintaining participation arrangements is developed. Resources required to implement the plan are identified and commitment is sought from senior management.

Practice task 6

Question 1

Why must managers provide feedback and information about consultation outcomes to workers? Select all that apply.

☐   To build open communication with workers

☐   To ensure workers know their job and legal duties

☐   To comply with WHS laws

☐   To show workers that they are valued and build better relationships

Question 2

Who should receive feedback and information derived from health and safety consultations? Select all that apply.

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☐ PCBUs

☐ Workers

☐ The general public

☐ HSRs

☐ Health and safety officers

☐ HSC members

Question 3

Provide **four** examples of information that managers must communicate to workers following a consultation meeting.

Summary

- Workers have a legal right to consult with PCBUs on matters affecting their health and wellbeing.
- Consultation must be used to identify workplace hazards, and assess and control risks.
- Effective consultation requires information to be regularly shared with workers.
- Managers are required to take feedback from workers into account when addressing workplace safety issues or planning and implementing new health and safety strategies.
- PCBUs are required to respond to requests and consult with all relevant stakeholders regarding health and safety.
- Effective communication systems with defined consultation and feedback channels are essential for successful health and safety management and worker engagement.
- When communicating the outcomes of health and safety consultation, consider the specific needs of individuals and groups in the workplace.

Learning checkpoint 2
Establish and maintain consultative arrangements in a work area

Part A

1. Which of the following are obligations that PCBUs have relating to worker consultation? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Establishing health and safety committees

- [ ] Implementing all ideas raised by workers regarding WHS issues

- [ ] Establishing work groups and managing the election process for health and safety representatives

- [ ] Giving feedback and information to workers following a consultation meeting

- [ ] Enabling health and safety committees or representatives to interact with workers

2. Which of the following methods are effective ways for managers to involve workers in consultation? Select yes or no for each one.

a)	Providing workers with the minutes from monthly management meetings	✱ Yes	✱ No
b)	Encouraging workers to participate in WHS audits and investigations	✱ Yes	✱ No
c)	Involving workers in WHS planning activities	✱ Yes	✱ No
d)	Providing counselling to workers who are not complying with WHS policies and procedures	✱ Yes	✱ No
e)	Holding two-way communication meetings with a focus on WHS issues	✱ Yes	✱ No

3. For each of the following WHS consultation sessions, provide an example of who it should apply to, suitable methods to communicate and strategies that will effectively evaluate the communication.
    a) WHS policy
    b) WHS training

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

A major transport company operates a fleet of trucks around Australia 24 hours a day, seven days a week and employs approximately 40 interstate drivers. With driver fatigue becoming an increasing concern, senior management at the company consulted a health and safety specialist to deliver an internal training program on managing fatigue. Management has also requested advice on how to improve the organisation's current health and safety participation arrangements, as there has been very little input from truck drivers.

The health and safety consultant identifies the following barriers to health and safety consultation:

*   Truck drivers work excessive hours, and many have unreasonable travel time deadlines to meet.
*   Little time is spent at the depot with other colleagues.

With this in mind, you have been asked to provide recommendations on how the company can implement participation arrangements involving all personnel.

1. Which of the following consultation arrangements could the company use to increase the involvement of truck drivers in health and safety matters? Select all that apply.

   ☐ A weekly team meeting at a specified time at the main depot

   ☐ A series of short WHS meetings held over four weeks at various time slots

   ☐ Teleconferences for drivers who are unable to attend an on-site meeting

   ☐ Emailing WHS feedback surveys to each driver to complete in their own time

   ☐ Nominating health and safety representatives from truck drivers and including representatives in planning and implementing WHS initiatives

2. Provide a practical suggestion the company could use to resolve the issue of driver fatigue through participation arrangements and consultation.

3. Which of the following are effective ways the company could provide feedback and information to truck drivers to keep them informed of health and safety outcomes? Select all that apply.

   ☐ Emailing WHS information to drivers, including a monthly WHS newsletter

   ☐ Providing laptops or remote communication devices to enable drivers to access the organisational intranet or other appropriate sources of WHS information

   ☐ Conducting regular one-on-one reviews and meetings between drivers, HSRs and supervisors

   ☐ Implementing a weekly team meeting at 9am every Friday to communicate WHS information and outcomes

   ☐ Providing WHS information in work areas via posters, bulletin boards or information displays

Topic 3
Establish and maintain procedures for risk management

A workplace hazard is a source or situation that has the potential to cause harm, resulting in injury, illness or damage to property.

A risk is the chance that the hazard will cause harm. Risk also refers to the severity of harm that may occur.

Hazards and risks exist in every workplace and organisation. Everyone has a legal duty to report hazards at work – this is critical for maintaining a healthy and safe workplace. PCBUs have a responsibility to implement and monitor procedures for identifying hazards and assessing risks.

In this topic you will learn about:

3A   Developing procedures for hazard identification and risk control
3B   Selecting and implementing risk controls
3C   Monitoring and reviewing risk controls
3D   Seeking expert WHS advice

3A Developing procedures for hazard identification and risk control

Under WHS laws, every worker has the legal right to be safe at work.

Workers, PCBUs, managers and other duty holders who have an influence on health and safety have a duty of care to:

- eliminate risks to health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable
- take reasonable steps to reduce or eliminate causes of harm.

Every industry has its own job-related hazards and risks, many of which cannot be avoided due to the high-risk nature of the work. For example, there are significant hazards when working in a mine, working in a hospital or building a house.
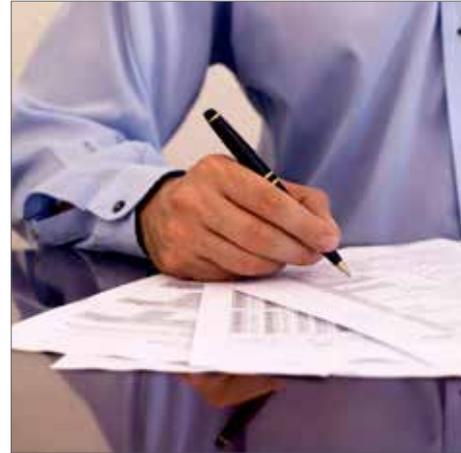
WHS laws require PCBUs to develop and implement effective ways to:

- identify workplace hazards
- assess risks
- implement risk controls
- monitor and review the hazards, risks and controls.

This is called the hazard management process. Here are several key terms that relate to hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control.

Hazard management procedure

This is the formal process of identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing controls, and reviewing and monitoring controls to manage workplace health and safety.

Hazard

Anything that has the potential to cause harm.

Risk

The possibility of harm and the consequences that may arise as a result of the hazard.

Risk level

This is the result of completing a risk assessment, calculated by determining the likelihood that harm will occur and the severity of harm. The risk level determines the urgency and type of control measures to be used.

Control

  Any method used to eliminate the hazard or minimise the risk.

Hierarchy of control

  This is a formal structure used to identify the most effective controls to eliminate or minimise the risk.

Monitoring

  This is the process of inspecting, supervising, observing or measuring the progress of an activity, action or system on a regular basis. The purpose is to identify a change from the performance level required or expected, and to determine improvements that can be made.

Identifying hazards

An effective hazard management procedure starts with identifying hazards in the workplace.

Workplace hazards may or may not be obvious, depending on the nature of the work carried out and the work environment.

PCBUs have a legal responsibility to control workplace hazards, either by eliminating the hazard or minimising the risk of harm.

To ensure the process of hazard identification is accurate and comprehensive, it should be carried out as a dedicated task and not in conjunction with other tasks. Only people with a thorough knowledge of the area, process or equipment under review should carry out hazard identification.

Ensure you also consider hazards that are less obvious. For example:

- Sitting in the same position carrying out the same task for an extended period of time can cause occupational overuse syndrome.
- Bullying in the workplace can lead to poor staff morale and mental illness.
- Poor air quality in the work environment can cause staff illness.

Watch this video to learn more about identifying hazards in the workplace.

v0158

Hazard identification checklist

From time to time, management, HSRs or members of the HSC may carry out a formal workplace inspection.

This usually takes the form of a walkthrough of the work area to gather information about the work team, their concerns and ideas, as well as their work practices.

A tailored checklist can be a useful part of a hazard management procedure. Ensure the checklist is specific to the environment and the work that takes place there. Hazard identification checklists provide a structure for collecting detailed information on equipment, processes and work areas for evidence of potential problems.

Here is an example of what could be included in a checklist.

Risk area	What to check
Manual handling	• Equipment for lifting and moving heavy objects • Safety signage
Housekeeping	• Workbenches • Walkways • Doorways
Machinery	• Safety guards • Noise levels • Moving parts
Working at heights	• Ladders • Cranes • Platforms • Cherry pickers • Scaffolding
Hazardous substances	• Fumes • Storage • Labelling • Personal protective equipment
Electrical hazards	• Cords • Power boards
Fire hazards	• Firefighting equipment • Fire alarms

Using existing processes to identify hazards

When establishing a hazard management procedure, there may be existing processes to help you identify and report the hazards in your work area.

Ensure the processes for reporting hazards outline the tasks the PCBU and workers need to follow to ensure the hazards and risks are controlled and monitored to the required standard. They should be simple and straightforward for all workers to follow, regardless of their language or literacy levels, experience or work hours.

These processes not only make it easier for workers to understand and carry out their duties, they also ensure you have documented evidence should the organisation be audited or inspected by the health and safety regulator.

Hazard reporting forms

Hazard reporting forms should be available on the organisation intranet and in the health and safety manual for your work area.

Regular evaluation

When you have developed a system for identifying and reporting hazards, your work area should be evaluated at least twice a year to minimise the likelihood of any health and safety issues.

Software programs

The content of WHS procedures depends on the organisation's health and safety policy and the type of activities carried out in the work area. The system should include using software programs to input, store and retrieve this type of information quickly and securely.

Worker reports

Worker reports are one of the most effective ways to identify hazards. Workers have a legal responsibility to report any identified hazards to the PCBU, who is legally required to take corrective action on those reports. PCBUs have the responsibility to consult with workers about issues relating to health and safety.

Other methods

Other ways of identifying hazards include:
- regular workplace inspections
- results of incident investigations
- evaluating reasons for poor quality outputs
- industry information bulletins
- reports from customers or visitors to the workplace.

Other ways to identify hazards

As well as checklists, hazards may be identified through other means, including reports of incidents and investigations.

The following outlines other sources of information that can assist the hazard identification process.

Reports and claims

Reports about equipment failure, incidents and near misses, as well as workers' compensation claims, may help you to determine workplace problems such as broken equipment, excessive noise, poor air quality, poor safety signage or lack of safety instructions.

Job safety analysis

A job safety analysis (JSA) – also known as a safe work method statement (SWMS) – is a comprehensive tool used to analyse each part of a work process to identify potential hazards and determine appropriate control measures.

Each task should be separated into its parts to identify any potential hazards; for example, a forklift operator drives the forklift across a warehouse, unloads items from the back of a tray truck and moves them to an overhead storage rack.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is the process of conducting group meetings with people who are familiar with the operation of the area under review. Encourage workers to provide details of any hazards they are aware of. The process must be non-threatening, with all suggestions listened to respectfully. Record all information relating to hazards and sort the results into the order of priority from most to least hazardous.

Trade journals

Trade journals can be a source of information regarding common or new hazards in the industry.

Industry associations

Health and safety issues are often raised at industry association meetings or during informal discussions before or after meetings. You may gain useful information by attending such meetings. Notes from meetings are often made available to the general public through bulletins and safety updates.

Manufacturers' manuals and safety data sheets

Manufacturers' instruction books and safety data sheets (SDSs) provide advice and warnings regarding WHS hazards. It is important to ensure all instructions are understood and followed by workers. This information should be reviewed to ensure all equipment and substances are as safe as possible and there are no underlying or hidden hazards.

How workplace changes may affect health and safety

Changes in the workplace occur frequently, and could have a negative effect on health and safety.

New work tasks, changes in design of the work environment and new equipment can:

- introduce new hazards
- change the risk level of existing hazards
- impact the way health and safety is managed in the workplace.

When changes to work operations have been approved, you should undertake hazard identification in the planning, design and evaluation stages. This ensures that any new hazards are identified early so they can be controlled effectively.

The following outlines changes that may create new hazards and risks.

Staffing changes

- Hiring new workers
- Reducing staffing levels through retrenchment or transfer
- Workers leaving or retiring

Changes to equipment

- Moving premises
- Installing new workstations, plant or equipment
- Introducing new technologies

Changes to work practices

- Introducing new products or packaging
- Changing production shifts
- Changing suppliers

Identifying hazards caused by workplace changes

Before introducing a proposed change, analyse the impact of that change on health and safety in the workplace.

Identify any new hazards as early as possible in the planning process and assess the risks to health and safety. This will give you time to plan for appropriate control measures before the change is put into place.

Here are three common techniques for identifying hazards in the planning and design stage.

Hazard and operability method (HAZOP)

HAZOP is a systematic, qualitative technique for hazard identification. A HAZOP fully describes the process and systematically questions every element to determine how deviations may occur. It then decides whether these deviations can give rise to hazards. HAZOP studies are usually carried out by a small, multidisciplinary team of experienced people, led by an experienced team leader.

Failure mode and effect analysis (FMEA)

An FMEA is an inductive hazard identification technique that explores the effects, severity and likelihood of failures or malfunctions of individual components in a system. This approach answers the question: 'If this part fails in this manner, what will be the result?' FMEAs can be applied to a number of situations where worker health and safety may be at risk through faulty parts.

Task analysis

Task analysis is used to examine the human characteristics of systems, operations and procedures to identify likely sources of error. It studies what should happen and observes what actually happens. When using task analysis, you need to define the functions and list every action performed. Each task is described and 'error likely' situations are identified and ranked.

Practice task 7

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

At a large pharmaceuticals company, an efficiency assessment and WHS audit are conducted simultaneously. These result in a list of changes needed to maintain or improve health and safety.

The WHS audit noted an increase in worker absenteeism in the accounts department on the ground floor. A specialist noise measurement consultant noted excessively high noise levels from an adjacent diesel compressor used for the upper floor laboratories.

Following minimal consultation and investigation into alternative locations, management chooses to relocate the diesel compressor to the rear of the building in a disused loading dock.

Within two months, several people working in the receiving dock at the other end of the building are sent home with unidentified illnesses or serious headaches.

The HSR authorises an investigation and study by an environmental health scientist, who finds excessive levels of carbon monoxide are entering the receiving bay from the hastily relocated diesel compressor.

Use the QR code to access a video of the case study.

v1488

Question 1

What type of hazard was created when the diesel compressor was relocated?

☐ A chemical hazard was created when the diesel compressor was refuelled.

☐ A manual-handling hazard was created.

☐ An environmental hazard was created.

☐ An occupational disease hazard was created due to the excessive noise emitted from the machine.

Question 2

What planning should the pharmaceuticals company have done before implementing this change? Select all that apply.

☐ The company should have spent more time in planning and consultation with workers about the hazards and risks.

☐ The company should have investigated the impacts of the proposed change before relocating the generator.

☐ The company should have avoided making any changes at all and left the compressor where it was.

☐ The company should have identified other possible locations for the compressor, in consultation with the HSR and the manufacturer of the machine.

Following up on hazard reports

Hazard management procedures need to have documented steps that explain what needs to happen after a hazard report form has been submitted.

They should describe the hazard that has been identified, the risk that has been assessed, and a time line for eliminating the hazard or minimising the risk.

The procedure should describe the next steps in the process, including who is responsible for implementing risk controls and signing off on the hazard report form.

Watch this video for more information about following up on hazard reports.

Assessing the risk

Once a hazard has been identified, the risks must be assessed.

Assessing the risk associated with each hazard is important for determining what control measures need to be put in place and how quickly something needs to be done to manage the hazard. To correctly assess risks, you need sound analytic skills:

- Be objective and methodical.
- Use a system and criteria so you know what you are assessing against.
- Never accept the first conclusion you make.
- Look at all the data, ask questions and reinterpret if necessary.

Risk assessment means considering the likelihood of the hazard occurring and the potential impact of exposure to the hazard. The combination of these produces a risk level.

A risk assessment can be completed using the following generic tool.

First, consider the most likely outcome (consequence) if an incident occurs.

Insignificant	No injuries or financial loss
Minor	Requiring first-aid treatment, medium to low financial loss
Moderate	Medical treatment required, high financial loss
Major	Extensive injuries, loss of productivity, no detrimental effects, major financial loss
Catastrophic	Resulting in serious or chronic injury or illness or death, detrimental effect, huge financial loss

Second, estimate the likelihood that the accident will occur.

Almost certain	Is expected to occur in most circumstances
Likely	It will probably occur in most circumstances
Possible	It might occur at some time
Unlikely	It is unlikely to occur, but has occurred in the past in the business
Rare	Very unlikely, but may occur only in exceptional circumstances

Consequences

Likelihood	Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost certain	High	High	Very High	Very High	Very High
Likely	Moderate	Moderate	High	Very High	Very High
Possible	Low	Moderate	High	High	Very High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High
Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate

Standards and priorities for risk levels

Before you can control the risk, you must establish the level of risk that is acceptable in your work area, based on your organisation and your industry's requirements.

Standards vary from industry to industry, influenced by perceptions, regulators and associations. Decisions must be made based on current standards, judicial interpretation and the public's expectation.

It is also important to establish priorities for how quickly risk controls should be actioned. You cannot deal with everything at the same time. The risk level should be used to decide what you need to do:

- immediately
- in the short term (within a few weeks)
- in the medium term (within a few months)
- in the long term (over the next year).

Consider the following when prioritising risk management tasks:

- the risk level, which is a combination of the likelihood and severity of the risk
- access to existing resources to control the risk
- the number of people affected by the risk
- how easily the risk can be controlled
- other benefits that may result from controlling the risk; for example, increased productivity
- your organisation's policies and procedures relating to prioritising risk.

Controlling the risk

When a risk assessment identifies a hazard with unacceptable risk (high or very high), you need to put controls in place to eliminate or reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

This should be outlined in the hazard management procedure.

Risk control is a legal requirement of all PCBUs. All duty holders are required to exercise their duty of care to identify and manage hazards and risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Codes of practice provide practical guidance on how to control certain types of hazards and risks that are covered by the WHS Regulations (for example, dealing with asbestos, manual handling and noise). Other types of hazards are covered by guidance materials, available through your health and safety regulator and Safe Work Australia. Unions, industry associations, consultants, specialist WHS advisors, colleagues and HSRs can also provide information and advice.

Further information on controlling risks is available from the following sites:

- http://aspirelr.link/swa-guidance-materials
- http://aspirelr.link/swa-resources-publications
- http://aspirelr.link/model-codes-of-practice

Establishing a monitoring process

An effective hazard management procedure involves a monitoring process, which addresses how risks will be followed up and reviewed.

As a manager, you need to lead the way in monitoring and reviewing risk controls. Consult with workers about how effective the risk controls are.

Documenting hazard management procedures

Once the processes for each stage of the hazard management procedure have been identified, you will need to document the procedure.

This is used to describe to the workers, HSC members and HSRs how the hazards and risks will be managed in the workplace. It ensures tasks are carried out in a consistent manner and that the requirements of WHS laws are achieved.

Procedures should also be documented to show compliance with the model codes of practice and to make decisions about how to improve work health and safety.

Consider the following when documenting the hazard management procedure:

- Use words every worker can understand.
- Remove legal jargon and complex terms.
- Keep the content short, simple and to the point.
- Use bullets and lists, rather than large paragraphs.
- Edit, proofread and format the document.
- Have at least two other people check the procedure before distributing it to staff.

Here are some examples of hazards, risks and suggested control measures.

Hazard	Risk	Control measures
Boxes cluttering walkways	• People may trip over them. • Boxes are an obstacle to emergency evacuation procedures and may pose a fire risk.	• Create storage area to contain extra boxes. • Educate workers about safe storage and keeping emergency exits clear. • Conduct regular inspections to ensure compliance with new storage arrangements.
Poor lighting in the office	• Workers complaining of headaches and fatigue due to eye strain.	• Improve lighting by providing extra lights over desk space or increasing wattage of light globes.
Complaints of racial harassment in the workplace	• Workers may suffer psychological trauma. • The organisation may incur legislative penalties.	• Research a workplace diversity program. • Monitor relations between groups of workers. • Provide training on workplace bullying and harassment.

Practice task 8

Question 1

Conduct a simple risk assessment in your office or home. Identify and document the following:

• A hazard

• The risks associated with the hazard

• Potential control measures for the hazard

Question 2

Which of the following documents support the identification, assessment and control of risks? Select all that apply.

☐ Performance management procedures

☐ Workplace inspection checklists

☐ Hazard reporting forms

☐ Worker productivity reports

☐ Incident reports

☐ Job safety analyses

Question 3

Match each of the items on the left to show whether they are hazards, risks or controls.

✳ Tripping and slipping	✳ Hazard
✳ Redesign shelving systems to handle more items	✳ Hazard
✳ Cluttered doorways	✳ Risk
✳ High likelihood of electrocution or a fire	✳ Risk
✳ Faulty electrical cords in the kitchen	✳ Control
✳ Implement and test fire evacuation procedures	✳ Control

3B Selecting and implementing risk controls

Risk controls include any action that removes the hazard at the source, or reduces the risk level.

Implementing risk controls requires different types of activity, depending on the nature of the organisation and its business. Activities may involve:

- eliminating the hazard
- modifying work practices or equipment to minimise the risk
- providing training, supervision and clear guidance on how to perform a task safely
- providing personal protective equipment (PPE).

The hierarchy of control is the most effective method of managing workplace risks and is required under the WHS Regulations.

Approaches to managing risk

Developing and implementing risk controls relies on effective analytical and problem-solving skills.

You will have to analyse relevant workplace information and data to identify and assess hazards, then decide what type of risk control to implement.

Here are some basic approaches to reducing risk.

Safe person approach

A safe person approach focuses on changing the behaviour of the people in the workplace. Introducing safe work methods, providing training in how to perform work safely and providing PPE are examples of controls that focus on the person.

Safe place approach

A safe place approach focuses on controls that reduce risks associated with the work environment. Such controls are usually incorporated into designing and engineering equipment, isolating hazards in the work environment and altering work processes.

Controls aimed at creating a safe place are usually more effective than controlling people because they target the source of the hazard. While the prime objective is to eliminate hazards, it is also important to realise if a hazard cannot be eliminated, it must be minimised as much as possible. This can be done using the hierarchy of control.

Hierarchy of control

The WHS laws require ongoing action from management in order to minimise the impact on workers' health and safety.

PCBUs must develop and maintain procedures that provide the most appropriate way of eliminating or reducing any risks identified.

Control measures can be sorted into categories with the most effective strategies listed at the top and the least effective at the bottom. This list of categories is known as the hierarchy of control. Sometimes the most effective method involves a combination of controls.

You can read more about how to manage risks and using the hierarchy of control at:

http://aspirelr.link/how-to-manage-whs-risks.

Here is the overview of the hierarchy of control.

1.   Elimination

Eliminate the hazard at the source. For example, remove hazardous materials or abandon hazardous work practices.

2.   Substitution

Substitute the hazard with something of lesser risk. For example, replace toxic materials with non-toxic materials.

3.   Isolation

Isolate the hazard from the main work area. For example, store hazardous materials in a designated area away from where people are working.

4.   Engineering controls

Use engineering controls to reduce the risk. For example, change equipment or tools being used, or install additional safety equipment.

5. **Administrative controls**

Use administrative controls to lessen the risk. For example, introduce new work procedures and practices.

6. **Personal protective equipment (PPE)**

Provide PPE for workers to use. For example, provide hearing and eye protection, hard hats, gloves, masks and protective clothing such as coats and vests. Ensure PPE is worn and used correctly.

Risk control procedures

You may be responsible for developing risk control procedures for your team or work area.

The procedures should enable consultation with workers, HSRs, HSC members and other key parties. It should allow for ongoing identification and assessment of hazards, and use the hierarchy of controls to control risks.

Here are five elements of a risk control procedure.

1. **Consult all relevant personnel**

- Familiarise staff with the HSR and/or HSC.
- Conduct regular WHS meetings.
- Plan strategies to inform staff.
- Receive feedback from workers regarding health and safety issues.

2. **Allocate responsibility**

- Nominate personnel responsible for the risk control procedure.
- Allocate specific functions to HSRs.

3. **Identify hazards and assess risks**

- Identify HSRs and workers in hazard identification.
- Assess risks using the risk matrix.
- Determine risk controls using the hierarchy of control.

4. Prepare a risk control procedure

- Document hazards, risk assessments and risk control measures.
- Record how risks will be controlled.
- Identify resources needed.
- Record time lines for implementation.

5. Monitor and review

- Monitor implementation of risk control procedures.
- Establish ongoing evaluation of the plan to ensure its effectiveness and appropriateness. Invite a HSR to be involved in ongoing evaluation.

Example

Applying risk controls

Peter is new to his role as coordinator of a small marketing team. The team is often out of the office setting up displays in shopping centres and at industry expos. On his first day, Peter trips over some boxes that are sticking out from under someone's desk. Looking around the office, he discovers boxes of display products taking up floor space. When he points out to the team that the boxes are a risk to others' health and safety, he is informed that the staff are very time poor and find it easier to keep the boxes near them so they don't have to spend time packing them away and then getting them back out the next day.

Peter considers control measures he can use to address the issue. He downloads the WHS policy and procedures. Using workplace documents, Peter categorises the hazard as a medium risk and considers reducing the risk by instilling a practice of packing resources in the cupboards each day (administrative control). He shortens the display times to allow enough time for staff to comply with the new procedure.

Use the QR code to access a video of the example.

v1489

Practice task 9

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

The national marketing team had a strategy in place to attend all the field days to introduce their new harvester to farmers around Australia. The team flew to their first field day, enjoying their time out of the office. One team member wore a hat, but still managed to get bad sunburn on his lower face and neck. The other two team members both ended up with sunburn on their faces, necks and ears.

Question 1

What are the key WHS issues? Select all that apply.

- [ ] Ultraviolet radiation which causes damage to the body's skin cells and is a possible commencement of skin cancer
- [ ] The PCBU was reckless in flying the team due to the high risk of a crash
- [ ] Lack of WHS policies and procedures on protecting workers against the impacts of UV radiation
- [ ] The length of the trip is against WHS laws as there is no prescribed rest or break periods
- [ ] The marketing team were bullied into attending the field trip, against their wishes

Question 2

Match up each possible control measure with the hierarchy of control.

* Administration

* Engineering

* PPE

* Elimination

* Relocate the team under cover; for example, in a marquee or under an awning.

* Cancel the remainder of the work trip.

* Provide instruction and education on the effects of UV radiation and how to ensure personal safety.

* Issue wide-brimmed hats, sunscreen and long sleeve shirts and pants.

3C Monitoring and reviewing risk controls

Risk control measures for some hazards may not be adequate, or may become ineffective as conditions or circumstances change.

By introducing a risk control, such as redesigning a work area or introducing new equipment, the change may produce new hazards or increase the risk level of existing hazards.

An important aspect of your WHS responsibilities is to:

- consult with your workers about the effectiveness of risk controls that are in place
- evaluate the controls
- identify the inadequacies
- report these inadequacies according to the hierarchy of control and WHS Regulations
- locate and provide resources to introduce new risk controls.

Evaluating the effectiveness of risk controls

The effectiveness of any risk control should be evaluated soon after implementation and monitored on an ongoing basis.

Here are some techniques that can be used.

Conduct post-control risk assessment

One of the most commonly used strategies for evaluating the effectiveness of risk controls is to conduct a second risk assessment following its implementation, and to compare the outcome with the original assessment.

This method relies on qualitative judgments, but delivers comparable data for analysis.

Observe worker behaviours

Risk registers can be used to generate monitoring checklists and conduct workplace observations. During these observations, PCBUs should evaluate the effectiveness of controls by observing and questioning worker behaviour. PCBUs should observe whether new procedures are being followed and ensure workers fully understand those procedures.

Survey key stakeholders

Interviews, questionnaires and surveys enable a large number of people to comment on whether or not the proposed control systems are being used in practice. Examples of key stakeholders include HSRs, HSC members, WHS professionals, union representatives and supervisors.

Analyse incident reports

Regularly collate completed incident report forms and analyse them to identify trends. Where risk control methods are adequate, no WHS incident reports should exist.

Analysing the impact of change

Risk assessment is not infallible. A range of methods should be used to analyse the impact of a proposed change on health and safety in the workplace.

Be aware that risk assessment is:

- subjective and has limitations – this should be taken into account when decisions on a proposed change are based on the outcomes of a risk assessment
- a tool that is used to support decision-making related to change – it should not be the sole driver in such decision-making.

Risk assessment of a proposed change should be as informed as possible, considering all possibilities.

In a high-risk environment, make sure you include robust monitoring systems to identify any failures or malfunctions before putting a change into practice.

Identifying inadequacies

Identify any issues with existing risk controls to ensure workers are appropriately protected from harm, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Here are three considerations.

Using consultation arrangements

Use consultation arrangements in the workplace to regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of any risk control system. WHS meetings are an important source of information for evaluating the risk control system, as is listening to feedback from workers and observing workplace procedures.

Reviewing WHS records

Reviewing WHS records may provide statistics and data that you can analyse to determine how effectively the risk control system is working. Incident reports and reports of near misses (dangerous incidents that could have resulted in injury or illness) can indicate areas of the system that are inadequate in controlling risks. These records can also indicate where a trend is emerging in occupational injuries or disease in the workplace.

Conducting regular health and safety audits

Records of regular health and safety audits can also indicate whether hazards or other issues are recurring in the workplace due to the ineffectiveness of risk controls. There may be strategies in place to manage risks, but workers may not be complying with them. Records such as worker absenteeism may also indicate problems brought about by inadequacies in the risk control system.

Determining reasons for failure of risk controls

Risk control measures may fail for a variety of reasons.

Many organisational factors have an impact on the effectiveness of risk controls. Here are several reasons for failure of risk controls.

Workplace culture

There may be a low level of commitment of workers to uphold WHS practices. The commitment of PCBUs and supervisors may also be low. This could result in:

- equipment not being regularly or adequately maintained
- staff not being adequately supervised
- staff not being provided with appropriate WHS information and training.

Pressure to cut corners

There may be pressure to ignore or cut corners on safe work practices; for example, there may be pressure to meet deadlines or cut costs, causing workers to adopt shortcuts or remove safety guards on dangerous machinery.

Characteristics of the workforce

Cultural diversity of workers or low language, literacy and numeracy skills could mean workers are not able to understand safety signs and safe work procedures.

Worker location

If there are people working remotely or on a number of different worksites, it may be difficult to convey WHS information or encourage and monitor safe work practices.

Ineffective consultation

Expert WHS advice may not have been obtained, or control measures may be based on inaccurate information.

Inadequate installation

Machinery may be incorrectly installed so that risk controls are ineffective.

Addressing inadequacies

Once the inadequacies of existing control measures have been identified, new risk controls must be introduced.

However, this cannot happen without management approving the appropriate resources to support their successful implementation.

Resources may include:

- financial resources
- human resources, including WHS professionals
- time off from work for workers to be trained and educated in the new controls
- equipment or building modifications
- documentation, manuals and procedures
- personal protective equipment (PPE).

Example

Risk control worksheet

Here is an example of a risk control worksheet.

1. Factors assessed as a risk.

```
┌──────────────────────────┐         ┌──────┐        Eliminate job/task
│ Is the job/task necessary│────────▶│  NO  │───────▶
└──────────────────────────┘         └──────┘        Options:
              │                                       _____
              ▼                                       _____
          ┌──────┐                                    _____
          │ YES  │                                    _____
          └──────┘
              │
              ▼
```
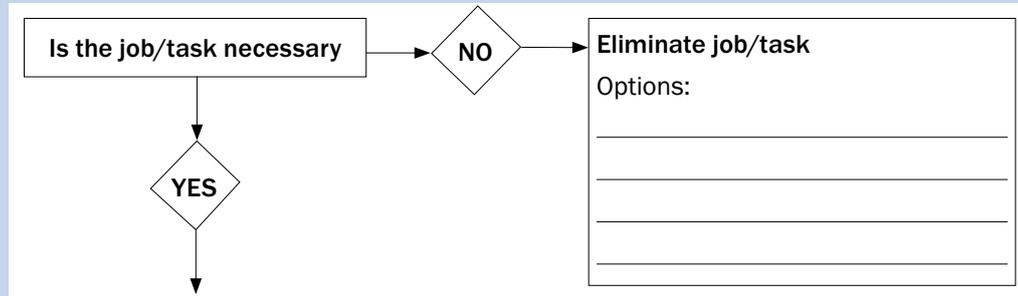
2. Is it practical to reduce the risk by using engineering controls?

Category	Options or actions	Time frame
Short term		
Medium term		
Long term		

3. Is it possible to reduce the risk by using administrative controls?

Category	Options or actions	Time frame
Short term		
Medium term		
Long term		

4. Is it practical to reduce the risk by using personal protective equipment?

Category	Options or actions	Time frame
Short term		
Medium term		
Long term		

Practice task 10

Question 1

A necessary responsibility is to check whether control measures are working as they should to protect employees from harm. Which of the following measures can be used by managers to check whether risk controls are effective? Select yes or no for each one.

a)	Conduct a follow-up risk assessment.	✳ Yes	✳ No
b)	Consult with workers on the impacts of the risk control measures.	✳ Yes	✳ No
c)	Hold management meetings to discuss the budget and resources invested into the control measures.	✳ Yes	✳ No
d)	Assess improvements in health and safety in the work area using reports and worker consultation.	✳ Yes	✳ No

Question 2

Which of the following can be useful in assessing and improving risk controls? Select all that apply.

☐ Providing sufficient finances to pay for risk controls to be implemented

☐ Implementing new equipment and machinery to improve productivity in the workplace

☐ Developing improved risk assessment tools

☐ Ensuring risks are assessed by HSRs, HSC members and workers

☐ Reporting on the outcomes of expenditure towards risk assessments

3D Seeking expert WHS advice

PCBUs have a legal responsibility to consult with workers and HSRs on the adequacy of risk controls.

HSRs should be involved in implementing risk controls because:

- they represent the workforce and ensure the workers contribute to discussions on health and safety
- their knowledge of the workplace allows better identification of hazards and adequate risk assessments
- they may have useful ideas about how different control measures may or may not work.

WHS consultants

Depending on the WHS issue, you may need to use a specialist consultant.

Calling on specialists for advice will help you determine the best way to manage workplace hazards.

However, it is important to evaluate their expertise and the relevance of their experience to the particular industry, problem and context. It is also important to clarify how the specialist will interact with the work group to obtain the required information. A specialist working in isolation without any input from workers may lead to flawed evaluations and inappropriate recommendations.

Here are some commonly used WHS consultants and their areas of specialisation.

Safety professionals

Safety professionals provide advice on developing and implementing systematic approaches to managing health and safety.

The Safety Institute of Australia (SIA) is the professional body for safety professionals.

Occupational therapists

Occupational therapists design the job, equipment and workplace to fit the worker to ensure health, safety and productivity are maintained at the highest levels.

For example, they can be asked to set up ergonomic workstations for office workers.

Occupational hygienists

Occupational hygienists apply a scientific, technical approach to identifying, assessing and controlling chemical, physical and biological agents that may affect workers' health.

For example, they may identify chemicals in office environments that workers may be exposed to.

Health professionals

Occupational health professionals design, implement and evaluate programs that maintain and enhance health, improve safety and increase productivity. They include occupational and environmental health nurses, occupational medicine physicians, industrial hygienists, environmental health surveyors, safety professionals and occupational health psychologists.

For example, an environmental health surveyor investigates working environments for exposure to microscopic biological hazards.

Toxicologists

Toxicologists plan and carry out laboratory and field studies to identify, monitor and evaluate the impact of toxic materials and radiation on workers' health and the environment. They may also analyse the impact of future technology.

For example, toxicologists test for radiation release and worker exposure around X-ray machines and radiation treatment machines in oncology departments.

Audiologists

Industrial audiologists specialise in identifying, diagnosing, treating and monitoring hearing disorders. They may assess and treat workers with hearing and related disorders. They may also fit hearing aids and provide auditory training.

Safety engineers

Safety engineers analyse plant and work systems to identify where faults can occur and propose safety requirements in design specifications to create safer work systems.

Consulting with a WHS specialist

Sue is the HR manager for a banking and finance company employing 600 staff. She has noticed an increase in the number of complaints relating to repetitive strain injuries to the back, neck, wrists and fingers. She has also seen an increase in the number of sick days taken for such injuries.

In discussion with line managers, Sue identifies that many people are remaining at their desks for long periods of time with minimal breaks, and are adopting poor posture at their workstations. Sue phones the Safety Institute of Australia for advice and they recommend employing the services of an occupational therapist.

Sue arranges for an occupational therapist, who is also a certified ergonomist, to perform the following services:

- Observe workers at their workstations to identify common issues.
- Conduct general ergonomic training with staff in small groups.
- Provide one-on-one workstation assessments with workers who are most at risk.

Three months after the visits by the occupational therapist, there is a 50 per cent reduction in the number of reported repetitive strain injuries and a 30 per cent reduction in the number of days of sick leave taken by staff.

Practice task 11

Identify a task or process in your work area that requires a risk control intervention and specialist advice, then answer the questions that follow.

Question 1

Briefly describe the task or process.

Question 2

Describe the safety issues you have identified.

Question 3

Identify a specialist WHS consultant who should be able to provide relevant information and services you require.

Summary

- A hazard is anything that may cause harm, injury or illness to a person, property or the environment.
- Hazard identification is the first step in the risk management process.
- Implement and regularly monitor a risk management process to ensure all hazards have been identified, risks have been assessed and adequate control measures have been implemented.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of risk controls to make sure they are having the desired effect.
- Use the hierarchy of control to determine which control measures to implement.
- A safe person approach focuses on changing the behaviour of the people in the workplace.
- A safe place approach focuses on risk controls that reduce the risks associated with the work environment.
- When seeking specialist WHS advice, evaluate the expertise and relevance of the consultant's experience to the particular industry, problem and work context.

Learning checkpoint 3
Establish and maintain procedures for risk management

Part A

1. Which of the following risk management procedures can be used to identify and control hazards? Select all that apply.

   ☐ Providing WHS training to new employees

   ☐ Setting up a health and safety committee

   ☐ Conducting regular audit activities

   ☐ Conducting risk analysis and assessment using statistical data, feedback from workers, consultation with WHS experts, and industry information

   ☐ Writing hazard management action plans

2. Which of the following procedures need to be in place to ensure hazard management procedures are effective? Select yes or no for each one.

   a) Compliance with WHS legal requirements   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   b) Accuracy in assessing risks   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   c) Low cost and low maintenance   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   d) User-friendly risk assessment tools   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

3. What strategies are needed to ensure new hazards are not created when proposed changes occur in the workplace? Select all that apply.

   ☐ The organisation's procedures should include the requirements to follow the hierarchy of control and an assessment of the hazards or risks associated with the changes.

   ☐ Change management procedures need to include allocating resources to identify and address any WHS impact caused by the change.

   ☐ Appropriate funds need to be withheld by management until after the changes have taken place and the impacts can be assessed.

   ☐ Feedback processes are needed to ensure any post-implementation issues can be raised and addressed.

4. A number of boxes have been stacked in front of a doorway.

    a) Explain how you would apply the hierarchy of control to select and implement appropriate control measures.

    b) Identify **two** factors that may reduce the effectiveness of your proposed risk controls.

5. Explain when it would be necessary to ask WHS experts for advice.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

A manufacturer that produces aluminium window frames receives complaints of excessive noise from nearby residents. Workers have also complained to management about noise levels, with many of them reporting headaches and migraines.

Current risk controls include workers wearing low-grade ear protection (earplugs or stereo headphones) and an administrative direction to close factory doors when making 'excessive noise', which is seldom adhered to. An environmental consultant is brought in to survey and assess occupational noise levels and provide solutions.

As a manager, you work closely with the environmental consultant. It is your job to implement any recommendations.

1. Describe the key issues that exist in the hazard management process at this workplace.

2. Which of the following procedures should be adopted to control existing hazards and ensure the proposed change will not create new hazards? Select yes or no for each one.

   a) Identifying hazards using hazard audits conducted by management and HSRs.   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   b) Implementing the proposed changes and delegating the task of reviewing the impacts after the first year.   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   c) Ensuring managers review hazard reports on a monthly basis.   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   d) Ensuring risk strategies are implemented properly and the required outcomes are achieved.   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

   e) Holding monthly off-site team building events that aim to improve team dynamics and communication.   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

3. Using the list below, what tasks will you need to complete before implementing procedures for any changes to the workplace? Select all that apply.

☐ Immediately release financial resources to redesign the workshop and purchase new PPE for workers.

☐ Consult with workers on their feedback about hazards, risks and controls.

☐ Delegate the task of carrying out a risk assessment to the workers.

☐ Consult with the environmental expert on dealing with noise hazards and control strategies to implement.

☐ Develop an action plan to monitor and review all proposed changes over the next six months.

Topic 4
Evaluate and maintain a WHS management system

As a manager, you need to prioritise the health and safety of your workers and include WHS in your planning tasks.

A work health and safety management system (WHSMS) for a work area can be used to help you manage workplace hazards and risks. It also helps to ensure workers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.

A WHSMS for a work area should form part of the organisation's overall WHS management system. It should include:

- clear roles and responsibilities
- safe work procedures
- training
- reporting processes
- resources for implementing and reviewing the associated risks.

All WHS management systems must be maintained and reviewed to make sure they comply with WHS laws and the needs of the organisation and its workers.

In this topic you will learn about:

4A   Developing and providing a WHS induction and training program
4B   Maintaining WHS records to identify patterns of injury and illness
4C   Evaluating the WHSMS
4D   Implementing improvements to the WHSMS
4E   Ensuring compliance with WHS legislation

4A Developing and providing a WHS induction and training program

Under WHS laws, the PCBU must provide sufficient training and instruction to workers so they can perform their job safely.

This means all workers must complete an initial WHS induction training course as well as ongoing refresher training courses. Efficient and well-trained workers are essential to safety performance, including reduced incidents.

Here are some key points on providing WHS induction and training.

WHS policies and procedures

All PCBUs have a legal responsibility to prepare new workers (including contractors and volunteers) for their job roles and ensure they understand all relevant WHS policies and procedures.

WHS legislative implications

Workers should be aware of the legislative implications of WHS as well as relevant policies and procedures. Training programs should ensure workers are equipped to perform their roles in a safe manner with minimal risks to themselves and others.

Health and safety hazards

Health and safety training programs may differ depending on the type of work being performed and the hazards and risks involved. For example:

- Office workers may need training in ergonomics, correct use of office equipment and emergency evacuation procedures.
- Construction workers may require training in using personal protective equipment (PPE), working at heights, use of tools and machinery and working with excessive noise.

Providing a WHS induction

All new workers should be provided with a WHS induction program before they start working.

This usually involves:

- a tour of the workplace (to identify emergency exits, safety signs and any restricted access areas)
- an explanation of workplace hazards and risks
- a demonstration of correct use of PPE, workplace equipment and machinery
- an explanation of workplace practices.

Workers should also be provided with a hard copy of the relevant WHS policies and procedures, or told how to access them electronically.

Your organisation may have a WHS induction checklist to make sure all of the relevant information is given to new workers during the induction period.

Here is an example of the information needed in an induction.

WHS induction information

- An explanation of the WHS duty of care and implications for workers
- Work instructions and any hazards and risks associated with specific tasks
- Fire and emergency response requirements
- First-aid facilities and procedures
- General health and safety policies and procedures
- Details of the HSC, HSRs and health and safety meetings schedule
- Specific WHS training programs, such as safe operation of equipment and risk management

Analysing WHS training needs of workers

Conduct a WHS training needs analysis to identify worker WHS skills and knowledge gaps.

This helps you work out what training must be completed to ensure that all workers have current WHS skills and knowledge. Training must be relevant to their job roles and the WHS issues that affect them in the workplace.

Here are the steps for developing a WHS training needs analysis.

Step 1: Benchmark WHS requirements

Start by analysing:
- workplace inspection data
- audit reports
- incident reports
- job descriptions
- job safety analyses
- minutes of HSC meetings.

Data from each of these sources will enable you to determine the standards by which you can measure worker performance.

Step 2: Determine current skills and knowledge

Determine workers' current skills and knowledge. This process may involve:
- one-on-one meetings
- surveys to identify current skills
- analysing each worker's qualifications and experience
- general observations.

Step 3: Identify competency gaps

Compare workers' current skills and knowledge with the benchmark requirements to determine future training needs. These may be developed in a training plan or matrix to enable further monitoring and evaluation.

Conducting mandatory training

Under WHS laws, workers must attend mandatory WHS training programs.

Workers may undertake training in:
- WHS compliance requirements
- WHS consultation for HSRs and HSCs
- WHS duty of care for PCBUs
- WHS risk management for PCBUs and team leaders
- industry-specific training (for example, working in confined spaces, working with infectious materials)
- emergency procedures.

Ongoing or refresher training may be required for workers who are involved in specialist activities that require specific licensing or regulatory requirements; for example, operating mechanical aids such as forklifts, cranes and other heavy machinery.

Training may be conducted by internal training personnel or by a health and safety officer in the workplace. In some cases, training may need to be provided by an external training provider or by a WHS management specialist. This is determined by workers' needs and industry requirements or levels of regulation that apply to the workers and the activities they undertake.

Coaches and mentors

Coaching and mentoring helps workers develop skills, attributes and knowledge designed to improve performance.

This type of activity is often closely linked to ongoing training programs and organisational change.

For PCBUs, this may involve:

- creating positive WHS values and beliefs (for example, encouraging everyone's participation in WHS decision-making and valuing their contributions)
- providing multiple workplace learning opportunities
- leading by example
- reinforcing WHS messages and positive work behaviours
- providing assistance on a day-to-day basis.

Example

WHS training matrix

Here is a WHS training program matrix for workers at the head office of a construction organisation.

Training requirements	Employee name				
	David Johns	Greg Knowles	Joseph Lee	Steven Davis	Will Fry
Site induction	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08
Basic fire extinguisher	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08
Emergency procedures	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08	15/08
First aid	22/11	N/A	N/A	22/11	N/A
Toolbox talks	17/08	17/08	17/08	17/08	17/08
Permit to work	17/08	**N/A**	**N/A**	17/08	17/08
Manual handing					
Conducting risk assessments			N/A		
Workplace inspections		N/A	N/A		

Practice task 12

Question 1

What topics should be included in a WHS induction for a new worker? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Organisational overview and site tour

- ☐ First-aid, fire and emergency response procedures

- ☐ Performance management procedures

- ☐ The customer service and sales process

- ☐ Work instructions and any hazards and risks associated with specific tasks

- ☐ WHS duty of care and implications for workers

- ☐ Details of the HSC, HSRs and health and safety meetings schedule

Question 2

Number each step from 1 to 4 to determine specific WHS training needs of a new worker.

- ☐ Develop a training plan that focuses on the gaps of the new worker.

- ☐ Gather evidence to determine the current skills and knowledge of the new worker.

- ☐ Locate or create benchmark WHS requirements for the worker's job role.

- ☐ Compare the new worker's current skills and knowledge with the benchmark requirements.

Question 3

How can you document the training needs of workers so that you can monitor and evaluate their progress?

4B — Maintaining WHS records to identify patterns of injury and illness

As a manager, you must have a record-keeping system that helps you identify patterns of work-related injury and illness.

You also need to keep a record of any WHS decision made, including the reasons for that decision.

Storing and maintaining WHS records

All WHS records of occupational disease and injuries must be stored and maintained in a simple and easy-to-read format.

Here are some considerations when storing and maintaining records.

Access and security

You need to be able to analyse and review WHS and relevant worker records. WHS records should be kept in a separate database or integrated into HR management systems. Records should also be secure, with access only available to authorised personnel in the organisation.

Types of records

The types of records kept by the organisation must meet legal reporting requirements and the organisation's needs from a WHS management perspective. Records must be stored securely and are subject to the same privacy requirements as any other worker records.

Storage and maintenance

Storing and maintaining WHS records enables an organisation to meet its legal obligations and effectively review and analyse information about WHS. These records also provide a useful tool for decision-making because they can be analysed to indicate WHS priorities and activities in the organisation.

Identifying patterns of injury and illness

Occupational injury and illness refers to the various types of harm that can be caused to workers when they are exposed to hazards.

Examples include:

- loss of hearing or vision
- skin burns and lacerations
- contact dermatitis
- respiratory conditions
- musculoskeletal disorders.

To identify the patterns of work-related injury and illness, you must analyse the relevant documents in your workplace to determine sources for each incident.

Injury/first-aid register

- Look for patterns such as an increased number of slips and trips.
- Analyse:
  - the number and types of incidents
  - whether there are peak times for incidents
  - the number of incidents per department
  - whether the same workers or job roles are involved.
- Consider whether work areas or work practices need to be modified.

Incident reports

- Consider the following:
  - Are similar incidents occurring in the workplace?
  - Are incidents occurring in the same place?
  - Are incidents the result of new equipment, poor training or workers not wearing correct PPE?
  - Have WHS resources decreased?
- The remedy will depend on the identified issues.
- Increased WHS resources must be applied as appropriate.
- Serious injuries may be investigated by the relevant WHS regulator.

Workers' compensation/rehabilitation records

- Patterns of repeated claims by individual workers or staff from specific areas may indicate more serious problems (for example, poor work morale, poor training or unsafe work practices).
- Monitor work processes in affected areas and apply treatments if necessary.
- Workplace psychologists may help to determine the cause of any morale issues.

Sick leave/absenteeism records

- Analyse these to determine reasons for absences (for example, there may be morale or bullying problems, or multiple workers experiencing similar illnesses).
- Consider the following:
  - Are there workers in particular areas or roles affected?
  - Is there a specific day it is occurring?
- You may need to conduct interviews and investigations to determine underlying causes.
- Where illnesses recur, environmental health surveyors may need to investigate.

Hazardous substances register

- Check that this is up to date.
- Check whether there is a correlation between an incident and the substances present in the workplace.
- Consider revising storage and/or handling procedures.
- Consider whether hazardous substances can be eliminated or substituted with less hazardous substances.

Equipment maintenance and testing reports

- Records may identify malfunctioning equipment.
- Consider the following:
    - Are there regular incidents concerning specific equipment?
    - Is maintenance up to date?
- Repair or replace damaged equipment.
- Consider eliminating the hazard by outsourcing the task.

Manufacturer and supplier information

- Check whether WHS issues and incidents are occurring because workers are not following manufacturer guidelines.
- Consider providing workers with training or refresher courses.
- Consider using administrative controls to restrict access to suitably trained operators.

HSC minutes/meeting agendas/documented discussions

- Check whether any WHS issues are repeatedly raised and discussed.
- Investigate whether WHS issues raised are being acted on.
- Ensure all WHS issues are investigated and resolved at the earliest opportunity, and that appropriate resources are applied to each situation.

Audit documents/reports

- These documents highlight:
    - areas where skills and knowledge are lacking
    - whether the work area is causing an increase in WHS incidents
    - whether changes to processes have resulted in an increase in incidents.
- Audit outcomes must be prioritised and addressed. They may include previously unidentified hazards, training deficiencies and record-keeping issues.

Induction, instruction and training

- Determine whether induction training is effective.
- Consider whether more incidents are occurring during the first three months of a worker's appointment.
- Determine whether incidents are occurring despite training.
- A training audit or validation may be required. Where deficiencies exist, you may need to source external training.

Documented results

- Check records to see the results of workplace testing, such as environmental testing, biological and physiological function testing and ergonomics assessments.
- Consider whether there is an increase in back problems or occupational overuse syndrome.
- More training may be needed in setting up ergonomic work stations.

You can see key WHS statistics for different industries in Australia at:

- http://aspirelr.link/key-whs-statistics
- http://aspirelr.link/work-related-injury-statistics

Example

WHS data analysis

Here is an example of WHS data analysis of working on an oil rig.

Agent of concern	Negative health effects	How it was identified
Noise	Progressive hearing loss	• Results of workplace environment testing
UV radiation	Sunburn, skin cancer	• Health and safety committee minutes • Results of workplace environment testing

Practice task 13

Question 1

Which of the following documents are suitable for analysing the patterns of work-related injury and illness? Select yes or no for each one.

a) Incident reports   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

b) Customer service complaints reports   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

c) Sick leave/absenteeism reports   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

d) Company sales and revenue performance reports   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

e) HSC meeting minutes   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

Question 2

What patterns might you look for in documents detailing work-related injury and illness?

4C | Evaluating the WHSMS

Quality is about achieving consistent outcomes that continuously meet a desired standard.

A quality system's framework in an organisation provides the benchmarks required to ensure that all systems, processes and procedures are of the highest standard. It embraces the concept of continuous improvement. It is important to measure and evaluate the work health and safety management system (WHSMS) in the work area against the organisation's own quality systems framework.

WHS quality systems

Certain quality systems must be adopted by an organisation to ensure hazards and incidents are eliminated or reduced as much as possible.

These must be addressed in the organisation's WHS policies and procedures. The following describes Standards that provide guidance on implementing WHS quality systems.

ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems – Requirements

└ This Standard is the benchmark for organisations with quality management systems in place, ensuring all systems, processes and procedures are of the highest standard and embrace the concept of continuous improvement.

AS/NZS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational health and safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use

└ This describes how to implement best practice health and safety management systems.

ISO 14001:2015 Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use

└ This details management specifications for sustainability and reducing environmental impact.

AS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Guidelines

└ This Standard provides an overall risk management approach for organisations and industry that includes WHS systems.

Evaluating internal systems

As a manager, you need to evaluate your internal WHS systems for your work areas to check whether they align with the organisation's quality systems framework.

The following example provides a description of work systems and how these might be evaluated.

System	Description	Evaluation
WHS induction system	A WHS induction system is established and implemented for all workers, including contractors.	• Induction has reduced the number of incidents that occur in the first three months of a worker's employment. • Workers report that they understand their WHS responsibilities, and their actions confirm this.
Roles and responsibilities	The roles and responsibilities of all workers and contractors are documented. Procedures are put in place to ensure these are distributed and understood.	• Workers consistently demonstrate they understand their job description and WHS responsibilities.
WHS documents and forms	WHS documents and forms are prepared, easily understood, stored correctly and accessible.	• Workers complete appropriate forms promptly and correctly.
WHS officers	A WHS officer is assigned. HSRs and HSC members are appointed where appropriate.	• Regular WHS meetings occur. • WHS is on the agenda for every worker meeting. • Workers are kept informed of WHS issues.
WHS policy statements	WHS policy statements are clearly written and regularly updated, providing information about: • the statement of intent (how the organisation intends to keep workers and visitors safe) • objectives (specific WHS targets the organisation wants to achieve) • consultation (how the organisation intends to consult workers on WHS) • training (how the organisation intends to provide WHS training to workers) • roles and responsibilities (specific tasks of workers) • accountability (who is responsible for specific WHS issues) • monitoring (how the organisation intends to monitor WHS).	• The policy is communicated to all workers. • The policy is regularly reviewed.

System	Description	Evaluation
WHS procedures	WHS procedures are clearly written, address legislative requirements and are stored correctly. They include systems and procedures to ensure: • the premises is maintained and secure • work practices are safe.	Procedures are working when: • injuries and illness are minimal • worker absences due to workplace issues are minimal • worker morale is high • workers are committed to WHS.
Controls	Controls are in place for suppliers, contractors and purchasers.	• A statement is included on purchasing forms about the standard suppliers are expected to meet. • Suppliers are asked to specify their WHS standards on quotes. • Suppliers are asked to provide WHS information on items. • Contractors are provided with a WHS induction and required to comply with company guidance on WHS matters.
Monitoring and review	Procedures are in place to regularly monitor, review and evaluate WHS policies, procedures and performance.	• Workers are allocated responsibility for this task and carry it out on a regular basis. • Results and recommendations are reported to management.
Resources	WHS is sufficiently resourced to ensure the organisation can meet its WHS obligations.	• Recommendations are promptly taken on board.

Lead and lag indicators

The effectiveness of a WHS management system can be determined by measuring progress and results against defined quality benchmarks called lead and lag indicators.

Lead indicators are used to predict or influence the future. For example, you might want to reduce the number of falls by implementing training on slips, trips and falls. Lag indicators are measures of results after they have occurred; for example, you can count the number of falls in a workplace by checking the incident register.

A lead indicator enables an organisation to take pre-emptive action to improve the chances of achieving strategic goals. This includes any measure or intervention that addresses or reverses a negative trend before it results in injury, loss or damage.

Lag indicators typically focus on measuring loss, such as lost time injury (LTI) and costs of injury.

Data on incidents and illnesses is necessary to do a final check on the effectiveness of WHS management systems. However, organisations should be cautious and avoid using them as the sole measure of performance.

Here are some examples of lead and lag indicators.

Lead indicators	Lag indicators
• Progress in completing risk-assessment program	• Absenteeism due to work-related illness
• Monitoring compliance with risk controls	• Reported unsafe acts
• Housekeeping standards	• Reported unsafe conditions
• Health surveillance reports	• Reported near misses
• Monitoring use of PPE	• Reported dangerous occurrences
• Results of sampling reports (for example, noise and air)	• Reported major injuries
• Monitoring effectiveness of WHS training	• Lost time injuries
• Awareness of new standards and WHS legislation	• Incidents requiring first aid

Practice task 14

Question 1

What is the international quality system standard that is adopted by organisations worldwide?

☐ ISO 25000:2019 Quality management in safety

☐ ISO 9001:2008 Quality and safety in the workplace

☐ ISO 2018:101 Quality systems

☐ ISO 9001:2015 Quality management systems

Question 2

Identify **three** things you could do to evaluate the internal WHS system in your workplace.

4D Implementing improvements to the WHSMS

All organisations must continually seek ways to improve WHS performance and reduce the risk of worker injury and illness.

Continuous improvement focuses on preventing problems through corrective actions to enhance health and safety in the workplace. Continuous improvement is a key concept in ISO-based health and safety management systems.

Continuous improvement is the process of improving the WHS management system in your work area to achieve enhancements in overall performance. This is achieved through regularly reviewing the organisation's policies, procedures and practices embodied in its WHS action plan.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is about taking a proactive approach to WHS and looking for ways to eliminate safety issues.

Once an issue requiring improvement has been identified, you will need to find its cause, determine the risks it poses to worker health and safety, and apply risk assessment techniques. You should then define a goal and set lead and lag indicators against which the improvement can be monitored and evaluated. Records should demonstrate whether the improvement idea is worth applying to other areas and what, if any, modifications are necessary.

Consider the following regarding WHS issues.

Adopt a proactive response

Senior management should adopt a proactive response with planned and sustained WHS initiatives. If the organisation is typically reactive in its response, this can be a sign that the organisation's WHS management system is failing.

A proactive response includes:

- researching new and more effective equipment, systems and work practices
- seeking advice on how to address the new requirements
- setting deadlines for implementing changes
- clearly assigning responsibility
- monitoring the implementation process
- regularly reviewing new arrangements to assess their effectiveness and value to the organisation.

> **Form WHS objectives**
>
> You should review the WHS system of your work area by analysing its ability to meet the organisation's WHS objectives and performance targets. Examples of organisational WHS objectives may include the following:
>
> - 5 per cent reduction in lost time incidents for the year
> - Improvement in lost time incident frequency rate from once a fortnight to once a month
> - Reduction in unplanned absences by three days per worker per year
> - Improvement in WHS compliance performance by 10 per cent across all areas of the organisation

Consultation and review

Consultation and review are both important parts of the continuous improvement process.

For example, while it may seem that incidents occurred because workers did not use protective clothing and equipment, issuing PPE may not solve the problem. Consultation with workers may reveal that the protective equipment is unsuitable for the task or the workers involved. The solution may be to investigate alternatives, such as amending safe work procedures.

Effective WHS reviews involve both senior management and individual business units. Senior management should be committed to periodic reviews of the WHS management system. Individual business units undertake reviews of WHS within their sphere of responsibility.

> **Reviews take into account:**
>
> - performance against business objectives
> - adequacy, effectiveness and suitability of the WHSMS
> - overall performance of the WHSMS
> - performance of individual elements in the WHSMS
> - internal and external factors affecting WHS management.

Implementing corrective actions

Action plans are a key tool in the continuous improvement process.

They should record actions and accountability. They should also include information on reporting channels and follow-up instructions that should be used when implementing improvements to the WHSMS in your work area.

Steps for implementing corrective actions
1. Communicate to management through management committees and formal WHS reporting channels.
2. Provide workers with training so they are skilled in following the changes to the correct standards.
3. Check and assess workers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to meet the required standards of the continuous improvement action.
4. Record expected completion times, dates for progress reports and the person responsible.
5. Sign off on actual completion date by the relevant authorised person.

Example

WHS action plan

Organisation: Library Person: Amanda Smith		Area for improvement: Phase out the use of A-frame ladders and replace with elevated work platforms (EWP), mobile scaffolds or platform ladders				
No.	Actions	Required outcome	Resources	Responsible	Target date	Sign off
1	Determine access equipment requirements to replace A-frame ladders currently in use.	List of quantity and working heights of EWPs, mobile scaffolds and platform ladders required for the site.		David – Site Supervisor	14/3	
2	Determine from list of requirements what items are to be purchased and what will be hired. Obtain quotes.	Most cost-effective solution to phasing out the use of A-frame ladders.	Supplier catalogues and price lists	Mike – Managing Director	15/3	
3	Order and arrange delivery of new access equipment.	New access equipment to be available on site.		Mike – Managing Director	16/3	
4	Prepare safe work method statements (SWMSs) for new access equipment.	Training reference for workers.	WHS regulations and codes of practice	David – Site Supervisor	16/3	
5	Provide training to all workers regarding correct application and use of new access equipment. Workers to sign toolbox talk minutes.	All workers to be aware not to use A-frame ladders and to be trained in use of alternative access equipment.	SWMSs and toolbox talk sheet	David – Site Supervisor Workers	17/3	

Practice task 15

Question 1

Which of the following statements about continuous improvement in WHS is correct? Select yes or no for each one.

a) It focuses on preventing problems, introducing corrective actions and improving performance to enhance health and safety in the workplace. ✳ Yes ✳ No

b) It aims to ensure the organisation meets its minimum requirements under the WHS laws. ✳ Yes ✳ No

c) Continuous improvement identifies issues that may impact worker health and safety and takes a proactive approach to addressing these issues, in consultation with workers, management and other stakeholders. ✳ Yes ✳ No

d) It is about responding to issues as they arise and taking quick action to minimise the damages caused by problems in the work environment. ✳ Yes ✳ No

Question 2

What processes would you follow if you were proactively addressing an identified WHS issue? Select all that apply.

☐ Conduct research and consultation with key stakeholders.

☐ Wait for complaints to be brought to the attention of management before taking action.

☐ Set deadlines for implementing changes in the work environment.

☐ Assign all responsibility for WHS performance to workers.

☐ Monitor the changes made in the implementation process.

Question 3

What information should be included in a WHS continuous improvement action plan?

4E — Ensuring compliance with WHS legislation

It is important for every manager to review the WHSMS in their work area to ensure it is compliant with the organisation's requirements under the WHS laws.

Structured reviews:

- ensure that organisational policies and procedures are applied effectively and comply with current legislative requirements
- drive continuous improvement processes
- provide opportunities to further develop the organisation's WHS systems and procedures
- enable the organisation to fulfil internal and external reporting requirements.

Reviewing WHS compliance

As a manager, you must continually review compliance with WHS legislation and regulations in your work area.

Elements to include in a review include:

- how well current WHS legislation, regulations and codes of practice are achieved within the operations of the policies and procedures
- how emerging WHS legislation will impact on the operations of the work team
- how new or revised guidance from trade associations and industry bodies applies to the work team
- how new or amended policies, procedures and instructions from the PCBU and management are applied by workers
- whether workers are complying with hazard reporting procedures as part of the WHSMS in the work area
- how effective implemented actions are compared to previous audit outcomes.

Conducting regular audits

The frequency and scope of any periodic management review should be defined by the needs of the organisation.

Here are tips on effective review processes.

Ensure they are regular

A frequent misconception of the review process for WHS compliance is that it should only be carried out annually. To be truly effective, you should integrate WHS reviews into daily, weekly and monthly reporting processes. Where possible, supervisors should be involved in this process at an operational and strategic level.

Check for compliance

You should regularly audit the WHS system to check that it complies with organisational standards, as well as WHS laws, regulations and codes of practice. This enables you to judge whether the system adequately meets the organisation's WHS objectives and complies with statutory guidelines.

Ensure they are effective

An effective system audit identifies the scope, frequency and methodologies to be used. It also determines whether the WHSMS conforms to planned arrangements and complies with legislation, and whether it has been properly implemented and maintained. It uses data from previous audits and provides information to management on the results of audits. It is also conducted by workers who do not have direct responsibility for activities being audited.

Use them to improve

The purpose of the audit should be made clear to all who are involved. This will encourage positive participation in the process and enable accurate data to be gathered. The purpose of audits is not to find fault and point blame at those workers or departments that do not comply. Rather, auditing should be treated as a useful tool in improving organisational effectiveness, and an essential part of an organisation's continuous improvement process.

Be prompted by change

Audits are usually performed on a regular basis, but may also be prompted by changes to processes, products or services, or the need to follow up on corrective action that has already been taken. The frequency of audits, particularly internal audits, is usually set according to risk, with high-risk areas or processes being checked more often. Audits may be conducted without prior notice or warning, but this would usually only occur when there are security, business or compliance concerns.

Watch this video on conducting safety audits.

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A defined audit process

Although the auditing process may differ between organisations, there are clear steps involved.

These steps are outlined below.

Step 1: Set policy for the audit

- Establish purpose and scope of the audit.
- Determine which standards, procedures and tools to use.
- Provide details of the audit team.
- Formulate the audit program.
- Determine audit report format and arrangements for responding.

Step 2: Conduct document review

- Supply relevant documentation to the audit team before on-site activities.
- Review documentation.
- Prepare the audit plan.
- Assign work to the audit team.
- Prepare work documents/checklists.

Step 3: Conduct on-site audit

- Conduct an initial meeting with senior management to introduce the audit team and confirm audit arrangements.
- Interview relevant personnel and gather evidence using checklists, copies of records, documents, samples and photos.
- List or report non-compliance issues.
- Establish a non-compliance register to monitor and review status.

Step 4: Prepare audit report

- Prepare a summary of the audit findings.
- Include details of any non-compliance.
- Develop a list of recommendations/considerations.

Step 5: Conduct follow up

- Review the non-compliance register to monitor progress.
- Check whether recommendations for improvement/compliance have been addressed.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="1" style="writing-mode:vertical">**Example**</td><td colspan="2">## Non-compliance report</td></tr>
</table>

Example

Non-compliance report

Here is a non-compliance report that identifies deterioration in WHS performance and offers suggestions for improvement.

Non-compliance report		
Identification	Date of audit	16 March
	Location	Super Chook Palm Beach, Townsville
	Responsible manager	Mr Ian Rysse
	NCR number	340413
	NCR raised by	Rob Corrup
Corrective action	Actions required	Workers' food-handling procedures have been rated as poor, with members observed not washing their hands between handling raw chicken and cooked meats. Workers must undergo a food-handling and hygiene refresher training within 7 days.
	Person responsible	Mr Ian Rysse
	Date to complete	23 March
Follow up	Describe actions undertaken:	
	Corrective action completed on:	
	Signature:	
Copies:	☐ Audit file	☐ PCBU

Practice task 16

Question 1

What processes can you use to drive continuous improvement in your work area?

Question 2

Which of the following are steps you can take to ensure policies and procedures are being applied effectively and comply with legal requirements? Select all that apply.

☐ Review the organisation's compliance to ensure policies and procedures are underpinned by current legislation, regulations and codes of practice.

☐ Access existing policies and procedures from the internet and adapt these to suit your organisation's requirements.

☐ Trial new WHS strategies and gather feedback from visitors, the public and customers to determine their impact on WHS performance in the organisation.

☐ Supervise and observe workers as they carry out their daily tasks to check they are complying with key areas of WHS.

☐ Gather feedback and information to measure how effective implemented actions are compared to previous audit outcomes.

Summary

- Every organisation must provide effective WHS induction for all new workers.
- WHS laws and regulations include an obligation for workers to attend training programs when WHS skills and knowledge gaps are identified.
- Conducting a WHS training needs analysis helps determine training needs to ensure all workers are aware of the WHS issues affecting them in the workplace.
- Effective WHS record-keeping systems are essential to be able to identify patterns of workplace injury and disease.
- Quality system frameworks outline the organisational structure, procedures, processes and resources needed to implement quality management.
- When evaluating your WHSMS against quality standards, use a mixture of proactive and reactive monitoring systems to evaluate the extent to which all WHS policies, procedures and objectives are being met.
- Continuous improvement focuses on preventing problems, taking corrective action and improving performance to enhance health and safety in the workplace.
- Structured reviews ensure the organisation's policies and procedures are being applied effectively and in accordance with legislative requirements.

Learning checkpoint 4
Evaluate and maintain a WHS management system

Part A

1. You are to provide induction training to a new worker in your work area. Which of the following topics should you include in the training? Select all that apply.

    ☐ Emergency evacuation/fire drill procedures

    ☐ Building maintenance systems

    ☐ Incident investigation and response procedures

    ☐ Common workplace hazards and risks

    ☐ Hazard identification and reporting procedures

    ☐ Notifiable incident reporting procedures

2. Which of the following are likely outcomes if the PCBU does not provide adequate training to new workers? Select yes or no for each one.

    a) Improved worker awareness around hazards, risks and reporting procedures   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

    b) Fewer incidents in the workplace   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

    c) Increased absences due to workplace injuries and illnesses   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

    d) Sanctions for WHS non-compliance by the WHS regulator that may include enforceable undertakings and fines   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

    e) Higher risk of an incident involving workers and the public   ✳ Yes   ✳ No

3. Which of the following types of WHS records are management responsible for completing and maintaining? Select all that apply.

    ☐ Incident reports

    ☐ Lost time injury reports

    ☐ Work team productivity reports

    ☐ Results of product quality audits

    ☐ Worker sick leave records or unplanned absences

4. Provide **three** reasons for why it is important to maintain WHS records.

5. List **four** WHS quality standards that apply to your role in the workplace.

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Doug works as a production manager for a food-processing business. The main production area where Doug is the manager has been running for six months without a major incident. There have been three near misses and one minor incident to a worker, leading to three days of lost time.

Doug conducts an audit on the existing WHS management system and uses the information gathered to identify gaps in the system. Doug helps supervisors conduct a number of hazard identification and risk control processes in each work area to determine the range of safety hazards present in the work area and assess the risks associated with each hazard.

Doug also researches information online about the food-processing industry and finds a number of useful guidelines and factsheets from industry associations and the health and safety regulator, as well as the local council. This information helps Doug understand the standards of performance that need to be achieved in the organisation.

Following his research, Doug works with each supervisor to develop a clear set of performance standards and competencies for each job role, which includes key standards of safety and hygiene. As a result, Doug and the supervisors develop a specialised training plan for each employee that explains the training gaps that need to be addressed.

The factory has now set WHS performance targets of zero lost time incidents and zero major incidents. The target for near misses and minor incidents is less than one per month.

1. Number each step in the correct order, showing the process that Doug used to identify WHS training needs in the factory area.

    ☐ He used industry information and guidelines from government publications.

    ☐ He established performance standards and competency requirements for the job roles.

    ☐ He set individualised training plans for each employee.

    ☐ He used the results of WHS audits.

    ☐ He used reports from hazard identification risk control reports.

2. What methods of performance measurement can Doug use to determine whether the WHSMS is compliant with WHS laws? Select all that apply.

    ☐ Gathering feedback from workers about hazards and WHS issues

   ☐ Keeping up to date with WHS industry trends

    ☐ Reviewing outcomes from ongoing audits or compliance activities

    ☐ Monitoring worker KPIs

    ☐ Assessing the competencies of workers following the training program

    ☐ Gathering data from hazard and incident reports and identifying trends

3. List **five** records that Doug should store and maintain so that he can better review the performance of the work area and the effectiveness of the WHS management system.
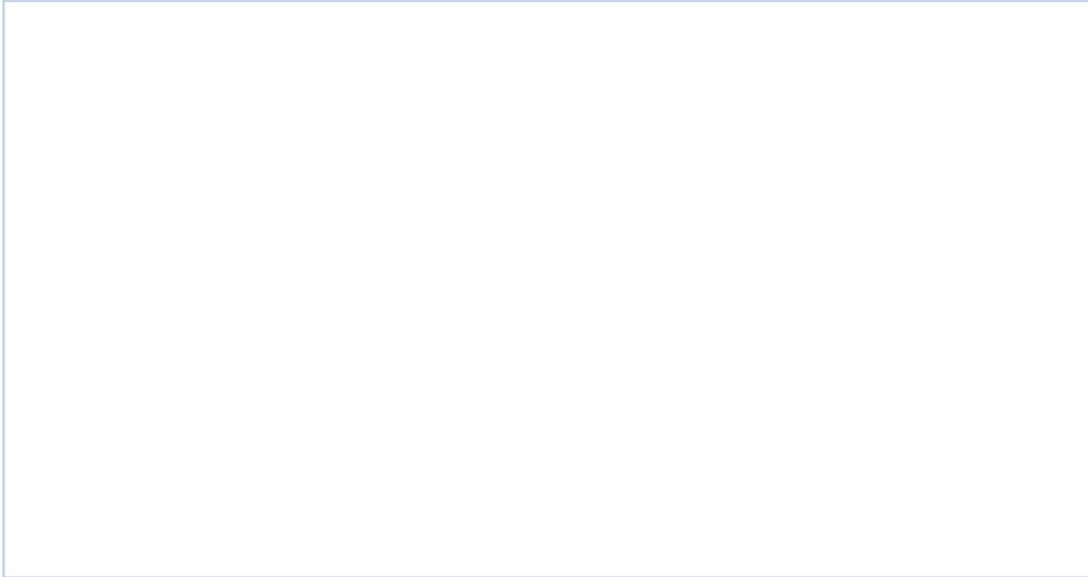
4. Describe how Doug developed and implemented improvements to the WHS management system.