

Risk Management Policy

Underlying Principles

The underlying principle of the 2001 Regulations is risk management that includes the process of:

- ❑ Identifying hazards – finding all hazards we have
- ❑ Assessing risks – judging how dangerous they are and ranking them in priority order
- ❑ Controlling hazards in the workplace – taking action to eliminate or control the hazards
- ❑ Monitoring and reviewing the process – working on it over time

This process will require consultation with all employees to ensure:

- ❑ a team culture is established and promoted
- ❑ many different points of view are examined
- ❑ safe thinking is encouraged across the whole workplace
- ❑ all staff support and comply with the regulations

The law says that employers must identify, assess and control hazards at work. As the employer's representative, the principal has a duty of care for all employees. This means that their safety is the responsibility of the principal.

Legislation requires the principal to:

- ❑ know the hazards in the workplace and judge how dangerous they are
- ❑ find ways to eliminate or control the hazards
- ❑ warn employees about the hazards and train them in safe work practices
- ❑ ensure that machinery, equipment and tools are always in a safe condition and are always used safely
- ❑ ensure that Material Safety Data sheets are available for every chemical in the workplace
- ❑ ensure that all chemicals and other substances which could cause ill health or injury are labelled properly, stored properly and listed in a workplace register.

Hazard Identification

A hazard is any person, thing or action in the work environment that could lead to someone developing an illness or sustaining an injury.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, (1983) requires that hazards be identified, assessed and controlled and that the workforce be consulted and involved in identifying hazards.

Hazards can be identified through;

- ❑ complaints
- ❑ consultation
- ❑ observations
- ❑ safety audits
- ❑ workplace inspections
- ❑ accident investigations
- ❑ injury, illness and near-hit records

Workplace hazards

Hazards in the workplace can be classified as:

- ❑ physical (such as inadequate lighting on stairs)
- ❑ chemical (such as insecticides or petroleum products)
- ❑ biological (such as fungi or rodents)
- ❑ mechanical (such as bared insulation on wires or using a mower without appropriate guards)
- ❑ psychological (such as interpersonal conflict)

Physical hazards

Knowledge of the type and frequency of workplace injuries allows employers and employees to investigate the causes of injuries:

- ❑ eliminate or control the hazards
- ❑ and significantly lower the risk of future injury.

Psychological hazards

The elimination or control of hazards which are the prime cause of psychological injuries are inherently more complex because the potential source is invariably people and interpersonal relationships. Healthy and safe workplaces require that all employees cooperate in identifying both physical and psychological hazards. The disgruntled, uncooperative or ineffective employee may be just as likely to cause a psychological injury to themselves or others as a slippery stairway is to cause a physical injury. In this context, employees include all members of staff and students in workplace.

The development and delivery of effective management strategies and well designed learning programs for students have a direct impact on reducing psychological injuries to staff.

Risk assessment

Hazards should be assessed according to:

- ❑ The severity of injury likely to be caused by a particular hazard
- ❑ The likelihood that the hazard will cause injury

The following table shows how to assess risks

How severely could it hurt someone or how ill could it make someone?	++ very likely (could happen at any time)	+ likely (could happen sometime)	- unlikely (could happen but very rarely)	-- very unlikely (not likely to ever happen)
*** kill or cause permanent disability or ill health	1	1	2	3
*** long term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
**medical attention and several day off work	2	3	4	5
*first aid required	3	4	5	6

The numbers reflect the importance of each hazard, in this table, a ranking of 1 is the highest priority, and these terms need to be addressed immediately. A ranking of 6 is lowest priority and would be addressed at a later date.

Risk Control

Having identified the hazards and placed them in priority order, the principal needs to consider what action to take. This may include:

- ❑ eliminating the hazard (or isolating it in the short term)
- ❑ changing the equipment or materials (e.g. by substituting a different material)
- ❑ changing the work methods (e.g. mitigating its effect by training or applying administrative controls)
- ❑ using personal protective equipment (PPE)

The following considerations should be employed;

- ❑ if the general assistant is unable to rectify a problem, the appropriate contractor should be notified.
- ❑ work instructions must be developed and displayed for all equipment and chemicals that could be a hazard. Staff are responsible for ensuring that work instructions are followed and that equipment and chemicals are used safely.
- ❑ personal protective equipment (PPE) **is the least effective way to reduce hazards**, but are nevertheless important, particularly regarding eye, hair and hearing protection.
- ❑ OH&S policies continually need to be developed in order to foster a culture of safety in our workplace.

Monitoring and Review

- ❑ Regular monitoring needs to be undertaken and processes established for staff to report new hazards as they become apparent. *See OH&S report form.(Appendix 1)*
- ❑ A regular program of hazard identification should be undertaken and included in the workplace calendar.

Safety Audit

A safety audit is a broad look at a workplace in terms of the safety of the major features of the site. It complements the detailed hazard identification process in workplace inspections. The outcomes from both processes should be combined in subsequent risk assessment and control activities.

A safety audit should involve all workplace employees, and be carried out annually.

Safety audits and hazard identification provide detailed assessments of the workplace which are to be used when consulting contractors on annual programs of work. High risk items on these assessments need to be strongly considered for immediate action.

Communication and Consultation

Our workplace should have a process for involving employees in identifying hazards, reporting problems and providing solutions to occupational health and safety issues.

A plan for effective risk management – a guide for new staff

1. Read the summary of the OH&S Act (1983) provided to you.
2. Read appropriate publications produced by Workcover.
3. Find out who is on the EH&S Committee, discuss any concerns you may have with an EH & S committee member as soon as possible.
4. Be pro-active in developing workplace policy and working with the committee.
5. Work collaboratively with staff in identifying and controlling hazards.
6. Review policies and procedures on a regular basis.
7. Involve yourself in the routine and cyclic monitoring of our workplace.

Last Review May 09 Next Review May 11

