WHS006 Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

Legal Application: As per WHS Act 2011 s.27(5)(b)(c) the 'officer', as part of their due diligence requirement must gain an understanding of the business operations to minimise the associated hazards and risks and ensure appropriate resources and processes are in place to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety. ch.3 of the WHS Regulation 2017 and Section 17 of the WHS Act 2011 address Risk Management generally.

Reference Documents:
- SafeWork Australia: How to Manage Workplace Health and Safety Risks – Code of Practice
- SafeWork NSW – Health and safety notes: Hierarchy of hazard controls
- SafeWork NSW – Hierarchy of controls: Fact Sheet

Purpose
To have a defined method of hazard identification, risk assessment and control so as to eliminate or minimise the potential for work place related injuries and incidents.

Scope
This procedure covers all workers and activities in the workplace.

Responsibilities
Management have the responsibility to:
- understand and implement the process and procedures of risk management
- ensure workers receive the necessary training and instruction in relation to risk management.

Workers have the responsibility to:
- ensure they follow the hazard identification processes of the workplace particularly with regard to notification of operational hazards as they may occur and to notify management immediately.
- follow any safe work practices that have been agreed in order to minimize the potential of incidents and accidents.
- consult with management on the identification, control and review of hazards and risks within the venue.

Terms

Term	Definition
Hazard	is an activity, object/toll, interaction or physical situation that has the potential to cause harm, either physical or psychological.
Hazard identification	is the procedure used to identify situations that could lead to injury
Risk	is the potential injury, incident or damage to property or people that could result from exposure to the hazard.
Risk Assessment	is the evaluation of the likelihood of an injury, incident or damage and the consequences or outcomes associated.
Risk Control	is how the risk associated with the hazard can be eliminated or controlled to reduce the risk.
Hierarchy of Control	the preferred order of risk control.

Procedure
The Process of WHS Risk Management (Refer to Hazpak Guidance document) and Code of Practice How to Manage WHS Risks)

The process works in the following steps:
1. Identify the Hazard
2. Assess the Risk
3. Eliminate or Control the Risk
4. Review

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1. Identify Hazard

Hazards are identified in any one of the following ways:

- Workplace Inspection
- Incident Investigation
- Observation by workers member, contractor or visitor
- When introducing new systems of work, procedures, plant or equipment
- WHS system audit, including HIISafe self audits.

If you identify a hazard in the venue:

- Stop the task you are doing
- Report the Hazard to your Manager on Duty immediately
- Ensure that either you or the Manager on Duty records the hazard and carries out an assessment of the risk through the Tasks/Hazards module on HIISafe.

2. Assess Risk

This will be undertaken by Management and/or the suitably qualified or trained person completing the workplace inspection. Using the Task/Hazards module in HIISafe enter all the details and use the Risk Matrix below as a guide to Assess the likelihood of a hazard or incident occurring and the potential severity / consequence of that incident. Use the matrix to determine the response rate to the hazard.

Risk Matrix (Hazpak- SafeWork)

Consequences – how badly could someone be hurt by this hazard?	**Likelihood –** how likely is it that the hazardous event could occur?			
	Very Likely Could happen anytime	**Likely** Could happen some time	**Unlikely** Could happen but very rarely	**Very Unlikely** May happen but probably never will
Death or permanent disability	1	1	2	3
Long-term injury of serious illness	1	2	3	4
Medical attention required	2	3	4	5
First Aid only	3	4	5	6

Risk Scores and suggested Action time frames

1 = Do something about this hazard immediately
2 = Do something about this hazard within 24 hours
3 = Do something about this hazard within 48 hours
4 = Do something about this hazard within one week
5 = Do something about this hazard within two weeks
6 = Do something when possible

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3. Control the Risks

The Hierarchy of Control is used to eliminate or reduce the risk. Elimination of a hazard is the best option. The lower the risk score the more important it is to try and use the high order controls preferably elimination, Personal protective equipment should only be used as an adjunct to other control methods or as a 'last resort'. For optimal outcomes, using a combination of controls should be considered.

The order of preference for hazard controls is:

1. **Elimination** – to completing eliminate or remove the hazard

2. **Substitute** – swap or change the hazard for something less hazardous e.g. substitute your equipment with something different or use a different process

3. **Isolation** – roping off or separating the hazard to a less hazardous environment to the general work area e.g. store hazardous item separately or cordon off area where hazard is found

4. **Engineering controls** – modifying the hazard or equipment to make the process or tasks less hazardous e.g. trolleys to move loads

5. **Administrative controls** – administrative activities to clarify processes or activities and reduce the risk e.g. training, creation of safe operating procedures, job rotation and policies

6. **Personal protective equipment** – tools, clothing and equipment worn by an individual to protect themselves whilst working e.g. gloves, eye protection, masks.

Complete the risk assessment with the preferred controls in consultation with Management.

Note that safe operating procedures (sometimes called safe work method statements or standard operating procedures) support a WHS procedure; they prescribe methods for carrying out certain procedures, types of work, tasks or operating equipment. Safe operating procedures are to be documented and readily accessible; they should form part of training for certain functions or tasks. The procedure describes the task and identifies the WHS risks associated with it; it details appropriate hazard controls and provides a 'blueprint' for completing the task safely. Employees should be consulted when safe operating procedures are developed.

Once the controls have been decided these must be agreed with management, implemented and then reviewed for effectiveness.

4. Review

This is a vital step in the Risk Management process. When implementing the controls a diary note should be created to review their effectiveness. The review process should involve consultation with the workers that are most affected by the hazard and the relevant controls.

Important: Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Hazard Elimination/Risk Control are processes that are ongoing. Any and every member of workers and management are expected to be diligent and responsible when it comes to identifying, reporting and controlling a risk. If you are aware of a risk associated with your work tasks report it to management

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