

**STUDENT GUIDE**

**SITXWHS006**

**Identify Hazards, Assess, And Control Safety Risks.**

|  |
| --- |
| SITXWHS006 Identify hazards, assess and control safety risks.  Application  This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to identify hazards, assess the associated workplace safety risks, take measures to eliminate or minimise those risks, and document all processes.  The unit applies to all tourism, travel, hospitality and event sectors and to any small, medium or large organisation.  All people working at all levels can participate in risk assessments which are commonly conducted as a team effort. Frontline operational personnel, who operate with some level of independence and under limited supervision, would assist other colleagues during the process. Individuals may conduct the assessments independently of others.  This unit incorporates the requirement, under state and territory work health and safety (WHS) legislation, for businesses to conduct risk assessments involving their workers to manage the safety of those workers and anyone else in the workplace.  No occupational licensing, certification or specific legislative requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication.  Prerequisite  Nil.  Learning goals   * Identify hazards. * Assess safety risks associated with a hazard. * Eliminate or control risks. |

1: WHS legislation and work health, safety, and security management systems

Work health and safety (WHS) and security is an incredibly important aspect of anyone’s role in a workplace. Without WHS policies, procedures, legislation and regulations, the number of workplace accidents, injuries and illness would be very high.

WHS applies to everyone in the workplace. It is not simply the responsibility of management.

WHS legislation

In the hospitality environment, there are a number of WHS requirements that must be followed.

Each state and territory in Australia has its own WHS/OHS (occupational health and safety) laws and regulations, as well as its own regulator.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Act** | Merger with solid fill | a piece of legislation that outlines the broad responsibilities/policy principles. |
| **Regulations** | Merger with solid fill | guidelines about specific areas that explain how the Act should be applied. |
| **Codes of practice** | Merger with solid fill | provide employers and employees with assistance on how to make sure they are following their legal and regulatory requirements. |
| **Standards** | Merger with solid fill | specifications, procedures and guidelines in a specific area that assist in maintaining quality, reliability, safety and consistency (such as the Food Safety Standards). |
| **WHS regulators** | Merger with solid fill | government bodies in each state that deal with matters relevant to WHS and enforce the laws. |

Let’s have a look at specific work health, safety, and security requirements. Note that the relevant state or territory is named after the Act or regulation.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACT** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT)](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35/default.asp) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (ACT)](https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/sl/2011-36/default.asp) * Codes: [ACT Codes of Practice](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/2198/kw/ACT%20Codes%20of%20Practice#!tabs-9) * Regulator: [WorkSafe ACT](https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/home/workhealthandsafety/worksafeact) |
| **NSW** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/act/2011/10/full) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (NSW)](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2017/404) * Codes: [NSW Codes of Practice](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-of-all-codes-of-practice) * Regulator: [SafeWork NSW](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-of-all-codes-of-practice) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Vic** | * Act: [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/occupational-health-and-safety-act-2004-23/031) * Regulation: [Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2017 (Vic)](https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/as-made/statutory-rules/occupational-health-and-safety-regulations-2017) * Codes: [Compliance codes and codes of practice](https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice) * Regulator: [Work Safe Victoria](https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice) |
| **Tas** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (Tas)](https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2012-001) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (Tas)](https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sr-2012-122) * Codes: [Codes of practice](https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice) * Regulator: [WorkSafe Tasmania](https://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/) |
| **SA** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)](https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/A/WORK%20HEALTH%20AND%20SAFETY%20ACT%202012.aspx) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2012 (SA)](https://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/LZ/C/R/Work%20Health%20and%20Safety%20Regulations%202012.aspx) * Codes: [Codes of practice](https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/law-compliance/laws-regulations/codes-practice) * Regulator: [SafeWork SA](https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/law-compliance/laws-regulations/codes-practice) |
| **WA** | * Act: [Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984 (WA)](https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/dmirs_law_a555.html) * Regulation: [Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 1996 (WA)](https://www.slp.wa.gov.au/legislation/agency.nsf/dmirs_law_s4665.html) * Codes: [Approved codes of practice](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/approved-codes-practice) * Regulator: [WorkSafe WA](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/) |
| **NT** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 (NT)](https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/WORK-HEALTH-AND-SAFETY-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011 (NT)](https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/WORK-HEALTH-AND-SAFETY-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-REGULATIONS-2011) * Codes: [Codes of Practice and other guidance material](https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/forms-and-resources/bulletins/codes-of-practice-and-other-guidance-material) * Regulator: [NT WorkSafe](https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/) | |
| **Qld** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2011-018) * Regulation: [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld)](https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0240) * Codes: [Codes of practice](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice) * Regulator: [Work Health and Safety Queensland](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/about-us/about-workplace-health-and-safety-queensland) | |
| **Commonwealth** | * Act: [Work Health and Safety Act 2011](https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2011A00137) * Regulations: [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-work-health-and-safety-regulations) * Codes: [Model Codes of Practice](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice) * Regulator: [Safe Work Australia](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-work-health-and-safety-regulations) | |

WHS legislation has been harmonised with the aim to have balanced and nationally consistent WHS legislation. The Commonwealth legislations listed above are is framework to which most Australian states and territories (with the exception of Victoria and Western Australia) have modelled their own legislation and regulations.

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Use the Internet and take some time to browse the website of your state or territory’s regulator. You will find resources, industry specific WHS information and WHS news.  Take notes on what you learn and share them with the class in a group discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

WHS responsibilities

As mentioned above, everyone is responsible for a safe workplace. Let’s now look at the roles and responsibilities of employers and employees in relation to WHS.

Duty holders

A duty holder refers to any person who is responsible for ensuring the safety of a group of people or an organisation. The WHS Act and WHS Regulations require:

|  |
| --- |
| *‘persons who have a duty to ensure health, safety, and security to ‘manage risks’ by eliminating health, safety, and security risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if it is not reasonably practicable to do so, to minimise those risks so far as is reasonably practicable’.* |

(source from: <https://www.comcare.gov.au/promoting/duty_holders>)

A duty holder can be:

* a PCBU
* an officer
* a worker
* other, such as volunteer.

See <http://www.comcare.gov.au/promoting/duty_holders> for more information about duty holders.

Employer responsibilities

Employers are legally obligated to ensure that their workplace is safe for all employees and visitors.

* All employees must be provided with the necessary training and information to ensure they can work safely (aside from the ‘standard’ WHS training, this will include food safety and chemical safety).
* Information must be provided in a language and format that employees are able to read (not all employees may be comfortable reading English-language documentation.
* Personal protective equipment must be available for all employees.
* All equipment on site must be safe and regularly maintained.

Image by [Anna Tarazevich](https://www.pexels.com/@anntarazevich/) on [Pexels](https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-man-and-a-woman-preparing-a-pizza-6937441/)

* Employers must ensure employees are not bullied, harassed or intimidated at work.
* Systems and processes must be in place for hazards to be reported.
* The workplace environment must be free of hazards and safe for employees and visitors.
* Notifiable incidents must be reported to the state or territory regulator.
* Physical health of employees must be monitored (especially important in food services).
* Employers must have a WHS record keeping system in place.
* Employees must be encouraged and feel free to contribute to consultative activities.
* WHS policies, procedures and forms must be in place and employees must know where to locate them.

Employee responsibilities

Employees are also obligated to ensure that the workplace is safe for their fellow colleagues and visitors.

* Participate in WHS training as required of their job role, and any refresher training.
* Employees must have the required qualifications, certificates or licences that are relevant to their job role.
* Be familiar with, and be able to access, WHS information related to their job role.
* Report any unsafe practices observed.
* Wear the personal protective equipment required of their role.
* Work and behave in a safe manner at all times, thus ensuring as much as is practicable, their own safety and that their colleagues and visitors/customers to the workplace.
* Use equipment safely by following manufacturer’s instructions, reporting faults or other issues, and using the equipment for its actual purpose.
* Follow instructions provided by the employer (unless they are deemed unreasonable).

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Share with the group why you believe employers and employees have the responsibilities listed above, and what could happen if either party did not meet their responsibilities.  Share your findings with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Warning | When we talk about safety, it is common to think only about physical safety. However, safety also includes personal welfare/wellbeing. Occupational violence and bullying and harassment have been given greater publicity in recent times. This type of behaviour can come from not only those you work with, but also customers, suppliers and others external from your workplace, but who you interact with as part of your job role. | Warning |

WHS management system (WHSMS)

In order to ensure that all responsibilities are met, organisations often establish a WHS management system.

The WHSMS:

* Helps ensure the safety employees, customers and others who use or are impacted by the work of the organisation.
* Enables effective management of anyone injured or harmed as a result of workplace activities.
* Allows the business to discharge its mandated WHS obligations.
* Provides the framework for effective WHS record keeping.
* Gives guidance to staff on how they might work cooperatively and collaboratively with each other and management of the business to optimise workplace safety.

The WHSMS will usually comprise of:

* A commitment by management to workplace safety, meeting their legal obligations and discharging all requirements under applicable WHS legislation.
* Dedicated and supporting WHS policy and procedures.
* Relevant and well-communicated safety goals and targets with clear KPIs.
* Job and workplace-specific induction and orientation coupled with task-relevant workplace training and on-the-job coaching.
* Supply of sufficient, appropriate and suitable resources to enable safe performance of allocated tasks and adequate facilities for their welfare.
* Presence of safe work processes.
* Appropriate protocols for the management of WHS incidents and accidents.
* Suitable and effective monitoring and supervision of work.
* Presence of an active workplace safety structure comprising work groups and employees, HSRs, an HSC, and a nominated management representative.
* Regular, comprehensive and effective workplace hazard inspections.
* Establishment of mechanisms to support and enable WHS reporting, communication and information-sharing including those relating to ‘notifiable incidents.
* Presence of comprehensive and up to date WHS records.
* Regular review and, where necessary, revision, of established WHS protocols.

WHS Plan

The WHSMS will most likely include a plan which is to be used by everyone within the organisation to implement the WHSMS and to set goals to improve WHS performance. The plan may be a checklist or template that is to be used to identify and prioritise WHS hazards and plan action to reduce risks.

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Review the WHS Action Plan at the following link.  Website: <http://www.csu.edu.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0010/2247904/Safety-Management-Plan-Template.docx>  Share your thoughts about this WHS Action Plan with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

2: Identifying hazards and assessing and controlling risks

As indicated in the previous topic, it is a legal requirement that workplaces are free of hazards and safe. This means hazard identification and risk assessment and control is an essential part of WHS and are also necessary to meet legislative requirements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | A **hazard** is the thing or situation that causes injury, harm or damage. |
|  | A **risk** is the chance of a hazard hurting you or somebody else or causing some damage. |

If you can remove or at least control a hazard, you can reduce the risk involved.

Identifying hazards

Hazards may be associated with the following:

* the physical environment, for example:

Image by [Odd Fellow](https://unsplash.com/@odd_fellow) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/M8_wXGEjUVg)

* + crowds
  + electricity and gas
  + flooring
  + lighting
  + noise levels
  + pests
  + working space
* plant and equipment, for example:
  + major equipment in the kitchen, including ovens, stoves, fridges, freezers, cool rooms, mixers and so on
  + small appliances
  + beverage dispensing systems using inert gases
  + knives and other sharp utensils
* working practices, for example:
  + length of time spent doing a certain task
  + allocation of breaks
  + rostering and shift allocation
  + opening and closing procedures
  + standard operating procedures for work-related tasks
  + manual handling
* security issues, for example:
  + customer behaviour
  + storage of cash, documents and keys
  + personal safety
  + theft and robbery

|  |
| --- |
| SHARE PLATE |
| In a group, think about the work completed in a hospitality environment and brainstorm hazards that were not in the list above.  Share your thoughts with your trainer and the rest of the group. |

Identifying safety risks

All workplaces should have procedures in place that explain how and when hazard identification activities are undertaken. Aside from formal processes, there are a number of ways that all employees can keep on top of hazard identification, which can include:

* taking regular walks around the workplace and looking for anything that may be a concern
* observing how plant and equipment are used
* looking at how plant and equipment are installed
* identifying what chemicals are available and what they are used for
* observing handling of hazardous substances
* observing employees for practices that are not safe, healthy or that put themselves or others (and the premises) at a security risk
* examining the general state of housekeeping.

Furthermore, if someone in the workplace tells you about a hazard or mention something that you feel is a problem, you must take action to report it.

An employer should:

* analyse incident reports, worker complaints, reasons for sick leave
* review plant and equipment maintenance records
* source safety data sheets and instruction manuals from manufacturers and suppliers
* source information from industry associations, unions and their state or territory regulator.

Legislation dictates that hazard identification activities must also occur when changes to the workplace are implemented, including:

* before the premises are used for the first time
* before and during the installation or alteration of any plant
* before changes to work practices are introduced
* when any new information relating to health, safety, and security risk becomes available.

|  |
| --- |
| SHARE PLATE |
| In a group, discuss why you think the legislation indicates the above requirements for hazard identification.  Share your thoughts with your trainer and the rest of the group. |

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| In this video WorkSafe Victoria safety inspectors discuss how to perform safety inspections.  Top tips for doing a safety inspection in your workplace.  Video: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-and-publications/video-and-audio/top-tips-doing-safety-inspection-your-workplace> (05:39)  Share your thoughts about this video with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

Risk management

The video you just watched discussed the process of identifying hazards and taking action to assess and control them.

Risk management is the process of reducing or managing the risks when working with a hazard or in a hazardous situation. Risk management is made up of the following stages:

|  |
| --- |
| Identify any potential hazards (dangers). |
|  |
| Assess the risks (that is, determine the result of any potential injury and the likelihood of it occurring). |
|  |
| Control the risks. |
|  |
| Monitor the effectiveness of implemented controls. |

Risk assessment

To be able to manage risk you need to recognise the hazards you may encounter in the workplace. This is done by completing a risk assessment.

A formal process to assessing hazards and risks involves:

* conducting an inspection of the premises
* consulting with others.
* observing workplace policies and workplace-specific procedures.

A risk assessment requires a risk analysis and a risk evaluation to be completed. By assessing the likelihood and consequence of the risk you will able to understand the situation better and respond in an appropriate way.

It is important to conduct a risk assessment should be done when:

* there is only limited knowledge about a hazard or risk, or about how the risk may result in injury or illness:
* there is uncertainty about whether all of the things that can go wrong have been identified
* the situation involves a number of different hazards that are part of the same work process or piece of plant and there is a lack of understanding about how the hazards may impact upon each other to produce new or greater risks.

Risk analysis involves considering the causes and sources of risks and comprises three factors: consequence, likelihood and risk.

Image by [ThisisEngineering RAEng](https://unsplash.com/@thisisengineering) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/ftd-Qk0om20)

Risk analysis involves considering the causes and sources of risks and comprises three factors: consequence, likelihood and risk.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Consequence | What would be the outcome of the event occurring?  How severe would the outcome be? |
| Likelihood | What is the chance of the event/consequence happening?  Has the event/consequence happened before?  Is it likely to happen again? |
| Risk level | The combined result of likelihood and consequence. |

You can analyse the level of risk by using a table to identify the severity or insignificance of the consequence:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LIKELIHOOD** | **CONSEQUENCE** | | | | |
| **Insignificant** | **Minor** | **Moderate** | **Major** | **Severe** |
| **Almost certain** | M | H | H | VH | VH |
| **Likely** | M | M | H | H | VH |
| **possible** | L | M | H | H | VH |
| **Unlikely** | L | L | M | M | H |
| **Rare** | L | L | M | M | H |

You can then evaluate how soon you should act to remove or control the hazard to achieve an ‘acceptable’ level of risk. Any task with a very high level of risk level is unacceptable.

| **Risk level** | **Action** |
| --- | --- |
| Very high | The proposed task or process activity must not proceed. Steps must be taken to lower the risk level to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls. |
| High | The proposed task or process activity can only proceed, provided that:   * The risk level has been reduced to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls * The risk controls must include those identified in legislation, Australian Standards, code of practice etc. * The risk assessment has been reviewed and approved by the supervisor or other relevant personnel * A safe working procedure or safe work method has been prepared * The supervisor must review and document the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls. |
| Medium | The proposed task or process can proceed, provided that:   * The risk level has been reduced to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of controls * The risk assessment has been reviewed and approved by the supervisor or other relevant personnel * A safe working procedure or safe work method has been prepared. |
| Low | Managed by local documented routine procedures, which must include application of the hierarchy of controls. |

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| There are also other risk assessment methods that can be used.  Website: <https://www.clarizen.com/best-qualitative-risk-assessment-methods/>  Share your thoughts about this article with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

The hierarchy of controls

The best way to have an injury-free workplace is to get rid of hazards. If the hazard cannot be eliminated completely, then the risk needs to be minimised. The hierarchy of controls are the actions that can be chosen from to control the hazard. These are known as hazard control measures.

| **Control measures:** | **Can be done by:** |
| --- | --- |
| Elimination | Removing the hazard completely |
| Substitution | Substituting the hazard with something safer |
| Engineering measures | Making changes to plant and equipment or isolating workers from it |
| Administrative/safe work practices | Minimise any remaining risk with administrative controls, such as training |
| Personal protective equipment | If a risk still remains, use personal protective equipment to keep employees safe |

Controls are generally implemented either at the site of the hazard or where it comes from, where it travels or its path, or with the employee.

There are some instances that you may need to refer the decision to a higher staff member for implementing a control measure. These can include:

* When the process to control the risk needs to have:
  + new equipment installed
  + contractors to come out and fix equipment or change something such as remove or replace a bench or shelf that staff have identified as being a hazard
  + specialised training such as a new cryo-vac machine has been installed and staff need to be trained on how to use it safely before they can use it
  + or specialists need to be involved such as an occupational therapist to determine if the procedure for using the cryo-vac machine will cause muscular issues.
* If the control measure is outside of the person’s responsibilities.
* If the control measure needs to be implemented immediately for staff safety (if not controlled immediately may cause serious injury) such as the blender cord has frayed and has exposed wires, so a new blender needs to be purchased immediately for service to continue or there is a gas leak.

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Read SafeWork SA’s detailed article about hazards and risks for kitchen workers. There are some great control measures included.  Website: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workers/types-of-workers/kitchen-workers>  Share your thoughts about this article with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

|  |
| --- |
| what’s cooking |
| Divide into small groups. Ensure that you divide the work equally.   * Using the hazard checklist provided by your trainer, complete a simple hazard inspection checklist and look over the training kitchen or your RTO facility for hazards. * As a group, determine and score the level of risk using the risk table shown previously. * Note down the diverse opinions of the group. * Use the hierarchy of controls and identify what controls could be put in place. Are there any controls currently in place that may not be working?   Present your findings to your trainer and the group. |

|  |
| --- |
| what’s COOKING? |
| Assume that you have been asked to implement one of the risk controls and this is training for staff about safe manually handling.  In small groups research this topic and then create a presentation that could be used to present the information that you have researched.  The information researched must be professionally presented and in a clear, easy to follow structure.  The presentation should be visually appealing with transitions, animations and consistent styles and colours.  Once your presentation is complete you will be required to present it to the rest of the group.  During the presentation you must demonstrate effective communication skills including:   * speaking clearly and concisely * using non-verbal communication to assist with understanding * asking questions to identify required information * responding to questions as required * using active listening techniques to confirm understanding.   As you are undertaking this activity with a team, each person in the group must contribute equally to the design, development of the presentation and also each member must take part in the delivery.  The trainer/assessor and fellow students will observe you conducting the presentation, ask questions at the end and provide feedback on the information presented and the presentation style. |

Monitoring controls

Just because a hazard has been identified and actions have been taken to address it, this does not mean that business can go on ‘as usual’ and everyone forgets about the hazard.

Not all controls implemented may work, and this can be due to a number of reasons:

* employees are not trained on the new processes or systems put in place
* new systems and processes are not communicated
* the control is only suitable in specific circumstances (that is, the full range of conditions relevant to the hazard were not considered)
* the controls introduce another hazard.

Monitoring should occur on an ongoing basis, making sure that the hazard has been effectively controlled and that no new issues are arising. This can be done by:

* regularly observing the work activity or process and seeing the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the implemented control (for example, how many people are using safety guards on that have been installed on kitchen equipment, or how many people are using manual handling equipment to move heavy loads)
* looking for new hazards (for example, has the introduction of manual handling equipment such as trolleys lead to an increase of near misses because people are not manoeuvring them safely through the kitchen)
* determining whether the problems have in fact been solved or simply lessened in impact or volume (for example, how many employees are still complaining of back ache or similar, or how many employees are still using poor lifting techniques when moving loads on to the trolleys)
* making sure awareness of the hazards and controls have been communicated (for example, does everyone know that there are trolleys available to help move heavy loads?)
* asking employees whether they believe the controls are working (for example, you may find out that the trolley wheels don’t turn corners very well and are causing some issues that could lead to accidents or breakage)
* reviewing accident/incident records and looking for a decrease in reports related to the specific area.

Record keeping

WHS record keeping is vital as part of the WHS system. It provides:

* valuable data for analysis
* identification of safety, security, accident and injury trends
* patterns of behaviour in the work environment and their relationship to accidents and injuries
* cycles of events and their relationship to external and/or internal factors
* the correlation between safety and productivity
* cost analysis
* issues that have not been picked up by employees or management.

WHS is also a legal requirement, therefore the workplace will be demonstrating compliance with their state or territory’s WHS/Act.

Records will provide both quantitative and qualitative data:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Document with solid fill | **Quantitative data** is numerical information that can be translated into statistical information. This is useful in identifying trends and patterns. |
| Document with solid fill | **Qualitative data** provides more subjective information and provides deeper insight into situations and behaviours. For example, it may include the written observations of a witness to an incident or accident. |

The types of WHS records that need to be completed and maintained and that will assist in hazard identification and risk control may include:

* audit reports
* training records, including training needs analysis and action plans
* induction records
* hazard and incident reports
* incident investigations
* risk assessments
* policies and procedures
* communications with the WHS regulator
* records of alcohol or drug testing (where applicable to the workplace)
* WHS meeting minutes and agendas (or evidence of other consultative activities)
* A picture containing text

  Description automatically generatedmonitoring reports and recommendations for change, including effectiveness of:
  + agendas for and minutes of meetings
  + committee members
  + consultation decisions and follow-up actions
  + consultation processes
  + diaries of meetings
  + work health, safety, and security information provided to personnel
  + risk controls
  + safe work practices

Image by [Alexander Grey](https://unsplash.com/@sharonmccutcheon) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/tn57JI3CewI)

* equipment registers
* plant and equipment manufacturer instructions
* records of equipment inspection and maintenance/testing
* SDS and dangerous goods registers
* first aid records
* workers’ compensation and rehabilitation records
* workplace environmental monitoring records.

All records must be completed accurately and must be filled out legibly (that is, the person’s handwriting can be easily read). This is especially important with accident/incident report forms because there may be a need for the report to be submitted to the WHS regulator if the situation is a notifiable incident.

What can you do with WHS records?

Records and information can be analysed and used to assist future management of WHS. Examples include:

* Equipment maintenance and testing reports can provide information about the reliability of equipment and whether there are specific parts that continue to fail; these reports can also provide information about the reliability of the manufacturer.
* How many accidents, injuries or near misses are occurring in specific work areas (for example, are the kitchen staff having more safety issues than the wait staff?).
* What activities are being performed when accidents, injuries or near misses occur (identifies the need for further training in an area, or whether equipment is a problem).
* What times accidents, injuries or near misses are occurring and how long the person/people involved have been work (for example, is there an indication that fatigue is leading to WHS issues).
* What area of work or work activity has been identified as having the hazards with the highest level of risk?
* How often are people calling in sick?
* Has there been a reduction or increase in WHS issues in certain areas?
* Is reporting accurate?
* What controls are to be put in place and have they been effective?
* Have all controls and changes discussed as part of consultation actually been implemented?
* How many security breaches or issues have been identified/reported?

All data can be used to look for areas for improvement. It’s important to make sure that the data is relevant, current and reliable. Historical data can be used to determine a baseline, but you need to be measuring current performance to be able to take appropriate actions.

3: Consultation and hazards and risks

A person conducting a business or undertaking must consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health, safety, and security matter.

Consultation is a legal requirement. Consultation should be a communicative, two-way process and consider the geographical location, availability and diversity of workers. Effective consultation:

* considers workplace culture
* is led by senior management
* provides contribution and feedback
* integrates with other systems in the organisation.

Consultation can lead to fewer workplace injuries and it can provide a way to discuss and share WHS concerns, identification of hazards and risks, implement solutions, and contribute to decision making.

Consultation can be through elected health and safety representatives and/or health and safety committees.

Health and safety representatives

You may have already heard the term health and safety representatives (HSRs), or this may be the first time you have heard about them.

Some workplaces will have an HSR. Some may have more than one, depending on its size and the different types of work that is conducted. This person is normally elected by the employees to represent them in relation to work health, safety, and security issues. This role is important as not all employees may feel comfortable approaching management about work health, safety, and security issues, especially if it involves reporting something they have seen another person do.

A group of chefs in a kitchen

Description automatically generatedEmployees can talk to the HSR about their concerns, who will then discuss them with management. This encourages a consultative environment.

Image by [Mealpro](https://unsplash.com/@mealpro) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/bqrz4lyA3PM)

Health and safety committees

Health and safety committees consist of a group of workplace representatives who work with the employer to discuss and act on WHS issues. The committee can include HSRs. Committees are usually created in large workplaces so that representatives from different departments or areas can come together to talk about health, safety, and security.

A good example of when a committee may be required is in a hospitality venue that includes accommodation, food and beverage services (such as a restaurant, bar and café), health and fitness (i.e. gym and spa facilities), gaming facilities and events. Each of these venues will have quite different concerns about health, safety, and security.

|  |
| --- |
| lift the lid |
| Have a look on your state or territory regulator’s website about the role of an HSR and:   * how they are elected * their responsibilities and powers * how they work with both employees and the employer.   Share your findings with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Watch the following video on a day in the life of a health and safety representative.  Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=a2tgvsCtKuA&feature=emb_logo> (01:48)  Share your thoughts with your group in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

Effective consultation for health, safety, and security risks in the workplace

|  |
| --- |
| LIFT THE LID |
| Your trainer will show a video developed by SafeWork NSW that discusses WHS consultation.  Consultation@work: the basics.  Video: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/safety-starts-here/consultation@work> (04:40)  Share your thoughts in a discussion facilitated by your trainer.  Trainer: show the video to the group and encourage discussion about why consultation is so important in having a good WHS culture. |

Consultation gives people the opportunity to participate and share information about work health, safety, and security.

Consultation is a legal requirement and an essential part of managing health, safety, and security risks.

Consultation with employees must take place for work health, safety, and security matters including:

* undertaking risk management activities
* proposing changes that may affect the health, safety, and security of workers
* making decisions about any work health, safety, and security procedures
* the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers.

When you share WHS duties with another employer or business, you must consult, cooperate and coordinate with each other and any workers of the business whose health, safety, and security is likely to be affected.

Consultation arrangements include:

* establishing consultation arrangements that suit the consultation needs of employees
* electing health and safety representatives to represent and investigate health, safety, and security issues
* health and safety committees facilitating cooperation and helping to develop work health, safety, and security policies, standards, rules, and procedures.



Image by [Mealpro](https://unsplash.com/@mealpro) on [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/photos/inOxArhTmpE)

Information gained from consultation can occur through:

* examining Commonwealth and state or territory WHS Acts, regulations and codes of practice
* checking equipment before and during work activities
* consulting work team members through daily informal consultation as well as regular formal meetings
* housekeeping
* reviewing health, safety, and security records, including hazard reports, hazardous substances and dangerous goods registers, security breaches and injury records
* WHS audits and review of audit reports
* workplace inspections in area of responsibility.

The type of consultation procedures will vary however there are some commonalities that apply, such as:

* attendance of health and safety representatives at management and WHS meetings
* early response to employee suggestions, requests, reports and concerns
* election of health and safety representatives according to legislative requirements
* formal and informal WHS meetings
* development of health and safety committees
* individual performance management processes
* other committees, for example planning and purchasing
* requirements as specified in Commonwealth and state or territory WHS Acts, regulations and codes of practice.

|  |
| --- |
| SHARE PLATE |
| Share with the group your thoughts about the following:   * What would be the benefits of consulting with employees when undertaking risk management?   Share your thoughts in a discussion facilitated by your trainer. |

Consultative processes

Several approaches to consultation have been provided below. The mechanisms used will vary according to the size of the workplace but these are common ways of getting others involved.

* A diary, whiteboard or suggestion box used by staff to report issues of concern.
* Fact sheets to fully inform personnel about WHS rights and responsibilities.
* Formal WHS representatives and committees.
* Formal meetings with agendas, minutes and action plans.
* Informal meetings with notes.
* WHS discussions with employees during the course of each business day.
* Recording issues in a management diary.
* Regular staff meetings that involve WHS discussions.
* Seeking staff suggestions for content of WHS policies and procedures.
* Special staff meetings or workshops to specifically address WHS issues.
* Staff handbook containing WHS information.
* Surveys or questionnaires that invite staff feedback on WHS issues.

Dealing with issues raised

Each workplace will have different processes, however the committee or the HSR will generally present issues to management. This may occur at a formal meeting or via email. Management will work with the committee or the HSR to come up with solutions or ways in which to handle the issues raised. Let’s look at an example.

|  |
| --- |
| *Vlad is the new HSR at Argus Hotel. Argus has a restaurant and accommodation of 30 rooms. Vlad has noticed an increase in near misses and minor incidents recently across both the accommodation and kitchen staff. He decides to create a survey to encourage anonymous feedback from employees.*  *Vlad puts the survey forms in the staff room alongside a locked box. He gives employees a week to fill out and return the survey.*  *Due to the anonymity of the survey, Vlad’s work is a success. He discovers:*   * *there are quite a few employees who are new to Argus* * *new employees have not felt their induction training was enough* * *two respondents said that the training received was some of the worst they have had during their career* * *some respondents said they don’t know where to find WHS policies and procedures.*   *Vlad uses this information and other details from his survey to create a report for management that includes some graphs that visually represent the results. He includes his own recommendations about what should be done, which will help guide management in the right direction. He distributes the report to management via email, with the understanding a meeting will be held to discuss actions to be taken.*  *Vlad meets with management a week later and they undertake a ‘walk through’ of the hotel to look at areas that need improvement. Management speak to employees informally and encourage them to provide further feedback.*  *Vlad is able to get the following actions taken:*   * *the induction process is reviewed and updated, with feedback provided from new employees* * *WHS policies, procedures, checklists and forms are reviewed, updated and placed in a folder in the kitchen* * *steps are taken to have documentation and information uploaded to the staff online portal, which will be located in a new section called ‘WHS’* * *the hotel runs an emergency evacuation drill so that everyone knows the process* * *the locked box remains in the staff room with a notepad and pen beside it so employees can contribute their thoughts at any time.* |

Outcomes of consultation

Once consultation has been undertaken it is important to communicate outcomes as quickly as possible. This ensures employees have been kept informed and the any issues can be actioned promptly. Outcomes may be communicated via:

* a formal meeting or presentation to discuss outcomes with employees
* publishing information on the Intranet
* sending an email with a report on outcomes
* distributing any analyses, documents or supporting information
* informal discussions with supervisors
* on a noticeboard in a communal area, such as the staff room.

|  |
| --- |
| *Vlad sends an email to all employees at the hotel explaining the outcomes of the survey. He also explains that a newsletter will be posted on the staff portal and on the noticeboard in the staff room.*  *He thanks employees for their time and support during the process and encourages them to continue speaking up when they see things that they feel are not right. He reminds them of the suggestion box and says that he is available any time to chat about anything work health, safety, and security* *related.* |

|  |
| --- |
| what’s COOKING? |
| Assume you work for the Argus Hotel in Vlad’s role. Create a WHS survey that could be given to staff that would help them provide information about the workplace’s WHS practices and systems.  Try to think of at least 10 questions. Feel free to look online at other WHS surveys for inspiration.  You can use Survey Monkey or any other survey generation tool on the Internet, or create it using a word processor.  Share your surveys with your trainer and group. |