

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Developing a Safety Plan

This information bulletin outlines the role Safety Plans play in an Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) and a method for their development. Safety Plans assist employers, workers and self employed persons meet their duty of care in regard to safety at a workplace. Safety Plans will also assist in demonstrating compliance with legal responsibilities. Organisations such as Contractor Accreditation Limited (CAL) have a requirement for Safety Plans in order to be placed on their register.

Legislation

The Northern Territory *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2007* and the Workplace Health and Safety Regulations place obligations on employers to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to the health and safety of workers at a workplace. Regulation 38 requires employers to identify workplace hazards and assess the risks associated with these hazards.

The process of hazard identification and risk assessment must be documented and records maintained. In addition, Regulation 39 requires employers to control the assessed risks. Under Regulation 40, these control measures must be maintained. A Safety Plan detailing all the hazards, risk assessments and control methods will assist employers meet their responsibilities.

What is a workplace health and safety plan?

A Safety Plan is a simple written document, which outlines how you intend to manage safety during a particular contract or on a particular worksite. It is a living document, which must be available to all persons involved. They must understand and comply with the requirements included in the plan. The plan should be compatible with your overall Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS).

Where to start

- Review the scope and type of work you do and records that relate to safety performance by your organization.
- Conduct an inspection of the premises or work site and discuss the implementation of a safety plan with workers and others who may be affected.
- Identify all hazards at the workplace and assess the risks, list how you intend to manage those risks, include the key requirements of the legislation relating to the hazards and risks.
- List the names of the key personnel and their allocated responsibilities and accountability to ensure that controls are put in place and maintained.

Contents of a safety plan

Employers developing a Safety Plan need to consider their particular workplace and organizational needs to ensure the plans relevance.

As a minimum, the Safety Plan should:

- include your OHS Policy signed by senior management;
- detail key staff and the organizational structure responsible for the management of safety;

- identify hazards associated with the work;
- explain methods of hazard identification including checklists and other methods to be used;
- detail risk assessment and control measures;
- list instruction and training and experience of the contractor's employees;
- include the types of records that will be kept and who is to keep them;
- state the monitoring and safety requirements that will be used;
- identify safety meetings and the means of resolving safety issues;
- reference or include written work procedures; and
- include emergency procedures.

Monitoring

The Safety Plan must be monitored during the course of the work to ensure its provisions are being complied with and that those with responsibilities are carrying them out. Regular meetings should also be held to discuss issues associated with the plan. Where a safety aspect falls down the plan should be reviewed to ascertain the system breakdown and if necessary the plan modified to prevent a recurrence.

Evaluation and review

For any Safety Plan to be effective it must be reviewed periodically and at the end of a contract to ascertain its effectiveness and appropriateness. Items that should be considered include:

- Were the objectives achieved?
- Was it effective in ensuring safety outcomes?
- Were responsibilities carried out?
- Can it be improved?

For further information please contact NT WorkSafe on 1800 019 115 or go to worksafe.nt.gov.au