Workplace Health and Safety Training

How to Use Safe Work Method Statements

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Who are we?

Total Management & Training *(formerly Queensland Training Services Pty Ltd and Total Safety Services)* is a registered training and consultancy organisation based in Cairns Australia offering nationally accredited courses, competencies and consulting services across a range of industries.

TMT has a reputation of providing prompt, professional service, using qualified, experienced consultants and trainers to deliver up-to-date, industry standard training and advice.

- BSB41415 Certificate IV in Work Health and Safety
- BSB51315 Diploma of Work Health and Safety
- Fire Safety Advisor
- Health and Safety Representative training
- WHS for Managers and Supervisors
- WHS for Business Owners & CEO's
- WHS for Committee Members
- Risk Management training
- Incident Investigation training

Qualifications in Business and Training and Assessment.

Short courses in confined space entry, working at heights, asbestos removal, test and tag, traffic management, emergency warden, construction induction and many others.

Who are we?

Total Management and Training assists clients with compliance through systems, process development and management, risk audits, site and system audits and training.

Total Management and Training provides clients with professional health and safety consulting at competitive prices without compromising quality. TMT is able to provide consultancy services to assist organisations in the management of health and safety issues.

- Development of health and safety procedures and systems
- Development of workplace health and safety manuals
- Conduct health and safety inspections
- Conduct and facilitate risk assessments
- System and compliance auditing
- General consultancy
- Quality systems
- Health and safety systems
- Integrated management systems
- Safe work method statements
- WHS Management Systems / Construction Safety Plans
- Audits in systems, compliance and general workplace safety

Topics

- What is a Safe Work Method Statement?
- What is high risk construction work?
- When is a Safe Work Method Statement required?
- Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement
- Implementing a Safe Work Method Statement
- Review a Safe Work Method Statement

Legislation

As there are sometimes differences between legislation in the various jurisdictions the following has been used in the preparation of this webinar

- Model WHS Regulations *(Revised 21 March 2016 - Safe Work Australia)*
- Model Code of Practice – Construction Work (November 2013 - *Safe Work Australia)*

Always refer to jurisdiction legislation specific to the location of your workplace

What is a Safe Work Method Statement?

A SWMS is a written document that sets out the ***high risk construction work activities*** to be carried out at a workplace, the hazards and risks arising from these activities and the measures to be put in place to control the risks.

Its primary purpose is to

- help supervisors and workers implement; and
- monitor the control measures

established at the workplace to ensure ***high risk construction work*** is carried out safely.

What is a Safe Work Method Statement?

- The SWMS:
  - sets out the work activities in logical sequences
  - identifies hazards
  - describes control measures.

  Both simple and complex activities can be broken down into a series of basic steps that will allow for full analysis of each part of the activity for hazards and potential incidents.
- The aim of a SWMS is to:
  - describe the activity or task to be undertaken
  - identify the resources, manpower and skills associated with the task
  - assess and select control measures (as appropriate)
  - systematically plan the activity so it can be completed efficiently and effectively.

What is High Risk Construction Work?

high risk construction work includes work that

- involves a risk of a person falling more than 2m; or
- is carried out on a telecommunication tower; or
- involves demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure; or
- involves, or is likely to involve, the disturbance of asbestos; or
- involves structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse; or
- is carried out in or near a confined space; or
- is carried out in or near -
  - a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5m;
  - or a tunnel; or

What is High Risk Construction Work (Continued)?

high risk construction work includes work that

- involves the use of explosives; or
- is carried out on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping; or
- is carried out on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines; or
- is carried out on or near energised electrical installations or services; or
- is carried out in an area that may have a contaminated or
- flammable atmosphere; or
- involves tilt-up or precast concrete; or
- is carried out on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians; or

What is High Risk Construction Work (Continued)?

high risk construction work includes work that

- is carried out in an area at a workplace in which there is any movement of powered mobile plant; or
- is carried out in an area in which there are artificial extremes of temperature; or
- is carried out in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning; or
- involves diving work.

When is a Safe Work Method Statement required?

- Legislation requires that a SWMS is prepared for any of the **high risk construction work** activities defined in WHS Regulations.
- For all other construction activities a SWMS is not required.

  However, a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCB) must manage risks to health and safety by eliminating or minimising risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

- Some PCBU's (including Principal Contractors) require SWMS's for all construction activities.

  If this is required by the contract documentation then SWMS's must be contractually supplied.

Person Conducting a Business of Undertaking - Duties

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must

- manage risks to health and safety by eliminating or minimising risks so far as is reasonably practicable
- provide relevant information, training, instruction and supervision to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from construction work carried out
- Prepare and implement SWMS for **high risk construction work** activities.

Person Conducting a Business of Undertaking - Duties

Two examples of ways that PCBU's for construction work can address these duties are as follows:

- Example 1
  - Conduct a project risk assessment to identify risks
  - Provide site specific induction (Including confirmation of all legislative training, licencing and competency requirements)
  - Require SWMS's for all construction work.
- Example 2
  - Conduct internal training and assessment for general construction risks
  - Conduct a project risk assessment to identify risks
  - Provide site specific induction (Including risks not addressed by general training, confirmation of all legislative training, licencing and competency requirements)
  - Prepare and implement SWMS for **high risk construction work** activities only.

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

When

- A PCBU must either:
  - Prepare a SWMS; or
  - Ensure a SWMS has been prepared

before the high risk construction work starts

Who

- A SWMS can be prepared either by:
  - The PCBU conducting the work; or
  - another person (e.g. consultant, Principal Contractor)

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

Content

- Legislation requires that a SWMS **must**
  - identify the work that is **high risk construction work**
  - specify hazards relating to the **high risk construction work** and risks to health and safety associated with those hazards
  - describe the measures to be implemented to control the risks, and
  - describe how the control measures are to be implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- Code of Practice for Construction Work suggests that a SWMS **may also include**
  - the name of the principal contractor
  - the address where the **high risk construction work** will be carried out
  - the date the SWMS was prepared and the date it was provided to the principal contractor
  - the review date (if any).

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

Content (Continued)

- Principal Contractor (or other PCBU) may require additional information such as:
  - Persons who participated in development of SWMs
  - Management name and position who approved the SWMS
  - Details of how changes to the SWMS is to be communicated to workers
  - Legislation, codes or practice or standards applicable to the SWMS
  - Risk rating for each step, hazard or risk both before and after application of controls
  - Hazardous chemicals
  - Plant
  - Maintenance checks
  - How health issues are to be managed (e.g. manual handling heat stress)
  - Emergency procedures
  - Supervision

High Risk Construction Work Safe Work Method Statement Template

NOTE: Work must be performed in accordance with this SWMS.

This SWMS must be kept and be available for inspection until the high risk construction work to which this SWMS relates is completed.
If the SWMS is revised, all versions should be kept.

If a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the high risk construction work in this SWMS, the SWMS must be kept for at least 2 years from the date of the notifiable incident.

[PCBU Name, contact details]		**Principal Contractor (PC)**	[Name, contact details]
Works Manager: **Contact phone:**		**Date SWMS provided to PC:**	
Work activity:	[Job description]	**Workplace location:**	

High risk construction work:	☐ Risk of a person falling more than 2 metres (*note:* in some jurisdictions this is 3 metres)	☐ Work on a telecommunication tower	☐ Demolition of load-bearing structure
	☐ Likely to involve disturbing asbestos	☐ Temporary load-bearing support for structural alterations or repairs	☐ Work in or near a confined space
	☐ Work in or near a shaft or trench deeper than 1.5 m or a tunnel	☐ Use of explosives	☐ Work on or near pressurised gas mains or piping
	☐ Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines	☐ Work on or near energised electrical installations or services	☐ Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
	☐ Tilt-up or precast concrete elements	☐ Work on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians	☐ Work in an area with movement of powered mobile plant
	☐ Work in areas with artificial extremes of temperature	☐ Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning	☐ Diving work

Person responsible for ensuring compliance with SWMS:		**Date SWMS received:**	
What measures are in place to ensure compliance with the SWMS?			
Person responsible for reviewing SWMS control measures:		**Date SWMS received by reviewer:**	
How will the SWMS control measures be reviewed?			
Review date:		**Reviewer's signature:**	

Safe Work Australia - Template

What are the tasks involved?	What are the hazards and risks?	What are the control measures?
List the work tasks in a logical order.	Identify the hazards and risks that may cause harm to workers or the public.	Describe what will be done to control the risk. What will you do to make the activity as safe as possible?

Name of Worker(s)	Worker signature(s)
Date SWMS received by workers:	

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

Work Health and Safety Management Plan

- The SWMS must take into account any WHS Management Plan prepared by the Principal Contractor
- A copy of the SWMS must be provided to the Principal Contractor before work commences.

Consultation

- Workers and their health and safety representatives (if any) should be consulted
  - in the preparation of the SWMS
  - if workers are not available at the planning stage, then when the SWMS is first made available to workers (e.g. at site specific induction or at a toolbox talk)
  - when SWMS is reviewed

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

Workplace specific focus

- The SWMS must
  - Reflect the site where the **high risk construction work** is being carried out – the work the workplace and the workers
  - Reflect the control methodologies to be used on the site.

Generic SWMS

- Generic SWMS maybe prepared and used for **high risk construction work** conducted on a regular basis, however must be reviewed to take into account hazards and risks specific to the site.

Preparation of a Safe Work Method Statement

Be readily understood

- The content of a SWMS should provide clear direction on the control measures to be implemented.
- There should be no statements that require a decision to be made by supervisors or workers in the preparation of the SWMS.

  For example *"use appropriate PPE"* . This does not clearly specify the type of PPE required.
- SWMS should not include the use of additional and extra use of added, spare, unnecessary, redundant (superfluous or surplus) unneeded, and uncalled for words in addition to, and on top of, what is necessary or essential.
- Avoid use of acronyms
- Remember who will be reading the SWMS.

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APPENDIX E – SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT EXAMPLE

NOTE: Work must be performed in accordance with this SWMS.

This SWMS must be kept and be available for inspection until the high risk construction work to which this SWMS relates is completed.
If the SWMS is revised, all versions should be kept.

If a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the high risk construction work in this SWMS, the SWMS must be kept for at least 2 years from the date of the notifiable incident.

ABC Bricklaying 123 Mortar Street Standard Course ACT 2600 Ph: (02) 1234 5678		**Principal Contractor (PC)**	**XYZ Contracting Services** 8910 Management Road Projectville ACT 2666 Ph. (02) 9876 5432
Works Manager: **Contact phone:**	Fred Bloggs 0400 111 111	**Date SWMS provided to PC:**	5 February 2012
Work activity:	Bricklaying	**Workplace location:**	Potters Hut, Brick Street, Pottery ACT 2600

High risk construction work:	✓ Risk of a person falling more than 2 metres (*note:* in some jurisdictions this is 3 metres)	☐ Work on a telecommunication tower	☐ Demolition of load-bearing structure
	☐ Likely to involve disturbing asbestos	✓ Temporary load-bearing support for structural alterations or repairs	☐ Work in or near a confined space
	☐ Work in or near a shaft or trench deeper than 1.5 m or a tunnel	☐ Use of explosives	☐ Work on or near pressurised gas mains or piping
	☐ Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines	✓ Work on or near energised electrical installations or services	☐ Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
	☐ Tilt-up or precast concrete elements	✓ Work on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians	✓ Work in an area with movement of powered mobile plant
	☐ Work in areas with artificial extremes of temperature	☐ Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning	☐ Diving work

Person responsible for ensuring compliance with SWMS:	Joe Bloggs, Leading Hand	**Date SWMS received:**	
What measures are in place to ensure compliance with the SWMS?	ABC Bricklaying WHS policies and procedures, general and workplace induction training, toolbox meetings, SWMS provided to and discussed with worker(s) at workplace and signed-off, ongoing workplace supervision by experienced leading hand.		
Person responsible for reviewing SWMS control measures:	Fred Bloggs, Works Manager	**Date SWMS received by reviewer:**	

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How will the SWMS control measures be reviewed?	SWMS control measures to be reviewed (and revised if necessary) if work tasks/methods change or unexpected issues arise.		
Review date:		Reviewer's signature:	

What are the tasks involved?	What are the hazards and risks?	What are the control measures?
List the work tasks in a logical order.	Identify the hazards and risks that may cause harm to workers or the public.	Describe what will be done to control the risk. What will you do to make the activity as safe as possible?
Delivery of bricks • Movement of powered mobile plant. • Work in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians.	Workers being struck by powered mobile plant. including delivery vehicle and forklift used for unloading. Workers being struck by vehicles in adjacent road or traffic corridor. Vehicles in adjacent road or traffic corridor being struck by falling objects.	Implement workplace traffic management plan and make available to workers: • Exclusion zone for mobile plant to be clearly identified (signage and barricades as per site plan) and controlled during vehicle loading/unloading operations. • Dedicated, trained road traffic controller(s) to direct traffic entering and leaving site and control traffic (pedestrian and vehicle) on adjacent pedestrian footpaths and roadways. • Use portable traffic signals and/or temporary safety barriers to direct/control traffic flow as required. • Brick delivery vehicle to be unloaded on-site (not from public roadway). Place brick pallets adjacent to bricklaying work areas (inside workplace boundaries and clear of workplace traffic routes).
Working at ground level • Movement of powered mobile plant.	Being struck by powered mobile plant.	Powered mobile plant to travel on planned and controlled workplace traffic routes. Where powered mobile plant are required to travel outside of planned and controlled routes, a dedicated, trained road traffic controller is to control plant movement.
Working above ground • A risk of a person falling more than 2 metres. • Construction work that is carried out on or near energised electrical installations or services.	Worker falling from height. Worker coming in contact with and/or receiving electric shock from overhead electric lines. Plant/equipment contacting overhead electric lines.	For bricklaying activity where there is a risk of a person falling less than 2 metres, use fully decked heavy duty frame trestle scaffolds, with bay lengths of 1.8 metres or less. For bricklaying activity where there is a risk of a person falling greater than 2 metres, use heavy duty modular scaffolds with brick-guards. Scaffolds from which a person can fall more than 4 metres must be constructed and certified by a licensed scaffolder. For all scaffolds:

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What are the tasks involved?	What are the hazards and risks?	What are the control measures?
List the work tasks in a logical order.	Identify the hazards and risks that may cause harm to workers or the public.	Describe what will be done to control the risk. What will you do to make the activity as safe as possible?
		• Platforms are not to be loaded with more than 100 bricks per bay (or 400 kg of blocks). • No scaffold alterations are to be undertaken except by licensed scaffolder. • Access to scaffold platforms is to be via stairs or ladder towers. The exclusion zones and approach distances to overhead electric lines at the locations and distances specified on the site plan are to be clearly identifiable and enforced by a dedicated controller.
Constructing brick walls Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse.	Worker injured by structural collapse before completion & curing.	Brace all constructed brick walls in accordance with Company Instruction Sheet #3.
Work completion • A risk of a person falling more than 2 metres. • Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse.	Injuries to public from unauthorised access to workplace (e.g. falls greater than 2 metres, structural collapse).	All scaffolding and site fencing is secure and serviceable. All entries and exits must be locked at the end of each day.

Name of Worker(s)	Worker signature(s)
Tom Smith	
Date SWMS received by workers:	14 January 2012

Implementing a Safe Work Method Statement

Providing information and instruction

- All workers who will be involved in high risk construction work must be provided with information and instruction so they:
  - understand the hazards and risks arising from the work
  - understand and implement the risk controls in a SWMS
  - know what to do if the work is not being conducted in accordance with the SWMS.
- This information and instruction may be provided during
  - general construction induction training
  - workplace-specific training or
  - a toolbox talk

Implementing a Safe Work Method Statement

Compliance with SWMS

- SWMS must be available to any person engaged in **the high risk construction work**
- All PCBU's (Principal Contractor and contractor) who are involved in **high risk construction work** must develop and implement arrangements to ensure the work is carried out in accordance with the SWMS. These may include:
  - a system of routine or random workplace inspections
  - a system of routine or random task observations
  - asking workers and supervisors a few questions about the control measures used in the SWMS to see if they understand what has to be done.

Implementing a Safe Work Method Statement

Compliance with SWMS

- If the work is not being carried out in accordance with the SWMS:
  - the work must stop immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so
  - work must not resume until the work can be carried out in accordance with the SWMS.
  - If work is stopped, the work and the SWMS should be reviewed to identify noncompliance
  - and ensure the method in the SWMS is the most practical and safest way of doing the task.
- The SWMS should be revised if another method is identified as being a safer option, before work resumes.

Review Safe Work Method Statement

- A SWMS must be reviewed regularly to make sure it remains effective.
- The review process should be carried out in consultation with workers (including contractors and subcontractors) who may be affected by the operation of the SWMS.
- When a SWMS has been revised the PCBU must ensure:
  - all persons involved with the high risk construction work are advised that a revision has been made and how they can access the revised SWMS.
  - The principal contractor should be given a copy of the revised SWMS
  - all persons who will need to change a work procedure or system as a result of the review are advised of the changes
  - all workers that will be involved in the **high risk construction work** are provided with the relevant information and instruction that will assist them to understand and implement the revised SWMS.

Summary

- An organisation must when deciding on the content of their SWMS's consider
  - The type of high risk construction work they are undertaking;
  - Their legislative requirements;
  - The type and level of organisations for whom they will be carrying out high risk construction work.
- Information, instruction and training of their workers.
- Their implementation and review processes.

A SWMS is not just a document to satisfy an audit.

It is an effective tool to ensure that high risk construction work is conducted in a safe way!!!!!

Questions