**AMPWHS401**

Monitor workplace health and safety processes.

**Training and assessment support materials**

**Acknowledgement**

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Training support materials for AMPWHS401 Monitor workplace health and safety (WHS) processes.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is one of the most visible elements of a company’s WHS systems but there is much more to a company’s WHS processes than PPE. But PPE plays an important role in keeping workers safe at work.

Personal Protective equipment

Why do we use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)?

The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) issued to employees working in a meat processing premises is designed and used for the following reasons:

1. protection for yourself
2. protection for the product.

Each piece of PPE that is issued must be worn, used, cleaned and stored in a particular way to help reduce the risk of contaminating the product.

These procedures for the use of PPE are based on the requirements of the ***Australian Standard for the Hygienic Production of Meat for Human Consumption.*** Export works also must follow the ***Export Meat Orders*** and importing country requirements.

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| **A range of PPE equipment used on slaughter floors and in boning rooms**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

What items of PPE do you have to wear at work and why do you need to use them?

Uniform shirts and trousers

In processing areas, a clean, light-coloured uniform – usually white – must be worn each day. The reason the uniform is light coloured is to show up any dirt and blood. The uniform must be laundered every day to make sure that bacteria does not have time to multiply. If uniforms become grossly contaminated during the day they must be changed to protect you and the product from contamination.

Uniforms are also worn to protect the product from the bacteria on your body. Uniforms are also used to cover over personal clothing such as underwear or outer clothing such as jumpers. This clothing must be fully covered by the uniform.

Used uniforms must be put in the correct chutes or laundry bins to stop the spread of contamination around the premises.

You must not wear dirty clothing or uniforms into areas where edible product is being processed.

Stockmen and maintenance personnel must change before coming onto the meat processing area.

Workers who go into areas such as rendering plants or hide sheds must change into clean uniform before going into the boning room or slaughter floor.

Uniforms must not be worn off the premises.

You should avoid contaminating your uniforms during breaks. For instance, do not sit on the grass or steps.

Uniforms for freezers and chillers

Working in cold environments presents specific problems and issues. Your company WHS policy will set out when and where specific PPE for working in freezers and chillers is to be worn.

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| **PPE for freezers**  *Courtesy Fletcher International © MINTRAC* |

Head covering

Head coverings must completely cover the head and ears so hair and loose skin cannot contaminate the product. Head coverings are made of light coloured cloth or disposable material and are washed or disposed of daily. Your workplace requirements will let you know what is allowed in your plant. Disposable hats must be thrown in the correct bins at the end of each day or when they are badly contaminated.

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| **Disposable hair net**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

Bump hats may be required in some production areas while hard hats are required in other production areas such as load out. They are safety requirements. Safety signs show where these hats must be worn. These hats need to be kept clean and replaced if they become chipped or cracked.

Snoods

Snoods are used to cover beards. Beards are required to be covered in all export works and many domestic premises. Snoods are disposable and must be thrown in the correct bin at the end of each day or when they are badly contaminated.

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| **Snood**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

Boots

Rubber boots are designed to protect your feet from the water, blood and waste that is found on the processing floor.

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| **Rubber boots**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

In some areas such as rendering plants safety boots must be worn to protect feet.

Boots need to be clean and free from contamination when you enter the processing area. This prevents soil, grease and bacteria on your boots being brought into the edible product.

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| **Boots can become heavily soiled.**  *© Fletcher International* |

Boots must also be cleaned before leaving the processing area. This stops fat, blood and meat being spread all around the premises. Fat and meat on walkways and steps can make them slippery and dangerous. Leaving fat in the treads of your boots can cause you to slip and fall. For this reason, boots are washed before entering and after leaving processing areas especially boning rooms.

Fat and meat scraps also attract rats, birds and flies and are a food source for bacteria.

Plastic aprons

Aprons are used to help avoid heavy contamination from blood, meat and guts.

Disposable aprons must be changed at breaks. Heavy duty plastic aprons must be washed thoroughly when indicated by your work instructions, and at breaks.

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| **Heavy duty plastic aprons**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

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| **Disposable plastic apron over mesh apron**  *© Fletcher International* |

Protective gloves and aprons

In many meat processing premises in Australia it is compulsory for people working with knives to wear protective gloves.

There are two types of protective gloves worn in production areas.

Cut resistant gloves

These gloves are made of a synthetic fibre often Kevlar. Their use has greatly reduced the incidence of knife cuts in the industry. Gloves must be laundered every day. They should be replaced if they become torn, frayed or heavily contaminated during the day’s work. A torn or frayed glove is both a hygiene hazard and a WHS hazard.

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| **Cut resistant glove**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

Mesh glove

These gloves made of steel mesh come in varying lengths and for both right and left handers. They must be washed and sterilised according to the SOP and work instruction which will vary from work area to work area and task to task.

Mesh gloves must be checked for wear especially between the fingers and replaced when damaged.

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| **Mesh gloves**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

In addition, insulated gloves may be required to be worn in load out, chillers and freezers.

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| **Insulated glove**  *© Fletcher international* |

Rubber or PVC gloves are used in some premises to keep protective gloves free from contamination and allow for easy washing during processing. The SOP and work instruction will explain when and how these gloves are to be worn. All damaged gloves must be replaced to prevent hygiene to the product and WHS hazards.

Protective mesh aprons protect the chest, stomach and genitals from knife cuts that can occur on the production chain.

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| **Mesh apron**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* |

Ear plugs and ear muff covers

You must always use hearing protection in the designated hearing protection areas. Hearing protection should be worn in noisy areas.

Disposable ear plugs should be kept clean and should be disposed of at the end of each day to avoid the risk of introducing ear infections. Earmuff covers should be washed or cleaned according to work instructions.

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| **Bump cap and disposable ear plugs**  *Photo courtesy Hepworth’s Industrial Wear Pty Ltd* | |

Arm and wrist guards.

Arm and wrist guards protect the arms and wrists from knife cuts. The guards accumulate blood, fat and meat products which provide a good environment for bacteria to multiply. Arm and wrist guards should be cleaned at breaks and at the end of the day or shift. They should be dried thoroughly and stored in a clean area.

Belts

Slaughter floor staff are required to wear either plastic chain belts or metal chain belts with a safety link in the belt. This is to ensure that if the belt becomes caught in moving machinery it comes off easily.

In some premises supportive back belts are issued to workers in load out areas where they are continuously lifting carton meat.

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| **Back belt**  *© Fletcher International* |
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| ***Knives, scabbards and steels*** |

The maintenance, cleaning and sterilising of the equipment is covered in the training materials for ***AMPWHS201 - Sharpen and handle knives safely****.*

What are the requirements related to personal protective equipment (PPE)?

According to the *National Guidelines for Health and Safety in the Meat Industry*:

***‘PPE and clothing are those items of equipment worn by an employee to minimise or eliminate exposure to specific occupational hazards.***

The emphasis is always on eliminating the hazards thereby making it unnecessary for workers to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). However, it is not always possible to eliminate the hazards, and PPE may be required to protect the worker from the consequences of exposure. For example, workers may be required to wear hearing protection to reduce the likelihood of hearing loss resulting from exposure to an excessively noisy environment. Workers in the meat industry are frequently required to wear PPE. In this case it is the employer’s responsibility to ensure PPE is:

* assigned to the worker for their exclusive use
* cleaned and maintained after use
* stored when not in use
* inspected and repaired regularly
* checked for continued functioning and effectiveness.

It is also the employer’s responsibility to ensure training is provided as appropriate. Workers should receive training about:

* proper use of PPE
* the deficiencies and restrictions of PPE
* fitting PPE and how to test for fit
* use of PPE
* maintenance of PPE
* storage of PPE
* identification of faults in PPE
* procedure for replacing PPE.

Workers are responsible to:

* wear PPE as instructed by the supervisor and as set out in the work instruction
* fit PPE to ensure it is used to maximum benefit
* check for any faults and replace it if faulty
* follow maintenance procedures as instructed by the supervisor and set out in work instructions
* store PPE as instructed.

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| Worker wearing clothing for cold room MTMMP4B |
| **Worker wearing clothing for cold room.**  *Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia* |

Examples of specific PPE are included in the ***National Guidelines for Health and Safety in the Meat Industry***.

Current legislative requirements for workplace health and safety

Why manage health and safety?

The reasons for systematically managing Work Health and Safety (WHS) are compelling, not the least of which is the impact on human lives. Fatalities alone are a sobering statistic.

Other compelling reasons for managing health and safety include:

Complying with the law

In all States and Territories the law clearly states employers have the primary responsibility for managing health and safety.

Financial reasons

Accidents and injuries are costly in terms of staff resources, time, financial outlays, equipment damage, disruption to operations and even public relation issues. Figures released by Safe Work Australia estimate the cost associated with work-related injury and illness to be more than $100 billion dollars per year.

Industrial relations

Poor health and safety may impact on the industrial relations at a site and subsequently affect the operation of the business.

Ethical and moral obligations

Responsible employers have an obligation to protect the health and safety of their employees and anyone else affected by their work activities.

Employee engagement and satisfaction

Involvement of employees in health and safety matters raises awareness and promotes conscious attention to personal safety and the safety of others.

Public relations

If the company is regarded locally as a poor performer in health and safety they may have a bad reputation in the community. This may impact on their ability to attract employees to work in the company especially considering the increasing competition for employees in regional locations where our companies are located.

What legislation covers Work Health and Safety (WHS)?

Australia has moved to similar WHS laws across Australia. This has come about through the work of Safe Work Australia. Safe Work Australia is the national policy body responsible for the development of model work health and safety laws. In consultation with the States, Safe Work Australia developed the model work health and safety laws consisting of the Model Work Health and Safety Act, supported by model WHS regulations, model Codes of Practice and a National Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

The Model Work Health and Safety Act then has been enacted or passed by Parliament in each State and Territory to become legally binding (Victoria has enacted similar legislation). The states and territories are responsible for regulating and enforcing the laws in their jurisdictions. The WHS law provides greater consistency across the whole of Australia making it easier for companies operating across state boundaries.

The WHS Act sets out general duties of all parties regarding WHS. The Regulations support the Act. The Regulations provide some detail around what companies need to do to comply with the Act. For example, the Regulations include a provision for companies to provide audiometric testing of workers who are frequently required to wear hearing protection to protect the worker against noise above the exposure standard.

The nationally harmonised legislation includes national codes of practice. Other publications that support implementation of the WHS legislation continue to be standards and guidelines covering specific WHS issues or industries. These are not legal requirements but may be used under law to demonstrate compliance with legislation.

The meat industry has *National Guidelines for Health and Safety in the Meat Industry.* These guidelines were developed through a cooperative arrangement between the Australian Meat Industry Employees' Union and the National Meat Association of Australia. The guidelines provide practical guidance on measures that may be put in place to reduce the incidence of occupational injury and disease in the meat industry. This is a useful publication as it is meat industry specific however it was developed in 1995 and is now well out of date in many areas. The documentation is available online at http://meatiesohs.org/files/information/guidelines.pdf

What are the main priorities of WHS legislation?

Two principles shape the Safe Work Australia vision for health and safety. The first: all workers regardless of their occupation or how they are engaged have the right to a healthy and safe working environment. The second: well-designed, healthy and safe work will allow workers to have more productive working lives.

The vision for achieving this as reflected in the WHS legislation is based on prevention of work-related illness and/or injury through consultation, communication and coordination of health and safety matters in the workplace with all personnel involved and taking a risk management approach to eliminate the risk of injury wherever possible or if this is not possible to minimise the risks.

Worker and employer responsibilities

Who has responsibilities under WHS legislation and what are those responsibilities?

Achieving the vision of a healthy, safe and productive working life for all, relies on everyone in the workplace meeting their health and safety responsibilities. The WHS Act sets out those responsibilities. These requirements are called **Duty of Care**.

In general, duties are placed on:

* employers (who are called persons in control of a business or undertaking in WHS legislation) who have the overall responsibility for providing a workplace that is safe and without risks to health, as far as practicable
* ‘workers’, i.e. employees of your company AND others such as a contractors, trainees etc. who are not employees of a company but they may be working on the premises. All ‘workers’ are required to perform their duties in a manner that ensures their health and safety, and that of others in the workplace
* any others who may influence WHS in the workplace, including contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and installers of plant, equipment or materials used in a workplace.

What are the WHS responsibilities of senior managers?

Under WHS legislation the CEO is given the title person in control of a business or undertaking. The reason for this is that there may be a number of ‘CEOs’ who have employee relationships with personnel working in your company at any one time. For example there may be contractors, personnel working for a labour hire company, trainees, personnel working for a registered training organisation etc. The CEO of a company is responsible to provide everyone working in the company with a safe workplace and the CEOs of the contractors, labour hire company etc are also responsible for their workers conducting their work safely and following your WHS requirements.

CEOs or persons in control of a business or undertaking bear the ultimate responsibility for health and safety in their organisation. They are responsible to set up the systems to manage health and safety and to hold their senior managers accountable for implementing the systems in their workplace.

Under the WHS legislation senior managers (that is managers who make decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part of the organisation) are given the title officers. They are responsible to exercise ‘due diligence’ to ensure that the systems are implemented and are effective in providing a safe environment. They must act on unsafe practices or incidents. They must be able to report on safety performance and they must ensure that their personnel have the health and safety expertise they need to do their work.

What are the WHS responsibilities of supervisors?

Supervisors are responsible for health and safety in their own work areas. They must implement the organisation’s health and safety systems in their work area. In practice this means that supervisors must:

* implement the risk management process in their areas through regular workplace inspections and risk assessments by identifying and fixing hazards before they cause problems
* consult with their workers and others such as contractors and trainees working in their area to involve them in health and safety matters so everyone is working safely and contributing to safety in the area
* model exemplary behaviour that demonstrates their commitment to health and safety and their commitment to treat everyone in the workplace equally, fairly and with respect
* act on any unsafe condition or incident or any health and safety issue that they are aware of; if they can’t solve it then they should report it to their manager or as appropriate, eg to the maintenance manager
* train their staff so that they work safely and don’t endanger the safety of others
* have a detailed understanding of the safety performance of their own area and be able to report on that performance.

It is most important for supervisors to act on matters reported to them, to do everything in their power to reduce or eliminate hazards. Supervisors should also take pro-active action to reduce or eliminate hazards before they cause problems. If supervisors have done everything in their power to provide a safe worksite then they have met their legal requirements.

**What resources are available to assist supervisors?**

Supervisors have a dedicated resource to help them meet their WHS responsibilities. This resource is a website called ***Workplace health and safety for meat industry supervisors****.* This website has been designed specifically for meat industry supervisors. As supervisors you carry significant responsibility and accountability under the legislation and regulations, but at the same time you may find it difficult to access specialised training.

Throughout this website, are links to various meat industry resources from **AMPC**, **MLA**, **AMIC** and **MINTRAC** as well as links to various WHS sites such as Safe Work Australia and relevant state WHS authorities such as Workcover.

What are the WHS responsibilities of workers?

Worker’s responsibilities include:

* taking reasonable care of their own health and safety
* undertaking the training offered
* taking reasonable care that their own conduct does not adversely affect others
* complying with instructions
* cooperating with workplace policies and procedures.

How is WHS legislation enforced?

WHS legislation is regulated by each state and territory government WHS authority. The authorities aim for compliance with the legislation. They employ inspectors to provide advice on compliance. The inspectors make every effort to assist companies to comply with the legislation but if the company is not co-operating or if there are breaches of the legislation the WHS Act provides a range of graduated enforcement options. This includes:

* issuing a non-disturbance notice, eg it is a requirement of the legislation that areas where there has been a notifiable accident are not disturbed in any way until otherwise directed by an authority inspector
* issuing an improvement notice
* issuing a prohibition notice
* issuing an undertaking for the company to take remedial action
* issuing an injunction
* issuing an enforceable undertaking
* issuing a penalty notice
* initiating prosecution.

In the event of a prosecution the reverse onus of proof has been removed. Under the old legislation if you were prosecuted you had to prove you had made every effort to comply with the legislation. Under current legislation the burden of proof rests with the prosecution, that is the prosecution must prove beyond reasonable doubt that you failed to comply with the legislation.

Penalties for breaches of the WHS legislation may incur fines to the company and/or fines and gaol sentences to individuals including directors, managers, supervisors or anyone associated with the business. Prosecutions are under criminal law. Fines to corporations may be as high as $3 million and fines to individuals may be as high as $600,000 to CEOs and $300,000 to other individuals. Gaol sentences to individuals may be up to a maximum of five years.

Hazards and risks associated with hand tools, plant, equipment and vehicles

WHS risk control

What do companies do to control risks?

The focus of company WHS programs is on the prevention of work-related illness and injury. To prevent injury, the company has programs focusing on identifying hazards before they result in accidents and rectifying any factors that may contribute to accidents. This is called risk management. WHS programs focusing on identifying risks and rectifying factors that may contribute to accidents include:

* conducting workplace inspections and audits and eliminating hazards wherever possible
* conducting risk assessments of jobs, plant and equipment and other high-risk areas such as possible emergencies and eliminating hazards wherever possible
* encouraging the workforce to report hazards or incidents
* illness and injury statistics including:
* incidence of workplace illness and injury compiled from accident report forms and workers’ compensation statistics
* costs of workers’ compensation claims and/or workers’ compensation insurance or premium costs
* results of workplace inspections and audits
* statistics related to specific programs, e.g. manual handling
* statistics on rehabilitation.

Your company will keep site illness or injury statistics covering these areas.

What is risk control?

A safe and healthy workplace does not happen by chance or guesswork. It is senior management’s responsibility to think about what could go wrong at the workplace and what the consequences could be. Then they do whatever they can (in other words, whatever is ‘reasonably practicable’) to eliminate or minimise health and safety risks arising from the work that is conducted at the workplace.

This process is known as risk management or risk control and involves four steps. These steps are:

* identify hazards – find out what could cause harm
* assess risks if necessary – understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening
* control risks – implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances
* review control measures to ensure they are working as planned.

Risk control means taking action to eliminate health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if that is not possible, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard will also eliminate any risks associated with that hazard.

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What are common hazards in the meat processing industry?

There are two general categories of hazards. These are hazards to health and hazards to safety. Health hazards may result in illness or disease. For example, personnel in meat processing premises may be exposed to bacteria such as *E. Coli*, viruses such as HIV or Hepatitis B or diseases such as Q Fever contracted from animals. Hazards to health may not be clear cut. Presenting symptoms may vary from individual to individual, may be slow to develop or may be cumulative.

Safety hazards may lead to an accident with damage to a person, property, plant or equipment. Safety hazards tend to be easier to find. There is usually a direct relationship between the safety hazard and its consequences.

Every industry has hazards which are common. Some hazards are common across many industries. For example, manual handling hazards are a significant cause of injury and subsequent workers’ compensation claims across Australia.

Hazards arise from the following aspects of work and their interaction:

* physical work environment (e.g. electricity, lighting, exposure to noise, heat, cold and radiation, confined spaces, contact with moving objects)
* equipment, materials and substances used (e.g. installation, use, maintenance and storage of equipment, use of knives)
* work tasks and how they are performed (e.g. manual handling)
* work design and management.

The next section applies the risk control process to the management of common hazards in the meat industry to reduce the risks to the lowest possible levels. The common hazards covered are:

* zoonotic diseases
* manual handling
* hazards that cause slips, trips and falls
* hazards related to plant, equipment and tools
* hazards of working with a knife
* extremes of temperature – cold and hot
* hazardous substances
* working at heights
* noise.

What is risk?

Risk is the possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard. Risk is a measure of the likelihood of an accident occurring and the severity or the consequence of that accident. If, for example, no one is exposed to the hazard then it is unlikely to cause harm. For instance, consider asbestos sealed in a well-maintained administration roof space. The asbestos is unlikely to cause harm because it is sealed and the seal is maintained. No one is exposed to the hazard.

Considering professionally installed and serviced electrical equipment used in a dry environment. In this case, the risk of electrocution may be deemed low. However, if the electrical equipment is poorly maintained with frayed electrical cord dangling in water then the likelihood of electrocution is dangerously high and as the consequences of electrocution may be death, then the equipment should be immediately removed or locked out and replaced.

The employer is legally required to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health and safety.

What is done at each step in the risk control process and what is the role of workers at each step?

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| The risk management process diagram |
| The risk management or risk control process  ‘How to manage work health and safety risks – Code of Practice’ Safe Work Australia |

The four steps in controlling risks to eliminate them or reduce them to the lowest possible levels before they cause injuries are to:

Step 1 – Identify hazards

Identifying hazards in the workplace involves finding things and situations that could potentially cause harm to people. Hazards generally arise from the following aspects of work and their interaction:

* physical work environment
* equipment, materials and substances used
* work tasks and how they are performed
* work design and management.

In general, a number of methods are used to identify hazards. These include workplace inspections, consultation with employees by both formal structures and informal discussions, safety audits and observation, risk assessments of plant, equipment, tasks etc, injury and illness records, accident and incident investigations.

Workers doing tasks and/or operating machinery are most familiar with that task and machinery and may be the first to identify any hazards or risks associated with their work and work area. You don’t want to be injured as a result of the hazard. You should report the hazard to your supervisor immediately and the supervisor should take action to eliminate or reduce the hazard. If you are still not satisfied you may report the hazard to your health and safety representative, the health and safety manager or the union.

Step 2 – Assess risks

A risk assessment involves considering what could happen if someone is exposed to a hazard and the likelihood of it happening. A risk assessment can help you determine:

* how severe a risk is
* whether any existing control measures are effective
* what action you should take to control the risk
* how urgently the action needs to be taken.

Risk assessment is the responsibility of management. Management will generally consult with workers about the hazards that may be associated with the work they are doing. As the operator of that task, you have the knowledge and experience to help management assess the risks associated with your job and help identify control measures to reduce the risks.

Step 3 – Control risks

The most important step in managing risks involves eliminating them if possible, or if that is not possible, minimising the risks as low as possible.

Workers and their representatives who will be directly affected by this decision are consulted about possible controls. For example, operators of plant and equipment are trained and experienced and most likely to have ideas about suitable control measures and their implementation.

There are many ways to control risks. Some control measures are more effective than others. It is important to select control measures that eliminate the risks or reduce them to the lowest possible levels. This may involve a single control measure or a combination of different controls that together provide the highest level of protection.

Some problems can be fixed easily and should be done straight away, while others will need more effort and planning to resolve. Of those requiring more effort, you should prioritise areas for action, focusing first on those hazards with the highest level of risk.

The various ways of controlling can be organised from the most effective method to the least effective. This is called the hierarchy of control as detailed in the following table.

Hierarchy of control measures

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| Effectiveness | Types of control | Examples |
| Most effective | Elimination | Eliminate manual transport of hooks by installing a hook line |
|  | Substitution | Substitution of metal hooks with lightweight durable plastic hooks on the chain will reduce noise levels |
|  | Isolation | A noisy machine may be enclosed to reduce the noise levels |
|  | Engineering controls | Acid treatment of floors to lift absorbed fatty substances followed by resurfacing using resin and graphite mix to reduce slip hazards |
|  | Administrative controls | Rotation of trained workers |
| Least effective | Personal Protective Equipment | Moisture resistant aprons, abdominal protective aprons, hand protection, head protection |

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| Controls such as laser guided circular saws reduce risk MTMMP4B |
| Controls such as laser-guided circular saws are most effective because they eliminate the risks of injury  © QAF Meats |

In most cases there will be a combination of controls. Some less effective controls may be put in place in the short term, e.g. wearing ear plugs, before effective controls can be in place in the long term, e.g. replacing the noisy machine.

Step 4 – Review control measures

The control measures that are put in place should be reviewed regularly to make sure they work as planned. In some cases controls may not work as planned and/or the controls may result in new risks. For example the introduction of a robot to perform a task may eliminate the risks associated with operating that task but may lead to new risks such as risks associated with servicing and maintaining the robot.

Management is responsible to review the effectiveness of control measures and identify and control any new risks that have been introduced because of the controls. A recent control measure is blade stop it’s a new system used in band saws that can stop a blade when it senses the presence of human flesh / fingers. As a worker in the area or operator of equipment you may be the person who is implementing the controls, and you may become aware of new risks. You should raise any health and safety issues with your supervisor. Don’t wait for an accident to happen. Report hazards and risks to your supervisor.

What is the role of workers in controlling risks?

Legally workers are required to look after their own health and safety and to take care of the health and safety of others around them. As part of achieving this you should notice hazards in your work area and the environment around you. If you can fix them, do so. If you cannot, then they should be reported to your supervisor. For example, rubbish on the floor may be a trip hazard. You may be able to remove the rubbish and eliminate the hazard. If you are unable to remove the rubbish you should report it to your supervisor. The supervisor is responsible for fixing the hazard. If you do not get satisfaction from the supervisor, you have the options of reporting the problem to the WHS representative, the WHS committee, the WHS coordinator or the union.

You should be made aware of progress and action taken to reduce the hazards you have reported.

How are workplace inspections conducted?

Regularly conducting workplace inspections is one method of identifying and controlling hazards before they cause accidents. Generally, a standardised procedure in the form of a checklist is used to conduct inspections. This is to make sure that no area is left out.

Supervisors conduct regular inspections of their work area. Inspections may also be conducted by the WHS representatives, the WHS committee and the WHS coordinator. Workers should report any hazards they see to their supervisors and raise health and safety matters when the inspections are being conducted. Workers may also be involved in identifying and implementing control measures to reduce the risks of accidents because of inspections.

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* manual handling
* hazards that cause slips, trips and falls
* hazards related to plant, equipment and tools
* hazards of working with a knife
* extremes of temperature – cold and hot
* hazardous substances
* working at heights
* noise.

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| PPE and other controls reduce risk on strapping machine MTMMP4B |
| Conveyor belts are engineering controls to reduce manual handling injuries  Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia |

Zoonotic diseases

What is Q fever and how is it managed in the workplace?

Zoonotic diseases

Zoonotic diseases are diseases that may be contracted from animals and animal products. Zoonotic diseases include *Brucellosis*, *Leptospirosis*, Q fever, Hydatid disease, *Erysipeloid* and *Orf.* The three principal diseases of concern are Q fever, *Leptospirosis* and *Brucellosis*.

How is Q fever contracted?

Q fever is the most likely disease to be contracted from animals or animal products. People can be infected by close contact with any material contaminated with the Q fever bacteria. It may be contracted from foetuses, placenta, faeces and milk of infected cattle, sheep and goats. Inhalation of contaminated aerosols or dust is the most common form of transmission. Q fever can also be passed on by contact with infected animals and contaminated articles such as straw, wool, hair and hides.

An individual who has not developed an immunity to Q fever, either naturally or by immunisation, is at risk of becoming infected. Those most at risk of becoming infected will be new workers to the industry and visitors to sites.

Signs and symptoms of Q fever

The time between breathing in the organism and the onset of the illness is generally 19–21 days.

Many of the symptoms of Q fever are typical of influenza, so it may be misdiagnosed. The symptoms include fever, sweats, severe headaches, myalgia, fatigue, nausea and photophobia and weight loss.

For some there is no illness, for others it is like a bad dose of the flu.

A smaller number of people may develop more severe or debilitating illness following initial Q fever infection. As many as 10-20% of people with acute Q fever illness may go on and develop signs of chronic fatigue called Post Q Fever Fatigue Syndrome (QFS). A smaller number of people may develop severe illness such as pneumonia or endocarditis and other conditions.

Treatment

Appropriate antibiotics, commenced soon after the onset of the illness, may be useful to improve recovery. Prolonged therapy may be required for chronic disease.

Prevention

Vaccination against Q fever

The most effective control measures for Q fever is pre-screening and vaccination program for every person entering the premises of meat slaughtering premises.

Every meat slaughtering premises in Australia provides Q fever vaccination for workers. Generally, no-one is allowed on to premises without Q fever vaccination. As trainees or workers, you should not enter the premises without being vaccinated against Q fever.

Before vaccination, people must have skin and blood tests to check if they have previously been infected with Q fever. Immunity to Q fever typically develops 15 days after vaccination.

Note that Q fever vaccine should not be given to people who have previously had Q Fever or who have tested positive on skin or blood tests, people who have previously been vaccinated against Q fever, people with known hypersensitivity to egg proteins, pregnant women and children younger than 15 years of age.

Prevention - PPE

As the vaccination process has a 15-day incubation period it is imperative correct fitting PPE be utilised for this period whilst onsite. P2 N95 masks are deemed suitable PPE for this purpose.

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Follow good hygiene practices

People working with animals or materials that may carry the Q Fever bacteria should be aware of general principles of infection control through practising good hygiene practices including handwashing, cough hygiene and not touching the face. They should also use effective personal protective equipment where appropriate and avoid or minimise risks of exposure to potentially infective material.

For more detailed information on the symptoms and complications see the ***Q Fever Information Kit for the Australian Meat Industry.***

What can be done to minimise the risk of contracting a zoonotic disease?

**Leptospirosis**

*Leptospirosis* may be contracted through direct contact with infected urine of infected cattle, pigs and horses. The *leptospirosis* organism can enter the body via eyes, mouth and damaged skin.

**Brucellosis**

*Brucellosis* may be contracted by direct or indirect contact with infected material from foetuses, placenta, faeces, raw flesh and milk of infected cattle, goats and feral pigs. Cattle are declared brucellosis free in all states except the Northern Territory. The organism may enter the body via the skin, eyes, mouth and by breathing in infected dust and aerosols.

Risk control program.

Employers are required by law to reduce risks to the lowest possible levels. Zoonotic diseases have the potential to cause harm to meat processing workers. Employers should have a risk control program in place to minimise the risks to workers of exposure to zoonotic diseases. The risk control program involves identifying the situations that may lead to exposure to potentially infective material such as body fluids of sheep, cattle and goats and introducing controls to reduce or eliminate exposure of workers to these materials.

Ideally the control measures focus on eliminating exposure to potentially infected materials through engineering controls such as:

* ventilation, exhaust and air conditioning system are installed
* chutes for offal, slinks and carcase remnants are properly fitted with flaps or covers.
* the slaughtering premises, including yards, pens, rendering areas and skin sheds are designed and maintained to ensure easy cleaning and efficient quick drainage.
* areas readily accessed by workers or visitors, for example the canteen, are not positioned near the yards or exposed to air ducted from the slaughter floor or condemned room.

It is also critical that workers follow work practices that reduce the risk of contamination and infection. This may be achieved by measures such as:

* washing stock down on the race entering the slaughter floor
* improving methods of handling animals
* careful removal of the paunch, stomachs, etc. to ensure they do not burst
* lowering of the guts to the eviscerating table to maintain the integrity of the released organs.
* the early removal of any type of contaminant from carcases
* prohibiting the storage of personal and soiled work clothing together in lockers
* laundering of work clothing by the employer
* muzzling of dogs used to move food animals
* no eating, drinking, smoking or nail biting in animal holding or processing areas.
* workers wearing personal protective equipment where appropriate to avoid or minimise risks of exposure to potentially infective material.

Access to the workplace should be **strictly** restricted to workers required to be there. Non-essential visitors, for example school, university or tour groups, should be discouraged as they may not have immunity to Q fever. Proof of vaccination or existing immunity is now a pre-requisite by some meat slaughtering premises before allowing entry to contractors and regular visitors. If access is permitted without proof of immunity, appropriate respiratory protection is recommended.

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| A white face mask with blue rubber bands  Description automatically generated |

Manual handling

What is manual handling or manual tasks?

Most tasks and activities in the meat industry involve some form of manual handling or physical effort to move or hold an object, people or animals. Manual tasks cover a wide range of activities such as handling live animals, using equipment, pushing and pulling cuts of meat, transferring meat into cartons, load out activities, working on a conveyor line and entering data into a computer.

What are hazardous manual tasks?

Some manual tasks are hazardous and may cause musculoskeletal disorders. These are the most common workplace injuries across Australia.

A hazardous manual task, as defined in the WHS Regulations, means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the following:

* repetitive or sustained force
* high or sudden force
* repetitive movement
* sustained or awkward posture
* exposure to vibration.

These factors directly stress the body and can lead to injury.

What injuries may be caused by manual handling or hazardous manual tasks?

Some manual tasks are hazardous and may cause musculoskeletal disorders. These are the most common workplace injuries across Australia.

A musculoskeletal disorder, as defined in the WHS Regulations, means an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. These injuries may include conditions such as:

* sprains and strains of muscles, ligaments and tendons
* back injuries, including damage to the muscles, tendons, ligaments, spinal discs, nerves, joints and bones.
* joint and bone injuries or degeneration, including injuries to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, hands and feet.
* nerve injuries or compression (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome)
* muscular and vascular disorders because of hand-arm vibration
* soft tissue hernias
* chronic pain.

These injuries may occur in two ways:

* gradual wear and tear to joints, ligaments, muscles and inter-vertebral discs caused by repeated or continuous use of the same body parts, including static body positions.
* sudden damage caused by strenuous activity, or unexpected movements such as when loads being handled move or change position suddenly.

Injuries can also occur due to a combination of these mechanisms, for example an acute injury to the back that has been worn down over years of heavy lifting.

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| M:\Photos\To be sorted\2008-2009 photos\##DONE - In Copyright Folder\Manual Handling\NORVIC\NORVIC_Scenarios1\DSC_8884.JPG |
| Repeated and continuous motion can cause strain.  © MINTRAC |

What are the legal requirements for controlling manual tasks?

Hazardous manual tasks (or manual handling) are specifically covered by Part 4.2 – Hazardous Manual Tasks – of the model Work Health and Safety Regulations. Regulation 60 states that senior managers must manage risks to health and safety relating to a musculoskeletal disorder associated with a hazardous manual task.

There is also a ***Code of Practice - Hazardous Manual Tasks***. The Code explains how to identify hazardous manual tasks, assess the risks of musculoskeletal disorders and eliminate or minimise those risks. To have legal effect in a jurisdiction, the Code of Practice must be approved as a code of practice in that jurisdiction.

Job rotation preferably every few hours is a good way to avoid repetition strain injuries.

How are the risks associated with manual tasks controlled?

Hazardous manual tasks are controlled in the same way as other hazards in the workplace through a risk control program. The four steps in controlling risks to eliminate them or reduce them to the lowest possible levels before they cause injuries are to:

* identify the hazards
* assess the risks
* control risks
* review control measures.

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| Rise and fall platform reduces risk of manual handling injury MTMMP4B |
| Rise and fall platforms reduce risk of manual handling injury.  © MINTRAC |

Step one: Identify the hazards

Hazards may be identified by measures including:

* direct observation
* consultation with workers
* analysis of historical data
* risk control program of manual tasks

Direct observation

Direct observation of a task or process may be completed using a checklist or other survey tool. Observation should occur while the usual work is being performed. It may identify risks overlooked in the daily routines.

Consultation with employees and their representatives

Employees should participate in all stages of identifying, assessing and controlling the risks associated with manual handling. Employees are likely to be aware of the risks associated with their work and are often able to put forward practical suggestions.

Analysis of historical data

This includes injury records, but also accident reports, previous audits, surveys, inspection by occupational health and safety staff, WHS committees or outside consultants. Meat industry experience may indicate trends to be considered.

Risk control program of manual tasks

A risk control program of manual tasks should be undertaken by senior management of all manual handling tasks.

Step two: Assessing the risks

Assessment of risk is undertaken to identify the specific factors that may pose a risk of injury. Generally a number of factors combine to increase the risk. One way to take a systematic approach to the identification of risk factors is to consider.

The task factors – what is being done:

* working posture, actions and movements
* duration and frequency of the activity
* location of the loads and the distance it is moved
* characteristic of the load and equipment
* weight and forces.

Work environment factors – where the task is performed:

* layout of the workplace
* condition of the workplace.

Work organisation factors – how the task is organised:

* work flow
* work loads
* work breaks.

Worker factors – who is doing the task:

* skills and experience of the worker
* specific clothing and other personal protective equipment (PPE)
* age and fitness level.

Step three: Controlling the risks

Once management have identified the hazardous manual tasks and assessed the factors that make them hazardous, then they are in a position to be able to identify the most effective control measures to eliminate the risks where possible or if that is not possible to reduce the risks to the lowest possible levels.

Purchasing to eliminate or minimise risks

Companies generally have a purchasing policy that focuses on purchasing plant and equipment has been designed so that it can be used safely and best matches the needs of your workers. For example a robot may eliminate a hazardous manual task.

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| Automated hock cutter MTMMP4B |
| Automated hock cutter  © QAF Meats |

Changing the design or layout of work areas

A well-designed work area will assist in eliminating or reducing the risk factors associated with a hazardous manual task, such as the degree of reaching, twisting or bending.

Changing the nature, size, weight or number of items handled

Examples of control measures that may be considered when handling loads include:

* purchasing products in smaller loads for manual handling or larger loads to be shifted mechanically.
* reducing the size or capacity of containers
* using grip devices adapted to the particular object to be carried.

Using mechanical aids

Mechanical equipment may eliminate or reduce the need for workers to lift, carry or support items, animals or people. A wide range of mechanical aids is available for example:

* conveyors such as roller conveyors, elevating conveyors, belt conveyors, screw conveyors, chutes, monorails or trolley conveyors
* cranes such as overhead travelling cranes, gantry cranes or jib cranes, stacker cranes, industrial manipulators and articulating arms.
* lifting hoists
* loading dock levellers
* turntables
* springs or gas struts, mechanical devices such as hand winches, hydraulic pumps, and battery powered motors.
* forklifts, platforms trucks, tractor-trailer trains, tugs and pallet trucks
* lift tables, mechanical and hand stackers, lift trolleys, two-wheel elevating hand trucks, and vacuum or magnet assisted lifters.

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| Tub on wheels reduces the risk of manual handling injury MTMMP4B |
| Tub on wheels reduces the risk of manual handling injury.  Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia |

Handling animals

When animals are being handled consider the following:

* using mechanical devices or other restraining aids for lifting, transporting or restraining animals
* knowing the pressure points to make animals move backwards or forwards.
* know low stress animal handling.
* knowing what animals to get into a pen with and those not to (wild feral)
* moving the animal to a place that constrains or minimises the movement of the animal before commencing the task.
* where handling is required, assessing the needs of the task including the specific type of mechanical aids and personnel, and planning it in a manner that avoids double-handling.
* where the use of a mechanical aid or assistive device requires two or more people, providing adequate resources so that workers under time pressure don’t try to complete the task on their own.

Changing the system of work

The workload and pace should accommodate the physical demands of the manual task. Workers should not have to work at a rate that is at the limit of their ability. Task design should take account of the range of human dimensions and capabilities such as height, reach and weight.

Changing the work environment

This includes controls to reduce risks associated with areas including:

* extremes of temperature
* floors and surfaces
* lighting

Using administrative control measures

Administrative control measures do not address the source of the risk – they only attempt to reduce risk by reducing *exposure* to those risk factors. Administrative controls include:

* job rotation
* rest breaks
* team handling
* information, instruction and training
* work instructions, SOPs.

Step four: Review control measures

Control measures that have been put in place need to be reviewed to check that they have achieved what they were designed to do and eliminated or reduced the risks to the lowest possible levels. Management also needs to review the control measures to ensure the controls have not introduced different risks.

Workers or operators of plant and equipment are well positioned to help management review control measures as it is the operators who are most familiar with the work being done and can provide feedback needed.

What is the worker’s role in reducing the risks associated with manual tasks?

There is a general duty of employees to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and avoid harming others. Duties of employees include:

* following instructions
* using personal protective clothing and equipment provided by employers
* taking care of equipment
* reporting hazards.

Workers’ responsibilities regarding manual tasks include:

* reporting to their supervisors any hazards associated with manual tasks
* participating in discussions about problems, identification, implementation and review of possible solutions
* implementing control measures relevant to their jobs and providing feedback about the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the controls
* participating in training related to reducing the risks.

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| A mechanised pallet jack eliminates lifting bulk meat packs MTMMP4B |
| A mechanised pallet jack eliminates lifting bulk meat packs  Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia |

Slips, trips and falls

What are the types of hazards that may result in slips, trips and falls?

The meat industry has a high incidence of injuries caused by slips, trips and falls. Slips, trips and falls may occur during manual tasks.

The most common hazards that increase the risks of slips, trips and falls are:

* floor surfaces – slippery, uneven or damaged
* ramps – slippery or damaged, the gradient (or slope)
* stairs – slippery, no handrail support or barrier to stop people falling over the edge
* platforms – slippery, no barrier to stop people falling over the edge
* drains and gutters – differences in levels of adjoining surfaces, pooling or build-up of material.
* obstructions or obstacles in any work area or pathways, including electrical cords, hoses and any other piece of mobile equipment such as trolleys.
* inadequate or poor lighting.

Additional factors that make floors, platforms and walkways slippery and may contribute to slips, trips and falls in the meat industry include:

* fat, blood, meat scraps, water and other waste products
* hot water and detergents in the cleaning and washing down process.

What can be done to reduce the incidence of slips, trips and falls?

As with all hazards the process is to:

* Identify areas or processes where slips, trips and falls may occur. Records of previous incidents and injuries, as well as consideration of industry information, the consultation with employees about areas of concern, and observation by inspections, audits or surveys.
* Assess all the factors that may contribute to an accident. When thinking about the floor surfaces, platforms, ramps, stairs, drains and gutters, obstructions and lighting, think about maintenance as well as housekeeping. Each workplace is different. A checklist may help but also always be on the alert to identify hazards and do something about them before they cause accidents.
* Identify appropriate controls. Remember to consider the most effective controls from the hierarchy of controls to ensure risks are reduced to the lowest possible levels. Substitution and engineering controls are effective controls and include:
* replacing the floor surface
* treating existing floors to improve grip
* fitting stairs, steps and ramps with slip resistant tread
* fitting stairs with handrails
* fitting platforms with a guard rail.
* Other controls include:
* maintenance procedures including prompt repair of damaged surfaces, equipment, fittings and leaks, blocked gutters and drains.
* restricted access, where feasible, to areas that pose risks and providing signposting.
* personal protective equipment of suitable footwear with slip resistant soles as with all PPE a procedure is necessary to make sure footwear is maintained and in good condition.

A combination of control measures is often necessary.

What is the role of the worker with hazards that pose risks of trips, slips and falls?

Employees play an important role by:

* fixing simple hazards such as removing obstacles in walkways
* reporting to the supervisor any damage to surfaces, drainage issues, fittings and equipment that require repair, and incidents where slips and trips have occurred even though no injury or damage has occurred.
* following all procedures and work practices that impact on the hazards, from following signage to care for footwear.

Hazards related to plant, equipment and tools

What is the definition of plant?

The ***Code of Practice, Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace’ (September 2013)***defines plant broadly as:

**‘*Plant*** *includes any machinery, equipment, appliance, container, implement and tool, and includes any component or anything fitted or connected to any of those things. Plant includes items as diverse as lifts, cranes, computers, machinery, conveyors, forklifts, vehicles, power tools and amusement devices.*

*Plant that relies exclusively on manual power for its operation and is designed to be primarily supported by hand, for example a screwdriver, is not covered by the WHS Regulations. The general duty of care under the WHS Act applies to this type of plant.*

*Certain kinds of plant, such as forklifts, cranes and some pressure equipment, require a licence from the WHS regulator to operate and some high-risk plant must also be registered with the WHS regulator.’*

What are the hazards associated with plant?

Plant is a major cause of workplace death and injury in Australian workplaces. There are significant risks associated with using plant and severe injuries can result from the unsafe use of plant including:

* limbs amputated by unguarded moving parts of machines
* being crushed by mobile plant
* sustaining fractures from falls while accessing, operating or maintaining plant
* electric shock from plant that is not adequately protected or isolated, and
* burns or scalds due to contact with hot surfaces, or exposure to flames or hot fluids.

Other risks include hearing loss due to noisy plant and musculoskeletal disorders caused by manually handling or operating plant that is poorly designed.

What are the legal requirements related to plant?

The ***Model Work Health and Safety Regulations*** (which have been passed into legislation in most states of Australia) state that:

**‘*Regulation 203:*** *A person with management or control of plant at a workplace must manage risks to health and safety associated with the plant.*

***Regulation 34-38:*** *In order to manage risk under the WHS Regulations, a duty holder must:*

* *identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to the risk*
* *eliminate the risk so far as is reasonably practicable*
* *if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable by implementing control measures in accordance with the hierarchy of control.*
* *maintain the implemented control measure so that it remains effective, and*
* *review, and if necessary, revise, risk control measures so as to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.’*

It should be noted that there is a legal requirement for control measures to be the most effective controls from the hierarchy of controls wherever possible. For example, plant such as robots may be installed that eliminate risks to workers. Engineering controls such as conveyor belts replacing manual tasks are also preferred options to administrative controls which only put barriers between the risks and the operators. Administrative controls should only be used in association with other more effective controls.

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| Forklifts eliminate the risk of manual handling injuries with carrying heavy loads MTMMP70B |
| **Forklifts eliminate the risk of manual handling injuries carrying heavy loads.**  *Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia* |

Workers are legally required to follow work instructions. Operators may be legally required to undertake training and certification to operate some plant. The certification may need to be updated regularly.

How are risks associated with plant controlled?

Management takes a planned and systematic approach to identify, assess and control risks associated with plant on site. The risk control process is also re-assessed:

* before and during the introduction of plant
* before and during any alteration to plant or change in the way plant or an associated system of work is used, including a change in the location of the plant, which is likely to involve a risk to health and safety.
* when new information regarding health or safety becomes available to the employer.

The risk control process is conducted in consultation with employees and their health and safety representatives and includes:

Hazard identification

Management takes a systematic approach to identify and maintain a register of all plant used on site and systematically identify all the hazards associated with each item of plant.

Hazards associated with plant generally arise from:

* The plant itself, for example hazards associated with a forklift would include hazards relating to its mobility, its electrical, hydraulic and mechanical power sources, moving parts, load-carrying capacity and operator protection.
* How and where the plant is used. The forklift, for example may have hazards arising from the kind of loads it is used to lift, the size of the area in which it is used and the slope or evenness of the ground.

Risk assessment

Risk assessment is undertaken in consultation with the employees who use the plant, equipment or tool, and also with those who clean and/or maintain it. The assessment includes consideration of all the factors that may contribute to the risks including:

* frequency and duration of exposure to the risk and risks identified
* work organisation, including the complexity and repetitive nature of the task and the number of employees using the particular plant.
* layout and condition of the workplace, including lighting, workspace, noise levels, pedestrian traffic, etc.
* condition and maintenance record of the plant, tool or equipment
* manufacturer’s operating instructions, if any, and the usual circumstances of its use, cleaning and maintenance
* guarding and safety device requirements
* the capability, skill and experience of the person using the plant, tools or equipment.

Risk control

Control measures need to be identified for each of the risk factors that have been identified. The most effective controls eliminate the risk of injury by replacing plant and equipment so that the task is automatic. Automatic hock cutters eliminate the risk of injury associated with cutting hocks. The automated carton forming machine eliminates the risk of injury associated with forming cartons, applying glue, etc.

Workers or operators of plant should be consulted about controls. They also need to be trained in implementation of the controls. Workers should also give feedback to management on the effectiveness of the controls.

Reviewing controls

The WHS Regulations state that:

**‘*Regulation 37: Control measures must be maintained so that they continue to protect workers and other people from the hazards associated with plant. The control measures must be:***

* **fit for purpose**
* ***suitable for the nature and duration of the work, and***
* ***installed, set up and used correctly.***

***Regulation 38: A person conducting a business or undertaking must review and as necessary revise control measures:***

* **when the control measure is not effective in controlling the risk**
* ***before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control***
* ***if a new hazard or risk is identified***
* ***if the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary, and***
* ***if a health and safety representative requests a review’***

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| IMG_2648 |
| Automated carton forming machine eliminates the risk of injury  Courtesy Fletcher International © MINTRAC |

How do workers operate equipment safely?

Workers are legally required to work safely and protect others from injury. This includes operating equipment safely. The safe operation of plant includes:

* participating in training in operation of the plant to gain competency
* following work instructions and any other workplace procedures related to the operation of plant.
* reporting any issues related to plant to your supervisor
* participating in consultation on the plant you operate
* following emergency procedures related to plant.

What are some of the safety controls on plant?

The WHS Regulations refer to some of the specific safety controls on plant. These include machine guards and emergency stops.

Machine guards

A guard is a physical or other barrier that can perform several functions including:

* preventing contact with moving parts or controlling access to dangerous areas of plant
* screening harmful emissions such as radiation
* minimising noise through the application of sound-absorbing materials, and
* preventing ejected parts or off-cuts from striking people.

Plant and/or components of plant that require guarding include:

Type A - Non-operational plant/components of plant which transmit power and motion:

* belts and pulleys (e.g. refrigeration rooms)
* gear wheels (e.g. chain drive mechanisms)
* shafts and spindles (e.g. viscera tables and conveyor belts)
* flywheels (e.g. motors, etc.)
* slides and cams
* chain and sprocket gears (e.g. conveyor belts).

Type B - Operation parts/components of plant:

* tools and dies of power presses
* blades of guillotines (e.g. head splitters)
* circular saw (e.g. horn removal saws)
* band saws (e.g. carcase splitting saw, boning room band saws)
* drills and chucks (e.g. maintenance section, core sampling of frozen cartons)
* elevating platforms (e.g. kill floors).



Bandsaw with guard

© MINTRAC

Permanently fixed physical barriers provide the highest level of protection against hazards. They provide permanent non-moving guards that cannot be removed without the use of tools.

This is practical when access is not necessary during the operation, maintenance and cleaning of equipment and prevents access to the moving parts of the machine.

Interlock physical barriers

Are linked to the operation so that the machine will not operate until the guard is fully closed. They can be electrical, mechanical, pneumatic or hydraulic. This is practical when access is necessary during operation, maintenance and cleaning.

Physical barriers

May be either fixed enclosing guards, which prevent access to a particular part of a machine, or fixed distance guards which reduce the possibility of access to any dangerous part or area by their size and ability to keep all parts of the operator at a distance from the hazard.

Presence sensing systems

Also known as photoelectric guards, are presence sensing or proximity sensing guards. They have a proximity reaction, i.e. the machine can be deactivated when someone enters or interrupts the barrier. The barriers may include electro-optic action (light barriers, light curtains, light screens) and ultra sonic and protective devices such as pressure mats. These devices may protect the operator from objects ejected from the machine.

Emergency stops

Emergency stop buttons are designed to stop driven machinery or equipment in a situation when a person’s health is at risk. Emergency stop devices should not be the only method of controlling risks. They should be designed as a back-up to other control measures.

What in general should you do in a plant/machinery emergency?

In an emergency the following steps should be taken:

* The priority is to engage the emergency stop system, e.g. emergency stop button and, if possible, isolate the power to the plant and equipment
* make sure that other people in the area are protected
* alert others, primarily your supervisor and the first aid officer (if required)
* respond in accordance with your workplace procedures to any injuries that may have occurred (as a worker this generally means that you alert your supervisor and/or first aid officer).

What should you do when cleaning and servicing plant?

Cleaning and servicing equipment may be dangerous. You should only undertake cleaning and servicing of plant if you are fully trained and authorised to do so. You should always follow work instructions related to cleaning and servicing of plant. Particular attention should be paid to the isolation and tagging procedures of the particular machine.

In order to protect the person cleaning and servicing the machinery it is important to make sure the machinery cannot be started when cleaning and servicing is taking place. To achieve this the machinery must be locked out and tagged out (LOTO), and power isolated at the source before cleaning or servicing begins.

If the machinery was operating during the cleaning or servicing the operator might fall into the machinery, body parts may be caught in machinery and articles of clothing or cleaning or servicing equipment may be dragged into the machinery. If the machine is not locked out, then another person may inadvertently turn the machinery on while the operator is cleaning or servicing the machinery.

Reducing the risks of working with a knife

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| P1010004 |
| Hazards and risks may arise from handling knives  *© MINTRAC* |

What risks are associated with knife use?

Knives are used across the whole meat industry. There are risks associated with the use of knives if they are not handled and used correctly and safely. Knives may cause injuries to the knife handler as well as those in close proximity to the knife handler.

The most common types of injuries are cuts and stab wounds. These often require medical attention and may need suturing, skin grafting and reattaching tendons.

How are risks associated with knives reduced to the lowest possible levels?

Management takes a risk management approach to all situations in meat slaughtering premises where knives are used. This includes:

* identifying the hazards associated with each task
* assessing the risks by identifying each of the factors that may have contributed to the risk
* identifying and implementing controls that reduce the risks to the lowest possible levels.
* mesh gloves, mesh aprons, cut resistant gloves, sharp knives, using the correct knife.
* Checking that the controls have reduced the risks and haven’t created any new risks.

What can workers do to reduce the risks of injury using knives?

Workers must receive training in the use of knives. You must always receive training and follow work instructions for the task you are doing. You should always concentrate when using a knife. You are most at risk of an accident when you are tired and not concentrating on the job you are doing. It is very easy to cut yourself when you become distracted or careless in your approach to work. There are some general principles about using knives safely. These include:

* don’t use a blunt knife as you will need to use more force which gives you less control.
* never take your eyes off the cutting path of the knife, if you must look away, stop cutting
* never cut towards yourself or towards another individual
* if you drop your knife let it fall, don’t try to catch it
* always place your knife in the scabbard or pouch when not in use
* always be aware of the movement of people around you
* never fool around with a knife in your hand or fool around with others who may have a knife in their hand.
* never move meat using a knife especially moving meat towards yourself
* always keep the handle of the knife clean and free of fat and grease.

Personal protective equipment is a vital part of knife safety, and workers should always use PPE when working with a knife. The PPE used at your meat slaughtering premises will be set out in work instructions for the task. You must be trained in each task that you do and you must follow work instructions for that task. The range of PPE equipment used can include:

* mesh gloves
* mesh aprons
* mesh tunics
* cut resistant gloves
* arm guards.

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| M:\Photos\To be sorted\2008-2009 photos\##DONE - In Copyright Folder\Manual Handling\NORVIC\2_NORVIC_BONING\DSC_9011.JPG |
| Cut resistant and mesh gloves reduce the risk of knife injury  © MINTRAC |

How do you sharpen knives safely?

You should complete the unit of competency ***AMPWHS201 Sharpen and handle knives safely***and follow work instructions related to sharpening knives at your premises. Some general principles related sharpening knives include:

* when using a sharpening stone, make sure the stone is on a slip-proof, flat surface
* when using a stone, always keep your free hand away from the stone and knife
* make sure your steel has a safety guard between the handle and the body of the steel
* when using a grindstone, make sure the rotation of the stone and the cutting edge of the blade are away from your body.

Eliminating or reducing hazards associated with extremes of temperature

What effects may occur from exposure to extremes of temperature?

Workers in meat slaughtering premises are frequently exposed to cold temperatures. Work is carried out in cold temperatures in areas including boning rooms, despatch areas, chillers, freezers and sometimes outdoors.

The body reacts to exposure to cold by trying to maintain its temperature by constricting blood flow to the skin. The skin changes, shivering and postural changes may lead to a loss of coordination and feeling. This is turn may increase the risk of accidents and soft tissue damage. Similarly, cold may aggravate the effects of other workplace hazards.

Exposure to cold may result in hypothermia, where the body’s core temperature may drop to a dangerous level. Frostbite is another risk in cold areas.

Exposure to high temperature and excessive humidity may also occur at meat slaughtering premises in areas such as yards and pens, rendering areas and scalding and singeing areas where pigs are processed.

Exposure to high temperatures may lead to rashes, cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

How are the risks of exposure to extremes of temperature controlled?

Risks associated with working in areas where there are extremes of temperature are controlled in the same way as all other risks are managed in the workplace by the implementation of a risk control program for extremes of temperature. This involves:

Identifying the hazards

Management takes a planned and systematic approach to identify all the areas and situations of extreme temperature at the site.

Assessing the risks

Once the hazards have been identified, all the factors that may contribute to the risk are identified. In extremes of temperature these may include:

* air temperature, air movement and humidity
* length of exposure
* nature and level of work
* types of clothing and footwear
* levels of fluid loss and replacement
* personal factors - for example, use of certain medications and/or pre-existing medical conditions, level of physical fitness and obesity can affect the risk of heat stress. Pregnancy can also reduce tolerance to heat.

Identifying and implementing controls

It is generally not possible to eliminate exposure to cold temperature, as it is a legal requirement for meat to be stored at low temperature to meet food safety and preservation requirements. Control measures to reduce risks to the lowest possible levels may include:

* restricted entry to cold areas for essential activities only or only by authorised persons
* wearing suitable clothing, footwear and PPE
* following work instructions, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and any other workplace procedures
* undertaking training including emergency procedures
* gaining permission to enter the area
* not working alone in a freezing chamber.

Management is responsible to implement the most effective controls particularly focusing on engineering controls such as:

The indoor working environment

* ventilation and mechanical cooling methods, such as air conditioning and/or air circulating fans.
* provision of mechanisms external to the workplace to assist in temperature control, such as planting shade trees, and the use of eaves and verandahs
* insulating the roofs and walls of the workplace
* insulating or shielding sources of radiant heat in the work place, e.g.. insulation around ovens, furnaces or other sources of radiant heat; and/or insulated barriers between hotter and cooler parts of the workplace
* exhaust ducts for venting hot air from the workplace. The outdoor working environment.

Arrangements for outdoor working environments should include:

* erection of shelters, tents and/or windbreaks (in the case of hot, dry winds) and provision of suitable clothing, sunscreen hats etc., to protect outdoor workers from the heat and exposure to UV radiation.
* provision of air-conditioned work vehicles.

What is the role of workers in reducing risks in extreme temperatures?

Workers are responsible for cooperating with control measures to eliminate or reduce risks. For example, workers should wear suitable clothing when entering or working in freezers and only enter when authorised and trained to do so.

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| IMG_2655 |
| Cold room clothing  Courtesy Fletcher International © MINTRAC |

In heatwave conditions management will advise you of precautions that should be taken. If you feel that you are a danger to yourself or others because of the heat you should report to your supervisor. Controls to reduce risks in high temperatures include taking rest and fluid breaks.

Eliminating or reducing hazards associated with exposure to hazardous chemicals

What is a hazardous chemical?

Hazardous chemicals are substances that may harm people, property and the environment. They may affect a worker’s health causing illness, disease or injury.

They include many common industrial, commercial, pharmaceutical, agricultural and domestic chemicals. Examples of hazardous chemicals in meat slaughtering premises include cleaning agents, sanitisers, ammonia, caustic soda and acids. They may be solids, liquids or gases.

What health effects may be associated with exposure to hazardous chemicals?

Hazardous chemicals may enter the human body in three ways:

* swallowing
* breathing
* skin or eye contact.

Health effects may be immediate, i.e. acute or short term, or chronic, i.e. a result of long term or continuous exposure or the body eventually reacts to an exposure which may have occurred a long time in the past.

Immediate effects of exposure include headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting or burns.

Chronic health effects include asthma, dermatitis, cancer and bronchitis.

What are the legal requirements related to managing hazardous chemicals?

There are general requirements under the WHS Act for senior managers to provide a healthy and safe working environment primarily through the implementation of risk management programs to manage risks (such as hazardous chemicals) in the workplace. There are also specific requirements related to the management of hazardous chemicals in the WHS Regulations covering areas such as the use, handling and storage of hazardous chemicals at a workplace including duties for keeping a hazardous chemical register, safety data sheets, labels, placarding, fire protection and equipment. There is also a *‘Managing risks of Hazardous Chemicals Code of Practice’* that provides a practical guide to achieving the standards of health, safety and welfare required under the WHS Act and Regulations.

How are hazardous chemicals managed in the workplace?

In order to meet obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations senior management is responsible to put a risk management program in place to minimise the risks of exposure to hazardous chemicals that includes storing, handling and managing them correctly to avoid harm to workers, members of the public, property and the environment. The risk management program includes:

* identifying the hazardous chemicals in the workplace
* assessing the risks
* implementing controls to eliminate and/or minimise the risks
* reviewing the control measures and keeping up to date with work health and safety codes of practice and legislation.

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| Signage indicating dangerous chemicals MTMMP4B |
| Signage indicating dangerous chemicals  Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia |
| Chemical storage with material safety data sheets MTMMP4B |
| Chemical storage with material safety data sheets  © MINTRAC |

What are the workers’ responsibilities in relation to hazardous chemicals at work?

Employees should take reasonable care for their own health and safety and avoid harming others. For hazardous chemicals this includes:

* following work instructions and any safety procedures associated with the use of chemicals
* reporting any issues with hazardous chemicals to the supervisor
* using any personal protective equipment provided for use with chemicals
* following safety instructions such as the removal of contaminated clothing before eating, drinking or smoking.

Under WHS legislation all workplaces must have a register of chemicals used in the workplace that includes safety data sheets (SDS) for each chemical that includes specific information on the chemical such as health hazard information, precautions for use, safe handling information, contact details, what to do in an emergency such as a spill or exposure to the chemical etc.

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| Signage requiring prtective clothing to be worn when handling chemicals MTMMP4B |
| Signage requiring protective clothing to be worn when handling chemicals  *Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia* |

Eliminating or reducing noise hazards in the workplace

What is the extent of the noise problem in meat slaughtering premises?

The meat processing industry is a ‘noisy’ industry. As a guide, if you must raise your voice to communicate with someone about one metre away, the noise is likely to be hazardous to hearing. The industry does have a number of hazards that may result in exposure to noise above acceptable levels. Sources of noise in the meat industry include:

* live animals
* knocking devices
* movement of metal hooks
* power tools
* compressed air
* metal screws for conveying product.

Hazardous noise can destroy the ability to hear clearly and can also make it more difficult to hear sounds necessary for working safely, such as instructions or warning signals. Exposure standard for noise is defined in the WHS Regulations as an LAeq,8h of 85 dB(A) or an LC, peak of 140 dB(C).

* prolonged exposure, that is, eight hours exposure to noise levels of 80 dB (A) and above.
* Exposure to a one-off noise, which can cause immediate hearing damage; the upper limit to which a person may be exposed is 140 db (C).

Noise-induced hearing loss is an insidious problem, usually developing slowly over many years. Although employees may think that they have become used to noise, this tolerance is due to temporary hearing loss. Repeated exposure to excessive noise over a period will eventually lead to permanent hearing loss.

This hearing loss results when tiny hair-like cells in the inner ear are permanently damaged by too much noise for too long. The damaged cells can then no longer send messages to the brain and hearing is lost. The damage often remains unnoticed until it is too late.

Not only does excessive noise result in permanent hearing loss, but it can also create other problems such as stress leading to tiredness, irritability and headaches. It can cause dizziness, raise blood pressure and increase heart rate. Noise increases the risk of accidents by disguising sounds of approaching danger or warnings, and negatively affective balance, concentration and communication among co-workers.

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| light weight plastic durable hooks |
| Substitution of light weight durable plastic hooks reduce noise  *Courtesy Fletcher International © MINTRAC* |

What are the legal requirements to reduce exposure to noise in the workplace?

Senior managers have the primary duty under the WHS Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers and other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the business. They also have more specific obligations under the WHS Regulations to manage the risks of hearing loss associated with noise at the workplace, including:

* ensuring that the noise a worker is exposed to at the workplace does not exceed the exposure standard for noise.
* providing audiometric testing to a worker who is frequently required to use personal hearing protectors to protect the worker from hearing loss.

Workers have a legal responsibility to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that they do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Workers must comply with any reasonable instruction and cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health and safety at the workplace. For example, if personal hearing protectors are provided the worker must use them in accordance with the information, instruction and training provided on their use.

How are the risks of hearing loss controlled in the workplace?

The **‘*Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss Code of Practice’*** provides guidance on how to manage the risks of hearing loss associated with noise with management following a systematic process that involves:

* identifying sources of noise that may cause or contribute to hearing loss
* assessing the risks associated with these hazards
* implementing risk control measures
* reviewing risk control measures.

Identifying sources of hazardous noise

Source of noise may be identified by conducting workplace inspections and talking with workers. Available information such as workers compensation claims, manufacturers specifications and industry risk information may help identify sources of excessive noise.

Assessing risks

Senior management may then contract a competent person to assess the risks by carrying out a noise assessment to:

* identify which workers are at risk of hearing loss
* determine what noise sources and processes are causing that risk
* identify if and what kind of noise control measures could be implemented
* check the effectiveness of existing control measures.

Implementing risk control measures

The WHS Regulations require duty holders to work through a hierarchy of control to choose the control measure that most effectively eliminates or minimises the risk in the circumstances. The most effective control measure is to eliminate the source of noise completely, for example by ceasing to use a noisy machine, changing the way work is carried out so hazardous noise is not produced or by not introducing the hazard into the workplace.

If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the source of noise, you must minimise the risk associated with hearing loss so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes ensuring that the noise does not exceed the exposure standard by choosing one or more of the following measures:

* substitute the hazard with plant or processes that are quieter
* modify plant and processes to reduce the noise using engineering controls
* isolate the source of noise from people by using distance, barriers, enclosures and sound- absorbing surfaces.

If there is a remaining risk, it must be minimised so far as is reasonably practicable by implementing administrative controls, and if a risk remains, then suitable personal protective equipment must be provided and used. These two types of control measures, when used on their own, tend to be least effective in minimising risks because they rely on human behaviour and supervision.

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| Machinery noise is reduced by enclosing the machine MTMMP4B |
| **Machinery noise is reduced by enclosing the machine.**  courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia |

What is the worker’s role in reducing or eliminating noise hazards?

In general, it is the worker’s role to work in a healthy and safe manner and take care of the health and safety of others. Applying this to noise, it is important to wear hearing protection in designated noise areas and report to the supervisor any noisy areas or changes in noise levels, e.g. equipment that has suddenly become noisier. Workers should cooperate in all activities aimed at hearing protection.

Hearing protection should be regularly tested for defects, properly fitted and worn, cleaned and maintained, replaced as appropriate and properly stored.

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| Worker packing trim wearing hearing protection MTMMP4B |
| Worker packing trim wearing hearing protection  *© MINTRAC* |

Workers’ compensation and rehabilitation programs

What are workers compensation requirements?

This is often referred to as Injury Management and covers the claim aspects of workers compensation as well as rehabilitation. It may also cover first aid requirements which in this training material is covered under accident management.

If accidents occur, and workers are injured, workers compensation claim procedures and occupational rehabilitation may be required.

Employers must comply with the requirements of their state or territory Workers Compensation Act. It is compulsory for employers to hold workers compensation insurance.

In general, compensation for the injured worker may include payment for medical treatment, weekly payments to compensate for loss of wages, lump sum payments to compensate for permanent disability, a payment for pain and suffering and rehabilitation costs.

What is the role of management in workers compensation?

Most companies will have a specific person who deals with the management of the claims and liaison with the insurer.

If a workers compensation claim is required, the supervisor should:

* provide a claim form and information on lodging a claim
* direct the worker to the appropriate workers compensation officer or human resource person.

The supervisor may be consulted about some aspects of filling in the claim form.

What are the rehabilitation requirements?

The rehabilitation sections of the relevant state Workers Compensation Act stipulates that employers must provide rehabilitation services to employees who are off work, or not fully fit for their normal duties, because of a workplace related event.

To do this the workplace needs at least:

* a management system setting out policies and procedures for rehabilitating workers
* a coordinator of the rehabilitation program in the workplace
* access to the services of rehabilitation providers who can assist with the return-to-work program.

When a person is injured at work or ill due to work they:

* first seek treatment as appropriate
* lodge a workers' compensation claim.

If they require rehabilitation, a plan for their rehabilitation must be prepared with that person's participation. Suitable work must be sought for the worker. This is negotiated between worker, rehabilitation co-ordinator and supervisor. Rehabilitation service providers may be involved if required. Rehabilitation service providers are external experts with technical expertise in returning injured workers to work. An agreement must be reached between all parties that rehabilitation is complete.

The rehabilitation coordinator, injured worker, supervisor, and possibly a rehabilitation service provider, develop a program. The supervisor assists with the implementation of the program. The ill or injured worker gradually upgrades in the program until they have reached their full potential.

Sources of information on WHS matters

What sources of information are available on WHS matters?

Formal sources of information may come from within or outside the organisation.

From within the organisation formal sources of information include:

* workers' compensation information
* accident report forms
* accident investigation reports
* workplace inspection reports.

From outside the organisation formal sources of information include:

* state and federal government WHS bodies
* websites on the internet
* subscriptions to WHS journals etc.

The first step in gathering information is to be clear about why you are gathering the information. When you have clarified the reason, then you can decide on the most appropriate sources of information.

It is important to know where to get information and how to access it. The best initial source of information on WHS matters is your state's government WHS body. For example, in NSW this would be the ***NSW Workcover Authority***. In general, the state WHS authorities may be accessed by telephone. They often have an information service that may assist with initial enquiries. They also have a website. For example, the ***NSW Workcover*** website is [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au). In general the websites are linked so that by accessing one site, you may obtain access to other sites.

Complying with the law

In all States and Territories, the law clearly states employers have the primary responsibility for managing health and safety.

Financial reasons

Accidents and injuries are costly in terms of staff resources, time, financial outlays, equipment damage, disruption to operations and even public relation issues. Figures released by Safe Work Australia estimate the cost associated with work-related injury and illness to be more than $60 billion dollars per year.

Industrial relations

Poor health and safety may impact on the industrial relations at a site and subsequently affect the operation of the business.

Ethical and moral obligations

Responsible employers have an obligation to protect the health and safety of their employees and anyone else affected by their work activities.

Employee engagement and satisfaction

Involvement of employees in health and safety matters raises awareness and promotes conscious attention to personal safety and the safety of others.

Public relations

If the company is regarded locally as a poor performer in health and safety they may have a bad reputation in the community. This may impact on their ability to attract employees to work in the company especially considering the increasing competition for employees in regional locations where our companies are located.

Work health and safety legal requirements

What legislation covers Work Health and Safety (WHS)?

Over the past two years Australia has moved to the same WHS laws across Australia. This has come about through the work of Safe Work Australia. Safe Work Australia is the national policy body responsible for the development of model work health and safety laws. In consultation with the States, Safe Work Australia developed the model work health and safety laws consisting of the ***Model Work Health and Safety Act***, supported by model WHS regulations, model ***Codes of Practice and a National Compliance and Enforcement Policy***. The ***Model Work Health and Safety Act*** then had to be enacted or passed by Parliament in each State and Territory to become legally binding. The states and territories are responsible for regulating and enforcing the laws in their jurisdictions. The WHS law provides greater consistency across the whole of Australia making it easier for companies operating across state boundaries.

The WHS Act sets out general duties of all parties regarding WHS. The Regulations support the Act. The Regulations provide some detail around what companies need to do to comply with the Act. For example the Regulations include provision for companies to provide audiometric testing of workers who are frequently required to wear hearing protection to protect the worker against noise above the exposure standard.

The harmonised legislation includes national codes of practice. Other publications that support implementation of the WHS legislation continue to be standards and guidelines covering specific WHS issues or industries. These are not legal requirements but may be used under law to demonstrate compliance with legislation.

What are the main priorities of WHS legislation?

Two principles shape the Safe Work Australia vision for health and safety. The first: all workers regardless of their occupation or how they are engaged have the right to a healthy and safe working environment. The second: well-designed, healthy and safe work will allow workers to have more productive working lives.

The vision for achieving this as reflected in the WHS legislation is based on prevention of work-related illness and/or injury through consultation, communication and coordination of health and safety matters in the workplace with all personnel involved and taking a risk management approach to eliminate the risk of injury wherever possible or if this is not possible to minimise the risks.

Who has responsibilities under WHS legislation and what are those responsibilities?

Achieving the vision of a healthy, safe and productive working life for all, relies on everyone in the workplace meeting their health and safety responsibilities. The WHS Act sets out those responsibilities. These requirements are called **Duty of Care**.

In general, duties are placed on:

* employers (who are called persons in control of a business or undertaking in WHS legislation) who have the overall responsibility for providing a workplace that is safe and without risks to health, as far as practicable
* ‘workers’, i.e. employees of your company AND others such as a contractors, trainees etc. who are not employees of your company but they may be working there. All ‘workers’ are required to perform their duties in a manner that ensures their health and safety, and that of others in the workplace
* any others who may influence WHS in the workplace, including contractors, manufacturers, suppliers and installers of plant, equipment or materials used in a workplace.

What are the WHS responsibilities of senior managers?

Under the WHS legislation the CEO is given the title person in control of a business or undertaking. The reason for this change is that there may be a number of ‘CEOs’ who have employee relationships with personnel working in your company at any one time. For example there may be contractors, personnel working for a labour hire company, trainees, personnel working for a registered training organisation etc. The CEO of your company is responsible to provide you and everyone else working in the company with a safe workplace and the CEOs of the contractors, labour hire company etc are also responsible for their workers conducting their work safely and following your WHS requirements.

CEOs or persons in control of a business or undertaking bear the ultimate responsibility for health and safety in their organisation. They are responsible to set up the systems to manage health and safety and to hold their senior managers accountable for implementing the systems in their workplace.

Under the WHS legislation senior managers (that is managers who make decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part of the organisation) are given the title ‘officers’. They are responsible to exercise ‘due diligence’ to ensure that the systems are implemented and are effective in providing a safe environment. They must act on unsafe practices or incidents. They must be able to report on safety performance and they must ensure that their personnel have the health and safety expertise they need to do their work.

What are the WHS responsibilities of supervisors?

Supervisors are responsible for health and safety in their own work areas. They must implement the organisation’s health and safety systems in their work area. In practice this means that supervisors must:

* implement the risk management process in their areas through regular workplace inspections and risk assessments by identifying and fixing hazards before they cause problems
* consult with their workers and others such as contractors and trainees working in their area to involve them in health and safety matters so everyone is working safely and contributing to safety in the area
* model exemplary behaviour that demonstrates their commitment to health and safety and their commitment to treat everyone in the workplace equally, fairly and with respect
* act on any unsafe condition or incident or any health and safety issue that they are aware of; if they can’t solve it then they should report it to their manager or as appropriate, eg to the maintenance manager
* train their staff so that they work safely and don’t endanger the safety of others
* have a detailed understanding of the safety performance of their own area and be able to report on that performance.

It is most important for supervisors to act on matters reported to them, to do everything in their power to reduce or eliminate hazards. Supervisors should also take pro-active action to reduce or eliminate hazards before they cause problems. If supervisors have done everything in their power to provide a safe worksite then they have met their legal requirements.

What resources are available to assist supervisors?

Supervisors have a dedicated resource to help them meet their WHS responsibilities. This resource is a website called *Workplace health and safety for meat industry supervisors.* This website has been designed specifically for meat industry supervisors. As supervisors you carry significant responsibility and accountability under the legislative and regulatory changes, but at the same time you may find it difficult to access specialised training.

Throughout this website, are links to various meat industry resources from AMPC, MLA, AMIC and MINTRAC as well as links to various WHS sites such as Safe Work Australia and relevant state WHS authorities such as Workcover.

Each of the headings on the left-hand side will take you to subsequent information pages.

What are the WHS responsibilities of workers?

Worker’s responsibilities include:

* taking reasonable care of their own health and safety
* taking reasonable care that their own conduct does not adversely affect others
* complying with instructions
* cooperating with workplace policies and procedures.

How is WHS legislation enforced?

WHS legislation is regulated by each state and territory government WHS authority. The authorities aim for compliance with the legislation. They employ inspectors to provide advice on compliance. The inspectors make every effort to assist companies to comply with the legislation but if the company is not co-operating or if there are breaches of the legislation the WHS Act provides a range of graduated enforcement options. This includes:

* issuing a non-disturbance notice, eg it is a requirement of the legislation that areas where there has been a notifiable accident are not disturbed in any way until otherwise directed by an authority inspector
* issuing an improvement notice
* issuing a prohibition notice
* issuing an undertaking for the company to take remedial action
* issuing an injunction
* issuing an enforceable undertaking
* issuing a penalty notice
* initiating prosecution.

In the event of a prosecution the reverse onus of proof has been removed. Under the old legislation if you were prosecuted you had to prove you had made every effort to comply with the legislation. Under the legislation the burden of proof rests with the prosecution that is the prosecution must prove beyond reasonable doubt that you failed to comply with the legislation.

Penalties for breaches of the WHS legislation may incur fines to the company and/or fines and gaol sentences to individuals including directors, managers, supervisors or anyone associated with the business. Prosecutions are under criminal law. Fines to corporations may be as high as $3 million and fines to individuals may be as high as $600,000 to CEOs and $300,000 to other individuals. Gaol sentences to individuals may be up to a maximum of five years.

Managing health and safety

How is health and safety managed in the workplace?

Health and safety is managed in companies in a similar way to any other aspect of business through general management systems and specific health and safety management systems. The goal is to integrate the management of health and safety into the ways people do their work so that it is a part of everything we do on a day to day basis.

Senior management develops a business plan that defines their strategic priorities for what the business wants to achieve, and a brief outline of how they plan to achieve the priorities. Health and safety may be a strategic priority in the business plan. There may for example be a priority that states:

***‘We are committed to providing a healthy, safe and supportive environment for our staff that enables them to achieve their potential, make their contributions to our business and develop their careers within our organisation.’***

Relevant senior managers then develop and implement operational plans that set out how the company plans to meet that strategic priority. They then incorporate health and safety into the management systems to achieve the strategic priority. Some of the initiatives incorporate health and safety into the general management systems. These include incorporating health and safety into:

the performance management system by including WHS into work plans and having WHS performance indicators

relevant standard operating procedures and work instructions

purchasing procedures through consideration of safety aspects and conducting risk assessments prior to purchasing and obtaining safety data sheets and operational manuals with purchases

management of change

maintenance programs.

Meeting the strategic priority for health and safety and managing WHS also requires specific WHS management systems. These generally involve:

a policy that provides a brief overview of what you want to achieve and how you plan to achieve it

procedures that set out a step by step process for meeting that specific health and safety goal.

In this way companies will have a company WHS policy that sets out the company priorities for achieving the priorities and in so doing, meeting their legal responsibilities to provide a healthy and safe working environment. The policy also generally includes the personnel with responsibilities to achieve those priorities. Companies will also have specific WHS policies and procedures that set out how they will manage high priority areas such as risk management, manual handling, noise, bullying and harassment etc.

Consultation

What are the WHS legal requirements for consultation?

Consultation is a key element in achieving a healthy and safe working environment. Consultation is a keystone of the WHS legislation.

The WHS legislation not only requires consultation with workers but has broadened the duties to consult with others at the worksite (such as contractors) or anyone likely to be affected by their business.

For example there must be consultation with contractors prior to them conducting their work to ensure they are qualified, have safe systems of work, are trained, are inducted in your company’s health and safety procedures and follow them on your premises. Supervisors must monitor contractors in their work area to ensure they are working safely and following the safety procedures for the area.

The WHS Act requires consultation when:

* identifying hazards and assessing risks
* making decisions about how to eliminate and minimise risks
* making decisions about facilities for the welfare of workers
* proposing changes that affect WHS of workers
* making decisions about procedures for:
  + consultation
  + resolving issues
  + monitoring health
  + information about training.

The company has the responsibility to work out the methods they will use to consult. Methods of consultation may be through health and safety representatives and/or WHS committees as well as meetings with other personnel such as contractors working at the site. There is an obligation under the Act for management to consult with workers and reach agreement about the methods for consulting. The Act sets out the process for electing health and safety reps, their functions, powers and entitlements. The role of health and safety reps (HSR) includes:

* representing workers on WHS matters for their area and work group
* conducting inspections of the work area they represent and working with the supervisor to take corrective actions as appropriate and agreed
* the right to HSR training (and refresher training) if they request training
* the right to issue provisional improvement notice (PIN). A PIN can only be issued if they have completed the HSR training and consulted with the person and still feel that the issue will continue. They then can issue the PIN in writing with corrective actions
* the right to direct to cease unsafe work. This may only be issued if the HSR has completed the HSR training, has consulted with the person, has followed the issue resolution process and still feels there is a serious and imminent risk to safety.

All these mechanisms for consultation focus on encouraging everybody to work together to manage WHS hazards in the workplace, as part of normal daily work.

How do supervisors meet their responsibilities to consult?

As a manager, supervisor or foreman in an area, your responsibilities to consult with your workers means that you need to:

* make sure your workers are aware of health and safety matters as soon as possible
* encourage them to ask questions about health and safety matters
* encourage them to raise their concerns and report any problems
* act promptly on any unsafe conditions or incidents they tell you about and notify them of the outcomes
* report any issues you are unable to resolve to your manager and inform your work group that you have done this
* encourage them to make suggestion to solve health and safety matters!
* involve them in the problem solving process!
* inform them of the outcome of the consultation and of the decision promptly.

You may use toolbox meetings, other meetings and other informal methods of consulting with your workers. You should be consulting with your workers on WHS matters as a routine part of your job. You need to create an environment in which your workers feel comfortable about raising WHS matters. Workers should report hazards. Supervisors or forepersons should fix them, or if they can't be fixed, report them as appropriate, for example to their manager or the maintenance manager – following workplace procedures. Feedback on progress should be given to workers ­­ particularly those who reported the problems.

How are hazards controlled?

The next step is identification and selection of the most effective control measures for each hazard and an action plan for implementing the controls. The action plan identifies the activities to be carried out to implement the controls, the timeframe and the people with the responsibility to take the actions.

There are many ways for employers to control the hazards. Some controls are more effective than others. Measures that eliminate the hazard are more effective than measures such as PPE that only place a barrier between the worker and the hazard. The best controls eliminate the hazards totally.

|  |
| --- |
| The carcase splitting saw has been redesigned to reduce the risk of injury MTMMP70B |
| **The carcase splitting saw has been redesigned to reduce the risk of injury.**  *© MINTRAC* |

There are legal requirements in the WHS Act for management to implement the most effective controls particularly where there are high risks.

Hierarchy of control measures – example

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Effectiveness** | **Types of control** | **Examples** |
| Most effective | Elimination | eliminate manual transport of hooks by installing a hook line |
|  | Substitution | substitution of metal hooks with lightweight durable plastic hooks on the chain to reduce noise levels |
|  | Isolation | a noisy machine may be enclosed to reduce the noise levels |
|  | Engineering controls | acid treatment of floors to lift absorbed fatty substances followed by resurfacing using resin and graphite mix to reduce slip hazards |
|  | Administrative controls | rotation of trained workers |
| Least effective | Personal protective equipment | moisture resistant aprons, abdominal protective aprons, hand protection, head protection |

In most cases there will be a combination of controls. Some less effective controls may be put in place in the short term (e.g. wearing earplugs), while more effective controls are in progress e.g. enclosing or replacing the noisy machine.

The following is an example of an action plan for changeover.

An example of an action plan for changeover

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timeframe** | **Responsibility** |
| Ensure slides and gambrels are stored within easy reach at about waist height. | one week | Plant engineer |
| Organise job rotation between jobs that involve different muscle groups | one week | Foreman |
| Provide an inclined rail so that worker only lifts the carcase to waist height, and the skid is then pulled up by mechanical means, to the right rail height for the next task. | one week | Plant engineer |

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| --- |
| Forklifts eliminate the risk of manual handling injuries with carrying heavy loads MTMMP70B |
| **Forklifts eliminate the risk of manual handling injuries carrying heavy loads.**  *Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia*  *Monitoring implementation of safe work practices* |

Once controls are in place their effectiveness should be monitored to ensure the hazard has been reduced or eliminated and that no new hazards have been created.

What is the supervisor’s role in monitoring implementation of safe work practices?

Supervisors are responsible for their work areas. We have learned that the focus of health and safety is to prevent injuries from occurring and this is achieved primarily by taking a risk management approach to eliminating hazards before they cause injuries. The risk management approach is taken in consultation with the workers, with others such as contractors and with the health and safety representative.

Under WHS legislation management, including supervisors have a responsibility to monitor the outcomes to ensure the continuing safety of their areas.

The responsibilities of supervisors include:

* conducting regular workplace inspections in consultation with workers to systematically identify and fix hazards
* participate in task and equipment risk assessment in consultation with workers to identify and fix hazards before they cause injuries!
* always model safe work practices themselves
* consult with workers about health and safety and encourage workers to share their safety ideas and report safety issues
* ensure workers are trained and competent in their jobs as well as trained and competent to work safely
* monitor workers to ensure they are following work instructions and working safely
* regularly review the safety performance of the area and identify any patterns that may need addressing such as an increase in any accidents or injuries or higher levels of leave.

Consultation

The WHS legislation recognises that workplaces have better health and safety outcomes when workers have input into health and safety matters that affect them. The legislation requires CEO s(or persons who conducts a business or undertaking as the CEO is known in the legislation) to consult with workers who carry out work for the business and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a work health or safety matter. Consultation on health and safety matters is conducted directly with workers and through workers representatives which may include health and safety representatives (HSR) and/or health and safety committees.

You should know who your health and safety representative is in your workplace. You may raise health and safety matters with them and they will work with appropriate workplace personnel to help resolve the matters.

You will also participate directly in health and safety matters relevant to your work area. Direct participation may include tool box meetings, meetings about changes to your work area, results of work inspections, emergency drills etc. You are encouraged to report and/or raise health and safety matters with your supervisor or health and safety rep.

What are the powers and functions of health and safety representatives?

The WHS Act sets out specific powers and functions that a HSR can perform in the interests of the workers they represent. The powers and functions are intended to enable HSRs to effectively represent the interests of the members of their work group and to contribute to work health and safety matters.

The powers and functions of HSRs are to:

* represent the workers in their work group in relation to work health and safety matters
* monitor the measures taken by the CEO/PCBU to comply with the WHS Act in relation to their work group members
* investigate complaints from work group members about work health and safety
* inquire into anything that appears to be a risk to the health or safety of work group members, arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking.

Who else does the CEO consult with on health and safety?

Under the WHS legislation CEOs/PCBUs are required not only to consult with their own employees but they are also required to consult with anyone else who is associated with your workplace (such as contractors) to ensure that everyone works together to control work health and safety risk. This means for example that companies must consult with contractors to ensure they are meeting their duty of care to provide a safe environment when they are doing work for the company and they are also complying with the health and safety requirements of your company.

Assisting with development of safe work practices

How is change managed?

Change is a constant feature of our lives including our working lives. Most people want the security of knowing that everything remains the same. People feel insecure when there are changes. They may not feel that the change is needed. They may feel insecure about whether they will be able to work in the new ways or they may fear that they will lose their jobs. These are the reasons why it is important to include people throughout the change process so they understand why change is needed, they participate in coming up with the new ways that things will be done and they are committed to implementing the changes.

There are legal requirements under WHS legislation to consult with workers about health and safety but also to consult with workers about any changes in the workplace. The changes may be on a site level such as a new production line or a new boning room or they may be at an area level with the introduction of an automated process such as a robotic to replace a job on the line or they may be corrective actions such as wearing harnesses on the legging stand, arising from risk assessments, inspections or compliance with law. Workers need to be consulted on all these changes so that they are committed to the change and will follow the new practices.

What is the role of supervisors in managing change?

The responsibilities of supervisors in managing change include:

* participating in all safety assessments associated with the change prior to changes being made including:
  + risk assessments of changed tasks
  + risk assessment prior to purchasing new equipment
  + changes to work instructions and SOPs
* consulting with workers in the area throughout the change process so that workers are committed to the change and will follow the changes processes
* training workers in the new processes so that they are competent in the new ways of doing things
* monitoring workers performance to check they are following the new ways
* monitoring the outcomes of the change to ensure hazards have been reduced and there aren’t any new hazards.

Accident management

What happens after an accident?

Accidents may happen if hazards and their associated risks are not controlled. Accidents result in injury or illness to a person, damage to property or the environment.

After an accident the following should occur, as appropriate.

* if the site is unsafe then it must be made safe as quickly as possible bearing in mind your own safety in making the site safe e.g. power switched off
* if a person is injured, they must be treated by following the first aid procedure
* the accident must be reported and investigated
* where the injury is serious, the worker may need ongoing treatment which may also include rehabilitation and workers compensation.

What are notifiable accidents?

Serious accidents must be notified to the appropriate state WHS authority. A notifiable accident is an accident where the injury is likely to need to hospitalisation (that is actual admission to hospital not just treatment in emergency). In this case there is also a legal requirement that the site of the accident is left undisturbed so that the inspector can investigate. This may mean stopping production until directed otherwise by the inspector.

There is also a requirement to report some serious events such as an explosion or gas leak, scaffolding falling etc. even if it doesn’t cause injury.

Your workplace will have a procedure for reporting a serious accident or event and not disturbing the accident area. As a supervisor you must understand and initiate this procedure as required.

What first aid is available?

All meatworks are required to provide first aid facilities. The requirements are set out in legislation and will vary from the provision of first aid kits and first aid officers to an on-site nurse.

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| --- |
| On-site nurse attends to worker MTMMP70B |
| **On-site nurse attends to worker**  *Courtesy of Meat and Livestock Australia* |

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the manager or supervisor of each area to ensure the employees:

* are aware of the designated first aid officer
* know the location of the first aid kits and/or rooms
* know the procedure to follow when first aid is required
* ensure an injured worker receives first aid
* initiate accident reporting and investigation procedure
* participate in the accident investigation process
* implement control measures arising from the accident investigation
* monitor implementation to confirm that the controls have eliminated the contributing factors and haven’t cause any new problems.

What records are kept of accidents?

It is important to keep records so that cumulative data can be examined and patterns identified and addressed. It is also important to keep records as evidence that you are meeting your legal responsibilities and complying with legislation.

Records are kept of:

* accident reports
* accident investigations and implementation and monitoring of corrective actions
* safety performance over time such as monthly reports of incidents, accidents, inspections etc.

Why investigate accidents?

Accidents must be investigated:

* so that factors contributing to the accident may be identified and rectified to prevent recurrence
* so that the event is recorded and records kept which may be used to identify trends and form a basis for planning prevention programs
* to comply with WHS legislation related to reporting accidents and to comply with workers compensation legislation related to lodging of a claim for workers' compensation.

How are accidents investigated?

The goal of accident investigation is to identify everything that has contributed to the accident, so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure a similar accident does not happen again.

Accidents are rarely, if ever, caused by a single event. There may be one or more hazards and associated risk factors.

The steps in an accident investigation include gathering the information, establishing the facts and finding out the circumstances that led to the accident. The hazards that contributed to the accident must be identified. The hazard may be related to:

* the worker (e.g. posture, height, other physical and psychological conditions)
* the work (e.g. layout, organisation of work, equipment used)
* the working environment (e.g. light, noise, temperature, distractions)

Next, the information must be analysed, considering the hazards and the risk factors, what controls were in place, whether they were adequate, what other control options could be put in place. The hierarchy of controls should be used to consider the effectiveness of the safety aspects of the current work procedure and to consider all other possible options.

Next, controls must be recommended and the action to follow – what is to occur, who is responsible and when it is to occur.

What is the role of management in the investigation of accidents?

The accident investigation should be conducted by the supervisor of the area where the accident occurred. This is because supervisors are, in the first instance, directly responsible for the health and safety of their employees. Other workplace personnel such as the health and safety representative and the WHS manager may also participate in the investigation process. Having identified the factors contributing to the accident, the supervisor is then responsible for rectifying the factors so that the accident does not happen again. Solutions should focus on eliminating the hazards.

The supervisor is also responsible for following the procedures related to the site's accident reporting and investigations i.e. complete and hand in forms within specified timeframe. The form may for example be circulated to the human resources manager and the WHS committee.

If the supervisor cannot fix the problem or does not have the authority to rectify the problem, then the accident investigation report should be directed to management and/or the person with authority to make the required decision, for example the maintenance department.

What are emergency programs?

A risk management approach is taken to the management of emergencies. This involves identifying all possible types of emergencies and putting procedures in place to minimise the likelihood of those emergencies occurring. The emergency plan aims to prevent or minimise injuries and damage to property from any emergency. In general, an emergency response plan sets out:

* the types of emergencies that may occur at that site
* the steps to be taken in the event of each of the potential emergencies, including evacuation procedures, contacting emergency services, and shut down
* other activities such as maintenance of fire extinguishers, warning systems and emergency lighting
* the responsibilities of all on-site personnel
* training for all employees on the emergency plan.

In general for an emergency that requires evacuation, you should follow your emergency evacuation procedures. The priority is to get everyone in your area safely evacuated. Other duties will generally include:

* raise the alarm or respond to the alarm
* assist anyone in danger if this does not place you in danger
* evacuate to the nominated assembly area
* follow your workplace procedures for making sure everyone is evacuated from your area
* restrict the danger area by closing fire doors
* remain in the assembly area until everybody is accounted for.

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to ensure all employees are aware of the site procedures, including:

* how to raise the alarm
* the evacuation exits
* the assembly areas.

Some personnel will have specific duties such as fire warden and receive specific training such as in the use of on-site firefighting equipment. Only personnel who have received training should use firefighting equipment such as fire extinguishers. The first priority is always to safely evacuate personnel from the area.

Workers’ compensation and rehabilitation programs

What are workers compensation requirements?

This is often referred to as Injury Management and covers the claim aspects of workers compensation as well as rehabilitation. It may also cover first aid requirements which in this training material is covered under accident management.

If accidents occur, and workers are injured, workers compensation claim procedures and occupational rehabilitation may be required.

Employers must comply with the requirements of their state or territory Workers Compensation Act. It is compulsory for employers to hold workers compensation insurance.

In general, compensation for the injured worker may include payment for medical treatment, weekly payments to compensate for loss of wages, lump sum payments to compensate for permanent disability, a payment for pain and suffering and rehabilitation costs.

What is the role of management in workers compensation?

Most companies will have a specific person who deals with the management of the claims and liaison with the insurer.

If a workers compensation claim is required, the supervisor should:

* provide a claim form and information on lodging a claim
* direct the worker to the appropriate workers compensation officer or human resource person.

The supervisor may be consulted regarding some aspects of filling in the claim form.

What are the rehabilitation requirements?

The rehabilitation sections of the relevant state Workers Compensation Act stipulates that employers must provide rehabilitation services to employees who are off work, or not fully fit for their normal duties, because of a workplace related event.

To do this the workplace needs at least:

* a management system setting out policies and procedures for rehabilitating workers
* a coordinator of the rehabilitation program in the workplace
* access to the services of rehabilitation providers who can assist with the return to work program.

When a person is injured at work or ill due to work they:

* first seek treatment as appropriate
* lodge a workers' compensation claim.

If they require rehabilitation, a plan for their rehabilitation must be prepared with that person's participation. Suitable work must be sought for the worker. This is generally negotiated between worker, rehabilitation co-ordinator and supervisor. Rehabilitation service providers may be involved if required. Rehabilitation service providers are external experts with technical expertise in returning injured workers to work. An agreement must be reached between all parties that rehabilitation is complete.

The rehabilitation coordinator, injured worker, supervisor, and possibly a rehabilitation service provider, develop a program. The supervisor assists with the implementation of the program. The ill or injured worker gradually upgrades in the program until they have reached their full potential.

Sources of information on WHS matters

What sources of information are available on WHS matters?

Formal sources of information may come from within or outside the organisation.

From within the organisation formal sources of information include:

* workers' compensation information
* accident report forms
* accident investigation reports
* workplace inspection reports.

From outside the organisation formal sources of information include:

* state and federal government WHS bodies
* websites on the internet
* subscriptions to WHS journals etc.

The first step in gathering information is to be clear about why you are gathering the information. When you have clarified the reason, then you can decide on the most appropriate sources of information.

It is important to know where to get information and how to access it. The best initial source of information on WHS matters is your state's government WHS body. For example, in NSW this would be the NSW Workcover Authority. In general, the state WHS authorities may be accessed by telephone. They often have an information service that may assist with initial enquiries. They also have a website. For example the NSW Workcover website is [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au). In general the websites are linked so that by accessing one site, you may obtain access to other sites.

Bibliography

These publications were used to develop this training material.

Meat Research Corporation, 1995 *National Guidelines for Health and Safety in the Meat Industry,* Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union and the Meat and Allied Trades Federation of Australia, Sydney http://meatiesohs.org/files/information/guidelines.pdf

Additional resources

Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) should refer to the Unit-by-Unit listing of resources on the MINTRAC website [www.mintrac.com.au](http://www.mintrac.com.au) for additional resources to support the delivery of this Unit.

RTOs who develop or identify additional resources are encouraged to advise MINTRAC so that these can also be added to the Unit-by-Unit listing.

The Workplace Health and Safety website for meat processing supervisors

In 2012 MINTRAC developed the Workplace health and safety for meat industry supervisors’ website. This website was designed specifically for meat industry supervisors who carry significant responsibility and accountability under the legislation and regulations, but at the same time find it difficult to access specialised training.

The website includes information about the regulatory environment, supervisor responsibilities, WHS induction, training activities, PPE and a series of factsheets on critical risks in the meat industry. These factsheets can be downloaded and used in training, printed and displayed in lunch rooms and accessed from your phone.

The fact sheets include:

* Knife handling
* Plant – Bandsaws, mincers and other equipment
* Slips, trips and falls
* Manual Tasks – involving repetitive tasks
* Manual tasks – involving heavy loads
* Plant – forklift trucks/vehicles
* Hazardous chemicals
* Stock handling
* Alcohol and other drug
* House keeping
* Working at heights
* Bullying
* Fatigue
* Hot water and steam
* Noise
* Working alone.

The website can be accessed from the MINTRAC website or directly at <http://www.mintrac-whs.com.au/>

Throughout the website, there are links to various meat industry resources from AMPC, MLA, AMIC and MINTRAC as well as links to various WHS sites such as SafeWork Australia and WorkCover.