ACT Government | ACT Health

GUIDELINE DOCUMENT

Work Health and Safety Guideline

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Contents

Introduction

The commitment of the ACT Health Directorate (ACTHD) to work health and safety is detailed in the Work Health and Safety Policy. The ACTPS Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2026 (the strategy) sets the direction for the ACTPS approach to improving work health and safety and wellbeing and includes targets to reduce workplace injuries.

Achieving a high standard of work health and safety (WHS) is a key commitment that requires:

- effective planning and performance management,
- a commitment to outcomes and continuous improvement,
- the development of and support for a positive safety culture,
- effective communication, consultation, and co-operation,
- effective risk management practices,
- clear roles and responsibilities,
- effective WHS procedures,
- a sound knowledge of relevant WHS information, and
- high levels of WHS competency.

This WHS Guideline is one part of the ACTHD work health and safety management system (WHSMS), which aims to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces through the management of risks and supports action to implement the strategy.

Purpose

The purpose of this WHS Guideline is to:

- support the WHS Policy,
- provide guidance about how WHS legislation requirements will be met,
- provide guidance to ACTHD about how WHS will be managed,
- support effective WHS risk management,
- provide WHS information that is relevant to managers and workers,
- provide specific procedures for the WHSMS,
- support WHS learning and development requirements for managers and workers, and
- support continuous improvement in WHS performance.

Scope

The WHS Guideline applies to officers, managers, workers (including contractors), suppliers and visitors.

How to use this guideline

The WHS Guideline is a "how to" guide for WHS and should be used as a resource for managing WHS risks.

The WHS Guideline is made up of two parts:

- **Part one** - provides information that all managers and workers should apply.
- **Part two** - provides information that is relevant to managers and workers, depending on their role in ACTHD and the hazards and risks in their workplace.

The WHS Guideline covers a comprehensive range of known hazards and risks. It is not possible to address every possible WHS issue in the WHS Guideline, but the information on risk management (section 3) can be applied to any hazard. Where an issue is identified that is outside of the scope of the WHS Guideline, the general principles of WHS still apply and reference should be made to WHS legislation, industry standards and subject matter experts, as required.

The WHS Guideline is designed to:

- provide an introductory summary of relevant WHS topics and provide references and links to additional resources, for example to specific WHS codes of practice. (Users of the WHS Guideline are strongly encouraged to access and use these resources if they are responsible for that area of risk), and
- promote and support a systematic approach to WHS (refer to section 1) but will not contain every document that forms part of the WHSMS (as most risks will be managed in accordance with business unit specific procedures and documents).

The WHS Guideline uses various specific terms (such as a hazard) to explain how WHS works. These terms will be explained in the relevant section of the WHS Guideline. See also Appendix 1 – Terms and Conditions.

The WHS guideline is based on, and uses, material from relevant work health and safety codes of practice accessed from the ACT Legislation Register between 1 September 2019 and 30 October 2019, 25 January 2022 and between 1 July and 24 October 2023. For the latest information on ACT legislation see https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/.

These codes of practice are designed to be used by duty holders to implement the WHS legislation. The codes of practice that have been used as resources are listed in Appendix 2 - Legislation. In addition, Safe Work Australia, WorkSafe ACT, Comcare and health publications have also been used as resources and links are available in this document.

WHS support and contacts

The ACTHD People Strategy and Culture (PSC) Branch maintains the corporate elements of the WHSMS, including this guideline, provides advice about WHS requirements and manages some specific WHS processes. Table 1 provides detail about the role and responsibilities of People Strategy and Culture Branch.

WHS competency is found across ACTHD and there is no one centre of excellence. As a result, ACTHD will:

- access WHS advice and competency across ACTHD, as required, and
- encourage formal and informal WHS communities of practice to share and improve WHS competencies.

Managers, HSRs and workers who require WHS information can:

- use the information in this WHS Guideline,
- access the information on the WHS Intranet, and
- contact People Strategy and Culture on 02 5124 9201 or lodging a request at: Jira - HR Support.

Part 1 – Information for all managers and workers

Part 1 of the WHS guideline provides information that all managers and workers should apply, and includes information on:

- the foundations for WHS management,
- communication and consultation structures,
- risk management,
- core WHS processes, such as reporting incidents and safety inspections,
- training and induction, and
- document control.

Section 1 - WHS foundations

This section provides information for managers and workers about ACTHD's WHS requirements, including:

- WHS legislation,
- safety culture, and
- WHS roles and responsibilities.

WHS legislative requirements

The WHS Policy explains the ACTHD commitment to ensuring the health and safety of workers and complying with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act) and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (WHS Regulation), which provide a framework to secure the health and safety of workers and workplaces through the management of risks.

ACTHD WHS system documents and processes are designed to enable ACTHD and its managers and workers to correctly apply WHS legislation. References to relevant WHS legislation will be included in each WHSMS document to ensure that managers and workers have access the original WHS legislation that supports the WHSMS documents. The WHS audit and assessment program will include WHW legislation requirements as a key element of the audit or assessment to support effective compliance with WHS legislation.

WHS legislation

The WHS Act requires the ACT Public Sector and ACTHD (as a person conducting a business or undertaking) to ensure the health and safety of workers, so far as is reasonably practicable. ACTHD is required to manage risks by:

- eliminating risks to health and safety, so far as is reasonably practicable, and
- if elimination is not reasonably practicable, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

The WHS Act also provides for consultation, representation, and participation, including workplace arrangements such as work groups, HSRs and health and safety committees.

The WHS Regulation includes specific requirements for hazards, risk management processes, registration, and licencing.

The WHS Codes of Practice (codes of practice) are practical guides to achieving the standards set down in the WHS Act and WHS Regulation. Because the codes of practice explain the requirements of the WHS Act and the WHS Regulation they provide an essential resource for understanding the overall WHS requirements.

In addition to the codes of practice, this WHS Guideline references Safe Work Australia WHS guides, and resources and information provided by health authorities.

Australian Standards provide relevant safety information and are referenced in this WHS Guideline. Australian Standards are available from the CHS Library (new users will need to create a log-in). The following section provides information about meeting the requirements of WHS legislation.

Meeting the requirements of WHS legislation

Meeting the commitment in the WHS Policy to comply with WHS legislation requires the ACTHD to:

- design the WHSMS documents, training, and information to meet the requirement of WHS legislation,

- provide information to duty holders to assist them to understand their responsibilities,
- implement effective communication, consultation and co-operation arrangement between duty holders and between workers and managers,
- ensure that safe design, certification, licence, registration, inspection and testing requirements are maintained,
- apply WHS risk management in accordance with the requirements of the WHS Regulation,
- apply the WHS Codes of Practice or other guidance as a way of controlling a hazard or risk when its applicable to the situation and those risk controls are applied, noting that:
    - codes of practice are admissible in court proceedings under the WHS Act and WHS Regulation,
    - courts may regard a code of practice as evidence of what is known about a hazard, risk, risk assessment or risk control and may rely on the code in determining what isreasonably practicable in the circumstances to which the code of practice relates,
    - compliance with the WHS Act and WHS Regulations may be achieved by following another method if it provides an equivalent or higher standard of work health and safety,
- apply the hierarchy of controls when identifying the risk controls to apply to manage risk, including where an Australian Standard or international standard sets out well-known and effective controls that are in use in the particular industry, that are suited to the circumstances in the workplace,
- consult with workers and their representatives about risk controls,
- ensure that effective training, instruction and supervision is provided to workers,
- provide suitable facilities for workers,
- ensure that emergency and first aid arrangements are in place, and
- ensure that specified WHS incidents are notified to WorkSafe ACT.

WHS Regulator

WorkSafe ACT is the WHS regulator and its role is to:

- monitor and enforce compliance with WHS legislation (including undertaking workplace inspections),
- provide advice and information, and
- promote and support WHS education and training.

This WHS Guideline provides an entry point for WHS information in ACTHD and includes links to the relevant codes of practice, where applicable.

Comcare is the Commonwealth agency responsible for the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRC Act) and administers the workers' compensation self-insurance licence granted under the SRC Act to the ACTPS. The self-insurance licence requirements include meeting specific work health and safety performance and audit requirements.

Safety culture

Achieving WHS outcomes requires a high level of WHS competency, effective practices and risk management, and a positive safety culture. Safety culture is a subset of organisational culture.

The ACTHD must continuously improve its safety culture[1] by making improvements in four areas:

1. Senior management commitment to safety[2].
2. Realistic and flexible practices for handling both well-defined and ill-defined hazards.
3. Continuous organisational learning through practices such as feedback systems, monitoring, analysis, and reporting.
4. Care and concern for hazards is shared across the workforce.

Managers and workers should apply the following principles to build a positive safety culture:

- *Safety before operations* – Safety is viewed as an investment and not a cost. Safety is prioritised before achieving business objectives. "Can do" attitudes are not allowed to bypass safety processes and outcomes.
- *Openness and transparency about safety and risk* – People are open and transparent in discussing risk and safety. Problems are not allowed to remain hidden. People are fearless in raising or discussing safety issues and difficult conversations are expected.
- *Effective leadership* - Leadership behaviour and organisational culture actively seeks, and welcomes information about risks and opportunities, so that safety decisions are made at the right time, for the right reasons.
- *Compliance to safety standards* - Legal requirements are met and written safety procedures are followed. There is no disconnect between the procedures and the way the work is done. Workers follow safety procedures even when no one is looking. Managers and workers care about our workplaces, and they are well organised.
- *Effective communication* – Effective communication ensures that safety critical information is relayed to decision-makers in time and messages are not diluted.
- *High levels of competency* – There is an accurate assessment of the WHS competencies of workers, and these assessments match the required competencies. Competency failures are not expected to lead to safety failures.
- *Being a safety learning organisation* - Safety critical information is extracted, shared and enforced, including using the information from safety incidents (in the ACTHD and in the ACTPS).

1 Pidgeon, N.; O'Leary, M. (2000). "Man-Made Disasters: why technology and organizations (sometimes) fail". *Safety Science*. **34** (1–3): pp 15–30.

2 Promoting effective health and safety leadership: using the platform in the model Work Health and Safety Act, Safe Work Australia.

- *People are part of the solution to safety* - The focus is not just on designing work to eliminate human error (for example, only focusing on enforcing procedures) it is on making people a solution; by building capability to:
  - manage operational risks effectively,
  - enable everyone to be a safety leader,
  - implement a positive safety culture,
  - solve problems, and
  - communicate safety and risk information accurately.

Roles and responsibilities

The Director-General is responsible for the leadership of the ACTHD and is accountable in accordance with the *Public Sector Management Act 1994*.

Table 1 summarises the roles and responsibilities of the Director-General and Deputy Directors-General (officers), managers, workers and health and safety representatives. Detailed information about the WHS requirements for these roles is provided throughout the WHS Guideline.

Table 1 – Roles and responsibilities

Role	WHS Act requirement	WHSMS role
Director-General and Deputy Directors-General, who are officers in accordance with the WHS Act.	Exercise WHS due diligence; including to: • acquire and update their knowledge of WHS matters, • understand the operations being carried out by ACTHD, and the hazards and risks associated with those operations, • ensure that ACTHD applies appropriate: ○ resources and processes to eliminate or minimise WHS risks, ○ processes in place to receive and respond promptly to information about incidents, hazards, and risks, and ○ processes for complying with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation.	Provide leadership and a corporate safety culture that enables the recognition of risks and opportunities to support sound safety decisions being made at the right time. Monitor and drive continuous improvement in WHS, including the annual review of the WHSMS. Actively manage WHS risk, including active review of risk tolerance and setting WHS objectives. Ensure effective communication, consultation and co-operation takes place with other duty holders.

Role	WHS Act requirement	WHSMS role
Executive Group Managers and Executive Branch Managers	Executive managers have the same duties as workers (refer below). Executive managers may have due diligence duties when participating in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the directorate.	Provide leadership and a corporate safety culture that enables the recognition of risks and opportunities to support sound safety decisions being made at the right time. Follow the guidance and procedures specified in the WHS Guideline. Ensure that: • officers are aware of strategic risks and risk controls, • WHS requirements are included in business and project planning, • risk management is effective. • WHS performance is monitored and reported to officers and governance committees, • implement WHSMS corrective actions, • effective communication, consultation and co-operation takes place with other duty holders, and • lessons from WHS incidents are applied to reduce risk.
Managers	Managers have the same duties as workers (refer below).	Provide leadership and a corporate culture that enables the recognition of risks and opportunities to support sound safety decisions being made at the right time. Follow the guidance and procedures specified in the WHS Guideline. Plan to improve and monitor WHS performance. Ensure that: • executive managers are aware of risks and risk controls, • WHS requirements are met and written safety procedures are followed, • effective communication, consultation and co-operation takes place with other duty holders, • regular workplace safety inspections are completed, • workplaces are well organised, • lessons from WHS incidents are applied to reduce risk, and • workers are trained and effectively supervised.

Role	WHS Act requirement	WHSMS role
Workers	While at work, a worker must: • take reasonable care for their own health and safety, • take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other people, • comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction, and • co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers. Note: Including this WHS Guideline.	Follow the guidance and procedures specified in the WHS Guideline and relevant safety procedures. Complete relevant WHS training and work within their areas of WHS competency. Care about their workplace and keep the workplace well organised. Look out for other workers and address any workplace hazards immediately. Report hazards and incidents. Raise WHS concerns with their manager (or a HSR). Participate in consultation processes.
Health and safety representatives (HSR)	At their discretion, exercise any powers in accordance with the WHS Act, including: • represent the workers in the work group, • monitor the measures taken in compliance with the WHS Act, • investigate complaints from members of the work group, • inquire into anything that appears to be a risk to the health or safety of workers, • inspect the workplace at any time after giving reasonable notice or, without notice, in the event of an incident, or any situation involving a serious risk, • accompany a Worksafe ACT inspector, • with the consent of a worker, be present at an interview concerning WHS with the worker, • request the establishment of a WHS Committee, • receive WHS information, • request the assistance of any person, • issue a provisional improvement notice, and • direct a worker who is in a work group represented by the representative to cease work.	Participate in workplace safety inspections and risk assessments (at their discretion). Facilitate consultation between the ACTHD and workers.

Role	WHS Act requirement	WHSMS role
People Strategy and Culture Branch	Monitor WHS legislation and standards and incorporates changes into the WHSMS. Plan for proposed WHS legislation and business requirements that may impact on the WHSMS.	Maintain corporate elements of the WHSMS, including this guideline. Ensure that relevant WHS legislation and related requirements are available and communicated to managers and workers. Support: • consultation structures, including the committees and HSRs, • the emergency and first aid arrangements for ACTHD workplaces, including the Workplace Emergency Planning Committee. Monitor: • WHS legislation and standards and incorporates changes into the WHSMS, • incidents and injuries, to identify trends, and undertake quality assurance checks. • workplace safety inspection schedules. Provide advice on WHSMS content and specific WHS issues within its areas of competency, including WHS in business plans, project plans, procurement processes, risk management and contractor safety management. Assist with identifying when additional subject matter expert advice is required. Undertake formal safety investigations of system critical events (refer to section 6). Guide managers, workers and HSR in working with WorkSafe ACT inspectors, as required. Work with other directorates and the Work Safety Group the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) to continuously improve the ACT Public Service WHSMS. Provide injury management support in partnership with the Injury Management Team in CMTEDD. Develop and implement WHS performance and audit plans. Monitor and report on ACTHD WHS performance, including WHSMS audits, formal safety investigations and reviews. Support the annual review of the WHSMS.

Work health and safety management system

Australian WHS regulators and employers have advocated a systems approach to WHS for decades. This approach is explained in AS/NZS ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management System, Requirements with guidance for use.

An WHS management system (WHSMS) is a set of tangible and intangible elements that can vary over time but interact in a coordinated manner under the collective purpose to protect and promote the physical and psychological safety of those present in an occupational setting or directly affected by its occupational activities.[3]

A WHSMS provides a focus on improving safety performance through a systematic approach integrating WHS planning, implementation, and review. A WHSMS is not simply the documents, processes or policies that outlines the WHS action considered important. A WHSMS gives effect to the WHS objectives in an ongoing and managed way that reduces risk and improves safety outcomes.

A WHSMS:

- is an evolving or continuously improving system which uses feedback to manage and improve safety related outcomes,
- builds on existing processes,
- includes the requirements of WHS legislation,
- integrates with other management systems (such as quality, risk management and environmental management),
- provides for more informed decision making,
- strengthens corporate culture,
- assists officers to demonstrate due diligence, and
- is used as the basis for safety audits.

The key elements of the WHSMS include:

- policy and planning (design and specifications),
- risk management (operational),
- learning and development (operational),
- communication, consultation, and co-operation (operational),
- good process, including incident reporting and inspections (operational and system verification), and
- review, performance, and audit (system verification and compliance).

3 OHS Body of Knowledge 12.2 OHS management systems (ohsbok.org.au)

The WHSMS aims to apply an iterative process to deliver continuous improvement in the following steps:

- Planning to identify and assess WHS risks and opportunities, establish objectives and implement processes to deliver the objectives specified in the WHS Policy and WHS Performance Management Plans, including:
    - who is responsible,
    - timeframes,
    - resource requirements, and
    - evaluation.
- Implementation.
- Checking, monitoring and measurement actions and processes, including performance indicators, and reporting results.
- Acting to continuously improve the WHSMS.

The diagram overpage shows that each of these elements are related to each other. For example, for the WHSMS to operate effectively:

- information from operational experience must be picked up in review processes and lead to the development of new plans and objectives,
- learning and development requirements are determined by the requirements specified in plans and the outcomes of risk assessments,
- effective communication and consultation structures support good policy and planning, and
- review processes identify gaps in compliance, performance and operations and lead to WHSMS improvement.

Effective implementation of a WHSMS requires that ACTHD have an effective safety culture. While the WHSMS provides the framework and processes that ACTHD will use to achieve its WHS objectives, the safety culture will determine how well people are able to participate in the WHSMS, how well it is done and the outcomes that are achieved.

Diagram of the WHS management system

The ACTHD WHSMS is described in the diagram below.

Diagram 1 – ACTHD WHMS.

Management change

The WHSMS must adapt to the changes required to meet the objectives of the WHS Policy as a result of:

- new business processes,
- setting up new workplaces,
- changes to existing workplaces, work organisation, working conditions and equipment,
- changes in the composition of the workforce,
- changes to WHS legislation,
- the unintended consequences of changes, and
- new information becoming available about how to control a hazard, including developments in technology and WHS knowledge.

The implementation of any change must include reviewing the implementation to ensure that there are not unintended consequences and ensuring that iterative corrective actions are implemented.

Records that make up the WHS management system

The records that make up the WHSMS include, in order of hierarchy, the:

1. WHS Policy,
2 WHS Performance Management Plans and WHS elements of business plans,
3. WHS Guideline (this document),

4. WHS procedures, information sheets and fact sheets developed to support the WHSMS by People Strategy and Culture,
5. WHS tools and checklists developed to support the WHSMS by People Strategy and Culture (such as inspection checklists and risk assessment templates),
6. work injury reporting system,
7. corporate/strategic risk assessments, reports, and investigations,
8. training programs (including Learning Management System training records),
9. business unit risk assessments, reports, and investigations,
10. business unit specific procedures, including standard operating procedures and job safety assessments (JSAs), and
11. business unit training and information (including training records).

Section 2 - Communication, consultation and co-operation

The WHS Act and WHS Regulation require ACTHD to effectively consult with:

- workers who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a WHS matter,
- worker representatives, and
- other duty holders, such as contractors, lessors and suppliers.

This section includes information about:

- how to consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with other duty holders,
- mechanisms to facilitate worker participation and representation, and
- issue resolution procedures.

The Work Health and Safety (Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice) Approval 2023 provides more detailed information for managers and workers.

This duty to consult is based on the recognition that worker input and participation improves decision making about WHS matters and assists in reducing work-related injuries and disease. Effective consultation is also a reflection of a positive safety culture.

The broad definition of a worker under the WHS Act means that ACTHD must consult with employees and should also consult with anyone else who carries out work for ACTHD, including contractors and volunteers.

What is consultation with workers

Consultation is a two-way process between the ACTHD and its workers where people:

- talk to each other about WHS matters,
- listen to their concerns and raise your concerns,

- seek and share views and information,
- consider what workers say before making decisions.

Section 48 of the WHS Act states:

(1)	Consultation requires:	
	(a)	that relevant information about the matter is shared with workers; and
	(b)	that workers be given a reasonable opportunity:
		(i) to express their views and to raise work health or safety issues in relation to the matter; and
		(ii) to contribute to the decision-making process relating to the matter; and
	(b)	that the views of workers are taken into account by the person conducting the business or undertaking; and
	d)	that the workers consulted are advised of the outcome of the consultation in a timely manner.
(2)	If the workers are represented by a health and safety representative, the consultation must involve that representative.	

Workplace communication

ACTHD workers will receive information about WHS through:

- WHS inductions,
- documents, including the WHS Policy, the WHS Guideline and business unit documents (such as procedures),
- team meetings,
- training (including formal training and on the job training),
- e-mail and Intranet communication,
- the WHS Committee, and
- WHS noticeboards.

WHS noticeboards should, where practicable, display the:

- WHS Policy,
- WHS contact information (including, health and safety representatives, Respect Equity and Diversity contact officers, first aid officers and wardens), and
- any WHS information campaigns that are being implemented (for example, RUOK Day).

Consultation with workers

ACTHD is required to consult with workers, as far as is reasonably practical, when:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks arising from work or proposed work,
- making decisions about the ways to eliminate or minimise those risks,
- making decisions about the adequacy of facilities,
- proposing changes that may affect the health and safety of workers,

- making decisions about procedures for consulting with workers, resolving WHS issues, monitoring the health of workers, monitoring the conditions in the workplace, and providing information and training for workers.

The information in the WHS Guideline about hazards and processes will highlight some of the opportunities to consult with workers.

ACTHD uses both formal and informal arrangements to facilitate consultation with workers, including:

- the ACTHD Consultative Committee,
- WHS committees,
- HSRs elected by workers,
- communication about WHS on the Intranet and by e-mail,
- discussing WHS in team meetings, and
- consultation about WHS impacts as part of project and operational planning.

Work health and safety committees

The WHS Act and WHS Regulation provide two formal mechanisms for facilitating communication and consultation with workers. The first mechanism is to have WHS committees made up of managers and worker representatives to advise ACTHD on WHS matters. WHS committees meet every three months. Information about the WHS committee is available on the Intranet.

Health and safety representatives

The second mechanism is to have health and safety representatives (HSRs). HSRs are elected by employees in their work group for a term of office of three years. The WHS Act provides that workers can determine how a HSR will be elected. People Strategy and Culture monitors the term of office of HSRs, seeks nominations and facilitates an election process, in accordance with sections 61 to 63 of the WHS Act. Procedures and supporting material will be provided to support the HSR nomination and election process.

The work group is determined by ACTHD after negotiation with workers, in accordance with part 5 of the WHS Act.

The powers of a HSR are detailed in sections 68 to 69 of the WHS Act. HSRs are required to complete a WorkSafe ACT approved five day training course before they can exercise their powers (specifically the powers to issue a notice or direct work to cease) under the WHS Act. HSRs should also undertake WorkSafe ACT approved annual one day refresher training. The powers of a HSR are summarised in Table 1.

The Comcare Health and Safety Representatives Handbook provides a detailed explanation of the arrangements for HSRs under the WHS Act. Although this publication refers to the Commonwealth WHS Act the provisions in the WHS Act (ACT) are the same.

Consultation with other duty holders

ACTHD is required to work with other entities in undertaking its operations. ACTHD will share WHS responsibilities with those entities, including:

- Canberra Health Services,
- Australian National University,
- Canberra University Hospital,
- University of New South Wales – Canberra,
- ACT Property Group,
- Major Projects Canberra,
- lessors of premises,
- labour hire providers,
- partnerships with non-government entities,
- contractors engaged to undertake construction and maintenance work at ACTHD controlled workplaces, and
- contractors engaged to undertake work at locations that are not under ACTHD control, such as medical services.

These relationships will be created and supported by different instruments, such as leases, agreements, memoranda of understanding (MOU) and contracts. The WHS Act makes specific provisions for the different duty holders to consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities to achieve WHS outcomes.

This duty is independent of any requirements included in a contract or MOU. The WHS Act requires:

- where more than one agency has a duty for the same matter, each agency retains responsibility for their duty in relation to the matter and must discharge the duty to the extent to which the person can influence and control the matter (WHS Act, section 16), and
- that each agency with the duty must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with all other entities that have a WHS duty in relation to the same matter (WHS Act, section 48).

ACTHD managers will:

- identify who else will be involved in the work, contact them, and commence discussions as soon as they are reasonably able to do so - this may occur as part of contractual negotiations, or discussions, or project planning,
- commence consultation during the planning of any work, to ensure that WHS measures are identified and implemented from the start,
- ensure that everyone associated with the work has a shared understanding of the risks, which workers are affected and how the risks will be controlled,
- ensure WHS requirements are met even if other duty holders also have the duty to do so, which does not require ACTHD to take a specific action itself (for example providing WHS training), but does require ACTHD to make sure that another agency is doing so,

- co-operating and co-ordinating activities with others who are involved in the work, or things associated with the work, to assist each duty holder comply with their duty, and
- maintain consultation processes over the life of the work to ensure that the duty holders can respond to changes in circumstances, particularly for long term projects.

What is reasonably practicable in relation to consulting, co-operating and co-ordinating activities with other duty holders will depend on the circumstances, including the nature of the work and the extent of interaction. Direct discussions and planning as part of everyday work may be suitable for simple tasks, but complex multi-agency projects will require formal mechanisms, written procedures, reporting and governance arrangements.

The consultation processes should cover:

- what each agency will be doing, and the hazards involved,
- who has control or influence over aspects of the work or the environment in which the work is being undertaken[4],
- ways in which the activities of each duty holder may affect the work environment and what others do,
- identifying the workers who are or will be involved in the activity and who else may be affected by the activity,
- the procedures or arrangements for the consultation and representation of workers, and for issue resolution,
- the information that may be needed by another duty holder,
- what each duty holder knows about the hazards and risks associated with their activity,
- whether the activities of others may introduce hazards or increase risks,
- what each duty holder will be providing for WHS, particularly for controlling risks, and
- the further consultation or communication that may be required to monitor WHS.

The WHS Guideline also includes information on incorporating WHS into procurement processes (Section 9) and contactor safety management (Section 10), which is relevant to the circumstances where commercial arrangements are established.

Union right of entry

The WHS Act provides that union officials (of a relevant union for ACTHD), who hold an entry permit[5], may enter an ACTHD workplace for the purpose of inquiring into a suspected contravention of the WHS Act that relates to, or affects, a relevant worker[6].

4 Safe Work Australia's advice on what is reasonably practicable states that, what a duty holder does and what they are able to do will determine if they have control. A duty holder may be found to have control over a relevant matter if they have the capacity to do so, whether that capacity is exercised or not. Control may arise from the legal ability to take control of the work activity, for example, under the terms of a contract or MOU, or from the practical ability to do so, for example, by being able to direct people on site and have those directions followed.

5 Entry permits are issued by Safe Work Australia or a state or territory WHS Regulator.

6 A relevant worker is a worker who is entitled to be represented by a union.

Union officials who attend an ACTHD workplace, in accordance with the WHS entry permit provisions, must present the entry permit for inspection. The workplace manager should facilitate the entry of the official and immediately contact People Strategy for advice.

The powers of a union official, with an entry permit, in accordance with part 7 of the WHS Act, includes to:

- inspect any work system, plant, substance, structure or other thing relevant to the suspected contravention,
- consult with the relevant workers,
- consult with ACTHD,
- inspect, and make copies of, any document that is directly relevant to the suspected contravention and that is kept at the workplace or is accessible from a computer that is kept at the workplace, and
- warn any person whom the WHS entry permit holder reasonably believes to be exposed to a serious risk to his or her health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard, of that risk.

Issue resolution procedure

While effective communication, consultation, co-operation and risk management processes should allow WHS issues to be addressed effectively, there may be occasions when parties have different views about a WHS standard or process that should be followed. Section 81 of the WHS Act and WHS Regulation 23 provide procedures for resolving a WHS issue.

The aim of effective issue resolution is to quickly resolve the issue at the lowest practical level. The issue resolution procedure (Table 2) is designed to facilitate the effective resolution of a WHS issue using ACTHD's management structure and consultation arrangements. This issue resolution procedure provides a step by step process and escalation pathway for resolving a WHS issue.

While ACTHD promotes the use of this issue resolution procedure, it acknowledges the rights of workers (for example, to approach WorkSafe ACT as the WHS regulator) and the powers of HSRs under the WHS Act.

Table 2 - Issue resolution procedure

Step	Action	Comments
1	Any party[7] with an issue advises the relevant person that there is an issue and the nature and scope of the issue.	For example, a worker raises an issue with a manager about the type of personal protective equipment being used.

7 Under the WHS Act, ***parties*** to an issue can include the ACTHD, a worker and a HSR and also representatives of these persons, where they are engaged by a party to represent them (refer to section 80 of the WHS Act).

Step	Action	Comments
2	The parties must meet or communicate with each other to attempt to resolve the issue. The parties must consider the relevant issue/s, including: • the degree and immediacy of risk to workers or other persons affected by the issue, • the number and location of workers and other persons affected by the issue, • measures (both temporary and permanent) that must be implemented to resolve the issue, and • who will be responsible for implementing the resolution measures.	Where there is disagreement about a safety standard that should apply, information can be obtained from People Strategy or a subject matter expert in the area. A party may, in resolving the issue, be assisted or represented by a person nominated by the party, for example a HSR. Where there is a WHS process that might assist the parties, such as undertaking a risk assessment, this process should be initiated promptly to assist the parties. Managers are responsible, at all times, for taking immediate action on any hazards. Risks controls for a hazard must be implemented as soon as practicable, even while the issue resolution procedure is underway.
3	If the issue is resolved, details of the issue and its resolution must be set out in a written agreement, if any party to the issue requests this.	If a written agreement is prepared all parties to the issue must be satisfied that the agreement reflects the resolution of the issue. A copy of the written agreement must be given to all parties and, if requested, to a WHS committee.
4	If the issue is not resolved at the local level, it should be escalated to the relevant Executive Branch Manager or Executive Group Manager.	Repeat steps 2 and 3, as required. The Senior Director, People Strategy should be advised of any issues raised to this level.
5	If the issue is not resolved at Step 4 it should be escalated to the ACTHD WHS Committee.	The role of the ACTHD WHS Committee is to advise ACTHD on WHS matters. Repeat steps 2 and 3 as required.
6	If the issue is not resolved ACTHD may request the assistance of an inspector.	HSRs may also request the assistance of an inspector.

Section 3 - Risk management

Risk management, in conjunction with effective communication, consultation and co-operation, is:

- fundamental to ACTHD and duty holders meeting their duty of care, and
- a core process for achieving sound WHS outcomes.

The ACTHD Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Framework is a reference for WHS risk management. These documents establish and maintain an ACTHD wide, comprehensive

system for the management of risks. WHS risk management is a subset of these enterprise risk management processes. This WHS Guideline supports the Enterprise Risk Management Framework and the WHS Policy by explaining how WHS risk management should be applied, including the requirements of the WHS Regulation.

The Work Health and Safety (How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks) Code of Practice Approval 2020 provides more detailed information on WHS risk management for managers and workers.

Effective risk management requires managers and workers to gain and use information and advice about hazards and risks relevant to their work from:

- WHS regulators (including safety alerts),
- Safe Work Australia,
- media reporting,
- industry associations and similar entities,
- certifying agencies,
- industry or WHS subscription services,
- unions,
- technical specialists,
- manufacturers and suppliers (including any product recall notices), and
- WHS consultants.

Managers and workers will apply risk management when:

- starting a new project or activity,
- changing work practices, procedures, or the work environment
- purchasing new or used equipment or substances,
- planning to improve productivity or reduce costs,
- new information about workplace risks becomes available,
- responding to workplace incidents (even if they have not caused an injury),
- responding to concerns raised by workers, HSRs or others at the workplace, and
- required by the WHS regulations for specific hazards (this WHS Guideline provides information on most, but not all, specific hazards that are relevant to the ACTHD).

It is also important to use the risk management approach when designing and planning products, processes or places used for work, because it is easier and more effective to eliminate hazards at the design stage. Managing WHS risks is an ongoing process.

WHS risk management uses specific terms:

- *Hazard* means a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include a moving vehicle, chemicals, electricity, fall risks, a repetitive job, noise, bullying or violence at the workplace (Table 3).
- *Risk* is the possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.

- *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.

The risk management process involves four steps (Figure 2):

1. identify hazards - find out what could cause harm,
2. 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,
3. control risks - implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances, and
4. review control measures to ensure they are working as planned.

Figure 2 – The risk management process[8]

The process of managing risk will help workplaces decide what is reasonably practicable, in particular situations, so that ACTHD can meet its duty of care under the WHS Act. In addition to this information on WHS risk management, this WHS Guideline includes information on common hazards, the risks that arise from those hazards and the recommended risk controls. Where hazard/risk specific information is available it must be applied as part of the risk management process.

8 Work Health and Safety (How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks) Code of Practice Approval 2020

Step 1 – Identifying hazards

WHS risk management should always start by identifying hazards. WHS risk management is different from enterprise risk management in this way, as enterprise risk management starts with a focus on outcomes or system failures.

Table 3 lists some common types of workplace hazards. Some hazards are part of the work process, such as manual handing, or using plant and hazardous chemicals. Other hazards can result from equipment failures or structural failures. A piece of plant or a work process may have many different hazards. Each hazard needs to be identified.

Hazards can be identified by anyone at any time and section 4 explains how any worker can report a hazard.

Hazards are commonly identified:

- by routine observations in the workplace (including, the identification of unsafe work practices, as well as checking the general state of housekeeping and if the tools and equipment for the task are suitable),
- by regular workplace inspections (including, finding out how people actually work, how plant is used, what chemicals are in use, is there space for unobstructed movement and is there adequate ventilation and lighting),
- when a risk assessment process is initiated (for example, for a new project or activity),
- when new plant and hazardous chemicals are being considered, and
- when changes occur in the workplace.

Hazards are not always obvious. Some hazards can affect health over a long period of time or may result in stress (such as bullying) or fatigue.

Table 3 – Categories of hazards

Hazard	Potential harm
Manual tasks	Overexertion or repetitive movement can cause muscular strain.
Gravity	Falling objects, falls, slips and trips of people can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, concussion, permanent injuries, or death.
Electricity	Exposure to live electrical wires can cause shock, burns or death from electrocution. Electricity is also a potential ignition source for fire.
Plant - machinery and equipment	Being hit by moving vehicles, or being caught by moving parts of machinery can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, permanent injuries, or death.

Hazard	Potential harm
Hazardous chemicals	Chemicals (such as acids) and dusts (such as asbestos and silica) can cause respiratory illnesses, cancers, or dermatitis. Gasses can cause a range of injuries or death (for example through asphyxiation)
Extreme temperatures	Heat can cause burns, heat stroke or fatigue.
Noise	Exposure to loud noise can cause permanent hearing damage.
Radiation	Ionising radiation sources, ultraviolet radiation (UVR), microwaves and lasers can cause burns, cancer or blindness.
Biological	Micro-organisms can cause disease, such as legionnaires' disease, communicable diseases, exposure to bacteria, or allergens.
Psychosocial	Effects of work-related stress, bullying, violence and work-related fatigue.

Step 2 – Risk assessment

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 the workplace determine:

- how severe a risk is,
- whether existing control measures are effective,
- what action should be taken to control the risk, and
- how urgently the action needs to be taken.

A risk assessment can be undertaken with varying degrees of detail, depending on the type of hazards and the information, data and resources that are available. It can be as simple as a discussion with workers or involve specific risk analysis tools and techniques recommended by subject matter experts. Managers and workers undertaking a risk assessment should review the relevant code/s of practice, which are referenced at each section of the WHS Guideline.

A formal risk assessment (using a risk assessment form or a written report) is required when:

- there is uncertainty about how a hazard may result in injury or illness,
- the work activity involves a number of different hazards and there is a lack of understanding about how the hazards may interact with each other to produce new or greater risks,
- changes at the workplace occur that may impact on the effectiveness of control measures,
- specific testing is required to ensure that exposure standards, such as noise and airborne contaminants, are not being exceeded, and

- the WHS Regulation requires a risk assessment to be undertaken, for example, where a new item of plant or a hazardous chemical is being considered.

When a formal risk assessment is not required risk can be assessed informally and implement risk controls. A formal risk assessment is not necessary when:

- a hazard can be immediately eliminated (for example, by disposing of a hazardous chemical),
- the WHS Regulation requires that hazards or risks be controlled in a specific way (for example, applying the information on safety data sheets for hazardous chemicals) - these requirements must be complied with,
- a code of practice or other guidance sets out a way of controlling a hazard or risk, the recommendations are applicable to the situation and those risk controls are applied, and
- there are well-known and effective controls that are in use in the particular industry, that are suited to the circumstances in the workplace.

Where an informal risk assessment process is followed, risk management action should, where practicable, be recorded in one or more of:

- a standard operating procedure (document control entries should be made to show the changes that were made to address a hazard),
- a job safety analysis (JSA), which is often used for operational tasks and is a documented process to identify the dangers of specific job tasks and involves:
  - breaking down the steps of performing a job,
  - identifying the hazards at each step,
  - creating controls for performing that specific task,
- a corrective action detailed in a work injury report,
- a workplace safety inspection checklist, and
- a risk register entry.

A risk assessment can be undertaken by one person, or a risk assessment team. A risk assessment team is recommended where:

- the hazard affects a substantial portion of the workers in ACTHD,
- a generic risk assessment is being undertaken[9],
- a subject matter expert or a competent person is not involved in the process,
- multiple inter-related hazards are involved,
- one hazard could lead to a chain of failures/risks,
- a small event could escalate to a much larger event with more serious consequences,
- where complex risk controls may be required, and
- where multiple duty holders are involved.

9 A generic risk assessment can be undertaken where there are similar hazards and it will not reduce the effectiveness of the risk controls to be implemented (for example, by assessing a class of vehicles are not exactly the same but that have the same performance and safety features).

Formal or generic risk assessments should be documented on a WHS Risk Assessment Form and approved by the risk owner, usually the relevant manager of the workers.

When a WHS Risk Assessment Form is used it should be provided to People Strategy and Culture at JIRA HR Support within 10 days of approval.

The implementation of risk controls must be closed out by the responsible manager on the form.

Step 3 – Risk control

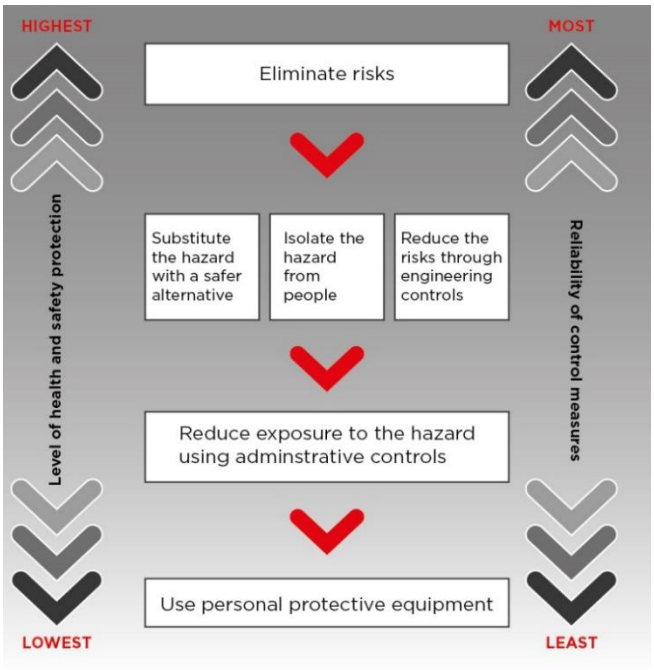
The most important part of the process is to implement reasonably practical risk controls, whatever the risk rating applied. ACTHD is required, by the WHS Regulation, to apply the hierarchy of risk controls, which ranks the ways of controlling risks from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest (Figure 3).

ACTHD, in deciding what is reasonably practicable to protect people from harm, must take into account and weigh up all relevant matters, including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or risk concerned occurring,
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or risk,
- knowledge about the hazard or risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk,
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk,
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk,
- the WHS legislation requirements for the management of risk explained on page 5, and
- the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk[10].

10 How to determine what is reasonably practicable to meet a health and safety duty, Safe Work Australia (May 2013)

Figure 3 - The hierarchy of risk control[11]



There will normally be a number of different options for the control of a hazard. In many cases risk controls from different levels will be used together. While the cost (in terms of time and effort as well as money) may be taken into account in determining what is reasonably practicable, it cannot be used as a reason for failing to control risk. The greater the likelihood of a hazard occurring and/or the greater the harm that would result if the hazard or risk did occur, the less weight should be given to the cost of controlling the hazard or risk. If two control measures provide the same levels of protection and are equally reliable, ACTHD can implement the least expensive option.

Administrative controls and personal protective equipment

Administrative controls (such as standard operating procedures), safety signs and personal protective equipment (PPE) will only be used:

- when there are no other practical control measures available (as a last resort),
- as an interim measure until a more effective way of controlling the risk can be used, and
- to supplement higher level control measures (as a back-up).

Where safety signs are used as a risk control, the signs must comply with AS 1319:1994 – Safety signs for the occupational environment (Reconfirmed 2018).

Where PPE is used as a risk control, ACTHD will ensure that the PPE is:

- suitable for the nature of the work and the hazards,
- compliant with relevant safety standards (such as Australian Standards or International standards),

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- a suitable size or sizes and fit for the workers who are required to use it,
- maintained, repaired, or replaced so that it continues to minimise risk to the worker who uses it, including by ensuring that the equipment is clean, hygienic and in good working order, and
- used or worn by the worker, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where PPE is provided to workers, the workers must receive information, training and instruction in the proper use, storage, and maintenance of the PPE.

Step 4 – Review control measures

The control measures that are put in place should be reviewed regularly to make sure they work as planned. A review is required:

- if the original risk assessment identified a review timetable (which is the required practice for a hazard that has not been eliminated),
- when new risk controls become available, such as new technology or a less hazardous chemical becomes available (or if there is a significant change in the costs of a risk control that was considered, but not implemented originally),
- 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 WHS 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 HSR requests a review.

The process for reviewing the risk controls for a hazard will be similar to the initial risk assessment process.

Section 4 - Hazard identification and reporting procedure

Hazards in the workplace can be identified in many ways, including by:

- making informal observations of the workplace looking at:
  - how people actually work,
  - how plant and equipment is used and how well is it maintained,
  - what chemicals or substances are around and what they are used for
  - what work practices exist,
  - what is the general state of housekeeping,
  - how suitable are the tools and equipment for the task,
- completing formal workplace inspections (Section 5),
- asking workers about any WHS problems they have encountered, and
- reviewing safety incidents (Section 6).

Where a hazard has been identified and the action to remove or manage the hazard is straightforward, action should be taken on these immediately, for example cleaning up a spill or removing a trip hazard. If a situation creates an immediate or significant danger to people, move the people to a safer location first and attend to the hazard urgently.

Information about the hazard and the corrective action should be reported to the workplace manager. If the hazard is not likely to reoccur, no further action is required.

If a hazard cannot be removed within three months, a work injury report (categorised as a dangerous situation) must be completed.

Section 5 – Workplace safety inspections

Regular, formal workplace safety inspections are a mandatory requirement of a WHSMS.

Managers are required to maintain a regular workplace safety inspection, testing and monitoring program that leads to timely and effective corrective actions, based on the type and number of hazards involved in the work being undertaken, and using inspection checklists for that type of workplace.

Managers, workers and HSRs should routinely observe the condition of the workplace, identify any hazards, and take action in accordance with the hazard identification procedures (Section 4 – Hazard Reporting).

A HSR may also carry out a workplace inspection in accordance with their powers under the WHS Act (Section 1 – WHS Foundations).

The workplace safety inspection process is a systematic check of workplace safety. The required minimum frequency for workplace safety inspections and the recommended checklist for each inspection is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 – Workplace safety inspection frequency and checklist type

Workplace type	Inspection frequency	Checklist
Laboratory area	Monthly	• Monthly Laboratory Safety Checklist for two consecutive months, and • Laboratory Safety Checklist at the third month.
Storage area	Three monthly	Storage Area Safety Inspection Checklist.
Monitoring Stations	Six monthly	Monitoring Station Safety Inspection Checklist.
Field work	Six monthly	Sample of sites in a six-monthly schedule. Field Work Safety Inspection Checklist
Data Centre and Communications Rooms	Variable depending on the frequency of access and hazards	Electronic Facility Safety Inspection Checklist.
Office	Six monthly	Office Safety Inspection Checklist.

Managers and HSRs undertaking a workplace safety inspection should consider:

- the specific hazards in the workplace, such as noise, fall hazards and plant,

- the work process followed (by observing task, talking to workers, and reviewing written procedures),
- whether the work environment enables workers to carry out work without WHS risks (for example, space for unobstructed movement, adequate ventilation, lighting),
- if safety documentation, such as procedures, are current,
- if any changes occurred in the workplace that may affect WHS,
- if hazards can be brought into the workplace, such as through contractor activities or hired plant and equipment,
- whether workers have any WHS concerns,
- if any hazard/risk reports or incident reports been submitted and if the corrective action has been completed,
- hazards that are not obvious, for example psycho-social risks (refer to Section 15 – Psychological Health), and
- the effectiveness of any previously implemented risk controls, including action taken in respect of a previous safety inspection.

The procedure for undertaking a workplace safety inspection is detailed in Table 5.

Table 5 – Workplace safety inspection procedure

Step	Action	Comment
1	Identify who will undertake the workplace safety inspection.	Ensure that sufficient time is allocated for the inspection to be completed. Ensure that a HSR at the workplace (if one is present) is invited to participate.
2	Select the appropriate workplace inspection checklist. People Strategy will ensure that the inspection checklists on the Intranet are appropriate for each workplace.	Confirm the area/s to be inspected, including parking, external building access, storage and amenities that are under the management control of ACTHD (usually within a specified leasehold or property boundary).
3	Advise workers (including contractors and volunteers) when and who will undertake the inspection.	This enables workers with any concerns to raise them.
4	Complete the workplace safety inspection checklist and identify the action that is required.	Include detail about what control measures were implemented and verify if the hazard has been managed.
5	Provide the completed workplace safety inspection checklist to the manager/s (electronically or in printed form). The manager should also advise their next level manager of the results of the inspection. The manager should advise the relevant Executive Group Manager or the Deputy Director-General of any significant hazard that is not resolved.	Where the workplace inspection takes place in a shared workplace (such as a level in Bowes Street) specific hazards, where identified) will be reported to the relevant manager during the inspection. The completed inspection report will be signed off by the Director, responsible for managing building facilities and distributed to the relevant Senior Directors and Directors responsible for the sections in the shared workplace.
6	The manager should discuss the outcomes from the completed inspection with their workers at team meetings.	
7	The results of the workplace inspection should be reported to the workplace WHS committee (if one is in place) or the HSR (if there is no WHS committee).	
8	The completed workplace safety inspection checklist should be provided to People Strategy and Culture at JIRA HR Support within 10 working days of being approved by the manager and will be retained as a corporate record.	Section 8 – Document control.

Section 6 - Incident reporting, WorkSafe ACT notification and investigation

Reporting a WHS incident

All workplace injuries and WHS incidents[12] (including events that could have caused an injury, for example an exposure to hazardous chemical – sometimes referred to as a near miss) must be reported immediately to a worker's manager following the procedure in Table 6.

A work injury report (in the Riskman reporting system) must be completed. The report will include information about:

- the sequence of events leading up to incident,
- what activity was being performed,
- the immediate remedial action taken, and
- if the activity that resulted in this incident is undertaken elsewhere in ACTHD, what action has been taken to prevent a similar incident?

Table 6 – Incident response procedure

Step	Action	Comment
1	Provide first aid support (by a trained first aid officer) if someone is injured and make the workplace safe.	Refer to the workplace emergency plan for information about medical emergencies.
2	Implement short term corrective actions for any unsafe condition immediately.	As a minimum identify and signpost any hazard and isolate it from harming anyone.
3	Verbally report information about the incident and the corrective action to the manager.	As soon as possible.
4	Assess whether or not the incident should be notified to WorkSafe ACT.	Refer to the information about the notification requirements in the next section. People Strategy and Culture: • can provide advice about whether an incident should be notified, and • must be advised if an incident is notified.

12 An unplanned event that results in, or has the potential to result in, injury, adverse health effects, damage or other loss, including situations that affect, or have the potential to affect, the psychological health of a person.

Step	Action	Comment
5	The worker (if they are able to) or the manager should complete a work injury report (in Riskman) as soon as possible.	Identify who the responsible manager in is in the work injury report. The report will then workflow to that manager. Reports must be completed within 48 hours.
6	The manager should complete the corrective actions in the work injury report.	Include detail about what control measures were implemented, the risk and verify if the hazard has been controlled. The manager should also advise the next level manager. The manager should advise the Executive Branch Manager/ Executive Group Manager of any injury or notifiable incident.
7	The corrective actions will be reviewed by People Strategy and the report finalised.	
8	The manager should discuss the outcomes from any incident with their workers at team meetings.	Note the requirements for maintaining the privacy of the personal/medical information of an injured worker.

Notifiable incidents

ACTHD is required to notify WorkSafe ACT immediately after becoming aware of a notifiable incident (a death, serious injury or dangerous incident). The notification to WorkSafe ACT must be made by the fastest possible means.

The following information explains which incidents need to be notified to WorkSafe ACT.

Section 35 of the WHS Act defines a 'notifiable incident'.

'Notifiable incidents' include the following:

- **the death of a person**, or
- **a serious injury or illness of a person**

Serious injury or illness includes immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital; immediate treatment for certain serious injuries; or medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance; or

- **a dangerous incident**

A dangerous incident means any incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety caused by incidents such as uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance, an uncontrolled implosion, explosion, fire; or uncontrolled escape of gas or steam.

- **a sexual assault incident**

A sexual assault incident means a incident (including a suspected incident) in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person at the workplace to sexual assault

The following information will assist in determining whether or not an incident is notifiable.

A serious injury or illness[13] of a person means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- Immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital.
- Immediate treatment for:
  - the amputation of any part of his or her body,
  - a serious head injury,
  - a serious eye injury,
  - a serious burn,
  - the separation of his or her skin from an underlying tissue (such as de-gloving or scalping),
  - a spinal injury,
  - the loss of a bodily function, and/or
  - serious laceration.

Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance (medical treatment is treatment provided by a doctor and exposure to a substance includes chemicals, airborne contaminants, and exposure to human and/or animal blood and body substances)[14] .

A dangerous incident[15] means an incident in relation to a workplace that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to a person's health or safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to:

- an uncontrolled escape, spillage, or leakage of a substance,
- an uncontrolled implosion, explosion, or fire,
- an uncontrolled escape of gas or steam,
- an uncontrolled escape of a pressurised substance,
- electric shock,
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance, or thing,
- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, any plant that is required to be authorised for use in accordance with the regulations,
- the collapse or partial collapse of a structure,
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting an excavation,
- the inrush of water, mud, or gas in workings, in an underground excavation or tunnel, or
- the interruption of the main system of ventilation in an underground excavation or tunnel.

13 WHS Act, section 36.

14 WHS Regulation 699 specifies that a serious illness for the purpose of section 36 includes any infection to which the carrying out of work is a significant contributing factor, including any infection that is reliably attributable to carrying out work and identifies specific zoonotic diseases contracted in the course of work involving handling or contact with animals, animal hides, skins, wool or hair, animal carcasses or animal waste products.

15 WHS Act, section 37.

A dangerous incident includes both immediate serious WHS risks, and also a risk from an immediate exposure to a substance which is likely to create a serious WHS risk in the future, for example asbestos or chemicals.

A sexual assault incident is a notifiable serious incident (including a suspected incident) in relation to a workplace, that exposes a worker or any other person at the workplace to sexual assault. For more information go to workplace sexual assault.

How to notify WorkSafe ACT

There are three ways to notify WorkSafe ACT of an incident:

1. by telephoning 13 22 91 (business hours) or 0419 120 028 (after hours),
2. e-mailing worksafe@act.gov.au, or
3. by completing the on-line incident notification form.

If a notification is made by telephone, the person making the notification will also be required to provide a written notification within 48 hours using the on-line incident notification form.

The manager or worker notifying WorkSafe ACT should include as much information about the notifiable incident as is available at the time, including:

- the sequence of events leading up to incident,
- what activity was being performed,
- the immediate remedial action taken, and
- if the activity that resulted in this incident is undertaken at any other ACTHD workplace, the action that has been taken to prevent a similar incident.

For a sexual assault incident, the person reporting the incident must not give information disclosing the identity of any person involved in the incident need only give the following details about the incident:

- the name and contact details of the person reporting and the name of the directorate,
- a description of the workplace where the incident happened, and
- whether or not the incident was reported to police.

If there is any doubt about whether the duty to notify applies to a particular incident, the manager or worker should telephone People Strategy and Culture during business hours on 02 5124 9201 or WorkSafe ACT on 13 22 91 (business hours) or 0419 120 028 (after hours) for advice. People Strategy and Culture must also be advised if an incident is notified to WorkSafe ACT by e-mailing telephone if possible or by providing information through JIRA HR Support.

Written records must be maintained of any verbal advice or instruction provided by WorkSafe ACT or a WorkSafe inspector.

Preserving an incident site

The manager is required to preserve the site of a notifiable incident, so far as is reasonably practicable, until an inspector arrives at the site. This requirement does not preclude any action to rescue or treat an injured person of make the workplace safe. The site must not be disturbed until an inspector attends the workplace, or an inspector advises (usually by phone) that the site can be released. If the incident site is part of a larger workplace, the site can be isolated, and work can continue in other parts of the workplace if it is practicable and safe to do so.

If a manager or worker is unsure whether an incident site needs to be preserved, or whether a site can be released, please telephone WorkSafe ACT on 02 6207 3000.

A WorkSafe ACT inspector, as the WHS regulator, may inspect the workplace and exercise powers under the WHS Act.

Other authorities

In some cases, an incident, such as an accident involving a motor vehicle, a fire or explosion, will involve other agencies, such as:

- ACT Emergency Services Agency, and
- ACT Policing.

These agencies may establish control of an accident site, undertake investigations, and will liaise with WorkSafe ACT and ACTHD, as required. ACTHD managers and workers are required to cooperate with the relevant regulator agency and can obtain further advice from the People Strategy and Culture, as required.

WorkSafe ACT inspections

WorkSafe ACT inspectors have powers under the WHS Act to:

- inspect the workplace,
- interview people at the workplace,
- require the production of documents,
- seize workplaces and things, and
- take enforcement action, such as issue improvement and prohibition notices.

The powers of a WorkSafe ACT inspector are detailed Part 9 of the WHS Act and the regulatory framework is detailed in the WorkSafe ACT Compliance Framework.

Managers and workers should consult with the People Strategy and Culture for advice, in the event that a WorkSafe ACT inspector attends the workplace.

Safety investigations

Injuries, illnesses, and incidents should be investigated to determine the contributing factors so that similar occurrences can be prevented. Safety investigations must focus on corrective actions, not the allocation of blame or fault.

Safety investigations into routine injuries, such as a muscular skeletal disorder caused by lifting, are relatively informal processes and are undertaken by managers and action is recorded on the work injury report.

While HSRs have powers to inspect the workplace after an incident, ACTHD and its managers are responsible for undertaking safety investigations. A union official may also exercise right of entry provisions after an incident (refer to Section 2 – Communication, Consultation and Co-operation).

The safety investigation needs to consider:

- if the risk management for the hazard is consistent with the advice provided in the WHS Guideline for a hazard involved in the incident, or a relevant code of practice,
- whether the activity was subject to a written procedure (if not, should a procedure be developed) and whether the written procedure is adequate,
- if a written procedure exists, were the procedures followed,
- if training or instruction was provided to the workers, and if it was adequate,
- is the training provided to workers adequate,
- it there were enough resources (including other workers and equipment) for the task, and
- if the level of supervision was adequate.

In the event of a serious incident or injury (Note: the notification criteria can be used as a guide to what a serious injury or incident is) the relevant manager should consider allocating an investigation team to undertake the safety investigation. In some cases, a subject matter expert may be engaged to assist the investigation.

The investigation team will:

- undertake a comprehensive investigation, including interviewing witnesses and managers and inspecting the workplace,
- involve managers who have direct knowledge of the relevant work area and work processes,
- consult with HSRs,
- consider possible underlying causes of the incident or injury, including environmental and organisational factors,
- maintain notes and records of the information obtained during the investigation,
- produce a written investigation report, with conclusions and recommendations for corrective action, and
- submit the investigation report to the relevant executive manager for approval.

Where a serious incident occurs during operations that involve contractors or other agencies the duty holders should apply the communication, consultation and co-operation requirements of the WHS Act (refer to Section 2 – Communication, Consultation and Co-operation) to determine how the incident should be investigated. In some cases, both agencies could co-operate together and undertake a single safety investigation.

Where a regulator (such as WorkSafe ACT) is undertaking an inspection or investigation, the relevant manager should consult with People Strategy and Culture before any ACTHD safety investigation is undertaken.

Section 7 - WHS induction and training

Induction

All workers at ACTHD controlled workplaces are required to complete a workplace specific WHS induction (including information about emergency procedures, facilities and first aid) provided by the manager.

A copy of WHS induction checklists and information is available on the WHS intranet page. More information about WHS training is available from the Learning and Development Intranet page. Also refer to Section 10 – Contractor Safety Management.

Competency and training requirements

WHS legislation and relevant standards have specific requirements for WHS training, including:

- first aid officers (Section 28 – First Aid),
- health and safety representatives (Section 2 - Communication, Consultation and Co-operation),
- emergency control organisation members (wardens) (refer to workplace emergency plans),
- workers who require licences,
- workers who are required to be a competent person (refer to the definitions) for their role, including for:
  - confined space entry risk assessment and rescue (Section 27 – Confined Spaces), and
  - environmental scientists and occupational hygienists.

People Strategy and Culture will maintain information about the training requirements identified by WHS legislation for roles in ACTHD.

ACTHD will consider the WHS training required by WHS legislation and will:

- determine the required competencies for specific roles, in position descriptions, individual workers, in performance development plans and classes or workers, in standard operating procedures and through learning needs analysis processes,
- ensure that workers achieve and maintain their competencies, and
- review and maintain records of training and competencies.

The majority of the training requirements for a worker or manager will be determined based on the risk assessment of the tasks and roles that they are required to perform, including their role in the WHSMS. The training for managers and workers can include:

- on the job training and instruction,

- formal training (provided by internal or external subject matter experts), and
- competency based training that is available from registered training. (These courses are mapped to the Australian Qualifications Framework and more information is available from Training.gov.au).

Manager and worker competencies are a critical factor in achieving WHS outcomes. Section 1 – WHS Foundations highlighted that ACTHD safety culture needs an accurate assessment of worker training and competency and the risks that can arise. It is also important to correctly assess the transferable skills and experience (and also the values) that people bring into ACTHD.

It is outside of the scope of this WHS Guideline to catalogue all the WHS training needs for all ACTHD work roles. An office-based worker may require a safety induction and be able to operate a personal computer and office equipment. However, the training needs for a worker doing specific field operational work may require qualifications and need to consider WHS training in:

- manual handling,
- chemical safety,
- risk management,
- occupational violence – de-escalation training,
- operational fieldwork planning,
- first aid,
- vehicle operations,
- emergency/incident management and responses, and
- operating communication equipment.

The effective implementation of risk management processes (refer to section 3 – Risk Management) is essential to correctly identify the WHS training and competency requirements for individual workers. The training or competency requirements should be recorded (so that managers and workers can easily identify the requirements) in relevant WHS documents, such as:

- risk assessments - as a risk control,
- job safety analysis - as a precondition for the task, and
- standard operating procedures - as a precondition for the task.

Training records

WHS training records must be maintained and stored, either in the Learning Management System or as an administrative record (Section 8 – Document Control).

More information is provided in the WHS Training and Competency Procedure.

Section 8 - Document control

Requirement

Keeping records assists the ACTHD to demonstrate compliance with the WHS Act and WHS Regulation.

WHS documents are corporate records and must be managed in accordance with the:

- WHS Act and WHS Regulation,
- ACTHD records management policies and procedures,
- *Territory Records Act 2002*, and
- Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule – Territory Administrative Records Disposal Schedules – Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Records Approval 2009 (No.1)

Risk management records

Keeping records of risk management processes:

- allows the ACTHD to demonstrate how decisions about controlling risks were made,
- provides a basis for preparing standard operating procedures,
- allows the ACTHD to review risks, and
- demonstrates to other stakeholders that WHS risks are being managed.

Managers and workers are required to keep information on:

- the identified hazards, assessed risks and chosen control measures (including any hazard checklists, worksheets and assessment tools used in working through the risk management process),
- how and when the control measures were implemented, monitored and reviewed,
- the consultation processes that were followed,
- relevant training records, and
- any plans for changes.

Examples of records

Examples of the WHS records that should be kept are listed below.

Corporate

Corporate (including facilities management, risk management and people) records:

- qualifications, skills, knowledge, competency and certifications relevant to their WHS tasks or role,
- evidence that a worker has completed specific WHS induction and training,
- inspection and test reports (including workplace inspections),
- minutes of WHS meetings, including executive meetings relating to WHS,
- audit reports (including relevant internal and WHSMS audit reports),

- internal management system review reports (for example a review of WHS performance),
- risk assessments,
- risk registers,
- procurement records that show the assessment of WHS risks and performance,
- work injury reports and investigations,
- statistical analysis of WHS data,
- minutes of management meetings that review WHS actions, and
- workplace emergency plans.

Workplace

Workplace records include:

- procedures,
- inspection and test reports (including workplace inspections),
- WHS action plans, for example to prevent a type of injury,
- equipment safety records,
- plant and equipment maintenance and inspections,
- contractor safety management records,
- workplace induction checklists,
- hazardous chemical registers and safety data sheets,
- risk assessments,
- minutes of management meetings that review WHS actions,
- high risk work permits,
- records of labour hire contractors, and
- records associated with supplier compliance.

Privacy

WHSMS documents, such as a work injury report, may contain personal information about a person. All personal information must be managed in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2014*. Medical or health records must be managed in accordance with the *Health Records (Privacy and Access) 1997*.

Retaining documents

WHS documents must be retained in accordance with the relevant retention and disposal schedule. For example:

- records of notifiable incidents and risk assessments must be retained for 30 years,
- records of hazardous chemicals, safety policies and guidelines must be retained for 75 years from the date of last action,
- records of workplace inspections must be retained for 10 years,
- records of the maintenance of plant and equipment must be retained until the item of plant is disposed of,

- records of the establishment and minutes of WHS committees must be retained for 5 years,
- records of the selection of HSRs and first aid officers must be retained for 1 year after the term of office has expired,
- safety investigations in respect of major accidents and inspection of hazardous chemicals and dangerous substances, must be retained for 75 years,
- WHS manuals, guidelines and procedures must be retailed for 75 years after the procedures are superseded,
- work permits must be retained for until the work in which it relates is completed, but for two years if a Notifiable Incident occurs during the work,
- health monitoring records must be retained for 75 years,
- asbestos management plans must be retained for 75 years from the date that the asbestos is disposed of, and
- generally other WHS records, including audits and first aid treatment records, must be retained for 5 years.

Managers should refer to the WHS Regulations and the Territory Records (Records Disposal Schedule – Territory Administrative Records Disposal Schedules – Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Records Approval 2009 (No.1) when making decisions about the retention and destruction of WHS records.

More information is available at Records Management.

Part 2 - Specific WHS guidance, hazards and risks

Part 2 of the WHS Guideline provides information that is relevant to ACTHD managers and workers, depending on their role in ACTHD and the hazards and risks in the workplace.

The issues listed in this part have been included based on:

- the role of ACTHD and work undertaken by its workers,
- WHS incident reporting trends and workplace injuries,
- consultation with workers and their representatives,
- WHS audits and assessments, and
- WHS legislation.

The risk controls for specific hazards must be determined in accordance with the hierarchy of controls (refer to Section 3 – Risk Management) and after consultation with workers. Where this guideline includes advice about the known risk controls for a hazard, these must not be regarded as an exhaustive list.

Section 9 - Incorporating WHS into procurement

Context

ACTHD engages in procurement activities that have WHS implications, including:

- engaging contractors to undertake construction and maintenance work, such as building maintenance,
- leasing premises and vehicles,
- engaging with contractors who design, construct or refurbish laboratories,
- purchasing plant, electrical equipment and hazardous chemicals, and
- engaging contractors to undertake programs of work on behalf of the ACTHD.

This information should be read in conjunction with the ACTHD Procurement and Contract Management Governance Policy, the Procurement and Contract Management Guide 2019 and Procurement ACT information.

When considering the WHS implications of these procurement processes, ACTHD must consider the WHS risks that might arise for employees, volunteers and visitors, but also the risk to contractors (who are also defined as workers under the WHS Act). This guidance is designed to support managers, delegates and staff undertaking procurement to:

- consider any WHS risks,
- consult with duty holders (where required),
- effectively incorporate WHS into procurement processes,
- establish relationships with suppliers,

- establish effective monitoring and transition arrangements, and
- evaluate the WHS performance of suppliers.

The range and potential complexity of the procurement activities that ACTHD might undertake is quite broad. Therefore, the information in this section of the WHS Guideline is designed to be scalable from a simple low risk purchase, for example on a credit card, to a major project. It should be read in conjunction with Section 10 - Contractor Safety Management and with other topics such as Section 24 - Electrical Safety and Section 25 - Plant and Equipment. The advice in this section only addresses the WHS risks involved and should be used in conjunction with ACTHD procurement information.

A procurement process will be required where ACTHD requires structures, or plant and equipment to undertake its operations. This work may involve multiple agencies and duty holders, such as ACTHD, Property Services Group, designers (such as architects and engineers), certifiers, suppliers, builders and contractors. Section 2 – Communication Consultation and Co-operation highlights some of the WHS requirements for duty holders working together. The ACTHD managers involved in this work must be aware of the specific duties that designers, have in accordance with the WHS Act. The duty requires the designer to ensure that a structure, plant or substance is designed to be without risk to the health and safety of people use it for its intended purpose. The relevant terms of section 22 of the WHS Act are:

> The designer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the plant, substance or structure is designed to be without risks to the health and safety of persons —
>
> > (a) who, at a workplace, use the plant, substance or structure for a purpose for which it was designed; or…..
> >
> > (f) who are at or in the vicinity of a workplace and who are exposed to the plant, substance or structure at the workplace or whose health or safety may be affected by a use or activity…….

Procurement method

Procurement processes will vary based on:

- the value of the purchase (there are procurement thresholds of $25,000 for basic purchases, between $25,000 and $200,000 for a simple procurement process and over $200,000 for complex procurement),
- the risk assessment of the procurement,
- whether or not:
  - a product or service is readily commercially available, off the shelf or a standardised service,
  - the product or service can be sourced from numerous suppliers,
  - an existing provider or a panel of providers is already under contract,
  - special handling, modification or adaptation is required,
  - a statement of work or complex specification is required, and
  - an open tender is required.

When to keep it simple

There are situations where purchases can be made with a few simple steps to consider WHS issues before the purchase is completed (either using a credit card, purchase order or existing contract), including:

- transactional, low value purchases of standard products and services, such as non-powered, hand-held tools,
- routine purchases of goods or services that ACTHD has previously purchased, and a risk assessment has previously been conducted,
- routine purchases of standard goods and services from existing contracts; for example, training and cleaning services, and
- purchases of services, where the work will be undertaken at the supplier's premises.

Managers and workers making these purchases will (depending on the level of WHS risk):

- consider any previous ACTHD experience with the good or service,
- consult with any affected workers (who might be the end users) and with any ACTHD subject matter experts,
- check what information is available about the good or service and if it suitable for the intended purpose, and
- consult with suppliers to confirm the suitability, if required.

Managers and workers making these purchases must remember that the cost of a purchase is not a reliable indicator of risk. For example, inexpensive electrical equipment and poorly selected chemicals can create a substantial risk to workers. Managers and workers should inspect products purchased this way before they are used by workers.

Procurement summary

A successful procurement process requires effective planning and implementation. WHS risks and responsibilities should be considered at the earliest stage of the planning process for an activity or project that may require a procurement activity.

The steps in a procurement process that involves a formal tendering process include:

1. Planning,
2. Preparing documentation,
3. Approach to the market,
4. Receiving submissions,
5. Evaluating submissions,
6. Post contract award, including:
   - contract management,
   - management of termination and transition-out, and
   - contract evaluation.

While WHS issues may arise at each step of the procurement process, the planning, evaluation, and contract management steps will probably have the most influence on the WHS outcomes.

WHS consideration in procurement planning

Adequate investment at the procurement planning stage will improve the management of the procurement process and the WHS outcomes. The investment at the procurement planning stage, of time and resources, should be commensurate with the size, value, complexity of the procurement and WHS risks involved.

The ACTHD Strategic Procurement Intranet page include information on the risk management process. Depending on the good or service being procured, a specific WHS risk assessment may also be required, for example when hazardous equipment or a hazardous chemical is being purchased.

The ACTPS WHS Active Certification process includes information about the WHS and pre-qualification requirements for construction work and the Secure Local Jobs scheme encourages companies that wish to provide specified categories of services to detail their WHS policies and programs as part of the Labour Relations, Training and Workplace Equity Plan. Labour hire providers must also hold a licence from WorkSafe ACT.

Generally good procurement planning leads to clear statements of requirement and contracts, and an effective evaluation and contract implementation process. In turn, this establishes the groundwork for contractor performance expectations and the monitoring arrangements.

In some cases, especially where a high degree of technical knowledge is required, a subject matter expert may need to be engaged as part of the project design, procurement planning and evaluation process.

The procurement planning process should incorporate WHS factors and consider:

- the requirements for a structure, product or service,
- whether there are any specific design requirements, and how safe design principles should be applied, for example compliance with AS/NZS 2982:2010 Laboratory Design and Construction,
- identifying the workers/end users who will be affected by the purchase,
- the nature of the procurement and the level of risk,
- whether it is necessary to consult with workers/users affected and integrate feedback into the decision making (for example for PPE),
- the known industry standards (such as Australian Standards or International standards) and known WHS risk controls that should be incorporated (for example, contractor WHS inductions),
- industry certification requirements,
- the risk controls identified by a specific WHS risk assessment (refer to Section 3 – Risk Management),
- the need for suppliers to demonstrate that they have a WHSMS, either as part of the evaluation or by having the system independently certified (which is recommended for contracts with higher risks),
- what level of confidence is required in the WHS performance of the supplier and how should that be specified in the approach to market,

- what are the WHS regulatory requirements for:
  - the goods and services being supplied (for example, licences, registrations, or a safety management system),
  - for any structures (for example, the Building Code of Australia),
- whether a principal contractor should be appointed for a construction project,
- the need for a transition plan, where it is anticipated that the service requirement is to extend beyond the contract period or will be handed over to another supplier,
- the need for a whole-of-life plan, and
- incorporating risk identification and management strategies into procurement plans or business cases.

Effective planning is a good start, but it is important to be aware that the risk assessment undertaken at this stage is likely to change when more information is known. The risk assessment should be reviewed at each stage of the procurement process and must be reviewed before contract implementation and through the life of the contracted work and depending on the level of risk. In addition, a risk assessment will be required for any plant and hazardous chemicals that is supplied for the use of ACTHD workers.

Prepare tender and contract documents

Where a tender process or written contract is required, ACTHD must include the WHS risk management actions identified at the planning stage in the tender specifications and draft contract documents to ensure that the:

- potential supplier of the product or service clearly understands the technical requirements as well as the WHS and safe design issues,
- most suitable supplier is selected, and
- product or service being procured will be delivered in a complete and technically competent way and not create or increase WHS risks to workers and others.

ACTHD, having regard to its communication, consultation, and co-operation requirements with other duty holders, should use this information to communicate to potential suppliers to provide information about the WHS risks, as well as the WHS responsibilities involved (Section 2 – Communication, Consultation and Co-operation). This is also an important opportunity for ACTHD to communicate the importance of achieving WHS outcomes to potential suppliers.

ACTHD can also give suppliers, advice, and support to raise their level of understanding of the WHS requirements, for example through an industry briefing.

WHS requirements should be included in documents and as conditions of the contract based on the purpose of the level of control that the ACTPS should exercise, the risks involved and the characteristics of the supplier/s. The development of a statement of requirements and draft contract terms will usually require legal advice.

Contract inclusions may cover one or more of the following:

- compliance with WHS legislation, certification requirements, specific standards and codes of practice,

- compliance with the WHS Policy and specific procedures and standards (usually for work in ACTHD controlled workplaces - identify these policies, procedures and standards at the time and commit to updating the supplier if these are varied),
- compliance with additional special conditions, especially for high-risk contracts,
- compliance with specific safe design, technical and functional requirements,
- compliance with identified established industry practice,
- demonstrated evidence (including third party certification) of the potential supplier's WHS management system, including management of sub-contractors and evidence of WHS performance records,
- the extent of subcontracting permitted and the approval process,
- the requirement for a project-specific WHS plan (including where a principal contractor arrangement is required),
- penalties/ramifications for failing to comply with WHS aspects of the contract conditions,
- other conditions, such as WHS performance monitoring:
  - providing regular WHS performance reports,
  - attending project management meetings,
  - notifying incidents and accidents,
  - investigation protocols for accidents (such as use of joint investigations),
  - WHSMS auditing, and
  - project-specific audits and procedures.

Evaluation

The evaluation process can (depending on the statement of requirement) include:

- examining the potential supplier's WHSMS, including policies, procedures, programs, safe work procedures, training/competency records, procedures for management of sub-contractor,
- verifying the operation of the potential supplier's WHSMS (this may include evidence of third-party certification and examination of the tenderer's records with regard to audits, inspections, plant records or accidents),
- evaluating the potential supplier's safety performance, including any infringements, fines or improvement notices, and
- conducting pre-award meetings where a potential supplier's is required to produce further evidence and/or to confirm their understanding of contract WHS requirements, specific WHS issues related to the contract and their ability to respond accordingly.

Contract implementation

The WHS considerations when awarding a contract depend significantly on the type of contract. For example, different measures would be needed for a contract for:

- labour hire services,
- the supply of vehicles,
- equipment installation services,
- construction and maintenance services, and

- health and medical services.

The actions could include meeting or communicating with the supplier to:

- develop a shared understanding about the WHS issues, risk assessment and planning processes,
- provide information about the hazards and risk controls required for ACTHD controlled activities,
- jointly review selected procedures and the WHS plan (where required), and
- identify how the supplier will monitor WHS performance and report to the ACTHD.

Contract management

The extent to which ACTHD will actively monitor the WHS performance of a contractor or supplier depends on the WHS risks and the extent to which ACTHD can or should be able to exercise control over the work and the risks. Generally, WHS risks are more significant where the contract involves the delivery of services. The contractor safety management (Section 10) provides three scenarios to assist project managers to implement an effective contractor safety management approach in common circumstances. Section 2, Communication, Consultation and Cooperation provides more information about how duty holders should work together.

Where the ACTHD purchases goods, such as computer equipment, the ACTHD has very limited control over the actions of a manufacturer or supplier and the WHS focus should be on the qualities and specifications of the product, for example electrical safety. However, ACTHD should undertake appropriate due diligence in sourcing goods, as part of the consideration of the whole of life cycle cost of a good. Section 25 – Plant and Equipment provides information about the duties of manufacturers, suppliers and installers.

Effective contract management involves managing a relationship with the supplier. The relationship should demonstrate the same principles of a positive safety culture that ACTHD expects of itself, including transparency and accurate and mature communication about WHS risk (Section 1 – Safety Foundations).

The aim of contract management is to ensure that all parties meet their obligations to deliver the objectives of the contract. ACTHD must monitor the supplier's WHS performance to ensure that WHS duties and responsibilities are met for the duration of the contract. The supplier must have:

- appropriate contract supervision arrangements and suitable WHS knowledge and skills and
- access to relevant documents such as risk assessments, the WHS plan, and WHS resources and expertise.

The extent to which ACTHD should monitor and supervise suppliers will be influenced by factors, such as the:

- type of hazards and the level of WHS risk,
- nature and complexity of the work to be carried out,
- level of control that each party has or is expected to have,
- duration of the contract,
- size and maturity of the WHSMS of ACTHD and the supplier,
- number of workplaces at which the contract will be performed,
- number of subcontractors involved, and
- consultative and reporting mechanisms.

The requirement for active supervision of WHS aspects by ACTHD may need to be higher in some circumstances, including for key events, such as:

- contract start up - ensuring that suitable systems and procedures are in place,
- monitoring conformance with safe work procedures and risk control measures with high risk or complex activities,
- reviewing coordination and notification systems where there is a high level of interaction with other entities,
- when introducing new plant, equipment, or systems of work, and
- after WHS incidents.

Monitoring activities for medium/high risk contracts

Effective monitoring activities for medium/high risk contracts may include:

- induction and training of suppliers and their workers on commencement, with refreshers for long-term contracts and project or site-specific training,
- inspecting licences, permits and certification records,
- inspecting plant and equipment associated with the services,
- regular internal and/or external audits of the supplier's WHSMS,
- site inspections to monitor the supplier's compliance with WHS procedures,
- providing advice to suppliers on unusual or unexpected risks and providing feedback on any non-compliance issues (such as from ACTHD experience or inspections),
- suppliers attending project management/contract review meetings (WHS should be a standing agenda item) and at supplier meetings (to improve project WHS coordination and problem solving),
- reviewing the supplier's WHS performance, including incident and accident records and regular reports (such as monthly reports),
- enforcing non-compliance in accordance with the contract terms,
- periodic review and updating of the supplier's WHS plan and targets, and
- providing regular reports to senior managers on WHS performance of suppliers.

The WHS performance of a contractor can be recorded in the ACTHD Contract Management Plan or in a report that is prepared specifically for the contracted work.

Management of termination and transition-out

At termination of the contract, ACTHD should ensure that:

- all WHS issues have been dealt with and there are no outstanding defects, corrective actions or non-conformances,
- all commissioning requirements have been implemented, for example, for a structure or plant (Section 25 – Plant and Equipment),
- WHS issues that may arise after handover have been considered, and
- workers, who may require training (for example in operating plant) have been identified and, where required by the contract, given this training.

The transition stage of a contract may involve matters such as asset transfer, ongoing maintenance and service commitments by the outgoing supplier and the possible introduction of a new supplier, including:

- passing on maintenance guidelines and records, including information about plant maintenance,
- identifying hazards identified and resolved or procedures, which have been developed or modified, and
- managing parallel operations of old and new systems or suppliers.

The best time to develop a transition plan is during the planning stage of the procurement process and in the start of the contract management stage, even if the transition out may be many years away. This is when the supplier will be most engaged in meeting the needs of ACTHD. The plan should outline WHS requirements that apply when an existing supplier will be expected to transition to a new supplier, including the requirement to maintain and transfer proper records, where applicable.

The WHS performance of the contractor should be recorded in the ACTHD Contract Management Plan or in a report that is prepared specifically for the contracted work.

Section 10 - Contractor safety management

Context

While ACTHD has the capability to understand the risks from its work activities, it may not understand all the risks that could be introduced by contracted parties. This section of the WHS Guideline addresses the risks arising from contracted work to:

- contractors,
- employees,
- volunteers, and
- visitors.

Contracted work includes:

- construction and maintenance work,

- equipment installation services,
- services provided by other ACTPS directorates and non-government entities,
- labour hire services, and
- work undertaken on behalf of ACTHD.

This section of the WHS Guideline should be read in conjunction with Section 9 - Incorporating WHS into Procurement and Section 2 - Communication, Cooperation and Consultation. The WHS Guideline also includes information about the safety requirements that may apply to contracted work, such as Section 24 – Electrical Safety and Section 25 – Plant and Equipment.

Effective contractor safety management starts with effective procurement processes. This section picks up the procurement process at the contract management stage.

In addition, contractors engaged by another duty holder (and agency or a company), such as lessor, need to be integrated into the contractor safety management processes.

The objectives of contractor safety management are to:

- facilitate consultation, coordination and co-operation between ACTHD and contractors (so that all parties have an understanding of the potential hazards and to allow co-ordinated control of risks),
- do what is reasonably practicable to ensure workers and others are protected from hazards (to the extent that ACTHD has control over that activity),
- manage any risk to workers and visitors that contractors may bring to ACTHD controlled workplaces, and
- ensure that ACTHD provides information to and receives relevant WHS information from contractors.

The Contractor Safety Management Procedure provides detailed information about managing the risks associated with engaging contractors, including examples.

Section 11 - Field operations

Field operations are work activities undertaken by ACTHD workers (alone or in partnership with other agencies) away from ACTPS workplaces. Safety is an important consideration for field operations because of the range of potential hazards and environmental conditions.

Field operations include compliance activities undertaken in and around Canberra, but could include activities that involve remote or isolated work[16]. The Work Health and Safety (Managing the Work Environment and Facilities) Code of Practice Approval 2020, at section 4.2, provides information about managing the risk of remote and isolated work.

16 Work that is isolated from the assistance of other people because of the location, time or nature of the work being done. Assistance from other people includes rescue, medical assistance and emergency services.

Risk assessment

The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to fieldwork operational risks. Risk assessments of field operations should be undertaken in respect of:

- generic categories of operations or activities, and
- specific operations or activities.

This section of the WHS Guideline includes information about the WHS considerations specifically for field operations, particularly remote or isolated work requirements. However, the risk assessment of field operations may involve a wide range of hazards, including working with contractors, plant, occupational violence, fatigue, exposure to sunlight and extreme heat, manual handling, and biological hazards. The information in this WHS Guideline (and the WHS Regulations and relevant codes of practice) must be considered in managing the risks of field operations.

Selecting transport

The decisions about the mode of transport for a field operation has a large impact on the risk to workers. The workers involved in field operations should be consulted in the selection and planning process.

Where a field operation involves vehicles, the selection process for the vehicle should consider the capability of the vehicle, its fit out and the driver competencies required. The trip planning must also consider the equipment and the training and procedures required for recovering the vehicle.

The following questions should be considered by workers and managers when assessing the risks of a field operation.

Planning

The following questions are designed to assist managers plan for field operations.

- What is the planning timetable for the field operation?
- Has the operation been undertaken previously, and if so, what do previous reports of these activities say about the WHS risks?
- What are the contingencies for a change in plans, including replacing workers who are not available at short notice?
- What are the potential consequences of changing plans, especially at short notice?
- What is the length of time and the distance of travel?
- What task or activities are required, and what hazards are inherent in those activities?
- What are the specific requirements for hazardous activities?
- What time of day will any hazardous activity be undertaken, does that affect the risk, for example visibility or fatigue?
- What is the current information about the region, locations and people that might be encountered? Is there a risk of violence? How reliable is the information and is more recent information available?

- Does the operation involve another agency and, if so, what:
  - is the level of WHS relationship maturity with that agency, and
  - are the management and control arrangements for each part of the activity?

Is the co-operation of another agency, such as the ACT Policing, required for an activity?

- What machinery, tools, equipment, and hazardous chemicals may be used?
- What pre-trip checks should be undertaken?

Workers

The following questions are designed to assist managers and workers plan for the staffing requirements for field operations.

- How many workers are required?
- If a worker will be alone, what impact does that have on the risk?
- What competencies do the workers require and what is the lead time for training and inducting workers in any WHS requirements (including using communication systems, first aid, obtaining emergency assistance)?
- How experienced are the worker/s in remote or isolated work?
- Is a worker able to make sound judgements about his or her own safety?
- What is the impact of fatigue on the level of risk?
- Are there existing standard operating procedures for the activities and, if not, what is the lead time to develop, test and train workers in the procedures?
- Does a worker have any health conditions (including allergies) that might affect the worker and increase the requirement for medical or emergency support?
- What first aid training and equipment do the workers require? Is the first aid equipment in date and appropriate for the type of injuries that could occur?

Travel and environmental conditions

The following questions are designed to assist managers and workers plan for the travel and environmental considerations for field operations.

- What are the environmental conditions (such as weather and/or terrain), including potential changes in those conditions and the risk of storms or bushfires?
- How are workers able to monitor changes in environmental conditions (such as thorough weather reports and contact schedules)?
- What contingency arrangements are required for a change in conditions, including communication arrangements, shelter locations or alternative means of travel/recovery?
- Will workers be exposed to extreme hot or cold environments and sunlight and for how long?

Emergency arrangements and communication

The following questions are designed to assist managers and workers plan for the emergency arrangements for field operations.

- What resources are required, including emergency equipment, emergency response beacons, satellite monitoring and other communications equipment (including is the equipment serviceable and safe to operate)?
- Will the emergency communication system work properly in all situations?
- If communication systems are vehicle based, what arrangements are there to cover a worker when he or she is away from the communication equipment?
- What are the arrangements if there is a vehicle breakdown?
- What movement plans and contact schedules are required? What are the procedures if a scheduled contact is missed?
- Who is responsible for monitoring movements and contacts, including outside of business hours?
- Where is the location of the nearest emergency and medical services and how can they be accessed?
- Is the emergency planning realistic and achievable?

Approvals

Managers who are assessing the risk of a field operation must consult with the workers who will undertake the activity to ensure that all parties have a common understanding of the risks and a high level of confidence in the risk controls. If either a worker undertaking a field operation or a manager do not have a high level of confidence in the risk controls, the operation should not proceed until a high level of confidence is achieved.

Communications systems for field operations

The type of communication system required will depend on the distance, the available infrastructure, and the environment. Expert advice and local knowledge may be needed to assist with the selection of an effective communication system.

The communication options include the following:

- Satellite communication devices (phones and trackers)
- Distress beacons are provided where life-threatening emergencies may occur, to pinpoint location and to indicate by activation of the beacon that an emergency exists. Distress beacons include Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) for personal use.
- Radio communication systems enable communication between two mobile users in different vehicles or from a mobile vehicle and a fixed station.
- Mobile phones cannot be relied upon as an effective means of communication in many locations. Coverage in the area where the worker will work should be confirmed before work commences. Geographical features may impede the use of mobile phones, especially at the edge of the coverage area, and different models have different capabilities in terms of effective range from the base station. If any gaps in coverage are likely, other methods of communication are required.

Section 12 – Solar ultraviolet radiation (UVR) and extreme heat

This section of the WHS Guideline contains information on the risks of solar UVR exposure and extreme heat. Workers who spend all or part of the day working outdoors are at risk of skin cancer and adverse health effects to their eyes. More information is available in the Safe Work Australia, Guide on exposure to solar ultraviolet radiation and the UV Radiation and Extreme Health Information Sheet.

Solar ultraviolet radiation

The risk controls for UVR include the use of shade, work scheduling and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Shade

Using shade, is one of the most effective forms of sun protection for outdoor workers. Shade can come naturally from permanent structures like buildings or trees or from portable structures like canopies or screens. If it is difficult for work to be carried out in the shade, workers should seek shaded areas during breaks.

A person working in the shade may still receive a substantial amount of exposure from indirect sources of UVR, for example from the UVR reflection off water. The best protection comes from using a combination of shade protection control measures.

Work scheduling

Managers and workers should consider making changes to outdoor work schedules to minimise exposure by:

- planning work routines so outdoor work tasks are done early in the morning or later in the afternoon when levels of solar UVR are lower,
- planning work routines so indoor or shaded work tasks are done during the middle of the day when levels of solar UVR are strongest,
- move the job indoors or into shaded areas, and
- sharing outdoor tasks and rotate workers between tasks.

Personal protective equipment

The PPE for sun protection includes:

- sun protective work clothing,
- sun protective hats,
- sunglasses, and
- sunscreen.

PPE should be chosen with regard to the type of outdoor work being performed. The design and selection should balance sun protection with the need to stay cool in hot conditions. It is important that design and use of the PPE does not create a secondary hazard, for example loose clothing becoming caught.

Workers should receive training and instruction about how to minimise exposure to UVR and use PPE correctly.

Extreme heat

Heat illness can occur when the body is unable to cope with working in heat. Heat illness covers a range of medical conditions including heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and skin rashes. Exposure to solar UVR and heat illness are separate, but related, hazards for outdoor workers.

Working in hot conditions may lead to workers not following sun protection or other control measures. For example, workers may stop using PPE and sun protective work clothing due to heat discomfort.

In some cases, control measures can minimise the risk of both heat illness and exposure to solar UVR. These include:

- providing shade for outdoor work,
- having rest breaks in cooler, shaded or indoor areas,
- having extra breaks,
- providing loose fitting, lightweight clothing for air movement and sun protection,
- changing work schedules to allow heavy work to occur during cooler times of the day - this may coincide with the times when solar UVR is less intense, and
- rotating workers between cooler, shaded tasks, and hot outdoor work.

In addition, workers must have access to drinking water and remain hydrated.

Workers should receive training and instruction about how to minimise exposure to extreme heat and use PPE correctly.

Section 13 - Occupational violence and aggression

Occupational violence and aggression (also called workplace violence) can have significant short term and long-term impacts on a worker's psychological and physical health. The number of reported incidents of occupational violence around Australia has significantly increased in recent years[17].

The ACTPS Managing Occupational Violence Strategy 2019 – 2022 aims to manage the risk of occupational violence in the ACTPS. The strategy supports the ACTPS Managing Occupational Violence Policy which establishes the requirement for risk management and clear response strategies. More information is available at the Safe Work Australia internet page on Workplace Violence.

Occupational violence and aggression is any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances arising out of, or in the course of their work[18].

17 Safe Work Australia https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/workplace-violence-and-aggression.

18 ACTPS Managing Occupational Violence Policy.

Occupational violence is also a risk for workers who witness violence. The definition of occupational violence and aggression covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that create a risk to the health and safety of all workers. Examples include:

- biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking,
- punching, slapping, pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing,
- throwing objects,
- verbal threats and shouting,
- aggravated assault,
- any form of indecent or unwelcome physical contact, and
- threatening someone with a weapon or armed robbery.

Occupational violence and aggression can occur as a direct result of the work of ACTHD or an indirect result, for example where the work places the worker in a vulnerable location.

The key risk factors for workplace violence and aggression include:

- undertaking compliance and enforcement activities,
- working alone, in isolation or in a remote area,
- working offsite or in the community,
- working in unpredictable environments,
- communicating face-to-face with members of the public,
- handling cash, and/or valuables,
- where service methods cause customer frustration, resentment or misunderstanding, and
- dealing with members of the public who have unreasonable demands or where their thinking is disordered (for example by psychosis or drugs).

Occupational violence between workers is addressed through the ACTPS Code of Conduct.

Domestic and family violence (DFV) can also create occupational violence risks for ACTHD workers. Where a DFV risk is identified for a worker or workers, ACTHD will develop a specific safety plan, in consultation with the affected worker/s. The safety plan must consider physical security and telephone and online harassment.

Risk management

The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to occupational violence and aggression risks. Risk assessments should be undertaken in respect of:

- operations or activities where exposure to occupational violence and aggression is foreseeable (for example compliance activities or when a worker is in a service/clinical workplace),
- any other operation or activity where a risk of occupational violence and aggression is identified, and
- a specific person who is identified as having the potential to act violently (a threat assessment).

The risk assessment should consider both the physical and psychological risks to workers. Where a threat assessment is being undertaken, ACTHD may need to engage a subject matter expert to assist the process.

Risk controls

Prevention and management of occupational violence and aggression requires an integrated ACTHD approach, including security procedures and systems [such as closed-circuit television (CCTV)], operational planning, co-operation with other agencies and training.

The risk controls applied will depend on the specific risk. The risk assessment should consider risk controls such as:

- designing the workplace to manage risk, including perimeter security, pass controls, CCTV, duress alarms and the use of barriers,
- providing a safe means of entering and exiting a workplace,
- establishing procedures to respond to an incident of occupational violence and aggression, including the roles of responders (for example emergency procedure and security procedures,
- training workers to de-escalate a potentially violent situation, apply situational awareness and to implement emergency procedures,
- providing safe equipment, such as triple break lanyards,
- providing communications equipment to workers who are undertaking fieldwork or visits,
- ensuring first aid officers are trained and first aid kits supplied to respond to the injuries that may occur as a result of occupational violence,
- providing tailored service strategies for people with high needs or who are identified as a risk, and
- providing supervision and support.

Where the risk of occupational violence and aggression is identified, the risk controls must be documented in the relevant written procedures, including:

- procedures, and
- job safety analysis documents.

All instances of occupational violence and aggression must be recorded in work injury report (refer to Section 6 – Incident Reporting).

Self defence

No ACTHD worker is required to use force in the performance of their role.

However, workers do sometimes ask about their right to defend themselves if they experience occupational violence. Workers should note that the following information is only a very general overview of the law regarding self-defence. It does not endorse any specific action in response to an incident of occupational violence.

The position about self-defence is that an employee acting in self-defence against an instance of occupational violence must act in a way that is reasonable, proportionate and

necessary in the circumstances. Whether any defensive conduct is lawful will depend on the circumstances in each case. The common law requires that a person acting in self-defence must believe on reasonable grounds that it is necessary in self-defence to take particular action. (Zecevic v DPP (Vic) (1987) 162 CLR 645)

More information is available in the:

- Occupational Violence – Staff Rights to a Safer Workplace Information Sheet
- Occupational Violence Information Sheet
- Challenging Behaviour Guidelines for ACT Health Services

Section 14 – Working alone and on call work

Working alone can increase the risk of a job because of the consequences of an accident or injury, and poor access to first aid and emergency assistance.

A worker may be working alone even if other people may be close by, including where a worker is:

- by themselves at night in an office building,
- called in to an ACTHD workplace as a result of an alarm, and
- travelling by vehicle to another location.

Managers and workers need to consider the:

- length of time the person may be working alone,
- location of the work,
- length of time needed for the tasks,
- time of day,
- communications equipment available (for example does the worker have access to a telephone or duress alarm),
- arrangements for a vehicle breakdown,
- fatigue risk (refer to Section 23 – Fatigue),
- environmental risks,
- hazards involved in the work, including laboratory hazards (Section 21),
- plant and equipment that may be used,
- skills and capabilities of the worker,
- location of emergency services, and
- risk of exposure to occupational violence.

Where workers work alone, managers will consider:

- implementing procedures for regular contact with the worker,
- providing emergency communication systems that will work properly in all situations, and

- discussing any pre-existing medical conditions that might increase the risk to the worker and the first aid and medical arrangements that should be implemented.

Section 15 – Psychological health

The starting point for the risk management of psychological risks is to understand the factors that can contribute to psychological injury.

The ACTPS *Healthy Minds – Thriving Workplaces* strategy promotes the creation of mentally healthy workplaces where workers:

- feel they have some level of say or control over the work they do,
- have variety in their work and social support from their supervisors and colleagues,
- have structures in place to support them to learn the skills they need to do their job and progress in their careers,
- feel they are provided with predictable employment, job security,
- feel that their renumeration adequately aligns with their work, and
- feel that work life balance is encouraged, and they have access to flexible working arrangements.

The strategy established priorities for action, including:

- making mental health a priority[19],
- using data to identify and manage risk,
- building an inclusive and respectful workplace culture,
- designing jobs, work and workplace to support mental health,
- promoting mental health and wellbeing through education and awareness programs,
- removing stigma around mental health to encourage staff to seek early support,
- developing positive leadership, and
- supporting people living with a mental health condition, including early intervention and reasonable adjustment.

The ACTHD Wellbeing at Work Strategy includes actions to:

- support psychological safety,
- promote mental health awareness and education, and
- implement peer support.

19 This aligns to the Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) research that shows that this is a lead indicate of risk. The PSC model considers:

- senior management commitment and involvement in relation to stress prevention practices;
- management priority - employee perceptions of how management values employee psychological health and safety in comparison to productivity goals;
- organisational communication - processes for employees to provide feedback on psychological wellbeing; and
- organisational participation - consultation about psychological issues with employees.

The Australian Workplace Barometer: Report on psychosocial safety climate and worker health in Australia provides Australian benchmarks on psychosocial safety climate.

Psychosocial hazards are anything in the design or management of work that increases the risk of work-related stress. A stress response is the physical, mental, and emotional reactions that occur when a worker perceives the demands of their work exceed their ability or resources to cope. Work-related stress if prolonged and/or severe can cause both psychological (a mental health condition) and physical injury. Stress itself does not constitute a physical or psychological injury. Workers can be exposed to a combination of psychosocial hazards; some may always be present, while others only occasionally.

The Health and Safety Executive (United Kingdom) model, promoted in Working Well as a practical, evidence-based approach to psychological health, recommends a focus on the issues detailed below:

- Job demands - including such issues as workload, work patterns, working environment, high cognitive demands and high emotional demands.
- Job control - how much say the person has in the way that they do their work.
- Organisational support - which includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line managers and colleagues.
- Relationships - which includes positive working practices to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour, including bullying.
- Role clarity - whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that the person does not have conflicting roles.
- Change management - how organisational change (both large and small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

There are some psychosocial hazards that are strongly associated with the risk of psychological injury and require specific risk controls, including:

- exposure to a traumatic event, such as a death or serious occupational violence,
- extended periods of fatigue, and
- experiencing bullying or harassment.

ACTHD addresses these hazards through:

- implementing a co-ordinated response to critical incidents (refer to section 16),
- managing occupational violence and aggression risks (refer to section 13),
- managing fatigue (refer to section 17), and
- providing professional psychological support for workers through the Employee Assistance Program
- applying the RED Framework and providing RED Contact Officers.

The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management applies to psychosocial hazards. Psychosocial hazards should be considered, where appropriate, in risk assessments for specific work activities.

Psychological injury risks involve a complex interaction between workers and their environment, and the risk controls are consequently more complex than for other hazards.

The ACTHD Workplace Climate Survey is an important tool that assesses a range of people and organisational trends, including the wellbeing of staff. In some cases, a business unit may need to undertake a specific psychosocial risk assessment. In this case ACTHD may consider the requirement for support from a subject matter expert (such as an organisational psychologist).

Supportive leadership

Ongoing work to create a positive workplace culture and supportive leadership is essential for good organisational health. The capacity of an agency to apply an organisational health model and supportive leadership is strongly associated with a reduced risk of psychological injury. Supportive leaders:

- are approachable and responsive when dealing with worker concerns,
- demonstrate an understanding of the issues faced by their workers,
- clarify work expectations, objectives and priorities,
- actively seek worker involvement in decisions,
- provide opportunities and encourage workers to work collaboratively with others,
- delegate and encourage workers to take initiative,
- can be relied on under pressure,
- support workers when things go wrong,
- provide frequent informal development-oriented feedback,
- treat workers with consideration and respect and encourage other workers to do the same, and
- are fair and equitable in their dealings with their workers.

The principals of supportive leadership are consistent with a positive safety culture (refer to Section 2 – WHS Foundations) and the ACTHD values.

Mental health awareness

Psychological health promotion actions in the workplace can be supported by optional activities to promote good general physical and mental health and early intervention to support workers who experience mental health issues.

Fostering a people-oriented organisational culture can aid in the prevention, early identification of and support for workers who have a mental health condition.

The ACTHD and ACTPS learning and development programs provide access to various mental health and psychological health training programs.

Managers with responsibility for managing psychosocial hazards can access more information from the:

- Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice) Approval 2023
- Work-related psychological health and safety: A systematic approach to meeting your duties (Safe Work Australia)
- Developing a mentally healthy workplace – A review of the literature.

Section 16 – Critical incident management

This section provides information about supporting workers who may be exposed to a critical incident at work. However, workers can also be exposed to critical incidents or traumatic events outside of work. The general principles for supporting a worker can also be applied to these personal situations.

Critical or traumatic incidents are powerful and upsetting incidents that intrude into daily life. They are usually experiences that are life threatening or pose a significant threat to a person's physical or psychological wellbeing. The situations and events that can lead to psychological trauma include:

- acts of violence,
- natural disasters,
- interpersonal violence such as the suicide of a family member or friend, and
- being involved in a serious motor vehicle or workplace accident.

People will experience different reactions to potentially traumatic experiences:

- Many people have strong emotional or physical reactions, but these reactions subside over a few days or weeks.
- Some people will experience symptoms for longer and they may be more severe.
- A minority of people will develop more serious conditions such as depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety disorders, or alcohol and drug problems.

Symptoms of trauma

The symptoms of trauma can be described as physical, cognitive (thinking), behavioural (things we do) and emotional. More details follow:

- Physical symptoms can include excessive alertness (always on the look-out for signs of danger), being easily startled, fatigue/exhaustion, disturbed sleep and general aches and pains.
- Cognitive (thinking) symptoms can include intrusive thoughts and memories of the event, visual images of the event, nightmares, poor concentration and memory, disorientation, and confusion.
- Behavioural symptoms can include avoidance of places or activities that are reminders of the event, social withdrawal and isolation, and loss of interest in normal activities.
- Emotional symptoms can include fear, numbness and detachment, depression, guilt, anger and irritability, anxiety, and panic.

As long as they are not too severe or don't last for too long, the symptoms described above are normal reactions to trauma. They are part of the natural healing process of adjusting to a very powerful event, making some sense out of what happened, and putting it into perspective.

Supporting recovery

Several factors, such as the nature of the traumatic event, the level of available support, previous and current life stress, personality, and coping resources can affect a person's

recovery. Understanding and support from family, friends, colleagues and managers can assist a person to recover more rapidly.

The five basic principles for facilitating positive adaptation following trauma are outlines below[20]:

- Promote a sense of safety - evidence has shown that people who can maintain or re-establish a relative sense of safety have considerably lower risk in the months following exposure.
- Promote calming - although initial arousal and numbing may be adaptive, prolonged states of heightened emotional responding may lead to agitation, depression, and somatic problems. Evidence suggests that implementing treatments for calming (for example; breathing exercises and imagery) are key to attaining anxiety management.
- Promote sense of self-and collective efficacy - evidence suggests that having a specific sense that one can cope with trauma related events has been found to be beneficial. As such, people must feel that they have the skills to overcome threat and solve their problems.
- Promote connectedness - social support and sustained attachments have been consistently found to be beneficial in combating stress and trauma.
- Promote hope - those people who remain optimistic are likely to have more favourable outcomes after experiencing trauma because they maintain a reasonable degree of hope for their future.

Critical incident response

The key elements of an effective response to a critical incident are listed below:

- Make the workplace safe, provide first aid and communicate the action taken to everyone.
- Facilitate people contacting their family or loved ones, especially if the incident involves emergency services and there may be media reporting.
- Provide as much information as is known about the incident (and no more) to the people immediately affected and their work colleagues.
- Ensure that the manager (and preferably a senior manager) attends the workplace as soon as possible.
- Managers should focus on providing an empathic, personal, and immediate response (refer to Section 15 – Psychological Health for information about supportive leadership) and avoid undertaking an operational debrief of the events until people are ready.
- Provide practical help, being directive about what action the ACTHD will be taking after the incident.
- Brief senior managers as soon as possible and establish communication procedures for information - so that workplace managers can focus on the wellbeing of workers.
- Develop a recovery program for the workplace (refer to the section below), including:
  - ongoing practical and emotional support to get back to normal for a period of days and weeks after the incident,

20 Critical Incident White Paper.

- follow up support meetings to ensure the communication is complete, required information is provided, reactions are monitored, and any issues are addressed, for some months after the incident.

Depending on the severity of an incident the workplace may also need to implement emergency management and business continuity plans.

Workplace support

Managers should contact People Strategy and Culture after a critical incident to identify any assistance that might be required in developing a recovery plan for the workplace.

The Employee Assistance Program should be engaged after a critical incident to assist in the design of the recovery plan and to visit the workplace.

The assumptions underlying psychoeducation are that if people are given information about what symptoms they might experience following a trauma they may find these symptoms less disturbing. Psychoeducation, which enhances those mechanisms associated with adaptation and resilience, includes:

- normalising the perception of transient stress reactions,
- reducing the expectancy of pathology,
- maintaining safety,
- integrating corrective information that enhances adaptation,
- reducing the stigma of stress reactions,
- encouraging social support, and
- subsequent help seeking, if necessary.

Advice to workers

Advice to workers about the way that they can help look after themselves after a traumatic event is provided in the list below:

- Recognise that you have been through a distressing experience and give yourself permission to experience some reaction to it. Don't be angry with yourself for being upset.
- Remind yourself that you are not abnormal and that you can and are coping.
- Avoid overuse of alcohol or other drugs to cope.
- Avoid making any major decisions or life changes.
- Do not try to block out thoughts of what happened. Gradually confronting these thoughts will assist you in coming to terms with the traumatic experience.
- Share your experiences with others when opportunities arise. This may feel uncomfortable at times, but talking to people you trust rather than bottling up your feelings is helpful in dealing with trauma.
- Try to maintain a normal routine. Keep busy and structure your day. Remember that regular exercise is important but do allow yourself time to rest if you are tired.
- Do not unnecessarily avoid certain activities or places.

- Let your friends and family know your needs. Help them to help you by letting them know when you are tired, need time out, or need a chance to talk or just be with someone.
- Make time to practice relaxation. Use a formal technique such as progressive muscle relaxation, or just make time to absorb yourself in a relaxing activity such as gardening or listening to music. This will help your body and mind to readjust.
- If the trauma stirs up memories or feelings from an unrelated past event, try not to let the memories all blur together. Keep the memories separate and deal with them separately.
- Express your feelings as they arise. Discuss them with someone else or write them down in a diary. Expressing feelings often helps the healing process.

Counselling support - Employee Assistance Program

For some people trauma is debilitating and treatment from a mental health professional will be required. Treatments include trauma-focused psychological interventions that focus on education, stress management techniques and helping the person to confront feared situations and distressing memories.

Workers who experience trauma should seek psychological assistance if the symptoms of the trauma are too distressing or last for more than a couple of weeks. The warning signs may include:

- being unable to handle the intense feelings or physical sensations,
- feeling numb and empty,
- experiencing strong distressing emotions that persist,
- being physically tense, agitated or feeling on edge,
- disturbed sleep or nightmares,
- lacking support from someone with whom you can share your emotions,
- having relationship problems with friends, family, and colleagues,
- eating disorders, and
- increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.

More information is available from the:

- Australian Psychological Society
- Psychological First Aid Guideline
- Critical Incident White Paper.

Professional psychological support for workers is available through the Employee Assistance Program.

Section 17 – Fatigue

Fatigue is more than feeling tired and drowsy. Fatigue is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively. The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to fatigue risks.

Fatigue can:

- occur because of prolonged mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock,
- be caused by factors which may be work related, non-work related or a combination of both and can accumulate over time, and
- adversely affect safety at the workplace by reducing alertness, when driving, diving, or undertaking critical tasks that require a high level of concentration.

The following signs or symptoms may indicate a worker is fatigued:

- excessive yawning or falling asleep at work,
- short term memory problems and an inability to concentrate,
- noticeably reduced capacity to engage in effective interpersonal communication,
- impaired decision-making and judgment,
- reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes,
- other changes in behaviour, for example, repeatedly arriving late for work, and
- increased rates of unplanned leave.

A fatigued worker may also experience symptoms not obvious to others including:

- feeling drowsy,
- headaches,
- dizziness,
- difficulty concentrating,
- blurred vision or impaired visual perception, and
- a need for extended sleep during days off work.

Fatigue is often caused by a number of inter-related factors, which can be cumulative. The major factors contributing to an increased risk of fatigue include the following:

- Work schedules, which limit the time workers can physically and mentally recover from work may cause fatigue, for example early start times or late finishes, short breaks, shifts lengthened by overtime and not enough non-sleep rest breaks during a shift.
- Working at night when the body is biologically programmed to sleep can interrupt a person's body clock. The body clock is the body's natural rhythm repeated every 24 hours. It regulates functions including sleeping patterns, body temperature, hormone levels and digestion. As it is programmed for different levels of wakefulness, people experience different levels of alertness depending on the time of the day.
- Job demands - some types of work, for example concentrating for extended periods of time, and performing work requiring continued physical effort, can increase the risk of fatigue. Workers can be mentally and physically fatigued at the same time. Work that is

reactive and performed under high pressure, for example, emergency management, may also increase the risk of fatigue.

- Poor sleep - workers having poor quality sleep or an inadequate length of sleep time, for example while travelling.
- Working in harsh and uncomfortable conditions can contribute to fatigue, for example, exposure to heat, cold, vibration or noise.
- Personal factors occurring outside of work may also contribute to fatigue. A worker's lifestyle, family responsibilities, health (for example: insomnia, sleep apnoea, some medication), other work commitments, and extended travel between work and home may all increase the risk of fatigue.

When individuals get less sleep than they need in a day, they build up a sleep debt which accumulates until they can get enough sleep to overcome the sleep debt. Each extra day without enough sleep increases the debt, and when it becomes large enough fatigue can occur. It may take several days before a person recovers from a sleep debt. Sleep debt is common with night shift workers as they often experience difficulty getting enough undisturbed sleep during the day.

The effective management of fatigue risk requires the co-operation of managers and workers. While tired muscles can recover with rest, the brain can only recover with sleep. The most beneficial sleep is deep undisturbed sleep taken in a single continuous period. The optimum amount of sleep varies for each person however, an adult generally requires seven to eight hours of sleep daily.

It is particularly important to identify fatigue risks which might arise when safety critical tasks are being carried out. Safety critical tasks are those where the consequences of a mistake or error in judgment could cause serious injury, for example:

- driving a vehicle,
- working with hazardous chemicals, dangerous substances, and biological hazards, and
- electrical work.

The control measures for fatigue risks include:

- designing working hours and rosters to allow for good sleep opportunity and enough recovery time,
- applying the hours of work provisions of the relevant enterprise agreements,
- limiting excessive working hours,
- ensuring workers have and take adequate and regular breaks to rest, eat and rehydrate,
- scheduling safety critical work outside the low body clock periods between 2am and 6am,
- managing overtime and on-call duties,
- considering future rosters and schedules when approving request for leave, and
- developing plans to deal with workload changes due to leave.

More information is available from Safe Work Australia publication Guide for managing the risk of fatigue at work.

Section 18 - Hazardous chemicals

Chemicals in the workplace

Where a domestic chemical (such as dishwashing liquid) is used for its intended purpose, the only safety requirement is for the chemical to be used in accordance with the label and any safety instructions provided by the manufacturer or supplier.

Some of the chemicals used by ACTHD (and by contractors) are classified as a hazardous chemical and there are specific WHS requirements that must be followed. The specific safety instructions for a hazardous chemical will be included in a safety data sheet (SDS) and also located on the label.

The workplace is required to maintain a register of its hazardous chemicals and ensure that workers have access to the SDS.

What is a hazardous chemical?

The simple way to identify if a chemical is classified as hazardous is to read the SDS. In addition, the Safe Work Australia Hazardous Chemical Information System provides an internet advisory service that assists managers and workers to find information on chemicals that have been classified in accordance with the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) by an authoritative source, such as the European Chemicals Authority (ECHA) or the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS).

Under the WHS Regulation, a hazardous chemical is any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria of one or more GHS hazard classes, including a classification in Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulation.

In relation to chemicals, a hazard is a set of inherent properties of the substance, mixture, article or process that may cause adverse effects to organisms or the environment. There are two broad types of hazards associated with hazardous chemicals, which may present an immediate or long,term injury or illness to people.

These are:

- **Health hazards** - These are properties of a chemical that have the potential to cause adverse health effects. Exposure usually occurs through inhalation, skin contact or ingestion. Adverse health effects can be acute (short term) or chronic (long term). Typical acute health effects include headaches, nausea or vomiting and skin corrosion, while chronic health effects include asthma, dermatitis, nerve damage or cancer.
- **Physicochemical hazards** - These are physical or chemical properties of the substance, mixture or article that pose risks to workers other than health risks, as they do not occur as a consequence of the biological interaction of the chemical with people. They arise through inappropriate handling or use and can often result in injury to people and/or damage to property as a result of the intrinsic physical hazard. Examples of physicochemical hazards include flammable, corrosive, explosive, chemically reactive and oxidising chemicals.

Hazardous chemical management

The WHS Regulation includes specific requirements for ACTHD to manage the risks associated with using, handling, generating and storing hazardous chemicals at a workplace. The requirements include:

- correctly labelling containers, pipework and displaying of safety signs, including ensuring that any decanted chemical is appropriately labelled (hazardous chemical labels and signs must comply with the GHS requirements),
- obtaining the current SDS from the manufacturer, importer or supplier (An SDS must comply with the GHS, which generally means the SDS should be issued must be less than five years old. The Work Health and Safety (Preparation of Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals) Code of Practice Approval 2022 details the requirements for an SDS),
- maintaining a register of hazardous chemicals at each workplace (using Chemwatch or a hard copy document - domestic chemicals used for their intended purpose do not need to be included],
- identifying risk of physical or chemical reaction of hazardous chemicals and ensuring the stability of hazardous chemicals, including ensuring that incompatible chemicals are not stored together,
- storing flammable gasses and liquids in accordance with the SDS and the manufacturer's or supplier's instructions,
- ensuring that exposure standards for hazardous chemicals are not exceeded (including undertaking air monitoring, where required),
- providing health monitoring to workers exposed to the specific hazardous chemicals listed in schedule 14 of the WHS Regulation,
- providing information, training, instruction and supervision to workers who use a hazardous chemical - competency-based industry training courses are available,
- providing a spill containment system for hazardous chemicals, if necessary,
- controlling ignition sources and accumulation of flammable and combustible substances (including not storing or using flammable and combustible substances in an enclosed environment that is not electrically safe),
- providing fire protection systems, firefighting equipment and emergency and safety equipment that selected with regard to the hazardous chemicals present,
- establishing warning placards and outer warning placards at the workplace, for specified (larger) quantities of a hazardous chemical (where the quantity exceeds that specified in schedule 11 of the WHS Regulation),
- maintaining a manifest for larger quantities of hazardous chemicals (where the quantity exceeds that specified in schedule 11 of the WHS Regulation) and providing notification to the regulator of the manifest quantities,
- preparing a specific emergency plan, if the quantity of a class of hazardous chemical at a workplace exceeds the manifest quantity for that hazardous chemical,
- ensuring the stability and support of containers for bulk hazardous chemicals, including pipework and attachments, and
- following procedures for decommissioning underground storage and handling systems.

The WHS Regulation contains prohibitions or restrictions on certain hazardous chemicals (certain carcinogens) except in specified circumstances. These hazardous chemicals are listed in Schedule 10. ACTHD must not use a prohibited hazardous chemical and must only use a restricted hazardous chemical with the prior approval of the Director-General. The request for approval should submitted though People Strategy and Culture and be accompanied by an approved risk assessment.

Risk management

The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to hazardous chemicals. A risk assessment of a hazardous chemical must be conducted before it is used by ACTHD workers to ensure that appropriate risk controls are in place.

Applying a risk management approach to hazardous chemicals includes the proper consideration on the risk in any decision to procure a hazardous chemical. ACTHD should select chemicals that have the lowest level of toxicity and will perform the required tasks. Alternatives to the use of chemicals should also be considered.

In some cases, managers may need to purchase chemicals without completing a formal risk assessment. However, the manager must still consider the toxicity of the chemical to be purchased, consult with workers, and implement risk controls. It is important to remember that the value of the purchase does not equate to the risk involved.

Managers and workers with responsibility for managing hazardous chemicals should review the detailed requirements of the Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice) Approval 2022.

There are additional requirements for the transport of dangerous goods by road or rail. The *Dangerous Goods (Road Transport) Act 2009* regulates the movement of dangerous goods by road.

In addition some substances are regulated as dangerous substances under the *Dangerous Substances Act 2004* if they have certain properties, for example explosives or security sensitive substances. The most common dangerous substances[21] are:

- flammable gases and liquids (such as hydrogen, methane, LPG, propane gas and petrol),
- combustible liquids (such as diesel fuel),
- gases kept under pressure (such as helium and nitrogen), and
- corrosive substances (such as bleach, acids and bases).

21 Access Canberra.

Asbestos

Asbestos means the asbestiform varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock forming minerals and is a human carcinogen. Asbestos containing material (ACM) means any material or thing that, as part of its design, contains asbestos.

The WHS Regulation (at Chapter 8) and the Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice) Approval 2022 specify the requirements for managing asbestos and ACM. The use of asbestos is prohibited. However, significant amounts of ACM (especially cement sheeting containing asbestos) remains in place in buildings and structures. ACM is also found in locations where structures containing ACM have been damaged or demolished in the past.

If ACM is in good condition and left undisturbed, it is unlikely that airborne asbestos will be released into the air and the risk to health is extremely low. It is usually safer to leave it and review its condition over time. However, if the asbestos or ACM has deteriorated, has been disturbed, or if asbestos-contaminated dust is present, the likelihood that airborne asbestos will be released into the air is increased.

When deciding if there is a risk to health from asbestos ACTHD must consider whether the asbestos or ACM that is under the control of ACTHD or at a location where workers are present, is:

- in poor condition,
- likely to be further damaged or to deteriorate,
- likely to be disturbed due to work practices carried out in the workplace (for example, routine and maintenance activities and their frequency), and
- in an area where workers or other people are exposed to the material.

Asbestos-related work activities (including maintenance) plus unusual and infrequent activities (such as emergency activities) need to be considered. ACTHD must consider the proximity of the asbestos or ACM to workers, as this can affect the potential for exposure if asbestos fibres become airborne.

ACTHD should engage a competent person (usually an occupational hygienist or Health Protection Services) to:

- provide specific advice about asbestos risks,
- test for the presence of asbestos and ACM,
- undertake air monitoring, if required, and
- develop an asbestos management plan for each site, under the control of ACTHD, that contains asbestos or ACM.

The requirements for managing asbestos include:

- having a competent person identify and correctly label ACM,
- installing warning signs that comply with GHS hazardous chemical labels and signs

- ensuring that ACM is not disturbed (Note: Material must be assumed to be ACM where it cannot be identified, but a competent person reasonably believes is ACM, or if part of the workplace is not accessible, but is likely to contain ACM[22],
- having a competent person establish an asbestos register and an asbestos management plan,
- making the asbestos management plan available to workers and HSRs,
- making the asbestos register available to workers (including contractors undertaking construction and maintenance work) who may come into contact with ACM,
- undertaking air monitoring, as required, to ensure that asbestos is not released from ACM,
- monitoring the condition of ACM and taking action to prevent any exposure if the condition as deteriorated,
- reviewing the asbestos management plan, if the condition of the ACM has changed and at least every five years, and
- engaging a licenced asbestos remover to remove the ACM if it has deteriorated and it is not safety to leave it in situ in accordance with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety (How to Safely Remove Asbestos Code of Practice) Approval 2022.

Asbestos in the environment

Asbestos can be present naturally in the environment. However, ACTHD workers are more likely to locate asbestos in the environment in the form of damaged ACM. If old cement sheeting is located (especially if it is damaged) it should be presumed to be ACM and risk controls implemented accordingly. The risk controls options include:

- isolating the location, and
- having it removed by a licenced asbestos remover, if the assessment of the risk requires it to be removed.

The planning for operational field work should consider the risk of exposure to ACM and the risk controls that should be in place.

The Hazardous Chemicals Procedure provides more information.

The Asbestos Management Policy provides more information about managing and controlling asbestos.

22 For example, accessing fire door and security safe cores to determine whether they contain asbestos may create a risk, for example, drilling can result in the release of airborne asbestos. If this is the case, cores should not be accessed and must be assumed to contain asbestos until otherwise proven (for instance, during maintenance when access is obtained) or information is obtained from the supplier. Fire doors may have a compliance tag on the door jamb stating the fire rating and a compliance date. This can provide an indication of whether the door is likely to contain asbestos. An example of a space that is not accessible is an enclosed riser shaft containing cables that may be insulated with ACM.

Section 19 - Radiation

The *Radiation Protection Act 2006* provides for the licencing and registration of radiation facilities and sources in the ACT. The *Radiation Protection Regulation 2007* supports the *Radiation Protection Act 2006* and provides for the prohibition of specific radiation sources.

The Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) provides codes for the safe use of ionising radiation[23] sources. The National Directory for Radiation Protection, June 20017 is an incorporated document and provides information about the regulatory framework for the management of ionising and non-ionising radiation.

The WHS Regulation specifies the risk management requirement to managing plant and equipment that produces radiation. Refer to Section 25 - Plant and Equipment.

AS/NZS 2243.4: Safety in Laboratories – Part 4 Ionizing Radiations provides specific information about risk controls for ionising radiation in laboratory environments.

The Radiation Safety Management Procedure provides more information.

Section 20 - Biological hazards

This section of the WHS Guideline includes brief information about some common biological hazards that workers could be exposed to. This section of the WHS Guideline should be read in conjunction with Section 21 – Laboratory safety. The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to biological hazards.

Information about biological hazards is available from a range of sources, including:

- subject matter experts,
- the Health Protection Service, and
- the Health Direct internet site of the Australian Government Department of Health).

Information about occupational exposures to biological hazards is available from Safe Work Australia in the National Hazard Exposure Worker Surveillance: Exposure to biological hazards and the provision of controls against biological hazards in Australian workplaces.

Biological hazards are organic substances that pose a threat to the health of humans and other living organisms. They include pathogenic micro-organisms, viruses, toxins, spores, fungi and bio-active substances. Biological hazards can also be considered to include biological vectors or transmitters of disease [for example blood, or animals].

Infectious agents can be spread in a variety of ways:

- Airborne - coughs or sneezes release airborne pathogens, which are then inhaled by others.
- Contaminated objects or food - pathogens may be spread to food or other objects.

23 Ionising radiation.

- Skin-to-skin contact - the transfer of some pathogens can occur through touch, or by sharing personal items, clothing, or objects.
- Contact with body fluids - pathogens in saliva, urine, faeces, or blood can be passed to another person's body via cuts or abrasions, or through the mucus membranes of the mouth and eyes.

Exposure to biological hazards in the work environment can also occur when workers are in contact with cell cultures, soil, clay and plant materials, organic dusts, food, as well as rubbish, wastewater, and sewage. Exposure to moulds and yeasts is common in workplaces with air conditioning systems and high humidity.

ACTHD workers may be exposed to biological hazards:

- from contact with people or through a building air conditioning system,
- working in uncontrolled environments (including venomous animals, bites and stings),
- from contact with animals or animal waste,
- from secondary contact with contaminated items,
- though exposure to mould (when moisture levels in a building are not managed effectively),
- though food handling, and
- from contact with contaminated water.

The following information highlights some of the specific biological hazards that ACTHD workers could be exposed to.

Respiratory communicable diseases (including COVID-19)

Information about managing communicable respiratory diseases is available on the ACTPS COVID-19 Response Sharepoint site. The risk controls apply to all communicable respiratory diseases subject to risk assessments being undertaken to identify the specific risk controls to be implemented.

Zoonotic diseases

Workers who work with live animals or animal products can be exposed to animal diseases and infections, some of which (zoonoses) have the potential to infect humans or cause serious allergy via sensitisation.

Though rare, more serious illness can happen in people with weakened immune systems, such as workers with diabetes, who are at higher risk. A worker who has an underlying health condition should cover his or her skin, for example using reusable or disposable gloves and long-handled tongs, if the worker comes into contact with something that could be contaminated.

The Australian code for the care and of animals for scientific purposes (Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council) also, while primarily focussing on the welfare of animals also provides information about the WHS aspects of the animal handling and exposure.

Allergies

Workers exposed to animals (for example in a laboratory environment) may also experience an allergic response, which is a reaction by the body's immune system to the urine, saliva and dander of the animal. Any worker who has regular contact with animals has the potential to develop allergies to them. Workers who have had a personal history of asthma, seasonal allergies, and dermatitis are at increased risk, workers with no prior history of allergies and only brief work exposures can also develop allergic reactions.

Workers need to talk to their manager if they have a personal history that may increase the risk of an allergic response. Workers with no prior history of allergies and only brief work exposures can also develop allergic reactions. Workers must report all allergic responses to a manager and be assessed by a first aid officer.

A risk assessment should be undertaken where a worker experiences an allergic reaction to determine the risk controls and/or reasonable adjustments that should be implemented.

Legionnaires' disease

Legionnaires' disease is caused by exposure to Legionella bacteria that can occur in poorly maintained air conditioning cooling towers and in some wet media, such as potting mix.

Legionnaires' disease takes between two to ten days for symptoms to appear. Symptoms include malaise, headache, chills, rapid onset of high fever, cough, and other influenza-like symptoms. Legionnaires' disease can be life threatening. The risk of infection is a combination of two factors - the amount of Legionella bacteria to which the body is exposed and the resistance of the individual to the bacteria.

The key to reducing the risk of contracting Legionnaires' disease is to minimise the risk of exposure to Legionella bacteria by effective management of air conditioning cooling towers, warm water systems and other such plant that afford optimum conditions for Legionella growth in addition to providing a means of dispersal, including:

- ensuring that building management/contractors (for example, through a lease or service contract) maintain and test the air conditioning system/cooling tower, in accordance with AS/NZS 3666.2 (2011) - Air-handling and water systems of buildings - Microbial control,
- ensuring that maintenance reports, consistent with AS/NZS 3896:1998 Waters - Examination for legionellae including Legionella pneumophila - Section 10 are made available, and
- implementing the Work Health and Safety (Managing the Work Environment and Facilities) Code of Practice Approval 2020.

Hand hygiene and standard precautions

Workers should always wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water before and after any activity that could expose the worker to biological material and when leaving a laboratory area. Workers can use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Managers should ensure that standard precautions are implemented when workers are potentially exposed to blood or hazardous biological substances. Standard precautions are

work practices to ensure a basic level of infection prevention and control that are applied to all organisms and biological hazards that can be transmitted by contact or airborne transmission. Standard precautions include:

- implementing good hand hygiene,
- using of PPE,
- appropriately handling and disposing of sharps and waste,
- implementing standard operating procedures to handle equipment that may be contaminated, and
- implementing cleaning techniques and managing spills of blood and substances.

Many infections are food-borne. Managers and workers should ensure that workers:

- wash hands before and after handling food,
- keep hot food hot and cold food cold,
- use separate storage, utensils and preparation surfaces for cooked and uncooked foods, and
- wash all utensils and preparation surfaces thoroughly with hot water and detergent after use.

Vaccinations

ACTHD offers seasonal influenza vaccinations to workers to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

All other vaccinations will be considered on the basis of a risk assessment of the exposure to a worker or group of workers.

Clinical waste

The *Clinical Waste Act 1990* regulates to treatment, storage, transport and disposal of clinical waste.

Section 21 – Laboratory safety

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (section 22) created a new duty for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU or businesses) that design structures (including a laboratory or a laboratory area). This includes the businesses that provide architects, engineers, and drafters for a structure. The duty requires the designer to ensure that the structure is designed to be without risk to the health and safety of people use a structure for its intended purpose or at or in the vicinity of a structure.

Laboratory design and construction (whether or a new laboratory or an existing building that has been converted to a laboratory) should comply with AS 2982:2021 Laboratory Design and Construction. The design stage, should consider the:

- access and egress,
- security,

- layouts, including manual handing, workflows, traffic routes and volumes and repetitive operations.

ACTHD controlled laboratories should apply with the safety standards that are specified in AS/NZS 2243: Safety in Laboratories and any WHS requirements for laboratory accreditation[24] for that type of laboratory. AS/NZS 2243 includes detailed guidance on:

- planning and operational aspects, including electrical arrangements such as systems for isolating and shutting off equipment (part 1),
- chemical aspects and storage (part 2),
- microbiological aspects and containment facilities (part 3,)
- ionizing radiations (part 4),
- non-ionising radiations – electromagnetic, sound and ultrasound (part 5),
- mechanical aspects (part 6),
- fume cupboards (part 8), and
- reticulating fume cupboards (part 9),

Where AS/NZS 2243 provides a higher standard than the WHS legislation, the higher standard should be applied. A risk assessment should be undertaken where proposed risk controls vary from AS 2243.

Section 22 - Hazardous manual tasks

Most work in ACTHD involves carrying out some type of manual task. Manual tasks cover a wide range of activities, including:

- using a personal computer,
- handling equipment (such as gas bottles),
- moving office supplies,
- installing information technology equipment,
- moving animals, and
- loading and unloading a vehicle with equipment.

Some manual tasks are hazardous and may cause musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), which are the most common category of workplace injuries in Australia[25].

The WHS Regulation, defines an MSD as an injury to, or a disease of, the musculoskeletal system, whether occurring suddenly or over time. The definition excludes the damage caused by a sudden impact, such as a fall. MSDs 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,

24 For example, National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accreditation.

25 Australian Workers Compensation Statistics 2016-17 Safe Work Australia.

- joint and bone injuries or degeneration, including injuries to the shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, ankle, hands, and feet,
- nerve injuries or compression,
- muscular and vascular disorders as a result of hand-arm vibration,
- soft tissue hernias, and
- chronic pain disorders.

MSDs 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, and
- sudden damage caused by strenuous activity, or unexpected movements such as when a load being handled moves or changes position suddenly.

A hazardous manual task, as defined in the WHS Regulation, 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, and
- exposure to vibration.

These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury.

The risks associated with manual tasks that have the potential to cause MSDs should be managed using a systematic process that includes:

- identifying manual tasks that are hazardous,
- if necessary, assessing the risks of MSDs associated with the hazardous manual task,
- implementing suitable risk control measures, and
- reviewing the effectiveness of control measures.

Identifying hazardous manual tasks

The first step in managing risks from carrying out manual tasks is to identify those tasks that have the potential to cause MSDs. All managers and workers are responsible for identifying and controlling the hazards that arise from manual tasks, which generally involve interaction between a worker and the:

- work tasks and how they are performed,
- tools, equipment and objects handled, and
- physical work environment.

Hazardous manual tasks can be identified by:

- using incident and injury data to identify trends,
- using industry information about MSD risks,

- asking workers for information about any tasks that:
  - cause discomfort,
  - are difficult to do (or appear to be harder than they should be),
  - are very tiring (as muscle fatigue reduces work capacity),
  - are awkward or dangerous (for example there is difficulty in controlling loads),
- observing work activities to identify:
  - any changes that have resulted in new manual tasks or a changed environment,
  - any practices that are performed differently that the process that is written in the form of procedures,
  - any loads that are heavy or awkward to move,
  - tasks involving tools, machinery or equipment that do not work properly or are difficult to use, and
  - if workers have made improvisations to tasks to avoid discomfort.

Where workers have a pre-existing injury or disability, specific risk controls may be required for that worker, such as addition aids and equipment, lifting devices or work modifications to reduce the risk of aggravating the condition. It is important that workers provide information to their manager about any relevant health condition that needs to be considered in the design of their work.

Risk assessment and control

Where hazardous manual tasks are identified and known risk controls are available, such as reducing loads and using load shifting equipment, the workplace can implement these controls. The process for implementing risk controls should include:

- consultation with workers and HSRs,
- documenting the risk controls in written procedures, and
- reviewing risk controls to ensure that the changes have been effective in reducing the risk.

Where it is not clear if known risk controls will adequately control the risk, a formal, documented risk assessment process should be followed.

Section 3 – Risk Management provides more information about undertaking a risk assessment. In addition, the managers and workers undertaking the risk assessment must review and consider the information in the Work Health and Safety (Hazardous Manual Tasks) Code of Practice Approval 2020.

A risk assessment can assist workplaces to determine:

- which postures, movements and forces of the task pose a risk,
- where during the task they pose a risk,
- why they are occurring, and
- what needs to be fixed.

Systems of work, or the way work is organised, can influence the physical and mental demands that a manual task places on a worker. The fatigue and strain (physical and mental) that may arise from the aspects of work (task demands, task control and resources

and support provided) bring on physiological responses such as increased muscular tension and affect the function of muscles, nerves, and blood vessels, increasing the risk of the worker developing an MSD.

The sources of risk can include:

- time constraints,
- pace and flow of work across the working day,
- ability for workers to influence workload or work methods and changes in the workplace,
- the level of resources and guidance,
- consultation processes,
- work roles and performance requirements or processes for dealing with conflicts, and
- staffing levels, skill mix and work hours.

Workers will also have different physical and psychological characteristics and these individual factors may increase the risk, for example:

- Skills and experience - being inexperienced in a job may increase the risk,
- Physical characteristics - a mismatch between the worker and the task, and
- Unaccustomed work - workers who are new, have transferred from another job or are returning from extended leave and whose muscles are not conditioned to the work.

More complicated or generic risk assessments should be documented on a Risk Assessment Form and approved in by the risk owner, usually the relevant manager of the workers.

Hierarchy of controls

The risk controls for a hazardous manual task must apply the hierarchy of controls, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8 - Hierarchy of controls for hazardous manual tasks

Hierarchy of control		Examples of control measures
Level 1	Elimination	Automate the manual task (such as using remote controls), Deliver goods directly to the point of use to eliminate multiple handling,
Level 2	Substitution	Replace heavy items with those that are lighter, smaller and/or easier to handle, Replace hand tools with power tools to reduce the level of force required to do the task,
	Isolation	Isolate vibrating machinery from the user,
	Engineering	Use mechanical lifting aids,
Level 3	Administrative	Rotate workers between different tasks, Train workers in safe manual handling (refer to the Learning and Development Intranet page for information about the core WHS training program that are available),
	Personal protective equipment	Providing heat resistant gloves for handling hot items.

Section 23 - Noise

Hazardous noise can cause hearing loss and damage, which can also make it more difficult to hear sounds necessary for working safely, such as instructions or warning signals. Managing the risk of noise is designed to:

- protect workers from hearing loss and disabling tinnitus (ringing in the ears or head),
- improve the conditions for communication and hearing warning sounds, and
- create a less stressful and more productive work environment.

The risk management procedures detailed in section 3 apply to managing exposure to noise.

The WHS Regulation requires ACTHD to manage the risks of hearing loss and:

- ensure that the noise a worker is exposed to at the workplace does not exceed the exposure standard for noise [measured in Decibels (dB) - the unit for measuring sound levels], and
- provide audiometric testing to a worker who is frequently required to use personal hearing protectors to protect the worker from hearing loss associated with noise that exceeds the exposure standard.

There are two parts to the exposure standard for noise, because noise can either cause gradual hearing loss over a period of time or be so loud that it causes immediate hearing loss. The exposure standards for noise specified in the WHS Regulations are:

1. An LAeq,8h of **85dB(A)**[26] - This is related to the total amount of noise energy a person is exposed to in the course of their working day. It takes account of both the noise level and the length of time the person is exposed to it. An unacceptable risk of hearing loss occurs at LAeq,8h values above 85 dB(A).
2. An LC,peak of **140dB(C)**[27] - This is related to loud, sudden noises such as a gunshot or hammering. LC,peak values above 140 dB(C) can cause immediate damage to hearing.

The decibel scale is logarithmic. On this scale, an increase of 3 dB therefore represents a doubling or twice as much sound energy. This means that the length of time a worker could be exposed to the noise is reduced by half for every 3 dB increase in noise level if the same noise energy is to be received.

A worker who is exposed to 85 dB(A) for eight hours receives the same noise energy as someone exposed to 88 dB(A) for four hours, with the balance of the day in a very quiet environment. In both cases the exposure standard is not being exceeded. However, being exposed to 88 dB(A) for more than 4 hours would mean that the standard is exceeded. There is a big range in different people's susceptibility to hearing loss from noise. Research shows that eight-hour average daily noise exposure levels below 75 dB(A) or instantaneous

26 **LAeq,8h** means the eight hour equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level in decibels, referenced to 20 micropascals, determined in accordance with *AS/NZS 1269.1 - Occupational noise management - Measurement and assessment of noise immission and exposure*.

27 **LC,peak** means the C-weighted peak sound pressure level in decibels, referenced to 20 micropascals, determined in accordance with AS/NZS 1269.1.

peak noise levels below 130 dB(C) are unlikely to cause hearing loss. The risk becomes greater with progressively increasing levels.

If workplaces identify any noisy activities that may expose workers or other people at the workplace to hazardous noise then, unless the workplace can reduce the exposures to below the standard immediately, the risks should be assessed by carrying out a noise assessment.

More information is available in the Work Health and Safety (Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work) Code of Practice Approval 2022.

Section 24 - Electrical safety

Electrical risks are risks of death, electric shock or other injury caused directly or indirectly by electricity. The most common electrical risks and causes of injury are:

- electric shock causing injury or death (Note: The electric shock may be received by direct or indirect contact, tracking through or across a medium, or by arching)
- arcing, explosion or fire causing burns,
- toxic gases and contaminates released by burning and arching, and
- fire resulting from an electrical fault.

Contact with electricity can have serious consequences. As well as the immediate acute health impact, workers can also experience serious delayed health impacts from an electric shock.

Electric shocks from faulty electrical equipment may also lead to related injuries, including falls from ladders, scaffolds, or other elevated work platforms. Other injuries or illnesses may include muscle spasms, palpitations, nausea, vomiting, collapse, and unconsciousness.

Any worker who experiences an electric shock must be assessed by a first aid officer and referred for an immediate medical assessment.

Workers using electricity may not be the only ones at risk as faulty electrical equipment and poor electrical installations can lead to fires that may also cause death or injury to others.

Exclusions

The information in this section excludes:

- electrical work on extra-low voltage electrical equipment and installations (such as some outdoor LED light installations), and
- work on telecommunications systems.

Risk management

The risk management procedures detailed in section 3 of the WHS Guideline apply to electrical risks.

Managers and workers must manage the WHS risks associated with electrical risks by:

- minimising the use of powerboards and prohibiting the attachment of one powerboard to another (piggybacking) to increase the number of appliances that can be attached,
- prohibiting the use of double adaptors,
- arranging electrical leads so they will not be damaged (avoid running leads across the floor or ground, through doorways and over sharp edges, and use lead stands or insulated cable hangers to keep leads off the ground),
- using cable protection ramps to protect cables in high risk areas,
- immediately removing any damaged electrical cable or item of equipment from service (using isolation tags, where appropriate),
- not using leads and tools in damp or wet conditions unless they are specially designed for those conditions,
- consulting with electricians that carry out electrical work,
- ensuring that electrical installations are designed and installed by a licensed electrician and that they comply with the Australian and New Zealand Wiring Rules,
- ensuring that no live electrical tails are left at the end of electrical work (unused electrical cables should be disconnected from the last junction/switchboard and removed, if possible),
- ensuring that electrical work is undertaken in accordance with a SWMS where it is part of construction and maintenance work,
- ensuring that electrical equipment and leads are checked before they are connected to power,
- ensure power circuits are protected by the appropriate rated fuse or circuit breaker to prevent overloading,
- ensuring circuits in a hostile operating environment[28] are protected by appropriate residual current devices (RCDs) that are properly tested and maintained (including using portable RCDs where appropriate),
- using an RCD with electrical equipment in a hostile operating environment, or where the electrical equipment is moved between different locations in circumstances where damage to the equipment or to a flexible electricity supply cord is reasonably likely,
- having an electrician check any RCD, circuit breaker or other over current protective devices that is triggered (Note: a safety switch may be rest only once without an electrician being called to identify the cause and taking corrective action),
- prohibiting any work on live or energised electrical equipment unless the requirements of WHS Regulation 157 to 162 are met, and

28 A hostile operating environment is an environment in which the normal use of electrical equipment exposes the equipment to operating conditions that are likely to result in damage to the equipment or a reduction in its expected life span. This includes workshops, wet areas and locations where the conditions involve exposing the electrical equipment to moisture, heat, vibration, mechanical damage, corrosive chemicals or dust.

- testing and tagging electrical cables and powerboards (refer to the section below).

Testing and tagging electrical equipment

Brand-new electrical equipment that has never been put into use (that is, other than second-hand equipment) does not have to be tested before first use. Brand-new electrical equipment, however, should still be visually inspected to ensure that no damage occurred during transport, delivery, installation, or commissioning. New electrical equipment should have a new to service tag attached, which includes when it must be tested. The inspection and testing schedule for electrical equipment required by AS/NZ 3760 (2022), is detailed in Table 10.

Table 10 – Electrical equipment inspection and testing schedule[29]

Cat.	Location/ equipment type	Inspection and testing of cables and power boards	Testing of RCDs			
			Portable	Fixed	Portable	Fixed
			Push button test by user		Operating time and push button test by an electrician	
1	Higher risk operating environments operating environments, including wet areas	12 months	3 months	6 months	12 months	12 months
2	Equipment that is moved frequently – where the cable is subject to flexing	12 months	3 months	6 months	12 months	12 months
3	Laboratory equipment	Determined by risk assessment [30]				
4	Fixed equipment (such as fridges, computers)	5 years	3 months	6 months	2 years	2 years
5	All locations - Commercial cleaning equipment (portable)	6 months	Daily or before use (whichever is the longer)	Not applicable	6 months	Not applicable
6	All locations – Hire equipment	Prior to hire	Before use	Before use	3 months	12 months
7	All locations – repaired equipment	Before return to service	Before return to service	Before return to service	Before return to service	Before return to service

29 Work Health and Safety (Managing Electrical Risks in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020 and AS/NZ 3760:2022 - In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment.

30 A risk assessment will be undertaken to identify the specific electrical equipment/leads or locations in a laboratory area are subject to the risk of exposure to damage or reduced safe life span as a result of exposure to, moisture, water, heat, vibration, dust, corrosive chemicals or any other factor. The risk assessment will be documented and approved by the responsible manager. The risk assessment will determine if the equipment falls into category1, 2 or 4 for testing and tagging cables.

Guidance on inspecting and testing electrical equipment in lower-risk operating environments is included in AS/NZ 3760 (2022) - In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment.

Danger and isolation procedures

Damaged electrical equipment must be removed from service and either permanently disabled (by removing the power cord) or tagged out of service (using isolation tags).

Out of service or caution tags are used to identify electrical equipment that is not safe to use or fit for purpose and has not been permanently disabled. The out of service or caution tag (refer to figure 3) should:

- be durable and securely attached,
- clearly state the nature of the defect or reason why the electrical equipment is unsafe,
- be attached on a prominent position on each isolation point, and
- only be removed by a competent person after fixing or rectifying the defect and making the electrical equipment safe or replacing with a danger tag in preparation to work on the equipment.

Figure 3: Example of a danger tag and out of service tag

Electrical circuits must be isolated before any work is conducted on an electrical installation and procedures implemented to ensure that the installation cannot be inadvertently re-energised while the work is carried out. All circuit breakers, switches and combined fuse switch units should be locked off to secure the isolation, where possible.

The fundamental principle is that the point of isolation should be under the control of the person who is carrying out the work on the isolated conductors. Tagging systems should also be used at the point(s) of isolation, where possible for general information. The isolation should be secured by locking off and tagging the electrical equipment as follows:

- isolation points should be fitted with control mechanisms that prevent the electrical equipment from being inadvertently re-energised,

- the control mechanism should require a deliberate action to engage or disengage the device, and
- the control mechanism should be able to withstand conditions that could lead to the isolation failing, for example vibration.

The control mechanisms may include built-in lock and lock-outs for switches, circuit breakers, fuses and safety lock-out jaws (sometimes called 'hasps'). Isolation controls may include additional components (for example; a clip, screw, bolt or pin that can be inserted to prevent a switch from being operated).

If more than one licenced electrician is working on the same de-energised electrical installation, individual electricians should apply their own personal lock to the isolation point. Danger tags are not required when using dedicated personal isolation locks. Otherwise, the principles of tagging must be applied:

- no-one should operate an isolator or knowingly use equipment where the isolator has a control mechanism attached,
- in situations where isolation points are accessible by other people at the workplace ensure, that the isolation method or system is not able to be altered, and
- isolation should include using suitable warning or safety signs as well as locks or other controls to secure the isolation (remember, a tag does not perform the isolation function).

Danger tags must be used for the duration of the electrical work to warn people in the workplace that:

- the electrical installation is isolated or out of service,
- the electricity supply must not be switched back on or reconnected, and
- reconnecting electricity may endanger the life of the electrical worker(s) working on the equipment.

The danger tag should:

- be durable and securely fixed to the isolator,
- clearly state the warning, including any warning about specific hazards relating to the isolation (for example, multiple points of supply),
- be dated and signed by the worker or workers involved in carrying out the work or, where appropriate, by the manager in charge of the workers,
- be attached in a prominent position on each isolation point (that is; the point or one of many points used to isolate electrical parts) or device, and
- only be removed by the signatories to the tag.

If an electrician is unable to return to complete electrical work and remove the isolation of the electrical installation, measures must be put in place to manage risks associated with removing the lock or tag. Testing must be carried out to confirm the relevant circuits have been de-energised and the status of any other relevant conductors in the work area.

Managers and workers with responsibility for managing electrical risks (including undertaking facilities management work) should review the requirements of the:

- Work Health and Safety (Managing Electrical Risks in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- The Australian and New Zealand Wiring Rules - Electrical installations AS/NZS 3000:2018 and AS/NZS3760:2022 - In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment.

The *Electrical Safety Act 1971* regulates the licencing or people to undertake electrical work and the regulation of electrical safety incidents.

Section 25 – Plant and equipment

There are significant risks associated with using plant, including:

- being exposed to hazardous chemicals and dangerous substances,
- being crushed or struck by mobile plant and vehicles,
- injuries from falls while accessing, operating, or maintaining plant,
- electric shock from plant that is not adequately protected or isolated,
- burns or scalds due to contact with hot surfaces, or exposure to flames or hot fluids, and
- hearing loss due to noisy plant and MSD caused by manual handling or operating plant.

This section provides basic guidance on how to manage WHS risks of plant, in accordance with the WHS Regulation. Managers and workers with responsibility for managing plant should review the requirements of the Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2022, as well as this section and Section 9 – Incorporating WHS into Procurement, to enable them to manage:

- the procurement of plant,
- plant installation
- risk management requirements,
- licence and registration requirements,
- safe operation requirements (including pre-start checks and inspections),
- maintenance procedures, and
- decommissioning processes.

The WHS Regulations also include specific safety provisions for plant, such as guarding requirements (refer to section 4 of the Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020).

What is plant?

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, vessels, and power tools. Plant that relies exclusively on manual power and is designed to be primarily supported by hand (for example, a hand saw), is not covered by specific plant safety requirements of the WHS Regulation.

Chain of responsibility for the safety of plant

Achieving plant safety outcomes requires duty holders to effectively meet their responsibilities at each stage of the life cycle of an item of plant. The WHS Act and WHS Regulation make specific provisions for these duties.

Designers

The safe design of plant plays a critical role in eliminating hazards and risks before plant is introduced in the workplace. Designers of plant are required to provide specific information to the manufacturer and work with manufacturers to address any safety issues with the design. Designers must also carry out, or arrange the carrying out of, any calculations, analysis, testing or examination that may be necessary to ensure the plant is safe. Designers may also apply specified standards (such as Australian Standards) in the process of designing plant.

Where the ACTHD engages a designer (rather than buying an off the shelf product) the procurement process should consider safety performance, standards, and any certification requirements.

Manufacturers

Manufacturers have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the plant is manufactured to be without risks to workers throughout the lifecycle of the plant. Manufacturers must also arrange for any calculations, analysis, testing or examination that may be necessary for the plant. A manufacturer must provide relevant information to the suppliers, installers, maintainers, users and operators of plant, including:

- the purpose for which plant was designed or manufactured,
- the results of any calculations, analysis, testing or examination, and
- any conditions necessary for the safe use of the plant.

This information is usually provided in the documentation provided with an item of plant, including any manual, operating instruction, safety data sheet and/or maintenance procedure. Manufactures are also required to maintain and update that safety information, for example if defects are identified during the life cycle of the item of plant.

Suppliers and importers

Importers of plant from outside Australia must take all reasonable steps to obtain information from the manufacturer and then pass this information on when supplying the plant. Effectively importers have similar duties to those of a manufacturer when importing plant from overseas. Imported plant must be inspected and, in some cases, tested.

Suppliers of Australian plant have the same responsibility as a manufacturer to provide relevant safety information. Suppliers of second-hand plant must ensure that any faults in the plant are identified. The supplier must provide a written notice outlining the condition of the plant, any faults identified and, if appropriate, that the plant should not be used until the fault is rectified.

Where the ACTHD undertakes a procurement for an item of plant from a manufacturer or supplier the procurement process should consider safety performance, standards, certification requirements, registration, training, and the information required for the safe commissioning and operation of the item of plant over its life cycle.

Installers

An installer of plant is required to ensure that:

- plant is erected or installed having regard to the manufacturer's instructions,
- access to and egress from plant complies with relevant standards (suggested 600 mm to 1000 mm, for safe access to the plant),
- plant is stable during installation,
- the interaction of plant with people, work processes and other plant is considered (for example, controlled through restricted access, guarding or insulation and that there is no hazardous noise),
- environmental factors affecting installation and use (for example, wet conditions) are considered, and
- other duty holders are advised of any new risks identified during the installation of the plant.

Some plant requires a formal commissioning process that involves performing adjustments, tests, and inspections to ensure the plant is in full working order and operating at its design specifications before the plant is used.

Risk management

Managers and workers are responsible for ensuring that plant in their control is safe and that:

- workers and other persons are not exposed to WHS risks from the use of plant,
- plant is maintained correctly,
- the handling, storage and transport of plant is safe,
- prevent unauthorised alterations to, or interference with, plant, and
- plant is only used for the purpose for which it was designed unless the proposed use does not increase the WHS risk.

The risk management procedures detailed in section 3 applies to plant. The ACTHD must undertake a written risk assessment of each type or class of plant. Where items of plant are not sufficiently similar to use a generic risk assessment, a separate risk assessment must be undertaken. The starting point for an effective risk assessment must be the information provided by the manufacturer, supplier, and installer.

The ACTPS Drug and Alcohol Policy provides practical guidance about dealing with work performance, conduct and WHS issues associated with alcohol or other drug use, including the risk associated with operating vehicles and plant.

Applying a risk management approach to plant includes the proper consideration of the risk in any decision to procure an item of plant. In some cases, managers may need to purchase

an item of plant without completing a detailed risk assessment form. However, the manager must still identify any hazards associated with the use of the plant being considered for purchase, consult with workers and implement risk controls. It is important to remember that the value of the purchase does not equate to the risk involved. The hazard checklist at Attachment B of the Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2022 can be printed and used for this purpose.

Managers and workers must manage the WHS risks associated with plant by:

- consulting with manufacturers, suppliers and installers of an item of plant (depending on the procurement process followed),
- undertaking a risk assessment of the plant (either generic or individual risk assessments),
- considering the risks involved in mobile plant and establishing traffic management plans for locations that have mobile plant and vehicles,
- considering the fall risks that might arise from using plant and equipment,
- implementing safe operating procedures for an item of plant that has risks in its operation,
- controlling access to plant only to authorised/licenced users,
- training workers to use an item of plant, including:
  - the correct use of guarding and other control measures,
  - how to safely access and operate the plant,
  - how to carry out inspections, shut-down the plant, and undertake cleaning, repair, and maintenance,
  - rights of way, clearances, and no-go areas for mobile plant
  - emergency procedures,
- providing effective supervision of workers using plant,
- displaying emergency procedures on or near an item of plant, if required,
- establishing written pre-start checks the plant, if required,
- establishing a program of safety inspections for an item of plant, if required (Note: A monthly vehicle safety inspection checklist should be completed for each pool vehicle),
- including each item of plant that requires inspection and maintenance in a register (the register must include the information specified in WHS Regulation 228 for registered plant),
- ensuring that plant is safely maintained:
  - by a competent person,
  - in accordance with the manufacturer's or supplier's instructions and the WHS Regulation,
- retaining records of registered plant until the item is relinquished, and
- immediately removing any damaged plant from service (using isolation tags, where appropriate).

Plant shutdown and isolation

In some cases, an item of plant (such as a lift or electrical equipment) requires a formal shutdown and isolation procedure. The risk assessment for the item of plant will determine

if this is required. The isolation/shutdown procedures must be included in the standard operating procedures.

Where an item of plant is powered by electricity, the electrical safety isolation procedures must be followed (Section 24).

The general procedures for shutting down plant include:

- warning other workers who may be affected by the shutdown,
- placing the energy control mechanisms in the safe or off position,
- releasing any stored energy (for example, hydraulic systems, air or gas pressure),
- ensuring that the plant is isolated from other hazards, and
- placing a lockout and tag-out device on each energy control point.

Danger and isolation procedures

Damaged or defective plant and equipment must be removed from service and either permanently disabled or tagged out of service (using isolation tags). Out of service or caution tags are used to identify equipment that is not safe to use or fit for purpose and has not been permanently disabled.

The same danger and isolation procedures that are used for electrical installations should be applied to damaged or defective plant. Damaged plant and equipment that is to be repaired and returned to service must be inspected and repaired by a competent person. The competent person must certify that the item of plant is safe before it is returned to service.

Where a damaged or defective item of plant and equipment is to be disposed of the decommissioning procedures must be followed.

Registration and licencing

Workers who operate some types of plant require a high-risk work licence from WorkSafe ACT (or a state or territory WHS Regulator). Refer to Schedule3 of the WHS Regulation - High risk work licences and classes of high-risk work.

Some types of high-risk plant must be registered with WorkSafe ACT, as listed in Schedule 5 of the WHS Regulation, including:

- lifts, and
- certain classes of pressure vessels (larger vessels that are classified as hazards category A, B, C or D according to the AS 4343:2014 – Pressure equipment – hazard levels.

Some items of plant (such as lifts) must have their designs registered with a state or territory WHS regulator).

Boilers and pressure vessels must also comply with the *Boilers and Pressure Vessels Regulation 1954*, including the annual inspection requirements.

Vehicles operated by ACTHD must be registered and drivers licenced in accordance with the relevant ACT road transport laws.

Managers must ensure that registration and licence records are maintained. Workers must provide evidence of a current driver's licence before using a vehicle and report any loss of licence or any conditions imposed on a driver's licence to their manager, if using a vehicle is part of the worker's job requirement.

Decommissioning

ACTHD must identify any hazards inherent in the process of decommissioning and dismantling the plant (for example, exposure to hazardous chemicals). The plant should be dismantled in accordance with the designer's and manufacturer's instructions. The ACTHD may need to engage a competent person to manage the decommissioning process.

The decommissioning arrangements for an item of plant must also follow the finance instructions for the disposal of an asset.

Disposing of plant may include reselling (in full or part) or scrapping (waste disposal and/or recycling). If the plant is to be scrapped, ACTHD must ensure that the item of plant is appropriately labelled and consult waste disposal authorities. If the plant is to be resold, ACTHD will take on the duties of a person that supplies plant and must:

- ensure that the plant is safe to load, transport, unload and store
- provide any information relating to the plant design, registration, installation, operation and/or maintenance.

The WHS Requirements for Plant and Equipment Procedure provides more information.

Section 26 – Fall prevention

A fall means a fall by a person from one level to another. Falls are a major cause of workplace death and injury in Australian workplaces. A risk of a fall means a circumstance that exposes a worker, or other person while at or in the vicinity of a workplace, to a risk of a fall that is reasonably likely to cause injury to the worker or other person.

The risk management procedures detailed in Section 3 – Risk Management apply to fall prevention. The specific risk controls required by Part 4.4 of the WHS Regulation and the Work Health and Safety (Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces) Code of Practice Approval 2020 must be applied in ACTHD controlled workplaces. Managers and workers with responsibility for managing fall risks (including undertaking facilities management work) should read the code of practice.

Information from work injury reports can also assist in managing fall risks.

The risk of a fall can arise during:

- construction and maintenance work undertaken by contractors,
- the use of storage facilities and load shifting equipment,
- facility management work undertaken by employees,
- field operations away from ACTHD controlled workplaces,
- the operation or use of vehicles, and

- activities that create slip, trip and fall hazards in ACTHD controlled workplaces.

Managers and workers must manage the WHS risks associated with fall risks, including circumstances in which a worker or other person (such as a member of the public) is:

- in or on a structure that is at an elevated level,
- in or on plant that is being used to gain access to an elevated level,
- in the vicinity of an opening through which a person could fall,
- in the vicinity of an edge over which a person could fall,
- on or in the vicinity of a surface through which a person could fall, and
- on or near the vicinity of a slippery, sloping, or unstable surface.

Managers in ACTHD controlled workplaces must consider fall risks in their monitoring of the workplace and regular workplace safety inspections (refer to section 5) and in the selection and operation of plant and equipment (refer to section 25), including:

- the suitability of ladders for workers to use moving from one level to another,
- the use of portable ladders,
- the stability, fragility, or brittleness of surfaces,
- the potential to slip, for example where surfaces are wet, polished, or glazed,
- the safe movement of people where surfaces change,
- the strength or capability of surfaces and structures to support loads,
- the slope of work surfaces, for example, where they exceed seven degrees,
- where levels change and workers may be exposed to a fall from one level to another,
- the stability of temporary or permanent structures,
- the evenness and stability of the ground,
- whether the working area is crowded or cluttered,
- the entry and exit from the working area,
- protection for open edges of floors, working platforms, walkways, walls, or roof,
- the presence of holes, openings, or excavations - which will require guarding, and
- places where hand grip may be lost.

In some situations, advice may be needed from technical specialists, such as structural engineers, to check the stability of structures or load bearing capacity. Risk assessments are required for plant and equipment.

Further information is available at:

- AS/NZS 1657:2018 – Fixed platforms, walkways, stairways and ladders - Design, construction and installation, and
- Managing the Risk of Falls Information Sheet.pdf.

Section 27 – Confined spaces

The ACTHD has control of identified confined spaces in its premises. Managers and workers with responsibility for managing confined spaces (including undertaking facilities management work) should read the Work Health and Safety (Confined Spaces) Code of Practice Approval 2022.

What is a confined space?

A confined space is defined by section 5 of the WHS Regulation. To be classified as a confined space, the space must be:

- an enclosed or partially enclosed space, and
- not designed or intended primarily to be occupied by a person, and
- at normal atmospheric pressure, or designed to be normal atmospheric pressure, while any person is in the space, and
- likely to present a risk to the health and safety of a worker who enters the space, because the space:
  - has an atmosphere that does not have a safe oxygen level, or
  - has contaminants, including airborne gases, vapours, and dusts, that may cause injury from fire or explosion, or
  - has harmful concentrations of any airborne contaminants, or
  - has a risk of engulfment.

Confined spaces include tanks, pits, pipes, ducts, flues, chimneys, containers, pressure vessels, underground sewers, wet or dry wells, shafts, trenches, tunnels or other similar enclosed or partially enclosed structures. They do not usually include locations such as plant rooms. While plant rooms may not be confined spaces, they may have hazards that require control, for example using access control.

If there is a question about whether or not a space is or is not a confined space the workplace should refer to the WHS Regulations and the Work Health and Safety (Confined Spaces) Code of Practice Approval 2022.

Note: Temporary control measures, such as providing temporary ventilation or achieving a satisfactory pre-entry gas test, will not cause a confined space to be declassified. For a confined space to be declassified as a non-confined space, it needs to have undergone sufficient changes in structure and use to eliminate all inherent hazards that define a confined space.

Risk management

Confined spaces pose dangers because they are usually not designed to be areas where people work. Confined spaces often have poor ventilation which allows hazardous atmospheres to quickly develop, especially if the space is small. The hazards are not always obvious and may change from one entry into the confined space to the next.

The risks of working in confined spaces include:

- loss of consciousness, impairment, injury or death due to the immediate effects of airborne contaminants,
- fire or explosion from the ignition of flammable contaminants,
- difficulty rescuing and treating an injured or unconscious person, and
- asphyxiation resulting from oxygen deficiency or immersion in a free-flowing material, such as grain, sand, fertiliser, water, or other liquids.

The work that is undertaken in confined spaces can also include other hazards, such as manual handling, extreme temperatures, and exposure to electricity. The management of the risk of working in confined spaces requires the effective management of each hazard.

The management of the risk to a worker who is required to enter a confined space includes:

- having a competent person undertake a risk assessment of a confined space entry and implementing the required risk controls (including risk controls for any hazard that might be present in the space - such as electricity and equipment with stored energy),
- consulting with workers and other duty holders (such as contractors or entities),
- purging and ventilating the space, as required,
- atmospheric testing,
- establishing communication arrangements,
- establishing a safe system of work (standard operating procedures or a SWMS) and ensuring that workers are trained in those procedures,
- providing appropriate PPE,
- having a trained standby person, with rescue equipment, monitor the work,
- establishing first aid, emergency, and recovery procedures,
- establishing signs and barricades, and
- obtaining a confined space entry permit and closing it off after the work is complete.

Specific competency-based training is required for workers to assess the risk of confined spaces and issue entry permits.

Where contractors are engaged to undertake work a competent person employed by the contractor can issue the confined space entry permit. Where ACTHD employees undertake a confined space entry, a competent (trained) employee in ACTHD should issue the permit or engage a competent person to do so. Managers can seek advice from the People Strategy and Culture on confined space risk management requirements.

Section 28 – Construction safety requirements

Construction work is defined in the WHS Regulation as any work carried out in connection with the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, and refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure. It includes work to install information technology infrastructure and cabling.

A construction project is a project that involves construction work where the total cost of the construction work is $250,000 or more. The whole project cost needs to be considered, including project management and design costs, in determining whether or not a project is a construction project in accordance with WHS Regulation 291. A construction project requires that a principal contractor meets specific responsibilities, including:

- developing and implementing a WHS management plan for the project, which meets the requirements of section 20 of the WHS Act,
- ensuring that workers are inducted into the WHS management plan and the workplace,
- that safe work method statements (SWMS) are in place for any high-risk construction work, including obtaining a copy of the SWMS before work commences, and
- that workers have completed relevant training, including general construction induction, asbestos awareness, and silica awareness, where applicable.

Where ACTHD does not engage a contractor to fulfil the role of the principal contractor ACTHD must undertake this role. ACTHD should not undertake the role of a principal contractor unless the specific circumstances prevent the engagement of a principal contractor. The Executive Group Manager for the business unit must approve the decision for the directorate to fulfil the role of a principal contractor. Consultation may be required with the ACT Insurance Agency in considering the risks involved.

Construction work initiated by ACTHD may involve multiple duty holders (ACTHD, other directorates, health service providers and contracted companies and businesses) working together to deliver the project. These relationships will be created and supported by different instruments, such as leases, agreements, memoranda of understanding (MOU) and contracts.

The WHS Act makes specific provisions for the different duty holders to consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities to achieve WHS outcomes. This duty is independent of any requirements included in a contract or MOU. The WHS Act requires:

- where more than one agency has a duty for the same matter, each agency retains responsibility for their duty in relation to the matter and must discharge the duty to the extent to which the person can influence and control the matter (WHS Act, section 16), and
- that each agency with the duty must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and co-ordinate activities with all other entities that have a WHS duty in relation to the same matter (WHS Act, section 48).

High risk construction work must be undertaken in accordance with a SWMS. This requirement applies to contractors and to work undertaken by ACTHD employees. High risk construction work is listed in WHS Regulation 291 and includes work:

- involving the risk of fall of more than 2 metres,
- carried out on a telecommunication tower,
- involving the disturbance of asbestos,
- carried out in an area that may have a flammable or contaminated atmosphere,
- carried out in or near a confined space,

- carried out on or near pressurised gas mains or piping, chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines, or energised electrical installations or services,
- carried our near powered mobile plant,
- involving structural alterations or repairs that require support to prevent collapse, and
- carried out in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated dept of more than 1.5 metres or a tunnel.

The Contractor Safety Management Procedure provides more information about managing the risks associated with engaging contractors, including examples.

More information is available in the:

- Work Health and Safety (Safe Design of Structures Code of Practice) Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Construction Work Code of Practice) Approval 2018.

Section 29 – First aid

First aid requirements will vary from one workplace to another, depending on the nature of the work, the type of hazards, the workplace size and location, as well as the number of people at the workplace. The terms used in this section are:

- First aid - is the immediate treatment or care given to a person suffering from an injury or illness until more advanced care is provided or the person recovers.
- First aid officer - is a person who has successfully completed a nationally accredited training course or an equivalent level of training that has given them the competencies required to administer first aid.

Risk management of first aid

The Work Health and Safety (First Aid in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020 provides information on using a risk management approach to tailor first aid that suits the circumstances of the workplace, while also providing guidance on the number of first aid kits, their contents and the number of trained first aiders that are appropriate for some types of workplaces. The risk management approach detailed in the code of practice promotes consultation with workers and involves the following steps:

- identifying hazards that could result in work-related injury or illness, including the use of hazardous chemicals, plant, hazardous processes,
- assessing the type, severity and likelihood of injuries and illness,
- providing the appropriate first aid equipment, facilities and training, and
- reviewing the first aid requirements on a regular basis or as circumstances change.

The risk management procedures (refer to section 3) can be used to undertake a risk assessment of the first aid requirement for each workplace. The code of practice recommends classifying workplaces as either high risk (such as laboratories) or low risk (such as offices) and providing first aiders and first aid kits and other first aid equipment accordingly. ACTHD's risk assessment process must also consider the:

- distance of the workplace from ambulance services, hospital, and medical centres,
- size and layout of the workplace,
- arrangement of work (multiple shifts or overtime),
- needs of any workers who have a disability or health risk that might require first aid support (such as anaphylaxis), and
- presence of visitors at the workplace.

The recommended resource allocations are:

- Low risk workplaces - one first aider and first aid kit for every 50 workers.
- High risk workplaces - one first aider and first aid kit for every 25 workers.

First aid equipment and facilities are located at convenient points and in areas where there is a higher risk of an injury or illness occurring. The first aid kits provide basic equipment for administering first aid for injuries including:

- cuts, scratches, punctures, grazes, and splinters,
- muscular sprains and strains,
- minor burns,
- amputations and/or major bleeding wounds,
- broken bones,
- eye injuries,
- providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and
- shock.

The contents of first aid kits are based on the risk assessment. For example, there may be higher risk of eye injuries and a need for additional eye pads in a workplace where:

- chemical liquids or powders are handled in open containers,
- spraying or hosing operations are carried out,
- there is any possibility of flying particles causing eye injuries,
- there is a risk of splashing or spraying of infectious materials, and
- welding, cutting, or machining operations are carried out.

Additional equipment may be needed for serious burns and remote workplaces or where there is a risk of injuries as a result of occupational violence.

A recommended list of the contents for a first aid kit is available in the Work Health and Safety (First Aid in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020.

Where a small number of ACTHD workers are co-located with another, larger entity, that other entity may provide the first aid support in that workplace. These arrangements should be made in accordance with the communication, consultation, and co-operation requirements (Refer to section 2). The arrangements should be confirmed in writing.

A first aid kit must be carried in any vehicle operated or leased/hired for ACTHD work.

Workers can find information about the first aid resources that are available in the workplace from:

- workplace safety induction information,
- safety notice boards,
- safety signs,
- HealthHQ,
- the manager, and
- a health and safety representative.

Other first aid equipment

Automated external defibrillator

An automated external defibrillator (AED) can reduce the risk of fatality from cardiac arrest. It is a useful addition for workplaces where large numbers of people are present or where there is a significant risk of electric shock. AEDs are designed to be used by trained or untrained persons.

AEDs are located in or close to, each ACTHD workplace. AEDs should be positioned in area that is clearly visible, accessible, and not exposed to extreme temperatures.

Safety signs should be posted to show the location of the AED and must be maintained according to the manufacturer's specifications. The level of charge should be regularly checked to ensure that the unit is available for immediate use. This check will be undertaken during workplace safety inspections (refer to section 5).

Information about the location of AEDs is included in the WHS induction material provided to new workers.

Eye wash and showers

Eye wash and shower equipment is required where there is a risk of eye injuries, exposure to chemicals, ionising radiation, biological material, or burns. The equipment can be permanently fixed or portable, depending on the workplace. Immediate access should be provided to shower equipment in workplaces where there is a risk of:

- exposure to hazardous chemicals or ionising radiation resulting in skin absorption or contamination from infectious substances, and
- serious burns to a large area of the face or body (including chemical or electrical burns or burns that are deep, in sensitive areas, or greater than the size of a 20-cent piece).

Shower facilities can consist of:

- an appropriate deluge facility and/or eye wash facility (recommended for workshops and locations with hazardous chemicals),
- a permanently rigged hand-held shower hose,
- a portable plastic or rubber shower hose that is designed to be easily attached to a tap spout for small, relatively low risk workplaces, where a fixed deluge facility would not be

reasonably practicable, but the risk of serious burns is still foreseeable (for example, where there is a food fryer), and
- a portable, self-contained eye wash or shower unit, which have their own flushing fluid, which needs to be refilled or replaced after use.

Eyewash stations and showers must be specified, installed, and managed in accordance with AS 4775-2007: Emergency eyewash and shower equipment, including:

- being positioned in accessible locations that require no more than 10 seconds to reach (or immediately beside the location where a strong acid or caustic substance is used),
- having the path of travel free of obstructions that may inhibit access,
- ensuring that workers are training in the use of the equipment,
- activating the equipment weekly to ensure that it is working, and
- an annual inspection by a competent person to ensure that it complies with AS 4775-2007.

The Eyewash Station and Emergency Shower Procedure provides more information.

Maintaining first aid equipment

The workplace must:

- ensure that the condition of first aid kits and resources is suitable, including:
  - check the battery status and pads on an AED,
  - monitor access to the first aid kit and ensure any items used are replaced as soon as practicable after use (usually by a first aider),
  - undertake regular checks (after each use or, if the kit is not used, at least once every 12 months) to ensure the kit contains a complete set of the required items. An inventory list in the kit should be signed and dated after each check; (This task can be undertaken by a contractor),
  - ensure that items are in good working order, have not deteriorated, are within their expiry dates, and that sterile products are sealed and have not been tampered with, and
  - display well-recognised, standardised first aid signs to assist in easily locating first aid equipment and facilities[31]
- ensure workers are aware of the location of first aid resources and communication systems,
- ensure that workplace inductions include relevant first aid information, and
- ensure that emergency showers and eyewash stations are tested regularly (run for sufficient time for the water to run clear) and inspected by a competent person annually.

31 Further information on the design and use of signs is available in AS 1319: – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment.

First aid rooms

A first aid room should be established at the workplace if the risk assessment indicates that it would be difficult to administer appropriate first aid unless a first aid room is provided.

For example, workers who carry out work where there is a higher risk of serious injury or illness occurring that would require treatment by an emergency service, may benefit from having access to a dedicated first aid room.

Where wellbeing rooms are provided for use by workers a first aid kit may be provided in the room and first aid treatment provided. However, these rooms will not usually comply with the mandatory inclusions for first aid rooms.

First aid training and procedures

First aiders must hold current nationally recognised statement/s of attainment issued by a RTO for the relevant nationally endorsed first aid unit/s of competency:

- Provide First Aid - provides competencies required to recognise and respond to common life-threatening injuries or illnesses, including life-support using cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and to manage the casualty and incident until the arrival of medical or other assistance. In low-risk workplaces, first aiders are sufficiently trained if they can perform CPR and treat minor illnesses and injuries.
- Provide Advanced First Aid and Provide Advanced First Aid Response - provides additional competencies required to apply advanced first aid procedures. This type of training is suitable for some high-risk workplaces.
- Manage First Aid Services and Resources - provides competencies required to apply advanced first aid procedures and to manage a first aid room.
- Provide First Aid in Remote Situations - provides the competencies required to administer first aid in a remote and/or isolated situation, including preparing for aero-medical evacuation. This type of training is suitable for high-risk workplaces that are likely to have a major delay in accessing emergency services.

Information about first aid training is available from the learning and development page on the HealthHQ. Records of the certificates of workplace first aiders will be maintained by the People Strategy and Culture Branch.

First aid officers are required to:

- understand the work areas that have been allocated to each first aider,
- complete the required procedures to ensure they receive appropriate training, including annual refresher CPR training, and that it is recorded,
- participate in the arrangements for ensuring that workers receive appropriate information, instruction, and training in relation to first aid,
- seek information when a worker commences work, about any first aid needs that may require specific treatment in a medical emergency, such as severe allergies (Note: information about a worker's health must be kept confidential and only provided to first aiders with the worker's consent),

- complete and maintain a first aid treatment record (link to be added) each time first aid treatment is provided (Information about a worker's health must be kept confidential and only provided with the worker's consent),
- implement standard precautions to avoid exposure to blood and bodily substances – refer to the Work Health and Safety (First Aid in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2015 - Appendix B,
- explain to a worker and managers what to do when a worker or other person is too injured or ill to stay at work, for example if they require assistance with transport to a medical service, home or somewhere else where they can rest and recover, and
- understand how to access counselling services after a serious workplace incident (refer to section 16).

First aid officers, when delivering first aid to an injured worker or other person at an ACTHD controlled workplace, are acting in their role as an employee on behalf of ACTHD.

The ACTPS First Aid in the Workplace Policy Statement provides information about the legal liability of first aid officers and ambulance costs.

Section 30 – Emergency procedures

ACTHD must establish workplace emergency arrangements, including emergency plans and procedures that clearly explain how to respond in each type of emergency that might occur at the workplace. The ACTHD emergency procedures are required to comply with the WHS Regulation, the Work Health and Safety (Managing the Work Environment and Facilities) Code of Practice Approval 2020. The ACTPS Fire Safety and Emergency Planning Policy Statement provides that all directorates must comply with AS 3745:2010 – Planning for Emergencies in Facilities. Laboratory environments should also comply with the emergency provisions detailed in AS/NZS 2243:2005 Safety in Laboratories.

ACTHD is required to establish emergency procedures and an emergency plan for each workplace controlled by ACTHD.

Where ACTHD workers are hosted in premises managed by other agencies (including Canberra Health Services), the emergency procedures and first aid arrangements of that agency will apply to ACTHD workers at that location. These arrangements should be made in accordance with the communication, consultation, and co-operation requirements.

Workplace emergency planning committee

The Workplace Emergency Planning Committee (WEPC) is responsible for the development, implementation, and maintenance of ACTHD workplace emergency plans, emergency response procedures and related training. The WEPC will work in collaboration with facility owners and their representatives, ACT Property Group, managers, occupiers, and workers.

The WEPC does not have responsibility for the ACT Health Emergency Plan or ACTHD business continuity management plans.

Workplace emergency plans

The workplace emergency plans provide information about the:

- roles and responsibilities for specific actions in an emergency, for example, the role of wardens,
- lines of communication between the emergency control organisation and the people at the workplace,
- activation of alarms and alerting staff and other people at the workplace,
- procedures for the safety of all people who may be at the workplace in an emergency, including visitors, and other workers,
- procedures for workers or other persons who will require special assistance to evacuate,
- specific procedures for critical functions such as a power shut-off,
- identification of safe places,
- potential traffic restrictions,
- emergency phone numbers, including out-of-hours contact numbers,
- access for emergency services (such as ambulances) and their ability to get close to the work area,
- use and maintenance of equipment required to deal with specific types of emergencies (for example, spill kits, fire extinguishers, early warning systems such as fixed gas monitors or smoke detectors, and automatic response systems such as sprinklers), and
- review of procedures and training.

ACTHD controlled workplaces must display an evacuation plan that illustrates the location of fire protection equipment, emergency exits, assembly points and should also display the location of fixed first aid equipment, including AEDs.

The workplace emergency plans are available on the Emergency Management Intranet page on HealthHQ.

ACTHD Security Policies also provide relevant information, including security reporting requirements and procedures (such as duress alarm procedures).

The emergency procedures must be tested in accordance with the emergency plan in which they are contained, including practicing regular evacuation drills (at least every twelve months). Wardens will usually undertake training every 6 months.

Workers must be instructed and trained in the procedures within the timeframes specified in the workplace emergency plan for each workplace and a record maintained. This information will be provided as part of the workplace safety induction.

In addition, emergency procedures for specific hazardous work (for example work in confined spaces) are covered in hazard and task specific documents, including:

- standard operating procedures, and
- confined space entry permits.

Workplaces in some rural locations (such as the Miowera Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm) require Bush Fire Operational Plans and Bushfire Action Plans.

Section 31 – WHS performance and improvement

ACTHD and senior managers will monitor WHS performance and objectives to address any gaps and ensure that risks are managed, and improvements implemented.

Performance indictors

ACTHD will use a range of performance indicators, including outcome measures (such as injury rates) and positive performance indicators (PPIs), which:

- focus on how successfully ACTHD is performing, by monitoring the processes which are expected to produce good WHS outcomes, and
- can be used to measure relevant WHS systems, processes, management and compliance with WHS practices.

The WHS information sources include:

- work injury reports,
- hazard/risk reports,
- risk registers,
- workplace safety inspections,
- safety investigations,
- risk assessments,
- WorkSafe ACT inspections,
- safety audits,
- training and inductions completed,
- progress against corrective actions and plans, and
- recorded safety observations.

In order to be useful and effective, selected performance indictors should be:

- an accurate measure of the performance area of interest,
- able to be measured objectively,
- easily understood,
- relatively simple and cost-effective to collect,
- able to be reproduced consistently over time, and
- a timely measure of performance.

Examples of performance indicators include:

- incident rates (per 1000 full time equivalent employees),
- serious injury rates (injuries with more than five days incapacity),
- workplace safety inspection frequency,
- incidence of corrective actions that are not resolved in the time allocated, at a point in time,
- number of risk assessments undertaken/reviewed per quarter, and

- WHS training completed as a proportion of the overall requirement (for example 90% of workers have completed the WHS Induction program).

More information about the use of PPIs is available from the Safe Work Australia publication Guidance on the use of positive performance indicators. WHS Performance Management Plans provide more information.

WHS audits

The ACTPS has developed a WHS Audit and Assurance Framework (the Framework) to meet its self-insurance licence conditions under the SRC Act. The Framework requires ACTHD to develop and implement a WHSMS audit program that:

- is authorised by the Director-General,
- defines the planned audits to be undertaken in the three-year audit cycle,
- details the scope of the program, having regard to the activities for which the ACT Government/directorate is responsible,
- is based on the scope (include an adequate sample of the premises and/or service locations), level of risk and nature of service provided,
- includes an external audit within the audit cycle, and
- considers the business requirements and workforce risks.

The Chief Minister, Treasurer and Economic Development (CMTEDD) will undertake audits of specific areas of WHS performance as part of the implementation the Framework. Comcare may also undertakes WHS audits as part of the self-insurance licence. ACTHD will incorporate the outcomes of these audits into its overall audit program and corrective actions.

ACTHD will develop an WHS audit program that includes, as a minimum, audits of:

- a specific risk or operational activity, or
- the WHSMS as a whole (using the National Audit Tool) every three years.

Audits must be undertaken by competent people (Appendix 1).

The WHS Audit and Assessment Procedure provides more information.

WHS annual review

ACTHD will undertake an annual review of the WHSMS to:

- ensure the continued suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness of the WHSMS in achieving its intended outcomes,
- meet the objectives of the WHS Policy,
- implement relevant ACTPS and ACTHD strategies and plans,
- access improvement opportunities, including the integration of WHS into other business processes,
- identify the need for changes in the WHSMS, and
- ensure that resource and capability requirements are met.

The review will take into account:

- the views of officers[32] and the Executive Board,
- the status of actions from previous reviews,
- changes in external factors, such as legislation and risks,
- changes in internal factors, such as business operations and risks,
- the achievement of WHS policy objectives,
- WHS performance reports, including outcome measures and positive performance indicators,
- information from incident trends, corrective actions, monitoring systems, compliance requirements, audit results, consultation processes, capability assessments and risk assessments,
- the adequacy of the resources for managing the system,
- feedback from stakeholders, including the Work Safety Group (CMTEDD), HSRs and WHS Committees, and
- opportunities for improvement and integration.

32 Refer to the definitions.

Appendix 1 – Terms and definitions

Term	Definition
A person conducting a business or undertaking	Means a person conducting a business or undertaking, in accordance with section 5 of the WHS Act: (1) For the purposes of this Act, a person conducts a business or undertaking: (a) whether the person conducts the business or undertaking alone or with others; and (b) whether or not the business or undertaking is conducted for profit or gain. (2) A business or undertaking conducted by a person includes a business or undertaking conducted by a partnership or an unincorporated association. (3) If a business or undertaking is conducted by a partnership (other than an incorporated partnership), a reference in this Act to a person conducting the business or undertaking is to be read as a reference to each partner in the partnership. (4) A person does not conduct a business or undertaking to the extent that the person is engaged solely as a worker in, or as an officer of, that business or undertaking. (5) A regulation may specify the circumstances in which a person may be taken not to be a person who conducts a business or undertaking for the purposes of this Act or any provision of this Act. (6) A volunteer association does not conduct a business or undertaking for the purposes of this Act. (7) In this section, volunteer association means a group of volunteers working together for 1 or more community purposes where none of the volunteers, whether alone or jointly with any other volunteers, employs any person to carry out work for the volunteer association.
Agency	Means a person conducting a business or undertaking.
Asbestos	Means the asbestiform varieties of mineral silicates belonging to the serpentine or amphibole groups of rock forming minerals and is a human carcinogen. Asbestos containing material means any material or thing that, as part of its design, contains asbestos.
Biological hazards	Are organic substances that pose a threat to the health of humans and other living organisms. They include pathogenic micro-organisms, viruses, toxins, spores, fungi and bio-active substances. Biological hazards can also be considered to include biological vectors or transmitters of disease [for example blood, or animals].
Competent person	The WHS Regulation defines a competent person as: • for electrical work on energised electrical equipment or energised electrical installations (other than testing mentioned in section 150 (Inspection and testing of electrical equipment) and section 165 (Testing of residual current devices) — a licensed electrical worker; and • for design verification under WHS regulation 252—a person who has the skills, qualifications, competence and experience to design the plant or verify the design; and • for any other case—a person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience the knowledge and skills to carry out the task.

Term	Definition
Construction work	Any work carried out in connection with the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, and refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure.[33.]
First aid	Is the immediate treatment or care given to a person suffering from an injury or illness until more advanced care is provided or the person recovers.
First aid officer	Is a person who has successfully completed a nationally accredited training course or an equivalent level of training that has given them the competencies required to administer first aid.
Hazard	Means a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include: moving machinery, a moving vehicle, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, psychological hazards such as bullying or violence at the workplace.
Hazardous chemical	Any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria of one or more GHS hazard classes, including a classification in Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulation.
Hazardous manual task	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, and/or • exposure to vibration.
Hierarchy of controls	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, using higher order, more effective risk controls before considering lower order risk controls.
Job safety analysis	A documented process to identify the dangers of specific job tasks that: • breaks down the steps of performing a job, • identifies the hazards at each step, and • creates risk controls for performing that specific task.
Laboratory	Any building or part of a building used, or intended to be used, for scientific or technical work, including research, quality control, testing, teaching or analysis. Such work may involve the use of chemicals (including dangerous goods and hazardous chemicals), pathogens, and radiation, or processes including electrical or mechanical work. The laboratory includes such support areas as instrument and preparation areas, laboratory stores and any offices attached or adjacent to the laboratory. (Source AS/NZS 2243.1:2021)
Occupational violence incident	Is any incident where a person is abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances arising out of, or in the course of their work. Occupational violence is also a risk for workers who witness violence.

33 Refer to the definition of a structure

Term	Definition
Officer	Officer means a) an officer within the meaning of the Corporations Act, section 9, other than a partner in a partnership b) an officer of the Territory within the meaning of WHS Act Section 247 (i.e. A person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking of the Territory is taken to be an officer of the Territory for the purposes of this Act), or c) an officer of a public authority within the meaning of WHS Act Section 252 (i.e. A person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of the business or undertaking of a public authority is taken to be an officer of the public authority for the purposes of this Act.)
Plant	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, vessels, and power tools.
Psychosocial hazards	Psychosocial hazards or factors are anything in the design or management of work that increases the risk of work-related stress. A stress response is the physical, menta,l and emotional reactions that occur when a worker perceives the demands of their work exceed their ability or resources to cope. Work-related stress if prolonged and/or severe can cause both psychological and physical injury. Stress itself does not constitute a physical or psychological injury. Workers are likely to be exposed to a combination of psychosocial hazards; some may always be present, while others only occasionally.
Reasonably practicable	In the WHS Act, at section 18, reasonably practicable, in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including: (a) the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring (b) the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk (c) what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about: (i) the hazard or the risk (ii) ways of eliminating or minimising the risk (d) the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and (e) after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.
Risk	Is the possibility that harm (death, injury, or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.
Standard operating procedure	A documented process to undertake a task, use a hazardous chemical or operate an item of plant. Also sometimes referred to as a safe operating procedure. These terms may be used interchangeably in industry practice.

Term	Definition
Safe work method statement	A documented process to identify the dangers of specified high risk construction work that lists the hazards and risks for activity; identifies the workplace circumstances that may affect the way in which work will be done, including: • information about the design of the structure, the workplace and information, contained in a Safety Management Plan, • information on any essential services located on or near the workplace, • information about any notifiable work (to a WHS regulator), • safe work methods and plant to be used, and • the appropriate risk controls or combination of controls to be used.
Structure	Anything that is constructed, whether fixed or moveable, temporary, or permanent. A structure includes: • buildings, masts, towers, framework, pipelines, transport infrastructure and underground works (shafts or tunnels), for example noise reduction barriers on a freeway, communications masts or towers, electricity transmission towers and associated cables, flying cables and supports, guyed towers such as a ski-lift tower, • any component of a structure, and • part of a structure.
Work Health and Safety Incident	An unplanned event that results in, or has the potential to result in, injury, adverse health effects, damage, or other loss.
Worker	A person is a worker in accordance with the WHS Act, if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as: (a) an employee (b) a contractor or subcontractor (c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor (d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking (e) an outworker (f) an apprentice or trainee (g) a student gaining work experience (h) a volunteer, or (i) a person of a prescribed class.
Workplace	Is a place where work is carried out for an entity and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work. It includes: (a) a vehicle, vessel, aircraft, or other mobile structure, and (b) any waters and any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters.

Appendix 2 – Legislation

Acts

- *Dangerous Goods (Road Transport) Act 2009*
- *Dangerous Substances Act 2004*
- *Health Records (Privacy and Access) 1997*.
- *Information Privacy Act 2014*
- *Public Sector Management Act 1994*
- *Radiation Protection Act 2006*
- *Territory Records Act 2002*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

Regulations

- Radiation Protection Regulation 2007
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Codes of Practice

- Work Health and Safety (How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Work Health and Safety Consultation, Cooperation and Coordination Code of Practice) Approval 2023
- Work Health and Safety (Confined Spaces) Code of Practice Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Construction Work Code of Practice) Approval 2018
- Work Health and Safety (First Aid in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Hazardous Manual Tasks) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (How to Manage and Control Asbestos in the Workplace Code of Practice) Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (How to Safely Remove Asbestos Code of Practice) Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice) Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals Code of Practice) Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Managing Electrical Risks in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Managing Noise and Preventing Hearing Loss at Work) Code of Practice Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Managing Risks of Plant in the Workplace) Code of Practice Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice) Approval 2023

- Work Health and Safety (Managing the Risk of Falls at Workplaces) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Managing the Work Environment and Facilities) Code of Practice Approval 2020
- Work Health and Safety (Preparation of Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals) Code of Practice Approval 2022
- Work Health and Safety (Preventing and Responding to Bullying) Code of Practice 2012 (No 1)
- Work Health and Safety (Safe Design of Structures Code of Practice) Approval 2020.

Version Control

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	8 June 2020	First Version
1.1	11 September 2020	Update of Code of Practice links
2.1	16 February 2022	Review of the document, including links to WHS procedures
2.2	6 September 2023	Review of the document to include: • WHSMS audit recommendation • WHSMS review outcomes • links to the Contractor Safety Management Procedure • construction safety content • updated WHS code of practice links.
2.3	5 December 2023	Endorsed by Corporate Governance and Finance Committee