ASSEMBLE.

Workplace Health and Safety Guide

Your Safety Responsibilities

Workplace health and safety (WHS) is largely about common sense. ASSEMBLE asks that you cooperate with us and our clients (your employer) to make sure you work safely.

Both you and ASSEMBLE have a duty of care to ensure that when working you do not put yourself or anyone else at risk of harm or injury.

Both employers and employees share the responsibility in the workplace and this is legally enforced.

PPE and Inductions

All ASSEMBLE employees are required to wear mandatory personal protective equipment (PPE) as required for their work. Examples include safety boots, appropriate clothing, safety glasses, hard hat etc.

It is expected that ASSEMBLE clients will conduct a site/workplace induction with you before you commence any work duties.

You will also be informed of mandatory PPE.

Managing Risks and Hazards

ASSEMBLE is committed to managing work health and safety risks, so that the health and safety of workers and other people are not affected by an organisation's conduct.

A **hazard** is a situation that has the potential to harm a person, while a **risk** is the possibility that the harm (i.e. death, an injury or an illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.

Hazards in the workplace can arise from:

- inappropriate systems
- lack of risk assessments (job safety assessments)
- machinery, plant and equipment
- unsafe use of equipment
- people not following procedures correctly.

The top five workplace hazards are:

- chemical – poisons and dust
- physical – noise, radiation or vibration
- biological – parasites or viruses
- physiological – bullying, fatigue or violence
- mechanical/electrical – tools or electrical equipment.

Intro follows Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's four-step process for managing risks, as outlined below.

1. Identify Hazards

Some hazards may be more obvious than others because they are common and well known in a particular industry. Others may be more difficult to identify.

It is important to work closely with workers and look at every task in the workplace to help identify all potential hazards.

Workplace records on incidents, near misses, health monitoring and the results of inspections can also help identify hazards.

If someone has been injured during a particular task, then a hazard exists that could hurt someone else.

Workplace incidents need to be investigated to identify any hazards involved and to control the corresponding risks.

2. Assess the Risk

A risk assessment can help determine:

- the severity of a risk
- whether any existing control measures are effective
- what actions should be taken to control the risk
- how urgently those actions should be completed.

A risk assessment is mandatory for certain high risk activities such as entry into confined spaces, live electrical work and high risk construction work.

In other situations, some hazards and their associated risks are well known and have well established and accepted control measures.

In these situations, the second step of formally assessing the risk is not required.

If after identifying the hazard, you already know the risk and how to control it effectively, you may simply implement the control.

However, a risk assessment should be done when:

- there is uncertainty about how the hazard may result in an 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
- there are changes at the workplace that may impact on the effectiveness of control measure.

3. Control the Risks

This is the most important step in managing risks – eliminating the identified hazard so far as is reasonably practicable, or if that is not possible, minimising risks as far as reasonably practicable.

The ways of controlling risks can be ranked from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. This is called the hierarchy of control.

The WHS legislation requires the PCBU to work through the hierarchy of control when managing risks.

This means the PCBU must always aim to eliminate the hazard, which is the most effective control.

If elimination is not reasonably practicable, the PCBU must minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable by doing one or more of the following:

- substituting (wholly or partly) the hazard creating the risk with something that creates a lesser risk
- isolating the hazard from any person exposed to it
- implementing engineering controls.

If a risk still remains, that remaining risk must be further minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable, by implementing administrative controls or through the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Administrative controls are work methods or procedures that are designed to minimise exposure to a hazard (e.g. the use of signs to warn people of a hazard).

Examples of PPE include ear muffs, respirators, face masks and protective eyewear. It is important to remember that PPE limits exposure to the harmful effects of a hazard, but only if it is worn and used correctly.

Administrative controls and PPE should only be used:

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

4. Reviewing Risk Controls

Controlling health and safety risks is an ongoing process that needs to take into account any changes which occur at the workplace.

This is why procedures and risk controls must be reviewed regularly to ensure they are still effective.

The WHS Regulation requires a review of control measures in certain situations.

A review, and if necessary, a revision is required:

- when the control measure does not control the risk it was implemented to control
- before a change at the workplace which is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control
- if a new hazard or risk is identified
- if the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
- if a health and safety representative requests a review and they reasonably believe that a circumstance referred to above affects or may affect the health and safety of a member of the work group they represent.

If problems are found, go back through the risk management steps, review the relevant information and make further decisions about risk control.

Control measures for serious risks should be reviewed more frequently.

You **MUST** contact ASSEMBLE immediately if there is a hazard in your workplace.

Consultation Procedure

A safe workplace is more easily achieved when everyone involved in the work communicates with each other to identify hazards and risks, talks about work health and safety concerns, and works together to find solutions.

The ASSEMBLE team believes consultation is a two-way process and is committed to openly and honestly talking about WHS matters, listening to employees' concerns (and acting on them as required), seeking and sharing views and information and considering what our workers say before making a decision.

We are also committed to advising our workers of the outcome of consultation in a timely manner.

ASSEMBLE will consult with workers when:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks
- making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks
- making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers
- proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of your workers
- making decisions on health and safety procedures.

If workers are represented by a Health and Safety Representative (HSR), the consultation will involve that representative.

Where more than one person has a duty for the same WHS matter, each person 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.

Each person must also **consult, cooperate and coordinate** activities with all other persons who have a WHS duty in relation to the same matter, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Consultation

Consultation with other duty holders enables everyone associated with the work to have a shared understanding of what the risks are, which workers are affected, how risks will be controlled, and how duty holders will work together to plan and manage health and safety.

Cooperation

Cooperation means that, if you are approached by other duty holders wanting to consult with you on a WHS matter, you should respond to any reasonable requests and assist them in meeting their duties.

Coordination

Coordination means that duty holders work together so that each person can meet their duty of care. This includes making sure that the measures you each put in place work effectively together to control the risks.

Any quality, safety or environmental issues witnessed by any ASSEMBLE employees **MUST** be reported immediately to your contact at ASSEMBLE.

Accidents and Incidents

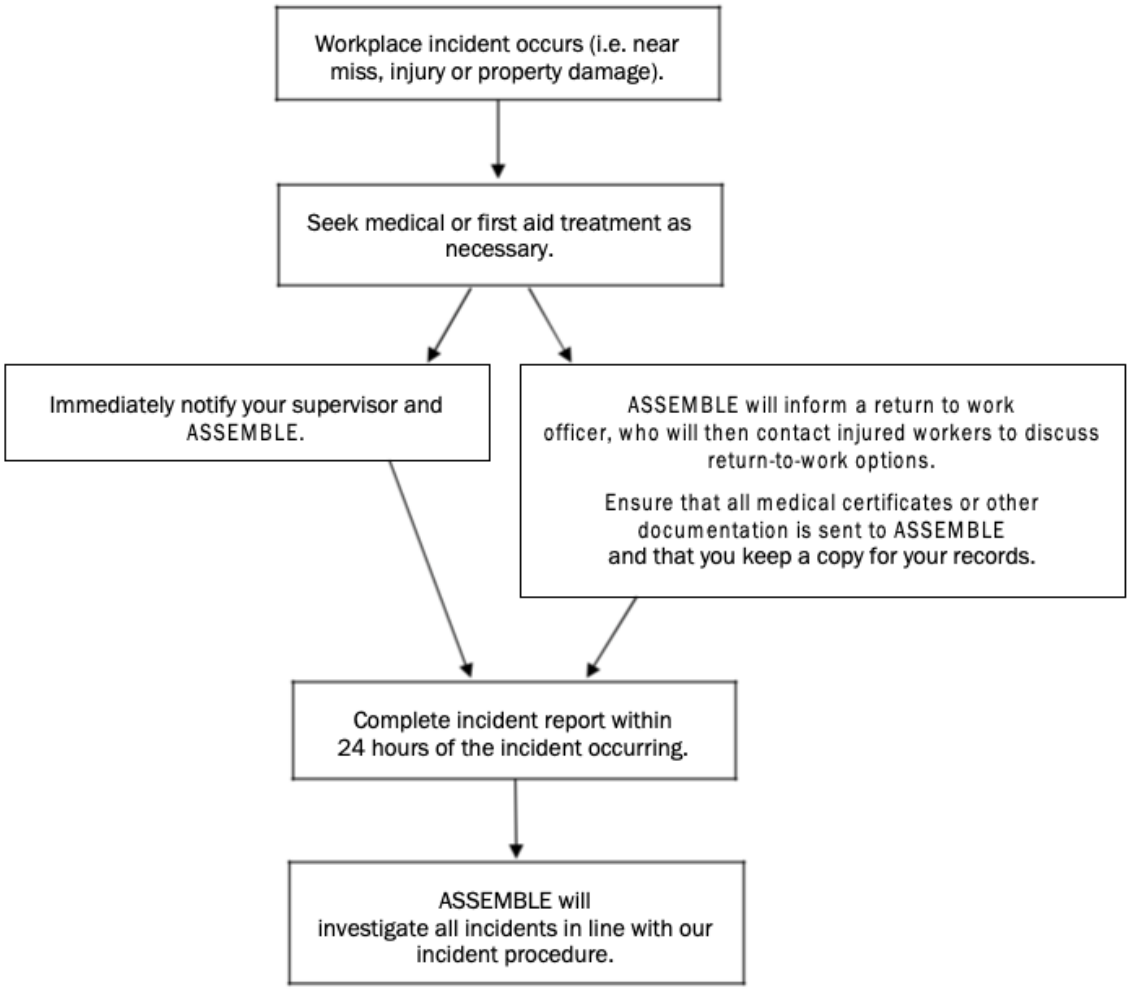
All accidents and incidents **MUST** be reported to ASSEMBLE as well as your client.

Injury Management

ASSEMBLE has a responsibility to manage any injuries that occur at your place of work.

If you become injured you **MUST** inform ASSEMBLE and your supervisor within 24 hours (preferably immediately).

Incident and Injury Management Reporting Flowchart



Basic First Aid

If an accident occurs you may be the first person to render first aid until a first aid officer or paramedic arrives.

No matter what the injury is **DRSABCD** is the order first aid is given:

D – Check for danger
R – Check for response
S – Send for help
A – Check airway
B – Check for breathing
C – Give CPR
D – Apply a defibrillator (if available).

Fire Protection

Please make yourself familiar with your workplace's fire and emergency procedures.

If you see any evidence of a fire you **MUST** report it immediately.

Fire production relies on three basic elements: fuel, oxygen and an ignition source. To prevent a fire always keep two of the three away from each other.

Make sure you know where firefighting facilities are at your workplace. If you come across any equipment that is empty or faulty please inform your supervisor.

Remember fire hydrants, hoses and extinguishers are exclusively for fighting fires and nothing else.

Manual Handling and Correct Lifting

Manual handling and lifting can cause serious injury if done incorrectly, with manual handling being one of the most common causes of injury in the workplace.

Manual handling is any activity involving the use of muscular force (or effort) to lift, move, push, pull, carry, hold or restrain any object. It covers more than lifting heavy weights and affects more than just the back. Correct lifting is not the only answer. Manual lifting should be avoided wherever possible by using forklifts or overhead crane machinery.

To reduce your risk of injury when lifting, ensure you:

- think about using a mechanical aid
- assess the environment – use suitable lifting equipment for the lifting area
- plan the load before attempting to lift
- where possible, seek a co-worker's assistance for heavy objects
- locate heavy objects at a suitable height for repeat lifting
- utilise correct manual handling techniques.

Correct manual handling technique:

1. Assess your ability to lift the load and determine the best lifting technique.
2. Use suitable hand and foot protection.
3. Start in a good posture. Place your feet close to the object to be lifted.
4. Warm up your body prior to lifting.
5. Bend your knees to a comfortable position and get a good hold of the object.
6. Make sure you have a secure grip.
7. Keep the object close to your body with slightly bent arms and your head up.
8. Keep your back straight during lifting, and avoid twisting and leaning sideways.
9. Placing the load down is just as important as lifting the load. Lower the load by bending your knees and securely placing the object.

Try to avoid:

- handing objects on uneven or rough surfaces, lifting in areas with poor lighting or in confined spaces
- lifting above shoulder level
- lifting any object that weighs more than you are comfortable lifting
- lifting more than you are comfortable lifting from a seated position
- performing lifting tasks frequently, rapidly and over long periods of time. If you are unsure, always ask first.
- Accidents don't just happen, they are caused. Remove the cause and be safe.

Understanding and Avoiding Fatigue

It is important to identify the first signs of fatigue and take necessary precautions to avoid the chance of having an accident/incident caused by fatigue.

Shift-work on rotating day-night rosters can cause fatigue. Shift workers tend to get less sleep to those who work equivalent hours during the day. Sleep during the day is typically of poor quality due to disruptions and environmental factors such as daylight, traffic and household noise.

Lack of quality sleep can impact concentration, judgement and reaction time and as a result increases the chance of being involved in an accident either at work or at home. Accidents can involve the health and safety of others as well as damage to plant and equipment.

The top six signs of fatigue include:

- constantly yawning
- impatience
- fidgeting
- mind starts to wander
- speed starts to vary
- eyelids become heavy.

The only way to cure fatigue is to sleep.

To remain safe and avoid the associated risk of fatigue:

- take scheduled breaks
- drink plenty of water and have regular meal breaks
- do not undertake double shifts or back to back shifts
- rest when you are not on duty as your body needs time to recover from work
- do not feel obligated to perform additional duties that may compromise workplace health and safety guidelines because the organisation is short-staffed.

If you feel fatigued you **MUST** stop all duties and notify your supervisor immediately.

Working in Confined Spaces

When working in a confined space you must follow strict safe work procedures in order to avoid a serious injury or fatality.

Working in a confined space is defined by a space that:

- has restricted means of entry and exit
- is at atmospheric pressure during occupancy
- is not intended as a regular workplace
- may have a contaminated atmosphere or inadequate ventilation.

When working in a confined space you must:

- have undertaken prior training before entering
- have sighted a confined space permit before entering and leaving the confined space
- not feed 240 volt electrical cables into vessels through access openings
- use only 32 volt lighting
- ensure you have adequate ventilation at all times
- have an observer stationed at the point of entry
- have a fire extinguisher available.

Once your work is completed your permit must be checked and signed by a supervisor.

Danger Tags

A danger tag is for your own personal protection and must be attached to the main switch, valve or similar equipment when there is danger posed if someone was to turn it on.

If you see a danger tag and this prevents you from carrying out your duties, **please cease work immediately and report it to your supervisor.**

Never remove a danger tag. Danger tags are only to be removed by supervisors.

Risk of Falling

Whenever ascending or descending stairs, ladders or equipment you should always maintain three points of contact.

You should also consider the following:

- always be aware of slippery boards, holes and guard rails not guarded properly
- never climb on uncertified scaffolding or framework
- be conscious of your surrounds to prevent overbalancing, slipping or tripping.

A safety harness must be worn and connected to a safe anchorage when exiting a work platform aloft.

Electric Shock

If a fellow worker has received an electric shock you should follow these steps:

- raise the alarm
- don't touch the person until the power has been turned off
- render first aid (within your capabilities).

If you cannot turn the power off use rubber, dry wood or PVC gloves to remove the wire and free the injured person.

Working in Hot Environments

You must protect yourself from the effects of heat when working in hot weather or environments.

Heat stress can be caused by:

- sun exposure
- low air movement
- high air temperature
- intense physical activity (often worsened with high work load)
- high humidity.

Consider the following when working in hot conditions:

- undertake heavy work during the cooler time of day
- cool down in a shaded area
- drink 3-4 litres of water a day
- wear loose clothing to assist with evaporation of sweat (ensure clothing meets safety requirements)
- wear a brimmed hat, SPF sunscreen (applied regularly) and a long sleeved shirt and trousers.

If you are experiencing symptoms of heat stress, move into the shade, drink plenty of water to rehydrate and advise your supervisor immediately.