

A Guide to Occupational Health and Safety Transport Industry



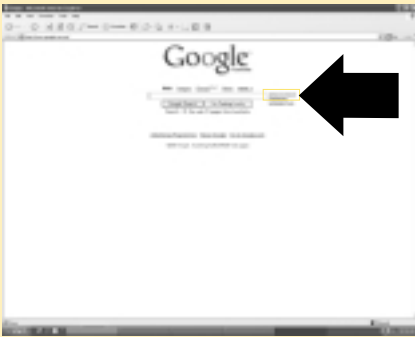
5th Edition, July 2006



How to find more information

The best way to get further information on any of the topics covered in this Guide is to use the internet. At the end of each section, under “more information on...” you’ll find a web search key. Follow the steps below and you should be taken to a webpage with further information on the topic.

- 1** Go to www.google.com.au. This screen will come up: Click on the **advanced search** link.



- 2** To use the **Google advanced search**: At the end of each section of this Guide, where it says “for more information on...”, there’ll be a ‘web search’ category, listing specific information to key in to your advanced Google search. For example, for further information on safety inspections (page 27), you’d key in:

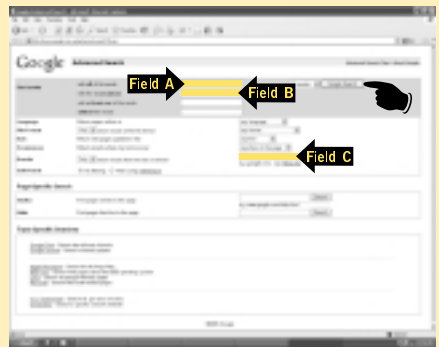
Field A: safe work practices

Field B: safety inspections

Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au and then click on the **Google Search** button on the screen.

If there’s no field mentioned in the instructions, leave that field blank.

- 3** A list of links should then come up on your screen. Generally the first one listed will be the one you want, but those further down the list may also be of interest to you. Click on the link of your choice and you’ll be taken to that webpage.



Or, of course, you can ring the organisations listed under “for more information” headings and ask for copies of their publications to be sent to you.

Preface

It is about ten years since the Transport Industry Safety Group (TISG) was formed. It still meets regularly and contributes to health and safety within one industry sector.

The establishment of the TISG followed the Coroner's recommendations on the death of a 14-year-old male pedestrian in a truck-related road crash. The incident occurred as a result of the failure (in part) of the truck driver's employer, a major Melbourne transport company, to provide the driver with proper training and supervision.

The Victorian TISG comprises senior executives from a number of organisations including the Transport Workers Union (Victoria/Tasmania), the Victorian Transport Association, VicRoads, Victoria Police, WorkSafe Victoria, the Transport Accident Commission, the Bus Association (Victoria), the Victorian Waste Management Association and Monash University Accident Research Centre.

The TISG meets regularly with the State Coroner to help identify key areas of risk and to develop pro-active strategies to reduce the incidence of death and serious injury within the transport industry. There are also a small number of consultants who voluntarily work with the TISG.

The idea for the Transport Industry Safety Guide also stemmed from one of the recommendations in the 1995 Coroner's finding on the death of the 14-year-old.

This Guide, now in its fifth edition, is a tremendous achievement for all those involved in the TISG and the transport industry generally. It will help to improve the safety and health of all those who work in the transport industry and the wider community who use our roads.



Graeme Johnstone
State Coroner
July 2006

**A safe workplace is where everyone in it is free
from the risk of harm.**

**Harm includes injury, death, occupational illness
and disease.**

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Foreword

Working together to achieve an outcome is very rewarding – all the more so when that outcome is safety related.

The Transport Industry Safety Group has again combined its resources to produce this publication, in the interests of all industry participants.

As we enter a new era of chain of responsibility with new occupational health and safety legislation which will change the working landscape of all industries, this Guide should be of even greater benefit to all industry operators, employees and subcontractors.

Previous editions of this Guide have served as an example and reference point for other industry sectors, setting a standard which the Transport Industry Safety Group and the freight and logistics industry can be very proud of upholding.

The industry members of the Transport Industry Safety Group express our appreciation for the support and commitment of VicRoads and WorkSafe.

All industry participants should use this Guide in the interests of a safe and effective industry.



Philip Lovel
Chairman
Transport Industry Safety Group
July 2006

The Building Blocks of OHS

Very important, as they provide guidance and can be used in prosecutions.

Workplace Policies

Provides guidance on how to meet the law.

Guidance Notes

Provides guidance on how to meet the law.

Codes and Australian Standards

Is the law and **must** be followed.

OHS Regulations

Is the law and **must** be followed.

Occupational Health & Safety Act

Introduction

This Guide provides background to the health and safety issues faced by the transport industry, and provides information and references to aid employers and workers, including contractors and owner-drivers, in developing a broad perspective in response to these issues.

The health and safety priorities in this Guide are those that people in the industry know are the issues requiring management, so this Guide has been compiled following consultation within the industry.

The intention is not to contest the technicalities, but to facilitate whatever possible action can be taken.

Effective occupational health and safety (OHS) happens when a company and its workforce co-operate to:

- develop policies, systems and procedures to eliminate or minimise risks,
- make sure the people who implement – and are affected by – the systems and procedures understand them,
- implement effective training in procedures, and
- ensure the workforce has good access to safety standards and safety information generally.

For any OHS system to be effective it must have the total commitment of all levels within the relevant organisation.

The employer's main duty under the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act) is contained in Section 21 (1).

This section requires employers to provide and maintain, so far as **reasonably practicable**, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.

There are some specific elements to this general duty which require the employer, so far as is reasonably practicable, to do things such as:

- provide and maintain safe plant and systems of work,
- arrange safe systems of work in connection with plant, vehicles, equipment, tools, machinery and substances,
- provide a safe work environment (both in the depot and in vehicles),
- provide adequate welfare facilities, and
- provide employees with the information, instruction, training and supervision they need to perform their jobs in a safe and healthy manner.

Employees also have specific obligations under the OHS Act. Section 25 of the Act requires employees to:

- take reasonable care with their own health and safety and the safety of others,
- co-operate with their employer to allow the employer to comply with the Act, and
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided at the workplace for health, safety or welfare.

Who's Who

Who is an Employer?

You are an employer if you employ people directly or engage subcontractors.

You may call yourself a subcontractor but if you employ people or engage other contractors, you are likely to be considered an employer under OHS laws.

An employer may be an individual, a company, body corporate, partnership, unincorporated association, franchising operation or not-for-profit organisation in the private or public sector who has one or more employees.

As an employer, you owe the duty of providing and maintaining a working environment that is safe and without risks to health to independent contractors as well as their employees who are working at your workplace.

This applies to matters over which you, as an employer, have control or should have control.

So, as well as providing a safe and healthy workplace for direct employees, you must consider subcontractors such as owner-drivers, labour-hire personnel and others who could be deemed employees in terms of OHS matters under your control.



Who is an Employee?

You're considered to be an employee if you work where an employer has, or should have, control when you're:

- employed under a verbal or written contract of employment or a contract of training – this includes direct employees as well as placements through group training and apprenticeships,
- an independent contractor engaged by someone else to do a specific job,
- a subcontractor,
- an employee of a contractor, or
- a person whose services are provided through someone else, such as a labour-hire or recruitment agency.

People working on matters over which an employer has control may be considered to be employees even if there is no contract of employment. Contracts don't matter – it's all about who actually has control.

Contractor Control

Under existing Commonwealth and State occupational health and safety legislation, the general OHS duties applying to an employer or contractor also apply to subcontractors and their employees in relation to matters *over which the employer (or contractor) has control*.

Contractors must be made aware that they are subject to the same safety standards as company employees.

Accordingly, contractors should be instructed and supervised to ensure that they meet such standards.

It is the company's duty to ensure that all contractors (and their employees) work in accordance with all company OHS requirements and meet regulatory standards such as vehicle maintenance, driving hours, etc.

In order to exercise practical control over a contractor working on its behalf, a company needs to implement appropriate measures such as:

- ensuring that the contractor is made aware of the company's OHS standards and procedures before commencing work,
- clearly defining responsibilities, roles and lines of communication and reporting between company personnel and the contractor, any subcontractors and other persons,
- ensuring that personnel designated to liaise with a contractor receive appropriate instructions in managing and controlling contractors (this should include knowledge of relevant legislation, knowledge of standards and codes of practice, understanding of the company OHS policies and procedures and a full and complete knowledge of the processes and procedures involving the use of contractors),
- clearly defining operational and other job requirements (for example, scheduling, awareness of the company's internal reporting and recording requirements, company rules, known work hazards, etc.), and
- providing appropriate information (and, if necessary, instruction and training) on working with specific hazards as they may affect or involve contract workers.

Contractors are required to make sure no-one is put at risk from the carrying on of their business.

More Information on Employers, Employees and Contractor Control

📖 *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, Section 24

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

Employers:

- ▼ Field A: who is an employer
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Employees:

- ▼ Field A: information for employees
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Contractor Control

- ▼ Field A: contractor control
- ▼ Field B: information on engaging a contractor
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au



What Does 'Reasonably Practicable' Mean?

Some of the general duty provisions in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and some specific requirements in the regulations are qualified by the words "so far as is reasonably practicable".

These words put limits on the duty to ensure health and safety.

The OHS Act explains what has to be taken into account when deciding if something is 'reasonably practicable'.

In general terms, the things to be taken into account are:

- the likelihood of the hazard or risk eventuating,
- the severity of any injury or harm to health that may occur,
- what is known, or should be known, about the hazard or risk and the ways of reducing, eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk,
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or reduce the hazard or risk, and
- the cost of any risk control methods.

All of these things have to be given weight when deciding if something is reasonably practicable.

Common practice and knowledge throughout the relevant industry are taken into account when judging whether a safeguard is 'reasonably practicable'.

Individual employers cannot claim that they did not know what to do about

certain hazards if they are known by others within the industry and if safeguards are available.

Industry safety standards and other published information, including Compliance Codes, Australian Standards, and other guidance material published by WorkSafe Victoria, all contribute to establishing this state of knowledge.

While cost is a factor, it must not be given any more importance than other factors in deciding if an action is reasonably practicable. The OHS Act does not allow a person to avoid putting a risk control measure in place purely on the basis of the cost of the control measure.

Where a regulation exists and is not qualified by the words "as far as is reasonably practicable", the regulation must be complied with in full.

More Information on Reasonably Practicable

- 🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):
 - ▼ Field A: summary of the occupational
 - ▼ Field B: reasonably practicable
 - ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Reasonably practicable means that if something can be done, and a reasonable person looking at the situation would consider that it is reasonable to do, then it should be done.

Chain of Responsibility

What is the Chain of Responsibility?

The chain of responsibility means that anybody – not just the driver – who has control in a transport operation can be held responsible for breaches of road laws and may be made legally liable.

In other words, if you use road transport as part of your business, you share responsibility for ensuring breaches of road laws do not occur.

So if a breach of road transport law occurs due to your action, inaction or demands, you may be legally accountable.

Put simply this means:



From 30 September 2005, the chain of responsibility applies to:

- driving hours, speeding and dangerous goods regulations,
- mass and dimension limits, and
- load restraint requirements.

Who is Covered by the Chain of Responsibility?

If you are involved in any of the following road transport activities, you may be held responsible for breaches of road laws:

- Consigning – commissioning the carrying of goods.
- Packing – placing goods in packages or containers or on pallets.
- Loading – placing or restraining the load on a vehicle.
- Driving – the physical act of driving a commercial vehicle.
- Operating – operating a business which controls the use of a commercial vehicle.
- Receiving – paying for goods/taking possession of load(s).

If you are involved in any of the above roles, you also have obligations not to coerce, induce or encourage a breach of road transport laws.

In addition to ensuring compliance with road laws, you have to take reasonable steps to make sure that you do not pass on to other parties any false or misleading information about a vehicle or its load.

If you victimise an employee or contractor who raises concerns about actual or possible breaches of road transport laws, it is an offence under the law.

If you are in control of a transport operation, you can be held liable for breaches.

Enforcement Powers

On 1 July 2003, new inspection and search powers were introduced in Victoria to support the enforcement of the chain of responsibility. The laws allow WorkSafe inspectors and police officers to:

- inspect and search commercial vehicles and premises associated with road transport,
- direct a person associated with road transport to provide documentation and items relating to commercial vehicle compliance,
- require a driver or other responsible person to provide reasonable assistance to an inspector or police officer and to give their name, home address and business address, and
- require a person to provide details regarding any other person who is associated with a commercial vehicle or its load, and to give information to help identify the driver.

Consignor/Receiver

Responsibilities

As a consignor or receiver, you have a responsibility for ensuring that any demands you make do not require a truck driver to:

- exceed permitted driving hours,
- fail to have minimum rest periods, or
- exceed the speed limit.

Under new legislation, you will also have a responsibility for ensuring that goods carried on your behalf:

- do not exceed vehicle dimension limits,
- do not cause vehicle mass limits to be exceeded, and
- are appropriately secured.

If you can show that you did not know and could not have been reasonably expected to know that the road law breach would occur, and that either:

- you have taken all reasonable steps to prevent the breach, or
- there was nothing that you could reasonably have been expected to do to prevent the breach,

you won't be liable for an offence under the chain of responsibility.

What You Need to Do

You should ensure that you can demonstrate that you took reasonable steps to prevent a breach occurring.

There are no limits to the ways in which you can do this. What constitutes reasonable steps will vary according to each individual's circumstances.

Examples of steps you could take include:

- ensuring that compliance assurance conditions are included in relevant commercial arrangements with other responsible persons,
- requesting information about what systems and controls are in place to ensure compliance,
- avoiding arrangements which encourage or reward non-compliance, and
- complying with an Industry Code of Practice.

It is expected that individual industries will develop Codes of Practice to suit their needs, and that these Codes will cover contractual arrangements, equipment, due diligence and quality management systems.

Loader/Packer

Responsibilities

Under new legislation, loaders will have a responsibility for ensuring that the vehicle's load:

- does not exceed dimension limits,
- does not cause vehicle mass limits to be exceeded, and
- is placed so that it does not become unstable, move or fall off the vehicle.

Packers will have a responsibility for ensuring that documentation about the vehicle's load is not false or misleading.

Packers will also need to make sure that any goods packed in a freight container do not cause the container's gross weight or safety approval rating to be exceeded.

If you can show that you did not know and could not have been reasonably expected to know that the road law breach would occur, and that either:

- you have taken all reasonable steps to prevent the breach, or
- there was nothing that you could reasonably have been expected to do to prevent the breach,

you won't be liable for an offence under the chain of responsibility.

What You Need to Do

You should ensure that you can demonstrate that you took reasonable steps to prevent a breach occurring.

There are no limits to the ways in which you can do this. What constitutes reasonable steps will vary according to each individual's circumstances. Examples of steps you could take include:

- having a loading diagram for different types of loads to ensure axle weight limits are not exceeded,
- if the vehicle's weight cannot be accurately assessed at the time of loading, under-loading for the first trip and verifying the weight at some stage of the journey – subsequent loads can be adjusted accordingly,
- fitting scales to loading equipment and keeping a 'running' total of the weight of the load for each trip, and/or
- using a pre-printed form which requires the person in control of packing or loading the goods to verify the accuracy of any records, and
- complying with an Industry Code of Practice.

It is expected that individual industries will develop Codes of Practice to suit their needs, and that these Codes will cover contractual arrangements, equipment, due diligence and quality management systems.

The people who make the decisions about how a task is carried out are responsible under the chain of responsibility – not necessarily the person who carries out the task. For example, if a packer is told by their supervisor to overfill a pallet or box, their supervisor would be considered responsible.

Driver

Responsibilities

As a truck driver, your responsibilities include ensuring that:

- driving-hours regulations (time spent driving and working) are adhered to,
- required rest breaks are taken,
- records of your driving hours are kept,
- your vehicle does not exceed mass limits,
- your vehicle and load do not exceed dimension limits,
- your load is appropriately restrained,
- you do not exceed the speed limit, and
- you do not tamper with any equipment required to be fitted to the vehicle.

What You Need to Do

As a driver, you need to make sure that your conduct does not compromise road safety or involve breaking the law.

You should know your vehicle's mass. Examples of ways you can do this include:

- keeping weighbridge docketts issued to the vehicle you are driving,
- using on-board scales to check your weights, and
- keeping any loading documentation that shows the weight of your load.

You must not exceed the regulated hours for driving and working. Remember that these are *maximum* hours. You should always rest when tired and have adequate sleep to prevent fatigue.

You should make sure that your vehicle does not exceed legal dimensions.

Your load should be checked to ensure it is properly restrained, even if you are not the person who loaded the vehicle. You should check the adequacy and condition of restraining equipment (chains, ropes, straps etc.).

You should make sure you observe the speed limit at all times.

Special Defence for Drivers

Under new legislation, if someone else is responsible for maintaining the vehicle you drive, or its equipment, you won't be liable for any deficiencies provided that:

- you did not cause or contribute to the deficiency,
- you did not know or could not reasonably be expected to have known of the deficiency, and
- you could not reasonably be expected to have checked whether there were, or were likely to be, deficiencies.



Operator/Manager/ Scheduler

Responsibilities

As an operator, manager or scheduler of a business involved in road transport, your responsibilities include ensuring that:

- rosters and schedules do not require drivers to exceed driving-hours regulations or speed limits,
- vehicle speed limiters are functioning,
- vehicles do not exceed mass or dimension limits,
- appropriate restraint equipment is provided and loads are appropriately restrained, and
- you keep records of your drivers' activities, including driving, work and rest times.

What You Need to Do

As an operator, or an employee of an operator, you need to make sure that your conduct does not compromise road safety or involve breaking the law.

You should:

- implement systems to ensure that the mass of each vehicle is assessed and recorded for each trip,
- have an auditable system for rostering and scheduling your drivers so that they do not exceed the regulated hours of driving and work or any speed limits, and that they have sufficient opportunity for rest and sleep to avoid fatigue,
- have work practices in place so that vehicles and equipment are kept in good condition and all loads are properly restrained,

- ensure that, if speed limiters are fitted to the vehicles, they are operating properly,
- keep records of drivers' activities including driving, working and resting, and check that they are complying with the regulations,
- include compliance assurance conditions in relevant commercial arrangements with other responsible persons,
- ensure that employees have the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable compliance with relevant laws.

More Information on Chain of Responsibility

📞 VicRoads on 13 11 71.

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

- ▼ Field A: chain of responsibility
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au



OHS Policy Statement

The present focus of State and Federal occupational health and safety legislation requires employers to:

- establish and maintain formal consultation procedures allowing for the regular exchange of information on OHS issues between management, supervisors, employees and contractors, and
- formalise, through documentation, standard risk identification and control mechanisms, and safe systems of work practices.

A company OHS policy statement should be in place. This should be a brief but concise declaration of intent, and should define lines of responsibility and the processes of accountability for both management and employees alike.

It should also demonstrate the joint commitment of management and the workforce to translating that commitment into effective action.

It should indicate, in clear and simple terms, the organisation's health and safety policy objectives, and outline the arrangements to achieve those objectives, including the allocation of functions and responsibilities.

Issues that should be covered in company OHS policy statements include:

- a senior management commitment to the provision and maintenance of working environments that are safe and without risks to health,
- the integration of that commitment into all organisational activities,
- a commitment to document the functions and duties of all people in the organisation for maintaining health and safety standards and practices,
- the accountability of all levels of management for implementing health and safety practices and procedures,
- the importance of consultation and co-operation between management and employees for the effective translation of policy objectives into action,
- the training of employees and sub-contractors (including labour-hire personnel and owner-operators who are 'deemed employees' in all these activities) in, and communication of, health and safety practices and procedures, and
- a commitment to regular monitoring and review of the policy and its effectiveness.

The policy must be kept up to date in line with developments across the organisation. Accordingly, arrangements must be in place to monitor and review the effectiveness of the policy statement.

Indeed, it should be reviewed every year to make sure it remains current and relevant.

All employees must be aware of the significance of the OHS policy statement, together with the strategies and plans for conversion of the policy into action.

The policy statement should be ratified and supported by management and employee reps.

Upon agreement, the document should be widely distributed, explained to all existing and new personnel and be posted on all noticeboards within the workplace.

Management Commitment

In demonstrating a company's OHS commitment towards all levels of staff and contractors, actions such as the following are necessary.

Demonstration of Commitment

Clearly-defined company policies should be developed, appropriately distributed and clearly displayed.

Identification of Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibilities of line managers and site supervisors should be clearly identified for all employees and contractors working under their direction.

Continuous Improvement

Clear responsibilities and procedures should be established to ensure continuous improvements in providing employees and contractors with healthy and safe workplaces.

These duties and responsibilities also apply to all contractors who employ staff or engage contractors themselves.

Consultation

Employees must be consulted when decisions are made or planned about occupational health and safety matters that directly affect them. This includes consulting Health & Safety Representatives, where elected, and independent contractors whose health and safety is likely to be affected.

Consultation includes sharing information, giving employees an opportunity to express their views on the matter, and taking those views into account before decisions are made.

More Information on Management Commitment

- 🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):
 - ▼ Field A: management commitment
 - ▼ Field B: criteria for evaluating
 - ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au



Safe Work Practices

Safe work practices and procedures should be developed from knowledge and assessment of the work system as a whole.

Audits and assessments of existing work practices and procedures should be conducted, and formal risk evaluations and assessments should be documented.

▼ All levels of staff should be involved in the development of safe work practices. This will help in gaining a total commitment from all employees to the implementation of such procedures.

Safe work practices should address each of the following areas:

- The design of transport vehicles with regard to OHS considerations such as entry and exit for drivers, ergonomic layout, ride and noise level.
- The safe operation of plant, machinery and powered mobile plant (including roadside work) and the prevention of fatigue.
- Issues about working at height, including top of load.
- The safe handling of raw materials, intermediates, waste and by-products, etc., including consideration of the weight bearing tasks, the size and shape of loads and use of mechanical aids etc.
- Appropriate reporting lines and contacts with regard to accident and hazard reporting, contingency planning, lock-out procedures, etc.
- The adequate supply, use and maintenance of any and all personal protective equipment.

- The reporting of hazards or unsafe work practices at workplaces not under the control and management of the employer (or contractor) to the employer's (or contractor's) representative.
- The implementation of effective emergency procedures.
- Appropriate and documented vehicle and plant maintenance systems.
- The safe interface of forklifts into transport yards, warehouses or other shared areas ensuring that pedestrians are physically separated from forklifts.
- Other areas where there is a risk of harm.

▼ Each workplace should be assessed individually, according to their particular needs and functions – not limited to these suggested areas.

More Information on Safe Work Practices

🔗 www.workcover.vic.gov.au

🔗 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

WorkCover

- ▼ Field A: risk control plan
- ▼ Field B: risk control plan
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au or
- ▼ Field A: safety assessment checklist
- ▼ Field B: safety assessment tool
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

National Occupational Health and Safety Commission:

- ▼ Field A: safety assessment
- ▼ Field B: hazards and solutions
- ▼ Field C: www.nohsc.gov.au

Producing an Effective Risk Control Plan

Regulations under the OHS Act describe processes for managing risk. Employers must make themselves familiar with these processes.

A general description of the processes and some suggestions on how to produce an effective Risk Control Plan follow. A sample layout for a Risk Control Plan is included on pages 20–25 of this Guide.

The risk management process in the OHS legislation includes three basic steps:

- ❶ identifying hazards,
- ❷ assessing the risk arising from those hazards, and
- ❸ putting specific risk control measures in place.

Despite the value of good processes, it is essential to put risk control measures in place as soon as possible. It is not acceptable to postpone obvious and common-sense risk control measures because the other processes have not been completed.

Implement risk controls as soon as possible. While you are waiting for longer-term solutions, put interim controls in place.

Implement any 'quick win' controls you identify while you assess risks.

Identifying Hazards

Hazards are the things which have the **potential** to cause harm or injury.

Road traffic, road conditions, driver fatigue, and roadside deliveries/repairs are examples of typical hazards in the transport industry.

It is essential to carry out hazard identification thoroughly, involving both management and the workforce.

Comprehensive hazard identification ensures that OHS systems are dealing with *all* the safety problems that need to be dealt with.

The key issue is that hazard identification is about whether there is potential for harm, not whether it is likely. Risk assessment processes look at likelihood.

Assessing Risks

Risk assessment is where decisions are made about the **likelihood** that a hazard will generate risk to safety and what the consequences of that risk might be.

This, in turn, helps in decision-making on what risk control measures are needed and how to make existing risk controls more effective.

Risk assessment requires good judgement and awareness of the potential risks of a work process, so a person undertaking a risk assessment must have knowledge and experience in the relevant work process.

Assessing risks is sometimes complicated by incomplete data or incomplete information regarding hazards of a work process.



Don't rely on score-type systems (such as a risk assessment matrix) to avoid doing something about a hazard. No matter how high or low the score, any score means that a hazard exists and must be attended to immediately.

Effective communication between management and the workforce makes for effective risk assessment.

In some cases, it may be necessary to break down the activity or process into a series of parts and assess each part separately.

Risk assessment should include:

- assessing the adequacy of training and/or knowledge required to work safely,
- looking at the way jobs are performed,
- looking at the way work is organised,
- determining the size and layout of the workplace,
- assessing the number and movement of all people at the workplace,
- determining the type of operation to be performed,
- determining the type of machinery and plant to be used,
- examining procedures for emergencies (e.g. crash, fire and rescue), and
- looking at the storage and handling of all materials and substances.

This step should result in information on where and which employees are likely to be at risk of incurring injury or disease, how often this is likely to occur, and the potential severity of that injury or disease risk.

Controlling Risks

Control measures should be implemented in the following order:

❶ Eliminate the risk from the workplace.

The most effective method for controlling risks is to eliminate the risk altogether – and health and safety law requires you to try to eliminate risks.

The best ways to eliminate risks are to make sure that you don't purchase hazardous materials, plant or equipment and to redesign your workplace and work systems to eliminate risks.

Taking steps to do this should be part of your Risk Control Plan.

❷ If you cannot eliminate them, then you must **reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable** (see page 7 for what 'reasonably practicable' means).

The best way to control a risk is by doing so at its source by:

- substituting something with a lower risk (for example, making the load lighter and less awkward for a hazardous manual handling task),
- isolating the source of the risk (for example, enclosing a noisy generator within a soundproof booth), or
- using an engineering control (for example, filling operations on a tanker being done from the ground rather than on top of the tanker, or using a mechanical device to handle a heavy or awkward object).

Procurement, design, installation and maintenance actions to do these things should be part of your Risk Control Plan.

③ If it is not possible to control a risk at its source, **use methods that act on people** by:

- changing work practices (for example, introducing job rotation to vary repetitive work),
- providing training (for example, training people in particular lifting techniques), and/or
- providing protective gear (for example, respirators).

These methods are not as effective as risk controls which act on the source of the risk. They should only be used in the short term as interim measures when it is not reasonably practicable to control the risk at its source.

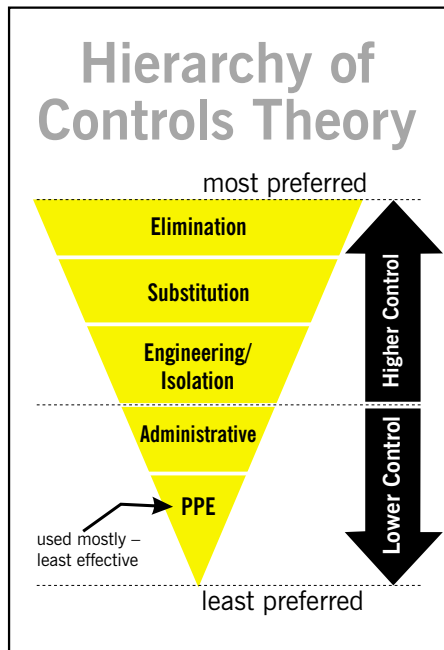
This series of steps is called the **hierarchy of control**. You should choose control measures from the top of the list wherever reasonably practicable, and only use methods that act on people as a last resort.

Health & Safety Representatives, employees and contractors likely to be affected should be involved in deciding on risk control measures. Their knowledge of the workplace will help develop effective control measures and make sure that the control measures will work in practice.

Testing Risk Controls

For some risk controls, you might need to test the control measures before they are permanently put into place. For example, if you decide to redesign a work process, this should be tested before the final arrangements are made.

By testing, you will be able to find out if there are any unexpected problems with the new way of doing things.



Testing will help to check that the solution doesn't cause any other problems. It will also give the workforce a chance to trial the new work process without the normal day-to-day work pressures.

Training

Many new risk control measures involve training. Training is not a suitable control measure on its own, but it is essential to good risk control.

Training gives the workforce the skills and knowledge they need to work with controls, as well as awareness of the hazards and risks in the workplace.

Make sure that everyone in the enterprise knows about the Risk Control Plan and has the skills and knowledge they need to play their part.

Planning Actions

When you have looked at risk control, you will probably find that you have different actions to take. Some of them will be immediate actions, while others will take longer to put into place.

Your Risk Control Plan will need to include what you will do:

- immediately,
- in the short term (within a couple of weeks),
- in the medium term (within a couple of months), and
- in the long term (over the next year or so).

To prioritise your actions, think about:

- how severe the risk is,
- how immediate the risk is,
- who it affects,
- how easily it could be controlled, and
- what other benefits there could be from controlling the risk.

Your Risk Control Plan and its implementation priorities should be agreed with your Health & Safety Representatives or by your OHS Committee, if you have one.

You can record your Plan using the format set out on pages 20–25 of this Guide, or design your own format.

You need to plan and budget for resources to implement your Risk Control Plan, monitor activity and measure results.

Like your OHS Policy Statement, your Risk Control Plan should be regularly reviewed to make sure it is still effective. This should be done whether you have one Risk Control Plan for the entire workplace, or a Plan for each hazard.

Different people may carry out the different jobs in the Plan. However, it is the employer who is responsible for making sure everything happens when it should.

The Risk Control Plan should include interim controls (the temporary measures put in place to reduce the risk of injury) as well as permanent controls for the long-term – these are more effective but may be more complex to implement.

More Information on Risk Control

📖 WorkSafe Victoria publications

📖 Australian Standards

📖 Libraries

📞 Consultants and other specialist advisers

📞 Unions and industry associations

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

WorkCover

▼ Field A: risk control plan

▼ Field B: risk control plan

▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au
or

▼ Field A: safety assessment checklist

▼ Field B: safety assessment tool

▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

National Occupational Health and Safety Commission:

▼ Field A: safety assessment

▼ Field B: hazards and solutions

▼ Field C: www.nohsc.gov.au

Sample Layout for a Risk Control Plan (RCP)

Risk Control Plan Form

Area covered by the plan:

Date prepared:

Who was consulted? (e.g. work groups, individuals, etc.)

.

Workplan

Action	Notes/Comments
Put effective consultation arrangements in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ Health & Safety Representatives elected and trained ▼ OHS Committee established 	
Identify who is responsible for different jobs in developing the RCP, particularly overall management and co-ordination	
Set up working arrangements, namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ How the Plan will be prepared (e.g. by work area or by hazard) ▼ Identify priority hazards and work areas ▼ Provide training and other resources ▼ Communication 	
Decide on a plan of action for risk control that includes timetables for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▼ Identifying specific hazards ▼ Assessing risks ▼ Introducing risk controls as soon as possible ▼ Reviewing progress with the RCP 	

Signed by: (senior responsible manager)

. (Health & Safety Representative)

Prepared by: Employer
 Health & Safety Rep.

Responsibility	Status

Risk Control Actions

Hazards identified (List where and what they are exactly)		Risk controls already in place	Is there a risk?		Immediate actions taken to control the risk
No.	What and where is it?		Yes	No	

What other control measures are needed? (Use the hierarchy of control to decide on control measures)	When is the action to be done by?	Who is responsible for making sure it is done?

Action Table

Hazard number	What has to be done to control the risks? (From risk control actions)	Who will do it?
Short term		
Reviewed by:		
Medium term		
Reviewed by:		
Long term		
Reviewed by:		

How will they do it?	Resources needed to do it	Who is responsible for making sure it's done?	By when? (Review date)
Progress review date (within two weeks):			
Progress review date (within three months):			
Progress review date (within 12 months):			

Rehabilitation Policy

All employers should have a rehabilitation policy in place to define return-to-work practices with the aim of helping injured workers return to work as soon as possible.

Returning to work early has been shown to be the best way of helping workers recover from injuries as it maintains their job skills and financial security while they recover in a familiar workplace environment.

Every workplace must have:

- a **risk management program** – a written outline of the steps that will be taken after an injury has occurred to reduce the risk of that injury happening again.
- an **occupational rehabilitation program** – an outline of the way injuries are managed at the workplace. It must be developed in consultation with workers, be in writing, and be made available to all workers.
- a **return-to-work plan** – an individual plan for each injured worker to help them return to work. This written ‘action plan’ can either help an injured worker to stay at work, or can assist them in returning to work after their injury. The employee concerned must participate and co-operate in this part of the process.

Treatment, return-to-work activities and any necessary occupational rehabilitation services should begin as soon as possible after an injury, to ensure the earliest possible return to pre-injury employment.



Suitable employment, including modified or alternative duties should be made available to assist the injured worker to remain at work or return to work at the earliest opportunity. These duties must be meaningful and suitable for the injured worker and a list of them should be forwarded to the treating doctor for approval.

▼ **Reference should be made to the employer’s WorkCover Authorised Agent/Insurer for more detailed advice about employers’ rehabilitation obligations. Authorised Agents/ Insurers will typically have a claims manager and that should be the person you seek out for advice.**

More Information on Rehabilitation Policy

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

- ▼ Field A: rehabilitation
- ▼ Field B: return to work
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au
or
- ▼ Field A: rehabilitation
- ▼ Field B: developing an occupational
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au
or
- ▼ Field A: rehabilitation
- ▼ Field B: risk management program
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Safety Inspections

Safety inspections play a vital part in preventing workplace accidents and incidents. You should use your own experience and the experience of others, as well as knowledge within the industry to make these processes as effective as possible.

Self Auditing/Periodical Inspections

All workplaces should establish standards against which management and staff hold themselves accountable. Some methods for doing this include:

- examining hazards found and improvements made in response to previous incidents and injuries,
- using collective industry knowledge, and
- identifying site risks particular to the business.

Preventive Maintenance Programs

Maintenance should be scheduled and conducted *before* failures happen.

Waiting for a failure is dangerous and costly, and can occur at the worst time for a business.

Recommended maintenance programs should be adhered to – if they are not available, they can be calculated and carried out at the most convenient time.

Manufacturers have recommended maintenance intervals for their equipment. This information can be obtained from manufacturers or suppliers.

More Information on Safety Inspections

- ① Manufacturers
- ① Suppliers
- ★ Employee Consultation
- ★ Expert and Engineering Experience
- 🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):
 - ▼ Field A: safe work practices
 - ▼ Field B: safety inspections
 - ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

You will help make your workplace safer if you:

- take reasonable care regarding your own health and safety when at work,
- take reasonable care not to affect the health and safety of others by your acts or omissions,
- follow all safety guidelines/systems of work as per training and instructions,
- make sure you have a certificate of competency if you operate or drive industrial equipment that requires certification,
- tell the people in control of your workplace about potential hazards or personal physical problems in the workplace,
- work with your employer in any action taken to make your workplace safer, and
- report any injury immediately to a supervisor/person responsible for WorkCover.

Incident Reporting and Investigation

An incident can involve an injury or a dangerous occurrence (commonly known as a 'near miss').

'Near misses' are really 'near hits'. They are events that could have led to an injury.

Near misses are a useful indicator of a problem without somebody actually getting injured.

Make sure that near misses – as well as accidents – are reported and learnt from. All incidents should be investigated to identify causes and determine corrective actions.

It is a key management responsibility to ensure that hazards causing, or potentially causing, employee injuries are promptly reported to supervisory personnel and that remedial action is promptly taken.

Details of these incidents should be recorded whether they involve personal injury or not.

The formats described in Australian Standard AS 1885, *Workplace Injury and Disease Recording* can be used to record details of workplace injuries and illnesses.

Analysis of such data shows that, as would be expected, many more incidents occur that cause no injury or serious damage than those that do.

▼ **Suitable preventative or remedial actions taken at this stage will greatly reduce the likelihood of repeat incidents, and perhaps more serious injury incidents, occurring.**

Where an injury occurs, employers are required to make changes to stop the same thing happening again.

The management-nominated contact person and the elected Health & Safety Representative should be involved in investigations involving property damage, injuries and dangerous occurrences.

Reporting Incidents to WorkSafe

All statutory requirements to advise the Victorian WorkCover Authority of dangerous occurrences and injuries to personnel *must* be complied with.

Strict time limits for reports and records apply. The incident site must not be disturbed.

An employer or self-employed person must notify the Authority immediately they become aware of an incident that results in death or serious injury.

Serious injuries include, but are not limited to, those that require:

- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance,
- immediate treatment in hospital as an in-patient, or
- immediate medical treatment for injuries, for example, amputation, serious head or eye injuries, scalping, electric shock, spinal injury, loss of bodily functions or serious laceration.

This duty also applies to incidents that expose a person in the immediate vicinity to an immediate health or safety risk, including:

- the collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction of, or damage to, plant that is required to be licensed or registered,
- the collapse or failure of an excavation or of any shoring supporting excavation,
- the collapse or partial collapse of a building or structure,
- an implosion, explosion, or fire,
- the escape, spillage or leakage of any substance, including dangerous goods, or
- the fall or release from a height of any plant, substance or object.

Within 48 hours of becoming aware of such an incident, the employer or self-employed person must give the Authority a written record of what occurred.

They must keep a copy of this record for at least five years and make copies available to:

- people injured or exposed to risk by the incident, and their representatives,
- the representatives of anyone who died as a result of the incident, and
- the Health & Safety Representative for the designated work group, and members of any Health & Safety Committee established.

The site of a notifiable incident must not be disturbed until an inspector directs otherwise, although a site may be disturbed to protect a person's health or safety, to help someone who is injured, or to make the site safe.

More Information on Incident Reporting and Investigation:

📖 *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

📞 Victorian WorkCover Authority – 13 23 60

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

Australian Standard AS 1885 – Workplace Injury and Disease Reporting

▼ Field B: workplace injury and disease recording

▼ Field C: www.nohsc.gov.au

Incident Notification Form

▼ Field B: incident notification form

▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Incident Reporting

▼ Field A: incident reporting

▼ Field B: incident reporting

▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Phone the Victorian WorkCover Authority on 13 23 60 to report a serious injury or incident.

See *Reporting Incidents to WorkSafe* on this and the previous page for what's considered to be 'serious'.

Health & Safety Reps and OHS Committees

The Victorian OHS Act covers the election and duties of Health & Safety Representatives, Deputy Health & Safety Representatives and OHS Committees.

▼ **Every workplace must have a method for effective consultation. Minimum requirements are set out in the Issue Resolution regulations.**

Designated Work Group

This is a group of employees who share common work practices and want to be represented on health and safety matters.

Health & Safety Representative

Health & Safety Representatives are the employees' voice in the workplace. They are elected by the designated work group to work with management on OHS matters.

Health & Safety Representatives have specific functions under the OHS Act and play a vital role in keeping workplaces safe. They are a key element in an effective OHS system.

Employers should actively encourage the election of Health & Safety Reps. Under the Act, elected OHS Representatives must attend approved training.

OHS Committee

OHS Committees are a pro-active method of raising and addressing OHS matters in the workplace. Committees are made up of management and employee representatives (at least half of the Committee must be employee representatives).

Occupational Health & Safety Committees are an excellent means of encouraging consultation and co-operation throughout the organisation.

A Committee can develop a sense of ownership of OHS amongst personnel, and lead to many significant advantages in terms of safer and healthier workplaces, a reduction in incident-related costs, improved quality and better morale.

Members of an organisation's OHS Committee should be drawn from all parts and levels of the organisation.

It is important that OHS Committee members are given formal training to assist them to work as an effective and efficient team.

Representatives and Committee members have a prominent role in conducting audits and follow-up inspections.

▼ **The benefits of an OHS Committee in establishing policies and developing systems and procedures should not be underestimated.**

More Information on Health & Safety Reps and OHS Committees

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover).

- ▼ Field A: Health and Safety Representative
- ▼ Field B: Health and Safety Representative
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Statistics show that workplaces with OHS Committees and Health & Safety Reps have fewer injuries.

Training and Induction

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 requires that sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision must be provided to employees, as far as is necessary to allow them to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risk to health.

This means that a formal, structured induction and ongoing training program should be in place for *all* employees and contractors (including labour-hire personnel) to assist in understanding the hazards which they may face in their tasks.

Where relevant, training and information should include such areas as:

- introduction to the workplace,
- identification/assessment/control of hazards (plant, noise, manual handling, heat, cold, confined spaces, etc.),
- safe work practices,
- traffic management,
- load restraint,
- safer driving,
- safe forklift operations,
- fatigue-management systems,
- introduction to new equipment and procedures,
- the presence of, storage, transport and handling of dangerous or hazardous goods, including waste,
- manual handling,
- emergency procedures (e.g. evacuation, trauma, etc.),
- accident investigation, reporting and recording, and

- OHS Committees, Health & Safety Representatives and methods for consulting and representing employees (including contractors) on OHS.

A useful approach to training is to carry out a training-needs analysis to identify OHS (and other) training deficiencies and to implement formal training programs in response.

OHS training should occur at all levels of the organisation, including senior management and key operations personnel.

Induction should include checking the currency of licences and certificates of competency.

Training is required when there are changes in the workplace, such as:

- modifications to work practices and procedures,
- the introduction of new technology, or
- the introduction of new plant or equipment.

These sorts of changes may also require a total review of some or all aspects of a company's work practices.

Structured training should lead to awarding certificates of competency.

▼ **Appropriate representatives of each level of management and the workforce should be involved in the planning for, and introduction of, new technology, plant or equipment.**

All training should be documented and regularly reviewed.

Health Priorities

Drug and Alcohol Policy

For good safety reasons, the community is increasingly opposed to the use of drugs and alcohol on the road and in the workplace – especially when the workplace is the road they share.

Drink driving is a major contributing factor to road crashes. With a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05, the risk of having a crash is double that of a driver with zero BAC.

Drug driving is also a major contributor to road fatalities in Victoria. Drugs can have similar effects to alcohol. This applies whether the drugs are for medicinal purposes (those bought over the counter at chemists can impair drivers just as much as prescription drugs) or for illicit purposes.

The effects of both alcohol and drugs can include:

- reduced mental alertness,
- diminished vigilance and concentration,
- lack of physical co-ordination, and
- inability to react quickly and appropriately to what's happening on the road.

Each workplace should have a drug and alcohol policy in place to deal with these issues *before* they come up.

Developing a Drug and Alcohol Policy

A workplace drug and alcohol policy is a written document which applies to all workers at the workplace. Consultation in the development of the policy is essential.

The following considerations need to be incorporated in a drug and alcohol policy:

- risk assessment,
- definition of impairment,
- method and frequency of testing (if appropriate),
- any exceptions (e.g. prescription drugs for illness),
- procedures for dealing with impairment (including rehabilitation, counselling, disciplinary action, etc.),
- procedures for approaching a visibly impaired worker,
- privacy and confidentiality,
- education and training,
- publicising of the policy,
- establishment of an employee assistance program (EAP),
- responsibility for implementation, and
- evaluation of the policy.

When your organisation develops its policies and procedures, ensure that Road Safety regulations are taken into account. For example, when developing a policy on drugs and alcohol, maximum blood levels of 0.05 or 0.00 BAC, depending on truck tonnage, must be included.

Once the policy is finalised, it should be publicised throughout the workplace so that all workers are familiar with it.

▼ It is vital that all drug and alcohol policies are implemented consistently, that is, applied equally to all workers at all levels – not employed arbitrarily.

Provisions to stand people down when they are a risk to themselves and others requires consideration of industrial requirements.

Infectious Diseases

Nobody should be disadvantaged, discriminated against nor have personal confidentiality breached because they contract a disease.

If a person has an infectious disease such as hepatitis, HIV/AIDS or tuberculosis, they cannot be discriminated against. This would be a case of disability discrimination under Equal Opportunity laws.

An employer cannot:

- make a worker have a blood test because they have an infectious disease,
- isolate, dismiss or segregate a worker because they have an infectious disease,
- breach a worker's confidentiality or privacy because they believe that others 'have a right to know' about the disease for their own safety, or
- treat a worker badly because they believe that they use drugs or engage in other high-risk behaviour which caused the disease.

If an employer or workmate tells anyone else about another person's infectious disease without that person's permission, it may also be a breach of privacy laws – and any discrimination that followed from such a 'leak' would be illegal.

The duty to safeguard the health of employees now specifically covers psychological as well as physical health.

Of course, every workplace is different, and it may be necessary to make some changes to a worker's duties if a their health condition creates a risk to others, for example in food handling.

Each workplace should have a policy in place regarding this matter. Consultation in the development of this policy is essential.

A policy should be developed before there is an incident, and should include such things as:

- identifying the risks associated with an infected person working in particular jobs,
- the most fair and equitable way to re-deploy someone who may be a risk,
- systems for the protection of the worker's privacy,
- education and training,
- establishment of an employee assistance program (EAP),
- responsibility for implementation, and
- evaluation of the policy.

Preventing Stress in the Workplace

Work-related stress is an increasing health and welfare issue, and the transport industry is prominent among industries whose workers are susceptible to stress and its effects.

The nature of transport work (that is, transactions, times, costs etc.) and the demands that are placed on people as a result induce constant work pressures.

Bullying and harassment are also sources of stress (see the next page for more on this issue).

The most effective way to deal with stress is through a strategic focus on prevention.

This means putting tangible solutions in place to prevent stress. Each workplace should have a policy in place to prevent, as far as possible, the issues associated with stress *before* they manifest themselves.

Consultation in the development of this policy is essential.

Developing a Policy

Initially, a risk assessment should be carried out to identify what may cause stress in the workplace.

This could include things like:

- workloads and work organisation,
- use of technology,
- introduction of change,
- communication,
- workplace culture, that is, norms in the workplace about choices and the way decisions are made,
- participation and decision making,

- extent of control over work methods such as work pace, working hours and work environment,
- workplace leadership,
- job security, status, pay, support and demands,
- the relationship between home and work,
- performance management systems,
- interpersonal relationships, and
- customer interaction.

In addition to identifying the causes of stress and implementing controls, any policy should incorporate the following considerations:

- senior management support,
- consultation mechanisms,
- active participation of employees,
- privacy and confidentiality,
- education and training,
- publicising the policy,
- establishment of an employee assistance program (EAP),
- careful design of jobs and systems of work,
- responsibility for implementation, and
- evaluation of the policy.

It is important to emphasise a primary focus at an organisational level, rather than a personal level to avoid stress being seen as “whingeing”.

Workplace Bullying and Harassment

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety.

Within this definition:

- 'Unreasonable behaviour' means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would expect to victimise, humiliate, undermine or threaten.
- 'Behaviour' includes actions of individuals or a group, and may involve using a system of work as a means of victimising, humiliating, undermining or threatening.
- 'Risk to health and safety' includes risk to the mental or physical health of an employee.

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, could be considered bullying:

- verbal abuse,
- excluding or isolating employees,
- psychological harassment,
- intimidation,
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job,
- giving employees impossible assignments,
- deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees, and/or
- deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance.

This list is not exhaustive. Other types of behaviour may also constitute bullying.

▼ **The recommendations in WorkSafe's bullying guidance material should be implemented in all workplaces.**

Bullying and harassment are occupational health and safety issues.

First Aid

In determining appropriate first aid facilities and suitably trained people, employers may consider the following systematic approach:

- ❶ identify the causes of work injury and work-related illness,
- ❷ assess the risk of work injuries and work-related illness occurring,
- ❸ determine the appropriate first aid facilities and training, and
- ❹ evaluate the first aid facilities and training.

Where there are separate work areas, it may be appropriate to locate first aid facilities centrally and to provide portable first aid kits in each work area.

Working Away from Main Premises

Where employees work away from their employer's premises, the employer will need to consider other factors including:

- whether employees work alone or in groups,
- employees' access to telephone and emergency radio communications, and
- the nature of the work being performed.

In these situations, an employer should consider providing small, portable first aid kits to employees. Employees should be informed about the contents of these kits, their location and access arrangements.

Drivers on the Road

Employers should have procedures in place for assisting drivers involved in road crashes. These procedures should include on-site crash assistance, vehicle and product recovery, as well as professional trauma counselling and return-to-work plans for affected employees.

Overtime and Shifts

Where work occurs in more than one shift, first aid facilities should be available whenever there are people at work.

The number of people working overtime is often fewer than on a regular shift, but additional hours of work can heighten fatigue. This may increase the risk of accidents and injuries.

An employer should ensure that, when overtime or shift work is being performed, appropriate first aid facilities and services are available for the number of people working each shift.

Working Alone

Particular care needs to be taken if you are working on your own, as accidents and incidents can happen when nobody is there to help, for example:

- robbery (e.g. cash in transit),
- abusive customers (e.g. carrying passengers),
- assaults,
- road rage,
- hijacking (e.g. carrying a valuable load),
- crashes,
- fire and explosion,
- traffic,
- animal attacks (e.g. carrying livestock),
- slips and falls (e.g. securing a load in transit),
- health complaints (e.g. heart attack, asthma attack), or
- vehicle fumes.

Establishing a safe workplace for lone workers is no different to providing a safe workplace for other employees. As with all other risks, a risk assessment should be carried out and control measures put in place. Some tasks will be well known to be high risk (like changing a tyre on the roadside), while others (such as hijacking) may not be expected but are possible.

Some controls could include:

- reorganising work processes to provide more safety,
- electronic and/or visual monitors,
- use of barriers between customers and drivers,
- working in teams or with 'buddies',
- making sure there is more than one safe exit,
- training in particular tasks and high-risk areas,
- ensuring that only experienced staff carry out high-risk tasks,
- periodical checks to make sure people are safe,
- provision of personal protective equipment and first aid kits,
- implementing methods of indirect supervision, for example, a worker on-the-road ringing in to let someone know they're about to perform a particular high-risk task, and
- making sure that workers are physically fit enough to carry out their tasks.

The provision of personal alarms and communications equipment is also worth exploring, although use of these methods alone have their faults – if a person is seriously incapacitated, they may not be able to use these systems.

In addition, there should be a policy, as well as training, in place so that a worker who has to carry out high-risk tasks, or is caught in an emergency situation knows exactly what to do.

Failure to provide adequate information, instruction and training to workers *prior* to them starting work alone would fail to satisfy the employer's general duty of care under OHS laws.

Noise

Exposure to excessive levels of noise in the workplace can damage your hearing, leaving you with lifelong disabilities such as permanent hearing loss and tinnitus.

Steps must be taken in workplaces to reduce employees' noise exposure to below the levels of noise exposure standards. This can be done by developing a noise control plan.

Solutions

Some of the methods that can be used to reduce noise levels include:

- getting rid of noisy plant which is no longer needed,
- eliminating noisy processes that are no longer needed or do not add value,
- outsourcing noisy processes,
- using better or more precise methods so noisy processes are not necessary,
- purchasing quieter equipment (make noise one of the considerations for all new equipment purchases),
- eliminating impacts between hard objects or surfaces,
- using absorbent linings on surfaces to cushion the fall or impact of objects,
- fitting exhaust mufflers and silencers,
- isolating noise sources,

- ensuring moving parts are properly maintained (e.g. lubrication),
- building enclosures or sound-proof covers around noise sources,
- fitting sound-absorbing materials on hard, reflective surfaces,
- increasing the distance between noise sources and workers,
- doing noisy work outside normal working hours, and
- rotation of employees between noisy and quiet jobs.

Hearing Protectors

If noise levels cannot be reduced sufficiently to ensure that workers are not at risk, hearing protectors may be used.

Employers should ensure that hearing protectors are regularly inspected and maintained. Employees should also inspect hearing protectors regularly to detect damage or deterioration.

Adequate provision should be made for clean storage of protectors when not in use. Facilities should be readily available for the cleaning of reusable protectors. Hearing protection devices should be cleaned and disinfected according to the manufacturer's instruction.

Vibration

Vibration refers to a shaking that travels through structures (e.g. road vehicles, power tools, aircraft), and from there, through the human body. Excessive vibration is a serious issue and can result in permanent disability, including:

- white finger (also known as dead finger), that is, damage to hands causing whiteness and pain in the fingers,

- carpal tunnel syndrome and other symptoms similar to occupational overuse syndrome,
- sensory nerve damage,
- muscle and joint damage in the hands and arms,
- lower back pain (damage to vertebrae, discs and ligaments loosened by shaking),
- motion sickness,
- bone damage,
- varicose veins and heart conditions (caused by a variation in blood pressure from vibration), and
- stomach and digestive conditions.

The likelihood of any of these conditions occurring can be affected by such variables as:

- the length of exposure time,
- the frequency of exposure,
- the rate at which the vibration happens, and
- the size of the vibration.


In the transport industry, exposure to high levels of vibration often occurs with regard to engines, springs and tyres.

A risk assessment should be carried out with regard to vibration, and control measures put in place. Some of these could include:

- proper maintenance of equipment (for example, properly tuned engines, suspension checks, and appropriate seating in vehicles),
- appropriate work schedules with adequate rest periods,
- purchase of ergonomic equipment,
- working methods that require less exposure to vibration,

- the use of auxiliary equipment that reduces the risk of injury caused by vibration,
- appropriate design and layout of workplaces,
- clothing to protect employees from cold and dampness,
- implementation of an appropriate health surveillance program where there is a high risk of exposure to vibration.

More Information on Health Priorities

 **Web search** (see inside front cover):
Drug and Alcohol Policy

- ▼ Field A: policy
- ▼ Field B: alcohol in the workplace
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Stress

- ▼ Field A: stress
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Bullying and Harassment

- ▼ Field A: bullying
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

First Aid

- ▼ Field A: first aid
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Working Alone

- ▼ Field A: safetyMAP
- ▼ Field B: alone
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Noise

- ▼ Field A: noise
- ▼ Field B: assessing and fixing
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au or
- ▼ Field B: other noise information
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Vibration

- ▼ Field A: vibration
- ▼ Field B: manual handling regulations
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Safety Priorities

Traffic Management

Normal road rules should apply to all site-traffic movements, including, in most instances, a set speed limit. This creates a common understanding and is highly beneficial for visitors to the site in understanding the protocol.

A management plan should be developed for all traffic movement in the workplace, in consultation with employees. Employee knowledge of problem areas and 'near miss' incidents should be used to comprehensively manage risks.

In addition, the following should apply:

- Clearly defined and constructed roadways to allow safe vehicle movements.
- Displaying a site-plan sign indicating roadways and traffic flow arrangements. Signs should be installed and speed limits applied to control vehicle movements.
- Using barriers to protect vulnerable equipment and pits or other hazards that are close to roadways.
- Providing separate, clearly marked pedestrian walkways. These should be protected by distance and/or physical barriers from vehicular traffic.
- Basing speed limits on reaction times and stopping distances. For example, blind corners give very little opportunity to react and stop, so speed limits should be set very low in these areas.
- Providing crossing controls where pedestrian traffic and vehicular traffic cross, for example, stop signs, pedestrian crossing markings and lights. 'Right of way' systems must be consistent and understood by pedestrians and drivers.
- Placing guard-rails where buildings or walkways open directly onto a vehicular roadway to ensure that pedestrians must first turn parallel to the roadway and can be seen by drivers.
- Avoiding the need for vehicles to reverse, where reasonably practicable. Ensure that warning devices and trained 'spotters' are used where vehicles *must* reverse or manoeuvre in a confined area or in the vicinity of pedestrians.
- Instructing all drivers in, and ensuring their understanding of, the traffic rules at the workplace. This is particularly important for drivers unfamiliar with the workplace.
- Ensuring that ground surfaces in dumping areas for bulk products in tip trucks are firm, stable and level.
- Ensuring that people wear high-visibility clothing when working in the vicinity of roadways.

Roadside Operations

Many tasks in the transport industry are carried out at the side of the road. These tasks include loading and unloading, changing tyres, and adjusting loads, to name a few. The risks associated with these operations can range from traffic accidents where a passing motorist doesn't allow enough room, to loads or vehicles falling on workers.

As with other operations, it is vital that roadside tasks be performed in a way that protects workers from harm.

A risk assessment needs to be carried out and control measures put in place. Policies need to be developed to guide workers who need to carry tasks out at the roadside. For example:

- a safe system for work when adjusting loads at the roadside,
- using the roadside as a workplace when loading and unloading.

Failure to provide adequate information, instruction and training to workers *prior* to them performing roadside work would fail to satisfy the employer's general duty of care under OHS laws.

Forklift Operations

Forklift operation is one of the most dangerous tasks at the workplace. To illustrate this:

- 50 forklift-related fatalities and more than 5,000 injuries occurred in Victoria's workplaces between 1985 and 2004. Critical risks included pedestrians near forklifts.
- 28 pedestrian deaths were caused by crushing from forklifts or dislodged loads.
- 15 operators were crushed in overturning forks or the equipment moving unexpectedly.
- 6 people died after falling from raised tines.

▼ Forklift braking and lifting capacities
■ must have sufficient safety margins to account for task, site and human variables.

Manual Handling

Manual handling covers a wide range of activities including lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, throwing and carrying. It includes repetitive tasks such as packing, manual loading and unloading, typing, assembling, cleaning and sorting, using hand tools and operating machinery and equipment.

Because most jobs involve some type of manual handling, most workers are at risk of manual handling injury.

Of course, not all manual handling tasks are hazardous, but it is significant that more than half of all workplace injuries are caused by manual handling.

Injuries that can Result from Manual Handling

Unsafe manual handling may cause a range of injuries and conditions including:

- muscle sprains and strains,
- injuries to muscles, ligaments, intervertebral discs and other structures in the back,
- injuries to soft tissues such as nerves, ligaments and tendons in the wrist, arms, shoulders, neck or legs,
- abdominal hernias, and
- chronic pain.

Some of these conditions are known as repetitive strain injury (RSI), occupational overuse syndrome (OOS), cumulative trauma disorder (CTD) and work-related musculoskeletal disorder (WRMSD).

In the Manual Handling regulations, all of these conditions are referred to as musculoskeletal disorders (MSD). The regulations define MSD as an injury, illness or disease that arises in whole or in part from manual handling in the workplace, whether occurring suddenly or over a prolonged period of time.

▼ The regulations say that manual handling risk assessments must be carried out for all hazardous manual handling tasks. Safety solutions that control the risk of injury must be put in place.

Working at Height

Falls while loading or unloading a truck are common injuries for truck drivers; fatalities have resulted from these types of falls.

Fall injuries while getting in or out of vehicles are also very common.

Making sure that vehicles incorporate safe access and loading systems in their design is the best way to control the risk of falls.

There are some excellent engineering solutions to the problems associated with people working at height. These systems typically incorporate the fundamental risk control principle of eliminating the risk by not having a person climbing on top of loads.

If work from the ground, platforms, docks or gantries is not practicable, then some form of harness should be worn.

A travel restraint system is better than a fall arrest system because travel restraint prevents you from reaching an edge to fall over. A fall arrest system stops you from hitting the ground if you do fall, and requires associated rescue procedures to be in place.

▼ Any fall can result in an injury, and falls from over two metres generate forces that can easily result in serious injury or death.

If people are required to work in areas where there is a risk of falling, employers must provide a safe method for people to get to and from, and move around that work area.

Working Near Overhead Wires or Underground Services

Work in the vicinity of gas mains, electricity power lines and other services can be hazardous. During the past two years, there have been three electricity-related deaths and many incidents around power lines on worksites in Victoria.

Safe work in the vicinity of overhead or underground services includes:

- Planning and doing the work so that you don't get too close – that is, maintaining a minimum clearance distance (for example, 132kV have bigger clearance distances than 11kV lines).
- Discovering the location and nature of services (for example, hidden underground services or high-voltage electricity lines).
- Obtaining all necessary permissions or authorisations from the owner of the asset (for example, if due to an emergency, your truck is within or near a clearance zone you must contact the asset owner). This includes:
 - ▼ Contacting the owner beforehand if you plan on working near the service, particularly if the asset is over 66kV voltage.
 - ▼ Notifying the asset owner if you do anything that affects their assets or affects the stability of the immediate area.
- Making your plant and equipment safer, for example by installing a chain that will conduct electricity to earth, or using non-conductive footwear, etc.
- Making your load safe, so it does not penetrate or contact services.

**In an emergency,
ring 000
for police, fire and/or
ambulance**

Examples of hazardous situations include:

- raising a tipper load under a power line,
- stopping at the roadside to adjust a load and throwing over a chain or tie-down that nearly hits a power line, or
- a truck, load or forklift parked at the roadside being unloaded and hitting a nearby gas line.

Current legislation governs worksites and operating cranes, plant and equipment including excavation equipment, reach mowers etc., near power lines. The laws include Network Asset regulations, the Gas Safety Act, and the Pipelines Act, and associated relevant codes, guidelines and rules.

When operating plant or equipment near overhead or underground services, care must be taken to ensure clearance distances are maintained. Often these are called 'no-go zones' and vehicles and plant items may not encroach within a no-go zone unless particular safety rules are followed.

These rules include requirements relating to:

- earthing the vehicle,
- the height of the working envelope and the transit envelope,
- ability of the equipment to limit encroachment, and
- use of a safety observer or spotter.

Waste Management

The waste management industry faces particular risks in its day-to-day operations. The risks associated with working near overhead wires are particularly high in this industry. Waste industry contractors face daily risks when lifting residential and commercial bins and skips near overhead power lines.

WorkSafe has developed a number of documents to help workers in the waste management industry to do their jobs safely:

- *Safe Handling of Industrial Waste, Non-Hazardous Waste and Recyclable Materials,*
- *Prevention of Falls in the Transport of Waste and Recyclables*
- *Waste Industry Guide for Working Near Overhead Electrical Cables*

All waste contractors and others in the industry should have copies of these guides and make themselves familiar with their content. To obtain copies, go to www.worksafe.vic.gov.au, and:

- select 'publications',
- then 'view publications' and
- use the dropdown window in 'publications by category' to select 'waste management'

More Information on Safety Priorities

 www.workcover.vic.gov.au

 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

- ▼ Field A: statement of health and safety
- ▼ Field B: safety policy
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Load Management and Restraint

Vehicle loads that are not secured adequately or correctly can cause serious crashes and injury. At the very least, insecure loads can cause traffic congestion and driver frustration.

As an owner and/or driver, you are responsible for ensuring that any load carried on your vehicle is securely restrained. This means that the load:

- must not be placed in a way that makes the vehicle unsafe or unstable,
- must be secured so that it is unlikely to fall or be dislodged from the vehicle, and
- must be restrained by an appropriate method.

Principles for Restraining Loads

To restrain your load adequately:

- choose a vehicle that is appropriate for the load being carried,
- place and position the load correctly on the vehicle,
- select suitable restraint equipment to hold the load carried,
- check lashings after loading the vehicle, as well as periodically during the journey, and
- provide adequate restraint to prevent movement (the load restraint system used must be able to restrain the forces detailed in the national *Load Restraint Guide – Second Edition*).

More Information on Load Restraint

- 📖 *Load Restraint Guide – Second Edition*, available for purchase from the VicRoads Bookshop, any VicRoads Registration and Licensing Office, or the VicRoads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- 🔗 National Transport Commission – www.ntc.gov.au
- 🔗 VicRoads – www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

Load Restraint Performance Standards

Loads must be restrained to prevent unacceptable movement during all expected conditions of operation. The load restraint system must be capable of withstanding the forces that would result if the laden vehicle were subjected to each of the following separately:

- 0.8 'g' deceleration in a forward direction,
- 0.5 'g' deceleration in a rearward direction,
- 0.5 'g' acceleration in a lateral direction,

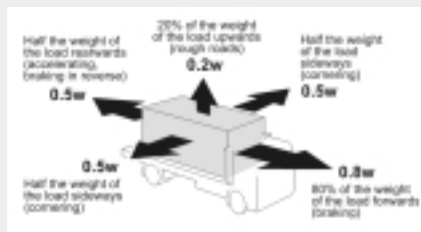
and to

0.2 'g' acceleration relative to the load in a vertical direction.

Note: 'g' (the acceleration due to gravity), is equal to 9.81 metres/sec/sec for the purpose of these standards.

(*w* = weight of the load)

The load restraint system will meet the Regulation Performance Standards, if the load doesn't shift when subjected to forces illustrated below:



Source: Section A and F of *Load Restraint Guide Second Edition 2004* as published by National Transport Commission

Fatigue

Fatigue is a common problem in all areas of the freight and logistics industry.

It can be defined as loss of alertness, which eventually results in sleep, with sleep being the end point in a steady and predictable drop-off in brain function.

This loss of alertness is accompanied by poor judgement, slower reactions to events and decreased skill, such as in vehicle control.

It affects the efficiency and productivity of an employee's performance in carrying out their tasks.

▼ **Research has found that an estimated 30% of fatal truck crashes are due to fatigue.**

Fatigue can result from long or arduous work, little or poor sleep, and the time of day when sleep is taken or work is performed.



Sleep is the only cure for fatigue.

It can be influenced by health and emotional issues, or by these factors in combination.

Importantly, fatigue impairs a person's judgement of their own state of fatigue. This means that effective management of fatigue cannot be the responsibility of the employee alone.

Fatigue can affect anybody, but it is a particular risk for drivers.

Reasons for Fatigue While Driving

There are many reasons for fatigue, and some of the things that can affect the likelihood of a driver suffering from it include the following:

- Driver's recent work history:
 - hours worked,
 - number of shifts,
 - hours of sleep,
 - hours of rest.
- Personal factors:
 - age,
 - experience,
 - health,
 - lifestyle.
- Trip characteristics:
 - trip length,
 - number/timing of breaks,
 - time of day (high risk exists especially between 2.00am-6.00am and 1.00pm-3.00pm 'circadian low'),
 - other work requirements, e.g. loading, unloading,
 - road conditions.

Dealing with Driver Fatigue

Flexible work schedules can help to minimise the risk of fatigue. Suggested solutions include:

- schedules organised as far as possible in advance,
- opportunities for drivers to swap shifts,
- recognition of circadian ‘lows’,
- recognition of risks associated with swing-shift type arrangements,
- regular rest breaks, and
- adequate rest breaks.

Work scheduling should not be the sole responsibility of dispatchers, consignors, managers and supervisors. Drivers should also be involved in developing their own rosters.

State legislation covers issues such as driving hours, and all companies must comply with this legislation.

The use of illicit drugs to combat fatigue is illegal and contributes to crashes. An employer who in any way encourages a driver to use illicit drugs to combat fatigue is breaking the law.

Random roadside drug screening has been introduced in Victoria to test for several illicit drugs known to impair driver performance. Drivers who use these drugs may be caught and prosecuted.

Driving Hours

It must be remembered that regulated driving hours are not the only safety factor for which you need to have regard.

All driving – long distance and local, regardless of the road authorities’ requirements to maintain a logbook – is a health matter that must be monitored by employers and others in the chain of responsibility.

Fatigue is directly related to high injury and fatality rates.

Prior planning and scheduling of work must consider the fatigue-related demands in its performance.

It is expected that every employer’s planning and scheduling demonstrates this at all times. It is also expected that the execution of the schedule by drivers and those in the transport chain demonstrates this at all times.

A smart approach to fatigue management is to link logbook and vehicle operation requirements with truck computer and consignment systems.

More Information on Fatigue

- 🔗 VicRoads:
www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- 🔗 Transport Workers Union:
www.twu.asn.au
- 🔗 National Occupational Health and Safety Commission:
www.nohsc.gov.au
- 🔗 National Transport Commission:
www.ntc.gov.au
- 🔗 **Web search** (see inside front cover):
 - ▼ Field A: fatigue
 - ▼ Field B: fatigue
 - ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au
- National Occupational Health and Safety Commission:**
 - ▼ Field B: shiftwork
 - ▼ Field C: www.nohsc.gov.au

Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances

'Dangerous Goods' vs 'Hazardous Substances'

Don't confuse dangerous goods with hazardous substances – they are classified according to different criteria.

■ **Dangerous goods** are substances that may be corrosive, flammable, explosive, spontaneously combustible, toxic, oxidising, or water-reactive.

Dangerous goods are classified on the basis of immediate physical or chemical effects. These goods can be deadly and can seriously damage property and the environment.

They are labelled with class symbols (diamond shaped) to alert you to the dangers. Dangerous goods are divided into different classes (1-9) and the symbols refer to the main dangers of each class of dangerous goods.

■ **Hazardous substances** are substances that have the potential to harm human health. They may be solids, liquids or gases; they may be pure or mixtures. When used in the workplace, these substances often generate vapours, fumes, dusts and mists.

Hazardous substances may cause immediate or long-term health effects. Exposure to these substances may result in poisoning, irritation, chemical burns, sensitisation, cancer, birth defects or diseases of certain organs such as the skin, lungs, liver, kidneys and nervous system. The severity of the health effects

depends on the substance and the dose absorbed.

Dangerous goods and hazardous substances are covered by separate legislation, each focusing on controlling the different risks described above.

Since many hazardous substances are also classified as dangerous goods, the requirements of both pieces of legislation apply in these cases.

Each piece of legislation complements the other, effectively ensuring the comprehensive control of all risks.

Specific legislation also applies to the transport of dangerous goods, including:

- *Road Transport (Dangerous Goods) Act 1995,*
- *Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1997* (Commonwealth),
- *Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2000,* and
- *Dangerous Goods (Rail) Regulations 1998.*

The Commonwealth regulations above specifically reference the *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* (ADG Code) and both are in turn adopted in Victorian legislation. The ADG Code also provides specifications for marking, labelling and packaging of dangerous goods.

Transport of dangerous goods is covered opposite.

Employers' duties are identical for dangerous goods and hazardous substances.

Manufacturers and/or suppliers of either dangerous goods or hazardous substances are required to identify all dangerous goods and hazardous substances, label them appropriately and comply with the legislation.

Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)

Manufacturers and suppliers must also provide MSDSs for all dangerous goods and hazardous substances they either manufacture or supply.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) must be kept up to date (reviewed every five years) and taken into account for risk assessment and risk control purposes.

Employers must keep a register of all dangerous goods and hazardous substances.

If dangerous goods quantities exceed various thresholds as identified in Schedule 2 of the *Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations*, the occupier may be required to:

- have a manifest,
- display placarding and HAZCHEM signage,
- notify the Victorian WorkCover Authority on 13 23 60,
- obtain a fire protection report, and
- develop a written emergency plan.

Report incidents to the Victorian WorkCover Authority on 13 23 60.

There are some exceptions for dangerous goods moving through a depot (called 'in transit' in the regulations). You should check the details in the regulations if you manage a transport depot.

The following must be in place:

- documented safe work procedures, and
- appropriate training and information.

When there is an escape, spillage or leakage of any dangerous goods:

- the incident must be reported to the Victorian WorkCover Authority on 13 23 60,
- the incident must be investigated,
- the investigation must be recorded, and
- a review must be made of the risk assessment and control measures.

Employers may also be required to carry out atmospheric monitoring or health surveillance under certain circumstances.

Transporting Dangerous Goods

There are specific requirements for consignors, contractors and vehicle owners.

A consignor is identified on the shipping document as hiring a contractor to carry dangerous goods. The consignor is responsible for the goods before they are transported, and the contractor is responsible for the goods during transport.

The vehicle owner may be a sole, joint or part owner of a vehicle and may have possession of the vehicle under credit, lease or other arrangements. An owner may also be a consignor or a contractor.

Obligations for those responsible for the safe transport of dangerous goods include:

- signage,
- using suitable vehicles,

- safe loading and stowage,
- segregation requirements,
- load restraint,
- shipping documents,
- safety information and equipment, and
- emergency planning and response.

Dangerous goods must not be transported along prohibited routes. Information on these routes is available from the Victorian WorkCover Authority.

If transporting bulk dangerous goods, then the trailer or vehicle, if not articulated, must be licensed. The driver must also hold a current dangerous goods driver licence. Some exemptions apply for Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBCs).

'Bulk' means a container with a capacity of more than 500L for class 2 (gases) or, for other classes, a container of more than 450L capacity or 400kg capacity.

Drivers of vehicles transporting dangerous goods also have specific legislative requirements including:

- obtaining licences when transporting bulk dangerous goods,
- ensuring the load/stowage is secure,
- displaying placards to identify dangerous goods (where required),
- carrying shipping documents,
- taking special care while driving,
- carrying safety information and equipment (where required),
- responding to emergencies.

When your load is determined as a placard load, you must have safety equipment in the cabin, including:

- fire extinguishers,
- portable warning devices, and
- special clothing and safety equipment.

Refer to the *Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1997* (Commonwealth) and the ADG Code for specific criteria to determine placarding requirements.

For securing loads, as required by the ADG Code, reference must also be made to the Load Restraint Guide.

Transport of explosives (Class 1 dangerous goods) is covered by the *Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2000* and the transport of radioactive material, (Class 7 dangerous goods) is administered by the Department of Human Services.

Some workplaces holding very large quantities of dangerous goods are licensed under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Major Hazard Facilities) Regulations 2000* and have particular security, transport and storage requirements.

Transport operators should expect these to be covered in contractual arrangements, site induction and training, etc.

More information on Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances

📖 *Occupational Health and Safety (Major Hazard Facilities) Regulations 2000*

📖 *Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1997*

📖 *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* (ADG Code, 6th Edition)

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

Dangerous Goods

- ▼ Field B: dangerous goods
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Hazardous Substances

- ▼ Field B: hazardous substances
- ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au

Fire Prevention/Emergency Evacuation Procedures

A program of regular inspections should be implemented to ensure control of fire hazards.

All fire control equipment must be checked and maintained on a regular basis in accordance with AS1851.

A program to respond to emergency situations, on and off site, should be developed and implemented in all areas of a company's operations.

Thorough planning is required to deal with potential emergencies such as fatal, serious and dangerous occurrences, fire threats and the need for evacuation.

Emergency programs need to consider aspects such as the following:

- Emergency response plans and procedures should be developed and implemented. These should be appropriate for the types of emergency situations likely to be faced by the company.
- Site plans should be prepared. These should include contact numbers, a system for emergency lighting, designation of safe exit routes, and information for emergency services on hazards present.
- Specific formalised training should be conducted on emergency systems and evacuation procedures for all employees. Emergency drills should be conducted at least annually and take into account all likely emergency situations.

- A detailed inspection program should be implemented, covering potential hazards, warning systems and evacuation procedures, and the location of designated meeting areas for head counts, etc.
- Plans should consider liaison with external authorities (including police, fire brigade and other emergency services, organisations, hospitals, councils, public utilities, etc.). Training exercises should include liaison with these outside services and organisations where appropriate.
- Suitable personnel should be appointed and trained as fire wardens and area wardens.
- Site emergency plans and procedures should be a standard part of any induction process for new employees.
- Procedures should also be developed for off-site accidents including rollovers and roadside work.

More Information on Fire Prevention and Emergency Evacuation Procedures

- 📖 AS 3745 – Australian Standard: Emergency Control Organisation and Procedures for Buildings, Structures and Workplaces.
- 📖 AS 1851 – Australian Standard: Maintenance of Fire Protection Equipment.

Personal Protective Equipment

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE) should always be seen as a last resort, to be employed only as an interim measure or used in conjunction with other measures.

Protective clothing and equipment differs from all other hazard-control techniques in that they *must be consciously employed by the worker*. PPE is not part of a machine or process, but an extension of a worker's own bodily protection.

Employers must provide information, instruction, training and supervision in the correct fit, use and maintenance of all PPE.

PPE includes such items of clothing as:

- overalls,
- helmets,
- gloves,
- boots, and
- aprons.

It includes such items of equipment as:

- earplugs and earmuffs,
- respirators,
- goggles,
- safety glasses, and
- welder's masks and shields.

In a properly controlled working environment, a worker should not need any PPE at all.

In fact, for every part of the worker's body that may be exposed to hazards, there is an item of PPE available on the market.

As a minimum, the following protective clothing and equipment should be used:

- safety footwear with non-conductive soles,
- high-visibility vests and/or shirts, and
- protective eyewear.

Special personal protective equipment may be needed in some hazardous situations, for example, working near power lines. This could include:

- earth chains (vehicle-mounted cranes, EWPs, concrete placing booms, etc.),
- safety helmets,
- rubber mats (vehicle-mounted cranes, concrete placing booms, etc.),
- shielded operator stations, and
- other appropriate safety apparel as required.

More Information on Personal Protective Equipment

📖 AS 1678 – Australian Standard: Emergency Procedure Guide

🔍 **Web search** (see inside front cover):

- ▼ Field B: personal protective equipment
 - ▼ Field C: www.workcover.vic.gov.au
- National Occupational Health and Safety Commission**
- ▼ Field B: SAA HB9
 - ▼ Field C: nohsc.gov.au

Conclusion

This Guide recognises that workers face many risks in the transport and ancillary industries. It provides a background and broad perspective on transport industry safety issues. The health and safety issues and priorities identified in the Guide are those identified by the industry through consultative seminars.

The introduction of chain of responsibility provisions has been a critical turning point in the transport industry safety landscape, and these principles are strongly supported by transport workers and the wider transport industry.

Chain of responsibility legislation requires that if you use road transport as part of your business, you share responsibility for ensuring that breaches of road laws do not occur.

Occupational health and safety legislation requires employers to be able to demonstrate that they have in place, as far as reasonably practicable, the necessary systems, policies, procedures and safe work practices to safely manage these risks so no-one comes to harm.

The effective management of risk is a key ingredient in improving occupational health and safety performance. As discussed, this requires a deliberate and ongoing commitment to – and accountability for – the level of health and safety performance within the areas of control of individual managers and workers. In this regard, consultation, communication and feedback are essential.

This Guide has explored in some detail the systems required for the effective management of occupational health and

safety. Strategies and procedures that relate to levels of safety in the workplace must involve as a minimum:

- involved and committed team management,
- clear accountability of line managers, supervisors, workers and contractors for health and safety,
- effective mechanisms for consultation and representation,
- a health and safety policy and supporting procedures available to all staff, and
- induction and training programs that enable management, workers and contractors to carry out their respective roles and to meet their occupational health and safety duties and responsibilities.

Workplaces should be systematically assessed and investigated to determine the levels of risk to which workers are exposed. There is a legal obligation to consult with Health & Safety Representatives. The input of workers and contractors in devising and implementing risk control measures is also essential.

Effective occupational health and safety management occurs when a company, its workforce and industry stakeholders work co-operatively to develop policies, systems and procedures to eliminate or minimise risk. The Transport Industry Safety Group (TISG) has been integral in promoting an industry-wide approach to occupational health and safety.

The development of this Guide, a culmination of specialist working parties and industry wide seminars, was a major early initiative by the TISG and was first developed in 1997. It has since been updated and reprinted three times.

Reference Material

■ OH&S Act 2004

- OH&S (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999
- OH&S (Noise) Regulations 2004
- OH&S (Certification of Plant Users and Operators) Regulations 1994
- OH&S (Plant) Regulations 1995
- OH&S (Major Hazard Facilities) Regulations 2000
- OH&S (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2000
- OH&S (Prevention of Falls) Regulations 2003

■ Road Safety Act 1986

- Road Safety (Drivers) Regulations 1999
- Road Safety (General) Regulations 1999
- Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 1999
- Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1999

■ Dangerous Goods

- Dangerous Goods Act 1985
- Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail (ADG Code, 6th Edition)

- Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Act 1995 – Commonwealth
- Road Transport Reform (Dangerous Goods) Regulations 1997 – Commonwealth
- Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000
- Dangerous Goods (Explosives) Regulations 2000
- Dangerous Goods (Transport by Rail) Regulations 1998

■ Guidelines

- Guidelines for the Collection, Transport and Unloading of Non-Hazardous Waste and Recycling Materials
- Safe Handling of Industrial Waste
- Proper Management of Waste (Various)
- Supply Chain Guides

Other Guidance Material

For further information, go to:

- www.workcover.vic.gov.au
- www.nohsc.gov.au
- other States' workcover sites.

Organisations & Contacts

Victorian WorkCover Authority

WorkCover manages Victoria's workplace safety system and provides services including:

- injury compensation,
- emergency response,
- advice, information and education,
- licensing and certification, and
- publications.

WorkSafe

WorkSafe is the prevention arm of WorkCover.

Contact WorkSafe Victoria Advisory Service
 Level 24, 222 Exhibition Street
 Melbourne 3000
 Phone: (03) 9641 1444 or 1800 136 089

WorkSafe Victoria Offices:

- Ballarat: 5338 4444
- Bendigo: 5443 8866
- Dandenong: 8792 9000
- Geelong: 5226 1200
- Melbourne: 9941 0558
- Mildura: 5021 4001
- Mulgrave: 9565 9444
- Preston: 9485 4555
- Shepparton: 5831 8260
- Traralgon: 5174 8900
- Wangaratta: 5721 8588
- Warrnambool: 5564 3200

Transport Workers Union (Vic/Tas Branch)

The Victorian Branch Occupational Health and Safety Unit provides advice and assistance to Union members and employers in meeting the Duty of Care.

Services include:

- safety audits,
- systems analysis,
- safety training, and
- environmental auditing.

Contact: 52-56 Rouse Street
Port Melbourne Vic 3207
Website: www.twu.asn.au
E-mail: info@twu.asn.au
Phone: (03) 8290 0600 or
1300 727 614

Victorian Transport Association

Through its associated company, Latus Pty Ltd, the VTA provides management advice and assistance to all companies in identifying and complying with their due diligence obligations under the various relevant Acts and regulations. Services include:

- chain of responsibility checklists,
- due diligence audits,
- document and procedure development,
- workplace training,
- dangerous goods and forklift licensing,

Victorian Waste Management Association (VWMA)

A sub-group of the VTA, the VWMA is the peak industry body in Victoria, providing expert advice in all areas of proper waste management, including specific training for industry.

Contact: Wirraway Drive
Fishermans Bend
Phone: (03) 9646 8590
Fax: (03) 9646 8596
Website: www.vta.com.au

VicRoads

The Road Corporation (VicRoads), in partnership with other transport agencies, local government and the Victoria Police, manages the road system. Functions include vehicle regulation, driver licensing and road user information.

Contact: Phone 13 11 74
Head Office: ph (03) 9854 2666
Website: www.vicroads.vic.gov.au

Victoria Police

The Traffic and Transport Services Department administers the law relating to traffic and motor vehicles, and provides support in fields such as traffic law enforcement and traffic control. The department is represented on the Transport Industry Safety Group.

Contact: Victoria Police Centre
637 Flinders Street
Melbourne 3000
Phone: (03) 9247 5762

Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC)

Contact: Building 70, Monash University,
Victoria 3800 Australia
Phone (03) 9905 4371
Website: www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc

Bus Association Victoria

The BAV is an employer association representing the views and interests of almost all private bus and coach businesses throughout Victoria. It provides advice, information and practical training in OHS to managers, supervisors and employees.

Contact: 450 Graham Street
Port Melbourne Vic 3207
Phone: (03) 9645 3300
Fax: (03) 9645 4455
Website: www.busvic.asn.au

Further advice

Further advice in understanding the implications of this document and practical assistance in devising and implementing strategies and programs to meet the OHS Duty of Care are available from:

- the Transport Workers Union, or
- Latus Pty Ltd (a joint venture company of the Victorian Transport Association).

About the Transport Industry Safety Group:

The Transport Industry Safety Group was established to develop and facilitate an industry approach to occupational health and safety following coronial inquests in relation to fatalities in the transport industry. It comprises representatives from VicRoads, Transport Workers Union (Vic/Tas Branch), Transport Accident Commission, WorkSafe Victoria, Victorian Transport Association, Victoria Police, Bus Association of Victoria, Monash University Accident Research Centre and the Victorian Waste Management Association.

Officials:

Chairman: Philip Lovel,
Victorian Transport Association

Vice Chairman: Bill Noonan,
Transport Workers Union
Vic/Tas Branch

Secretary: Richard Lambert,
Bus Association Victoria

Treasurer: Don Hogben, VicRoads

This Guide proudly developed by:



VICTORIAN WORKCOVER AUTHORITY



VICTORIA POLICE



victorian
waste management association

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