



Government of South Australia

SafeWork SA

Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work

Code of Practice

February 2026

OFFICIAL

This code is based on a national Model Code of Practice developed by Safe Work Australia under the national harmonisation of work health and safety legislation and has been approved under section 274 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA), following the legislated consultation.

This code of practice commenced in South Australia on 19 February 2026, the date it was published in the Government Gazette.

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Contact information

Safe Work Australia | info@swa.gov.au | www.swa.gov.au

Contents

Foreword	5
1 Introduction	6
1.1 Psychosocial hazards at work	6
1.2 Work health and safety duties	7
1.3 Consultation	11
2 Overview of the process to manage psychosocial risks	17
3 Identify psychosocial hazards	19
3.1 Common psychosocial hazards	19
3.2 How to identify psychosocial hazards	24
4 Assess the risks	28
4.1 When should a risk assessment be conducted?	28
4.2 How to assess psychosocial risks	28
5 Control the risks	30
5.1 Matters to consider when controlling risks	30
5.2 Eliminating risks	32
5.3 Minimising risks	33
5.4 Combining risk controls	36
5.5 Implementing control measures	37
6 Review control measures	40
7 Recording the risk management process and outcomes	42
8 Responding to reports, complaints or incidents	43
9 Conducting work health and safety investigations	47
Appendix A – Job characteristics, design and management	49
Job demands	49
Fatigue	52
Low job control	53
Job insecurity	56
Poor support	57
Lack of role clarity	60
Poor organisational change management	62
Inadequate recognition and reward	63
Poor organisational justice	65
Traumatic events or material	67
Remote or isolated work	69
Intrusive surveillance	70
Poor physical environment	71
Appendix B – Harmful behaviours	72

Identifying harmful behaviours	72
Controlling risks from harmful behaviours	75
Appendix C - Risk register.....	79
Appendix D: Case studies	80
Scenario 1: Health and social care – home care services	80
Scenario 2: Health and social care – residential aged care	83
Scenario 3: Call centre	86
Scenario 4: First responders – firefighters.....	89
Scenario 5: Public sector department	92
Scenario 6: Small family-owned retail outlet.....	95
Scenario 7: Transport	98

Foreword

This Code of Practice on managing psychosocial hazards at work is an approved code of practice under section 274 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2012 \(SA\)](#) (the WHS Act). An approved code of practice provides practical guidance on how to achieve the standards of work health and safety required under the WHS Act and the [Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 \(SA\)](#) (the WHS Regulations), and effective ways to identify and manage risks.

A code of practice can assist anyone who has a duty of care in the circumstances described in the code of practice. Following an approved code of practice will assist the duty holder to achieve compliance with the health and safety duties in the WHS Act and WHS Regulations, in relation to the subject matter of the code of practice. Like regulations, codes of practice deal with particular issues and may not cover all relevant hazards or risks. The health and safety duties require duty holders to consider all risks associated with work, not only those for which regulations and codes of practice exist.

Codes of practice are admissible in court proceedings under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations. Courts may regard a code of practice as evidence of what is known about a hazard, risk, risk assessment or risk control and may rely on the code in determining what is reasonably practicable in the circumstances to which the code of practice relates. For further information see the Safe Work Australia Interpretive Guideline: [The meaning of 'reasonably practicable'](#).

Compliance with the WHS Act and WHS Regulations may be achieved by following another method if it provides an equivalent or higher standard of work health and safety than the code.

An inspector may refer to an approved code of practice when issuing an improvement or prohibition notice.

Scope and application

This Code is intended to be read by a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU). It provides practical guidance to PCBUs on how to manage psychosocial health and safety risks at work.

This Code may be a useful reference for other persons interested in the duties under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations.

This Code applies to the performance of work and to all workplaces covered by the WHS Act.

How to use this Code of Practice

This Code includes references to the legal requirements under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations. These are included for convenience only and should not be relied on in place of the full text of the WHS Act or WHS Regulations.

The words 'must', 'requires' or 'mandatory' indicate a legal requirement exists and must be complied with.

The word 'should' is used in this Code to indicate a recommended course of action, while 'may' is used to indicate an optional course of action.

1 Introduction

The WHS Act defines 'health' as both physical and psychological health. This means that where the WHS Act imposes a duty in relation to 'health', PCBUs must manage risks to both physical and psychological health, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Risks to psychological health are known as psychosocial risks. The WHS Regulation defines psychosocial risks as a risk to the health and safety of a worker or other person from a psychosocial hazard.

Psychosocial hazards can cause psychological and physical harm. On average, work-related psychological injuries have longer recovery times, higher costs, and require more time away from work. Managing the risks associated with psychosocial hazards not only protects workers, it also decreases the disruption associated with staff turnover and absenteeism and may improve broader organisational performance and productivity.

1.1 Psychosocial hazards at work

Psychosocial hazards are hazards that:

- a) arise from or relate to:
 - i. the design or management of work
 - ii. the working environment
 - iii. plant¹ at a workplace, or
 - iv. workplace interactions or behaviours; and
- b) may cause psychological harm (whether or not it may also cause physical harm)².

Psychosocial hazards and the appropriate control measures may vary between workplaces and between groups of workers, depending on the work environment, organisational context and the nature of work.

Workers are likely to be exposed to a combination of psychosocial hazards; some hazards may always be present, while others only occasionally. Common psychological hazards that arise from, or are related to, work may include:



¹ WHS laws use the term plant to describe machinery, equipment, appliances, containers, implements and tools, any part of those things or anything fitted or connected to those things.

² See Regulation 55A of WHS Regulations.

[Appendix A 'Job characteristics, design and management'](#) and [Appendix B 'Harmful behaviours'](#) provide further guidance and examples for each hazard.

Psychological harm or injuries from psychosocial hazards include conditions such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and sleep disorders.

Physical injuries from psychosocial hazards include musculoskeletal injury, chronic disease, and physical injury following fatigue-related workplace incidents.

How do psychosocial hazards cause harm?

Psychosocial hazards can create stress. Stress is the body's reaction when a worker perceives the demands of their work exceed their ability or resources to cope.

Stress creates a physiological and psychological response in the body by releasing adrenaline and cortisol, raising the heart rate and blood pressure, boosting glucose levels in the bloodstream and diverting energy from the immune system to other areas of the body.

Stress itself is not an injury but if it becomes frequent, prolonged or severe it can cause psychological and / or physical harm.

Some hazards cause stress when a worker is exposed to the risk of that hazard occurring as well as when they are directly exposed to the hazard itself. For example, workers exposed to workplace violence are likely to experience stress if they perceive that the risk has not been controlled, even if the violence does not occur again. In this situation, despite the hazard rarely occurring, the stress itself may be prolonged.

1.2 Work health and safety duties

Person conducting a business or undertaking

WHS Act section 19

Primary duty of care

WHS Regulations Division 11

Psychosocial risks

WHS Regulations Part 3.1

Managing risks to health and safety

A PCBU must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, workers and other persons are not exposed to risks to their psychological or physical health and safety. A PCBU must eliminate psychosocial risks in the workplace, or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise these risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

A PCBU must manage psychosocial risks in accordance with Part 3.1 of the WHS Regulations.

Under the WHS Regulations, to manage psychosocial risks, a duty holder must:

- identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to psychosocial risks
- eliminate risks, so far as is reasonably practicable

- if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risks – minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable
- maintain implemented control measures so they remain effective, and
- review, and if necessary, revise control measures to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.

In determining control measures to be implemented, a PCBU must have regard to all relevant matters, including:

- the duration, frequency and severity of the exposure of workers and other persons to the psychosocial hazards
- how psychosocial hazards may interact or combine
- the design of work, including job demands and tasks
- the systems of work, including how work is managed, organised and supported
- the design and layout, and environmental conditions, of the workplace, including the provision of:
 - o safe means of entering and exiting the workplace
 - o facilities for the welfare of workers
- the design and layout and environmental conditions of workers' accommodation
- the plant, substances and structures at the workplace
- workplace interactions or behaviours, and
- the information, training, instruction and supervision provided to workers.

Examples of where a PCBU will have a duty to manage psychosocial risks include when:

- the PCBU engages workers to carry out work
- the PCBU directs or influences workers in carrying out work
- other people may be put at risk from work carried out in their business or undertaking (for e.g. visitors, delivery people, clients, patients and their families)
- the PCBU manages or controls a workplace

PCBU duties – what is reasonably practicable?

WHS Act section 18

What is reasonably practicable in ensuring health and safety

The standard of 'reasonably practicable' in health and safety duties applies to a PCBU. Other duty holders are required to meet different standards, for example officers must exercise 'due diligence' and workers and others at a workplace must take 'reasonable care'.

'Reasonably practicable', in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, considering and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring; and
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk; and
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or risk, and about the ways of eliminating or minimising the risk; and
- after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or

minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

The greater the risks, the more that is required to be done to eliminate or minimise it. This may mean using more than one, or a combination of control measures.

Where psychosocial hazards are only present for short periods, infrequently and are not severe, it may not be reasonable to implement expensive and time-consuming control measures. It may, however, be reasonable to apply less expensive controls.

Multiple control measures may be required. The aim must be to keep trying to lower the likelihood and degree of harm, until further steps are not reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Psychosocial hazards can interact or combine with other psychosocial hazards to increase the risk. This means controlling the risks associated with one hazard can also minimise the risks from other psychosocial hazards.

When considering each control or combination of controls, a duty holder must take into account the likelihood of a particular control being effective.

Cost of control measures

Cost is a matter to be considered and weighed up with other relevant matters to identify what is reasonably practicable, but this must only be done after assessing the extent of the risks and the way of eliminating or minimising it.

Where the cost of implementing control measures is grossly disproportionate to the risks, it may be that implementing them is not reasonably practicable and not required. This does not mean that you are excused from doing anything to minimise the risks. A less expensive way of minimising the risks must instead be used. If two controls measures provide the same level of protection and are equally reliable, you can implement the less expensive option.

The question of what is reasonably practicable is determined objectively, not by reference to your particular business or undertaking's capacity to pay, or other individual circumstances. You cannot provide workers with a lower level of protection simply because you are in a lesser financial position than another PCBU facing the same hazards or risks in similar circumstances.

For further information see the Safe Work Australia Interpretive Guideline: [The meaning of 'reasonably practicable'](#).

Designers, manufacturers, importers, installers and suppliers of plant, substances, and structures

WHS Act Part 2 Division 3

Further duties of PCBUs

Designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers of plant, structures or substances can influence the safety of these products before they are used in the workplace.

These duty holders must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, these products are without risks to the health (including psychological health) and safety of workers or others who are at or near the workplace.

For example: taking reasonable steps to design workspaces that reduce the risk of work-related violence and aggression or designing plant to ensure that cognitive demand for operating it do not create psychosocial risk. See [section 5.1](#) and [Appendix A](#) for more detailed examples.

Officers

WHS Act section 27

Duty of officers

Officers, such as department secretaries or company directors, have a duty to exercise due diligence to ensure the PCBU complies with its duties under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations. For psychosocial risks this means the officer must take reasonable steps to:

- acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of psychosocial work health and safety matters
- gain an understanding of the nature of the operations of the business or undertaking of the PCBU and generally of the psychosocial hazards and risks associated with those operations
- ensure the PCBU has available for use, and uses, appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks from work carried out by the business or undertaking
- ensure the PCBU has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding incidents, psychosocial hazards and risks to health and safety and responding in a timely way to that information
- ensure the PCBU has, and implements, processes for complying with any duty or obligation they have under the WHS Act and WHS Regulations, and
- verify the provision and use of the resources and processes mentioned above and that they are performing effectively.

For example: an officer must check the PCBU's approach to systematic WHS management to ensure:

- there are appropriate processes to manage known and emerging psychosocial hazards, the PCBU is allocating enough resources to manage these and has effective consultation, coordination, and cooperation processes (e.g. periodic site visits to talk with workers and supervisors about hazards).
- key performance indicators are appropriate.

An officer should also seek out own information on the organisations WHS performance and insists that reports are provided to them promptly and their feedback actioned.

For information on officers and their duties see the Safe Work Australia Interpretive Guideline: [The health and safety duty of an officer](#).

Workers

WHS Act section 28

Duties of workers

Workers must take reasonable care for their own psychological and physical health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons. Workers must comply with reasonable health and safety instructions, as far as they are reasonably able, and co-operate with reasonable health and safety policies or procedures that have been notified to workers.

For example: workers must follow any notified workplace policies setting standards for appropriate behaviour aimed at preventing bullying and harassment.

A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a PCBU including work as an employee, a contractor or sub-contractor or their employees, a labour hire worker, an outworker, an apprentice or trainee, a work experience student, or a volunteer.

Other persons in the workplace

WHS Act section 29

Duties of other persons at the workplace

'Other persons' may be persons such as visitors, delivery people, customers, clients, patients and their families.

Other persons at the workplace, like visitors, must take reasonable care for their own psychological and physical health and safety and must take reasonable care not to adversely affect other people's health and safety. They must comply, so far as they are reasonably able, with reasonable instructions given by the PCBU to allow them to comply with the WHS Act and WHS Regulations. This includes standards from the PCBU regarding prohibitions on violence and aggression, bullying and sexual harassment.

For example: a customer in a customer service centre must not behave violently, nor abuse or harass staff.

Other relevant duties

Other relevant duties under WHS laws are set out throughout this Code of Practice. See [Consulting workers](#), [Consulting, cooperating and coordinating activities with other duty holders](#), [Information, training, instruction and supervision](#), and [Remote or isolated work](#).

WHS laws do not operate in isolation and other laws may also apply. For example, industrial relations, criminal, anti-discrimination, privacy and workers' compensation laws.

1.3 Consultation

Consulting workers

WHS Act section 47

Duty to consult workers

A PCBU must consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a WHS matter.

The definition of 'worker' under the WHS Act is broad. In addition to employees, it includes anyone working for the business or undertaking, including contractors and their employees, labour hire workers, outworkers, apprentices, trainees, work experience students and volunteers.

Examples of workers affected, or likely to be affected, by a psychosocial hazard include:

- workers affected by an organisational change (e.g. a merger or acquisition) where workers may experience poor change management or a lack of role clarity
- call centre workers during, or following, a natural disaster, and
- shift workers, or workers who work in remote or isolated circumstances, who may be exposed to social isolation, violent behaviour or sexual harassment.

You must also consult with workers when assessing risks or making decisions about the psychosocial risks to health and safety including what control measures are implemented.

Effective consultation with workers improves decision-making about health and safety matters and assists in reducing work-related injuries and illness. Workers can identify tasks or aspects of their work that cause or expose them to psychosocial hazards and may have practical suggestions or potential solutions to address those hazards. For example, workers may have ideas to improve work design to minimise the risks of psychological harm.

Workers from diverse backgrounds may be exposed to different psychosocial hazards. You must consult with all workers, in particular workers with vulnerabilities, who are likely to be directly affected by particular psychosocial hazards. For example, women, young workers, those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse workers and workers with disability are more likely to experience workplace sexual harassment and should be provided with the opportunity to participate in these consultations (which may take different forms), along with all workers who are likely to be directly affected.

If you and your workers have agreed procedures for consultation, it must be conducted in accordance with those procedures.

WHS Act section 48

Nature of consultation

All consultation must include any Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) representing your workers. A HSR is a worker who has been elected by a work group under the WHS Act to represent them on health and safety issues. References to consultation with workers in this Code includes consultation with any HSRs.

You must:

- provide workers with a reasonable opportunity to raise psychosocial health and safety issues, express their views and contribute to decision-making
- consider whether existing consultation arrangements are appropriate for psychosocial risks, and
- consult with workers and their representatives on implementing new consultation arrangements if required.

Management commitment and open communication between managers and workers is important in achieving effective consultation. Your workers are more likely to engage in consultation when their knowledge and ideas are actively sought and concerns about psychosocial health and safety are taken seriously. You should encourage workers to:

- share their knowledge and experience, and
- report psychosocial hazards so risks can be managed before an injury occurs.

Methods of consultation

Effective methods of consultation can vary according to the needs of your workers, workplace size, worker distribution across sites and shifts, the nature of the work and the type of hazards in a workplace.

You and your workers should agree the form consultation will take. If your workplace has agreed to procedures for consultation, those procedures must be decided in consultation with workers and, if there is an agreed procedure for consultation, this procedure must be followed.

For example, consultation could include:

- pre-job-start or toolbox discussions
- focus groups
- worker surveys
- WHS committee meetings
- team meetings, and
- individual discussions.

Each consultation method has benefits and limitations.

For example: some forms of consultation are better for workers who do not have regular access to computers, while others allow workers to raise sensitive issues anonymously, or to provide detail and context.

CALD and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers may need, or benefit from, different forms of consultation. For example, providing materials and conducting consultation in workers' preferred language(s) and using culturally appropriate people and messages.

Workers may be hesitant to raise and discuss some psychosocial hazards due to confidentiality or other concerns, particularly in relation to hazards like bullying or sexual harassment. You should consider consultation processes that address such concerns like anonymous surveys or reporting, particularly where workers may be concerned raising safety issues could impact on their employment or career progression.

You may need to use multiple methods of consultation for psychosocial hazards. The form and methods of consultation must be decided in consultation with workers.

To genuinely consult with workers, PCBU's must:

- share relevant information about the matters being consulted on
- give workers a reasonable opportunity to express their views, raise psychosocial risks, psychological health and safety issues and contribute to the decision-making process
- genuinely consider and take the views of workers into account before making decisions on health and safety matters, and
- advise workers of the outcome of consultation.

If workers are represented by a HSR, consultation must involve that HSR. HSRs have a specific role to:

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

HSRs have a critical role not only in raising and helping to resolve issues on behalf of their work group, but also in reviewing processes following an incident.

WHS Act section 49

When consultation is required

As a PCBU you must consult with workers when:

- identifying hazards and assessing risks to health and safety arising from the work carried out or to be carried out
- making decisions about ways to eliminate or minimise those risks
- making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of workers
- proposing changes that may affect the health or safety of your workers, and
- making decisions about procedures for consulting with workers; resolving health or safety issues at the workplace; monitoring health of your workers; monitoring the conditions at the workplace under your management or control and providing information and training for your workers.

However, it may be useful to also consult workers about matters not listed above.

Regular consultation is better than consulting only as issues arise on a case-by-case basis, or as a reaction to a particular event, because it allows you to identify and fix potential problems early. Further guidance is available in the Code of Practice: [Work health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination](#).

Consulting, cooperating and coordinating activities with other duty holders

WHS Act section 14

Duties are not transferable

WHS Act section 16

More than 1 person can have a duty

WHS Act section 272

No contracting out

More than one person can have the same WHS duty at the same time. The WHS Act requires that where more than one person has a duty for the same matter, each person retains responsibility to meet their duty in relation to the matter and must do so to the extent to which they can influence and control the matter.

Examples of concurrent duty holders include:

- PCBUs who are carrying out work on the same site (e.g. where work schedules and deliveries need to be coordinated to avoid unreasonable time pressures or to obtain safe site access, or where visiting care workers need to know if a client's behavior may be a risk to their health and safety).
- PCBUs who together, deliver a service (e.g. government agencies who establish the systems and policies that affect the work activities of others).
- PCBUs who have management or control of a workplace where others are working (e.g. medical workers working independently from a shared workspace, a construction site with multiple contractors operating, or multiple government agencies within one shared building).

When this occurs, each duty holder retains responsibility for their duty in relation to the matter and must discharge their duties to the extent to which they:

- have the capacity to influence or control the matter, or
- would have the capacity but for an agreement or arrangement purporting (e.g. appearing or claiming) to limit or remove that capacity.

Duty holders cannot transfer their duty to another person or contract out their health and safety duties. Duty holders can make arrangements or agreements with other duty holders to assist with meeting their duties.

WHS Act section 46

Duty to consult with other duty holders

Duty holders must consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a WHS duty in relation to the same matter, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where you share a duty (e.g. you share a workplace or are involved in the same activity), each duty holder should:

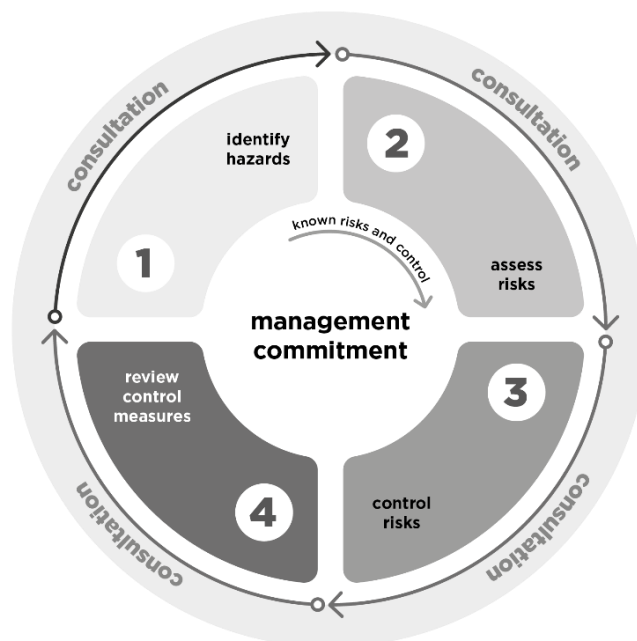
- exchange information
- find out who is doing what about their respective WHS obligations, and
- work together in a cooperative and coordinated way so risks are eliminated or minimised.

Consulting, cooperating and coordinating with other duty holders can help you more easily and effectively control risks, and assist each of you to comply with your duty.

For example: both a PCBU who engages workers through a labour-hire company and the labour-hire company who supplies the workers have WHS duties to ensure the health and safety of the workers. They may consult and cooperate as part of contract negotiations about how to minimise psychosocial hazards, such as high job demands, by agreeing on realistic timeframes, and ensuring workers have the skills and support to perform the work. Further guidance is available in the Code of Practice: [Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination](#).

2 Overview of the process to manage psychosocial risks

To meet your duties to ensure health and safety, you must eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks so far as is reasonably practicable. To achieve this, just as for any other hazard, you can apply the risk management process described in the Code of Practice: [How to manage work health and safety risks](#).



The risk management process involves four steps:

1. **Identify hazards** – find out what could cause harm ([Chapter 3](#)).
2. **Assess risks**, if necessary – understand the nature of the harm the hazard could cause, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening. This step may not be necessary if the risks and controls are known ([Chapter 4](#)).
3. **Control risks** – implement the most effective control measures that are reasonably practicable in the circumstances and ensure they remain effective over time. This means:
 - you must eliminate risks, if reasonably practicable to do so
 - if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risks, implement the most effective control measures to minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances, and
 - ensure those control measures remain effective over time ([Chapter 5](#)).
4. **Review control measures** to ensure they are working as planned and make changes as required ([Chapter 6](#)).

All of these steps must be supported by consultation (see [Section 1.3](#) of this Code).

Risk management requires planning and is an ongoing process. However, considering risks early prevents costly changes later and allows for more effective control measures to be used, resulting in less harm to workers.

For example: you should consider psychosocial hazards at the design phase when planning an organisational restructure.

The risk management process may be implemented in different ways depending on the size and nature of your business or undertaking. Larger businesses and those in sectors where workers are exposed to more or higher risks are likely to need more complex, sophisticated risk management and consultation processes.

Before you start the process:

- explain the process
- get commitment and engagement from senior leaders and managers
- identify who needs to be involved, for example managers, workers, HSRs and subject matter experts, and
- decide how the process and its outcomes will be recorded and communicated.

Leadership and management commitment

Genuine commitment by the PCBU, officers, and other organisational leaders is essential. These leaders, through their governance arrangements and resourcing decisions, actively shape the organisation and the way work is undertaken. These decisions will, directly and indirectly, impact how effectively you can control psychosocial risks.

This commitment can be built by ensuring leaders understand their duties under WHS laws, the risk management process these require, the business case for effectively managing psychosocial hazards, and the roles of various organisational leaders (e.g. human resources and WHS managers).

Consulting workers through the risk management process

At each step of the risk management process you must consult workers who are, or are likely to be, directly affected by a WHS matter and any HSR(s). For example, you must consult on proposed changes affecting work health and safety such as:

- new policies, procedures and systems of work
- organisational restructures, changes to staffing levels, new reporting arrangements and work locations
- changes to tasks, workload, duties and working arrangements, including rosters
- new technology, plant, equipment, substances, structures and production processes
- the redesign of existing workplaces, or
- changes to the way information, training, instruction and supervision is provided.

Consultation on changes that may affect work health and safety should occur as early as possible.

See [Section 1.3](#) for more information on consultation.

Further guidance on the risk management process is available in the Code of Practice: [How to manage work health and safety risks](#).

3 Identify psychosocial hazards

The first step in the risk management process is to identify psychosocial hazards. This involves identifying the aspects of work and situations that could potentially harm your workers or others at your workplace and why these may be occurring. This step should also assist PCBUs to identify where and when workers are exposed to psychosocial hazards, and if controls are not adequately eliminating or minimising risks from known hazards.



3.1 Common psychosocial hazards

Below is a list of some common examples of psychosocial hazards you should consider when identifying psychosocial hazards in your organisation. The list and the examples in the descriptions are not exhaustive. Workers are likely to be exposed to a combination of psychosocial hazards; some risks may be constantly present, while others arise sporadically.

Some hazards by themselves may cause serious harm, such as experiencing workplace violence. In most circumstances, it will be a combination of psychosocial hazards which together may cause harm. Harm can be caused by a single instance or over time with repeated or prolonged exposure.

Hazards can be grouped or described in different ways. How they are categorised is less important than ensuring you and your workers have the same understanding of what is happening and how it may be causing harm.

Hazard	Descriptions
Job demands	<p>Intense or sustained high mental, physical or emotional effort required to do the job.</p> <p>Repetitive work.</p> <p>Unreasonable or excessive time pressures or role overload.</p> <p>High individual reputational, legal, career, safety or financial risk if mistakes occur.</p> <p>High vigilance required, limited margin of error and inadequate systems to prevent individual error.</p> <p>Shifts / work hours that do not allow adequate time for sleep and recovery, causing fatigue.</p> <p>Sustained low levels of physical, mental or emotional effort is required to do the job.</p> <p>Long idle periods while high workloads are present, for example where workers need to wait for equipment or other workers.</p> <p>Examples: time pressure, role overload, unachievable deadlines, high vigilance, challenging work hours or shift work, unrealistic expectations to be responsible</p>

Hazard	Descriptions
Fatigue	<p>outside of work hours.</p> <p>Fatigue is a state of physical, mental or emotional impairment. Fatigue can develop over the short or long term, can prevent people from functioning safely and can have health effects.</p> <p>In a work context, fatigue is more than feeling sleepy, tired and drowsy. It is a state of impairment which can be:</p> <p>physical – impacting physical abilities like coordination and strength</p> <p>mental – impacting mental and cognitive abilities like decision making and concentration</p> <p>emotional – impacting abilities to engage emotionally or regulate emotions, or a combination of any of the above.</p> <p>Fatigue can be caused by a range of hazards broadly grouped as:</p> <p>Work hours and shift design – this includes working long hours, working during some or all of the natural time for sleep or not allowing sufficient opportunity for sleep or rest.</p> <p>Tasks, equipment or environments – this includes an imbalance between the demands of a worker’s job, and the personal and work resources available to support them to manage these demands.</p> <p>Individual – workers’ levels of fatigue tolerance and vulnerability will differ, influenced by factors such as age, general health status, sleep disorders, and natural sleep-wake preferences (e.g. being a 'morning' or 'evening' person).</p> <p>Examples: jobs where there are high cognitive demands (such as sustained concentration or extended work hours); lack of recovery periods between shifts; roster cycle or shift length; environmental stressors at work (e.g. light, noise, climate, vibration); and design, quality and management practices for accommodation facilities that compromise the amount and quality of sleep and rest.</p>
Low job control	<p>Workers have little control over aspects of the work including how or when the job is done.</p> <p>Workers have limited ability to adapt the way they work to changing or new situations.</p> <p>Workers have limited ability to adopt efficiencies in their work. Tightly scripted or machine / computer paced work.</p> <p>Prescriptive processes which do not allow workers to apply their skills and judgement.</p> <p>Levels of autonomy not matched to workers’ abilities.</p> <p>Examples: requiring permission before progressing routine tasks; excessive monitoring of work tasks and / or breaks; unpredictable working hours; little or no involvement or input into decisions that affect workers; insecure or precarious work, or work that involves uncertainty over the length of the job such as causal, labour hire or rolling fixed-term contract work.</p>
Job insecurity	<p>Employment where workers lack the assurance that their job will remain stable from day to day, week to week, or year to year.</p> <p>Workers are engaged in insecure, precarious, and contingent work arrangements such as fixed-termed contracts, seasonal, casual, freelance and gig work.</p> <p>Examples: jobs where there is little or no job security, little or no entitlements or benefits (e.g. sick leave, pay rates), low levels of control or need to work multiple jobs.</p>

Hazard	Descriptions
Poor support	<p>Tasks or jobs where workers have inadequate support including practical assistance and emotional support from managers and colleagues, or inadequate training, tools and resources for a task.</p> <p>Lack of emotional and practical support during workplace changes</p> <p>Examples: inadequate emotional, functional and administrative support from managers, poorly maintained or inadequate access to equipment / tools or supervisory support, lack of functional or adequate IT systems, limited opportunities to engage with co-workers during the work shift.</p>
Lack of role clarity	<p>Uncertainty, frequent changes, conflicting roles or ambiguous responsibilities and expectations.</p> <p>Examples: a worker being told one task is a priority but another manager disagrees; a worker being given multiple priority tasks from different managers; a worker being given conflicting information about work standards and performance expectations.</p>
Poor organisational change management	<p>Insufficient consultation, consideration of new hazards or performance impacts when planning for, and implementing, change.</p> <p>Lack of emotional and practical support during workplace changes</p> <p>Insufficient support, information or training during change.</p> <p>Not communicating key information to workers during periods of change.</p> <p>Examples: not consulting workers on changes in the workplace that affect them (e.g. not communicating with workers about the change or genuinely considering their views), lack of practical support for workers during implementation of workplace changes.</p>
Inadequate reward and recognition	<p>Jobs with low positive feedback or imbalances between effort and recognition.</p> <p>High level of unconstructive negative feedback from managers or customers.</p> <p>Low skills development opportunity or underused skills.</p> <p>Examples: not being recognised for extra effort or commitment, no reasonable opportunities for career development.</p> <p>Underutilisation of skills.</p>
Poor organisational justice	<p>Inconsistent, unfair, discriminatory or inequitable management decisions and application of policies, including poor procedural justice (procedural fairness).</p> <p>Not keeping relevant people informed of decisions made (informational fairness).</p> <p>Failure to treat everyone with respect and dignity (interpersonal fairness).</p> <p>Example: inconsistent, unfair, discriminatory or inequitable decisions and application of policies or procedures, poor conduct and performance being ignored or ineffectively handled by management.</p>
Traumatic events or material	<p>Exposure to events that pose an immediate risk to the health or safety of people or animals.</p> <p>Exposure to natural disasters, or seriously injured or deceased persons or animals.</p> <p>Reading, hearing or seeing accounts of traumatic adverse or distressing events, abuse or neglect.</p> <p>Supporting victims or investigating traumatic events, abuse or neglect.</p>

Hazard	Descriptions
	<p>Witnessing, investigating or being exposed to traumatic events or material. A person is more likely to experience an event as traumatic when it is unexpected, is perceived as uncontrollable or is the result of intentional cruelty. This includes vicarious exposure and cumulative trauma exposure.</p> <p>Examples: witnessing or investigating fatalities, serious injuries, abuse, neglect or serious incidents (e.g. investigating child protection cases); being exposed to extreme effects of natural disasters or seriously injured people.</p>
Remote or isolated work	<p>Working in locations with long travel times, or where access to help, resources or communications is difficult or limited.</p> <p>Examples: night shift operators, workers who spend a lot of time travelling (e.g. driving); workers working alone from home or socially isolated away from home over protracted periods of time.</p>
Intrusive surveillance	<p>Excessive surveillance or monitoring methods / tools to monitor and collect information about workers at work.</p> <p>Examples: unreasonable level of supervision, micromanagement that involves excessive control and monitoring, tracking of when and how much a worker is working, tracking calls made and movements made by the workers (using CCV and trackable devices), the use of keyboard activity trackers, technology that allows the PCBU to remote access and take screenshots of a workers' computer, GPS monitoring of worker's movement in company vehicles for the purpose of work performance monitoring, as opposed to other reasons such as safety considerations.</p> <p>Typical monitoring is in the form of tracking voice/digital communications, tracking movements via CCTV, trackable devices and GPS monitoring in company vehicles.</p> <p>Note: surveillance of workers while at work may be appropriate for the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring workers' geographical location or movement to control risks associated with remote or isolated work; and • managing physical and or/IT security risks in a workplace.
Poor physical environment	<p>Exposure to unpleasant or hazardous working environments.</p> <p>Examples: work environments that involve poor air quality, poor lighting high or nuisance noise levels, extreme temperatures, exposure to vibration, hazardous substances or uncontrolled biological hazards (e.g. blood or bodily fluids or infectious pathogens). Other examples can include inadequate break facilities, limited access to healthy food options or facilities to store and heat healthy foods and accommodation that does not allow for sleep and recovery (e.g appropriate temperature for sleep and light blocked out for night shift workers sleeping during daylight hours).</p>
Violence and aggression	<p>Violence, physical assault, threats of violence or aggressive behaviour in a workplace.</p> <p>These behaviours may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - single occurrence or repeated behaviours over time - instigated by other workers (including workers of other workplaces), customers, patients, clients, or other people in a workplace. <p>Examples: biting, spitting, kicking, throwing objects, using or threatening to use a weapon, verbal abuse and threats, aggressive behaviour such as yelling, or</p>

Hazard	Descriptions
Bullying	<p>physical intimidation.</p> <p><u>Repeated</u> unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.³</p> <p>These behaviours may be instigated by other workers, (including workers of other workplaces), customers, patients, clients, or other people in a workplace.</p> <p>Examples: <u>repeated</u> incidents of: practical jokes or initiation, spreading misinformation or malicious rumours, belittling or humiliating comments, being verbally denigrated or threatened, withholding information or resources that workers require to perform their work, undermining, or interfering with another worker's work, or persistent exclusion from work-related activities.</p>
Harassment including sexual harassment	<p>Harassment due to personal characteristics such as age, disability, race, nationality, religion, political affiliation, sex, relationship status, family or carer responsibilities, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.</p> <p>Sexual harassment - any unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances where a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would anticipate the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.⁴</p> <p>These behaviours may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - single occurrences or repeated behaviours over time - instigated by other workers (including workers of other workplaces), customers, patients, clients, or other people in a workplace. <p>Examples: telling insulting jokes about particular racial groups; making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's disability; asking intrusive questions about a person's body; staring, leering or unwelcome touching; sexual or suggestive comments, jokes or innuendo; unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against a person.</p>
Conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions	<p>Poor workplace relationships or interpersonal conflict between or from other businesses, clients or customers, people in a workplace that do not fit the definitions of other harmful workplace behaviours.</p> <p>These behaviours may be instigated by other workers (including workers of other workplaces), customers, patients, clients, or other people in a workplace.</p> <p>Examples: frequent disagreements, disparaging or rude comments, unreasonably excluding a worker from work-related activities, discriminating against another worker due to their characteristics, unresolved and excessive conflict regarding work tasks, processes, customers, interpersonal issues; treating some workers less favourably than others because of their background or personal characteristics.</p>

[Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#) provide further examples of these hazards.

Factors that may put some workers at higher risk

Like for physical hazards, some workers may be at greater risk from psychosocial hazards due to their lived experiences or their confidence or experience participating in health and safety or other organisational processes. This means there is a greater likelihood or severity of harm for these workers. For example, workers with:

³ Bullying as defined in Safe Work Australia Guidance and the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth).

⁴ Legal definitions of 'sexual harassment' may vary in each state and territory.

- limited experience in the workplace (e.g. young workers)
- barriers to understanding safety information (e.g. literacy or language)
- socially isolating jobs or who perform work in remote areas
- perceived barriers to raising safety issues (e.g. power imbalance or stigma)
- existing psychological and / or physical vulnerabilities, or
- previous exposure to a hazard.

For example: inexperienced workers may not identify harmful behaviours or have the confidence to report them. You could address this by providing more detailed induction training and greater support and supervision until they gain experience and understand these hazards.

Consulting your workers will assist you to identify any groups who are at greater risk, and whether there are additional reasonably practicable controls you must implement to eliminate or minimise the risks for these workers.

Addressing risks to individual workers

It may also be reasonably practicable to accommodate the needs of an individual worker to prevent harm where the worker has disclosed those needs or the PCBU is aware.

For example: a worker with an injury or disability may need a quiet work area or different equipment to do their work.

As well as making changes for individual workers you must still eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks for all workers so far as is reasonably practicable.

These changes may include, but are not limited to, changing workload and work hours, the nature of work, the work environment, or support and supervision.

3.2 How to identify psychosocial hazards

You must identify all reasonably foreseeable psychosocial hazards arising from the work carried out by your business or undertaking.

As well as identifying common hazards, ensure your process identifies hazards for less common but serious incidents, such as sexual or physical assault.

Types of psychosocial hazards are described in [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#).

Psychosocial hazards can arise from organisation-wide systems, work practices, work environments and workplace behaviours, or they can be specific to a task or job.

Consult your workers

You must consult with your workers (see [Section 1.3](#) of this Code) when identifying hazards to health and safety arising from the work they carry out or are going to carry out.

If your workers are represented by HSRs you must include them in this consultation. HSRs may have specific training in work health and safety which can assist you to manage risks. HSRs can also provide workers some anonymity which may encourage better engagement

on psychosocial hazards.

Your workers may use different terms to describe exposure to psychosocial hazards. For example, they might say they feel:

- stressed, burnt-out or emotionally exhausted about their workload
- anxious or scared about talking to or dealing with an aggressive person
- frustrated with their managers and / or co-workers
- humiliated, degraded or undermined by sexual harassment or discrimination
- angry about policies being applied unfairly
- worried that not enough information is being shared about change processes
- confused about what their role involves, torn between competing priorities or 'feeling like a failure' for not being able to meet unrealistic expectations, or
- distressed, unable to sleep, or traumatised by exposure to traumatic situations or content.

Good consultation should allow for differences in how workers may describe hazards and seek to identify the underlying cause. You should provide your workers with information to help them understand and recognise psychosocial hazards.

Use surveys and tools

You can use surveys to gather information from workers, HSRs, supervisors and managers. Surveys are particularly useful when:

- anonymity is important, this is because anonymous surveys or tools protect workers from stigma or other adverse outcomes when reporting hazards or concerns
- workers are physically dispersed - for example, they work across multiple sites or shifts
- you need to consult with a large number of workers
- workers need time to consider your questions and their response, or
- workers may struggle to understand or otherwise participate in other forms of consultation.

Surveys must not replace agreed consultation procedures unless agreed with your workers, however they can be used as an additional tool for consultation.

You can seek advice on psychosocial risk assessment from the WHS regulator, industry and employee associations, technical specialists and safety consultants to determine an approach that is reasonable and practicable for your context.

In assessing risk, greater weight should be given to information that is objective, independent and / or representative of all workers. Less weight should be given to information that is subjective, non-representative of all workers or open to misinterpretation.

Observe work and behaviours

Psychosocial hazards may be identified by observing:

- the workplace (e.g. are workers isolated or exposed to poor conditions)
- the work and how work is performed in practice (e.g. are workers rushed, is work delayed, do certain tasks result in confusion or frequent mistakes), and
- how people interact with each other (e.g. are workers, customers and clients respectful, or are harmful behaviours present).

In some circumstances, harmful workplace behaviours may occur in response to other psychosocial hazards, such as high job demands, lack of role clarity and inadequate support. Also consider whether the workplace culture supports or tolerates harmful

behaviours, including lower level (but still harmful) behaviours like name-calling, teasing, sexual or gendered jokes, dark humour and crude language.

Review available information

Review relevant information and records which may include:

- records of injuries, incidents or workers' compensation
- worker complaints and investigations
- reports from workplace inspections (e.g. HSR or safety officer walk arounds)
- staffing, resourcing, procurement and refurbishment decisions (e.g. will outsourcing some work increase work demands for another area, like contract managers)
- work systems, policies, governance arrangements and procedures
- duty statements and performance agreements
- records of hours worked (e.g. regular extra hours indicating high work demand)
- absenteeism and turnover data
- exit interviews
- Health and Safety Committee (HSC) meeting records, and
- previous psychosocial risk assessments and any material feeding into them.

Not all psychosocial hazards will be associated with reported incidents, so it is important to gather additional information.

Information and advice about psychosocial hazards and risks relevant to particular industries and work activities are available from the WHS regulator, industry associations, unions, technical specialists, similar workplaces and safety consultants. Advice is particularly helpful in complex or high-risk situations.

For example: where workers are exposed to violence or aggression from a person they owe a duty of care to, such as law enforcement officers.

Look for trends

You may be able to identify trends from the information you collect. Trends may show certain tasks have more hazards associated with them, or some hazards are more common in certain roles. Trends may show workers in a particular location are exposed to more hazards than in other areas, which may indicate a problem with the design of that work area or the way work is carried out there. This can inform your risk assessment.

Have a reporting mechanism and encourage reporting

You should establish a mechanism for workers to report hazards. This should protect the privacy of workers who make reports and allow for anonymous reporting where possible. Your reporting mechanism should suit your business size and circumstances and be proportional to the risks in your business.

For example: an agency / organisation could have a board in the communal area for workers to write up hazards they identify, a locked box for making confidential reports, an email address to raise issues, and the duty manager taking reports of any hazards posing an immediate risk.

When hazards are not being reported

Workers might not report psychosocial hazards because they:

- see them as just 'part of the job' or the work culture
- believe it not serious enough to report
- feel they do not have time to report frequently occurring hazards
- think reports will be ignored, or not handled respectfully and confidentially
- fear they will be blamed or believe reporting may expose them to additional harm, discrimination or disadvantage, or
- do not know or understand how to report a hazard.

If a worker is being bullied, harassed or is exposed to other harmful behaviours they might not report it when the other person is in a position of authority (e.g. a manager or supervisor) or a position of influence (e.g. a client). Workers may be worried about the consequences of reporting, such as the person finding out about the complaint and the behaviour escalating.

It is important that hazards reported by workers are taken seriously. Workers can be encouraged to report hazards by:

- treating all reports of psychosocial hazards seriously, appropriately and confidentially
- using agreed mechanisms, such as HSRs who can raise safety concerns for workers anonymously
- regularly discussing psychosocial hazards at team meetings or toolbox talks
- providing workers with a range of accessible and user-friendly ways to make a report informally, formally, anonymously or confidentially
- making it clear that victimising those who make reports will not be tolerated
- training key workers (e.g. supervisors, managers, contact persons and HSRs)
- ensuring processes and systems for reporting and responding to complaints of bullying, harassment or other harmful behaviours are appropriate, transparent and well understood, and
- acting decisively to control the risks your workers identify.

Your hazards and risks reporting system should be appropriate and proportional for your organisation and the risks in your workplace.

For example: a large organisation with previous instances of violent behaviour should consider a formal system with documented procedures. In contrast, a small business with no previous instances of violent or aggressive behaviour may not require a formal system, and could instead encourage workers to discuss hazards with supervisors as required and have a method of reporting and recording details.

4 Assess the risks

4.1 When should a risk assessment be conducted?

Once you have identified psychosocial hazards in your workplace, the next step is to assess the risks they create. This will help you determine what is reasonably practicable in managing the risks.

You should carry out a risk assessment, in consultation with workers and their HSRs if they have them, for any hazards you have identified. However, if you already know what the risks are and how to control them effectively, you can implement the controls without undertaking a risk assessment and then check to confirm these have been effective.

A risk assessment can help you determine how severe risks are, and what is reasonably practicable in managing the risks.

Further information on risk assessments is available in the Code of Practice: [How to manage work health and safety risks](#).



4.2 How to assess psychosocial risks

To assess the risk of harm, you need to identify the workers affected and consider the duration, frequency and severity of their exposure. [Appendix C](#) may assist you to capture this information.

Once you have identified all the hazards you should assess the risks. To do this, consider:

- **duration** – how long is the worker exposed to the hazards or risks?
- **frequency** – how often is the worker exposed to the hazards or risks?
- **severity** – how severe are the hazards and the workers' exposures?

You should also consider the adequacy of any existing control measures; this will help in determining the level of risk associated with hazard exposure.

Consider psychosocial hazards collectively rather than in isolation. Workers and others may be exposed to more than one psychosocial hazard at any time and hazards can interact or combine. Assessing risks collectively may also assist you to identify more effective control measures.

Example 1: Infrequent exposure to low levels of work-related conflict may be unpleasant without causing a risk to health and safety, while frequent exposure to high levels of conflict can increase the likelihood of a prolonged stress response which may result in harm. However, the likelihood of harm may increase where a worker has existing psychological vulnerabilities.

Example 2: A worker with existing psychological vulnerabilities with an elevated risk of suicide exposed to chronic bullying, low peer and / or supervision support is more likely to experience harm due to feeling trapped and / or helpless than a worker with no existing vulnerabilities or strong peer and supervision support.

Example 3: A worker exposed to a short term but severe hazard (e.g. a violent incident) is more likely to experience harm if they are also exposed to chronic (long duration) psychosocial hazards (e.g. ongoing high demand and low support).

Example 4: Keeping cash on premises provides the potential for a robbery to occur (a hazard) and this may cause harm (e.g. being assaulted or post-traumatic stress disorder). However, while the work environment, including physical barriers, may mean the likelihood of death or serious injury from being assaulted is low, the likelihood of psychological injury may be higher.

Example 5: A worker exposed to aggressive customer behaviour is likely to be at higher risk if at that time they do not have other workers present to support them and are unable to control or alter the way they work to de-escalate the situation.

Psychosocial risks increase when exposure to hazards is more severe (e.g. exposure to a traumatic incident), more frequent (e.g. regularly performing tasks without adequate support), or is longer in duration (e.g. high job demands over weeks or months).

The risks also increase when workers are exposed to a combination of the above mechanisms.

For example: short term but severe exposure to a psychosocial hazard (e.g. a violent incident) is more likely to harm workers if they are also exposed to chronic (long duration), but less severe hazards (e.g. ongoing low support).

Psychosocial risks can cause both physical and psychological injuries. The severity of psychological injuries varies, but in comparison to physical injuries, on average, they require longer off work and are more costly

5 Control the risks

Once you know which psychosocial hazards are present and you have assessed the risks they create, you are in a position to control them.

You must eliminate risks to health and safety if it is reasonably practicable to do so.

If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risks, you must minimise risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

To identify what can be done you should, in consultation with your workers, identify as many possible control measures as you can. This gives you the greatest scope to choose and apply the most effective control measures to eliminate or minimise risks. Consultation with workers will assist you to identify control measures you might not otherwise think of.

When deciding what control measures to use, a PCBU must have regard to all relevant matters and utilise the **hierarchy of controls** (see [sections 5.1](#), [5.2](#) and [5.3](#) of this code).



5.1 Matters to consider when controlling risks

WHS Regulation 55D

Control Measures

How long (**duration**), how often (**frequency**) and how significantly (**severity**) your workers are exposed to psychosocial hazards impacts the level of risks. Hazards **interacting** or **combining** with each other may also change the risks.

As you work through the risk management process you must consider things that may give rise to hazards, influence the level of risks workers are exposed to, or could be changed to help control those risks, including:

- **the design of work, including job demands and tasks involved**

Considering how the work is designed will support you to eliminate hazards at the source and at the organisational level.

Control measures for psychosocial hazards should predominantly be considered at an organisational, work and system design level (e.g. organisational resilience) rather than at an individual level (e.g. individual resilience and stress management), although some circumstances may require responses at both levels.

Focusing on higher level control measures that address work design will ensure the risk of harm is addressed at the source, rather than inferior measures that only reduce the impact of harm after it has occurred.

Effective work design considers:

- o the work: how work is performed, including the physical, mental and emotional demands of the tasks and activities, the task duration, frequency, and complexity, and the context and systems of work

- the physical working environment: the plant, equipment, materials and substances used, and the vehicles, buildings, structures that are workplaces
- the workers: the extent to which the working environment and the nature of the job or tasks are a good fit for the individual worker's skills, knowledge and preferences as well as their physical capabilities.

Your workers should have an appropriate amount of work to match their skills and experience.

For example: a job designed with too much work for a worker of that skill level to complete with the resources provided, or tasks that do not match that worker's skillset will create hazards. Matching tasks to workers' skills and scheduling non-urgent tasks for times of lower demand may assist to control risks.

See the [Safe Work Australia Handbook: Principles of Good Work Design](#) for more information about how to achieve good work design and work processes.

- **systems of work, including how work is managed, organised and supported**

Systems of work are organisational rules, policies, procedures and work practices used to organise, manage and carry out work. These systems can introduce psychosocial hazards, but if carefully considered can also help control them.

For example: a system of work in which there is inadequate resourcing and commitment from Officers, inadequate opportunity for workers to seek assistance from supervisors, sets unrealistic targets or timeframes or that allocates tasks without regard for other work demands may introduce hazards.

A system of work which provides for support and manages job demands may assist to control risks.

- **the design, layout and environmental conditions of the workplace, including safe means of entering and exiting the workplace and welfare facilities**

A poor physical working environment can be a psychosocial hazard; however, the way a workplace is set up can also control other psychosocial hazards.

For example: ensuring workers can get away from aggressive customers or can observe when another worker may need assistance, and the introduction of noise attenuating treatments in an office environment to reduce nuisance noise levels

- **the design, layout, and environmental conditions of workers' accommodation**

Like the working environment, accommodation provided for workers can introduce or control psychosocial hazards.

For example: worker accommodation which does not provide adequate privacy or security can contribute to the risk of violence or harassment. Well-designed accommodation can help control these risks.

- **plant, substances and structures at the workplace**

Plant (e.g. machinery, equipment, appliances, technology and tools), structures and

substances used at work can introduce psychosocial hazards where they create a physical hazard that is not adequately controlled.

For example: plant can create loud noises, dust and vibrations which create poor physical environments and contribute to both psychological and physical harm. Other examples include poorly designed or integrated technology that make tasks more difficult.

Well designed and maintained plant can prevent these hazards but can also be used to control other psychosocial hazards.

For example: safe plant that allows work to be performed more efficiently can reduce high work demands.

- **workplace interactions or behaviours**

The way workers interact with each other and other persons in the workplace, their behaviour and relationships can introduce psychosocial hazards. However, supportive leadership, positive relationships and professional and respectful interactions can help to minimise a range of psychosocial hazards.

Poor organisational culture can hamper efforts to improve work health and safety by preventing workers seeking and providing support and discouraging workers from reporting hazards and participating in consultation. Leaders demonstrating poor behaviour are likely to contribute to poor organisational culture.

- **information, training, instruction and supervision provided to workers**

Information, training, instruction and supervision assists in controlling some psychosocial risks and is necessary to implement control measures effectively. It must be provided in a way that is understood by workers so that control measures are utilised as intended. This may require consideration of any barriers to workers' capacity to understand and utilise control measures and provide feedback on their usability and effectiveness.

For example: where low role clarity is creating a risk, information and training on the worker's role will assist in controlling the risks.

5.2 Eliminating risks

Eliminating risks is the most effective control measure and you must always consider elimination before anything else. For psychosocial risks, elimination means completely removing the psychosocial hazard and associated risks through good work design.

Examples of eliminating psychosocial hazards include:

- the introduction of rosters that provide advance notice of work hours schedules to eliminate the hazard of unpredictable work hours
- refusal of service to customers with higher risk of violence or abuse
- setting achievable performance standards and workloads for the number of workers, work hours and their skill sets.

It may not be reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, for example, if doing so means a

product cannot be made or a service cannot be delivered. Where a risk cannot be eliminated, you must minimise the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

5.3 Minimising risks

WHS Regulation 36

Hierarchy of controls

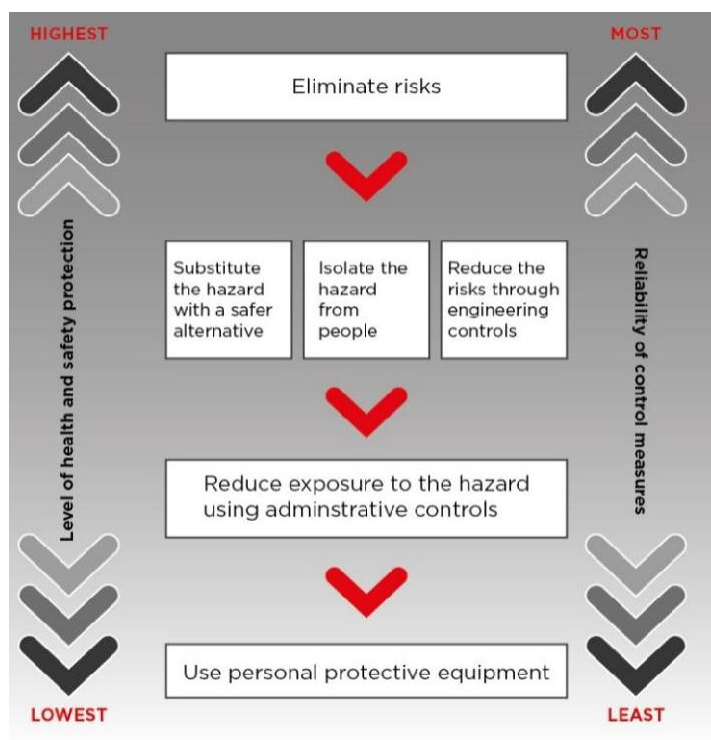
The hierarchy of control **must** be followed if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate psychosocial risk.

The hierarchy of controls (**see below**) ranks control measures from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest and **requires** duty holders to minimise risks by one or more of the following methods:

- **substitution** – minimise the risk by substituting (wholly or partly) or replacing a hazard or hazardous work practice with something that gives rise to a lesser risk.
- **isolation** – minimise the risk by isolating or separating the hazard or hazardous work practice from any person exposed to.
- **engineering controls** – minimise the risk by implementing engineering controls as a physical control measure.

If the risk remains, it must be minimised by implementing administrative controls, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Any further remaining risk must then be minimised with suitable personal protective equipment (PPE), so far as is reasonably practicable.



Administrative control measures and PPE do not control the hazard at the source. They rely on human behaviour and supervision and, used on their own, tend to be the least-

-effective in minimising risks.

All controls within the hierarchy of controls (regardless where they appear) are part of a Safe System of Work.

For example, where a PCBU seeks to control risks through administrative processes at the workplace, it is critical that staff are properly trained and instructed in those processes.

Step 1 - Substitution, isolation and engineering controls

PCBUs **must** minimise the risk of psychosocial hazards by either substituting or isolating the hazard from the person or implementing engineering controls, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Substituting a hazard means substituting (wholly or partly) hazardous ways of working with less hazardous alternatives.

Isolation of a hazard involves physically separating the source of harm from people exposed to the hazard.

Engineering controls include physical controls such as a mechanical device or process. Substitution, isolation and engineering controls for psychosocial hazards can be achieved through changing the design of work (see [section 5.2 – Eliminating Risks](#)) and can be complemented by other systems of work (e.g. rostering, working hours, task rotation and breaks to allow opportunities for rest and recovery).

Further examples of high order minimisation controls for managing the risk of psychosocial hazards include:

- providing workers with time and physical locations where they can retreat safely and recover from dealing with aggressive clients
- improving the work environment to reduce stressors (e.g. installing sound dampening technology or enclosing machinery to isolate workers from unpleasant or hazardous noise, increasing the lighting in darker areas, or placing barriers between workers and customers to minimise the risk of physical assault)
- allowing more time for difficult tasks to be completed safely, especially by inexperienced workers
- matching work allocation with appropriate resourcing including adequate numbers of workers, worker competencies, and levels of exposure to psychosocial hazards (e.g. considering the severity, complexity, and number of cases allocated to each worker when allocating child protection caseloads)
- providing sufficient cover for workers who are on leave
- designing work to minimise confusion by clearly defining workers' roles, reporting structures, tasks and performance standards
- designing work rosters to facilitate better work / life balance for workers required to work away from home
- providing workers with control over their work pace and allowing them to take breaks to manage their workload and fatigue instead of using machine pacing or automated work allocation
- increasing the level of practical support during peak workloads
- changing venue of care from a home environment to a clinic environment for clients that have a history of aggressive behaviour.

Step 2- Administrative controls

If risk remains after applying substitution, isolation and engineering control measures, PCBUs **must** minimise the remaining risk by implementing administrative controls, so far as is reasonably practicable. Administrative controls are less reliable at minimising risk because they rely on human behaviour and should be used in conjunction with higher order controls, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Administrative controls commonly include organisational policies and standard operating procedures that are designed to minimise exposure to a hazard, as well as the information, training and instruction needed to ensure workers can work safely.

Further examples of administrative controls include:

- setting and reinforcing clear expectations about acceptable and unacceptable behaviours at work, including policies for work-related bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of harassment
- ensuring workers have the information, training, and supervision to perform their job safely, and that it is provided in a way that they readily understand.
- consulting and training workers to prepare for the introduction of new equipment, software or production techniques
- providing supervisors with appropriate training in people and work management, and on the job support
- training workers and supervisors to recognise early warning signs of psychosocial risk (such as absenteeism, workplace incivility and reduced productivity).

If your workplace has agreed policies, those policies relating to psychosocial hazards **must** be developed in consultation with workers and their HSRs (if elected), and all workers **must** be made aware of what the procedures are and what is expected of them.

Step 3 - Personal protective equipment

If risk remains after applying substitution, isolation, engineering and administrative control measures, PCBUs **must** minimise the remaining risk by ensuring the provision and use of suitable PPE, so far as is reasonably practicable. For psychosocial hazards, PPE can assist by controlling physical hazards that give rise to psychosocial risks, such as when using plant, substances etc or working in certain environments.

Protecting workers with PPE is a last resort and should only be used where there are risks that cannot be minimised using higher order controls. If PPE is selected as last resort, it should be used in conjunction with administrative controls (e.g. the provision of information, instruction and training to workers and / or the implementation of safe work procedures).

Examples of using PPE as a control measure include providing:

- personal distress alarms, mobile phones or other communication devices
- police body armour and face protection
- readily accessible gloves, gowns, and face shields for workers who may have the potential for exposure to high-risk biological hazards
- high quality hearing protection or headphones to reduce stress from noise.

5.4 Combining risk controls

A combination of control measures may be used to minimise risk if a single control is not sufficient to eliminate or minimise psychosocial risk. In most cases, a combination of control measures will be the most effective approach.

Examples of combining administrative controls with higher order controls include:

- designing out work processes that may escalate client aggression, and considering what appropriate physical or other barriers (i.e. distance) should be used in conjunction with a client aggression policy and worker training and supervision
- where work involves inherent risk (i.e. front line responders), training should be provided to ensure workers have the skills to manage and respond to these situations, in conjunction with higher-order controls.

Scenario: In service delivery roles there may be work pressure, aggressive customers and supervisors who are not readily available to provide support. In this circumstance, a combination of control measures could include:

- redesigning the mode of service (e.g. automating parts of the service)
- reviewing and adjusting numbers of workers to meet client needs and demands
- designing the work environment to introduce physical barriers between workers and clients
- job rotation to reduce exposure to distressed clients
- providing adequate supervision of workers to ensure their health and safety
- administrative procedures to identify clients showing signs of aggression, and training supervisors and workers to improve team communication and support
- implementing procedures to restrict or terminate service in the event of aggression
- providing training for workers in de-escalating aggressive behaviour by clients
- providing personal distress alarms, and
- access to an Employee Assistance Program service.

5.5 Implementing control measures

It is important to ensure a particular control measure will work before relying on it. You may need to test control measures, provide information, training or instruction to workers and supervise work to ensure control measures are effective.

Test control measures

Testing control measures allows you to ensure they are suitable for your workplace, operate as intended and do not introduce new risks.

You should allow enough time for your workers to adjust to changes (e.g. new work processes) before assessing the effectiveness of control measures. At this stage, you should frequently check with your workers on how they think the improvements are working and supervise workers to ensure controls are implemented effectively.

Information, training, instruction and supervision

WHS Act section 19

Primary duty of care

WHS Regulation 39

Provision of information, training and instruction

As you are planning to implement control measures, you must consider what information, training, instruction or supervision is required to ensure the control measures are effective.

Training must be suitable and adequate, having regard to:

- the nature of the work to be carried out
- the associated psychosocial hazards and risks and
- the control measures to be implemented.

Training should require workers to demonstrate they are competent in performing the task. It is not sufficient to simply tell a worker about the procedure and ask them to acknowledge they understand and can perform it. Training may include formal training courses, in-house

training or on the job training.

For example: if supervisors and managers have a role in implementing workplace policies on addressing harmful behaviours, you must provide them with any training necessary to ensure safety. This may include training, so they know what to do if they witness, experience or have a worker approach them about violence and aggression, bullying or sexual harassment at work, or know who to seek guidance from if they have questions. They may also need training to support skills in investigation and resolving complaints, including training on person-centered and trauma-informed workplace investigations.

Information, training and instruction must be provided in a form all workers can understand. For example training may need to be provided in multiple languages or using a mix of verbal and non verbal methods so that it is readily understood by workers. Information and instruction may also need to be provided to others who enter the workplace, such as customers or visitors.

The level of supervision required will depend on the risks and the experience of the workers involved. High levels of supervision are necessary where inexperienced workers are expected to follow new procedures or carry out difficult and critical tasks.

Maintenance

WHS Regulation 37

Maintenance of control measures

You must ensure that control measures are maintained so that they remain effective, including by ensuring they are fit for purpose, suitable for the nature and duration of the work; and set up and used correctly. You should decide what maintenance a control measure will require when you implement the control and establish a schedule for routine checks and maintenance. You may prepare a risk register identifying the hazards, what action needs to be taken, who will be responsible for taking the action and by when.

Workplace policies

Workplace policies can provide important information and help ensure everyone involved understands the business or undertaking's processes for managing psychosocial risks. Policies alone should not be relied on to control psychosocial risks, but they can detail responsibilities and help set clear expectations, particularly about behaviours at the workplace and during work-related activities and workers' rights and responsibilities. You may have separate policies or one policy which covers several work health and safety issues.

Where you have policies relating to psychosocial risks these must be developed in consultation with your workers and any HSRs. All workers must be made aware of the policies and what is expected of them.

Controlling risks arising from management action

Management action, such as managing unsatisfactory performance or harmful behaviour is a necessary part of conducting a business or undertaking. Management action may also be necessary to prevent or control psychosocial hazards, for example:

- increased demands on other workers due to unsatisfactory performance, or
- behaving in a way that may harm others.

PCBUs may be concerned about balancing the need to undertake performance action with the duty to eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks that may arise from the process, so far as is reasonably practicable. This can be done by:

- addressing unsatisfactory performance or harmful behaviour and
- designing the management process in a way that eliminates or minimises psychosocial risks.

Addressing psychosocial hazards contributing to unsatisfactory performance or harmful behaviour

Unsatisfactory performance or harmful behaviour may be the result of multiple factors, including psychosocial hazards affecting the worker. Confirming whether all psychosocial hazards have been eliminated or minimised so far as is reasonably practicable will help you to ensure you are meeting your duties. A range of psychosocial hazards can contribute to poor performance and harmful behaviour, such as:

- lack of support or training to perform the role
- lack of clarity on the role and requirements, or
- poor interpersonal relationships.

Eliminating or minimising psychosocial risks in the management process

You must ensure you have eliminated or minimised any risks in your management process, so far as is reasonably practicable. For example, you should control risks associated with:

- poor organisational justice by ensuring you apply policies transparently and fairly
- poor interpersonal relationships by conducting the process in a respectful and constructive manner
- poor support and organisational justice by proactively managing performance and conduct problems, and
- poor support by adequately managing the risk to a worker that arises from adverse feedback on their feedback on their performance and conduct.

6 Review control measures

The last step of the risk management process is to review the effectiveness of the implemented control measures to ensure they are working as planned. If a control measure is not working effectively it must be reviewed and modified or replaced.

WHS Regulation 38

Review of control measures

Reviewing control measures should be done regularly as part of recurrent or cyclic risk assessment.

However, a review will also be required:

- when a control measure is not eliminating or minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable
- before a change at the workplace that is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk that the control measure may not effectively control
- if a new hazard or risk is identified
- if the results of consultation indicate a review is necessary, or
- if an HSR requests a review because they reasonably believe one of the above has occurred and it has not been adequately reviewed already.



Reports, complaints (including informal complaints) or grievances from workers may identify new psychosocial hazards or risks that are not adequately controlled. This should trigger a review of whether your existing control measures are effective, if your response procedures worked the way they were supposed to and whether new risks have been identified that also need to be managed.

Common review methods include inspecting the workplace, consultation, and analysing records and data. You can use the same methods as in the initial hazard identification step to check control measures. You must also consult your workers and their HSRs (if elected).

The person reviewing your control measures should have the authority and resources to conduct the review thoroughly and be empowered to recommend changes where necessary.

Questions to consider may include:

- are control measures working effectively, without creating new risks?
- have workers reported feeling stressed or are they showing signs of harm?
- have all psychosocial hazards been identified?
- have risks changed or are they different to what you previously assessed?
- are workers actively involved in the risk management process?
- are workers openly raising health and safety concerns and reporting problems promptly?
- has instruction and training been provided to all relevant workers?
- are there any upcoming changes that are likely to result in a worker being exposed to psychosocial hazards?
- are new control measures available that might better control the risks?

- have risks been eliminated or minimised as far as is reasonably practicable?

If the effectiveness of the control measures is in doubt, go back through the risk management steps, review your information and make further decisions about control measures.

7 Recording the risk management process and outcomes

You should record your risk management process and the outcomes, including your consultation with workers. This allows you to demonstrate you have met your WHS duties and will assist you when you need to monitor or review the hazards you have identified and controls you have put in place.

Your records may include the outcomes of consultation, the hazards you identified, how you assessed the risks, the control measures implemented, and the training provided.

You should select a method of recording the risk management process and outcomes to suit your circumstances.

For example: you can use a risk register such as the one in the Code of Practice: [How to manage work health and safety risks](#) or in [Appendix C](#).

It is also useful to have a record of the processes used to investigate and resolve issues. You could choose to include only high-level information in the general risk register where you are concerned about the need to maintain confidentiality.

A WHS inspector may ask to see a copy of records relating to the risk management processes if they visit your workplace. If you do not have a written record, you will need to demonstrate by other means how you have met your duties.

8 Responding to reports, complaints or incidents

Encouraging workers to raise concerns regarding psychosocial hazards, and in turn effectively responding to those concerns, can assist PCBUs to not only identify hazards, but also review whether control measures are working. To facilitate this, PCBUs can investigate reports, complaints or incidents involving psychosocial hazards to determine what happened, why, and what can be done to improve controls to eliminate or minimise recurrence. The formality and comprehensiveness of any investigation and response can be proportional to the level of risk, the seriousness of actual or potential harm, the number of workers affected, and the size of the business.

There are various ways workers may report or raise psychosocial hazards, including:

- discussions with supervisors
- incident report forms
- emails or text messages
- advising their HSR(s), WHS Committee, Human Resource team and/or union representatives
- letters of complaint or grievance
- medical certificates, or
- workers' compensation claims.

Individual workers may report or raise psychosocial hazards directly with management or with their HSRs who can raise issues on behalf of the work group.

Early reporting of psychosocial hazards is encouraged so hazards can be managed before they cause harm.

Example 1: A response may involve enquiries/conversations by a supervisor about the report, complaint or incident with affected workers, or a more formal independent investigation with assistance from an external competent professional or relevant internal representatives, such as in-house human resources or WHS professionals.

Example 2: A response to a complaint about sexual harassment may involve discussions with the parties and / or witnesses, providing support to all parties, facilitating an impartial investigation, and maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of the parties.

The process for investigating or responding to reports, complaints or incidents involving psychosocial hazards should be proactive, fair, objective, conducted in a timely and impartial manner, applied consistently to all workers, and ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved. This is particularly important where there is an allegation about work-related bullying, work-related violence or aggression, or work-related sexual harassment.

Where a HSR has been advised of a complaint or incident involving a worker in their workgroup, they are entitled to investigate the complaint. This can include:

- inspecting the workplace, or any part of the workplace, where the worker works at any time after giving reasonable notice to the PCBU, or without notice if the incident or situation involves a serious risk to health and safety emanating from an immediate or imminent exposure to a hazard
- accompanying an inspector during an inspection of the workplace or part of a workplace where the worker works

- with the consent of a worker, or one or more workers, the HSR representing and being present at an interview between the worker(s) and an inspector or PCBU (or the PCBU’s representative)
- receiving information concerning the work health and safety of workers in the workgroup
- wherever necessary, requesting the assistance of any person.

It will not always be appropriate to consult work groups or their representative HSR(s) if the initiating report or subsequent investigation includes sensitive and confidential information about other workers. In this case, it is still useful to provide HSRs with general information about the process and outcomes including:

- how the psychosocial hazard will be managed
- updates on the progress of actions in response to the report, complaint or incident and likely timeframes, and
- WHS actions and improvements which have or will be introduced in response to the issue (within the limits of confidentiality).

Principles that can be applied, so far as is reasonably practicable, when responding to complaints, incidents or reports involving psychosocial hazards are set out in the Table below.

Principles	Response
Act promptly	Respond to reports, complaints, or incidents quickly, reasonably and within established timelines. Advise relevant parties how long it will likely take to respond. Keep them informed of progress to provide reassurance the report has not been forgotten or ignored.
Ensure immediate safety	Take steps to eliminate or minimise ongoing exposure to hazards and to provide immediate support so far as reasonably practicable . Depending on the nature of the allegations and proximity of working relationship between complainants and complaint respondents, workplace adjustments may need to be made to ensure everyone’s safety while the investigation is conducted. Such adjustments may need to consider the means of safeguarding children, young people and others with characteristics or circumstances that may render them vulnerable.
Treat all matters seriously	Take reports, complaints and incidents seriously and assess them on their merits and facts.
Consider any external reporting responsibilities	A complaint may be a matter that needs to be reported to external authorities. To determine this, consider if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - there is alleged or suspected criminal conduct that should be reported to police, including whether the law requires reporting the suspected offence to police; - a mandatory report to the statutory child protection authority is required; - there is an obligation to report concerns about someone who works with children or vulnerable people; or - there is an obligation to report to any other authority, including regulatory and contracting bodies.

Principles	Response
Use a trauma-informed approach	<p>The concept of a trauma-informed approach means that workplace systems recognise and acknowledge that workplace responses or investigations of reports about psychosocial hazards can escalate or de-escalate distress in those with a history of trauma.</p> <p>In practical terms, this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focusing on people’s strengths rather than limitations - emphasis providing physical, social and emotional safety - education and awareness about mental health - rebuilding a sense of control - promoting peer, supervisor and social support, and - promoting a belief in recovery (by facilitating a sense of personal agency and competence).
Maintain confidentiality	<p>Maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved or be very clear if there are any limits to confidentiality (e.g. if there are concerns about the safety of any persons). Details of the matter should only be known by those with a direct role in resolving it, and sensitive and personal information should be protected</p>
Be neutral	<p>Impartiality towards everyone involved is critical. This includes the way people are treated throughout the process and ensuring all parties are able to provide their side of the story. The person responding to the report, complaint or incident should not have been directly involved and personal or professional bias is to be avoided. If this is not possible, consider engaging an external party to ensure impartiality.</p>
Support all parties	<p>Once a report or complaint has been made, or an incident has occurred, advise parties involved what support is available, (e.g. employee assistance programs), and allow a support person to be present throughout the process including at interviews or meetings (e.g. an HSR, union representative or work colleague). Ensure adequate and fair support is available to all parties, including those who may be away from work during investigations or during disciplinary processes. This includes both the complainant and the person who the complaint has been made about. Support should also continue following completion of the incident investigation process.</p> <p>Some parties to a complaint may require tailored supports to mitigate any risks to them associated with their age, health or disability status, or other characteristics or circumstances that may impede their capacity to understand their rights and obligations. For example, if a complaint involves a person aged under 18 years, a plan to protect their welfare should be made.</p>
Do not victimise	<p>It is important to ensure anyone who reports a psychosocial hazard, or is a party to a report, complaint or incident, is protected from victimisation.</p>
Communicate process and outcomes	<p>Inform all parties of the process, any rights and obligations that may apply, how long it is estimated to take, what they can expect will happen during and at the end of the process, including rights of appeal and review and alternative bodies to which a complaint can be made Should the process be delayed for any reason, advise parties of the delay and when the process is expected to resume. Reasons for actions that have been taken or not taken should be explained to the parties wherever possible so that the processes and outcomes are transparent. Wherever possible, an educative approach should be used. Where persons are away from the workplace (e.g. they are</p>

Principles	Response
	unwell or have been stood down from their roles during investigation processes), ensure an appropriate mechanism for communication is still available.
Keep records	<p>Keeping a record of the following information will be useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the person who made the report - when the report was made - who the report was made to - the details of the issue reported - action taken to respond to the issue - any further action required – what, when and by whom.

If it is likely that responding to the complaint, incident or report will be sensitive or complex, input from organisational Psychologists, human resources, WHS or other experts, such as security professionals, may assist.

PCBUs must ensure that they have clear policies and procedures for responding to incidents, complaints and reports of hazards and risks. These should:

- explain who is responsible for responding to incidents, complaints and reports (and if these differ according to the type of incident, complaint, hazard or risk)
- outline how the issues will be dealt with when a complaint is made
- highlight the responsibilities of supervisors and managers of WHS duty holders
- include internal and external support options for persons subject to an incident or complaint
- outline the rights and responsibilities of parties subject to an incident or complaint (such as complainants, complaint respondents and witnesses)
- outline the process for how vexatious complaints or reports will be handled
- procedures for issue and dispute resolutions, and
- external avenues that workers can access if they are dissatisfied with the PCBUs response.

Where response procedures are developed, this must be done in consultation with workers and HSRs (if elected).

9 Conducting work health and safety investigations

Any WHS investigations into reports of incidents involving psychosocial hazards should primarily aim to:

- identify hazards
- access adequacy of PCBU's current risk assessments
- identify any new or improved control measures, and
- access whether the PCBU has met its duty of care obligations.

Investigations must maintain appropriate privacy and confidentiality of all workers involved to the extent permitted by law. For example, do not discuss reports in public areas or with anyone not involved in the investigation. Ensuring confidentiality should not prevent the parties involved from seeking support.

Nature of investigation

The nature of your investigation should be proportional to the risks and suit the circumstances. When deciding the nature of an investigation consider the:

- level of risks involved
- complexity of the situation, and
- number of workers involved or affected.

A formal investigation may not always be the most effective option.

For example: the best response to a single low-level incident may be immediate informal discussions with the workers involved and changes to the relevant control measures. The earlier problems can be identified and addressed, the less likely a formal and complex investigation will be required.

Small businesses may require assistance if a matter is complex or high risk. You can seek advice from the WHS regulator, your industry body or a WHS expert.

Selecting an investigator

It is important to find an investigator who has the confidence of all parties involved where possible. They should be impartial and have the skills and knowledge to identify psychosocial hazards, assess the risks and recommend appropriate controls.

An external investigator may be required if an impartial internal investigator is not available, for example where a matter involves a senior manager.

Balancing a fair and transparent process

The investigation should be fair, transparent and timely to ensure due process for both those who raised the issue and any workers who have had allegations made about them.

Throughout the investigation affected workers should be:

- informed of their rights and obligations during the process
- provided with the opportunity to respond to any allegations made against them
- provided with a copy of relevant policies and procedures
- informed of their right to have copies of any statements they have made

- kept informed about possible outcomes, timeframes, rights of appeal and reviews, and
- provided with adequate and fair support.

Concurrent investigations

Harmful behaviours, such as bullying and harassment can be responses from workers exposed to other hazards, for example high job demands and poor support. Where these behaviours breach employment codes of conduct or professional standards you may require a separate investigation into these breaches as a disciplinary matter, as well as a systematic WHS investigation looking at any hazards present and ensuring they are controlled.

Where breaches of a code of conduct or professional standard are not proven there may still be an underlying WHS risk which needs to be controlled.

Appendix A – Job characteristics, design and management

This appendix provides examples of control measures for psychosocial hazards related to job characteristics, design and management, and the working environment and equipment including:

- high or low job demands
- fatigue
- low job control
- job insecurity
- poor support
- traumatic events or material
- remote or isolated work
- intrusive surveillance
- lack of role clarity
- poor organisational change management
- inadequate recognition and reward
- poor organisational justice, and
- poor environmental conditions.

However, it is not an exhaustive list and you should use the process outlined in this Code to ensure you identify all hazards in your workplace and assess and control the associated risks.

A single or irregular exposure to these hazards may not create psychosocial risks, or the risks may be very low. However, if workers' exposure to a hazard (or a combination of these hazards) is frequent, prolonged or severe it can cause psychological and physical harm.

The controls provided are examples. You must consider what is reasonably practicable to eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace.

Job demands

Sustained or intense high levels of physical, mental or emotional effort which are unreasonable or chronically exceed workers' skills, or sustained low levels of physical, mental or emotional effort. A job can include periods of high and low job demands. A job can also involve a combination of low or high mental, emotional and physical demands.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own, but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

High physical demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long, irregular or unpredictable work-hours (e.g. doing shift work. Working split shifts , or being on call) - Insufficient breaks (e.g. breaks are infrequent, too short, strictly scheduled or regularly interrupted) - Not being able to recover between periods of work (e.g. being expected to work afterhours, be on call, or return to work with insufficient rest and sleep) - Not having opportunities to use leave entitlements
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High workloads (e.g. having too much to do) - Physically demanding, challenging or tiring work (e.g. undertaking hazardous manual tasks or strenuous physical tasks), and - Time pressures or fast paced work (e.g. unreasonable deadlines or computer / machine paced work). <p><i>Note: work that involves disruption to sleep pattern or shift work is associated with a greater risk of fatigue.</i></p>
High mental or cognitive demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex tasks frequently or severely exceeding a worker's capacity or competency (e.g. workers lack the training, resources, skills, authority or experience to reasonably or successfully do tasks) - Sustained levels of concentration or vigilance particularly when accuracy is required or workers are looking for infrequent events (e.g. long-distance driving or security monitoring) - Poorly designed or integrated technology that makes tasks more difficult to perform - Insufficient time allocated for the number or volume of tasks - Work where errors may have high reputational, legal, career, safety or financial risks (e.g. air traffic control, medical care or decisions affecting a large number of people) - Absence of systems to prevent individual errors (e.g. relying on workers to memorise information or perform manual calculations without checks), and - Repeatedly or rapidly switching tasks so it is difficult to concentrate and complete tasks (e.g. being frequently interrupted or having to do numerous things at once). <p><i>Note: work that involves complex tasks and high concentration is associated with a greater risk of fatigue.</i></p>
High emotional demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to distressing or emotional situations (e.g. dealing with confrontation) - Managing other people's emotions (e.g. de-escalating an aggressive situation, undertaking disciplinary processes or assisting people who are distressed) - Providing support or empathy (e.g. conveying bad news, providing advocacy or counselling), and - Suppressing emotions or displaying false emotions (e.g. nursing staff hiding distress for patients or retail workers pretending friendliness with difficult customers). <p><i>Note: work that involves emotional labour or providing emotional support is associated with a greater risk of fatigue.</i></p>
Low job demands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Having too little to do (e.g. running out of work) or long idle periods where workers cannot perform other tasks (e.g. where a worker must monitor a process and cannot perform other tasks until it is complete) - Highly monotonous or repetitive tasks which require low levels of thought processing and little variety (e.g. packing products or monitoring production lines) - Work that is too easy (e.g. significantly below a worker's skills or abilities), and - Idle periods when high workloads are present (e.g. having urgent work but being unable to proceed until equipment, resources or support become available).

Controlling job demands

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

<p>Job/ work design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schedule tasks to avoid intense or sustained low or high job demands (e.g. schedule non-urgent work for quieter periods). - Manage supply chains to avoid large fluctuations in demand (e.g. delays in supplies causing backlogs of orders). - Plan shifts to allow adequate rest and recovery, particularly between periods of high demand.
<p>Physical work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design the workplace to eliminate demanding tasks or jobs (e.g. locate the storeroom next to the loading dock so deliveries do not require double handling). - Provide quiet spaces for workers doing mentally demanding work. - Implement systems to reduce human error (e.g. use IT systems to capture important information and generate reminders). - Provide appropriate break areas (e.g. air-conditioned or shady areas for physically demanding work or staff-only areas for workers dealing with difficult customers).
<p>Modifying job demands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan your workforce so you have an adequate number of appropriately skilled staff to do the work and so that tasks utilise your workers' skills. - Roster enough workers to ensure they can take required breaks over long or busy shifts. - Rotate workers through demanding or repetitive tasks. - Reschedule non-urgent tasks if demand is unexpectedly high or low. - Select and install fit for purpose technology which integrates well with other systems and enables productive work. - Provide additional support during periods of high demand (e.g. provide more workers, better equipment or outsource tasks). - Schedule enough time for difficult tasks to be completed safely. Inexperienced workers may require additional time, supervision or support. - Outsource tasks to external companies with the capacity to deliver services safely (e.g. outsource tasks to companies that have appropriately skilled workers or specialised equipment).
<p>Safe work systems and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empower workers in situations where they face high emotional demands (e.g. allow discretion in providing refunds where appropriate to avoid customer aggression or distress). - Have regular conversations about work expectations, workloads, deadlines and instructions to ensure job demands are understood and can be managed. - Regularly review and update work policies and procedures to avoid unnecessary work (e.g. ensure reporting lines are suitable for current workloads). - Have systems for escalating problems and getting support from managers.
<p>The worker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set achievable performance targets, with consideration for the worker's experience and skills. - Provide training if required to ensure workers have the skills to meet work demands. - If emotional demands are an unavoidable part of a worker's role, ensure these are captured in the position description and

	applicants are informed at the pre-selection stage (e.g. at interview) of the demanding nature of the role.
For information on safe physical work environments see the Code of Practice: Managing the work environment and facilities . For information on designing structures which will, or could reasonably be, used as a workplace see the Code of Practice: Safe design of structures .	

Fatigue

A state of physical or mental exhaustion, or both, which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively.

Fatigue can develop over the short or long term, can prevent people from functioning safely, and can have health effects

Eventuate in situations where workers work long hours, often with high physical, mental or emotional demands. If fatigue results from psychosocial hazards eventuating, it can cause further physical or psychological harm.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Fatigue may include:

- physical exhaustion due to work that involves high physical demands (see [Job demands](#) listed above in this Code for examples of high physical demand)
- physical exhaustion due to working in poor environmental conditions (see [poor physical environments](#) listed below in this Code for examples)
- mental exhaustion due to work that involves high mental or cognitive demands (see [Job demands](#) listed above in this Code for examples of high mental or cognitive demands).
- emotional exhaustion due to work that involves high emotional demands (see [Job demands](#) listed above in the Code for examples of high emotional demands).

Controlling fatigue

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporate fatigue management into rosters and work practices to allow for adequate rest and recovery, particularly between periods of high demand. - Establish hours of work guidelines to manage the likelihood of fatigue (e.g maximum shift length, maximum number of consecutive shifts, minimum break / rest periods within shifts and between shift blocks , maximum night shifts, maximum overtime); minimise irregular hours (setting rosters early to ensure worker can plan personal time and adjust sleep patterns, minimise on call rosters, develop contingency plans for unplanned absences to minimise calling worker in at short notice) - Ensure journey management processes to manage fatigue-related risks when travelling for work purposes.
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Reducing fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide additional support during periods of high demand (e.g. provide more workers, better equipment or outsource tasks). - Providing workers with control over their work pace and allowing them to take breaks to manage their workload and fatigue. - Rotate workers through demanding or repetitive tasks. - Reschedule non-urgent tasks if demand is unexpectedly high. - Outsource tasks to external companies with the capacity to deliver services safely (e.g. outsource tasks to companies that have appropriately skilled workers or specialised equipment).
Physical work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce exposure to conditions that influence worker comfort. - Provide suitable accommodation arrangements that allow workers to get good quality rest and sleep. - Provide quiet spaces for workers doing mentally demanding work. - Provide appropriate break areas (e.g. air-conditioned or shady areas for physically demanding work or staff-only areas for workers dealing with difficult customers).
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training to supervisors and workers on recognising signs and symptoms of fatigue. - Empower workers in situations where they face high emotional demands (e.g. allow discretion in providing refunds where appropriate to avoid customer aggression or distress). - Increasing the level of practical support during peak workloads. - Provide opportunities for workplace napping as a control to reduce fatigue..
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training if required to ensure workers have the skills to meet work demands. - Provide training to supervisors and workers about early warning signs and symptoms of work-related fatigue and how to respond when they recognise them in themselves or others. - If emotional demands or high risk work are an unavoidable part of a worker's role, ensure these are captured in the position description so that applicants can make informed decisions at the pre-selection stage (e.g. at interview) as to their own capacity to meet the demands

Low job control

Having little control or say over the work or aspects of the work including how or when the job is done.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Low job control may include:

- requiring permission or sign-off before progressing routine or low risk tasks (e.g. before ordering standard monthly supplies or sending routine internal emails)
- workers' level of autonomy not matching their abilities (e.g. inexperienced and highly skilled workers are given the same level of autonomy)
- prescriptive processes and not allowing workers to apply their skills or judgment (e.g.

- work is tightly scripted and workers cannot adapt to the specific situation)
- lack of consultation about changes impacting their work (e.g. changing processes for interacting with clients)
- limited scope for workers to adapt the way they work to changing situations or adopt efficiencies in their work (e.g. not allowing workers to adapt processes which do not suit the situation)
- workers have little influence on how they do their work, when they change tasks or take breaks (e.g. work is machine or computer paced)
- workers are unable to avoid dealing with aggression or abuse (e.g. police or healthcare services)
- workers do not have control over their physical environment (e.g. working in uncomfortable temperatures), and
- where workers are engaged in insecure, precarious and contingent work arrangements (e.g. casual work, labour hire, fixed-term contracts, gig economy workers).

Controlling low job control

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

<p>Job/work design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Match workers' level of autonomy to their skills and experience. - Implement consultation arrangements to regularly discuss the work, how it is done and any changes impacting workers. - Develop governance arrangements and approval processes that balance risks and efficiency to streamline lower risk tasks. - Design processes and systems to deal with new situations and provide autonomy for workers to apply their judgement when processes are not fit for purpose.
<p>Physical work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design processes and systems so workers control their workflow (e.g. use electronic systems to filter client queues and give workers control over when the next client is called). - If work is machine or computer paced, design processes so workers can alter the pace of work, change tasks, or pause the workflow to take breaks. - Provide workers with reasonable control over their physical environment (e.g. workers can adjust their workstation). - Ensure equipment is maintained and appropriate to the task
<p>Improving job control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plan any regular additional work hours or changes to work in advance with workers (e.g. if additional hours are usually required during peak season, plan this in advance with workers). - Involve workers in organisational decision-making processes and encourage suggestions for continuously improving work practices. - Plan deadlines, performance targets, work allocations and work plans in consultation with workers. - Hold regular team meetings and discuss any work challenges with workers and discuss how problems could be solved. - Monitor staff in a way that is not excessive or punitive.

Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Create an environment where workers feel empowered to raise safety concerns about work requirements. Encourage workers to suggest changes or adopt efficiencies in their work.- Provide leadership and supervision that supports workers to take reasonable control over their work.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Develop a performance management system that ensures workers have input into the way they do their work rather than focusing only on output.- Hire workers with the right skills and experience for the position including the level of autonomy the job will have.

Job insecurity

A state of uncertainty about continued employment due to precarious and contingent work arrangements (such as being engaged on a fixed-termed contract, or in seasonal, casual, freelance and gig work).

Subjectively perceived threat of job loss.

Lack of assurance that their jobs will remain stable in the future.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Job insecurity may include:

- work that involves uncertainty over the extent and length of their employment, such as casual, labour hire or rolling fixed-term contract work
- work undertaken by employee-like workers as defined under the *Fair Work Act 2009*
- workers coming to work sick or injured (presenteeism) to maintain a positive impression with the employer so as to secure future shifts and employment contracts
- no paid leave, leading to presenteeism
- workers taking on more hazardous job tasks
- workers do not have control over their pay and work process
- workers performing extended hours of work when jobs are available
- ongoing fatigue when long hours of labour are on offer or required, and
- isolated work resulting in physical and social isolation.

Controlling job insecurity

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult and provide advance notice of work arrangements. - Implement consultation arrangements to regularly discuss the work and any changes impacting workers usual work hours or arrangements.
Reducing job insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where reasonably practicable, avoid insecure, precarious and contingent work arrangements (e.g. move long-term casual or fixed-term workers to permanent, ongoing employment contracts). - Review and adjust employment agreements and entitlements to enable more stable and secure employment opportunities. - Plan any regular additional work hours or changes to work in advance with workers (e.g. if additional hours are usually required during peak season, plan this in advance with workers). - Involve insecure workers in organisation decision-making processes and encourage questions about their employment status.
Safe work systems and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create an environment where workers feel they do not need to always maintain a positive impression with the employer to secure shifts or employment contract.

procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide mechanisms for workers to report issues, raise concerns or appeal workplace decisions. This may include anonymous surveys or reporting. - Ensure you attribute work correctly and ensure the right workers receive recognition for achievements. - Provide systems to protect workers who raise safety concerns from discrimination (Sections 104-109 of the WHS Act prohibit discriminatory, coercive or misleading conduct). - Provide leadership and supervision that supports workers to provide input regarding work hours and arrangements.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage workers to use available processes to raise concerns, issues or complaints early, and use appeal processes when necessary. - Encourage workers to not attend work if they are sick or injured. - Hire and promote workers based on merit using transparent selection methods.

Poor support

Inadequate support, including insufficient support from supervisors or other workers.
Not having the resources they need to do the job or support work performance.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Poor support may include:

- insufficient, unclear or contradictory information (e.g. necessary information is not passed on or is communicated poorly)
- not having the things to do their job properly or on time (e.g. not having the necessary tools, systems, equipment or resources)
- frequently needing to compete for the things needed to do the job (e.g. where multiple workers need to use equipment at the same time)
- poorly maintained or inadequate tools, systems and equipment (e.g. tools are broken or IT systems do not work as intended)
- inadequate training for the task (e.g. new workers are asked to do complex tasks or workers are expected to use new tools without training)
- jobs where supervisors are unavailable to make decisions or provide support (e.g. they work from a different location or are frequently in meetings)
- inadequate guidance from supervisors or assistance from other workers (e.g. other workers are not available to help safely complete tasks)
- workers cannot ask for help when needed (e.g. workers are not able to pause work, leave their workstations or are working remotely without means to contact supervisors)
- workplace cultures that discourage supervisors or co-workers supporting each other (e.g. highly competitive, insecure, critical, uncooperative or uncollaborative workplaces)
- working environments that discourage discussion (e.g. lack of suitable spaces to discuss sensitive issues or where workers are physically separated)
- limited emotional support or unempathetic leadership (e.g. supervisors do not notice when workers are struggling, do not take issues seriously or provide a safe space to raise issues)

- failing to monitor the welfare of workers who have experienced adverse work experiences (such as performance counselling or a critical incident), and
- infrequent or poor performance feedback and discussions (e.g. feedback is unclear, unhelpful or not provided) and / or solutions / suggested pathways to improvement are not clarified.

Controlling poor support

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

<p>Job/work design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement good information sharing systems so workers have quick access to the information they need to do their jobs (e.g. ensure databases are kept up to date and are user friendly). - Design work so supervisors have manageable workloads, sufficient resources and their span of control allows effective supervision (e.g. supervisors have time to answer questions or assist with challenging tasks). - Establish systems to ensure regular, fair, goal-focused and constructive feedback discussions occur between workers and supervisors to discuss work tasks, and any support or development needs (e.g. implement end of shift debriefs or require supervisors to do quarterly check ins). - Provide clear management structures and reporting lines (e.g. provide organisational charts or ensure workers understand who to go to for help).
<p>Physical work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide workers with the things they need to do their jobs properly and safely (e.g. the right tools, equipment, systems and resources) and ensure workers have sufficient access to them (e.g. they are conveniently located and workers do not need to compete for access). - Provide workers with access to supervisors (e.g. locate workers close to their supervisor or if working remotely provide tools like videoconferencing). - Design the work environment to facilitate cooperation and ensure people can ask for help (e.g. workers can easily have discussions with others and there are suitable meeting spaces).
<p>Increasing support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold regular team meetings, and discuss any challenges, issues and support needs (e.g. ask workers about any new challenges or training they may need). - Build a workplace culture that values collaboration and cooperation instead of competition (e.g. establish team rather than individual goals or praise cooperation). - Maintain tools, systems and equipment, and review whether they are suitable for the work (e.g. ensure equipment works and consider whether other equipment might work better or more efficiently). - Schedule meetings to ensure supervisors have availability during workers' usual hours to meet with them so workers can raise issues or ask questions. - Increase the level of support during peak periods or challenging tasks (e.g. roster more workers on during peak season or check in more often for challenging tasks). - Backfill roles or redistribute work when workers are out of the office or on leave. - Design rosters so supervisors are available to help during difficult or

	<p>busy times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set clear work goals and clearly explain tasks.
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Train workers on how to do their jobs using methods that enable sound understanding of how to perform their tasks safely and effectively - Establish open communication (e.g. have an open-door policy) and encourage workers to share concerns early (e.g. by taking their concerns seriously and ensure they have safe spaces to raise them). - Encourage and reward workers supporting each other. - Encourage the development of positive working relationships (e.g. invest in team planning and building activities and encourage team discussions). - Build interpersonal capabilities across the team (e.g. emotional intelligence, conflict resolution, or communication and feedback skills). - Encourage supervisors to be empathetic in their leadership, including taking workers concerns seriously, sensitively managing problems and helping when workers are struggling. - Ensure supervisors understand their role in supervising workers. - Encourage supervisors to provide timely, task specific, constructive feedback.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hire supervisors with the skills, experience and training to perform their role and support their team. - Provide development programs to improve supervisors' skills. - Establish inductions, training and mentoring (e.g. buddy programs) for new workers.

Lack of role clarity

Unclear, inconsistent or frequently changing roles, responsibilities or expectations.

Lack of important job-related information.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Lack of role clarity may include:

- unclear, inconsistent, or frequently changing jobs or role responsibilities
- overlap in responsibilities between workers (e.g. workers are given the same task and are not clear who is responsible for what)
- conflicting, uncertain, or frequently changing expectations and work standards (e.g. workers are given conflicting deadlines or instructions)
- conflicting, unclear or changing reporting lines
- missing or incomplete task information
- a lack of clarity about work priorities (e.g. which tasks or stakeholder relationships are most important).

Controlling lack of role clarity

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide position descriptions that clearly outline all key tasks, responsibilities and role expectations. - Design management structures with clear reporting lines. - Provide workers with a single immediate supervisor. - Detail reporting lines in an organisational chart.
Physical work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a workplace which is compatible with workers' responsibilities (e.g. seat workers with their teams). - Provide systems, tools and equipment which is compatible with workers' responsibilities (e.g. IT systems with profiles set up for different users and access to programs they need for their role).
Providing role clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide clear work instructions and expectations, explain why roles, responsibilities and tasks have been allocated, and ensure workers understand. - Ensure workers assigned to the same task understand who is doing what. - Change tasks or processes that frequently create conflict, confusion, or result in frequent mistakes (e.g. provide clearer explanations or redesign the tasks). - Update job descriptions and any role expectations following changes. - Implement regular check-ins and encourage open discussion among team members to ensure they are clear about who is doing what. - Provide all workers with an induction and ensure they understand their role. - Provide clear guidelines for what to do when expectations do not align (e.g. between workers, workers and supervisors, or workers

	<p>and clients).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement systems to help workers identify issues or conflicts and resolve them.
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk to workers to ensure they understand their role, your expectations, who they report to and the organisation's work more broadly. - Encourage feedback on changes that affect workers' job tasks. - Design a performance feedback system where employees receive regular feedback and provides them an opportunity to raise concerns about role clarity. - Check with employees to ensure they understand any additional or different responsibilities or duties following an organisational change or restructure.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage workers to talk to their supervisor or manager early if they are unclear about the scope or responsibilities of their role. - Provide a realistic job summary and overview during recruitment and selection processes so applicants are aware of the role, expectations and responsibilities.

Poor organisational change management

Organisational change management that is poorly planned, communicated, supported or managed.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Poor organisational change management may include:

- not consulting workers on changes in the workplace (e.g. not talking to workers or genuinely considering their views or legal rights in relation to employment law)
- poor consideration of WHS risks or performance impacts of a change (e.g. not considering health and safety risks when downsizing, relocating or introducing new technology or not allowing for drops in productivity while workers learn new processes)
- poorly planned changes (e.g. changes are disorganised, do not have a clear goal or do not account for workers' needs; inadequate communication with stakeholders causing disruption)
- poor communication about planned changes (e.g. allowing rumours to spread without providing timely, authoritative information)
- insufficient information is provided regarding changes (e.g. information is unclear or does not provide enough guidance for workers to understand and engage with the change)
- inadequate support for workers through the change process (e.g. not allowing time for workers to learn new tasks), or
- providing insufficient training to support changes (e.g. how to perform a new role or use a new process).

Controlling poor organisational change management

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

<p>Job/work design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You must consult workers who are, or are likely to be, affected by a WHS matter. You must agree consultation arrangements with your workers and should design them to suit your workplace. You must use agreed consultation arrangements when planning changes that raise WHS concerns. - Modify work plans to allow for a period of change (e.g. adjusting performance targets while workers learn new roles). - Plan any changes to duties, tasks, objectives and reporting arrangements to ensure they are reasonable and fair (e.g. ensure workers will not have too much to do).
<p>Physical work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide practical support for changes in duties, tasks or objectives (e.g. ensure workers have access to the tools and resources they need to perform a new task). - Provide mechanisms to guide workers and managers through the change process (e.g. provide information or feedback sessions to address any concerns).
<p>Managing and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide authoritative information about upcoming changes and

communicating organisational change	<p>options being considered as soon as possible, keep workers up to date, and ensure workers understand the changes (e.g. provide updates at team meetings or on notice boards).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform customers and suppliers about changes and any impacts this will have. - Provide workers with the reasons for changes. - Provide emotional support to help workers deal with challenges or frustrations resulting from change and uncertainty. - Provide workers with information about their legal rights and rights to representation, including by a union -
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage workers to engage with the development of new position descriptions and work processes. - Encourage workers to engage with consultation and raise any issues, concerns or suggestions. - Respect individual differences and recognise workers will respond to change in a range of ways and will have different needs in consultation and engagement.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You must provide workers any information, training, instruction and supervision necessary to safely complete their work (e.g. train them on safely using new equipment). - Ensure the person communicating changes has the skills and authority to do so, and supervisors have the skills to support workers through periods of change.

Inadequate recognition and reward

Jobs where there is an imbalance between workers' effort and recognition or rewards, both formal and informal.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Inadequate recognition and reward may include:

- receiving unfair negative feedback (e.g. criticism on things workers cannot control or on things for which they have received insufficient training and support)
- receiving insufficient feedback or recognition (e.g. workers do not receive feedback on their work or are not given information to help them improve; workers are not acknowledged or rewarded for high effort or supporting colleagues)
- unfair, biased, opaque, or inequitable distribution of recognition and rewards (e.g. workers being rewarded for the efforts of others)
- limited opportunities for development (e.g. a lack of job training or development), or
- not recognising workers' skills (e.g. closely supervising or directing an experienced staff member on simple tasks).

Controlling inadequate recognition and reward

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use fair, transparent and meaningful ways of providing recognition and rewards to reflect workers' efforts (e.g. avoid only recognising the workers doing high profile work; recognise teamwork and corporate contributions). - Design fair and transparent performance management processes (e.g. ensure performance measures relate to aspects of work within a worker's control and consult workers on performance expectations).
Providing appropriate recognition and reward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide recognition or feedback promptly and ensure it is specific, practical, fair and clearly relates to workers' performance. - Consult workers when designing reward and recognition systems.
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop leaders' abilities to provide constructive feedback and recognise good performance. - Ensure performance management systems focus on aspects of work that are within the worker's control. - Ensure you attribute work correctly and ensure the right workers receive recognition for achievements. - Train supervisors on how to have difficult conversations and manage underperformance in a way that prioritises improvement over blame.
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement systems to support performance (e.g. training and mentoring) and provide opportunities for development (e.g. allow workers to take ownership of particular tasks). - Recruit or train supervisors with the skills to provide constructive feedback and recognise the contributions of workers.

Poor organisational justice

Poor organisational justice involves a lack of procedural justice (fair processes to reach decisions), informational fairness (keeping people informed), or interpersonal fairness (treating people with dignity and respect).

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Poor organisational justice may include:

- failing to treat workers' information sensitively or maintain their privacy (e.g. having performance discussions in front of others or using or disclosing information for a purpose it was not disclosed for)
- policies or procedures that are unfair, biased or applied inconsistently (e.g. promotion based on favouritism, or applying disciplinary policies inconsistently or discriminatorily)
- failing to complete administrative or managerial duties such that it impedes other workers' ability to meet their work responsibilities or access an entitlement (e.g. failing to make decisions that enable a worker to keep a project on schedule or failing to review a request for annual leave).
- penalising workers for things outside their control (e.g. for not producing a sufficient number of products when they did not have access to the required materials)
- failing to recognise or accommodate the reasonable needs of workers (e.g. failing to provide an accessible workplace)
- discriminating against particular groups or not applying policies fairly to some groups
- failing to appropriately address (actual or alleged) underperformance, harmful behaviour, or misconduct (e.g. not investigating allegations of sexual harassment or not ensuring procedural justice for workers accused of bullying)
- allocating work, shifts and opportunities in a discriminatory or unfair way (e.g. giving 'good' shifts based on friendships with a supervisor), or
- no or inadequate processes for making decisions affecting workers (e.g. policies and processes do not set out the key considerations for disciplinary decisions).

Controlling poor organisational justice

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design unbiased and transparent workplace processes, policies and procedures in consultation with workers (e.g. decision making, recruitment, promotion, performance management, task allocation, WHS or workplace entitlement policies). - Consult workers when setting work standards or performance expectations. Ensure they are achievable and workers will not be penalised for things outside their control.
Physical work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a workplace environment where private conversations can be held and ensure confidential information is kept secure. - Ensure the workplace accommodates reasonable needs of workers (e.g. provide accessible ramps, doors or IT equipment).
Safe work systems and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide mechanisms for workers to report issues, raise concerns or appeal workplace decisions.

procedures	<p>Ensure workers are aware of all internal and external avenues for reporting or complaining about harmful behavioural and other psychosocial hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regularly review policies, processes, procedures, performance expectations and decisions to ensure they are appropriate, fair and reflect the needs of the workplace. - Communicate processes and information to workers in a timely and appropriate way (e.g. notify unsuccessful applicants privately before you publicly announce promotion decisions). - Provide systems to protect workers who raise safety concerns from discrimination (Sections 104-109 of the WHS Act prohibit discriminatory, coercive or misleading conduct).
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage workers to use available processes to raise concerns, issues or complaints early, and use appeal processes when necessary. - Ensure workers understand expectations and performance targets. - Hire and promote workers based on merit using transparent selection methods.

Traumatic events or material

Traumatic events involving work-related violence and aggression are covered in [Appendix B](#).

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Traumatic events or material may include:

- witnessing or investigating a fatality, serious injury, abuse, neglect or serious incident (e.g. working in child protection)
- exposure to seriously injured or deceased persons (e.g. working in an emergency department or as a forensic scientist)
- experiencing fear or extreme risks (e.g. being in a motor vehicle accident, workplace incident or near miss)
- exposure to natural disasters (e.g. emergency services workers responding to floods or bushfires)
- witnessing or investigating terrorism or war (e.g. police officers responding to terrorist attacks or journalists reporting on wars)
- supporting victims of painful and traumatic events (e.g. providing counselling services)
- listening to or reading descriptions of painful and traumatic events experienced by others (e.g. lawyers reviewing evidence or advocates helping with victim testimonies)
- finding evidence of crimes or traumatic events (e.g. customs workers or online moderators), and
- exposure to events that bring up traumatic memories.

Controlling exposure to traumatic events or material

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

<p>Job/work design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design work to minimise the number of workers exposed to traumatic events (e.g. design roles so tasks that can be carried out away from an accident or disaster scene are performed from another location). - Coordinate and schedule tasks at traumatic scenes so workers are not exposed to unnecessary trauma (e.g. arrange for less urgent tasks to be performed after a body has been removed).
<p>Physical work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminate physical risks to health and safety in the workplace to prevent trauma from a workplace incident or near miss. - Remove or secure potentially lethal means of self-harm (e.g. medications or hazardous chemicals) from the workplace or secure them (e.g. require two workers to enter codes to access storage units or require higher level authorisation processes). - Provide physical barriers to discourage suicide attempts (e.g. install fences to prevent access to train tracks or railings on bridges, locking windows and limiting roof access). - Implement file flagging processes or password requirements on potentially distressing files to eliminate inadvertent exposure to distressing content.
<p>Minimising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduce exposure to traumatic materials, particularly if there is no

<p>exposure to traumatic events or material</p>	<p>operational need for workers to view or listen to all the materials or consider them in detail (e.g. allow online moderators to remove users based on a single serious breach or encourage officers discovering suspected child abuse material to pass that material to identified investigations without reviewing it).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use screening software to remove explicit material. - Minimise the number of workers exposed to traumatic materials or events (e.g. do not bring unnecessary workers into an investigation or natural disaster area). - Minimise the amount of traumatic materials or events each worker is exposed to (e.g. rotate workers through different roles to provide periods of respite). - Reduce workloads so workers can investigate thoroughly and provide adequate support to victims (e.g. prevent workers from feeling they 'failed someone'). - Increase breaks and recovery time after exposure to a traumatic event (e.g. provide time to disconnect from work).
<p>Safe work systems and procedures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide guidelines and procedures for dealing with incidents, train workers in these procedures and ensure they understand them (e.g. reduce the number of decisions workers make during a traumatic event). - Implement reporting systems for exposure to traumatic or distressing events. Implement systems that prompt supervisors to support workers, trigger a review of the incident and a review of whether control measures are working as planned. - Create a safe space for workers to report traumatic or distressing events and deal with these disclosures sensitively and seriously. - Foster informal peer and managerial support. - Implement procedures for providing support after traumatic events (e.g. monitor workers for indications of poor adjustment post-incident and offer formal mental health support if required). - Train supervisors on responding to trauma and where they can get assistance. - Foster opportunities to contribute to post incident reviews to facilitate learning and to validate the significance of responder's contributions.
<p>The worker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure recruitment and selection practices incorporate a realistic job preview so applicants are aware the role has the potential to expose them to trauma. - Monitor the health of your workers following traumatic events, or when dealing with traumatic materials, using processes developed in consultation with workers. - Provide training to workers so they understand their role, know how to respond effectively, and know where to access advice and assistance during a traumatic event. - Provide training to workers who may be exposed to traumatic events or have a role in supporting workers who are exposed, so they can recognise signs and symptoms of stress and ensure they know where and how to access support. - Monitor and support workers following traumatic events (e.g. are there any changes to their behaviours or increased absenteeism). - Provide employee assistance programs and encourage workers to use them.

Remote or isolated work

Work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of the location, time or nature of the work.

Working in environments where there are long travel times, poor access to resources, or communications are limited and difficult.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Remote or isolated work may include:

- working in locations requiring long commutes to work sites
- significant delays to entering or exiting the worksite (e.g. prisons, tower cranes or confined spaces)
- limited access to resources (e.g. supplies are delivered infrequently or there are significant delays in getting additional equipment if needed)
- limited access to recreation or opportunities to escape work issues (e.g. living in workers' accommodation in remote areas)
- reduced access to support networks and lower capacity to meet family commitments (e.g. fly-in fly-out or offshore work)
- working alone (e.g. lone workers on night shift)
- working away from the usual workplace (e.g. working in clients' homes, offsite or from home)
- where there is limited access to reliable communication and technology (e.g. no phone reception or IT systems are frequently offline), and
- difficulties or long delays accessing help in an emergency (e.g. community nurses in remote areas, working in underground mines).

Controlling remote or isolated work

WHS Regulation 48

Remote or isolated work

You must manage the risks associated with remote or isolated work, including providing effective communication with the worker carrying out remote or isolated work.

The Code of Practice: [Managing the workplace environment and facilities](#) provides information on how the risks associated with remote or isolated work can be controlled including information on:

- workplace layout and design
- communication systems
- buddy systems
- movement records, and
- training information and instruction.

Intrusive surveillance

Excessive surveillance methods / tools used to monitor and collect information about workers at work for the purpose of work performance monitoring.

Intrusive surveillance methods / tools can be analogue (e.g. supervisor engaging in micromanagement) or technological (e.g. tracking devices).

Note: surveillance of workers while at work may be appropriate for the purposes of:

- monitoring worker's geographical location or movement to control risks associated with remote or isolated work, and
- managing physical and / or IT security risks in a workplace.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Intrusive surveillance may include:

- unreasonable levels of supervision.
- excessive monitoring of work tasks or breaks.
- tracking calls made and movements made by workers (using CCTV and trackable devices) for the purpose of work performance monitoring (as opposed to safety or other purposes).
- GPS monitoring of workers' geographical location and movement in company vehicles for the purpose of work performance monitoring (as opposed to safety or other purposes).

Controlling exposure to intrusive surveillance

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Job/work design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consult with employees when developing performance-monitoring systems and procedures for reviewing and monitoring employees. - Develop a clear policy on appropriate monitoring that is not excessive or punitive. - Consult with employees about the use of satellite tracking systems or devices and the purpose of the tracking and limits for privacy purposes. - Develop team-based targets which help build effective teams and allow the measurement of team performance against organisational goals.
Physical work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a workplace environment where private conversations can be held and ensure confidential information is kept secure.
Safe work systems and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure supervisors understand their role in supervising workers. - Ensure managers are competent supervisors, including providing support and training. - Encourage the development of positive working relationships (e.g. invest in team planning and building activities and encourage team discussions).
The worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage workers to talk to their supervisors or manager early if

	<p>they have concerns, issues or complaints about the surveillance methods / tools used to monitor their work performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure workers understand expectations and performance targets.
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Poor physical environment

Exposure to unpleasant, poor quality or hazardous working environments or conditions.

Note: Some of these examples of hazards may not create psychosocial risks on their own but may do so if combined with other hazards. Some hazards may only create risks on their own when severe. Consider all hazards present and the circumstances to determine what is reasonably practicable to manage the risks.

Poor physical environments may include:

- performing hazardous tasks
- working in hazardous conditions (e.g. near unsafe machinery or hazardous chemicals)
- performing demanding work while wearing uncomfortable PPE or other equipment (e.g. equipment that is poorly fitted, heavy, or reduces visibility or mobility)
- workplace conditions that affect concentration or ability to complete tasks (e.g. high noise levels, uncomfortable temperatures or poor lighting)
- unpleasant workplace conditions such as poorly maintained amenities, unpleasant smells or loud music
- working with poorly maintained equipment (e.g. equipment that has become unsafe, noisy or started vibrating), and
- work-related accommodation, facilities and amenities that cause or contribute to worker fatigue (e.g. conditions are noisy, uncomfortable or stop workers getting enough sleep).

You can find more information on physical hazards and the working environment on the Safe Work Australia website.

Controlling a poor physical environment

Like psychosocial hazards, you must eliminate or minimise physical hazards in the workplace as far as is reasonably practicable. Specific duties may also apply under WHS laws, for information on how to manage a poor physical environment please see the Safe Work Australia website.

Appendix B – Harmful behaviours

This appendix provides information on psychosocial hazards related to harmful behaviours. Harmful behaviours are:

- violence and aggression
- bullying
- harassment including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment, and
- conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions.

These can cause physical and psychological harm to the person they are directed at and anyone witnessing the behaviour.

A single or irregular exposure to these hazards may not create psychosocial risks or the risks may be very low. However, if workers are exposed to a hazard (or a combination of these hazards) over a prolonged period or in a severe way they can cause psychological and physical harm.

The controls provided are examples, you must consider what is reasonably practicable to eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace.

Identifying harmful behaviours

Overt or extreme forms of these behaviours (such as physical violence) may be easier to identify and are not tolerated in most workplaces. However, more subtle forms like crude language, sexist remarks, exclusion, undermining, denying access to resources, information and other supports a worker needs to perform their role and a climate of incivility may not be taken as seriously. Such behaviours can amplify the impact of hazards such as poor support, poor organisational justice and poor change management.

Some of the things that may increase the likelihood of workers being exposed to harmful behaviours are set out below. This can help you identify when, where and why these behaviours may happen at work.

For example: workplaces with low worker diversity (e.g. the workforce is dominated by one gender, age group, race or culture), some workforce characteristics (e.g. new and young workers, casual workers, workers in minority groups) and a workplace culture which tolerates or ignores harmful workplace behaviours are more likely to have a higher prevalence of experience harmful behaviours and inadequate systems for responding to them.

Workers may be more likely to experience harmful behaviours or be more severely affected by it, because of their sex, gender, sexuality, age, migration status, disability and literacy. The risk of experiencing harm rises when a person faces multiple forms of discrimination. Attributes that make a person more vulnerable to these behaviours can also make workers less likely to report concerns or incidents.

Harmful behaviours can come from a range of sources including:

- **External** behaviours from customers, clients, patients, members of the public or from other businesses (e.g. between a plumbing and an electrical sub-contractor at the same work site, or a delivery person and a retail worker).
- **Internal** behaviours from other workers, supervisors, or managers.

Harmful behaviours may be an inappropriate response to other psychosocial hazards (e.g.

high job demands or inadequate support). To effectively control risks, you must control the underlying causes as well as directly addressing harmful behaviours.

Note: the risk factors listed below are not exhaustive and may apply to all the harmful behaviours listed below.

Violence and aggression

Things that increase the likelihood of violent or aggressive behaviour include:

- providing care or services to people who are distressed, confused, afraid, ill, affected by drugs or alcohol or receiving unwelcome or involuntary treatment
- enforcement activities (e.g. the activities of police, prison officers or parking inspectors)
- working in high crime areas
- handling valuable or restricted items (e.g. cash or medicines)
- poor visibility in the workplace (e.g. poor lighting or barriers)
- restricted movement in the workplace (e.g. limited exit points)
- working alone, in isolation or in a remote area with the inability to call for assistance
- working offsite or in the community
- working in unpredictable environments (e.g. where other people may pose a risk to workers' safety such as at a client's home)
- interacting with customers, either face-to-face, on the phone or online, or
- service methods or policies that cause or escalate frustration, anger, misunderstanding or conflict (e.g. low staffing levels, customer service policies, setting unreasonable expectations of the services an organisation or workers can provide).

Bullying

Things that increase the likelihood of bullying include:

- presence of other psychosocial hazards:
 - o high job demands
 - o low job control
 - o low support
 - o organisational change, such as restructuring or significant technological change
 - o lack of role clarity, or
 - o poor organisational justice
- leadership or management styles:
 - o autocratic, authoritarian and charismatic behaviour where workers are given limited to no decision making autonomy or where fear or unrealistic rewards are used to motivate workers
 - o laissez-faire behaviour where inadequate direction or guidance is given to workers, responsibilities are not delegated appropriately or where instances of poor performance and conduct are not proactively managed, and
 - o abusive, demeaning or passive-aggressive behaviour or tolerance of such behaviour such as treating workers with contempt, delivering unfair criticism or undermining a worker's performance.
- systems of work
 - o lack of resources or training
 - o inappropriate work scheduling, shift work and poorly designed rostering
 - o unreasonable performance measures or timeframes
 - o poor workplace relationships
 - o poor communication
 - o isolation
 - o low levels of support, or
 - o work group hostility.

Harassment including sexual harassment

Things that increase the likelihood of harassment include:

- particular cohorts of workers who are more vulnerable such as young workers, workers with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, workers in insecure or precarious forms of employment, and workers on working visas
- acceptance of harmful behaviour (e.g. racially or sexually crude conversations, innuendo or offensive jokes are part of the accepted culture)
- power imbalances along gendered lines (e.g. workplaces where one gender holds the majority of management and decision-making positions)
- workplaces organised according to a strict hierarchical structure (e.g. police and enforcement organisations, medical and legal professions)
- use of alcohol at work activities and attendance at conferences and social events as part of work duties, including overnight travel
- workers are isolated, in restrictive spaces like cars or working from remote locations with limited supervision or restricted access to help and support
- working from home which may provide an opportunity for covert sexual harassment to occur online or through phone communication
- interacting with customers, either face-to-face, on the phone or online, and
- poor understanding among workplace leaders of the nature, drivers and impacts of sexual harassment.

While anyone can experience harassment there are certain groups who are more likely to experience it. Some workers may be at greater risk because of their age, gender, sexuality, migration status, disability and literacy.

Conflict or poor workplace relationships and interactions

Things that increase the likelihood of conflict or poor workplace relationships include:

- culture of tolerating swearing, name calling, spreading rumours or rudeness within the workplace
- lack of policies or processes to handle reports of harmful behaviour, and
- the presence of other psychosocial hazards (workers are more likely to be uncivil when they are stressed).

Controlling risks from harmful behaviours

Behaviours such as those listed above are known to cause harm. You must put control measures in place to eliminate or minimise risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

This section provides examples of control measures for managing the risks of violence, aggression, sexual harassment and bullying at the workplace.

Note: These are examples only. You must identify and implement control measures that eliminate or minimise the risks in your workplace, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Physical work environment and security

The physical work environment can affect the likelihood of violence, aggression, harassment and bullying occurring and the ability to respond if it does happen. Consider the following control measures which may provide the highest protection for workers.

Security

- Security personnel or night-time security patrol.
- Video surveillance.
- Fixed and portable alarm systems.

- Communication systems like phones, intercoms and alarm systems are in place, regularly maintained and tested.
- Ensuring vehicles are fit for purpose (e.g. have central locking devices, tracking devices such as GPS systems to allow drivers in distress to be located, lighting inside the vehicle to allow the driver to be aware of passenger behaviour, vehicles are well maintained so they do not break down in unsafe locations or times).

Access

- Controlling access to the premises (e.g. electronically controlled doors with viewing panels that allow surveillance of public areas before the doors are opened from the inside).
- Preventing public access to the area when people are working alone or at night (e.g. via a security card or code, asking guests to leave the room while workers clean).
- Providing facilities and amenities which give privacy and security (e.g. private and secure change rooms or facilities for workers to use which are separate from customers).
- Separating workers from the public with fixed or removable barriers (e.g. high counters, furniture, screens on counters or screens between a driver and passenger).
- Installing a service window for night transactions and systems like pay-at-the-pump.
- Where practicable, providing a workspace for workers who are not able to work from home.

Visibility

- Ensuring internal and external lighting provides good visibility, including in car parks.
- Arranging furniture and partitions within the workplace to ensure good visibility of service areas, improve natural surveillance and avoid restrictive movement.
- Improving natural surveillance in areas such as offices, storerooms and other segregated areas (e.g. using semi opaque glass or screens).

Environment

- Ensuring there are no areas where workers could become trapped, such as rooms with keyed locks.
- Implementing appropriate temperature and noise controls, such as in waiting areas to reduce customer frustration.
- Securing any objects that could be thrown or used to injure someone.
- Providing workers and others with a safe place to retreat. In other situations, it may be possible to move the person behaving harmfully (e.g. an aggressive student could be removed from the classroom while the behaviour continues).
- Ensuring a safe working environment for workers during travel (e.g. workers being in a vehicle together), at conferences, off site, at client or customer premises, and any other location where work is performed.

Safe work systems and procedures

Some safe work systems and procedures can be administrative controls that should be part of your approach to managing risks at your workplace.

Communication

- Communicate with workers when they are working in the community or away from the workplace (e.g. a supervisor regularly checking in with the worker throughout their shift).
- Clearly define jobs and seek regular feedback from workers about their role and responsibilities.
- Clearly communicate to clients and customers that any form of violence, aggression harassment or bullying is not tolerated (e.g. in service agreements, contracts or on

- signs).
- Manage expectations of clients and customers by clearly communicating the nature of the products or services you are providing (e.g. online and using signage).
 - Put up signs at the workplace (e.g. zero tolerance of aggression and violence; limits on products or services; security cameras are in use; or limited cash held on the premises).

Procedures

- Ban or refuse service to persons with a history of harmful behaviour (e.g. patrons at pubs or clients gyms). If service is necessary, such as for medical care, put in place additional measures to protect workers and others.
- Provide alternative methods of customer service to eliminate face-to-face interactions (e.g. online or click-and-collect services, or no contact delivery drops).
- Establish procedures for dealing with harmful behaviour from customers or clients and how workers and managers can respond.
- Limit the amount of cash, valuables and medicines held on the premises and handle them securely (e.g. only accept cashless payments) see the Safe Work Australia *Guide for Transporting and Handling Cash* for more information.
- Use face shields where spitting or intentional coughing is a risk.
- Avoid the need for workers to work alone where possible (e.g. working in pairs, closing the business with security personnel present, or providing a safe escort to a worker's transport).
- Provide supervision of work and support for workers, especially new, young and inexperienced workers.
- Have procedures for working in isolation and uncontrolled environments (e.g. carrying out situational risk assessments to determine at each visit the safety of a client's home before commencing duties).
- Provide a sufficient number of workers (e.g. during peak periods of customer attendance and for the level of care needed for clients).
- Alternate tasks in the workplace - particularly tasks requiring high levels of customer interaction - with other work tasks and ensure workers have regular breaks if aggression or incivility is likely.
- Encourage workers to keep records and screen shots if harmful behaviour occurs online or through phone communication and report the behaviour to their supervisor.
- Assess risks of client aggression and violence and whether additional control measures are required for dealings with some clients.
- Implement management plans where a client is known to have a history of aggression or violence. Develop the plan in consultation with appropriately qualified people and communicate it to all relevant workers.
- Reduce waiting times and missed calls (e.g. by training 'relief' workers to take calls or transferring calls to other areas).
- Encourage workers to escalate problem calls to senior workers.
- Encourage workers to report incidents and behaviours of concern.
- Provide a range of accessible and user-friendly ways to make a report informally, formally, anonymously and confidentially.

Information and training

- Improve role clarity by ensuring workers have well-defined roles and clear expectations.
- Provide adequate resources and training to workers so they are able to perform their role confidently and competently.
- Provide information on the standards of behaviour expected in the workplace, including the use of social media or other technologies.
- Train workers in how to deal with difficult customers, conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques, when and how to escalate issues to managers or supervisors,

- and procedures to report incidents.
- Train managers and supervisors on how to deal with difficult customers and conflict resolution when issues are escalated.
- Plan for regular handover and information exchange with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers.
- Understand client condition / disability / triggers / care and behaviour management plans.
- Ensure workers understand how to make a report, their right to representation, and the support, protection and advice available.
- Make it clear that victimisation of those who make reports will not be tolerated.
- Train key workers (contact persons) to receive reports and give support and advice.

Policies

- Implement appropriate workplace policies as part of managing WHS risks.
- Set, model and enforce acceptable behaviour standards for all people in the workplace. Foster a positive and respectful work culture where violence, aggression, harassment and bullying are not tolerated.
- As power imbalances and inequality increase the risk of gendered and sexual harassment, consider implementing policies and strategies to address gender inequality, lack of diversity and power imbalances at the workplace.
- For work-related events, reinforce workplace policies and behaviours expected of workers, ensure responsible service of alcohol policies are followed and that workers know who to turn to if they experience or witness harmful behaviour at the event.
- Avoid sexualised uniforms and ensure clothing is practical for the work undertaken.
- Act in a consistent manner when dealing with reports of violence, aggression, harassment and bullying, including providing sufficient and appropriate feedback to workers who have raised concerns.
- Allow workers to refuse or suspend service if people fail to comply with the expected standard of behaviour.
- Ensure processes and systems for reporting and responding to incidents are widely communicated and regularly reviewed.
- Provide supportive, consistent and confidential responses to reports.

Review

- Regularly evaluate work practices, in consultation with workers and their representatives, to see if they contribute to harmful behaviours.
- Review control measures after incidents or changes in behaviour.
- Review and monitor workloads, staffing levels and time pressures.
- Collect de-identified details of all reports, including those that are not pursued formally by the complainant, to help you identify systemic issues at the workplace.

Appendix C - Risk register

Location:

Date:

Hazard	How frequently are workers exposed to this hazard?	How long does this exposure last?	How severe is their exposure?	Are other hazards present this may interact with?	How effective are the current controls?	What further controls are required?	Actioned by	Date Due	Date Complete	Maintenance and review
<i>E.g. High work demand (end of financial year sales)</i>	<i>Once a year</i>	<i>1 month</i>	<i>Moderate, most staff are unable to complete essential tasks and report feeling stressed.</i>	<i>Yes, aggressive customers and low support from supervisors.</i>	<i>Moderately, workers are encouraged to leave non-essential tasks but still struggle to keep up with demands.</i>	<i>Additional workers to be assigned to busy shifts.</i>	<i>J. Blogs</i>	<i>31/05/2022</i>		<i>To be reviewed after first week of this year's sales.</i>

Appendix D: Case studies

The control measures PCBUs choose must suit the organisational and worker needs, and effectively control the risks to the highest level that is reasonably practicable. The tables below outline scenarios with common psychosocial hazards and risks, example controls and approaches to maintain, monitor, review and achieve continual improvement of the risk management approach.

Scenario 1: Health and social care – home care services

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>A small to medium sized organisation delivers health and social care to disabled and elderly adults.</p> <p>The services are delivered largely within clients' private residences but can include transporting clients by vehicle to and from other locations for leisure and other activities of daily living. Workers are typically employed on a casual or contract basis. Many are recent migrants. Minimal time is allowed for travel between clients, and travel time is unpaid. This forces workers to rush.</p> <p>Some care recipients have complex health and behaviour support needs. Despite this, workers often work alone with limited support and with inadequate skills and knowledge to provide good quality and safe care.</p> <p>Workers have been injured by aggressive or stressed clients. Not</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>High work demands: Workers experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time pressure and a lack of flexibility • emotional and physical demands (such as heavy lifting and managing challenging behaviours). <p>Low job control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers have limited ability to adapt the way they work by raising concerns about unsafe working conditions. <p>Exposure to violence and aggression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure to violence and aggression can be emotionally distressing for workers. <p>Isolated work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in people's homes and in the community without co-workers and supervisory support can impair 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • worker ratios and travel times are reviewed in order to ensure sufficient workers are rostered to complete work tasks. • risk assessments of each site location / community activity are conducted prior to service provision for a new client and / or new site location for care activity. Consideration is given to the client's home environment and previous history when managing risks to workers. If risks are assessed as too high, service is refused until adaptations are made to minimise the risk. • policies are introduced and enforced to ensure where a client has been assessed as likely to exhibit violent or aggressive behaviours, two workers are 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). • workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. • regular reviews are conducted to assess the sustainability of work demands and to identify additional training and support needs. • workers are consistently encouraged to (and informed how to) report health and safety incidents.

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>all supervisors conduct adequate welfare checks of workers exposed to these incidents.</p> <p>Casual, contract and migrant workers are reluctant to report health and safety concerns. They fear that their hours will be cut or they might lose their job. Some workers can't afford to take time off when they are ill or injured.</p>	<p>workers' sense of security and safety.</p> <p>Assessing the risk Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. The risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. • workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. • there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regular reviews to assess the adequacy of worker ratios and rosters. - support in the form of supervision, training, communication protocols and equipment, critical incident procedures and worker welfare checks. - actively encouraging workers to take adequate time off to recover from illness or injury or offering work adjustments. 	<p>allocated to provide care, or care is provided in a controlled environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • means for increasing communication / consultation are introduced to ensure workers are provided with up-to-date information. • systems for professional supervision and debriefing are developed and implemented. • workers receive training to prevent / manage aggressive client behaviour, as well as training on incident reporting, emergency response procedures, peer support and psychological first aid. • communication processes, equipment (mobile phones, duress alarms) and training are implemented to address risks associated with isolated work (including device monitoring to ensure appropriate and timely response to any emergency situations). • workers are given transparent information about their rights and obligations in relation to industrial and work health and safety matters. • a reasonable adjustment policy is introduced to enable workers to negotiate temporary or long-term adjustments to their work design. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • post critical incident reviews are conducted with workers to ensure they are consulted in evaluations of their effectiveness. • policies and procedures relating to worksite security, incident response, complaints, worker supervision and support and training and development are reviewed and updated to ensure they meet client and worker needs and are consistent with good practice standards. • managers or supervisors undertake professional development activities to develop their knowledge and skills in psychosocial safety management in the health and social care sector.

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	- actively encouraging workers to report concerns over health and safety.		

Scenario 2: Health and social care – residential aged care

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>A large organisation provides residential aged care services to elderly clients. Most clients are frail, while others have complex clinical care needs, limited mobility or limited capacity to undertake activities of daily living without support. Workers often provide end of life care to clients and support for grieving families.</p> <p>One facility is significantly understaffed, due to a high number of vacant positions. The organisation is undergoing change (a design and implementation of a new model of care), so the Director of Nursing is instructed to not fill the vacant positions until the new model of care is implemented. She is also directed to not use temporary agency staff to fill shifts unless she has called all staff to offer them an extra shift first. If no staff can be found to fill shifts, she must seek approval to use agency staff from the Chief Operating Officer.</p> <p>Finding additional staff to cover shifts is time consuming and often not successful. Shifts are frequently understaffed or staffed with workers who are tired due to working multiple extra shifts. Basic care standards</p>	<p>Hazards identified High work demands: Workers experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time pressure due to understaffing • emotional demands due to caring for people with physical and emotional needs. <p>Low job control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers have limited authority to make decisions about staffing or the ability to influence decisions about work design that directly affect them. <p>Poor change management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers are not adequately consulted on organisational changes that impact on them. <p>Poor organisational justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director of Nursing is not given sufficient information and authority to meet her responsibilities towards her team and her clients. • She is also held responsible for problems that she did not have adequate power to prevent. <p>Low reward and recognition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an imbalance between 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the organisation conducts workforce planning and work design to ensure it has the right numbers of staff, with the right knowledge, skills and attributes to support the objectives of their new care model. It consults with its workers throughout these processes to enable them to influence decisions relating to workplace design and conditions, training, workforce numbers and skill mix and leadership and culture. • a training needs analysis is conducted and a development program for workers is implemented. • the Director of Nursing is given greater authority to undertake recruitment and procure agency staff. • the organisation reviews its performance management policies and practices to ensure they are procedurally fair. • managers are educated on formal and informal ways of recognising and rewarding workers. <p>Expectations about recognising and</p>	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). • workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. • regular reviews are conducted to assess the sustainability of work demands and to identify additional training, development and support needs. • managers or supervisors undertake professional development activities to develop their knowledge and skills in psychosocial safety management in the health and social care sector.

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>are not met. The Director of Nursing is given a negative performance review as a result. Other workers report feeling under-appreciated and under-skilled.</p> <p>The Director of Nursing and her team are uncertain about what the new model of care means for them, how understaffing and training issues will be addressed and whether they will be consulted about the changes.</p>	<p>effort and recognition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers are not adequately supported to develop the skills they need to deliver good quality and safe care. <p><u>Assessing the risk</u> Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. The risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. • workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. • there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transparent workplace processes, policies and procedures relating to decision making, performance management, task allocation, work health and safety or workplace entitlements. - mechanisms or support to appeal administrative decisions. - processes to ensure adequate consultation with workers during periods of change. 	<p>rewarding workers are included in managers' performance agreements.</p>	

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	- actively encouraging workers to report concerns over health and safety and / or resourcing.		

Scenario 3: Call centre

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>The business has an office in metropolitan Adelaide and around 30 per cent of the workers work from home.</p> <p>Their role requires them to respond to customers' telephone inquiries and complaints. Long call queues with automatic call drop-ins are a source of persistent time pressure for workers. Customers can become abusive due to long wait times.</p> <p>There are tightly scripted response protocols and prescriptive service standards that must be met. Workers are allocated limited time to spend with each person, regardless of the complexity of their query.</p> <p>There is no structured communication process with those working from home (WFH). They are often not adequately informed of matters relevant to their job and training and development activities.</p> <p>There is very little variation in the nature and tempo of workers' tasks and their break times are set on a rigid schedule.</p> <p>A recent restructure occurred, and workers are unsure about their roles and future workloads. A new IT system with performance monitoring</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>High work demands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers experience time pressure to meet performance targets. <p>Low job control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers lack task variety and limited ability to modify their work design to accommodate variations in the complexity of queries from customers. <p>Aggression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers are exposed to verbal aggression from frustrated customers. <p>Poor change management and role clarity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management does not provide adequate or consistent communication regarding changes within the organisation and remote workers. Workers, particularly those who WFH, may not be adequately consulted during the change process. <p>Poor support and remote and isolated work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those who WFH have limited opportunity to interact with their peers and managers for information, emotional and training support. 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> service level agreements are renegotiated so response times are manageable with existing worker numbers. work schedules are modified so that workers can take short breaks, away from their workstation. customer triage processes are introduced so that workload is distributed according to call complexity and urgency. This may include arrangements for more experienced workers to handle complex queries or for workers to receive mentoring to handle complex queries. workers are rotated according to task and query type to facilitate task variety, aid development and reduce exposure to stressful calls / interactions. workers are supported to be seconded for duties in other functional areas of the business for respite or development. customers are offered alternatives to resolve their query if wait times 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. regular reviews are conducted to assess the sustainability of work demands and exposure to abusive calls and to identify additional work design, training and support needs. leadership team is educated in their WHS responsibilities and work design practices to prepare them for future change in the organisation. opportunities for more systemic changes to work design to reduce the human impact of the work are considered (such as the use of automated web-based services in lieu of phone-based services).

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>software is making workers anxious as they have not yet had training on it and they are concerned it will be used as a means to increase workload, reduce their autonomy or even to sack them.</p>	<p>Assessing the risk Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. Risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. • workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. • there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reviews of work design to ensure manageable workloads with achievable performance standards, limited customer wait times and opportunities for greater flexibility and task variety. - change management practices that focus on worker needs for communication, consultation and transparency. - accountabilities and processes to ensure that remote workers receive peer and managerial information and support. - procedures and training to minimise the duration and 	<p>are lengthy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customer behaviour standards are implemented. These standards are recorded and consequences played to customers upon first contact and prior to speaking with workers. • workers are provided with the right to restrict or cease services to customers who breach the standards. • a system is established to identify customers with history of breach of behavioural standards. These customers are advised that services will be ceased or restricted if the problematic behaviour re-occurs. • workers are trained in how to de-escalate aggressive or distressed customers. • workers receive functional and emotional support during and following abusive interactions (e.g. ability to refer caller to a supervisor and the means to access preferred emotional supports). • a program of call monitoring for worker development and coaching is introduced. • communication and consultation is conducted with workers about the implications of change for their roles. Specific attention is given to consulting with those who WFH to 	

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	frequency of worker exposure to aggression.	<p>ensure their information and other needs are understood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• workers are given information about their rights and responsibilities in relation to organisational change, changes to job design and work processes.• consultation and training on the new IT system is provided before it is introduced.• performance targets are relaxed until workers are familiar with the new systems.• regular 1:1 and team meetings with all office based and WFH workers are conducted to ensure regular and consistent information sharing.	

Scenario 4: First responders – firefighters

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>Work performed by firefighters can involve exposure to threats to their safety and the safety of others. They may be exposed to physical and biological hazards, actual suffering or death or the fear of possible suffering and death.</p> <p>Due to a recent surge in emergencies and workforce shortages, workers have been required to work longer hours than usual, with fewer breaks and less time between shifts for respite. There are also restrictions on the availability of PPE due to supply problems. Workers have reported emotional and physical fatigue.</p> <p>Frequent changes in policies and procedures and increasing volumes of administrative work frustrate and confuse workers and add to their physical and cognitive demands.</p> <p>Workers report the emotional strain of these pressures is impacting on their relationships. They note an increase in uncivil behaviour and arguments between peers.</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>High work demands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers experience role overload and fatigue due to the increased hours of work, combined with the emotional, cognitive and physical demands of their roles. Staff shortages and increased workload impact the ability for workers to take breaks, access leave or see support where required. <p>Role clarity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently changing policies and procedures impair workers' understanding of expectations around work standards. <p>Low control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the increase of service demands and lack of workers, staff feel unable to decline additional shifts or request leave. <p>Traumatic events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers are exposed to traumatic experiences such as fatalities, serious injury and fear of death or injury. <p>Poor physical environment and support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers perform hazardous work in unsafe conditions with inadequate PPE. 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> worker recruitment, onboarding and training are prioritised to increase workforce capacity. the means by which changes in policies or procedures are communicated to first responders is modified so that they receive key information in short written or verbal briefs. Communication about any non-critical matters is paused during very high demand periods. additional opportunities are introduced for consultation with staff regarding their support, resourcing and training needs. Workers are consulted about managing the work demands that are impacting on their stress levels and relationships. non-critical tasks or activities are paused, reduced or re-allocated to enable first responder workers greater opportunities for respite when not engaged in incident response. strategies for conserving supply or identifying alternative sources of PPE are researched and 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. staff responsible for workforce planning regularly consult with managers to inform assessments of service demands and associated workforce forecasting. longer term practices for modifying non-critical taskings or priorities during periods of high service tempo and worker shortages are identified. protocols for the prevention and management of mental health challenges or conditions associated with traumatic exposure are reviewed by subject matter experts.

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	<p>Conflict or poor workplace relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers are exposed to potentially harmful behaviours due to the negative impact of work stress on workplace relationships. <p><u>Assessing the risk</u> Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. Risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> plans to increase worker capacity, physical protection and flexibility through recruitment action, re-design of duties and sourcing of PPE. means of reducing the cognitive load on workers associated with policy and procedural changes. procedures and protocols for reducing the frequency and impact of exposure to traumatic events. 	<p>implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protocols for the prevention and management of mental health challenges or conditions associated with traumatic exposure are established and / or communication and educational efforts are increased. Informal peer support and monitoring efforts are increased. workers are rewarded for demonstrating constructive interpersonal behaviour when under stress. 	

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- procedures and training to minimise the duration and frequency of worker exposure to aggression.- processes or opportunities for workers to engage in constructive discussions about work stressors.		

Scenario 5: Public sector department

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>A medium sized public sector agency has a workforce that is based largely in the Adelaide CBD.</p> <p>The work is complex, politically sensitive, and typically performed under time pressure. To meet expectations, workers often need to work long hours. Workers report that they feel mentally exhausted and that they do not have time to adequately prepare briefings for Government. They also report that being available around the clock is expected, and that asking for respite or support is not encouraged.</p> <p>Members of one of the agency's units state that underperformance from some members is not addressed by their manager. They add that they have voiced their concerns several times that this is unfair and a source of strain.</p> <p>Other workers state that managers are very authoritarian and that some managers exclude or belittle workers who they consider to be 'different'. However, workers are reluctant to complain due to a 'lack of faith in the system' and fear of reprisals. Some report that they have complained but that it was 'swept under the carpet'.</p> <p>Rates of turnover and sickness</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>High work demands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers feel overloaded due to the high volume, complexity and responsibility of their work, and the time pressure imposed by managers and the Government. <p>Low control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers have little control over the work volume or tempo. <p>Poor support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers have inadequate opportunities for respite and report a lack of managerial regard for their health. <p>Inadequate reward and recognition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers' reports indicate an imbalance between effort and reward. Long hours and heavy workloads are expected as the norm rather than recognised as additional effort. <p>Bullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several indicators that workers are exposed to bullying are apparent (worker reports of unreasonable behaviour, persistent high demands and low control and authoritarian and laissez-faire management styles). 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teams are consulted in a courteous manner about their workloads before forecasting and planning future work to ensure they have spare capacity. the PCBU implements or upgrades workload management systems that enable workers to reliably and easily record all core and additional work hours. managers review work patterns weekly, adjust taskings and priorities to minimise excessive work hours and consult with workers to plan for respite periods (such as time off in lieu or annual leave). team structures, resourcing, priorities, work processes and options for additional support are implemented to improve team capacity and efficiency. workers are allowed to negotiate work from home agreements and 'do not contact' times to manage their work-life balance. educate managers about formal and informal means of recognising and rewarding workers as part of a 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. annual workplace planning activities entail consultation with workers to inform future workforce capability needs (functions, structures, attraction and recruitment, learning and development, retention and succession planning). key HR and WHS other business support staff undergo work design training so that they can support business units to improve efficiency and worker functioning. the agency's framework for unacceptable behaviour prevention

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>absence have increased in recent years. Burnout, dissatisfaction with management, lack of job satisfaction and a lack of regard for worker health are commonly cited as reasons for leaving in exit surveys.</p>	<p>Lack of organisational justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers report a lack of fairness (not being treated with dignity and respect) and perceptions of a lack of procedural justice (complaints ignored or not handled satisfactorily). <p>Assessing the risk Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. Risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workforce planning to ensure adequate staff are available to meet demands. limiting governance requirements for low-risk tasks to reduce administrative burden. systems to ensure that managers provide fair and constructive feedback on 	<p>reward and recognition program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require managers to undergo education and training to develop more adaptive leadership styles. Equip managers with the ability to know when to be democratic, consultative, directive or authoritative. require managers to undergo training in managing underperformance, including conducting performance counselling. formalise expectations at all levels of management in relation to worker performance and conduct management in performance agreements. Corrective actions are taken with managers who fail to meet expectations. managers at all levels assess the performance of their subordinate team leaders / supervisors through regular check-ins with their respective workers. These check-ins focus on how team leaders / supervisors support their workers and their teams to perform at their best. workers are offered secondment opportunities to other agencies for respite and / or professional development. desired values and behaviours are 	<p>and response is strengthened through additional leadership, risk assessment, transparency, education, support, reporting and monitoring measures.</p>

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
	<p>performance and are aware of workers' support needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - means of ensuring that individual, team and agency performance expectations are fair and reasonable for its resources and of ensuring that all workers are aware of these. - clear articulation of expected and prohibited workplace behaviours and rights to be protected from bullying and harassment. - transparent policies for and procedures for complaints, including options for complainants who are dissatisfied with the PCBU's response. 	<p>reinforced throughout key points in the employment lifecycle (through consistent application of rewards for desired behaviours, sanctions for harmful behaviour and corrective action for underperformance).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transparent information on rights and obligations in relation to unacceptable workplace behaviour (including how to request a review of a decision and external complaint bodies) is promulgated. 	

Scenario 6: Small family-owned retail outlet

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>A small busy retail store which is open all week is in an ageing building with a poorly designed fit out. It is owned and operated by three adult family members, who employ several casual workers to help with busy periods. The casual workers tend to be a mix of people aged from 16-24 years of age.</p> <p>The casual workers have irregular shifts and work patterns, and the owners spend minimal time developing their skills in areas like stock control and operating the cash register. The casual workers are also unclear as to what tasks to prioritise, particularly during busy times.</p> <p>The storeroom is cluttered and disorganised. This makes unloading new stock and the process of finding prepaid orders difficult, particularly when there are lots of customers waiting.</p> <p>The owners of the business sometimes see customers become aggressive with their young casual workers when there are long wait times.</p> <p>One customer cornered a young female worker and made sexualised</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>Lack of role clarity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual workers are often unclear about how to do the work effectively and efficiently. <p>Poor physical environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The layout of the storeroom makes it difficult for workers to access, load and unload stock in a safe and efficient manner. <p>Poor support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The owners of the store do not equip the workers with adequate skills, knowledge and physical conditions to perform their work safely and effectively. <p>Harmful behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers are exposed to instances of aggressive behaviour and sexual harassment from customers. <p>Poor organisational justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The business owners do not take workers' complaints about harmful behaviours seriously. <p>Assessing the risk</p> <p>Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout, psychological illness and / or physical injury. Risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exposure is frequent and / or 	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a training needs analysis is conducted and a formal onboarding and ongoing training program is implemented for workers. The training program is designed to ensure skill and knowledge gaps are addressed. shift rosters are prepared and communicated well ahead of time. Wherever possible, inexperienced workers are paired with experienced ones. Additional experienced workers are rostered for expected high demand periods. start of shift briefings are conducted with all rostered workers for the purpose of task prioritisation and allocation. the owners arrange for stock to be delivered outside of peak periods or when additional workers are rostered. the loading dock, storeroom and shop floor is redesigned and refurbished to improve safety and efficiency (including dedicated organised space for prepaid orders). 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. informed by worker consultation, an ongoing schedule of work design reviews and associated assessments of training needs is implemented. all workers are educated and trained in how to recognise and report workplace hazards and are regularly encouraged to offer suggestions on how work may be done safely and efficiently. job descriptions are developed for all roles that includes information about the likely health and safety risks that workers may be exposed

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>comments about her. However, the owners don't do anything about it. They explain to the casual workers that they don't want to upset the customers even more.</p>	<p>prolonged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. • there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - formal procedures and systems for worker onboarding and ongoing training. - plans and processes to minimise conflicting work demands and unsafe work practices and working conditions. - policies and procedures for minimising exposure to, and the impact of, harmful behaviours that includes complaints processes. 	<p>Safety inspections of all work areas at least weekly and workers and systems for reporting hazards and unsafe practices are implemented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • designated queuing areas are established to prevent workers from being in close proximity to waiting customers. • a customer code of conduct is developed in consultation with workers and placed in prominent areas of the shop floor. Customers are advised that any harmful behaviour directed at workers will result in a refusal of service. • a process for complaints relating to harmful workplace behaviours is developed and communicated to all workers. Options for informal and formal worker support if exposed to harmful behaviour are included and communicated to all workers. External avenues of complaint if workers are dissatisfied with the PCBUs response are also included and communicated. • procedures and practices for responding to aggressive or violent customer behaviour (to de-escalate and / or physically remove customers from the shop) are implemented. • the shop owners ensure that any workers affected by workplace 	<p>to. The information is particularly framed to assist young workers to make an informed decision as to the inherent risks of working in customer service roles. The information includes details of the measures the employer has to protect workers from harmful workplace behaviours.</p>

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
		aggression, violence or sexual harassment are offered informal or formal supports and adjustments to their duties to minimise the risk of repeated exposure.	

Scenario 7: Transport

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>A medium sized transport company that has been operating for 30 years provides services largely to the fuel and agriculture industries.</p> <p>The company directly employs its drivers, most of whom are experienced in transporting fuel and other dangerous goods. Most drivers have been long-term employees of the company and report positive views of their managers.</p> <p>The company services customers in numerous regional and remote locations across SA and the NT. Many drive long distances to service farming operations, mining sites and remote air strips. Drivers can travel alone for several days at a time to reach their most remote customers. They are equipped with satellite phones for emergencies and have a policy that only sleep breaks should be taken in serviced locations.</p> <p>Over the last two years the company has grown and the demand for more frequent and faster deliveries has increased. However, the company has not been able to attract and recruit sufficient additional drivers to meet demand. While drivers are frustrated about this, they report positive views of managers and that</p>	<p>Hazards identified</p> <p>Role overload:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery deadlines are unachievable and truck drivers are not taking sufficient and / or safe rest breaks in to meet those deadlines. <p>Low job control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers are not able to influence delivery schedules and compensate by putting their own safety at risk. <p>Remote/isolated work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers often spend long periods of time alone in remote locations with limited facilities and supports. <p>Violence and aggression:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers are exposed to instances of aggressive behaviour from unhappy customers. <p>Poor support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers have limited means of contact with their management while in remote locations and higher risk situations. <p>Poor organisational justice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The owner of the company has not taken adequate action to protect his workers from harmful behaviours. <p>Assessing the risk</p> <p>Exposure to these hazards may put workers at risk of burnout,</p>	<p>Following risk assessment and consultation with workers, the following risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contracts with customers are reviewed and the deliverables are renegotiated to account for known or expected workforce capacity limitations. • delivery timeframes are revised and adjusted to account for variations in capacity. These are communicated to existing and prospective customers. • HR / recruitment specialists assist the company to develop and implement an attraction strategy to stimulate the recruitment of more drivers. • casual drivers are engaged to enable the company to meet high customer demand and to provide respite for permanent drivers. • work rosters and job allocations are modified to ensure that drivers have respite from long trips in remote locations. • the company's policy on rest and sleep breaks is reinforced and drivers are reassured that they will not face adverse action from the 	<p>Following implementation of controls, the following ongoing risk management actions may be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual psychosocial risk assessments are conducted to monitor risk levels and the effectiveness / adequacy of controls. Risk assessment is based on multiple methods (surveys and other risk assessment templates, worker consultation) and measures (such as incident reports, sickness absence trends, complaints, turnover rates). • workers are consulted to identify any additional controls that may be needed. • clauses are placed in contracts that service delivery is subject to the company's procedures for mitigating work health and safety risks. • senior managers at the company complete education on the health and safety effects of remote work and fatigue how these hazards and risks are effectively managed. • the company includes a truck driver representative in its WHS committee. • the company trains all dispatch managers in consolidating orders so that unnecessary trips are eliminated

Scenario/work context	Psychosocial hazards and risks	Psychosocial controls	Review and improve
<p>they are committed to staying with the company through this challenging time.</p> <p>Several drivers have felt compelled to skip rest breaks during trips to deliver goods on time. Some take shorter rest or sleep breaks in un-serviced locations. Others follow company procedures with breaks but have been abused by angry customers when deliveries are delayed. The company owner is unhappy about his drivers being treated this way but is reluctant to talk to customers about it due to fears of losing contracts.</p>	<p>psychological illness and / or physical injury. Risk is increased if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exposure is frequent and / or prolonged. • workers have existing health vulnerabilities and / or there are already indications of a negative impact on worker health. • there is a lack of adequate measures to control these hazards, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures to manage customer demands and expectations in a way that reduces time pressure for his drivers. - measures to reduce workload pressure in the short, medium or long term by reviewing and reducing contract commitments, arranging a source of casual drivers and / or identifying ways to attract more experienced drivers for permanent employment. - procedures and practices to monitor driver welfare while on trips and delivery locations. - policies and procedures for minimising exposure to, and the impact of, harmful behaviours that includes complaints processes. 	<p>company if adhering to the policy means that deliveries are delayed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • managers contact drivers on trips of long duration and / or to remote locations to check on their welfare and drivers are advised that satellite phones can be used to contact managers for non-urgent matters. • the scheduling officer checks in with drivers before agreeing to delivery schedules to ensure these are realistic and encourages early feedback on delivery issues • a system is introduced to alert the dispatch manager and retail business if delivery delays are likely. • a customer code of conduct is developed in consultation with workers. Customers are advised that any harmful behaviour directed at workers will result in a refusal of service. Customers are also advised that concerns or complaints about deliveries are to be directed to the scheduling officers or operations manager of the company. • drivers are trained in de-escalation techniques for dealing with aggressive customers. • drivers are educated in the safety risks of fatigue and fatigue management. 	<p>or minimised.</p>

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