



RMS WHS Procedure: PN 066P11 (for Policy No. PN066)

Safe Work Method Statement Procedure

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Procedure: Safe Work Method
Statements
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Approved by: Stephen Barton, General Manager, WHS
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1 Purpose

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all its workers and others. A safe and healthy working environment is the right of every worker.

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that RMS' managers and workers comply with legislative requirements and adhere to its Work Health and Safety (WHS) standards.

It will also provide guidance to RMS staff in the effective development and use of Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS).

2 Scope

This procedure covers all RMS workplaces and includes:

- RMS workers, such as employees, contractors or subcontractors, an employee of a contractor or subcontractor, labour hire, apprentices, trainees, work experience students and volunteers
- Other duty holders who carry out work for RMS or who are likely to be directly affected by an RMS-related work health or safety issue

3 General requirements

Managers must identify medium and high risk work activities that require the development of a SWMS.

The purpose of a SWMS is to:

- Outline a safe method of work for a specific activity
- Provide an instructional document that staff must read and understand before starting an activity
- Meet legal requirements (i.e., assessing and controlling workplace hazards and risks)
- Provide evidence in auditing and inspection
- Satisfy contractual requirements under NSW Government WHS guidelines

4 Definitions

Definitions related to this procedure are specified in Appendix A.

5 Responsibilities

<p>RMS through its managers (from the executive down to the front line) must:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all its staff and others • Make sure that WHS responsibilities are appropriately defined • Provide RMS managers and workers with the training and resources they need to carry out their WHS responsibilities competently
<p>RMS managers must:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement this procedure • Ensure that SWMS are developed and maintained for activities where there is a medium/high risk of injury • Make sure adequate resources are available • Ensure that SWMS are developed in consultation with workers. Relevant frontline management must lead, facilitate and participate in the work teams in developing SWMS • Ensure that all SWMS are kept on the Project File and/or other local records • Monitor the policy for continuous improvement and maintain reports on its performance by ensuring that the SWMS Policy Audit Criteria is implemented on a timely basis
<p>RMS workers must:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with legislative requirements and RMS' WHS policies and procedures • be instructed in the relevant SWMS • sign a record that they have been instructed in the relevant SWMS • follow the procedures and controls in the SWMS
<p>Other duty holders (including contractors and subcontractors) must:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to RMS' WHS policies and procedures, as part of their contract <p>Comply with reasonable WHS instructions given by RMS</p>

<p>Health and safety representatives (HSRs) must:</p>	<p>Work cooperatively with RMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out the role and functions of the HSR, in compliance with WHS legislation • Provide workers' feedback on workplace hazards and working conditions to RMS
<p>Health and safety committee members must:</p>	<p>Work cooperatively with RMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform the role and functions of the H&S committee members, in compliance with WHS legislation • Provide RMS with workers' feedback on any workplace hazards

6 Safe Work Method Statement requirements

6.1 Risk management

A SWMS is a documented list of the steps for a task/activity and provides workers and others with a system for doing their work safely. The implementation of the SWMS relies on the individual to follow the requirements as set out in the document. Therefore a procedure can be regarded as an administrative control type and should only be adopted once all other types of controls, such as elimination, substitution, isolation and engineering, have been considered.

A SWMS should be developed, once it is identified as:

- An action arising from an incident investigation or hazard report, and/or;
- A control measure in a risk assessment.

Further information can be found in the *Risk Management and Systemic Safety Investigation* procedures.

NOTE: High Risk Construction Work

A SWMS must be prepared for high risk construction BEFORE work commences. Please refer to 'Definitions' (Appendix A) for classification of High Risk Construction Work.

The SWMS must take into account all circumstances that may affect the way in which the high risk construction work is carried out and also the WHS management plan, if conducted as part of a project. Those responsible for the work site must ensure that high risk construction work is carried out in accordance with the SWMS for the work.

If any person finds that high risk construction work is not being carried out as per the SWMS, then that person must:

1. stop the work immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so, and
2. resume work only in accordance with the SWMS

6.2 Development

SWMS should be developed in consultation and cooperation with the workers undertaking the activity. Consultation and cooperation will also ensure that hazards and controls are appropriately identified.

WHS Committee or Health and Safety Representatives for that team/workgroup shall assist, where practical, in the development of the SWMS

The following steps should be followed to ensure that a proper SWMS is developed:

- **Observe the task/activities:** Although workers might have knowledge/understanding of the task/activity, it is important to observe the task/activity being performed the preferred way, to ensure the safest method is documented.
- **Review associated legislative requirements:** Some task/activities are governed by legislative requirements. These must be considered when developing a SWMS to ensure any legal requirements are included. If the task/activity uses any hazardous substance/s or dangerous good/s the SWMS must reference the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for each hazardous substance or dangerous good.
- **Record the sequence of basic job steps:** Assemble the steps involved in the activity and then write down the ones that make up the task/activity.
- **Record potential hazards of each step:** Next to each step identify what may have potential to cause injury or illness (to those doing the work or to anyone else nearby), damage to the environment, property, plant or equipment.
- **Identify ways of eliminating and controlling the hazards:** For each identified hazard, list the measures that need to be put in place to eliminate or control any likely risk occurring.
- **Test the procedure:** Observe the workers or others following the SWMS and adjust the procedure as necessary.
- **Monitor and review:** Make sure the activity is supervised to ensure the documented process is being followed.

6.3 Implementation

Once the SWMS has been approved it is then implemented and available for use.

All workers will be inducted and must sign the SWMS before commencing work. The finalised copy must be kept within the workplace and be available for use. A copy should be with RMS staff at all times when undertaking the activities described in the SWMS.

6.4 Accessibility and display

SWMS should be physically displayed prominently or readily available in the areas in which they are to be used.

6.5 Records management

The development of SWMS needs to be done by using the SWMS template attached or to an equivalent standard. SWMS shall be retained locally for future reference and maintained for auditing/verification purposes.

SWMS records are to be maintained as follows:

- The manager is responsible for ensuring that all SWMS are kept on the Project File and/or other local records
- Record of induction into the SWMS must be maintained

When developing a SWMS that involves hazardous substances or a traffic control plan, the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and Traffic Control Plan (TCP) must be attached to the SWMS

6.6 Review of SWMS

SWMS shall be regularly reviewed to make sure they remain effective. You must review your control measures and, if necessary, revise them:

- After an incident or near-miss (control measure was not effective in controlling the risk)
- If there is a change of supervisors, workers, designers or engineers
- If the task/activity changes
- When a new hazard or risk is identified
- If the results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary, or if a health and safety representative requests a review
- Where a known risk exists (such as industry incidents like utility strikes, plant rollover etc)
- Where the equipment or plant used in the SWMS changes
- If there is a change to legislation, standards or codes of practice

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All SWMS should be reviewed annually, in consultation with all RMS workers.

7 Related information

- Code of Practice: How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks; Construction Work
- NSW Government WHS&R Management System Guidelines
- RMS QA Specification G22 WHS
- WorkCover Guidelines for Writing Work Method Statements in Plain English
- WHS Act 2011 (including: 46-48 Consult, cooperate and coordinate with 'Workers')
- WHS 2011 Regulations:
 - 32-38 Manage Risks
 - 38 Review controls
 - 289 Construction work
 - 291 High Risk Construction Work
 - 299 SWMS required for High Risk Work
 - 300 PCBU Must ensure SWMS implemented
 - 309 – Requirement for WHS Plan on Construction \geq \$250,000
 - 39 – provide information, instruction, supervision, & suitable to worker
 - 44-46 PPE requirements

Appendix A

Definitions

Hazard	A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause injury or disease to people, damage to the environment, property, plant or equipment.
Risk	The likelihood that a hazard will result in injury, illness, loss or damage to people, to the environment, property, plant or equipment and the potential consequences of that injury, illness, loss or damage.
Risk control	Methods used to manage the risk to an acceptable level by applying the hierarchy of control. Always try to eliminate risk in the first instance
Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)	A procedure which describes how work is to be carried out in a safe and standardised process. A SWMS outlines the hazards, risks and associated control measures to be applied to ensure the task/activity is conducted in a safe and injury-free way.
Medium/High risk Work Activity	Any work undertaken by RMS business units that exposures workers to medium and high risk hazard exposures
High risk construction work	<p>High risk construction work is defined as construction work that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves a risk of a person falling more than 2 metres (for example when a worker is installing an evaporative cooler on the roof of a double-storey building). • Is carried out on a telecommunications tower (for example installing equipment on a telecommunications tower). • Involves demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure (for example knocking down load-bearing walls as part of a warehouse conversion). • Involves, or is likely to involve, the disturbance of asbestos (for example removing floor tiles containing asbestos as part of a building refurbishment or cutting or drilling into an asbestos cement sheet wall). • Involves structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse (for example using props to support a ceiling where a load-bearing wall will be removed). • Is carried out in or near a confined space • Is carried out in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres or is carried out in or near a tunnel (for example laying or repairing pipes and conduits in a 2-metre trench, testing drainage pipes in a 2-metre trench, building a tunnel in the course of constructing an underground railway or road). • Involves the use of explosives (for example, blasting in preparation for the construction of a building or road, breaking up rock during construction of foundations). • Is carried out on or near: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ pressurised gas distribution mains or piping

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines ○ energised electrical installations or services ('Near' in the above circumstances means close enough that there is a risk of hitting or puncturing the mains, piping, electrical installation or service). <p>NB - High-risk construction work is not limited to electrical safety 'no-go zones'. Electrical installations do not include power leads and electrically powered tools. Some examples of high-risk construction work include working near overhead or underground powerlines and construction work that involves drilling into a wall where live electrical wiring may be present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is carried out in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere (for example demolishing a petrol station and removing old tanks, decommissioning plant and removing pipe work that may contain residue of hazardous chemicals). • Involves tilt-up or precast concrete (for example building a factory using tilt-up panels or installing a precast drainage pit). • Is carried out on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians (for example building an additional lane on a road or installing drainage that involves digging up part of the road). • Is carried out in an area at a workplace in which there is movement of powered mobile plant (for example working in an area of a construction site that is not isolated from the movement of skid steer loaders, telehandlers, backhoes, mobile cranes or trucks). • Is carried out in an area in which there are artificial extremes of temperature (for example construction work in an operating cool room or freezer or construction work alongside an operating boiler). • Is carried out in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning (for example constructing a bridge over a river or restoring a wharf), or
Construction work	Defined as any work carried out in connection with the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure.

Appendix B SWMS Proforma (must be used in the development of SWMS)

	Office Location:		I approve the use of this Safe Work Method Statement:	
			Name:	Position:
		Signature:	Date:	
		Local Reference No: (SWMS) Activity Guide(s) used:		
Description of Activity:			Work Site/Project Depot:	
Critical Steps in this Activity:	Potential Hazards:	Safety Controls:		

Training Required to Complete Activity:		List Codes of Practice, Legislation, Standards which apply to this Activity:	
1. List training required e.g. Hiab, First Aid, and Traffic Control.	2. Training details are located on: Project file: <input type="checkbox"/> tick box Training Data Base <input type="checkbox"/> tick box Other (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> tick box		
List Plant/Equipment/Personal Protective Equipment required for this Activity:	List Equipment Maintenance Checks required for this Activity:	Engineering Certificates/Permits/Approvals required for this Activity <i>e.g. road closure, Excavation,, WorkCover notification, demolition licence.</i>	
		Type	Reference/Document
Person(s) Responsible for Supervising Work:			
Person(s) responsible for supervising the work, inspecting and approving work areas, work methods, protective measures, plant equipment and power tools 1 NB List of qualifications/experience is held on local files Name: Position: Signature: Name: Position: Signature: list of names and signatures of staff instructed in this SWMS.:			
Workers name:		Date received:	
Signature:			

****** This document complements the Project WHS Management Plan or Site Specific Safety Management Plan ***