

Contents

Before you begin	iv
Topic 1 Identifying hazards and controlling risks	1
1A Understanding the legislative framework	3
1B Identifying and recording hazards	10
1C Implementing risk controls	20
1D Reporting risk control issues	27
Summary	30
Learning checkpoint 1: Identifying hazards and controlling risks	31
Topic 2 Implementing policies and procedures into work team processes	35
2A Informing the work team	37
2B Monitoring housekeeping practices	44
2C Maintaining health and safety incident records	47
Summary	51
Learning checkpoint 2: Implementing policies and procedures into work team processes	52
Topic 3 Supporting consultation, cooperation and communication	55
3A Supporting workplace consultative procedures	57
3B Reporting health and safety issues	62
Summary	65
Learning checkpoint 3: Supporting consultation, cooperation and communication	66



Topic 1

In this topic you will learn about:

- 1A Understanding the legislative framework**
- 1B Identifying and recording hazards**
- 1C Implementing risk controls**
- 1D Reporting risk control issues**

Identifying hazards and controlling risks

To ensure a safe and effective working environment for yourself and others, make sure you understand the legislative frameworks used in your service.

This includes understanding the National Quality Framework (NQF), the National Quality Standard (NQS) and your relevant state or territory health and safety legislation. These legislative guidelines provide a clear legal framework for employers and employees to work within.

Identifying and recording hazards and risks in the education and care industry is of high importance. Methods used to record identified hazards should be based on guidelines and standards set out by your state or territory's health and safety regulators.

Risk control strategies such as substitution, isolation and removal processes may also be implemented to minimise accidents and injuries resulting from identified hazards and/or risks. Implementing risk control procedures helps you to minimise risk in an effective and precise manner.

Watch this video for information about hazards and risks.



v0075

The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and both national learning frameworks.

National Quality Standard	
	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
✓	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
✓	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
✓	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership
Early Years Learning Framework	My Time, Our Place
Principles	
	Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships
	Partnerships
	High expectations and equity
	Respect for diversity
	Ongoing learning and reflective practice
Practice	
	Holistic approaches
	Responsiveness to children
	Learning through play
	Intentional teaching
	Learning environments
	Cultural competence
	Continuity of learning and transitions
	Assessment for learning
Outcomes	
	Children have a strong sense of identity
	Children are connected to and contribute to their world
	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
	Children are confident and involved learners
	Children are effective communicators

Health and safety authorities

Safe Work Australia is a national policy-making body that attempts to improve health and safety, and workers' compensation across the country. Safe Work Australia does not regulate or enforce health and safety laws. Instead, each jurisdiction has its own authority responsible for administering workers' compensation, enforcing jurisdictional laws and taking actions to improve health and safety.

The following table lists the health and safety authorities for each jurisdiction and their websites. You will find plenty of information online, including forms, fact sheets, contacts and guidelines for injuries, claims, safety and risk prevention. Your service should also have many health and safety resources you can refer to.

Jurisdiction	Name of authority	Website
Commonwealth	Comcare	http://aspirelr.link/comcare
ACT	WorkSafe ACT	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-act
New South Wales	SafeWork NSW	http://aspirelr.link/safework-nsw
Northern Territory	NT WorkSafe	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-nt
Queensland	Workplace Health and Safety Queensland	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-qlld
South Australia	SafeWork SA	http://aspirelr.link/safework-sa
Tasmania	WorkSafe Tasmania	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-tas
Victoria	WorkSafe Victoria	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-vic
Western Australia	WorkSafe WA	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-wa

Regulations and standards

Regulations are rules that support the general requirements of legislation. They are mandatory, which means employers and workers must abide by them. Standards set out details and procedures to ensure the safety of products and services, and provide guidance for those working in various areas, such as children's services.

Each state and territory has its own health and safety regulations and standards.

However, the regulations and standards for your service are guided by relevant industry requirements. The NQF applies Australia-wide health and safety guidelines through the Education and Care Services Regulations and the NQS.

Standards are only legally binding when they are included in legislation, as they are with the NQF. However, most services choose to implement standards that achieve high-quality care, as it is recommended that health and safety standards be followed for your own protection and the protection of those you work with.

Your organisation should have a copy of the relevant regulations and standards for you to access at all times.

Common policies and procedures include those for:

- ▶ dealing with infectious diseases
- ▶ hazard identification and reporting
- ▶ nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements
- ▶ sun protection
- ▶ water safety
- ▶ first-aid incident and injury reporting
- ▶ dealing with medical conditions
- ▶ emergency evacuation.

Watch this video about following health and safety procedures.

The following is an example of a policy.



Example

Illness and infectious diseases policy

One World for Children's Centre will respond to an ill child immediately to ensure the child's health, safety and wellbeing. First aid will be applied as appropriate to each situation. In the case of infectious diseases, the period of exclusion will be in accordance with the 'Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion from School, Pre-school and Child Care Centres for Cases of and Contact with Infectious Diseases' (*Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, 5th Edition, National Health and Medical Research Council).

Relevant legislation

- ▶ Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 85, 86, 87, 88, 168
- ▶ National Quality Standard – Quality Area 2

Sources

- ▶ Parent Handbook
- ▶ *Staying healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services*, 5th Edition, National Health and Medical Research Council

Infection control

Although our environment cannot be made germ-free, we can lessen the harmful effects of germs by keeping their numbers low. Germs can be most effectively controlled by frequent:

- ▶ cleaning and disinfecting of objects that come into contact with children
- ▶ hand-washing.

In addition, proper handling and disposal of contaminated items is necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

Hand-washing is the most important procedure you and the children can follow to prevent the spread of infection.

How to wash your hands:

- ▶ Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm running water and soap.
- ▶ Wash your fingernails, between fingers, backs of hands and wrists.
- ▶ Rinse your hands well under running water.
- ▶ Dry your hands with a single cloth or hot blow dryer.

2. **Predict** – what could happen if the hazard is not rectified.
3. **Decide** – what action should be taken to eliminate or minimise the hazard as much as possible.
4. **Execute** – the required action; you need to be willing to act to prevent possible incidents from occurring.

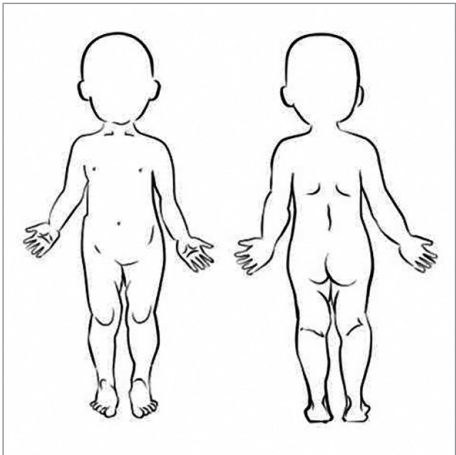
The following is an example of putting these steps into action:

1. **Scan** – You see a wet floor surface.
2. **Predict** – You predict that someone could slip over.
3. **Decide** – You determine that someone needs to mop the area.
4. **Execute** – You mop the area.

Another good method of scanning for safety is to conduct a safety inspection to effectively record and report hazards. Most services have a checklist for each area to confirm what needs to be considered and where.

Services may include different content and layout according to their workplace setting.

Hazard identification checklist	
Type of hazard (tick the relevant hazard)	Comment/action taken and who is responsible
<input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate lighting	
<input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate household cleaning equipment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Manual handling (for example, lifting loads)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited ventilation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Infectious diseases	
<input type="checkbox"/> Open wounds/cuts	
<input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals or medications	
<input type="checkbox"/> Faulty electrical equipment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Overloaded power points	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pets	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom equipment and supplies	
<input type="checkbox"/> Loose floor coverings	
<input type="checkbox"/> Client behaviour (for example, any behaviours of concern)	

Nature of injury sustained: 		<input type="checkbox"/> Abrasion, scrape	<input type="checkbox"/> Cut
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bite	<input type="checkbox"/> Rash
		<input type="checkbox"/> Broken bone/fracture	<input type="checkbox"/> Sprain
		<input type="checkbox"/> Bruise	<input type="checkbox"/> Swelling
		<input type="checkbox"/> Burn	<input type="checkbox"/> Concussion
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):	

Illness Circumstances surrounding child becoming ill, including apparent symptoms:	
Time of illness: AM/PM	
Date of illness:	
Action taken	
Details of action taken, including first aid administration of medication:	
Medical personnel contacted: Yes / No If yes, provide details:	
Details of person completing this record	
Name:	Signature:
Time record was made: AM/PM	
Date record was made:	
Notifications (including attempted notifications)	
Parent/guardian:	
Time: AM/PM	Date:
Director/teacher/coordinator:	
Time: AM/PM	Date:

1C Implementing risk controls

A risk is the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury, illness or harm. Once a hazard is identified, the risks associated with each hazard need to be assessed to determine the likelihood of injury or illness being caused by that hazard.

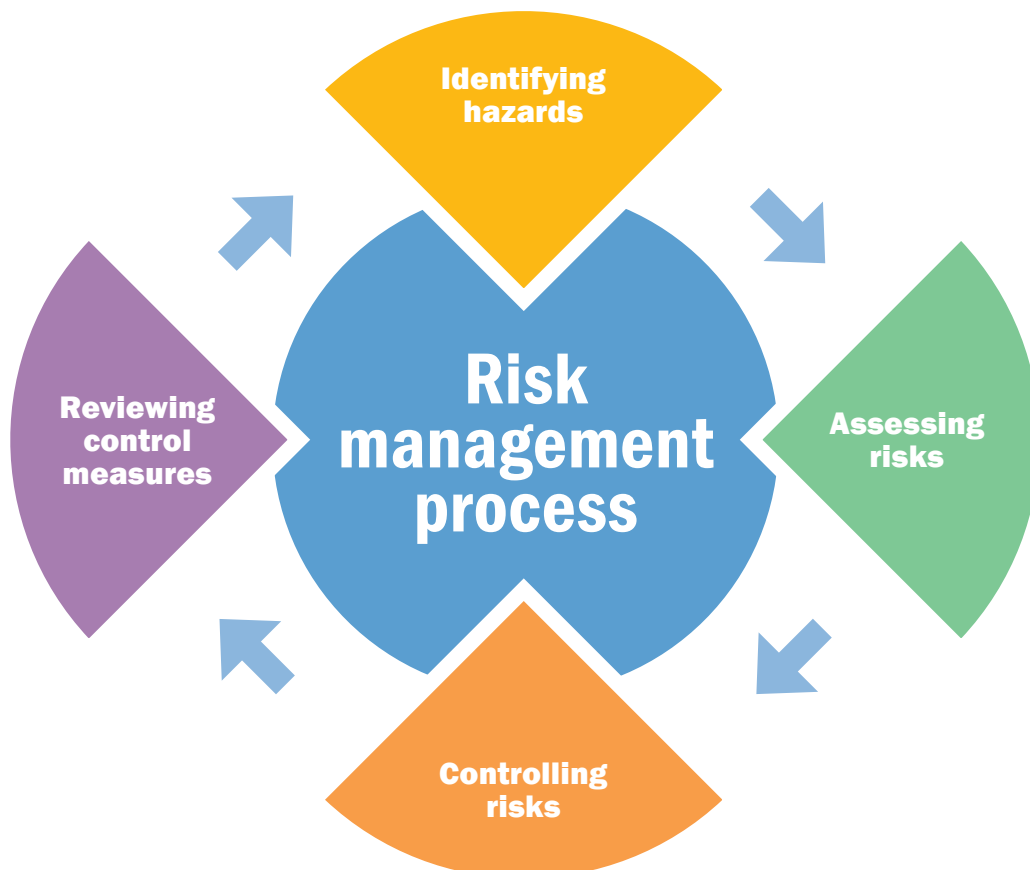
All hazards pose a risk. Risk controls are measures and elimination techniques implemented to isolate, substitute or remove a hazard from the environment. Ideally, these are implemented prior to any harm resulting from a potential hazard.



When assessing the risk associated with a hazard, it is necessary to ask the following questions:

- ▶ Who is exposed to the hazard?
- ▶ How often are people near the hazard?
- ▶ Has the hazard already caused any problems?
- ▶ How easily could someone be hurt by the hazard?
- ▶ How common is it for this hazard to cause problems in the workplace?
- ▶ Which factors or specific aspects of the work are increasing the likelihood of injury or illness?

There are four steps to risk management:



Steps to identify the risks

To complete a risk assessment, you need to identify the consequences of the risk and the likelihood of it occurring to determine the potential for harm. This helps you make decisions on how to control the hazards and minimise the risk.

Follow these steps to effectively identify risks:

- ▶ Assess the likelihood and consequences of the risk, such as:
 - how often people are exposed to the hazard and for what period of time
 - how effective current strategies are
 - whether changes could occur to make this hazard more dangerous
 - whether the actions of people make this hazard more harmful.
- ▶ Classify the risk by finding out about how the hazard may cause harm. Hazards are not always isolated issues; people impact on the environment and resources or materials, and this is often how harm occurs. For example, chemicals stored on a shelf do not pose a high risk if left there; it is their incorrect use or mishandling that makes them hazards and poses a risk to health.
- ▶ Grade the risk to determine how severe the harm may be. Grading considers the:
 - type of harm
 - severity of the harm
 - possible injury or health outcome.

These gradings help you to determine what action to take.

Risk matrix

To complete the risk assessment, you can use a risk matrix to collate all the information.

Grading – severity of impact				
Likelihood risk will occur		Minor	Moderate	High
	Likely			
	Possible			
	Unlikely			
Key:				
		Acceptable risk – monitor and reduce as much as possible		
		Concerning risk – must be reduced as much as possible		
		Intolerable risk – must be acted on and reduced immediately		

This grading helps you identify which risks are most dangerous and are therefore your highest priority to deal with.

Example

Using the hierarchy of control

Educators are often required to change children's soiled nappies and can contract infectious diseases through contact with urine and faeces, which may cause serious illness. This is a common hazard in education and care services, as the likelihood of infection is relatively high and the severity of the infection is also high. According to the risk matrix, the level of risk is classified as a concerning or intolerable risk.

The hierarchy of control can help you choose the most effective methods to minimise the risk:

- ▶ Elimination: it is not practical to eliminate infants or their nappies from the service.
- ▶ Substitution: it is not possible, as nappy changing cannot be avoided.
- ▶ Isolation: it is not always practical to only have selected workers change nappies. Most services do have specific nappy-change areas, so this is isolating the hazard to some degree.
- ▶ Engineering controls: equipment and tools can be changed to ensure adequate protection is provided to educators changing nappies. For example, steps can be added to nappy change tables to reduce the need to lift toddlers, which is a manual-handling risk.
- ▶ Administrative controls: policies and procedures relating to nappy changing include washing hands before and after nappy changes, and cleaning equipment and disposing of nappies as hygienically as possible. However, educators are still in contact with the hazard.
- ▶ Personal protective equipment (PPE): gloves can be worn by educators to reduce the risk of exposure to germs and bacteria.

Practice task 3

1. Regulation 101 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations outlines that risk assessment must be completed prior to an excursion. What considerations are listed?

2. Review a service's risk assessment process in their emergency management plan. List **five** risks that are identified, including the risk levels.

Learning checkpoint 1

Identifying hazards and controlling risks

Part A

Tasks that educators often carry out when working with infants and toddlers are:

- ▶ lifting and carrying an infant or toddler on their hip
- ▶ changing nappies.

1. For each of these tasks, identify and record the existing and potential hazards.

2. For each of the hazards, identify the inherent risk, the risk controls and the residual risk.

Example

Communicating WHS policies and procedures to staff

Happy Gardens Child Care Centre focuses on a new policy or procedure each week. It uses a range of methods to share information and help each staff member to understand their role.

This week the centre is focusing on the sun safety policy and procedures. It has:

- ▶ put a copy of the policy in the staffroom
- ▶ placed a SunSmart poster in each bathroom (both adult and child bathrooms)
- ▶ included an article in the staff and parent newsletter
- ▶ encouraged each staff group to talk about their routine and how sun safety is carried out
- ▶ placed a forum posting on the intranet
- ▶ invited a guest speaker from the Cancer Council for older children and parents
- ▶ placed SunSmart brochures from the Cancer Council in each staff member's locker and left a pile of these in the foyer for families to access.

Information and instructions may need to be provided verbally, in written form or in other languages depending on the intended audience. You may also provide information via videos, signs, symbols and other pictorial presentations.

Providing information about hazards, risk assessment and controls

Report hazards, risks and control measures to appropriate personnel, such as your supervisor, centre director, area manager or management committee. You should also use the service's standard documents and communication processes to share information.

To ensure all staff understand the impact of incidents, hazards and risks, provide discussion and details about the following.

Area of discussion	Details
Specific safety hazards	<p>These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ chemicals ▶ bodily fluids ▶ needles and sharps ▶ manual handling and work posture ▶ burnout, fatigue and stress ▶ underfoot hazards ▶ trips and falls ▶ noise ▶ airborne contaminants ▶ entryways ▶ violent, threatening or bullying behaviour ▶ computer use ▶ rostering ▶ moving parts of machinery ▶ medicines and waste that are cytotoxic (damaging to the skin).

2B Monitoring housekeeping practices

Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help to ensure tasks are completed safely. Poor housekeeping, on the other hand, contributes to incidents by masking hazards that cause injuries.

Housekeeping practices

All staff have responsibility for carrying out health and safety housekeeping practices. This includes tasks such as ensuring:

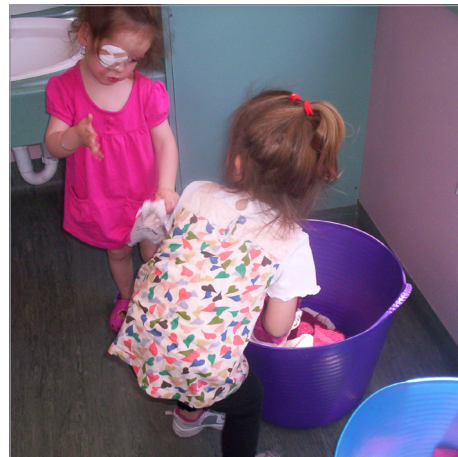
- ▶ all workplace areas are clean and tidy
- ▶ walkways and emergency exits are kept clear from obstructions
- ▶ floors and walkways are suitable and safe
- ▶ equipment is clean, functioning, and correctly stored and maintained
- ▶ the work space around equipment and machinery is clear, clean and safe
- ▶ utilities are functioning correctly, including lighting, airflow and ventilation
- ▶ storage areas are clean, safe and suitable
- ▶ PPE is easily accessible and in good working order
- ▶ signage is current, clearly visible and understood by all staff.

Many incidents are caused by poor housekeeping practices. Monitoring housekeeping practices through observation, cleaning routines and maintenance throughout the day can help to lower the impact and costs associated with injuries and incidents.

Implementing WHS policies and procedures ensures adequate housekeeping is maintained, and that hazards and risks are identified and managed promptly and effectively.

Consider the 'scan, predict, decide and execute' method from Topic 1:

1. Scan for potential hazards and risks when walking through your service. Keep your eyes moving around, looking for what is in the area. While scanning, identify each item that could be a potential hazard.
2. Predict what could happen. Briefly review in your mind what could go wrong if the hazard is not rectified.
3. Decide what action should be taken.
4. Execute the required action. Be willing to act to prevent incidents from occurring.



2C Maintaining health and safety incident records

Health and safety incidents can occur regularly in your service. Incidents may involve children and adults, including yourself, your co-workers and visitors to the service. Adults working in education and care settings may slip or fall, be exposed to illness and infection, or be injured because of incorrect manual-handling techniques or faulty equipment.



Workplace incident reports

When any workplace incident occurs, complete an incident report or record as soon as possible. This type of record may vary from service to service, but it will require specific types of information. Depending on the type of incident that has occurred, the specific incident record or documentation may vary. In particular, your service may use different records for incidents involving children compared to adults. All incident records are confidential.

A copy of the ACECQA approved incident record for children can be found in Topic 1. Most services choose to use this document as it is provided by the regulatory body. This form may also be adapted to suit adult incidents.

Example

Completing an incident report

Stacey, a qualified educator, bends to lift a child from the ground onto the change table to change his nappy. As she bends down, her lower back twists and she cries out in pain.

Stacey is unable to complete any other duties and the service director, Gloria, takes her to the doctor. An incident report is completed and taken along with them to the doctor's surgery.

Injury report

Injured person details

Surname: Grover

Given names: Stacey

Reason for being on premises: Educator

Injury details

Date of injury: 16/1/18

Time of injury: 10.15 am

Circumstances leading to the injury and how the injury occurred:

Lifting child onto a change bench for nappy change routine; twisted and pain occurred in lower back

Products or structures involved: Nappy-change bench

Location: Infant room, nappy-change bench

Name of all witnesses: Gloria Stephens

Summary

- ▶ Providing health and safety information to others in the workplace is a key responsibility of your job role.
- ▶ It is imperative that you have sound knowledge and understanding of how policies and procedures relate to health and safety in your workplace.
- ▶ When emergencies occur, quick, coordinated and effective action can make an immense difference to safety by minimising negative impacts to ensure the safety of children and adults.
- ▶ Emergency drills allow staff to practise procedures, and provide opportunities for them to experience different situations, leave the building under different circumstances, and observe and evaluate ways to improve the procedure.
- ▶ Personal protective equipment (PPE) is equipment that is worn by a person to provide protection from hazards.
- ▶ Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help to ensure tasks are completed safely.
- ▶ Health and safety incidents may occur regularly in your service. They may involve children and adults, including yourself, your co-workers and visitors to the centre.

When workers are involved in consultation processes, they participate more actively and take on the roles required to maintain a safe and healthy workplace more readily. Every participant should feel that they are a supported and valued member of a team. Consultation also helps workers to:

- ▶ be committed to WHS issues and processes
- ▶ willingly follow guidelines and procedures
- ▶ use equipment according to guidelines and operating manuals
- ▶ apply appropriate actions in hazardous situations.



When consultation must occur

To provide opportunities for you and staff to contribute to safe work practices, you may organise the following consultative activities.

Meetings

Consultation usually occurs at organised meetings with HSRs or HSC members, team leaders, supervisors, directors and other staff members. These meetings should provide all staff members with the opportunity to share their own opinions, views, skills and knowledge, and to contribute to the ideas and opinions of others. Most importantly, these consultative activities provide workers with the opportunity to raise WHS issues, which may involve discussing any risks, hazards and injuries that have been reported and determining appropriate strategies to deal with them.

Health and safety meetings should be organised in advance to allow as many people as possible to attend. They should be chaired by one person, who should ensure that the meeting covers all relevant matters. Having someone chair the meeting also ensures that people stay on topic and that everyone is given the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Someone should also be responsible for taking the minutes (notes) of the meeting. This ensures that the service keeps an accurate record of what was discussed; for example, what issues were raised and what strategies will be used to deal with them.

Changes in work practices that arise from meetings can be documented in handouts and fact sheets. Information can also be posted on noticeboards in the staffroom or in specific work areas. You need to read this information and ask questions if you are unclear about these changes in work practices.

In your role, you may be responsible for:

- ▶ chairing the meeting
- ▶ taking minutes
- ▶ encouraging or assisting others to participate
- ▶ making changes or assisting others to make changes to the workplace, policies or procedures
- ▶ supporting others to adapt to changes.

3B Reporting health and safety issues

Workers in any organisation have a responsibility to report any health and safety issues and concerns they identify in the workplace. These issues must be reported according to relevant health and safety legislation, as well as the organisation's policies and procedures.

Legislative requirements

Health and safety is primarily the role of state and territory governments. Comcare is responsible for the health and safety of workers in the Commonwealth government, ACT government and organisations that are self-insured. The Commonwealth government also jointly funds the independent statutory agency Safe Work Australia.



Health and safety legislation is comprehensive and covers key information such as:

- ▶ duties to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all workers and others who attend the workplace
- ▶ work systems that are safe and without risk to health
- ▶ training workers to work in a safe and competent manner
- ▶ requirements to take steps to prevent injury, illness and disease
- ▶ requirements to consult with workers and their representatives over WHS matters
- ▶ provisions for health and safety inspectors to visit workplaces, investigate incidents and enforce provisions of the legislation.

Reporting procedures

Your service should use records to report safety issues, which include incident or injury reports, hazard checklists, written reports of findings and maintenance records. These records must be completed as soon as practicable after an incident and they must include as much detail as possible. Where a serious incident has occurred in your service resulting in medical assistance and/or treatment, the PCBU/employer must notify the relevant health and safety authority and ACECQA immediately.

All policies and procedures must comply with and reflect current legislation, regulations and industry standards. However, there may be some variations in health and safety policies and reporting procedures across different services depending on:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ▶ the size and nature of the service | ▶ individual attitudes |
| ▶ the service culture | ▶ literacy levels |
| ▶ the degree of formality in the workplace | ▶ the complexity and design of forms |
| ▶ management expectations | ▶ the accessibility of the forms required for completion. |
| ▶ staff induction and training | |

For example, the line of contact and reporting may be different in each service. The policies and procedures provide directions based on how the service is structured.

Service	Guidelines and procedures	Actions
Service 3: Private service directed by the owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A HSR is located on the premises and is the staff contact when the owner is not on site. ▶ The HSR and the owner work closely together to ensure all issues are resolved. ▶ The owner approves and organises all maintenance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The HSR and owner are alerted to the situation. ▶ A maintenance report is completed. ▶ The owner and HSR decide on and implement risk controls. ▶ The owner organises the repair.

Reporting tools

You can use a maintenance report, service report form or a maintenance request or maintenance work schedule to report health and safety concerns or issues.

These reports can be used to identify and manage hazards and risks effectively. These reports will be developed to suit your service. Points on the form may include:

- ▶ date and time of recording
- ▶ address and service name
- ▶ description of the fault, concern or issue
- ▶ risk assessment
- ▶ name and role of the person completing the report.

Practice task 9

1. Review an organisation's health and safety policy and procedures. How would the organisation deal with the issue in the previous example (a shade sail coming loose in one corner)?

2. Who might this issue be reported to?

3. Who else would need to know about the issue?

4. Who would organise the repair?
