FACTSHEET

How to deliver effective High-Risk Workshops

The OFSC encourages accredited companies and the broader industry to have discussions about high-risk work to ensure safer outcomes for all. One way to achieve this is by holding a '**High Risk Workshop**' (HRW). At their core, HRWs bring together everyone involved in high-risk work to ensure the methodology is clearly understood, risks are identified, and controls are agreed upon before work begins.

What is a HRW?

A HRW is a pre-planning meeting, or series of meetings, held prior to starting defined high-risk work.

HRWs can assist companies to meet the requirements of the first sub criteria for each of the OFSC's Hazard Audit Criteria, which focus on appropriate risk identification, assessment and control in accordance with the hierarchy of control.

Facilitated by the head contractor, the HRW brings together key stakeholders involved in the delivery of the high-risk work.

Ideally, those stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Company management with decision making authority,
- Work Health and Safety representatives/managers,
- Site staff (including supervisors, engineers)
- Specialist subcontractors
- Other workers involved in performing the work, and
- Consultants (where applicable).

The purpose of the HRW is to:

- Develop and review detailed, site-specific work methodologies for the high-risk work

- Consider logistics, site conditions, and complex interfaces (including temporary and permanent conditions) that might affect those methodologies.
- Systematically identify and review all potential hazards
- Prioritise hazards, focusing control efforts on those with the potential for serious injury or fatality.
- Collaborate to assess risks and agree on appropriate controls.
- Collaborate to document the agreed work scope, work sequences, hold points, inspection frequencies, responsibilities and controls, and
- Incorporate lessons learned from past incidents to enhance control strategies.

What is considered high-risk work?

HRWs are typically conducted for the following types of high-risk activities:

- Demolition Works
- Civil Works (including Excavation, Trenching, Piling, Ground Anchors or other Ground improvement)
- Structural Works (incl. Jump Forms, Perimeter Screens, Formwork, Falsework, Structural Steel, Precast Concrete, Complex Structures and/or elements)
- Use of Explosives / Blasting
- Façades and Roofing Works
- Hazardous Materials removal (incl. Lead Paint, Asbestos removal)
- Work in Confined spaces
- Electrical, and
- Fixed Plant (including erecting, dismantling, and climbing of Tower Cranes and Hoists)

The OFSC recommends holding a HRW when conducting any of high-risk work addressed in the Hazard Audit Criteria.

How do you plan and conduct a HRW?

There are three distinct stages to deliver a HRW. If you are conducting a HRW, this should occur prior to commencing the high-risk work.

1. Identification Stage

The identification stage is when the head contractor and specialist subcontractors determine which upcoming work activities qualify as high-risk and therefore require a HRW.

2. Pre-Planning Stage

The pre-planning stage brings together the specialist subcontractors and the head contractor to hold one or more pre-planning meeting(s) to prepare for the HRW. Key activities in this stage include:

- Proposing a work methodology for undertaking their elements of high-risk work.
- Preparing site-specific materials such as drawings, digital models, sequence diagrams, and other visual aids to support clear understanding of scope and methodology for all stakeholders
- Identifying potential hazards and risks associated with the planned high-risk work
- Proposing appropriate control measures to eliminate or mitigate the identified risks, and
- Reviewing previous incident reports and lessons learned from similar tasks, to inform hazard identification and strengthen control strategies.

3. HRW Stage

The HRW stage brings together specialist subcontractors, the head contractor and other key stakeholders to conduct the HRW. This stage includes:

- Walking through the planned methodology and sequence step by step
- Presenting and reviewing the pre-identified hazards to all stakeholders
- Collaboratively identifying additional hazards, encouraged by input from all stakeholders
- Reviewing the pre-identified controls for each hazard, with a strong focus on those hazards that pose the greatest potential for serious injury or fatality
- Verifying that appropriate controls aligned with the hierarchy of control are in place for every significant hazard, and that these controls are understood, documented, and assigned with clear responsibilities.
- Scheduling follow-up workshops if any uncertainties or issues arise during planning or execution to revisit the methodology, reassess hazards, and refine controls.
- Preparing and delivering a toolbox talk or prestart meeting to communicate the agreed work methodology and controls to all workers involved in the task, and/or confirming that SWMS align with the methods and controls discussed during the workshop

Application to complex structures

If your project involves complex structural work, the OFSC recommends holding an HRW, particularly for structures that are atypical in design or are temporary.

Complex structures may include, but are not limited to:

- Raking columns
- V-shaped columns
- Cantilevered elements (e.g. structural components projecting more than 5m or other large overhangs)
- Mega-load transfers
- Spanning walls and long trusses, and
- Atypical load path structures (i.e. structural systems or elements that deviates from typical or standard loadbearing configurations).

Note: Under the *Safe Design of Structures Code of Practice*, a designer of a structure must provide a written safety report to the Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) who commissioned the design. This report applies to designs of structures that include unusual or atypical features which present hazards and risks during the construction phase and are unique to the particular design.

When working with complex structures, consider the following questions during HRWs (where relevant to your work):

Theme	Key Questions
Design & Complexity	• Are there structural features that the Structural Engineer has identified which present unique hazards and risks? • Are any risks identified in the Safety in Design register for these complex structures?
Temporary Works & Stability	• Has the Structural Engineer identified any specific temporary measures or bracing requirements for each phase of construction to maintain stability?
Construction Methodology	• What is the planned construction methodology and sequence for this structure, and has it been reviewed and approved by the Structural Engineer?
Site Constraints & Interfaces	• Are there site constraints (eg. limited space, access, clearance) or interfaces with other works/ structures, or public areas that need to be managed? • Will any restricted or exclusion zones be required during construction?
Lifting & Plant	• What is the materials handling and lifting plan, including the selection of plant and equipment?
Competency & Inspections	• Who is the nominated competent person from the specialist subcontractor responsible for the installation of the structure? • What inspection frequencies and hold points has the Structural Engineer set, and how will these be managed throughout the construction?

This factsheet was developed in collaboration with accredited company Multiplex.

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