# What constitutes a good working Health and Safety management system?

**(This document is an abbreviation of the Keep Safe, Keep Farming Guide from which can be found at: saferfarms.org.nz)**

## Introduction

A safety management system is an established set of processes to manage health and safety and maintain a high safety standard in the workplace. It is important to note that a safety management system is a system – a combination of processes

**A safety management system should include:**

- A commitment by the manager/ administrator and also staff to focus and improve upon health and safety on the farm
- Good documentation and records-keeping
- Clear allocation of responsibility to staff and managers
- Strong processes to cover every task performed by employees and managers
- Employee participation in every level of safety management
- Risk management
- Workplace inspections
- Emergency procedures
- Maintenance of plant and equipment
- Incident investigation and reporting
- Contractor and visitor management
- Training
- Auditing the safety management system on a regular basis to confirm that it works.

## Applying good H&S processes to your business

To develop your safety management system, you do not need to be an expert.

Consultation, communication and leadership are key to developing and using your safety management system. People who work on your farm should be involved in the preparation of the programs that make up the safety management system. Good leadership is required to achieve success and to get things happening and to keep things moving.

# 01 / HEALTH AND SAFETY (H&S) POLICY

An H&S policy is a statement by the business about its commitment and intent to manage and improve occupational health and safety.

The reasons for having a written health and safety policy are:

- to provide the starting point for developing your safety management system;
- to state clearly the employer's commitment and support for a sound H&S program;
- to allocate responsibilities; and
- to assist in designing H&S objectives.

Important points to consider when writing the policy are:

- involving employees;
- promoting the health and safety of employees;
- protection from hazards; and
- complying with legislation.

Your policy statement could include the following references:

- the commitment of the employer to provide a healthy and safe work place for employees;
- the employer's duty to take all reasonable actions to prevent illness and injury to an employee: e.g. (a) addressing training needs of employees in the use of safe work procedures; (b) supplying proper supervision and enforcement of safe work procedures;
- the employer's commitment to consult and cooperate with all levels of the workplace to put in place the H&S policy;
- the employer's commitment to provide opportunities for worker participation; and

- the need for everyone to be responsible for a healthy and safe workplace.

To enhance commitment to the policy it is good practice for it to also be agreed to and signed by H&S representatives and managers, or, on small sites, by the whole workforce.

**Checklist / The H&S Policy**

**is kept current with workplace changes and legislation**

**is clearly stated and easily understood**

**is communicated to all employees**

**is signed by senior management**

**is adhered to in all work activities**

**is a summary of the company's commitments**

**is well displayed around the workplace**

**is clear about the workplace/s to which it applies**

**is reviewed at least every year**

# 02 / PLANNING

**An annual safety improvement plan sets out a business's occupational health and safety objectives and targets for the year. A yearly plan should be developed based on the principles in your Health and Safety policy, and focused on more specific safety goals for the business year.**

**The plan should be based on the management of identified hazards or shortcomings, as well as to set new goals to meet. The plan should be developed in a yearly meeting, with representation from management, H&S representatives, and staff. Goals which were not achieved in the previous year can be rolled over to the next.**

**Specific targets can include:**

- **reduction of incidents**
- **improvement of plant or equipment**
- **training goals.**

# 03 / DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

Documents are a key part of any safety management system and should be prepared, maintained, and stored to meet the needs of the business.

Keeping records:

- demonstrates compliance with the on-going safety management system and with other requirements such as those arising in legislation
- helps to raise employee awareness of what is needed
- helps to evaluate the safety management system and H&S performance.

The safety management system needs to be kept up to date and available at all times.

Some of the documents that should be kept and maintained include:

## Internal

- operation H&S Policy and Annual Safety Improvement Plans
- employee training records and certification of qualifications attained
- risk identification and register
- incident identification and register
- farm maps
- HSNO safety data sheets logged against each chemical held on farm
- procedures
- workplace rules
- H&S meeting minutes
- results of employee health monitoring.

## External

- legal requirements
- supplier and contractor information
- H&S audits and reviews
- letters from stakeholders and external organisations

- permits to work
- inspection, calibration and maintenance activity
- standards and guidelines.

All of your documentation can be stored in Agrismart health and safety

## 04 / ROLES AND RESPONSIBILTIES

Allocate responsibilities within your safety management system to people who have the knowledge and skills to make the safety management system effective.

To ensure that each person employed at the site is aware of and understands their roles, employers, jointly with employees, need to record the responsibilities for each position. Record the management structure for your operation, including all responsibilities and accountabilities.

- Allocate responsibility according to ability
- Involve employees through the site safety meetings in the development of their responsibilities. They may cover areas that you have missed, or may highlight the need for sharing of some roles.
- Once these responsibilities have been agreed upon, record them.
- Include a relevant schedule of responsibilities in the induction kits that are issued to each employee upon induction.
- When allocating responsibilities, explain each item and ask for feedback to make sure they understand.

Nominate who will be responsible for identifying and recording the information. A copy should go:

- to each person with those responsibilities
- on the file of each person with those responsibilities
- in the master file of documents.

**Checklist**

**All tasks have been allocated to a responsible and competent person**

**A back-up person has been allocated in each case**

**Induction and/or training on each task has been delivered**

**Responsibilities have been documented**

# 05 / EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Employee participation can be an effective means of reducing injuries as well as helping overall business efficiency. It makes workers feel empowered, involved and valued which has flow on benefits beyond health and safety.

- Make it clear to your employees that you value and support their involvement in health and safety
- Involve and train health and safety representatives
- Actively involve your health and safety representatives in routine health and safety matters such as risk identification and management, incident investigation, and audits
- Support their training in both health and safety and broader matters relating to health and safety, and give them a clear mandate to operate and support their efforts.

Under the Act, employers shall provide their employees with 'reasonable opportunities' to participate in improving health and safety in their workplace.

Agrismart strongly recommends all businesses should consider:

- implementing a documented system for employee participation based on good faith and a clear commitment to health and safety outcomes
- having at least one health and safety representative for each farm and that each committee focus primarily on safety-critical aspects of the farm
- having effective, empowered and informed health and safety representatives that are trained under the Act.

A copy of the minutes for every H&S meeting should be posted on the notice board for an agreed period of time, to allow all staff to access them, with the master filed with all other records.

**Checklist**

**There are trained H&S representatives for each workplace with clearly defined functions**

Scheduled H&S meetings are being held

# 06 / RISK MANAGEMENT

**"RISK"**

**Means an activity, arrangement, circumstance, event, occurrence, phenomenon, process, situation, or substance (whether arising or caused within or outside a place of work) that is an actual or potential cause or source of harm; and**

**Includes**

a. **a situation where a person's behaviour may be an actual or potential cause or source of harm to the person or another person; and**
b. **without limitation, a situation resulting from physical or mental fatigue, drugs, alcohol, traumatic shock, or another temporary condition that affects a person's behaviour.**

**The concept of a Risk is central to the Act's focus on preventing harm. A risk is a source of harm. Risks must be systematically identified and managed.**

**Risks can;**

- **be actual or potential**
- **be physical, biologogical, or behavioural (including temporary conditions that can affect a person's behaviour, such as fatigue, shock, alcohol or drugs)**
- **arise or be caused within or outside a place of work**

Risk management is all about identifying how someone could be harmed in the workplace and putting in place effective measures to prevent that harm occurring. Risk management is the basis of all health and safety management.

There are three basic steps to Risk Management:

- **Identifying the risks**
- **Controlling each risk**
- **Monitoring the effectiveness of the risk controls**

## Risk identification

A risk is anything that has the potential to cause harm should that risk not be identified. Identifying Risks is paramount to a successful Health and Safety system.

Methods may range from a simple checklist for a piece of equipment or substance, to an open-ended appraisal of a group of related work processes. A combination of methods outlined below may provide the best results.

- developing a risk checklist;
- conduct walk-through surveys;
- review information from designers or manufacturers;
- analyse unsafe incidents, accident and injury alerts and data;
- review and analyse work processes;
- consult with employees;
- examine and consider safety data sheets and product labels; and
- seek advice from specialists, consultants and representatives in situations where specific technical expertise is needed to identify and manage a risk or risks.

## Risk Identification Methods

These processes can be carried out by a group that is selected for this purpose because of their knowledge and expertise, or even a trained facilitator.

On a less formal level, Toolbox meetings can provide an opportunity to conduct more team-based risk identification, as well as to reconfirm employee knowledge of known risks and their controls. And finally, individuals, as part of their everyday work, can identify potential risks simply by thinking before they act.

Some risks exist in the work process, such as mechanical risks, noise, or the toxic properties of substances. Other risks result from equipment machine failures and misuse, structural failures, control or power system failures and chemical spills.

It is useful to consider these types of risks when identifying work related risks to ensure that a wide range is considered. Below is a list of Risk categories:

| Types of risks include: | Examples: |
|---|---|
| **Gravity** | falling objects, falls of people |
| **Nip points** | caught between |
| **Struck by** | being hit |
| **Hazardous substances** | skin contact, inhalation |
| **Thermal energy** | spills and splashes of hot matter |
| **Extremes of temperature** | effects of heat or cold |
| **Radiation** | ultra violet, arc flashes, micro waves, lasers |
| **Noise** | hearing damage |
| **Electrical** | shock, burns |
| **Vibration** | to hands and body |
| **Biological** | micro-organisms |
| **Human Factors** | drugs, alcohol, stress, fatigue |

Once a risk has been identified it needs to be recorded in the Risk Register.

## Risk controls

There is a hierarchy of control measures:

**Elimination** – removing the risk or hazardous work practice. This is the most effective control measure;

**Isolation** – preventing people from interacting with the risk e.g. machine guarding, remote handling;

**Minimisation** – if the risk cannot be removed, replaced or isolated, a minimising control is the next preferred measure. This may include changes to tools or equipment, providing guarding to machinery or equipment, and introducing work practices that reduce the risk. This could include limiting the amount of time a person is exposed to a particular risk and providing appropriate equipment for prolonged exposure.

There will be circumstances where more than one control measure should be used to reduce exposure to risks.

By using these controls you will be able to remove or reduce the exposure of the risk to employees. When setting up these controls it is always better to remove the risk. As a risk is controlled, it should be updated in the Risk Register.

### Risk Monitoring

Constantly reviewing risks and control measures is important to ensure they continue to be relevant and stop or control exposure to risks or hazardous work practices. This includes monitoring the health of those employees exposed.

**Checklist**

**Responsibility has been allocated for risk management briefing of everyone who comes on to the workplace**

**The site is inspected frequently**

**Identified risks are controlled and monitored**

**The Risk Register is kept up to date**

## 07 / WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS

Workplace inspections are one of the best tools for finding problems and assessing their risks before accidents or other losses occur.

A well-managed inspection schedule should meet such goals as:

- Confirming rules and processes are followed
- Identifying potential problems that were not anticipated during design or task analysis
- Identifying equipment deficiencies such as normal wear and tear, abuse, or misuse
- Identifying bad practice
- Identifying process requirements that are unrealistic or unattainable
- Identifying effects of changes in processes or materials
- Identifying inadequacies in risk controls
- Providing management self-appraisal information

- Demonstrating management commitment through visible activity for health and safety.

  Inspection, detection and correction activities are hard to beat as ways of showing employees that their health and safety is important.

  Two broad categories are ‘informal’ inspections and ‘planned’ inspections. Both are important. Both are discussed below, with major emphasis on planned inspections.

## Planned inspections

Regular, planned inspections of all aspects of the workplace – plant (fixed and mobile), vehicles, buildings, yards – are necessary to pick up and deal with risks before they result in accidents.

Workplace inspections are part of on-going risk assessment and help in identifying which parts of your safety management system are working well. They are all part of continually improving your safety management system and in turn the safety of those in your workplace.

What’s to be inspected, how often, what do you need to look for, who’s doing the looking and what has to be done with the information collected will make up your inspection program.

Here are some steps to use when developing a formal inspection plan:

- Using a site plan, divide the site up into manageable chunks
- Allocate the role of conducting inspections to competent people
- Create a General Workplace Inspection List
- Once you have developed your inspection list, review it with other employees. This will ensure that all the areas of the operation have been included on the form, and the people doing the inspection are made aware of what to look for
- Decide the frequency of these inspections. If one area is quite hazardous, (e.g., rotary and herringbone milking plants, all accesses to those plants), the inspection frequency should reflect this and be conducted more often than in other areas. Most businesses conduct inspections at least monthly
- Ensure the person conducting the inspection is sufficiently knowledgeable about required processes and technical information

- Allocate a person responsible for the collection and control of completed inspection forms and who is going to respond to the issues identified
- Nominate where all the completed inspection forms are to be filed and located. Record all the master inspection forms in the document control master list. Move to formal inspection section.

  Here are some key points that will help make inspections more effective:

- Refer to a map and checklist
- Record the positive as well as the negative
- Look for off-the-floor and out-of-the-way items
- Take immediate action, even if it is a temporary measure, if it is safe to do so
- Describe and locate each item clearly
- Prioritise the risks
- Determine the basic causes of unsafe actions and conditions
- Informal inspections
- Notify all employees of identified risks and the controls put in place.

## Informal inspections

A form of informal inspection is simply when people are aware of their environment as they work. Periodically stopping to reassess their surroundings can alert employees to new hazards.

**Checklist**

**An inspection process has been agreed upon and mapped**

**The site is formally inspected regularly**

**Staff are encouraged to conduct informal checks before and during their working day**

**Inspection documentation is kept up to date**

# 08 / WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

## SURVEILLANCE

Workers may be exposed to crop dusts, diesel exhaust emissions, a wide range of hazardous chemicals and noise. These risks can impact on workers slowly over time, and effects vary from person to person.

It is possible to measure physical, chemical and biological hazards, such as dust, heat, noise, vibration, radiation, fumes and bacteria.

## Health Surveillance

It is not always practical to remove the risk altogether. Where risks are controlled only, one way of measuring how successful the control strategies have been is to monitor the effect on people and their health.

Monitoring people's health following exposure to the risks should never be seen as a control in itself but only as an indicator of the effectiveness of the controls you have put into place.

Another form of health surveillance involves monitoring people's health to ensure that they remain fit to perform their tasks where their health may directly impact on the health and safety of others. An example would be the health of the drivers of heavy goods and dangerous goods vehicles. Employees should be made aware of and consent to health surveillance from the start of their employment with the company.

Health surveillance may also give people early warning of medical conditions that can be treated before they become a problem, affect their health or prevent them from working.

To ensure that a health surveillance program yields accurate results, a baseline health assessment at the start of employment is recommended. This identifies pre-existing conditions, and allows subsequent testing to demonstrate whether the employee's health is worsening as a result of workplace hazards. In the case of work which requires the use of hearing protection, a baseline hearing check should be considered necessary.

While hazards of the work environment may not immediately present dangers to the workforce, it is their combined nature that poses real issues if left unattended.

# 09 / EMERGENCY PLANNING

While the main purpose of your safety management system is to prevent incidents, emergency events can occur.

The purpose of an emergency response plan is to:

- minimise the level of risk to life, property and the environment as a result of an emergency situation;
- identify the resources – people, equipment, information and knowledge – necessary to ensure that when used effectively, minimise that risk; and
- provide guidance for all employees – what to do in emergency situations.

Each workplace needs to plan for these events. They are generally incidents that may be unlikely to occur but with potential high consequences. A set of plans (known as the emergency response plan) and procedures for how to deal with these events shall be developed and regularly tested to ensure that the effects of these unplanned events are minimised.

Emergency response plans may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Warning and alarm systems – installation, availability and testing requirements;
- Emergency procedures – who does what when an emergency occurs (including evacuation);
- List of key emergency personnel;
- Emergency rescue equipment available on site;
- Details of offsite emergency services available;
- Information requirements of offsite emergency services;
- Internal and external communication plans;
- Training plans;
- Drills and simulation exercises; and

- First aid supplies and trained first aiders.

## Planning for emergencies

All potential emergency situations need to be identified and emergency procedures documented for preventing and minimising injury and illness.

## Assessing possible emergencies

Identifying potential emergency situations is the key to having effective emergency response plans. Developing the plan begins with emergency assessment.

The results of emergency assessment will show:

- how likely an event is to happen;
- what means are available to stop or prevent the event; and
- what response is necessary for the event.

The emergency assessment may result in a list that may include:

- Fire
- Explosion
- Flood
- Major trauma (injuries)
- Medical emergency (general and specific such as heart attack)
- Hazardous material or chemical spill
- Electrical
- Mobile plant or vehicle collision
- Illegal acts such as bomb threat or unauthorised entry

Any of the above can be related. For example a collision could result in major trauma and a fire or explosion.

## Identifying emergency events

At the planning stage it is important to include employees who may have had experience in emergency work, such as volunteer fire fighters, volunteer rescue service or first aiders. They can help identify emergencies and the response procedures needed. Other emergency events may be known from previous experience or local knowledge. Also look at other risk assessments that you have done such as safe work procedures, workplace inspections and accident investigations. Discuss the issues with other farmers.

Rural fires are a particularly hazardous activity carried out on farms.

## Emergency resources

The final consideration is a list and the location of what emergency equipment is needed. The table below lists some possible emergency equipment and locations.

| Emergency equipment: | Location: |
|---|---|
| **Medical suppplies (first aid kits)** | - Office<br>- Dairy<br>- Implements shed<br>- Sheds |
| **Fire extinguishers** | - Office<br>- Implements shed<br>- Sheds |
| **Emergency chemical spill kit** | HSNO/Agrichem store |
| **Trained personnel** | All senior employees first aid trained |

### Preparing an emergency procedure

To develop standard emergency procedure, you should first list what potential emergencies may occur at your workplace. You should have identified these during your hazard management process.

The procedure needs to be posted in the workplace. This will need to be in an obvious location, ideally close to your communication system so contact with emergency services can be made. It can be posted in multiple locations.

The emergency response plan will be made up of procedures for the identified emergencies. Emergency response is about making rapid decisions due to time and the circumstances.

The emergency response plan should have specific duties, responsibilities and authorities.

Some of these are:

- who reports the emergency;
- who starts the emergency response plan;
- who has overall control;
- who establishes communication;
- who alerts emergency personnel;
- who orders evacuation;
- who alerts external emergency services;
- who provides first aid;
- who advises relatives of casualties;
- who sounds the all-clear; and
- how the site of the incident is secured and what safety work can be undertaken.

To ensure good emergency response, you should:

- develop an evacuation procedure;
- develop procedures for emergency response for your specific major emergency events (e.g. flood, fire, explosion, medical);
- install and maintain all necessary fire fighting and emergency equipment;
- train all emergency personnel as required;
- appoint first aid officers;
- provide a map of the farm, including exits, safe evacuation paths, location of fire fighting and emergency equipment, emergency phones and evacuation assembly areas; and
- identify the local emergency services (fire, ambulance, police, SES, VRA) and how to contact them.

## Emergency training

All employees should be trained and educated so they know what to do for their role and responsibilities in the event of an emergency.

There should be a schedule developed for training and refresher training for all employees for all emergency events identified.

The emergency response plan should be reviewed (and where necessary revised) after an incident or emergency event.  Planning for emergencies is vital.

Planning helps prevent injury to people, damage to property or the work environment.

## Plan

A farm map of the total workplace needs to be drawn, showing the location of all potential emergencies. This is so that employees, visitors, and emergency services will be able to find emergency equipment to control a situation (fire extinguishers, etc.), identify areas of high risk, or find alternate entry and exit points. A standard site map could be used, once the emergency features have been included.

This farm map needs to be displayed in the workplace and provided to emergency services.

**Checklist**

**Emergency procedures have been agreed upon and documented, with signage prominently displayed**

**All employees, contractors, and sub-contractors have been trained in the use of the procedures and their training recorded**

**Emergency drills are conducted regularly**

**All emergency documentation, including records of first aiders and emergency equipment, is kept up to date**

# 10 / MAINTENANCE

A program of planned maintenance is essential to achieving and sustaining health and safety at your workplace.

## Advantages of planned maintenance

- Routine checks prevent harm to people and plant.
- Repairs are more likely to be permanent rather than temporary patch-ups, which may not be reliable and often end up as the 'permanent' solution until the next breakdown.
- Personnel are less likely to be exposed to risks when machinery malfunctions demand manual intervention.
- Down time is planned and results in less disruption of personnel and production.
- Maintenance costs are controlled which allows for the best use of resources.

## Health and safety requirements

Health and safety legislation places a general duty on businesses to maintain machinery and equipment in a safe operating condition.

Controls, emergency stops, access and guarding systems shall be maintained in full functional order. Priority for this should be no less than for maintaining any other part of a machine. Machines that are designed to function automatically should be maintained in this condition to avoid the need for operators to intervene manually and place themselves at risk. Modifications and repairs shall be conducted by an appropriate person (in some cases, a Certified Practicing Engineer – CPEng) and documented.

Equipment that is solely or mainly H&S equipment shall have a high priority for maintenance. These include:

- all personal protective equipment;
- air filters and air conditioners in dusty or hot work environments;
- seats, seat-belts and controls on mobile machines;
- windows; and
- dust seals.

## Routine maintenance tasks checklists

Checklists should be prepared and used to check and confirm condition mechanical integrity, and correct operation. These should include all tasks and be based on machinery and equipment manufacturer recommendations and your own experience. The use of these checklists will provide information for operators, supervisors and managers.

Safe work procedures shall be observed while carrying out the above maintenance tasks.

## Suggested aids in planning maintenance

- manufacturers' handbooks and maintenance schedules;
- records of maintenance work performed on major plant items;
- maintenance schedules/checklists; and
- computer-based schedules which include reminders and completion of audit reports.

## Repairs

Unplanned maintenance activities often present a greater risk of injury than the normal operation of machinery. For this reason greater control and supervision is required. It would be an advantage to have a breakdown procedure or checklist. Questions to be asked include the following:

- What level of competency is required for the work to be undertaken?
- Who is responsible for repairs?
- Who will supervise?
- How will communication and consultation with employees occur?
- How will machinery be made safe?
- What procedure will be used for hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control?
- What specific safe work procedures and permits will be used, e.g. lockout, hot work, confined spaces?
- How will safe access be provided, e.g. fixed access, scaffolding, elevating work platforms?
- How will heavy or bulky items be moved e.g. cranes, fork lifts, trolleys?
- How will services be provided e.g. light, compressed air, electricity, water, ventilation?
- How will spills of flammables, combustibles or pollutants be controlled?
- What emergency equipment will be required e.g. fire extinguishers, first aid kit?
- How will pedestrian and vehicle access be controlled?

- What facilities will be needed for temporarily storing tools, parts and scrap?
- What will be needed to properly clean up after the job?
- What start-up precautions will be needed e.g. all guards replaced, all adjustments made, all controls working properly, all emergency stops operational, observation and close supervision?
- Will there be wider safety implications?

One of the most practical parts of any safety management plan is scheduling and recording maintenance activities. The use of mobile and fixed plant presents some of the greatest risks. All plant should be inspected and serviced using service manuals and known safe methods.

**Checklist**

**Maintenance records have been established for each piece of equipment**

**Maintenance has been completed and certified on all equipment**

**Repairs are completed promptly by a competent person, and certified where appropriate or needed**

**All maintenance documentation, including service manuals, is kept up to date**

# 11 / INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

A key part of a health and safety management system is to evaluate accidents and near-miss incidents so that the chances of the same or similar incidents happening again can be removed or at least reduced. To achieve this requires good investigation and keeping of records to monitor progress.

## What is an incident?

An incident is an event resulting in, or having the potential for injury or illness, or damage to machinery and equipment, or the possibility of injury or damage. An event that does not cause injury or damage is called a near miss. Following an incident, the integrity of the scene must be preserved. Apart from the need to administer aid to those hurt in the incident, and stabilising anything that could cause further harm, the scene should be cordoned off until initial investigations are completed and, where applicable, clearance to release the scene has been given by a health and safety inspector.

## Serious Harm

Serious harm means death, or harm of a kind or description declared by the Governor-General by Order in Council to be serious for the purposes of the Act; and "seriously harmed" has a corresponding meaning. Until such an Order in Council is made, the following types of harm are defined in Schedule 1 as "serious harm" for the purposes of the Act:

1. Any of the following conditions that amounts to or results in permanent loss of bodily function. Or temporary severe loss of bodily function: respiratory disease, noise-induced hearing loss, neurological disease, illness caused by exposure to infected material, decompression sickness, poisoning, vision impairment, chemical or hot metal burn of eye, penetrating wound to eye, bone fracture, laceration, crushing.
2. Amputation of body part.
3. Burns requiring referral to a specialist registered medical practitioner or specialist outpatient clinic.
4. Loss of consciousness from lack of oxygen.
5. Loss of consciousness, or acute illness requiring treatment by a registered practitioner, from absorption, inhalation or ingestion of any substance.
6. Any harm that causes the person harmed to be hospitalised for a period of 48 hours or more commencing within 7 days of the harms occurrence.

## Incident reporting

- It is a legal requirement for the site to record serious harm events and deaths and report them to the Ministry. Go to: http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/notifications-forms/accident-serious-harm
- When people are injured or become ill it is important that they receive the right treatment.
- The information recorded can be valuable in determining the how, when, why and where of accidents that can be used to stop further accidents from happening.

Certain information must be recorded to meet your health and safety legal requirements. Health and safety legislation requires that some types of accidents and incidents be reported and fully investigated. All accidents and near misses must be recorded in the farm's accident register. You must be aware of the legislation that applies to your farm and what your reporting requirements are.

Everyone in the workplace shall report incidents.

## Incident investigation

Accident investigation is a process of gathering facts and breaking them down by continually asking ‘why’. Only then can you identify the underlying causes, put controls in place and prevent it happening again.

Because accidents are never caused by a single factor, it is important to identify all the causes and put in the right controls. Human error may only be one small part of the cause, and process failure or poor management could be the real catalysts.

## What should be investigated?

All incidents and near misses should be investigated. This investigation should take place as soon as possible after the incident happens. Getting the investigation started quickly is important as crucial evidence can be disturbed or destroyed as time passes. Important information from people involved in or witnessing the accident or incident may be lost if the investigation is not started as soon as possible.

Investigations should not be confined to the immediate scene. Information from safety records, safe work procedures, manufactures handbooks and authoritative (e.g. government) publications may indicate particular areas of concern.

## Who investigates?

Management should appoint an appropriate and objective person to conduct an investigation. This could be the manager and/or supervisor responsible for the area where the incident occurred, or someone external. Involving an employee or employee representative who knows the work area in the investigation can help to identify the causes and corrective actions required.

Incidents that are reported to WorkSafe may require the involvement of the manager and experts from outside the workplace. Anyone who carries out an investigation should have some training. The site should not be disturbed during and after an injured person is removed, unless for immediate safety reasons, until WorkSafe personnel give clearance to do so.

It is advisable that more than one person carries out accident and incident investigation.

## Where to from here?

The investigation should have:

- determined what happened
- identified the cause(s) of the accident or incident;
- identified and implemented the necessary corrective action;
- implemented or modified controls necessary to avoid a repeat of the accident or incident;
- recorded the changes in safe work procedures from the corrective actions; and
- determined who is responsible for completing the corrective actions.

Incident investigations are aimed at preventing future accidents and incidents; it is not about blame. This should be stressed to employees who are interviewed in an investigation, so that all relevant information can be gained.

To effectively collect accident and incident data, you require a simple documented system that allows you to implement ways to prevent the incidents from recurring.

**Checklist**

**An incident register has been established, and includes all incidents, including near misses**

**Processes to preserve incident scenes for investigation have been established**

**Any incidents are reported promptly**

**Investigations are conducted to determine the cause of any incidents**

**Processes are put in place to prevent incidents from reoccurring**

# 12 / CONTRACTOR MANAGEMENT

Contractors and sub-contractors play a major role in many workplaces.

Your responsibility extends to the health and safety of all people who undertake tasks on your farm – full time, part time and casual employees, contractors and their employees, sub-contractors and consultants. They, in turn, have certain responsibilities to you as the employer (principal) and it is in pulling these two sets of responsibilities together that a program for contractor and sub-contractor management can be developed.

It is important to note that contractors and sub-contractors have the same level of care requirements to their employees as the principal does. They need to be informed of all health and safety procedures, audits, investigations and the like so that they can assess the safety of their employees on site.

The level of risk that is involved in work to be done can assist in determining the level of control.

## Purpose

- to ensure fulfilment of obligations for the health and safety of contractors and their employees
- to provide a systematic risk assessment based approach to the management of contractor health and safety
- to structure contracts which have the power to impose health and safety standards
- to provide evidence of due diligence through documentation of the contractor health and safety management process.

**Checklist**

**Induction has been developed for all visitors and contractors, including emergency procedures and workplace rules**

**All visitors and contractors sign in and out of the workplace**

**The induction process is reviewed regularly and documented**

# 13 / TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

## Why train?

One of the requirements of health and safety legislation is that employees must be trained and supervised to carry out their work safely. A very high number of serious injuries happen to young workers, new employees, people undertaking new or different work, and sometimes after having a long period of leave.

Training is a means of sharing knowledge and developing skills and attitudes. It is one way of influencing behaviour and improving health and safety.

## What is a training program?

Employers should implement a training program, which will:

- identify what skills, knowledge or competencies an employee should have before starting a job, and analyse the training needed for that job;
- develop, maintain or improve employment-related skills, knowledge or competencies of employees;
- let trainers determine what skills and knowledge new people have;
- design the training for the skills needed;
- show how the training will be conducted;
- let trainers evaluate the training; and
- ensure people are only required to do work if trained or appropriately supervised.

## Training program requirements

### Framework

A formal training program should include a range of tasks and outcomes and should:

- provide induction training for new people to the industry (and workplace);
- evaluate competence of new staff to confirm they have relevant skills and qualifications;

- give additional training for people moved to new work;
- train under close personal supervision when starting work, and new tasks;
- provide certification for technical tasks where appropriate; and
- require that records of the training of each person be kept.

## Induction training

Induction training is usually the first introduction to the workplace. It is usually a formal training session and basic on-the-job training, which can be conducted by a supervisor/manager.

## Job and task performances

Training should focus on a job or task rather than on an occupation. All employees should be appropriately trained for the tasks and processes they are involved with.

## Diagnostic maintenance skills

For employees involved with equipment and changing work site conditions, training should include techniques for identifying potential malfunctions, hazardous conditions and unsafe work situations.

## Refresher training

Refresher training should be included in operational training programs, and should include briefing techniques for updating individuals, supervisors and managers on changes in work practices, new equipment operating procedures and changes in the working environment generally.

## Reviews of training schemes

Workplace instruction and training programs should be reviewed regularly and employees supervised on an on-going basis.

The type of training that each person at the site needs depends on:

- each person’s role and responsibilities at work;
- each person’s occupation (e.g. plant and machine operators and people who handle hazardous substances need specific training);
- the hazards identified during an inspection of your workplace; and

- the type and occurrence of injury and disease at work.

## Health and safety training

On all farms, no matter how large or small, everyone needs training in health and safety matters; this will include:

- the employer, including managers;
- the supervisor;
- all employees – casual, part-time and full-time;
- students on work experience;
- new employees;
- contractors and sub-contractors;
- the health and safety committee representative; and
- members of the health and safety committee.

The basic aim of health and safety training is to impress the principles of good health, accident and incident prevention and safe behaviour upon employees so that they will apply these principles to their work. Some training needs to be specific to the task or role of the employee.

The need for health and safety training at work is continuous. As circumstances at work change, there will always be the need to ask the questions:

- How does this change affect health and safety?
- What health and safety instruction and training do I need to provide now?

Typical times when you need to ask these questions are:

- whenever you take on someone new at work – health and safety is an important part of induction training;
- whenever you buy new machinery or equipment or new substances such as chemicals;
- whenever people's jobs change;
- whenever you change the layout of your work environment;
- whenever there are new health and safety regulations, standards or laws that affect your industry; and

- if there has been an accident, injury or health and safety incident at work.

### Planning for safety and health training

Training programs are best planned if everyone at work:

- has basic information about what the laws and regulations are;
- has the opportunity to talk about health and safety concerns;
- uses the health and safety skills and knowledge they have;
- takes part in a workplace inspection and identifies hazards at work; and
- takes part in a training needs analysis to find out what training each person needs.

### Training needs analysis

Conducting a health and safety training needs analysis (TNA) will ensure that the people at your workplace get the type of training they require to perform their tasks.

It will enable you to ensure that the training is relevant to the job and the changing needs of the workplace.

A TNA involves looking at all aspects of work, including the work environment, the actual jobs people do and the skills and knowledge of each person at work. Once this information is collected, then you can start to plan what training your operation needs.

Employees are one of the most important assets of any operation. Training employees to perform their roles competently is vital to any workplace.

## 14 / FITNESS FOR WORK

All workplaces should, as part of hazard management, have processes to ensure that employees are fit for work. Employees who are not fit are potentially a hazard.

Fit for work means that an individual is physically and mentally able to perform assigned tasks competently and in a manner which does not compromise the safety or health of themselves or others. Linking up with Employment Assistance

Programme can help an employer to develop and manage processes relating to employee wellbeing and fitness for work.

Fitness for work can be impaired by a number of factors including:

- Fatigue;
- Dehydration;
- Psychological and emotional Issues;
- Alcohol and drugs.

General principles for dealing with fitness for work issues include:

- Recognising that the hazards exist and having strategies in place to manage them before issues arise
- Ensuring that all employees are aware of the hazards and are able to recognise symptoms in themselves and in others when issues are developing, and are aware of the responses expected of them
- Recognising that all people are susceptible to these sorts of issues from time to time and a supportive response from management is generally more appropriate than discipline
- Establishing and maintaining a good drug and alcohol policy
- Recognising when something is compromising an employee's ability to perform their role safely, and intervening
- Where rules are used to help to manage these issues, ensure that these rules are clear, well known and applied consistently.

# 15 / HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES (HSNO)

Many chemicals and fuels used on farms are hazardous and are controlled under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO).

Hazardous substances used on farms include:

- pesticides
- herbicides
- fertilisers
- veterinary medicines

- cleaning products, like dairy sanitisers
- post-harvest sanitisers
- petrol, diesel and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

## Hazard classifications, approvals and controls

Hazardous substances are classified according to their hazardous properties. Hazardous substances may have one or more the following properties:

- explosive – hazard class 1
- flammable - hazard classes 2, 3 and 4
- oxidising - hazard class 5
- toxic - hazard class 6
- corrosive - hazard class 8
- toxic to the environment (ecotoxic) – hazard class 9.

All hazardous substances must be approved by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) under HSNO. An approval lists the controls, or rules, that apply to the substance so that the risks to people and the environment are safely managed.

Controls cover:

- packaging and labelling
- information about hazardous substances – safety data sheets
- protective clothing and equipment
- safe storage of hazardous substances including:
  - warning signs
  - container types
  - storage location and construction
  - certification of storage locations and containers
  - training and certification for people who use hazardous substances
  - emergencies including:
    - fire extinguishing

- spill and leak control
- planning for emergencies.

## Person in charge

HSNO requires a person in charge at all workplaces to manage hazardous substances. On a farm, this will normally be the farm owner or manager. They must make sure that the farm complies with all the HSNO controls.

## Staying safe with hazardous substances – where to start

You need to know what hazardous substances you have and how to manage them. Product labels and safety data sheets (SDSs) provide information about the product's hazards and how to manage them. Manufacturers and suppliers must only sell correctly labelled substances and must provide compliant and up to date SDS for hazardous substances.

SDSs contain important information about:

- first aid
- storage
- cleaning up spills
- the right protective equipment.

Make sure you have SDSs for all your hazardous substances. Contact your supplier who must provide them.

## Staying safe with hazardous substances – where to start

Which controls you have to follow depends on the type and amounts of hazardous substances you have. Make a list, or inventory, of all the hazardous substances you have, the amounts you have, their hazards and approval numbers. The approval number should be on the SDS. You can use the information in your inventory on the HSNO Calculator (**www.hazardoussubstances.govt.nz**) and the Approved Hazardous Substances with Controls Database with on the Environmental Protection Authority website (**www.epa.govt.nz**).

### Where to get more information

The Hazardous Substances website (www.hazardoussubstances.govt.nz) provides information on hazardous substances and controls. It also has the HSNO calculator.

Staying safe with chemicals and fuels on farms is a WorkSafe good practice guide about hazardous substances on farms, it is available here – [to be filled in when published]

The Environmental Protection Authority's website (www.epa.govt.nz) contains information about hazardous substance approvals.

# 16 / AUDITS AND ONGOING IMPROVEMENTS

Get your safety management system underway before giving any attention to auditing it. One year after you've had a safety management system in operation, have a look at whether it's working.

A good review can start with two basic questions asked honestly:

- What went really well over the last 12 months with our safety/health performance; and
- In what areas could we do better?

These questions can be asked informally so they have immediate appeal. However, just as a structured (formal) workplace inspection can detect hazards that are not so obvious, a structured review will help identify concerns that might otherwise go unnoticed.

As time goes by and your experience and level of comfort with a safety management system increases you might be wise to engage a fresh set of eyes to have a look for any strengths, gaps or improvement areas. The checklists at the bottom of each section can be used together as an auditing tool, as can the Workplace Safety Management Practices (WSMP) audit checklist produced by ACC.