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START YOUR SAFETY AND HEALTH @ WORK

A guide for small and medium enterprises



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Introduction

Take care of your employees' safety and health and they will take care of your business.

Do you know that a work accident can hurt your employees and ultimately, your business profitability? It can grind your operations to a standstill, impact staff morale, and harm your company's reputation and future opportunities.

If you can prevent work accidents, you can keep your business running smoothly and enhance your future growth. Managing safety and health at work can be simple.

This book will guide you through START, a five-stage approach:

Set up a team

Think and plan

Act on your plan

Review your plan

Train your employees

Quick Check

SET UP A TEAM

YES NO

1. Do you have a safety and health team or committee? **GO TO PAGE 4**

THINK AND PLAN

2. Do you have a safety and health policy? **GO TO PAGE 6**

3. Do you set safety and health rules? **GO TO PAGE 6**

4. Do you have a plan to address safety and health issues? **GO TO PAGE 7**

5. Have you done your risk assessment? **GO TO PAGE 8**

ACT ON YOUR PLAN

6. Have you developed safe work procedures? **GO TO PAGE 10**

7. Do you have a maintenance programme for equipment? **GO TO PAGE 10**

8. Do you have an emergency plan? **GO TO PAGE 11**

9. Do you keep your employees informed on safety and health matters? **GO TO PAGE 12**

REVIEW YOUR PLAN

10. Do you monitor your safety and health performance? **GO TO PAGE 14**

11. Do you investigate and report incidents? **GO TO PAGE 15**

TRAIN YOUR EMPLOYEES

12. Do you provide training to your employees? **GO TO PAGE 16**

YESIf you've answered "yes" to all 12 questions, please continue your effort on WSH.

NOFollow the steps in the pages stated to get started on your WSH journey.



Set Up a Team

Set Up a Team

Do you have a team of employees looking at your company's safety and health?



DO YOU KNOW?

- It is mandatory to form a WSH committee if your company has more than 50 employees and is regarded as a factory under the WSH Act.
- The WSH committee must meet at least once a month.
- Minutes of meeting must be recorded and filed.

Go to <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/training/training-courses/Pages/default.aspx> for the list of Accredited Training Providers and courses.

Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) issues cannot be handled by one person. To address all aspects of the organisation's WSH operations, it has to be a group effort.

You may want to consider forming a team or committee to plan, develop and promote WSH¹. We suggest that the WSH team be made up of:

- Chairman;
- Secretary; and
- Members.

If your company employs less than 10 employees, forming a team may not be practical. Do consider:

- including WSH in the agenda of your company meetings; and
- appointing a representative to handle WSH in your company.

¹ The requirements can be found in the WSH (WSH Committee) Regulations 2008.

Go to <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/wsh-regulatory-framework/Pages/workplace-safety-health-act.aspx> for more information on the WSH Regulatory Framework.



Think and Plan

Do you have a company safety and health policy?

After forming a WSH team for your company, formulate a safety and health policy statement.

A clear and concise policy statement will reflect your company's commitment and support towards managing safety and health matters. This statement should be signed by the business owner, managing director or CEO² equivalent, to demonstrate senior management's commitment.

A good policy will consist of:

- Commitment to adhere to relevant legal requirements;
- Duties and responsibilities to ensure safety and health at work; and
- Commitment to continuously improve WSH performance.

Do you set basic safety and health rules?

Now that you have a safety and health policy to set your company's direction, you can move on to define basic safety and health rules for your employees, vendors, contractors and visitors.

Rules create a common understanding on what can make your workplace safer. To ensure compliance, you may want to put regular checks in place.

Some common rules could include:

- No smoking near areas where flammable materials are stored;
- Speed limit no more than 20km/h;
- No consumption of alcohol at work;
- No by-passing of emergency switch; and
- Prompt reporting of all injuries.

DO YOU KNOW?

- The safety and health policy should be communicated to your staff.
- Place it in a visible location, such as the noticeboard or reception area.

DO YOU KNOW?

- Rules must be documented, communicated and made easily available.
- Review of rules should be carried out periodically.
- Some organisations incorporate WSH compliance as part of staff appraisal.

Do you have a plan to address safety and health issues?



DO YOU KNOW?

As there may be a list of issues to be addressed, you need to:

- prioritise the importance;
- put a reasonable timeline to each action item;
- identify resources required; and
- identify owners for each of the action items.

The policy and rules form the fundamentals of WSH in the company and the WSH team can now start identifying the issues to be solved. Your WSH team can brainstorm on WSH issues with these questions:

- Have we carried out risk assessment for each work activity³?
- Do we have safety instructions for each job?
- Are our machines properly maintained to ensure safe operations?
- What should we do if there is an emergency?
- Are our employees adequately trained?
- Do we provide personal protective equipment⁴?
- Do we need regular inspection or audit?

² For information for *Top Management on WSH under Director's Guide*, go to https://www.wshc.sg/wps/PA_InfoStop/download/WSHC%20Director's%20Guide.pdf?folder=IS2010040500159andfile=WSHC%20Director's%20Guide.pdf

³ For information on common WSH hazards and suggested safety tips, go to *A Guide to Workplace Safety and Health: Don't ignore everyday risks at work* at [https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/infostop/file/A_Guide_to_WSH\(1\).pdf](https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/infostop/file/A_Guide_to_WSH(1).pdf)

⁴ For information on standards for personal protective equipment, go to www.singaporestandardseshop.sg

Have you done your risk assessment?



DO YOU KNOW?

- It is mandatory to carry out risk assessment under the WSH (Risk Management) Regulations 2006.
- Risk assessment should be reviewed at least every 3 years or when there is a change in work practices or work processes.
- The bizSAFE programme provides step-by-step assistance to build risk management capability. Information on bizSAFE can be found at www.wshc.sg/bizsafe

By identifying the potential hazards your employees might face, you can then determine and apply appropriate control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks.

These are the basic steps to conduct risk assessment⁵ (RA):

1. Form a RA team with staff who are familiar with the work.
2. Gather information such as:
 - layout or plan of your workplace;
 - list of all work activities; and
 - list of equipment, tools and chemicals used at work.
3. Identify the hazards associated with the work activities.
4. Evaluate the risks based on how likely an incident will happen and how serious it can be.
5. Eliminate or control the risks.
6. Keep RA records and review them regularly.

⁵ For more information risk management, refer to *Code of Practice on WSH Risk Management*. The publication is available at [https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/infostop/file/WSH%20COP%2012_Final%20uploaded%20on%20website\(4\).pdf](https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/infostop/file/WSH%20COP%2012_Final%20uploaded%20on%20website(4).pdf)



Act on your Plan

Act on your Plan

Have you developed safe work procedures?

Documenting instructions or work procedures will ensure that knowledge is passed on and not lost.

However, it is insufficient to solely perform the job in the correct sequence and manner. Carrying out the work safely is equally important. In developing safe work procedures, you can follow these steps:

1. Identify a list of work activities.
2. Break down each activity into simple steps.
3. For each step, discuss with the RA team on how to perform it safely.

You must also ensure that plans are put in place if you have work at height activities⁶ or lifting activities⁷.

DO YOU KNOW?

Safe work procedures must be:

- documented;
- communicated; and
- reviewed when there are changes to the work activities, RA or when there are incidents.

Do you have a maintenance programme for equipment?

Defects or failure in the work equipment can turn work activities into a dangerous situation and your workers may get injured. Due to time loss from work stoppages, productivity will also be affected. Having a good maintenance programme is, therefore, essential to keep work machinery safe and reliable.

A good maintenance programme should include:

- identifying a list of equipment;
- setting frequency of maintenance according to manufacturer's recommendation;
- ensuring that manufacturer's manual for maintenance is updated and available if the maintenance can be carried out in-house; and
- training employees to use the equipment properly and safely.

Statutory equipment, such as lifting equipment and pressure vessels must be licensed⁸ by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) and inspected by an authorised examiner.

DO YOU KNOW?

The maintenance programme should be reviewed annually.

Do you have an emergency plan?



DO YOU KNOW?

- It would be useful to display all emergency numbers in prominent locations.
- Fire extinguishers must be periodically checked and replaced when expired.
- Drills should be conducted periodically to test your plan.

First Aid

As a basic emergency preparation, your employees should have access to first aid provision⁹ such as:

- sufficient number of first aid boxes; and
- adequate first aid personnel (For 25 to 100 employees, you need a trained first aider. Subsequently, you need to maintain the ratio of one first aider for every 100 employees.)

Fire Safety

Building owners or occupiers of certain premises need to prepare a fire emergency plan¹⁰ and notify the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF). All tenants should be informed of such procedures.

Spill Control

If your company handles a large quantity of chemicals, ensure that you have an emergency plan in the event of a spill and a spill control kit to mitigate any loss of containment. Activate SCDF when the spillage is beyond your company's control.

⁶ For requirements of working at height, refer to *Code of Practice on Working Safely at Height*. The publication is available at <https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/infostop/file/CP%20for%20WAH.pdf>

⁷ For requirements of safe lifting, refer to *Code of Practice on Safe Lifting*. The publication is available at <https://www.wshc.sg/wps/themes/html/upload/announcement/file/Lifting%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>

⁸ For information on licensing of equipment, go to <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/applications-registrations/Pages/certreg.aspx#equipment>

⁹ The requirements can be found in the WSH (First Aid) Regulations 2011.

¹⁰ Information about the Fire Safety Plan Approval is available at www.scdf.gov.sg

Do you keep your employees informed on safety and health matters?



DO YOU KNOW?

Your employees should be kept informed of the following safety and health matters:

- safety and health policy;
- employees' roles and responsibilities;
- hazards, risks and control measures for the operations that they are involved in;
- safe work procedures;
- emergency procedures; and
- contacts of the first aider and fire warden.

Educating employees on safety and health matters is a challenge. However, with good communication and consultation, employees can be involved and informed on safety and health issues at the workplace.

Some methods of communication include:

- providing a WSH notice board;
- holding regular safety talks and screening of videos;
- distributing of safety handbooks and brochures;
- displaying WSH signs and posters; and
- organising a WSH Day annually.



Review your Plan

Review your Plan

Do you monitor your safety and health performance?



Keeping track of your company's safety and health performance will help you to monitor trends and identify gaps and areas for improvement.

Monitoring your company's WSH performance includes data gathering on:

- incident statistics;
- findings from audit;
- findings from inspections; and
- feedback from employees.

It is also important to set standards and requirements for your vendors or contractors¹¹. As part of your monitoring system, you should also include supervision of their safety performance¹².

¹¹ For information on how to set standards and requirements, refer to *WSH Guidelines: Contractor Management*. The publication is available at https://www.wshc.sg/wps/PA_InfoStop/download/Guidelines_for_Contractor_Management.pdf?folder=IS2011101200681&file=Guidelines_for_Contractor_Management.pdf

¹² You may consider using Safety and Health Annual Performance (SHAPE) as your WSH monitoring tool. For more information on SHAPE, go to <https://www.wshc.sg/shape?action=viewHomeandopenMenu=3>

Do you investigate and report incidents?

DO YOU KNOW?

- RA and safe work procedures should be reviewed when a workplace incident has occurred.
- You can also pick up important learning points from past accident cases on the WSH Council website¹⁴.

You can request the following from your contractors:

- RA records;
- past safety records;
- safe work procedures; and
- their own contractor management policies.

Incident Reporting

As an employer, you must notify the following workplace incidents to MOM immediately or as soon as reasonably practicable¹³:

- fatality;
- injury whereby your employee is given more than 3 consecutive days of medical leave; or hospitalised for at least 24 hours;
- occupational diseases; and
- dangerous occurrences.

¹³ For information on incident reporting, go to <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/incident-reporting/Pages/default.aspx>

¹⁴ For past WSH-related case studies, go to <https://www.wshc.sg/wps/portal/resourcescasestudies?openMenu=1>

Incident Investigation

The true cost of a workplace incident is often underestimated¹⁵. To prevent an incident from recurring, investigation must be conducted. This will help to find the root cause of the incident and identify gaps in your safety and health system. In conducting an investigation, you should:

- form a team;
- identify the sequence of events;
- identify root causes and their solutions; and
- develop an action plan.



Train your Employees

¹⁵To calculate the cost of an incident, you can use the Incident Cost Calculator at <https://www.wshc.sg/wps/portal/icc?view=mainandopenMenu=3>

Train your Employees

Do you provide training to your employees?



DO YOU KNOW?

Under the Factories (Safety Training Courses) Order, workers from the following sectors would have to attend compulsory safety orientation training:

- construction;
- oil and petrochemical;
- metalworking; and
- marine.

Safety Orientation

When new workers are hired, they should undergo an in-house safety orientation course first to familiarise themselves with the new work environment.

Likewise for veteran workers in your company, they should also go for periodic upgrading or refresher courses.

When there are changes in work procedures, all workers should be informed and retrained where necessary.

Other Trainings

Many MOM Accredited Training Providers provide a range of relevant courses for workers¹⁶. By undergoing related WSH training, your workers can upgrade their knowledge and skills and improve their job performance.

¹⁶ For a list of Accredited Training Providers and courses, go to <http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/training/training-courses/Pages/default.aspx>

Other Useful Information

Financial Assistance

Financial Assistance	Description
Risk Management Assistance Fund (RMAF)	A fund set up to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) defray the cost of engaging an Approved Risk Consultant (ARC) to build in-house capabilities. An ARC can train, provide consultancy services and assist SMEs in implementing risk management. https://www.wshc.sg/wps/portal/RMAF?openMenu=2
Skills Development Fund (SDF)	A funding scheme for employers to get subsidies for course fees and absentee payroll from SDF for rank-and-file workers as well as professionals, managers, executives and technicians for pre-approved courses. http://app2.wda.gov.sg/web/Contents/Contents.aspx?ContId=436
Workplace Health Promotion Grant	A funding scheme offered by the Health Promotion Board. The grant provides financial support to help SMEs establish and sustain their workplace health programmes. http://www.hpb.gov.sg/hpb/default.asp?pg_id=3676
Accelerated Depreciation Allowance for Noise Control	A tax incentive scheme to recover the cost of implementing noise control measures over a one-year period. http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/incentives/accelerateddepreciationallowancefornoisecontrol/Pages/default.aspx
Accelerated Depreciation Allowance for Chemical Hazard Control	A tax incentive scheme to recover the costs of implementing chemical hazard control measures over a one-year period. http://www.mom.gov.sg/workplace-safety-health/incentives/accelerateddepreciationallowanceforchemicalhazardcontrol/Pages/default.aspx
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPRING http://www.spring.gov.sg/Resources/Documents/Guidebook_Govt_Asst_Prog.pdf • Productivity Fund http://productivity.enterpriseone.gov.sg/en/govassist.aspx http://www.bca.gov.sg/CPCf/cpcf.html

Annex A – WSH Policy Sample

These tools are available on www.wshc.sg

Tools	Description
Incident Cost Calculator	An interactive electronic tool that allows you to input the actual or estimated costs of an incident or injury that has occurred in your organisation. With the Incident Cost Calculator, you can track the real costs of the incident or injury.
WSH Appraisal Tool	An easy-to-use tool for assessing WSH performance in your company. The tool helps you find out the strengths and weaknesses of your WSH system, so that you can put in place measures to address the gaps identified.
WSH Assessment Tool	A tool which allows you to get a better picture of your company's safety performance and derive recommendations for future improvement.
SHAPE	A programme which provides top management with an overview of the organisation's WSH policy, planning, management programme, active and reactive performance monitoring, which aids to identify focus areas for new initiatives to be introduced or current initiatives to be reassessed.

Guidance Materials

These guidance materials are available on the iWSH Portal at www.wshc.sg. If you would like a hardcopy, kindly email contact@wshc.sg. Copies are subject to availability. You can download a copy of the list of collaterals from the WSHC website under the Resources tab.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY

ABC Company is a leading consumer product factory in the metal industry. We are committed to providing staff, contractors and visitors with a healthy and safe environment.

This policy applies to the company premises, activities of the company and controlled equipment.

The company strives to fully integrate health and safety into all aspects of its activities through a continuous improvement of processes. This will be achieved by:

- implementing and maintaining a framework that ensures the systematic management of health and safety throughout all sites and workplaces and compliance with legal and other requirements; and
- setting measurable objectives and targets aimed at controlling higher risk activities and increasing awareness of health and safety.

Our principal goal is to improve health and safety management and to eliminate injuries and illnesses at our workplaces.

We promote a proactive health and safety management philosophy based on effective communication and consultation, the systematic identification, assessment and control of hazards and the encouragement of innovation.

Managing Director
ABC Company
June 2012

COMPANY LOGO