

# ▶ WHAT IS RISK ASSESSMENT?

In order to meet their OHS obligations, employers must identify any workplace hazards. A formal risk assessment is the best way to identify workplace hazards.

This is a summary of the basic steps:

## 1: Hazards

**Identify** workplace hazards at each operational phase e.g. work equipment, potentially harmful practices/procedures, dangerous machinery, heavy loads, slip and trip hazards, falling hazards, toxic and flammable substances, electrical equipment, moving vehicles, bullying or violence from the public or within the workplace.

Develop a workplace hazard checklist. Consult with workers and add to it as required.

## 2: Risks

**Assess** how likely it is that each of the hazards identified could harm anyone and if so, how serious that harm is likely to be.

Think carefully about how young workers' lack of experience, combined with their physical and mental development, may increase their risk of harm and impact on the safety of others.

Rank the hazard risks to help you determine where you should be putting preventive effort.

## 3: Control Measures

**Control measures** must be introduced to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

The most effective way to control the risk of injury or illness is to eliminate the hazard from the workplace altogether.

Where this is not possible, hazards can be substituted with safer alternatives or engineered out of the workplace with controls such as guards, enclosures or ventilation. Administrative controls such as safer workplace practices, procedures and policies also help to control hazards.

When hazards cannot be removed from the workplace, employers are obliged by law to provide adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) to all workers, with training and supervision in using PPE correctly.

Providing young workers with OHS orientation, adequate and accessible information, formal training and competent supervision will help to ensure they avoid harm and do their job safely.

## 4: Recording

**Record** your findings in writing and communicate them to all employees and any other people affected by the workplace.

## 5: Reviewing

**Review** your workplace safety. Conduct a formal risk assessment annually or when changes occur within the workplace that affect OHS. Consult with the people performing the work about the types of hazards in the workplace and how it could be made safer.

Go to "**Assessing OHS Standards in Your Workplace**" in our links section for more detailed information