

WORK HEALTH SAFETY WORKPLACE INSPECTIONS PROCEDURE[®]

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The purpose of this procedure is to provide managers with guidance on the procedure required to complete workplace inspections.
- Provide managers and staff with information about the safety benefits for undertaking workplace inspections.
- Compliance with this procedure will be monitored by WHS, the relevant WHS Committee and the Ministry of Health (MoH) WHS Audits Ministry every two years.

NSW Health Policy Directives

- [Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures](#)
- [Ministry of Health WHS Audits](#)

Related Information

- SafeWork NSW - How to manage work health and safety risks: Code of practice: <http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/formspublications/publications/Documents/how-manage-work-health-safety-risks-code-of-practice-3565.pdf>

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st February 2017	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Manager	Area/Dept: Work Health Safety

CHANGE SUMMARY

- This document was a SCH WHS Workplace Inspections policy that has been reviewed and updated in relation to current Ministry of Health Policies, WHS Legislation and Codes of Practice.
- This document has been changed to a Network Policy.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All SCHN staff are required to read and acknowledge this document.
- Training – information disseminated at SCHN Orientation, through WHS promotions and as determined by WHS training needs analysis.

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1. Purpose/Scope

Managers and or Supervisors of workplaces are required to have carried out inspections of their workplaces on a monthly basis and to keep a record of hazards identified and actions undertaken to rectify or control these hazards.

The purpose of inspections is to proactively identify and eliminate or control hazards in the workplace. Regular inspections that identify and minimize risks lead to higher standards of Work Health and Safety. Regular workplace inspections carried out diligently, with effective control measures put in place, are the component of the prevention of accidents and incidents.

Please Note: For the purpose of this procedure, environmental Inspections, hazard inspections, walk throughs etc. will be termed Workplace WHS Inspections.

2. Responsibilities

- **Workers will:** comply with WHS&IM policies and procedures; and any measures put in place to protect their health and safety at work.
- **Managers/Supervisors will:** implement and comply with WHS&IM policies and procedures.
- **Directors will:** establish and maintain WHS&IM procedures to achieve WHS policy objectives.
- **Chief Executive will:** ensure WHS&IM procedures are in place to achieve WHS policy objectives.

3. Related Documents

- SCHN - WHS Workplace Inspection Checklists
- SCHN – Monthly Themed WHS Promotions
- [Ministry of Health PD2016_017 Work Health and Safety Audits](#)
- [SCHN WHS Audits Policy](#)

4. Audit

Compliance in completing monthly inspections will be monitored by the internal WHS Audit completed by WHS and WHS Committee members.

Compliance will also be audited through the Ministry of Health WHS Audits every two years.

5. Procedure

5.1 Principles of an Inspection

Workplace inspections are an important part of any organisational WHS program. The inspection is carried out for the following three basic reasons:

1. To check specific conditions (e.g. building, fixtures, fittings, safety systems and equipment, etc.) while at the same time checking actual performance against predetermined standards to confirm if acceptable safety and health conditions are being achieved.
2. To monitor and evaluate the performance and compliance against organisational policy, procedures and other predetermined requirements.
3. To proactively identify hazards and workplace practices which have the potential to cause an accident or injury.

5.2 Benefit of an Inspection

- identify hazardous conditions and apply hazard control measures;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of safety and health controls in practices and procedures;
- improve safety and health practices and procedures;
- measure safety performance;
- check facilities, equipment, processes etc.;
- collect information that identifies new safety initiatives etc.;
- maintain focus on safety and health through consultation; and
- display supervisory commitment to safety and health.

In addition, undertaking regular inspections is an integral part of WHS consultation between management and workers. It enables workers to play a more significant role in the maintenance of a safe work environment and thus help to improve and facilitate industrial relations. However, it must be recognised that the full benefit of the inspection process cannot be realised if no action is taken based on the information collected.

5.3 Inspection Frequency

WHS Workplace Inspections must be conducted monthly and the SCHN monthly inspections have different monthly themes. Monthly themes are based on requirement for the MoH WHS Audit and specific hazards applicable to the workplace.

Inspections may need to be conducted more frequently dependent on the nature of the work environment. For example, if inspections are identifying too many hazards to deal with effectively at one time, then inspections may need to be conducted on a fortnightly or weekly basis.

If inspections consistently fail to identify many hazards, a person who works outside the department ('a fresh set of eyes') such as WHS staff may be considered useful to audit the inspection process.

5.4 WHS Inspection Checklist

- The WHS Workplace Inspection Checklist and WHS Workplace Promotion is monthly themed, and will assist managers/supervisors and workers to look for specific hazards on that particular month.
- The Workplace Inspection Checklist and the Promotional calendar can be located on the WHS&IM page on the SCHN Intranet under Our people.
- The Workplace Inspection Checklist and Promotional material are sent out to WHS Committee members, Service Directors and Managers/Supervisors on monthly basis and are available on the WHS Intranet Site.

5.5 Conducting a WHS Workplace Inspection

The manager/supervisor or their delegated member/s of staff carries out the SCHN WHS Workplace Inspection at least monthly, preferably working in pairs.

When doing the inspection it is important to identify that staff have been trained in the use of a piece of equipment, and the safety precautions that must be followed.

If a person is observed not wearing ear protection for example, rather than just make a note on the checklist that the area was non-compliant, ask the employee why they are not wearing the equipment provided. This will allow a much better opportunity for providing recommendations.

Staff members that carry out the WHS Workplace Inspection and complete the Inspection Checklist give each identified hazard a risk priority and recommended actions to be taken to minimise the risk. This includes any outstanding items from the previous month.

5.6 Follow-up and Reporting

On completion of the SCHN WHS Workplace Inspection the checklist must be given back to the manager/supervisor in order to report on the hazards or faults identified, with suggestions for necessary action.

A manager/supervisor and or a worker who carry out the WHS Monthly Inspection and complete the WHS Monthly Inspection checklist must give each identified hazard a risk rating to prioritise and recommend actions to be taken to eliminate and or minimise the risk as far

as reasonably practicable. In addition there must be dates for completion or management of the hazard on the action plan. This includes adding items to the departments' WHS risk register and managing the identified hazards on the WHS risk register's hazard identification action plan. They will also review any carried over items from the previous month.

Follow up and evaluation of any actions/changes must occur. This process provides the opportunity to ensure that the corrective action has been completed satisfactorily and has actually rectified the matter.

The follow-up can be an informal inspection type to determine if:

1. control methods are being complied with and are acceptable to those in the workplace;
and
2. the original action has in fact removed the hazard and not in itself created a hazard.

5.7 The WHS Internal Audit

WHS and WHS Committee members undertake Audits of the department including the monthly SCHN WHS Workplace Inspection Checklists to identify issues which have not been resolved and signed off as completed in that period.

5.8 The WHS Committee

Committee representatives report back to the WHS committee on:

- Whether Monthly inspections have been conducted at least monthly
- Number of hazards identified each month for the months since the last visit.
- Number of hazards that have been resolved
- Number of hazards that have not been resolved
- The time a hazard has remained un-resolved and why it has remained un- resolved
- Put a report of the audit together for the WHS committee

The WHS committee will review the report of the findings at their next meeting and discuss what actions they can take to try to assist with addressing any unresolved issues or offer the department assistance in developing their monthly routines.

The WHS Committee will then forward a report of their findings to the executive annually unless there is a need for executive follow up which will then be forwarded 3 monthly.

6. References

1. NSW WHS Act 2011
2. NSW WHS Regulation Act 2011
3. [NSW Ministry of Health Better Practice Procedures \(PD2013_005\)](#)
4. [Ministry of Health Work Health and Safety Audits](#)
5. [SafeWork NSW - How to manage work health and safety risks: Code of practice:](#)
6. ACHS EQUIP5