Hygiene Management Procedure

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Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to prevent illnesses and injuries by identifying, assessing and controlling hazards associated with exposure to contaminants in Department of Education and Training (the Department) workplaces.

Scope

This procedure applies to the management of hygiene related hazards that may be experienced in all Department workplaces including schools and central and regional offices. Hygiene related hazards may include:

* Noise
* Dust
* Lighting
* Gases, vapours and fumes
* Radiation.

3. Procedure

3.1 Identify Potential Exposures

The [Workplace Manager](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) and/or [Management OHS Nominee](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx)**,** in consultation with the [Health and Safety Representative](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) (HSR) and employees, are to identify all potential contaminants that employees may be exposed to in the workplace. In all instances the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must record the identified contaminants on the *OHS Risk Register.*

Examples of contaminants that may be found in the workplace include:

| **Physical** | **Chemical** | **Biological** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Noise | Vapour | Fungi |
| Vibration | Gases | Bacteria |
| Temperature | Dust | Mites |
| Light / UV | Mist | Yeasts |
| Humidity | Fumes | Viruses |
| Ventilation | Corrosives | Enzymes |
| Radiation | Solvents | Body fluids |

Contaminants may be identified when:

* previous workplace monitoring results are reviewed
* an incident or illness is reported in the workplace
* requested by regulatory authorities or external auditors
* a new task or chemical is introduced into the workplace
* the work environment is changed
* new or additional information relating to acceptable exposure standards becomes available.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should consider all means of exposure when identifying hazards e.g. inhalation, ingestion, absorption and injection.

3.2 Identifying Similar Exposure Groups (SEG)

The SEG is a means of effectively allocating limited hygiene monitoring resources. Once the contaminants are known, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should group similarly exposed workers into a SEG. For administrative purposes the exposures and controls for one person are representative of all individuals in the group.

A worker may belong to more than one SEG. In consultation with the HSR and employees, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** may decide that the DWG is the same as the SEG.

3.3 Risk Assessment of Hazards

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to conduct a risk assessment for each hazard associated with exposure to contaminants in the workplace. All risk assessments are to be conducted in consultation with:

* the HSR
* employees
* relevant standards, codes of practice or legislation.

The risk assessment is to be completed using the risk matrix in the *OHS Risk Management Procedure.* The outcomes of the risk assessment are to be documented in the *OHS Risk Register.*

For every hazard identified and documented in the *OHS Risk Register*, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should detail the initial risk rating, existing controls (e.g. engineering, administrative, personal protective equipment) and any residual risk rating.

In order to accurately determine the level of risk, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** may need to consider specific workplace monitoring and engage the services of an [occupational hygienist](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx). Specific monitoring will provide results on the actual level of exposure, which can be used as a representative sample to compare against legislated maximum exposure standards.

If monitoring is required, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that:

* the monitoring is specific to the contaminant and route of exposure (i.e. inhalation would require a different sampling method to ingestion)
* [personal monitoring](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) rather than static monitoring is conducted to define potential exposures. [Static monitoring](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) should only be used for measuring exposures when a strong correlation is found with personal monitoring
* monitoring is conducted and analysed by a competent person
* the assessment is representative – neither worst case nor best case scenarios.

If workplace hygiene monitoring is necessary an external provider may be required and should be identified and engaged as per the *Contractor OHS Management Procedure.*

3.3.1 Contaminant Monitoring and Exposure Limit Findings

Once the monitoring is completed, the reported findings should be provided to the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee.** The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for implementing the recommendations in the report in order to reduce the risk of exposure to employees.

If only the results of monitoring are provided **the Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** can compare them to the [Occupational Exposure Limit (OEL)](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) for that specific contaminant to determine the need for corrective actions and follow-up surveillance.

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should contact the OHS Advisory Service on **1300 074 715** if they require assistance to interpret the findings in reports provided.

## 3.4 Controlling Risks

Where specific hazards have been identified from exposure to contaminants, controls are to be established and implemented by the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with the HSR and employees. This is to be documented in the *OHS Risk Register.*

As part of the control process the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that:

* recommendations for placement of personnel in medical surveillance programs are considered
* existing controls are adequate, whether additional or alternative controls are needed, and if so, what these should be
* consideration is given to whether periodic monitoring of the contaminant or the controls is required and the nature of such monitoring.

When determining controls to reduce employee exposure, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** must follow the Hierarchy of Control in the *OHS Risk Management Procedure.* As an example, effective controls (from most to least effective) to reduce exposure to noise could include:

* Eliminate the hazard - Eliminating the noise source such as the machine, task or work process
* Substitute the hazard with a lesser risk - Substituting a less noisy machine for the task
* Engineering controls- Separate the noisy process or equipment by installing sound dampening/absorption around the noise source or between the source and the worker
* Administrative controls - Establish hearing protection zones and display ‘hearing protection’ signage
* Personal Protective Equipment - Providing suitable Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) e.g. hearing protection
* Implementing a workplace monitoring program e.g. audiometric (hearing) tests.

3.4.1 Safe Work Procedures

Some interactions between employees and contaminants (e.g. coaching sport outdoors in the sun) may require the development and implementation of a safe work procedure. Refer *to Safe Work Procedure Template.*

3.4.2 Communication

If workplace monitoring of contaminants is required, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that the results of the monitoring are clearly communicated by:

* verbally informing employees sampled and the SEG of the results and controls required following the monitoring;
* including report findings from monitoring on the agenda and minutes of Health and Safety Committee Meetings (if relevant) and/or regular staff meetings;
* displaying and communicating the results of monitoring on the workplace OHS Notice Boards (see *OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure*).

## 3.5 Reviewing Controls

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of hazard controls in consultation with the HSR and employees. The review of controls is to occur as outlined in the *OHS Risk Management Procedure.*

In the event that further/ongoing monitoring is required, the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** should ensure that this occurs according to this procedure.

## 3.6 OHS Risk Register

The **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** are to ensure that the *OHS Risk Register* is kept up to date and is reviewed when hazards associated with exposure to contaminants are identified, assessed, controlled and reviewed.

4. Defined terms

Terms defined within this Procedure can be located on the Department [Defined Health, Safety Terms](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/definedohsterms.aspx) website. Defined roles will appear **in bold**.

5. Related references

*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

*Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*

*Victorian Code of Practice for Manual Handling 2000*

*NIOSH Manual of Analytical Methods*

*AS 2985:2009 - Workplace atmospheres – Method for sampling and gravimetric determination of respirable dust*

*AS 3640:2009 - Workplace atmospheres – Method for sampling and gravimetric determination of inhalable dust*

*AS 1269:2005 - Occupational noise management-Overview and general requirements*

*NOHSC 3008 (1995) 3rd Edition – Guidance Note on the Interpretation of Exposure Standards for Atmospheric Contaminants in the Occupational Environment*

*NOHSC 1003 (1995) Adopted National Exposure Standards for Atmospheric Contaminants in the Occupational Environment*

6. Related documentation

*Contractor Management Procedure*

*OHS Consultation and Communication Procedure*

*OHS Risk Register*

*OHS Risk Management Procedure*

*Safe Work Procedure Template*

7. Further assistance

Further information, advice or assistance on any matters related to hygiene management is available by contacting the OHS Advisory Service on ph. 1300 074 715 or email safety@edumail.vic.gov.au.