



Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) (Revision 3)

Purpose: To provide written instructions on how to identify and document safe working methods and procedures. Safe working methods and procedures are developed so that the health and safety risks to workers from a job or task can be minimised.

Guidance

1. Refer to the [Safe Work Australia website](#) or consult the Work Health and Safety Officer for information on any codes of practice, which may apply to the job or task to be completed.
2. The creation and adherence to Safe Working Method Statements (SWMS) assists in the Authority's compliance with the *Work Health & Safety Act 2011 S19(3)*, which states, "a person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:
 - a) the provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety; and
 - b) the provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures; and
 - c) the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work; and
 - d) the safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances; and
 - e) the provision of adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including ensuring access to those facilities; and
 - f) the provision of any information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking; and
 - g) that the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace are monitored for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers arising from the conduct of the business or undertaking."

How to prepare safe working methods statements and procedures

3. Observe and break down the task into steps.
 - 3.1. Each step should tell, in general terms, what must be done. No reference to *how* the job is done should be made. Hazards should not be identified at this stage and no safety precautions should be prescribed (this comes later). If necessary, insert a paragraph to help explain the context of procedures.
4. Record the sequence of basic job steps on the '**Safe Work Method Statement**' ([See Attachment A](#)), and any potential problems or hazards that could arise at each of these steps.
5. To assist in the identification of problems or hazards at each step, the following should be considered:
 - 5.1. Check for exposure to noise or fumes
 - 5.2. Could equipment fail?
 - 5.3. Is the work physically arduous?
 - 5.4. Is the work made harder by the way it is organised or by external factors?
 - 5.5. Is the worker isolated or remote?
 - 5.6. Is there enough space?
 - 5.7. Does the work require awkward body posture e.g. crouching, reaching overhead?
 - 5.8. Does the procedure call for demands on vision, hearing or communication?
 - 5.9. Can any person be struck by or make contact with anything injurious?
 - 5.10. Can any person be stuck between or in anything?
 - 5.11. Are there any manual handling hazards?
 - 5.12. Is there any possibility of slips, trips or falls?

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- 5.13. What level of supervision is required?
- 5.14. Are there any psychological hazards to be considered?
- 5.15. Have all workers been training to undertake the task?
6. For each step where a hazard has been identified, document (on the SWMS) suggested ways of preventing injury or preventing people from coming into contact with the hazard(s). The 'hierarchy of control' (as described below and in Figure 1) should be considered at this stage:
 - 6.1. **Eliminate the hazard** – remove the problem altogether
 - 6.2. **Substituting or modifying the hazard** - replace the hazard with something else
 - 6.3. **Redesign or re-engineer to control the hazard at its source**
e.g. tools can be redesigned or use enclosure exhaustion of ventilation systems
 - 6.4. **Isolate the hazard** - e.g. cordoning off an area or limiting access
 - 6.5. **Administrative controls** - e.g. limiting time/exposure, varying the time a task is carried out, undertaking training
 - 6.6. **Personnel protective equipment** may be used as an interim measure to reduce exposure to a hazard or as part of additional control measures.
7. Any recommendations regarding safe use of tools/equipment or personal protective equipment (PPE) must be documented on the SWMS.
8. Any recommendations for additional information or training should also be documented on the SWMS.

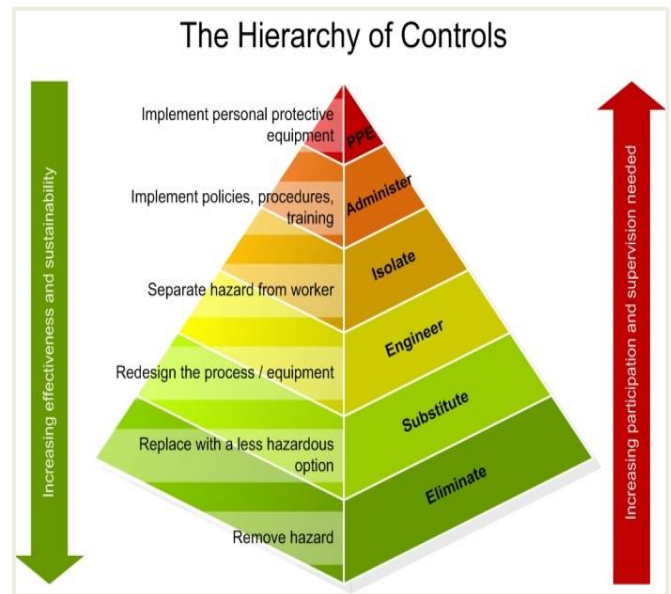


Figure 1: The Hierarchy of Controls

Risk

9. Assigning a risk level or rating allows for the stratification of identified risks in order to prioritise their management. To determine a risk level, a qualitative risk matrix (Figure 2) should be used to combine the highest magnitude consequence (identified during risk analysis), with the likelihood (also identified during risk analysis).

Likelihood	Consequence				
	Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Extreme
Almost certain	Low 5	Medium 12	High 17	Very high 22	Very high 25
Likely	Low 4	Medium 11	High 16	High 19	Very high 24
Possible	Low 3	Low 8	Medium 13	High 18	Very high 23
Unlikely	Low 2	Low 7	Low 10	Medium 15	High 21
Rare	Low 1	Low 6	Low 9	Medium 14	High 20

Figure 2: The agency's risk matrix

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Recommended steps for filling out the SWMS

10. Consult with relevant workers involved with the task on the activities involved and associated hazards, risks and controls.
11. In the '**What are the tasks involved?**' column, identify the work that will be undertaken in a logical order. An compiled example of tasks is attached ([See Attachment B](#))
12. In the '**What are the hazards and risks?**' column, list the hazards and risks that may cause harm to workers or the public for each work activity.
13. In the '**What are the control measures?**' column, select an appropriate control or combination of controls by working through the hierarchy of controls. It is important you are able to justify why the selected control measure is reasonably practicable for the specific workplace.
14. The **Risk Before / Risk After** columns provide benchmarking of risk before and after controls are implemented. If the risk rating after controls are implemented (RA) remain unacceptable, the controls must be re-examined until the lowest level of acceptable risk is achieved and, if this is not achievable, the job or task should not occur. In reaching the lowest level of risk a duty holder must examine what is reasonably practical. There are two elements in this assessment. A duty holder must first consider what can be done -that is, what is possible in the circumstances for ensuring health and safety. Secondly, whether it is reasonable in the circumstances to do all that is possible. This approach is consistent with the objectives of the WHS Act which include ensuring that workers and others are provided with the highest level of protection that is reasonable practicable.

SWMS compliance (information, monitoring and review)

15. Brief each team member on the SWMS before commencing work. Ensure each team member knows work is to stop if the SWMS is not followed.
16. Observe the work being carried out and monitor compliance with the SWMS. Review risk controls regularly, including:
 - 16.1. before a change occurs to the work itself, the system of work or the work location
 - 16.2. if a new hazard associated with the work is identified
 - 16.3. when new or additional information about the hazard becomes available
 - 16.4. when a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the work
 - 16.5. when risk controls are inadequate or the SWMS is not being followed.
17. In all of the above situations stop the work, review the SWMS, adjust as required and re-brief the team.
18. Keep the SWMS in a readily available location for the duration of the task or work and for at least 2 years after a notifiable incident occurs.
19. If work is being carried out in connection with a construction project, the principal contractor must be provided with a copy of the SWMS before the work starts.

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References / related material

Attachment A – Safe Work Method Statement

Attachment B - Example Compiled Safe Work Method Statement

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Safe Work Method Statement Template














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Attachment A – Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

In order to determine a sequence of steps, observe an experienced and qualified worker undertaking the task. Verify this with other worker(s) and ask other workers in the group to assess the sequence of steps with you.

SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT – Part 1

SAFE WORK PROCEDURE

TASK/ OPERATION:					Overall Risk Rating After Controls		Low		Moderate	
							.High			
Personal Protective Equipment										
Foot Protection	Hearing Protection	High Visibility	Protective Clothing	Head Protection	Eye Protection	Face Protection	Breathing Protection	Hand Protection	Sun protection	Communication Equipment
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
										
Day Operations – Normal Requirements: Safety footwear, hand protection (gloves), overalls (as required)										
Safety Notes:										

Safe Work Method Statement Template



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Procedure (in steps):	Possible Safety or Environmental Hazards	RB	Control Measures to Reduce risk	RA	Responsible Officer
NOTE: RB = Risk Rating before controls implemented - RA = Risk Rating after controls are implemented.					
Step 1		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 2		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 3		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 4		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 5		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 6		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 7		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 8		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 9		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

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Step 10		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	
Step 11		Choose an item.		Choose an item.	

References: OHS Legislation for all States
QLD – Code of Practice for Manual Tasks
National Code of Practice for Prevention of Manual Handling Disorders
Australian Standard 3848.2, 2030.1, 2337.1 and any others.

Safe Work Method Statement Template



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SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT – Part 2

Personal Qualifications and Experience required for the job:	Duties and Responsibilities of those employees undertaking the task:	Training Required to Complete the Work: (All employees must be trained in relevant procedures.)
Relevant training as determined by General Manager & delegates.		Training as per JHA. Training in this SWMS
Details of regulatory permits/licenses required:	Engineering Details/Certificates/Work Cover Approvals:	Codes of Practice, Legislation:
		-
Plant/Tools/Equipment: (List plant and equipment to be used on the job.)	Maintenance Details: (Include maintenance on vehicles, forklifts, electrical equipment etc.)	

Safe Work Method Statement Example



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Employee Sign-off

This SWMS has been developed through consultation with employees. I have read the above SWMS and I understand its contents. I confirm that I have the skills and training, including relevant certification to conduct the task as described. I agree to comply with safety requirements within this SWMS including safe work instructions and Personal Protective Equipment described.

Name	Qualifications	Signature	Date	Time	Employer

Issue No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Name									
Date									

Alert/ safety/ special considerations: Compiled SWMS must be kept readily available at the relevant job site. A copy of the finalised SWMS must be dispatched to the WHS mailbox (whs@gbmpa.gov.au) prior to commencement of task.














Safe Work Method Statement Example

Annex B Example Safe Work Method Statement

SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT – Part 1

SAFE WORK PROCEDURE

TASK/ OPERATION:					Overall Risk Rating After Controls		Low		Moderate	
Filing of SCUBA Cylinders							.High			
Personal Protective Equipment										
Foot Protection	Hearing Protection	High Visibility	Protective Clothing	Head Protection	Eye Protection	Face Protection	Breathing Protection	Hand Protection	Sun protection	Communication Equipment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
										
Day Operations – Normal Requirements: Safety footwear, hand protection (gloves), overalls (as required)										
Safety Notes: The process of filling of a portable cylinders by way of a compressor or decanting are outlined in AS 3848.2. The filling of Breathing Apparatus Cylinders may only be performed by trained personnel. AS 2030.1 requires that the permission of the cylinder owner be obtained before a cylinder is filled.										
Testing of the purity of this compressed SCUBA air shall take place at least every three (3) months.										
The composition and purity of SCUBA air shall be in accordance with Clauses 1.3.5 & 1.3.6 of AS 3848.2 respectively.										
All cylinders shall comply with AS 2030.1										
Where storage vessels are used (storage banks) they shall be inspected as per clause 3.3 of AS 3848.2.										
Where Flexible Hoses are used they shall be tested annually and marked and tagged with the test data.										

Safe Work Method Statement Example



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Procedure (in steps):	Possible Safety or Environmental Hazards	RB	Control Measures to Reduce risk	RA	Responsible Officer
NOTE: RB = Risk Rating before controls implemented - RA = Risk Rating after controls are implemented.					
Step 1 Inspect cylinder externally, noting the age, test date due, burst disk pressure and fill pressure of cylinder.	Ergonomics of handling cylinder.	POSSIBLE	Have a clear & clean work area, if cylinders are to be rested in elevated position, ensure measures are in place to prevent falling from heights or knocking over. Where chance of pinching during manoeuvring of cylinders, wear appropriate PPE.	UNLIKELY	Operator
Step 2 Place Cylinder onto filling pad and connect to Whip Fill Hoses.	Ergonomics and manual handling of cylinder. High Pressure Air	LIKELY	Have a clear & clean work area, take caution to handle valve correctly, outlet away from hand. The connection for the fill hose should be checked and remain dry and clean. Restrain cylinders or shield where possible	UNLIKELY	Operator.
Step 3 Confirm Fill valve & fill levers are in off position. Visually check pressure in Air banks. If Air banks are below desired pressure proceed to Step 4. If Air Banks are at or above desired pressure proceed to Step 5.	Ergonomics Manual Handling Strains	POSSIBLE	Maintain situational awareness of SCUBA tanks and passersby.	RARE	Operator
Step 4 Slowly Open Banks valve all the way & then rewind clockwise 1 quarter turn. Start compressor (Following Company Procedure for starting Compressor)	High Noise levels. High Pressure Air Slips/Trips/Falls	ALMOST CERTAIN	Don Hearing protection while in proximity of compressor while running. Maintain situational awareness.	POSSIBLE	Operator (responsible for all persons in vicinity)

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Procedure (in steps):	Possible Safety or Environmental Hazards	RB	Control Measures to Reduce risk	RA	Responsible Officer
NOTE: RB = Risk Rating before controls implemented - RA = Risk Rating after controls are implemented.					
Step 5 Set regulator to appropriate fill level, (Not greater than 225 bar) confirmed on external inspection of cylinder. Open fill levers with respect to Fill hoses connected to cylinders.	Mild noise levels High Pressure Air	ALMOST CERTAIN	Don Hearing protection while in proximity of compressor while operating. PPE as required (Safety Glasses) Open fill lines to cylinder slowly to avoid excess air hammer and dynamic loading Maintain situational awareness	POSSIBLE	Operator (responsible for all persons in vicinity)
Step 6 Open cylinder valves slowly pressurising fill hoses to cylinder pressure and observe 150mm gauge.	1.) Mild Noise levels. 2.) Burst of fill hose. 3.) Hose/connection leak. 4.) High pressure air <i>Repeat as required and add RB RA ratings as required</i>	ALMOST CERTAIN	1.) Risk rating is in relation to exposure time, Don on Hearing protection while in proximity while operating. 2.) Very unlikely occurrence, maintain checks of hose as slowly applying pressure from cylinder. 3.) Very unlikely occurrence, maintain checks of hose connection as slowly applying pressure from cylinder. Ear protection and Safety glasses may be required of all persons at operator's discretion, if leak becomes evident, turn off valve and bleed line immediately.	POSSIBLE	Operator.
Step 7 Slowly open Main Fill Control Valve to allow filling of cylinders from compressor/banks 'Moderate fill speed' is determined by fixed orifice restrictors to approx. 30-40 bar per minute.	1.) Mild Noise levels. 2.) Burst disk rupture.	ALMOST CERTAIN	1.) Risk rating is in relation to exposure time, Don on Hearing protection while in proximity while operating. 2.) Very unlikely occurrence, maintain checks of connection as slowly applying pressure from cylinder. Ear protection and Safety glasses may be required of all persons at operator's discretion, if leak becomes evident, turn off valve and bleed line immediately. If Burst disk ruptures, make safe cylinder if possible, turn off all filling valves and cylinder stop valve.	POSSIBLE	Operator

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Procedure (in steps):	Possible Safety or Environmental Hazards	RB	Control Measures to Reduce risk	RA	Responsible Officer
NOTE: RB = Risk Rating before controls implemented - RA = Risk Rating after controls are implemented.					
Step 8 Maintain continuous monitoring of filling cylinders.	Equipment malfunction High pressure air Housekeeping	POSSIBLE	Maintain situational awareness Monitor compressor function and filling speed	UNLIKELY	Operator
Step 9 Once cylinders have reached desired pressure, isolate the cylinder valve & bleed the fill valve.	Mild noise levels Valve malfunction High Pressure Air	LIKELY	Monitor release of air from bleed silencer. Slowly remove filling adaptor from cylinder keeping awareness of potential for residual pressure between adaptors and valve/panel	UNLIKELY	Operator
Step 10 Disconnect Fill hose from cylinder and remove cylinder from filling area.	Ergonomics and manual handling of cylinder.	POSSIBLE	Have a clear & clean work area, Ensure a clear pathway is available prior to lifting and moving tanks. Maintain situational awareness	RARE	Operator.
Step 11 Place cylinder in 'full' area	Ergonomics Manual Handling	POSSIBLE	Ensure clear work area, identify travel path and correct manual handling procedures.	RARE	Operator

References: OHS Legislation for all States
QLD – Code of Practice for Manual Tasks
National Code of Practice for Prevention of Manual Handling Disorders
Australian Standard 3848.2, 2030.1, 2337.1 and any others.

Safe Work Method Statement Example



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SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT – Part 2

Personal Qualifications and Experience required for the job:	Duties and Responsibilities of those employees undertaking the task:	Training Required to Complete the Work: (All employees must be trained in relevant procedures.)
Relevant training as determined by General Manager & delegates.	To perform tasks safely within the parameters set in training and to take caution at all times when working with compressed air.	Training as per JHA. Training in this SWMS
Details of regulatory permits/licenses required:	Engineering Details/Certificates/Work Cover Approvals:	Codes of Practice, Legislation:
	Plant to comply with relevant statutory requirements PPE to comply with relevant Australian Standards	- Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 - Work, Health and Safety Regulation 2011 - QLD – Code of Practice for Manual Tasks - National Code Of Practice for Prevention of Manual Handling Disorders
Plant/Tools/Equipment: (List plant and equipment to be used on the job.)	Maintenance Details: (Include maintenance on vehicles, forklifts, electrical equipment etc.)	
Compressor, storage banks, filling station,	Regulatory maintenance as per relevant Australian Standards 3 Monthly compressor safety inspection and Air Quality Analysis	

Safe Work Method Statement Example



Employee Sign-off

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Issue No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Name									
Date									

Enter a Succinct Title (Revision enter number)