

A silhouette of a person in mid-air, jumping over a gap between two dark, jagged rock formations. The background is a bright, hazy sky with a low sun, creating a golden glow. The person's arms are outstretched, and their legs are bent in a jumping motion.

Management of Critical Health and Safety Risks

Presented by Helen Mason
Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce



Risk Management

Different businesses will have different health and safety risks – it depends on the type of work you do.

Healthy and safe work starts with identifying and understanding what your work-related health and safety risks are.

It then involves doing what is reasonably practicable to eliminate those risks; or where they cannot be eliminated, minimise so far as reasonably practicable.

Leadership questions - Where am I at?

- **Set expectations** – Have I clarified my commitment, expectations and approach to risk management?
- **Enable the work** - Have I ensured risks are understood, controls implemented and risk management properly resourced?
- **Monitor outcomes** – Have I ensured we are effectively monitoring activity, verifying and continually looking for ways to learn and improve?

Leadership



Identify your Health and Safety Risks

Focus on your business's critical risks first before managing less serious risks.

Your acute, chronic and catastrophic risks that could lead to death or serious injury/harm.

Review your work activities on an ongoing basis to identify any new risks that need to be managed.

Develop a risk profile prioritising your critical risks. The profile should include a description of the risk; the activity, process or location where it occurs; who might be exposed; and when and how this might happen.

DRIVING



**WORKING AT
HEIGHT**



**DUST
EXPOSURE**



ELECTRICITY

**MACHINERY/
PLANT**



Control Risks

Identify controls for your critical risks – with your board, executive team and workers, identify controls for your health and safety risks paying special attention to your critical risks. Specify whether you can remove the risk or prevent the exposure. Ensure the full range of controls are identified.

Set control standards for critical risks – with your people, set and communicate expectations and performance standards for managing these critical risks. Identify key risk controls. Define the parameters of these controls, how you will test they are working as intended and how everyone will know if the controls are in place and are effective.

Assess whether risks are managed within defined risk tolerances – for each critical risk, determine whether the controls in place are managing the risk to within the tolerances and expectations set by the management and board. Take action where they are not.

Most effective

Elimination



Minimisation

Substitution (wholly or partly) and/or

Isolation/Preventing contact and/or

Engineering control measures



IF RISK REMAINS

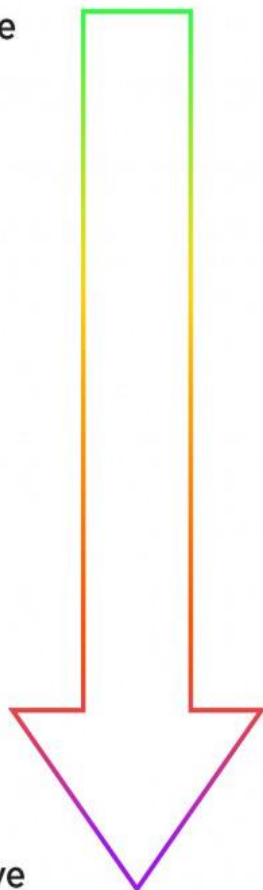
Administrative control measures



IF RISK STILL REMAINS

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Least effective



Implement the Controls

- With your people, plan how to implement any controls not currently in place. Develop information and training to inform people about the controls and your expectations for implementing and monitoring them.
- Ensure you have the resources needed to meet your expectations. This will include training; plant and equipment; physical and psychological capacity and capability; information; budget and technology.
- Enable information about the risks to flow vertically and horizontally within your organisation, and where relevant to your supply chain and industry.
- Take time to learn about the way work is managed by those exposed to the risks. Practice your recovery controls, emergency plans etc

How will your people respond when (not if) something doesn't go according to plan

Monitor and Verify

- Monitor your key risk controls – at an executive level develop, monitor and verify the key risk controls on a frequent basis.
- Develop formal assurance programmes – this could include internal and/or external audit and verification processes and monitoring your health and safety management system and risk control practices.
- Learn and improve – use incidents and events to learn and improve; experience risk controls on the ground by visiting sites and holding discussions with workers. Be curious, ask questions and listen.
- Learn from others external to your business and sector – benchmark key information and processes with others within and outside your sector.

Advice from Others

- Lead by example. Your approach to risk management sets the tone for your organisation.
- Ensure your attention is focused on critical risks and the efforts to mitigate these.
- Focus on the most effective controls first. Administrative controls like training and PPE shouldn't be the focus.
- It is crucial to include frontline workers in identifying risks and controls.
- Learn how to hold a good safety discussion.
- Align your approach to operational risks – environment, food safety etc – it makes it easier for people to understand and implement.
- Risk management is an ongoing activity.
- Don't assume the system is working – verify.
- Don't be fooled into thinking paperwork/checklists is how you manage risks. There's a lot more to it.

