

SESLHD PROCEDURE COVER SHEET



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District

NAME OF DOCUMENT	Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure
TYPE OF DOCUMENT	Procedure
DOCUMENT NUMBER	SESLHDPR/311
DATE OF PUBLICATION	November 2017
RISK RATING	Low
LEVEL OF EVIDENCE	National Standard 1 Workplace inspections, Pre-occupancy Inspections, Hazard Registers.
REVIEW DATE	November 2022
FORMER REFERENCE(S)	Former SESLHNP/84 'OHS – Regular Workplace Inspections'
EXECUTIVE SPONSOR or EXECUTIVE CLINICAL SPONSOR	Director People and Culture
AUTHOR	John Parkinson WHS Consultant, Health, Safety & Wellbeing
POSITION RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DOCUMENT	Peggy Pollock Manager, Health, Safety & Wellbeing peggy.pollock@health.nsw.gov.au
KEY TERMS	Workplace, Environmental Inspection, Hazard Inspection, Walk through.
SUMMARY	Procedure for conducting regular or pre-occupancy inspections of workplaces in order to identify potential hazards.

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY

**This Procedure is intellectual property of South Eastern Sydney Local Health District.
Procedure content cannot be duplicated.**

Feedback about this document can be sent to seslhd-executiveservices@health.nsw.gov.au

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this procedure is to instruct staff on implementing a safe work environment and compliance to the [Code of Practice - Managing the Work Environment and Facilities](#).

2. BACKGROUND

Workplace environmental inspections have been broken down into two key areas, of preoccupancy assessments and regular inspections.

Pre-occupancy inspections are designed to help identify potential workplace safety risks prior to workers starting in a new/redesigned work location.

Regular workplace inspections conducted on a monthly basis provide a record of hazards that have been identified and actions undertaken to rectify or control these hazards.

The overall purpose of these inspections is to identify then eliminate or control hazards in the Workplace. Workplace inspections carried out diligently using effective control measures are a key element to the prevention of accidents and incidents leading to a higher standard of workplace health and safety.

2.1 Definitions

Regular Workplace Inspections: also refer to the following terms environmental inspections, hazard inspections, walk through inspection.

Pre-occupancy Inspection: refers to an inspection of a workplace prior to workers conducting work in this location. This includes: a new building, re-design of a workspace or a pre-existing location that is to be occupied by a new department/service.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Workers will:** comply with Work Health Safety (WHS) and Injury Management (IM) legislation, policy and procedures; and any measures put in place to protect their health, safety and wellbeing at work.
- 3.2 Line Managers will:** implement and comply with WHS and IM procedures and report any unresolved items, actions and/or beyond their delegation to their manager.
- 3.3 Sector Managers/ Service Managers will:** establish and maintain WHS and IM procedures to achieve WHS policy objectives and monitor reporting of unresolved action items.

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

- 3.4 Chief Executive will:** ensure WHS and IM policy and procedures are in place to achieve our WHS policy objectives.

For further detail, refer to:

[SESLHDPR/212 Work Health and Safety - Risk Management Procedure](#)

[SESLHDPR/271 Work Health and Safety - Statement of Commitment Procedure](#)

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Regular Workplace Inspections

Workplace inspections are an important part of any organisational WHS program. The focus of the inspection is:

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

4.1.1 Benefit of an Inspection

- Identify hazardous conditions and apply control measures.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of health and safety controls in practices and procedures
- Improve health and safety practices and procedures
- Measure safety performance
- Check suitability of new facilities, equipment, processes, etc.
- Collect information that identifies new safety initiatives.
- Maintain focus on health and safety through consultation.
- Display supervisory commitment to health and safety.

In addition completing regular inspections is an integral part of WHS consultation between management and workers. Inspections enable workers to play a more significant role in the maintenance of a safe work environment.

However if no action is taken to mitigate all identified risks based on the information collected then the full benefit of the inspection process cannot be realised.

4.1.2 Inspection Frequency

As a minimum, workplace WHS Inspections must be carried out monthly. This directive can only be varied if the department/service manager consults with the WHS Coordinator and a documented risk assessment concludes that:

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

- The department/service is identified as a high risk and therefore the frequency may increase to weekly.
- The department/service is identified as a low risk and therefore may reduce the frequency to a maximum of three monthly.

Note: if an injury occurs, or the environment changes or there is an addition or replacement of equipment, a regular workplace inspection must be completed.

Inspections may need to be conducted more frequently depending on the nature of the work environment. The corrective actions must be taken immediately to mitigate the risks.

All workers in the department/service should be rotated through the regular inspection process so different workers are involved in assessing the workplace.

If the regular inspections consistently fail to identify any new hazards, it is recommended that the manager arranges for a periodic review by 'a fresh set of eyes' - a person who works outside the department such as a WHS Coordinator, Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or Health & Safety Committee (HSC) member. This periodic review will assist in confirming the initial inspection findings.

4.1.3 Regular Workplace Inspection Checklist

The standard items on the regular Workplace Inspection Checklist cannot be removed. If an item on the checklist is not relevant to the department, the N/A option may be marked.

However, further items can be added to suit the specific needs of the department. It is recommended any additions are made in consultation with the WHS Coordinator. Examples of additional items may be:

- Mobile duress alarms are returned to the storage location.
- Specific tasks in the workplace e.g.: working at heights, confined spaces, etc.
- Access to car parking facility (after hours, work vehicles).
- Disabled access and other considerations (paths, doorways, amenities, etc).

4.1.4 Conducting a Regular Workplace Inspection

The manager or their delegated worker/s conducts and completes the [WHS Regular Workplace Inspection Checklist](#) monthly, preferably working in pairs.

[Refer: Appendix 2 - Regular Workplace Inspection](#)

A manager and/or worker who carry out the Regular Workplace Inspection and complete the [WHS Regular Workplace Inspection Checklist](#) must give each identified hazard a risk priority and recommend actions to be taken to minimise the risk. They will also review any carried over items from the previous month.

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

4.1.5 Follow-up and Reporting

On completion of the Regular Workplace Inspection the checklist must be given back to the manager including all identified hazards or faults with the recommended corrective action.

The Manager must review the Inspection Checklist and develop an action plan with the person responsible ensuring the risk priority, the recommended controls and completion dates are all incorporated. This may include raising a work order (MAXIMO) and adding items to the department's hazard register that may require further risk assessment.

It is the responsibility of the manager to follow up and evaluate the effectiveness of any controls to mitigate the risk. This process provides the opportunity to ensure that the corrective action has been completed satisfactorily and has actually rectified the matter.

4.1.6 Quarterly audits of inspections

The quarterly audit is conducted at a facility level to identify issues which have not been resolved and signed off in the preceding three months. The facility Executive will determine the process, and format to conduct and report on the quarterly audits of department WHS Regular Workplace Inspection Checklist. This may be through the Health & Safety Committee, WHS Coordinators or another agreed arrangement.

The quarterly audit should focus on:

- A list of all HIGH risk-rated hazards that remains unresolved for the quarter and the reasons why.
- A list of all hazards unresolved for greater than three months or more and the reasons why.

A report of the audit is to be provided to the facility Executive and the Health & Safety Committee.

An appointed representative by the facility executive will review the quarterly report focusing on the unresolved issues and discuss what actions they can take to assist with addressing any unresolved issues or offer the department assistance in developing action plans to mitigate the risk.

The appointed representative will then forward a report of their findings to the executive annually. The exception is if urgent action is required by the facility executive they will be contacted and the report forwarded immediately.

4.2 Pre-occupancy Inspection

The pre-occupancy inspection must be completed for any new construction and/or refurbishment works that change the design and/or function of the work area, regardless of the project being managed internally or externally. An agreement of any outstanding

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

deficiencies and /or rectifications is completed before any building works are signed off by the project manager.

4.2.1 Principles of an Inspection

Pre-occupancy inspections are an important way to identify potential safety issues prior to workers commencing work in a new environment. The focus of the inspection is:

- To check specific conditions (e.g. building, fixtures, fittings, safety systems and equipment, etc.)
- Check the new work area against predetermined standards to confirm if these have been met (i.e. room size and/or layout, or building specifications).
- To monitor and evaluate the work environment against organisational policy, procedures and other predetermined requirements.
- To identify hazards which have the potential to cause an accident or injury.

4.2.2 Pre-occupancy Inspection Checklist

The [Pre-occupancy Checklist](#) cannot be changed, however, if required additions can be made to suit the specific needs of the department/service.

For example:

- Duress alarm locations and sufficient numbers available.
- Mobile duress alarms location and storage
- Seclusion/assessment rooms - exit points
- Access to car parking facility outside normal working hours

4.2.3 Conducting a Pre-occupancy Inspection

The Pre-occupancy Checklist requires all Parts A, B and C to be completed along with the development of an action plan for an identified deficiencies or safety issues.

Refer: [Appendix 1 - Pre-occupancy Inspection Flowchart](#)

The manager of the department is responsible for completing Part A in consultation with the workers who will soon occupy the work area, the workers' representative and/or the workgroup's HSR.

The manager may also consider including other relevant stakeholders from the following groups in the pre-occupancy inspection: WHS Coordinator, Manual Handling Coordinator, Fire Officer, Engineering, Infection Control and Biomedical Services. Where pertinent, a member of the project management team or building contractor may accompany the pre-occupancy inspection team to answer any queries that may arise at the time.

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

An authorised security department representative must complete Part B in consultation with the department manager.

The facility engineering manager is responsible for completing Part C in consultation with the department manager.

Ideally all stakeholders should complete the pre-occupancy inspection at the same time for the purpose of consultation to initiate the development of an action plan to remedy any identified deficiencies and/or safety concerns.

4.2.4 Follow-up and Reporting

Once the assessment and action plan has been completed any required controls to rectify the identified issues must be implemented.

The Manager will need to consult with their senior manager to make them aware of any deficiencies that require rectification that is beyond their own delegated authority to approve.

In some cases these issues may need to be addressed with the contractor or project manager before the works are signed off.

The facility WHS Coordinator may be contacted for further assistance with the Pre-occupancy Inspection.

5. DOCUMENTATION

- [F127 - WHS Regular Workplace Inspection Checklist](#)
- [F219 - Pre-occupancy Checklist](#)
- [Appendix 1 - Pre-occupancy Inspection Flowchart](#)
- [Appendix 2 - Regular Workplace Inspection Flowchart](#)

6. AUDIT

This procedure will be audited through the WHS & IM Profile every two years. Compliance in completing monthly inspections will be monitored by Health and Safety Committees.

7. REFERENCES

External References

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 No 10](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#)
- [Code of Practice - Managing the Work Environment and Facilities](#)

Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy Workplace Inspections Procedure

SESLHDPR/311

Internal References

- [SESLHDPR/212 Work Health and Safety - Risk Management Procedure](#)
- [SESLHDPR/271 Work Health and Safety - Statement of Commitment Procedure](#)
- [WHS Definitions Dictionary](#)
- [F126 - WHS Record Keeping Matrix](#)

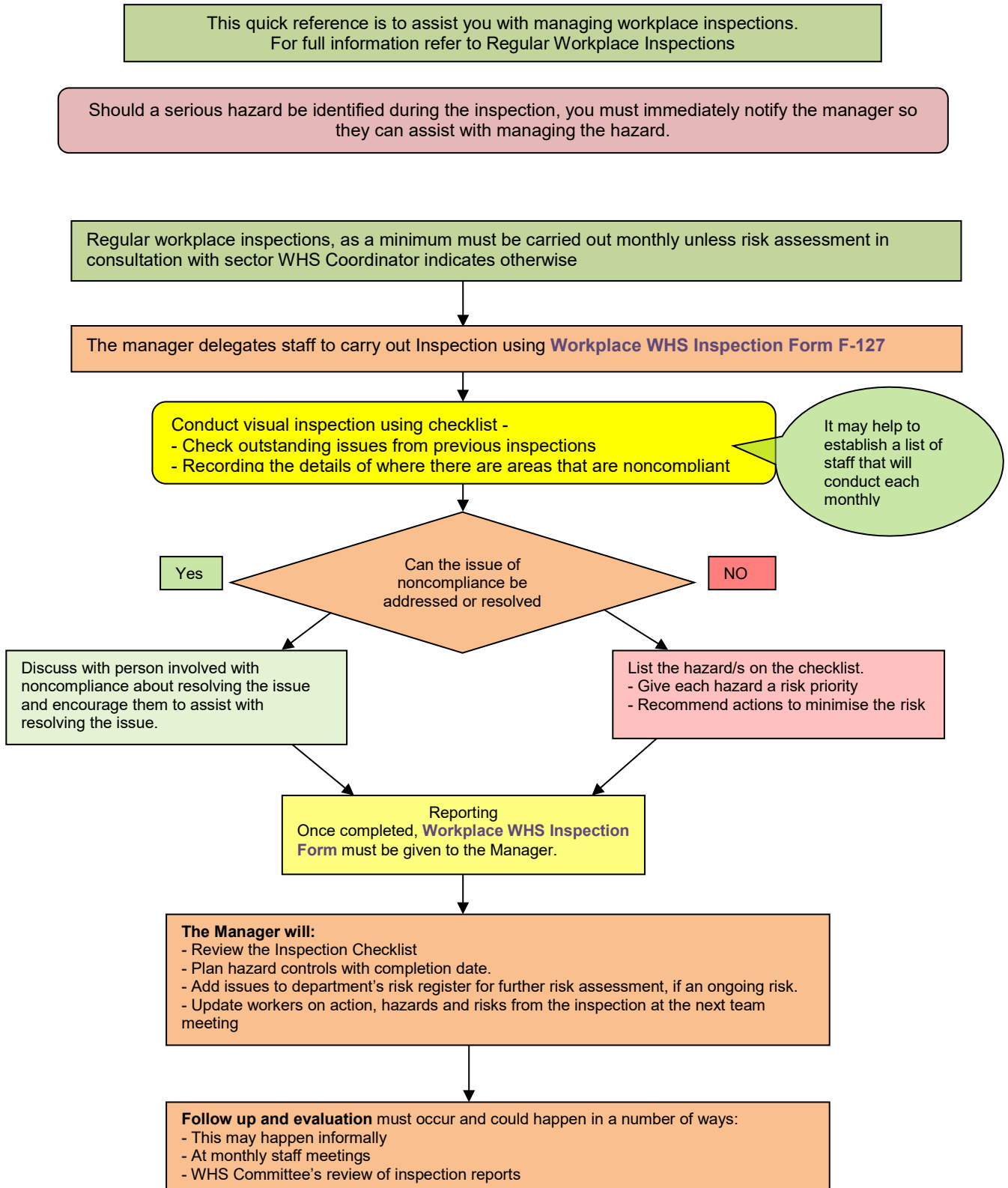
8. REVISION AND APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approval
Jun 2009	0	Area OHS Manager. Approved by Chief Executive at Area Executive Team meeting 9.6.09
Mar 2011	1	Peter Kuszelyk, OHS Officer, Health safety and Wellbeing. Amended to reflect change to Local Health Network and Cluster.
Nov 2013	2	Ron Taylor, WHS Consultant, Health Safety and Wellbeing. Amended to reflect change to WHS Act, regulation and Code of Practice.
Mar 2014	2	Re-formatted by District Policy Officer.
April 2014	2	Approved by DET. Published in May 2014.
August 2017	3	Desktop Revision and Links Update - John Parkinson, WHS Consultant
October 2017	3	Updates endorsed by Executive Sponsor
June 2020	4	Risk rating reduced to Low Risk. Review date amended to November 2022 to align with Low Risk rating. Executive Sponsor updated from Director Workforce Services to Director People and Culture. Approved by Executive Sponsor.

**Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy
Workplace Inspections Procedure**

SESLHDPR/311

Appendix 1 - Pre-occupancy Inspection Flowchart



**Work Health and Safety – Regular and Pre-Occupancy
Workplace Inspections Procedure**

SESLHDPR/311

Appendix 2 - Regular Workplace Inspection Flowchart

This quick reference is to assist you with managing workplace Pre-occupancy inspections. Pre-Occupancy inspections, must be completed prior to commencement of the work in a workplace environment For full information refer to Pre-occupancy Inspection checklist SESLHD F211

Should a serious hazard be identified during the pre-occupancy inspection, you must report this immediately by notifying the manager, project manager and/or contractor so action can be taken to manage the identified hazard.

NOTE - All 3 parts (A, B, & C) of the Pre-occupancy inspection form must be completed. It is recommended all stakeholders complete the pre-occupancy inspection at the same time

Part A: The manager of the department is responsible for completing part "A" in consultation with workers or the workers' representative and workgroup's HSR. Other stakeholders may also be included in the inspection team.

Part B: The manager in consultation with an authorised security department representative must complete part B.

Part C: The facility engineering manager is responsible for completing Part C in consultation with the department Manager.

