



A PRACTICAL AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE TOOL

Psychosocial WHS Readiness Checklist

A clear, evidence-based snapshot for organisations, managers and safety leaders who want to strengthen how psychosocial risks are managed.

36
practical checkpoints

15-25
minutes to complete

3
priority actions

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RiskReady Academy

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WORK SAFETY HUB

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Start with one work group, site or activity

This is a conversation and prioritisation tool. Complete it with people who understand how the work is really done - ideally a manager, a worker or HSR, and a WHS or People & Culture representative.

1	Choose the scope Name the site, work group, project or activity you are reviewing.
2	Rate the evidence Mark Yes, Partly, Not yet or N/A based on what you can demonstrate today.
3	Discuss the gaps Pay particular attention to weak controls, unsafe reporting pathways and differences between work groups.
4	Choose three actions Assign an owner, due date and evidence of completion on the action-plan page.
5	Revisit Review after action, significant change or an incident - and at a planned interval.

The core risk-management cycle



YES 2 points	PARTLY 1 point	NOT YET 0 points	N/A exclude
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Important: A high score is not a finding of legal compliance. A single serious gap - for example, an unsafe reporting process or an uncontrolled high-consequence risk - may require priority action regardless of the total.

The 36-point readiness check

Mark the status that best reflects demonstrable practice today. If the team disagrees, use that as useful evidence and mark Partly.

01

Leadership, governance & ownership

Make psychological health part of how the organisation directs, funds and verifies safety.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
1. Senior ownership: A named executive or owner is accountable for psychological health and has the authority, time and resources to act.	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Clear roles: Officers, executives, managers, supervisors, WHS and People & Culture know their responsibilities and escalation points.	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Integrated system: Psychosocial risks sit inside WHS/OHS governance, planning, risk registers, change and assurance - not only wellbeing or HR.	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Due diligence evidence: Leaders receive useful information about exposures, controls, incidents and overdue actions, and verify that controls work.	☐	☐	☐	☐

02

Consultation & worker voice

Treat consultation as an ongoing two-way process, not a once-a-year survey.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
5. Ongoing consultation: Workers and HSRs are consulted when hazards are identified, risks assessed, controls chosen and effectiveness reviewed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Safe ways to speak: People can raise concerns through trusted, accessible options, including confidential or anonymous channels where appropriate.	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Representative reach: Consultation includes contractors, labour hire, remote, isolated, shift and other groups whose experience may differ.	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Close the loop: Workers are told what was heard, what will change, who owns the action and when progress will be reviewed.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Hazard scan: what should be on your radar?

Use language that fits your workplace. These hazards may interact or combine, and the same hazard can look different across teams, roles, shifts and locations.

01 High or low job demands	02 Low job control
03 Poor support	04 Lack of role clarity
05 Poor organisational change management	06 Inadequate reward and recognition
07 Poor organisational justice	08 Conflict or poor workplace relationships
09 Remote or isolated work	10 Poor physical environment
11 Traumatic events or material	12 Violence and aggression
13 Bullying	14 Harassment, including sexual and gender-based harassment

03 Identify psychosocial hazards

Look for hazards in the work and system, then map who may be exposed and how.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
9. Systematic scan: We examine work design and management, the work environment, equipment, behaviours and workplace interactions - not only wellbeing.	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. Multiple evidence sources: We use worker input, observations, work data, surveys, complaints, incidents, claims, absence, turnover and exit feedback.	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Common hazards covered: The common psychosocial hazard categories are considered in language that makes sense for our industry and roles.	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Exposure mapped: We know where, when, how often and how long people may be exposed, and which groups may face higher or different risks.	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Hazards considered together: We consider interacting hazards, such as high demands plus low control and poor support, as well as acute and cumulative harm.	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. Change trigger: Psychosocial hazards are considered early in restructures, new technology, rosters, projects, procurement, growth and other change.	☐	☐	☐	☐

From identified hazard to effective control

The strongest responses change the conditions of work. Training, policies, EAP and support can be valuable, but they should not be the only answer where the source of risk can be redesigned or better controlled.

04 Assess & prioritise risk

Assess risk where the level of risk or suitable controls are not already well understood.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
15. Assessment where needed: We assess risk when the level of risk or suitable controls are not already well understood.	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. Sound factors: Assessment considers possible harm, likelihood, frequency, duration, severity, existing controls and interaction between hazards.	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Transparent priorities: High-consequence, widespread or urgent risks are prioritised and the basis for decisions is recorded.	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Work-focused lens: We assess the sources of risk in the work and system - not whether an individual is 'resilient enough'.	☐	☐	☐	☐

05 Control the risks

Start with elimination and work design; use training and support as part of a broader control approach.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
19. Eliminate first: We eliminate risk where reasonably practicable; otherwise we minimise it using the most effective reasonably practicable controls.	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. Design before coping: We prioritise work design and organisational controls before relying on policies, training, EAP or individual coping strategies.	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. Fit-for-context controls: Controls address the specific hazard, exposure and work group, including how multiple hazards combine.	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. Consultation shapes controls: Affected workers and HSRs help select, test, implement and improve controls.	☐	☐	☐	☐
23. Delivery is owned: Each control has an owner, resources, due date, success measure and interim protection where long-term work is needed.	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. Embedded in operations: Controls are built into staffing, workloads, rosters, job design, supervision, procurement, change and contractor management.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Make the system usable when something happens

People need to know where to go, trust what will happen next and see managers respond consistently. Capability matters most when it is connected to real reporting, decision and control pathways.

06

Reporting, response & support

Create a trusted pathway from an early concern to safe action, support and risk reduction.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
25. Trusted reporting: Clear pathways cover hazards, incidents, bullying, harassment, violence, aggression and work design issues - and people know how to use them.	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. Safe early response: Reports are triaged promptly by a capable person, with privacy, procedural fairness, immediate safety and support considered.	☐	☐	☐	☐
27. Risk-based follow-up: Reviews and investigations look for work and system contributors and better controls while conduct processes are managed appropriately.	☐	☐	☐	☐
28. No adverse treatment: People can report and participate without victimisation; updates, outcomes and escalation or notification steps are managed.	☐	☐	☐	☐

07

Capability, training & supervision

Build role-specific capability so people know what to notice, do, record and escalate.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
29. Worker capability: Workers can recognise relevant hazards and controls and know how to report, seek help and escalate.	☐	☐	☐	☐
30. Manager capability: Managers can respond early, listen, protect privacy, consult, document, escalate and act on work-related risk.	☐	☐	☐	☐
31. Relevant learning: Training, instruction and supervision are role- and industry-specific, refreshed when needed and accessible to relevant workers.	☐	☐	☐	☐
32. Training is not the control plan: Learning supports broader risk management and is not used as a substitute for fixing work design or implementing controls.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Review what works - and keep the evidence

08

Review, assurance & evidence

Test whether controls work, keep proportionate evidence and close the governance loop.

CHECKPOINT	YES	PARTLY	NOT YET	N/A
33. Planned and triggered review: Controls are reviewed routinely and after change, a report or incident, new information, evidence of failure or a relevant HSR request.	☐	☐	☐	☐
34. Effectiveness is verified: We test whether controls are used, fit for purpose, reducing exposure and not creating new risks.	☐	☐	☐	☐
35. Evidence is kept: Consultation, hazards, assessments, decisions, controls, training and reviews are recorded in a proportionate, privacy-conscious way.	☐	☐	☐	☐
36. Governance closes the loop: Results reach the right leaders, overdue or high risks are escalated, actions are closed and jurisdictional requirements stay current.	☐	☐	☐	☐

Calculate your readiness snapshot

A. Yes count x 2	B. Partly count x 1	C. Applicable items 36 minus N/A	READINESS % (A + B) / (C x 2) x 100

90-100%	Stronger foundations	Validate critical controls and worker experience.
70-89%	Good progress	Close priority gaps and strengthen evidence.
50-69%	Developing	Use a structured action plan and targeted risk review.
Below 50%	Start with the foundations	Establish ownership, consultation and a systematic risk process.

Do not average away a critical gap. Prioritise any serious uncontrolled exposure, unsafe reporting pathway, failure to consult or ineffective control regardless of the overall percentage.

Turn the snapshot into a 30-day action plan

Choose three actions that reduce exposure or strengthen a critical part of the system. Make the first step small enough to begin, but specific enough to verify.

PRIORITY GAP	FIRST PRACTICAL ACTION	OWNER	DUE

A simple four-week rhythm

WEEK 1	Scope & own Confirm the work group, accountable leader and action owners.
WEEK 2	Listen & verify Consult workers and HSRs; review available data and current controls.
WEEK 3	Decide & design Select practical controls, resources, measures and interim protection.
WEEK 4	Start & communicate Begin implementation, explain what is changing and set a review date.

Next review date _____	Accountable leader _____	Work group / scope _____
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Keep the momentum practical

If this checklist surfaced gaps, the next useful step is usually a focused conversation about one work group - followed by action on the conditions creating risk.

START A TEAM CONVERSATION	Ask: What makes a good day hard here? When does pressure become unsafe? What gets in the way of raising a concern?
RUN A FOCUSED RISK REVIEW	Use worker input and operational evidence to identify hazards, assess exposure, strengthen controls and set a review date.
BUILD ROLE-BASED CAPABILITY	Help workers recognise and report hazards, and help managers respond, consult, document, escalate and act.

Build practical psychosocial WHS capability

For workers: recognise relevant hazards, understand controls, use reporting pathways and know when to escalate.

For managers and supervisors: respond early, consult, protect privacy, document decisions, escalate and support practical controls.

Available as online or facilitated learning options. Training is an important foundation within a broader psychosocial risk-management approach.

Explore psychosocial awareness learning



Talk to Work Safety Hub

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Sources & important information

This checklist was informed by the Safe Work Australia Model Code of Practice: Managing psychosocial hazards at work; WorkSafe Victoria's Psychological health compliance code and 2025 Regulations; SafeWork NSW's Managing psychosocial hazards at work Code; and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland's Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022.

General information only. This self-assessment is not legal advice, a full compliance audit or a guarantee of compliance. Laws and approved codes differ by jurisdiction and change over time. Check the current requirements of your regulator and seek competent or legal advice for your circumstances. Completing the checklist does not replace consultation, risk assessment, effective controls or review.