



WORK HEALTH & SAFETY FACTSHEET

FACTSHEET 11 – Construction

Definitions

Construction work: Any work relating to the construction, alteration, conversion, fit-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure

Structure: Anything that is constructed, whether fixed, moveable, temporary or permanent (WHS Act, s4)

Construction Project: A construction work project where the cost of construction work is \$250,000 or more.

Principal contractor: The PCBU who commissions a construction project; or the PCBU who is engaged to be the principal contractor and manages or controls the workplace.

High Risk Construction Work

Work carried out:

- On a telecommunications tower
- In or near a confined space
- On or near energised electrical installations or services
- In an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
- In or near a shaft or trench deeper than 1.5m or a tunnel
- On or near pressurised gas mains/piping
- On or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
- Where there is any movement of powered mobile plant
- In an area where there are artificial extremes of temperature
- In or near water (or other liquid) that involves a risk of drowning.

Or involving:

- Structural alterations/repairs that require temporary support
- A risk of a person falling more than 2m
- The disturbance of asbestos
- Demolition of a load bearing element of a structure
- The use of explosives
- Tilt-up or precast concrete
- Diving work

Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS)

SWMS are required only for high risk construction work (see previous definition), and need to identify:

- The work that is considered high risk construction work
- Hazards relating to this work, and risks to health and safety associated with these
- How hazards will be controlled and how the controls will be implemented, monitored and reviewed.

When preparing the SWMS, the PCBU must take into account:

- Circumstances at the workplace that may affect how the work is carried out, e.g. other contractors
- The WHS management plan for the workplace (where applicable).

Principal Contractor

The Principal Contractor on a construction project is required to:

- Display signage showing their name and contact details
- Prepare a written WHS management plan (WHSMP) for the project
- Inform all persons carrying out work on the project of the WHSMP
- Obtain copies of SWMS for any high risk construction work
- Manage risks related to:
 - storage, movement and disposal of materials and waste; storage of plant not in use;
 - traffic in the vicinity of the workplace; and essential services.

Construction General Induction Training

- The PCBU and principal contractor must not allow a worker to carry out construction work without proof of successfully completing the Construction General Induction Training.
- If the training was completed more than two year previously, the worker must have carried out construction work within the last two years.

