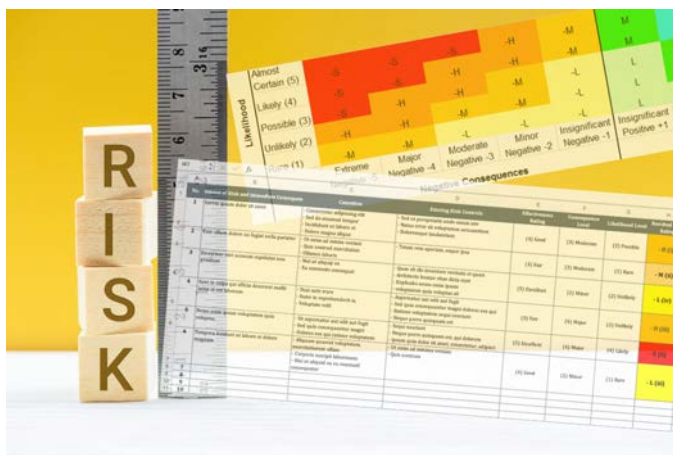


*Insight* aims to provide useful information, links and tips in the areas of Risk Management, Work Health and Safety, Business Continuity Management, and other areas relating to management systems and corporate governance.

## WHS Risk Registers

A WHS Risk Register is not technically required under the WHS Legislation. Nor is this term discussed in ISO 45001 or ISO 31000. However, this document for capturing strategic and operational risks can be the most useful tool in the management system kit bag.

Broadly speaking, legislation requires that an organisation identifies their risks and then controls them. A WHS risk register is the simplest way to demonstrate this.



The **How to manage work health and safety risks Code of Practice (2021)**, suggests on a couple of occasions that "You may prepare a risk register identifying the hazards, what action needs to be taken, who will be responsible for taking the action and by when". Using a WHS Risk Register has a range of benefits, including:

- It enables risks to be collated and prioritised for management.
- It is a central repository that houses the organisation's strategic and operational WHS risks.
- It provides evidence of the application of risk assessments.
- When shared with Senior Managers it provides evidence to support their fulfillment of their due diligence requirements.
- The prioritisation of the risks in the Register can provide the starting point of all planned

improvements and the associated resourcing requests.

- It is the validation point from which assurance activities are initiated, targeting the weak or ineffective controls, with the aim of strengthening them.

QRMC advocates that it should be a centre-piece document of a Management System.

Obviously, a Risk Register does not equal Risk Management, as the Risk Register is simply a tool to aid the organisation to be more systematic in relation to their management of risks, be they focussed on a specific discipline like WHS, quality or the environment or enterprise wide.

The WHS Risk Register should reflect the organisation's approach to the management of their identified WHS risks, linking the risks identified (such as those associated with working at height or dealing with difficult customers) with the controls and the need for specific procedures and processes to manage the risk.

Overarching this, there should be a critical assessment of the risk details and the controls in place to determine (a) if there have been any changes, (b) if the controls are effective, and (c) whether it is 'reasonably practicable' to implement controls higher up the 'hierarchy of controls'.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.

## Technology Improving Safety

Cast your mind back 20 years to 2002. Before Apple invented the iPhone. Before Smart TVs and Netflix. Before Facebook. Before Uber turned the Taxi industry on its head. Leighton Hewitt was the Men's World Number 1 Tennis Player. The Ketchup Song made Number 1 in 28 countries and became the biggest dance craze since the Macarena. Top Gear made its debut on TV. And everyone loved the film My Big Fat Greek Wedding. Well, almost everyone.

Back then, almost every organisation used paper forms to report a safety hazard and if your workplace

had an Incident Management software system, you were considered to be an “early adopter”. Most of us struggled to use MS Excel to produce a bar or pie graph! The advancements in technology since 2002 have completely revolutionised the way we go about our daily lives, especially the way we communicate and access information.

Applications of technology have also advanced the way we conduct our work and made workplaces healthier and safer. The use of machines and other tools and devices has assisted in the reduction of risks and injuries to workers, or eliminated these altogether. Remote control vehicles, and now driverless cars, are changing the way high risk work is being conducted in the mining industry in particular. Adjustable workstations are an example of changes in the office environment that have been introduced to assist in managing ergonomic risks and strain/sprain injuries. Drones are being used in the electricity industry to inspect the condition of transmission towers and poles, eliminating the need for workers to climb these 15+ metre high structures.

Working remotely is another area where technological advances have improved the ability to complete work safely by allowing workers to regularly stay in touch and utilise devices that send reminders to “check-in”, with an automatic escalation process where this is not completed.



Access to key information and documentation is also achievable via electronic tablets that can be used online and offline, and GPS technology and satellite phones allow a worker to be contacted and traced in an emergency.

Circling back to Incident Management Systems, software providers now utilise smartphone Apps so workers can report a hazard, safety incident or conduct a Workplace Inspection on the spot. Managers have immediate visibility of results and corrective actions are tracked and escalated where not completed for improved accountability. These systems also provide a greater and more automated ability to display WHS performance and identify trends.

It's incredible to think about the technological advancements that have occurred over the last 20 years and what might be possible in the next 20. One thing is certain however – these advancements have contributed to significant improvements in work health and safety and have reduced risks and injuries to workers. The greatest challenge for organisations is deciding whether they will be innovators, early adopters, running with the majority or lagging behind the pack.

Bring on the next 20 years.

Please [contact QRMC](#) for more information.