

Safety in Design

Frequently asked questions

A new Safety in Design procedure has been developed to ensure that the design of our assets considers the safety for those that will construct and use them.

What is Safety in Design?

Safety in Design is a risk management process that integrates control measures early in the design process to eliminate or, if this is not reasonably practicable, minimise risks to health and safety throughout the life of the asset being designed.

When do you need to follow the Safety in Design procedure?

The procedure is to be used during the design phase of all projects involving the creation and modification of our assets. It applies to both permanent and temporary works.

As a designer, you must follow the risk management process described in the Safety in Design procedure or an alternative equivalent process that meets the intent of the *Work Health and Safety Act*.

Is a design safety review workshop required at both concept and detailed design stages?

We expect there to be a balance between the required effort and the benefit derived from the process. Therefore, for simple designs, a design safety review workshop would not be required at both concept and detailed design stages.

Designers should understand that Safety in Design is more than just holding a workshop, such as a HAZOP at a specific point in the design process. Considering the safety aspects of a design by adopting a risk management approach should be part of the entire design process.

When is a Safe Design Report required?

A Safe Design Report is only required for designs that have unusual or atypical features that present hazards and risks that are unique to the particular design.

The WHS Act requires that the designer transfer safety related information to those that will give effect to the design. This should include key information about identified hazards and action taken or required to control risks related to the design.

What are designers' duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act*?

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act*, designers must ensure that designs of structures, plant and substances are without risk, so far as reasonably practicable, to those that will construct, use or be exposed to them.

Designers must also give adequate information communicating any risks that may be inherent in the design.

What are project managers responsible for in relation to Safety in Design?

Project managers must provide designers with any information in relation to the hazards and risks at the site where the construction work is to be carried out.

Project managers are also required to consult with designers about how to ensure that health and safety risks arising from the design are eliminated or minimised during construction.

What is 'reasonably practicable'?

Deciding what is 'reasonably practicable' to protect people from harm requires taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring
- the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk
- knowledge about the hazard or risk
- ways of eliminating or minimising the risk
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk.

Do you need to follow the Codes of Practice issued by SafeWork NSW?

No, it is not mandatory to follow the Codes of Practice. SafeWork NSW issues Codes of Practice to provide practical guidance on how a person can achieve the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act and Regulation*.

However, Codes of Practice may be used in court to determine what is 'reasonably practicable' in the circumstances to which the code relates. It is recognised that equivalent or better ways of achieving the required work health and safety outcomes may be possible. For that reason, compliance with Codes of Practice is not mandatory providing that any other method used provides an equivalent or higher standard of work health and safety.

For further information, please send your query to standards@sydneywater.com.au.