

Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) contractor handbook

October 2013





Purpose of the handbook

This handbook has been prepared to outline Barwon Water's workplace health, safety and wellbeing expectations of contractors and their sub contractors.

It is important the information in this handbook is read prior to submitting a tender or quote to Barwon Water and the health, safety and wellbeing requirements are implemented before commencing work.

Distribution of handbook

A copy of the Barwon Water Contractor Health, Safety and Wellbeing Handbook will be provided to all contractors who are required to carry out work for Barwon Water or on its assets.

Objective

Barwon Water is committed to providing a safe working environment for all employees, contractors, customers and visitors and also minimising our impacts on the natural environment. To achieve this commitment Barwon Water expects contractors to ensure:

- Safety is given the highest priority with all work undertaken.
- Supervisors and senior managers lead by example, proactively driving HSW requirements.
- Compliance with all legislative requirements.
- Environmental impacts are avoided and minimised wherever possible.
- All contractors are supervised and suitably trained.
- At risk behavior and non compliance is identified and rectified.
- Plant, equipment and tools are in fit condition and suitable for use.
- The workplace is maintained in a clean and tidy condition.
- All incidents and unsafe acts are reported and corrective actions are completed promptly.

Before contractors start work

Before a contractor can begin work on any Barwon Water site, they must ensure certain requirements are met. The contractor must:

- Provide evidence of licences, insurances, plant registrations or any other documents as required.
- Submit a safety management plan in accordance with legislative requirements for contracts exceeding \$250,000.00.
- Submit safe work procedures, risk assessments and safe work method statements (SWMS) for review.
- Submit an environmental plan for review or otherwise incorporate environmental controls into HSW documentation.
- Attend a risk and planning workshop with the Barwon Water Responsible Officer.
- Ensure that all workers attend the Barwon Water induction as well as any site or project specific inductions.
- Inspect their workplace to ensure it is free from uncontrolled hazards.

Auditing

To help contractors meet these expectations and fulfill Barwon Water's legal obligations, contractors will be routinely audited.

Feedback from these audits will be provided to the contractor to assist in continually improve HSW performance and also meet their own regulatory requirements. Contractors will be required to participate in these audits and provide information as necessary.

Serious or repeated breaches of required HSW standards or legal obligations may result in the issue of a formal contract breach notification.

General HSW expectations

Asbestos

Barwon Water sites containing asbestos have been identified, assessed and controlled.

The Barwon Water asbestos register can be referenced for detailed information. Prior to working on or adjacent to asbestos material, authorisation must be sought from the Barwon Water Responsible Officer.

Asbestos may only be removed by a contractor with an Asbestos Removal License. Any work conducted on or with asbestos material must be carried out as per legislative requirements.

Carbon footprint

If specified in the contract, records of contract-related fuel use (including mobile plant and generators), electricity use and emissions must be kept and reported to Barwon Water as required.

Chemicals, hazardous substances and dangerous goods

All chemical substances are to be appropriately handled and stored to prevent spillage.

Contractors are to hold current Material Safety Data Sheets for all substances stored onsite and any chemicals used shall be the least hazardous available for the intended task. If regulations require spill kits, then they should be appropriately located and correctly stocked. Fuelling, oil changes and servicing of equipment will be conducted in such a way that fuel, waste, oil and grease is not spilt or dumped on the ground.

The contractor is solely responsible for the safe disposal of chemical substances.

Confined spaces

All work to be performed in a confined space must be performed in accordance with Australian Standard AS2865 Safe Work in a Confined Space and the WorkSafe Victoria Compliance Code – Confined Spaces 2008.

Contractors requesting to enter a Barwon Water controlled confined space must obtain a Confined Space Entry Application Form from the Barwon Water Responsible Officer at least three (3) days prior to entry.

Contractors shall maintain their own entry permits and make copies of these available to Barwon Water when requested.

Consultation and communication

Consultation is an essential part of managing workplace health and safety.

Communication arrangements between the contractor and its employees shall be in accordance with the Victorian OHS Regulations 2007 and may include toolbox talks, pre-start meetings, formal health and safety committees or a combination of these methods.

Danger and out of service tagging

'Danger' tags shall be used to ensure the safety of contractors/employees working on plant and equipment and prevent inadvertent use by unauthorised persons.

'Out of Service' tags shall be used to identify defective plant and equipment that requires servicing or repair. Where minor plant and equipment is tagged 'Out of Service' the plant or equipment is to be removed from service and placed in a quarantined area to prevent inadvertent use.

Diving

Any diving operation carried out by contractors on Barwon Water property or arranged by Barwon Water employees must have prior approval from the Barwon Water Diving Officer (Water Reclamation department).

Diving shall be carried out in accordance with AS 2299. These diving standards together with the Barwon Water diving procedure for working underwater outline the requirements for contractors engaged in underwater operations.

Electrical safety

All portable electrical equipment is to be tested and tagged by a licensed tester to Australian Standard AS3760: In service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment. Non-tagged equipment must not be used.

All extension leads are to be in good condition and only used up to lengths of 30 metres. Electrical leads are to be elevated above ground level where wet ground or other hazards exist. Residual current devices (earth leakage protectors) are to be used where required.

Emergency response

Contractors will be briefed on specific emergency requirements as part of the site specific induction provided before work commences.

On sites controlled by the contractor, emergency response and associated requirements will be the responsibility of contractor.

Environment

The contractor shall manage the worksite to minimise environmental impact.

Contractors are to manage environmental risks including flora, fauna, weed control and cultural heritage as per accepted management plans or as directed by Barwon Water. All legislative requirements and permit conditions are to be strictly adhered to.

No removal or disturbance of vegetation, wildlife or cultural heritage may occur without approval from Barwon Water along with any necessary permits. Areas deemed as 'no-go zones' may not be used in any way, including storage or stockpiling of materials or equipment.

Sites are to be reinstated to their previous condition to Barwon Water and the relevant land owner or land manager's satisfaction.



Excavation

When undertaking trenching or excavation work the contractor shall issue an excavation permit as well as perform the required WorkSafe notification.

All trenches and excavations that are to be accessed by any person must have a documented daily inspection and an associated SWMS for the work being performed.

All excavations over 1.5 meters are to be adequately benched, battered or shored or have some other means to prevent collapse.

All other requirements of the Trenching Code of Practice (1988) must be met.

Fatigue

As well as leading to long term health problems, fatigue can affect a person's capacity for working safely and making sound judgments. Where fatigue has been identified as a hazard through the risk assessment process a fatigue management plan shall be implemented.

Fire protection

The contractor and their employees are responsible for fire protection at the worksite in accordance with Australian Standard AS2444 and the Building Code of Australia. This includes the provision of fire fighting equipment and familiarity with the operation of this equipment.

Fire protection alarms, fixed installations and equipment such as pumps and water supplies shall not be shut down or altered without authorisation from the Barwon Water Responsible Officer.

Barwon Water has specific restrictions on works conducted during Total Fire Ban days and in areas deemed a high fire risk. Contractors are to adhere to all directions provided by the Responsible Officer in this matter.

First Aid

Each contracting company shall ensure first aid amenities are available and maintained in each of the worksites under their control. The number and type of first aid kits and first aid trained persons will depend on the number of staff and the level of risk posed by the work activities.

For high risk and/or remote workplaces a risk assessment shall be undertaken in accordance with the WorkSafe Compliance Code – First Aid in the Workplace.

At a minimum, at least one person in each work crew shall be senior first aid (Level 2) trained.

Hot work

Hot work includes any of the following work activities:

- All forms of welding.
- Oxy acetylene cutting.
- Grinding or cutting using abrasive tools.

The contractor shall use a hot work permit system for any work that has a potential for fire or explosion. Completed permits shall be retained and filed for reference.

Hot work shall not be undertaken on total fire ban days, except under a permit issued by the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) or County Fire Authority (CFA) and with the written authorisation of the Barwon Water Responsible Officer.

Consideration of other activities that could create a spark or an ignition source must be controlled particularly during the high fire danger period.

Housekeeping

Good housekeeping practices contribute to the prevention of injuries and have a positive impact on overall workplace health, safety and wellbeing. Contractors shall be responsible for ensuring that work areas within their control are maintained to a high standard with stairways, passages, emergency exits, fire fighting and safety equipment kept clear at all times.

Issue resolution

Contractors shall have in place a documented procedure for the resolution of workplace health and safety issues. This procedure shall be in accordance with Part 2.2 of the Victorian OHS Regulations 2007.

An issue resolution flow chart should be prominently displayed in site huts and amenities buildings.

Lifting devices

All lifting accessories (wire and chain slings, shackles etc.) shall be clearly marked with their Safe Working Load (SWL). Rigging equipment shall only be used for its intended purpose and all lifting gear shall be visibly marked in accordance with the relevant Australian standards. Such markings shall be legible throughout the working life of the equipment (i.e. showing load capacity).

Cranes must conform to the relevant legislation and Australian standards, all cranes undertaking work must have current crane safe certification (green sticker) and be registered with WorkSafe (where relevant).

All personnel required to operate any crane shall be trained and/or certified for the equipment and hold the appropriate competency certification for the type of crane being used.

Manual handling

Contractors shall identify, assess and control the risks associated with manual handling. Manual handling control measures may include task modification, mechanical handling devices or rotation of employees.

Controls for manual handling risks should be in accordance with WorkSafe Code of Practice – Manual Handling.

Mud, sediment and stormwater

Erosion and sediment control measures are to be installed to prevent off site discharges. Silt fences are to be checked regularly and no discharge to waterways or drains is to occur without approval from Barwon Water.

Vehicle tyres and tracks should be inspected for mud build-up to prevent deposit on roadways, with any deposits removed immediately.

Noise

The contractor shall meet EPA requirements and take all reasonable steps to minimise noise at the worksite. Equipment with a noise level that exceeds the regulatory action level of 85 dBA (Leq) 8-hour must be identified as a noise hazard and signage displayed.

If the noise level cannot be reduced by engineering controls then all personnel operating or working in proximity to that equipment must use hearing protection.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

PPE is to be individually issued (in most cases), maintained in good condition and fit for purpose in accordance with the relevant Australian standards. The PPE must be appropriate for the work environment and tasks being undertaken and all workers trained in its correct use.

Protective helmets are to accord with Australian standard AS1800, and are to be replaced at intervals no greater than three (3) years (or less where excessive wear and tear exists).

Additional PPE shall be in accordance with the SWMS or other risk assessment conducted for the activity to be undertaken. Contractors are responsible for supplying their personnel with the required PPE.

Plant and equipment

All plant and equipment is to be fit for the purpose for which it is intended. All operators are to have appropriate licences or competencies and risk assessments completed and made available on request.

All items of plant shall be inspected daily before first use and maintained in good condition. Any plant found to be not in a safe condition shall be removed from site and replaced.



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Public safety

Contractors shall exercise all due care for the health and safety of members of the public. This requirement includes full compliance with all relevant legislation codes of practice and/or Australian Standards.

Contractors shall ensure appropriate guards, barriers and notifications are in place to ensure risks to the public are controlled to an acceptable level. All machinery is to be left in a safe condition so as to not present a public hazard. No trenches or openings are to be left unattended and adequate measures put in place to prevent unauthorised access to the work site.

Reporting of hazards and incidents

The contractor must report to Barwon Water all hazards and incidents that occur on site. These may include medical treatment, lost time injuries, near miss/hit incidents, chemical spills environmental disturbance or pollution and reportable dangerous occurrences.

Incidents that result in injury or medical treatment must be notified within 24 hours to the Barwon Water Responsible Officer.

The contractor shall promptly investigate and attend to any legal requirements in respect to such injury or damage and fully cooperate with subsequent Barwon Water investigations.

Smoking

Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking areas with facilities for butt disposal.

Smoking is not permitted in any site office, amenities shed or vehicle and no smoking shall occur within 6 metres of any dangerous goods.

Smoking is not to take place in the vicinity of confined space work.

Traffic management

The contractor shall ensure appropriate management of traffic movement is in place. Where there is potential to impact public traffic, the contractor shall obtain the appropriate approvals from Vic Roads or the relevant local government agency. Traffic management plans and associated permits must be onsite for the duration of works and available for inspection at all times.

Waste management

All waste must be appropriately contained (e.g. bins) at all times and disposed of in accordance with EPA requirements. The waste management hierarchy (avoid, reuse, recycle) should be applied. Unless otherwise agreed, the contractor is responsible for collection and disposal of wastes to an appropriate off-site facility.

Working alone

Where possible, contractors should ensure that employees do not work alone in isolated areas. If a worker does need to perform his or her duties in isolation, the contractor shall provide means of communication and establish a way of contacting the employee regularly to ensure their wellbeing.

Working at height

Adequate protection against falls from height is to be provided for all persons who are required to work within 2 m of an edge where the potential for a fall from height greater than 2 m exists. This includes work on roofs, ledges, or adjacent to open pits.

Fall protection may be in the form of barricades, scaffolds or appropriate fall arrest systems.

All scaffolding equipment must conform to the requirements outlined in the respective legislation and AS1576: Scaffolding. Ladders may only be used as a means of access or egress and only to perform light work. All portable ladders used on site must comply with Australian Standard AS1892: Portable Ladders.

Workplace amenities

Amenities and facilities are integral to the health, safety and welfare of workers. Contractors are to provide adequate and hygienic amenities for on-site workers including subcontractors. This includes but is not limited to providing and maintaining toilet and washing facilities, shelter, storage areas, eating areas and drinking water.

Workplace inspections

Contractors shall routinely inspect their workplaces to ensure they are free from uncontrolled hazards and that their own HSW work procedures are being followed.

Copies of workplace inspection schedules and completed inspection forms shall be made available to the Barwon Water Responsible Officer when requested.

Contact us

Comments on this handbook and suggested improvements are welcomed.

Please address all feedback to:

- ✉ HSW Coordinator
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Barwon Water general enquiries

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