

Working on Telecommunication Towers

Safety@Optus – Hazard Standard



What you need to know

There are many differing types of telecommunications towers. That's why, if you are a Supplier to Optus, you must have robust risk management processes and strategies specifically targeted to undertake tower work.

In addition to the types of towers, the environments in which towers may be located can present hazards that are unique to each location. This must be a consideration in the planning stages prior to undertaking any work on a telecommunication tower.

All necessary site safety documentation related to tower work must be kept and submitted to Optus as part of the site final phase handover pack.

Planning your work

On most towers, Optus shares the tower with other carriers. To prevent any WHS issues, it is imperative as part of the end-to-end risk & hazard management of the work, as much information as possible is obtained from the site owner or site manager regarding :

- access to the site, inductions, site protocols , security, terrain, landowner, etc
- hazards inherent to the site or structure. This should extend to environmental factors
- Any planned work by other carriers or other contractors at the site
- Any RFSNA, EME – possible outage requirements etc to do the work
- Any specific design or build restrictions / permit to work or SWMS requirements

Legal Responsibilities

Work on Telecommunication Towers, as prescribed by the Commonwealth WHS Regulations 2011, is regulated by the several provisions such as working at heights, plant and structures, falling objects, falls, manual handling and electrical work. The Commonwealth has also developed several Codes in support of the regulations which can be found at [Safe Work Australia](#):

Use of this Standard

This Standard "at times" will need to be read and used in parallel with other WHS standards to ensure that all concurrent duty holders are aware of its WHS obligations and all Optus contractor requirements are being met.

The requirements listed in this standard will be used by Optus as part of the contractor audit assurance framework to verify the management of the WHS contractual and legislative obligations

Australian Standards & Industry Codes

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to be aware of licencing rules and have PTWs when working and have a documented a process of "where applicable" how it meets the relevant Australian codes and standards for working with electricity or installing and decommissioning electrical devices and products



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Safety@Optus – Contractor Requirements



Contractor Requirements

1. The Supplier must have a process of risk assessment to identify any type of hazards and the associated risks with working on a tower
2. Where it is identified, the Supplier must have a process to make all workers on site aware of the hazards and what the controls that are in place prior to the work commencing.
3. The control measures used to manage the different types of site or tower hazards must be clearly be communicated and consulted to all workers for input, then documented on the site-specific SWMS and the project risk register where applicable to other sites.
4. Where applicable and required, ensure that all structures, plant and equipment (e.g. towers, poles, cranes, man boxes, ladders vertical lifelines, safety mesh, access stairs, hydraulic EWP / EMI shielding), are installed, inspected, measured and in accordance with their inspection and testing frequencies, legal and manufacturers requirements.
5. Where applicable, conduct site inspections of works to ensure compliance with the control measures that have been put in place to ensure the safe systems of work are effective
6. Ensure persons are certified, licenced, trained and competent and fit for work before working on / climbing telecommunication towers.
7. A Supplier must be able to verify that any Emergency plans, entry and exit plans developed are by an appropriately trained certified personal and the site supervision of the tasks are performed by appropriately trained and where applicable "certified or licenced personal "
8. The Supplier is to ensure the Identification all Commonwealth, State, Territory and local statutory requirements for telecommunication tower work that any local Council or local authority permits that are required are on site and available upon request
9. There is to be accountable personal on site that can demonstrate the risk controls that are in place are fit for purpose and effective in preventing harm
10. The Supplier is to ensure work is not conducted on a live antenna, feeder system or transmitter (Note: except for approved maintenance and directional alignment which is normally undertaken from the rear of the antenna).
11. Ensure that at the end of completed work for any upgrade. Maintenance, installation of antennas or RF related equipment do not exceed any the regulatory radiation or RF emissions limits and all supporting records are updated for the site.
12. Any work carried out on the tower regarding structural integrity, antenna placement, change to RF emissions or general design or the "As Built" drawings , must be captured, recorded and site records updated so as available to any future workers attending site