

Working with Lasers

Safety@Optus – Hazard Standard



What you need to know

At Optus, the primary use of laser technology is related to the installation, activation, upgrade, repair and maintenance of Fibre Optic Communications "FOCs". There may be times when they are used to level, straighten or measure at an Optus work location.

There are classifications for lasers. Part of the classification describes the capabilities that a laser has and how it can cause injury to people. This classification rates from Class 1 lasers like laser printers etc to high powered Class 4 lasers used to cut steel.

In the Optus network, most fibre optic Communications systems are considered a Class 1 laser product because the laser emissions are completely enclosed, and there are low power levels being transmitted.

However, Optical amplifiers may be class 2, 3 or above when used individually or when used together for long haul FOC systems.

Planning your work

All those working with lasers must be trained and be aware of basic laser safety and how to read and apply the information provided on the warning labels.

That's is why, it is imperative to first understand the class of laser that might be required to be worked with, how exposure to laser light can occur. What the hazardous properties are and what exposure to the class of the laser light can do. It is only then that the correct risk controls can be implemented.

Manufacturers are required to label products with the class of laser with warning labels and direction for safe use. This can also provide guidance on the safe use of the laser

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 and Industry codes

It is the responsibility of the Contractor to be aware of "where applicable" how it meets relevant Australian codes and standards for working with lasers.



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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 associated risks when working with lasers
2. Where it is identified, the Supplier must have a process to make all workers on site aware that lasers are in use on the site and seek input as to what the controls that are in place prior to the work commencing.
3. The control measures used to manage the different types of lasers, must be documented on the site-specific SWMS and the project risk register if applicable to other sites. This must be communicated to all workers on site
4. All PPE (personal protective equipment) that is used as a part of a control measure must meet any required Australian standards if applicable and be fit for purpose.
5. All PPE must only be used for its intended purpose and in accordance with manufacturers recommendations
6. Where applicable, conduct 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
7. The Supplier is to ensure that any Council or local authority permits that are required are on site and available upon request
8. 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