

High Risk Tasks

Safety@Optus – Task Hazard Standard



What you need to know

The purpose of this document is to address the high-risk tasks / activities performed by Optus Suppliers / Contractors in the delivery of Telecommunications Services

High risk Task are called high risk as they are the tasks that have been statistically identified by Safe work Australia to have the highest potential to cause serious harm or death. There is a legal requirement to risk manage and control these tasks.

If an incident occurs and a person is injured , or worst-case scenario “killed” whilst performing one of these tasks, if it is found that there is a failure to risk manage or control these tasks, there are several possible penalties that can be imposed by a WHS regulatory body, or it may even constitute a criminal offence

Although high risk tasks are generally associated with construction work, high risk tasks are not exclusive to construction undertakings , and can be performed in the maintenance – upgrade, fault repair, expansion of the network, in Optus facilities retail stores and minor trades work at customer premises.

What are the legal obligations

If you are a contractor / Supplier you have an obligation to make sure that, as far as reasonably practicable, that your organisation or next tier subcontractors undertaking high-risk activities or task have a process to identify, risk manage and control all high-risk tasks and associated activities

It is the responsibility of the Contractor working on behalf of Optus to be aware of and have documented a process of how it meets the WHS legislation, the Optus hazard standards and relevant Australian standards applicable to the high task being undertaken.

Evidence

It will be the responsibility of the Contractor / site supervisor to provide evidence of how it meets the Optus and the WHS legal requirements when Optus performs its site inspections and undertakes WHS system audits

Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS)

It is a legislative requirement to provide a “SWMS” whenever any of the ‘high-risk task listed is carried out.

To meet this obligation, you will need to identify each person involved, in charge of, or any individual who has influence in the risk management and control of the work location. They must be consulted for input when preparing the SWMS.

The SWMS must be kept and readily accessible to any person engaged to carry out the high-risk task and for inspection until the high-risk tasks to which it relates is completed

The SWMS are to be provided back to Optus as part of the Job completion handover packs



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Following a notifiable incident, the SWMS should be kept for at least 2 years and available upon request to Optus and any regulatory Authority

A SWMS can also be kept electronically. Where a SWMS is revised, every version should be kept.

If you have been appointed by Optus as a Principal Contractor (PC) to undertake construction work.

It is the responsibility and legal obligation of the PC to review and approve all SWMS from any subcontractors

Communication & Consultation

Once prepared, you also have an obligation to make sure that the SWMS is communicated, signed as an acknowledgement of its content by all workers and the work is carried out in accordance with the SWMS

The same process of Consultation & Communication must be followed if the SWMS is reviewed for change

In addition, at times The Consultation process may not be confined to work site SWMS and may need to be expanded to discuss general site safety, worker inductions, and any associate risks that may be have an indirect connection with the performance of a high-risk task

Important Note

The Optus high risk task standards are designed to meet best practice safety standards for all high - risk works as defined by Commonwealth WHS Regulations 2017.

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

General information regarding high- risk tasks/activities can be found at
www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au

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Safety@Optus - Supplier Standards / requirements

To assist, Optus has created a suite of standards for all Contractors / Suppliers and relevant workers to acknowledge and reference. This is to ensure clarity of the Optus expectations and requirements when undertaking work that requires performing a high-risk task.

The suite of Optus high risk task Hazard Standards “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 legislative requirements are being met

If there is any inconsistency or ambiguity between the Optus Standard (Work Health & Safety), and the WHS Laws, the WHS Laws will prevail.

High risk tasks listed below have been amended to be specific in their application to Optus works. Optus does not Construct Tunnels, dive or engage in the use of explosives

Work at Heights - work involving a risk of a person falling two metres or more or the use of ladders or other platforms that there is a risk of a fall from one level to another

Work involving demolition, pull down or redundancy of Optus structures that are load bearing or an element of a structure that is related to the physical integrity

Working with Asbestos - involving removing or disturbing asbestos

Temporary Works - Alteration to a structure that requires the structure to be temporarily supported to prevent its collapse – This also extends to Optus work locations that require temporary solutions to keep Communication services connected.

Traffic Management - Work on or adjacent to roads or railways that are in use other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians

Mobile Plant - Work on a site where mobile plant is in use or there is movement of powered mobile plant at the site

Working in a Confined Space – in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere with restricted entry and exit access

Excavations and Directional Drilling – The Safety @ Optus hazard standard extends these to underground directional drilling - including work on or near pressurised gas pipes (including utility providers distribution infrastructure)

Working with Hazardous Substances on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines or near pressurised gas mains or piping

Working with Electricity – on or near energised electrical installations and lines whether overhead or underground or fixed within a structure

Working in a Hazardous environment – Areas of artificial extremes of temperature or over or adjacent to water or other liquids if there is a risk of drowning

Work on Telecommunications Towers

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Optus Hazard Requirements

1. The Contractor must have a process to identify all High-Risk tasks and hazards associated with the activities of performing a high-risk task. This must have an end-to-end approach to the any risk assessment prior to the work being undertaken
2. This extends to a high-level generic control in the physical design , work design and planning stage of the work or contained in the Statement of work, contract undertaking and must be documented in a risk register
3. All Contractors or Suppliers who have Supplier agreements or contracts with Optus which require the performance of a high-risk activities or task, must provide a Safety Management plan relevant to the contract undertaking, detailing the risk management strategy / controls of high risk works. The length of the management plan must be appropriate to type or length of the contract
4. The plan must include how the risk management strategy for high-risk work is brought to life / and implemented at the work location/ site level.
5. The Contractor / Supplier must be able to demonstrate / provide evidence of safe design principles and the use of the "HIRAC" methodology to eliminate high risk tasks where possible, and if can't be eliminated, how it use the hierarchy of control to establish the layers of risk control and the most effective management of risk. This must extend to whatever the type of environment the work location is in.
6. Responsibilities and authorities for managing and supervising construction, demolition or any other Supply / contract agreement, such as facilities maintenance or cleaning where high tasks works are assigned, the relevant persons responsible must be identified (e.g. principal contractor, supervisors, team leaders, project managers etc).
7. If you have been engaged to perform construction work and formerly appointed in writing as a Principal Contractor (PC), the supplier / contractor must articulate in any Safety Management Plans provided their understanding of PC legislative obligations and duty owed to Optus and any next tier subcontractors engaged to undertake work on the behalf of Optus
8. Information from any site risk assessment is to incorporated to create clear and understandable safe systems of work for the site and a site-specific SWMS (Safe Work Method Statement)
9. The Contractor / Supplier must have, and be able to demonstrate a process of it how it consults with workers (**including sites with multiple PCBUs or work crews**) and communicates all safety requirements including the content of SWMS and controls to all workers – A site specific SWMS is to be available at all sites where high-risk tasks are being performed on the behalf of Optus and acknowledges the use of Mobile plant by another contractor (sites with multiple PCBUs) or work crews
10. All contractors / Suppliers who undertake or engage next tier subcontractors to perform high risk tasks must have site specific and task specific emergency plans and be part of the site consultive and communication mechanisms