



# TRAUMATIC EVENTS OR MATERIALS

## RISK MANAGEMENT

*Risk Management involves identifying potential risks, assessing their likelihood and impact, and developing strategies to mitigate or control them. It is a proactive process that seeks to prevent risks from occurring or minimise their impact if they do occur.*

No person should be injured in their workplace, including psychological injury. To meet their duties to ensure health and safety, employers must identify and eliminate or minimise psychosocial risks so far as is reasonably practicable. How long (duration), how often (frequency) and how significantly (severity) workers are exposed to psychosocial hazards impacts the level of risks. Hazards interacting or combining with each other may also impact this. Further guidance on the risk management process is available in the Code of Practice: [How to manage work health and safety risks](#). For more information on the risk management process for psychosocial hazards, please view [Section 2 of the Model Code of Practice](#).

Mind Your Head advocates for *prevention* – that is, identifying risk, implementing or changing systems to prevent worker harm or injury *before it occurs*.

### Examples of Risk Management Strategies for Traumatic Events and Materials include:

- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify potential traumatic events or materials that may impact the organisation and its employees. Evaluate the likelihood and severity of each risk.
- **Training and Education:** Provide employees with training programs and educational resources to increase their awareness and knowledge about traumatic events, their potential impacts, and strategies for coping and resilience.
- **Policies and Procedures:** Develop and implement clear policies and procedures that outline how traumatic events or materials should be reported, managed, and responded to within the organisation. Include guidelines for providing support to affected employees.
- **Emergency Response Planning:** Establish and regularly update an emergency response plan that includes protocols for managing traumatic events. Ensure that employees are trained in emergency procedures and that there are designated individuals responsible for coordinating responses.
- **Psychosocial Support:** Provide access to mental health resources, such as employee assistance programs and similar services, or trauma-informed care, to support employees before, during, and after traumatic events.



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- **Communication and Information Sharing:** Establish effective communication channels to share information, updates, and resources related to traumatic events or materials. Ensure that employees have access to accurate and timely information.
- **Peer Support and Debriefing:** Facilitate peer support programs or support groups where employees can share their experiences, provide emotional support, and engage in debriefing sessions to process traumatic events.

### WAYS TO MANAGE RISKS

**Consult workers and HSRs.** Establish Health and Safety Committees with at least 50% representation from workers. Encourage feedback, especially on any changes.

**Consider how long, how often and how severely workers are exposed to hazards.** The longer, more often and worse the low job control, the higher the risk that workers may be harmed.

**Utilise surveys and tools to assess psychosocial risks** in the workplace, particularly for businesses with over 20 employees.

**Establish a system for workers to report their concerns,** while ensuring anonymity and treating their concerns with respect and seriousness to encourage reporting.

**Observe work and behaviours,** such as prolonged work duration, excessive paperwork, or customer frustration, which may indicate low job control.

**Review available information,** including employee retention, incident reports, complaints, time-off records, injuries, incidents, and workers' compensation to identify potential hazards.

**Identify other hazards present and evaluate how they may interact or combine to create new, heightened risks.** For instance, low job control could pose a greater risk in workplaces with high job demands if workers are unable to take breaks or switch tasks to manage fatigue. Finally, consider the duration, frequency, and severity of workers' exposure to hazards, as prolonged and severe exposure to low job control could increase the risk of harm.