



REMOTE OR ISOLATED WORK

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 Remote of Isolate Work include:

1. **Risk Assessment:** Conduct thorough risk assessments specific to remote or isolated work environments to identify potential hazards and vulnerabilities.
2. **Policies and Procedures:** Develop and implement clear policies and procedures that address the unique risks associated with remote or isolated work, including guidelines for communication, emergency response, and work-life balance.
3. **Training and Education:** Provide comprehensive training to remote workers on safety protocols, emergency procedures, health and well-being, and remote work best practices.
4. **Communication Systems:** Establish reliable communication systems that enable real-time communication between remote workers and their supervisors or colleagues. This may include the use of mobile devices, video conferencing, and collaboration platforms.
5. **Emergency Response Plan:** Develop and communicate an emergency response plan specifically tailored to remote or isolated work scenarios. Ensure workers are aware of emergency contacts, procedures, and how to access assistance in case of emergencies.



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6. **Work Schedule and Breaks:** Encourage remote workers to establish and maintain a healthy work-life balance by setting clear work schedules, promoting regular breaks, and encouraging time off to prevent burnout and promote well-being.
7. **Technology and Equipment:** Provide remote workers with reliable and appropriate technology, equipment, and tools to ensure they can perform their tasks safely and efficiently. Regular maintenance and support for remote equipment should be provided.
8. **Mental Health Support:** Implement programs and resources to support the mental health and well-being of remote workers, including access to counselling services, employee assistance programs, and virtual activities.
9. **Relocate the work:** Consider moving the work to a more suitable location to reduce the risks associated with remote or isolated environments.
10. **Ensure workers are physically and mentally fit to perform the work:** Assess and verify that workers are in good physical and mental condition to safely and effectively carry out their tasks in remote or isolated settings.
11. **Provide appropriate training about working in remote or isolated environments:** Offer comprehensive training programs that equip workers with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate and address the unique challenges of remote or isolated work.
12. **Avoid riskier times of the day,** such as excessive heat, cold, storms, and when the circadian rhythm wants the body to sleep,. Schedule work to minimize exposure to hazardous conditions or times when workers may be more susceptible to fatigue or adverse weather conditions.

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 who may find the People at Work assessment tool beneficial.

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.



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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.