

# Agency WHS Workplace Inspection

## Introduction

This document sets out work health and safety (WHS) guidelines for Participating Agencies (the Agency/s) of the Across Government Facilities Management Arrangements (AGFMA) to undertake Workplace Inspections for the identification of hazards and taking appropriate action to correct, rectify and prevent them. Workplace inspections are an essential tool used to ensure a safe workplace and a requirement under the [Work Health and Safety Act 2012](#) ('WHS Act').

## Workplace Inspections

A Workplace Inspection is essentially an assessment of the workplace, or item of plant / equipment, for the purpose of identifying unsafe conditions, hazards and non-compliance with legislation, procedures / permits, conditions / work processes or operational safety related matters. Inspections should also include any activities undertaken at the time in a particular area, for example, if contracted workers are performing work at a Designated Location, the Agency representative may at their discretion, include that work in the scope of the inspection.

As part of its framework of WHS activities, an Agency should develop and maintain a process and schedule for undertaking Workplace Inspections at each of its Designated Location/s. A well-managed inspection program will support an Agency to:

- Identify potential WHS risks and/or hazards.
- Identify defects in plant/equipment.
- Identify inadequate and/or non-compliant work practices.
- Identify the effects of changes, for example implemented action for previous inspection findings
- Comply with relevant WHS legislation and standards.
- Conduct reviews of implemented risk control measures for continuous improvement.
- Show commitment to WHS practices through participation.

## Type and Frequency of Inspections

### Regulatory Inspections

There are a number of Workplace Inspections which are required to be conducted as part of an Agency's compliance with legislative and regulatory obligations. Equipment subject to a regulatory inspection may present a higher risk of harm to Agency personnel, assets and operations if not properly inspected and maintained. Regulatory Inspections include, but are not limited to:

- Electrical testing and residual current devices (RCD).
- Fire Equipment (suppression systems, alarms, extinguishers, hose reels, etc.).
- Pressure vessels.
- Lifting equipment.
- Working at heights equipment.
- Gas cylinders.

- Specialist medical and first aid equipment (first aid kits, rooms, vehicles, etc.).

The regulatory inspections listed above may, at the discretion of the Agency, include contracted workers and their equipment. For example, if an inspection is undertaken for electrical testing and tag compliance, the equipment used by the contracted worker may be included in the scope of the Workplace Inspection.

### **Scheduled Inspections**

The type and frequency of Workplace Inspections depends on the Agency's operation/s and the level of risks associated with their operation/s. Scheduled inspections include, but are not limited to:

- Daily e.g. pre start inspection; inspection of contractor work.
- Weekly e.g. general housekeeping.
- Monthly e.g. office floor inspection; emergency eye wash.
- Quarterly e.g. emergency equipment; electrical test and tag.

The examples of Regulatory and Scheduled Inspections are not exhaustive and are provided as a guide only. In consultation with Agency workers and the Facilities Management Service Provider (FMSP), Agencies must undertake to identify all potential areas and/or items which should be included in its Workplace Inspection program and determine the appropriate inspection frequencies, giving consideration to level of risk and regulatory requirements.

## **Conducting Workplace Inspections**

Persons taking part in Workplace Inspections must be appropriately trained and/or qualified and have an understanding of basic risk management principles (hazard identification and risk management). The inspection team should comprise of at least two to three Agency Workers, for example:

- Manager / Supervisor.
- Health and safety representative (HSR), or equivalent.
- An Agency representative who is impartial to the Designated Site and who can provide an objective and unbiased perspective.

When conducting a Workplace Inspection, it is beneficial to have "fresh eyes" in the inspection team. Someone that is new or unfamiliar with the Designated Location is more likely to identify new/potential hazards and/or risks. The inspection team should take time to review the inspection checklist prior to commencing the inspection to ensure there is a clear understanding of what is being inspected.

All Workplace Inspections should include a review of prior inspection reports to monitor re-occurring hazards / risks, or issues which have not been rectified.

## **Inspection Reporting and Monitoring**

At the conclusion of a Workplace Inspection the documented hazards must be recorded in the agency's Hazard and Incident Reporting System.

Concurrently, Agencies are encouraged to review their risk register to ensure new risks are added, existing risks are updated where necessary and corrective actions assigned to address the identified areas of concern are documented. Regular monitoring of corrective actions should be undertaken to ensure actions are addressed and closed out within prescribed time frames.

## Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Participating Agency Managers/Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and maintain a schedule of Workplace Inspections; and undertake inspections in accordance with the schedule.</li> <li>• Ensure Workers, including contracted workers, who undertake Workplace Inspections are appropriately qualified and/or trained.</li> <li>• As required, discuss/notify the FMSP during Agency Focus Group Meeting.</li> </ul>
Agency Workers who undertake inspections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake workplace inspections as required by the Workplace Inspection schedule, using appropriate tools (forms, checklists) to document findings</li> <li>• Engage with affected or interested parties during the inspection</li> <li>• Record identified hazards into the agency's Hazard and Incident Reporting System</li> </ul>
Facility Management Service Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up with Agency during Agency Focus Group Meeting.</li> </ul>
Contracted Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperate as required for the undertaking of all Workplace Inspections.</li> <li>• Ensure qualifications and licences are current at time of undertaking an inspection</li> </ul>