

Working on or near water

Site: Any	Date:		
Main work activities: Any work activity on or in or near water – where there are hazards and risks as identified below and these are <u>not covered by a more specific risk assessment</u>			
Maximum number of people exposed: Any (typically 2 or 3) Category, (skilled, visitor, trainee etc.): Any (including staff, casual staff, volunteers and others) Age range: All (additional/alternative risk assessment for young persons and children) Frequency and duration of exposure: Up to daily			
Hazards/risks identified: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drowning 2. Hypothermia 3. Other injury associated with working in or near water including e.g. prolonged exposure to wet, uneven/unstable ground, hidden hazards 4. Ill-health e.g. leptospirosis, Weil’s disease, tetanus or other infection from contaminated sources and exposure to irritants such as toxic plants <p><i>* Other generic risk assessments may also be relevant to working near water and should also be considered. Where more specific hazards/risks are identified a specific risk assessment should be completed, using this assessment as a starting point</i></p>			
Current action taken to reduce the risk (if any): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff required to work (or supervise work) on or near water are suitably trained and/or qualified, aware of the risks and of the precautions to be taken 2. Any worksite near or on water is assessed (by a suitably competent person) each time before work commences. Work in deep or fast-flowing water is avoided. Account is taken of weather forecasts and the likelihood of changing conditions. Safe access and egress routes are identified 3. All those working on or near water are provided with the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) including suitable protective clothing and footwear and lifesaving equipment including buoyancy aids/lifejackets and rescue equipment as necessary 4. Workers who regularly/routinely work near water may require additional vaccinations (seek further advice). Cover any cuts/abrasions with waterproof dressings prior to work. Wash hands following work and before any refreshment breaks. 5. Lone work is not allowed on or near water where a significant risk exists. All workers know how and where to get assistance if required <p>Risk assessment (taking account of existing controls): <u>Delete as appropriate (see notes overleaf)</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A serious risk remains requiring immediate action as detailed below 2. A significant risk remains and will be further dealt with as detailed below 3. This is considered a low/acceptable risk that is currently sufficiently well controlled 			
Agreed new/additional control measures:	When	Who	Done

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Where ever possible you should involve your team in the risk assessment and gain their commitment to control measures.

General Guidance

Notes on risk assessment and completion of this form

NB This is a generic risk assessment for guidance only. Further or different controls may be necessary for specific individuals and jobs. This assessment should be modified and personalised accordingly.

1. This form should be used to specify the controls that are in place to deal with any identified hazard where some significant risk of harm/damage or loss is identified.
2. A judgement of significant risk may be made through experience of previous incidents, official guidance on risks associated with certain activities or through individual expertise and advice.
3. A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm/damage or loss. Examples include: electricity, vehicles, anything very hot or very cold, any sharp or pointed instrument or object, something very heavy/awkward that must be moved, something toxic or caustic, flammable or dangerous substances.
4. The risk calculation is a subjective process to determine whether those with responsibility are satisfied that the controls in place, with respect to a particular hazard, are sufficient to avoid an incident or to make an incident sufficiently unlikely. In certain cases reference to statutory requirements may be necessary.
5. Those carrying out the risk assessment should be competent to do so. Competence is the ability to profile the risks in operational activities and then apply the right measures to control and manage those risks. In case of doubt, advice should be sought from the Safety Officer or others as appropriate.

Specific Guidance – Work on or near water (significant risk of immersion/drowning/injury or health-hazard)

Risk of drowning

Accidental drowning can usually be linked to one or more of the following factors

- failure to provide personal buoyancy equipment
- failure of buoyancy equipment to operate correctly
- disregard or misjudgement of a hazard
- lack of supervision, especially of the young
- inability to cope once a problem arises
- the absence of rescuers and rescue equipment
- failure to take account of weather forecasts

Falling unexpectedly, fully clothed into cold water, and trying to swim or co-operate with rescuers, is often extremely difficult. Even strong swimmers may experience problems.

Personal buoyancy aids and public rescue equipment (PRE)

Where there is a risk of falling into the water and drowning, it is essential to provide sufficient buoyancy to keep the person safely afloat.

The choice of buoyancy aids and/or PRE is complex. If you think you may need this type of equipment contact the OSHA for further advice.

If in doubt seek further advice from your Line Manager or OSHA