



Safe work method statement for demolition work

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Sample safe work method statement demolition work

A safe work method statement (SWMS) must be prepared by the persons conducting businesses or undertakings (PCBUs) for any identified high risk construction work (HRCW) in relation to all construction work, irrespective of the cost of that work.

A PCBU must eliminate or, where it is not reasonably practicable, control the risks associated with 'construction work' in line with the 'hierarchy of controls'. A PCBU must monitor and, where required, review these risk control measures, especially when workplace specific circumstances change. The SWMS documents the risk control measures that will be implemented for any identified HRCW, and is required to be prepared before HRCW starts.

This example SWMS is for general demolition work and has been developed to assist PCBUs to meet their responsibilities, as required by part 6.3, division 2, *High risk construction work – safe work method statements* required for in the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* (WHS Regulation).

PCBUs can use this as a general example, but would need to adapt this to be workplace specific.

Recommended steps for completing a safe work method statement

Consult with relevant workers, contractors and health and safety representatives (HSRs) about the tasks, the HRCW involved and the associated hazards, risks and controls.

In the 'Task' column, list in sequence what basic steps will be undertaken for the work.

Under 'What high risk construction work does this task involve?', detail the relevant hazard number(s) relating to the HRCW involved with that task.

- If a task does not involve any HRCW, write 'N/A' in this column. It is not then compulsory to outline the hazards, risks and control measures for that particular task.

Under 'What are the hazards and the risks?', list the hazards and risks relating to the identified HRCW. Under 'What are the control measures?', identify the appropriate control measure(s) by working through the hierarchy of controls (see below).

- It is important that you are able to justify why the selected measure offers the highest reasonably practicable risk control.

Hierarchy of controls

Eliminate any risk to health or safety associated with construction work by removing the hazard – eg stop using a hazardous chemical.

Minimise the risk to health or safety by using any one, or any combination, of the following controls:

- Substitute the hazard – eg using a new activity, procedure, item of plant, process or chemical.
- Isolate persons from the hazard – eg barriers, fencing or guardrails.
- Use engineering controls – eg mechanical or electrical devices.

Use administrative controls – eg changing the way the work is done.

Provide personal protective equipment (PPE) – eg safety spectacles, ear muffs/plugs or hard hats.

Safe work method statement compliance (information, monitoring and review)

- Brief each team member on this SWMS before commencing work. Ensure the team knows work is to stop if the SWMS is not followed.
- Observe the work being carried out and monitor compliance with the SWMS. Review risk controls regularly:
 - before a change occurs to the work itself, the system of work or the work location
 - if a new hazard associated with the work is identified

- when new or additional information about the hazard becomes available
- when a notifiable incident occurs in relation to the work
- when risk controls are inadequate or the SWMS is not being followed.
- In all of the above situations, stop the work, review the SWMS, adjust as required and re-brief the team.
- Retain all versions of the SWMS in a readily available location for the duration of the HRCW and for at least two years after a notifiable incident occurs.

Company name: ABC Demolition [ABN] 123 Mortar Street, Standard Course, ACT 2600 Phone: (02) 1234 5678	Principal contractor: XYZ Contracting Services 8910 Management Road, Projectville, ACT 2666 Phone: (02) 9876 5432
Work activity: Demolition work – not workplace specific	Work location: Potters Hut, Brick Street, Pottery, ACT 2600
Works manager: Fred Bloggs	Contact phone: 0400 111 111

Hazard number	High risk construction work	Yes
1	Involves a risk of a person falling more than two metres	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Involves demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Involves, or is likely to involve, the disturbance of asbestos	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Involves structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Is carried out in or near a confined space	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Is carried out in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres or is carried out in or near a tunnel	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Involves the use of explosives	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Is carried out on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping, chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines or energised electrical installations or services	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Is carried out in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Involves tilt-up or precast concrete	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Is carried out on, in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Is carried out in an area at a workplace in which there is any movement of powered mobile plant	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Is carried out in an area in which there are artificial extremes of temperature	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Is carried out in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Involves diving work	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Task	What high risk construction work does this task involve?	What are the hazards and the risks?	What are the control measures?
1	Delivery of plant	Movement of powered mobile plant.	Workers and others being struck by powered mobile plant including delivery vehicle and forklift used for unloading.	Prepare and implement workplace traffic management plan and make available to workers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exclusion zone for mobile plant to be clearly identified (signage and barricades as per site plan) and controlled during vehicle loading/unloading operations.
		Work in or adjacent to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor that is in use by traffic other than pedestrians.	Workers and others being struck by vehicles in adjacent road or traffic corridor.	Dedicated, trained road traffic controller(s) to direct traffic entering and leaving site and control traffic (pedestrian and vehicle) on adjacent pedestrian footpaths and roadways. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using portable traffic signals and/or temporary safety barriers to direct/control traffic flow as required.
			Vehicles in adjacent road or traffic corridor being struck by falling objects.	Plant delivery vehicle to be unloaded on-site (not from public roadway).
2	Demolishing the building or structure	Movement of powered mobile plant.	Workers and others being struck by powered mobile plant.	Prepare and implement workplace traffic management plan and make available to worker. Establish exclusion zones and keep unauthorised people outside of potential collapse zones and areas affected by rebounding material. Install overhead protective structure where work is adjacent to public.
			Workers and others being struck by vehicles in adjacent road or traffic corridor.	Systematic and progressive demolition of structure starting from the top. The demolition procedure is prepared and is appropriate for the demolition method to be used. The procedure should be specific for the site and sequential starting from top of structure.
		Involves demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to the physical integrity of the structure.	Workers and others injured by structural collapse.	Temporary braces, propping, shoring or guys may need to be added to ensure that stability of the structure is maintained so as to prevent the unexpected collapse of part or all the structure. A wall is not to be permitted to stand unless it is effectively supported against collapse. This includes checking whether the wall to be demolished is providing support for other walls.

Task	What high risk construction work does this task involve?	What are the hazards and the risks?	What are the control measures?	
Demolishing the building or structure (continued)	Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse.		<p>Where demolition work is undertaken on a suspended concrete slab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prepare and implement a sequential demolition plan specific to the site and approved by a competent structural engineer. Specifically, the plan should consider the rate of demolition and outline the load capacity limits of floors, ramps or other suspended slabs. If temporary supports are required, their specification and positioning should clearly be shown in the plan • consider the method for moving plant from floor to floor. If using ramps, the loads on the structure should be verified. In particular, the ramp's specifications, location and the placement of temporary supports should be documented in the demolition procedure • consider the means for clearing rubble from floors or other suspended slabs to prevent a build-up of rubble in excess of that specified in the demolition plan • the installation of temporary supports must be according to manufacturer's instructions and the installation of their positioning must be according to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ specifications in the demolition procedure ○ instructions on when to remove rubble to prevent slabs being overloaded ○ instructions on where a ramp is to be used and whether it needs temporary supports ○ the prescribed distances between machines when they're located on slabs. 	
	Demolition involving the use of explosives.	Workers and others being struck by debris.	Only a licensed competent person must be engaged to undertake demolition work involving explosives and the development of a blast management plan. They must also be responsible for all aspects of the use of explosives in the demolition. WorkCover NSW must be notified prior to their use.	
	Demolition carried out in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere.	Exposure to hazardous materials in structure.		<p>All areas of the workplace, including basements, cellars, vaults and waste dumps, should be examined to determine whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are any items which could be a fire and explosion risk • any previous use of the site might cause a risk because of the nature of and/or decomposition of materials • there are any toxic, radioactive or other hazardous chemicals present. <p>Any hazardous materials, including explosives, should be clearly identified. Refer to the chemical's safety data sheet (SDS) or the label of the chemical's container.</p>
		Exposure to asbestos containing material (ACM).		Where ACM is identified, stop the work activity and inform the occupier/owner of the premises or PCBU with management and control. A licensed asbestos removal contractor may be required to remove ACM.
		Workers and others struck by debris from explosion.		
		Workers and others burnt by fire.		

Task	What high risk construction work does this task involve?	What are the hazards and the risks?	What are the control measures?
Demolishing the building or structure (continued)	Demolition carried out in or near a confined space.	Workers and others affected by hot environment – eg heat stroke and dehydration.	<p>Where work is being undertaken in a confined space, do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete a written risk assessment that details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ whether the work can be done without the need to enter the confined space ○ the nature of the confined space ○ hazards regarding the concentration of oxygen or the concentration of airborne contaminants ○ the work to be undertaken and the method of working ○ the type of emergency procedures. ● Prepare a confined space entry permit and issue it to the worker entering the area. ● Put signage, a communication system and emergency procedures in place. ● Ensure that trained and competent workers use PPE. ● Ensure that there are specific controls for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ plant and services ○ atmosphere ○ flammable gases and vapours ○ fire and explosion.
	Demolition carried out in an area in which there are artificial extremes of temperature.	Workers and others affected by cold or hot environment – eg frost bite.	Monitor thermal comfort level. Provide UV protection (sunscreen and long sleeve shirts). Ensure regular rest breaks and supply of drinking water. Shorten work periods and/or cease work in extreme cold/hot temperatures.
	Demolition carried out in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning.	Workers and others at risk of drowning.	All drowning hazards such as water filled open penetrations and excavations must be fenced or securely covered to prevent entry. Powered mobile plant and materials are not to be operated or stored within 2 metres of an open trench.
	Demolition that involves diving work.	Workers and others being exposed to rapid depressurisation.	A written risk assessment must be conducted by a competent person before diving work is carried out. Diving work must be undertaken and supervised by trained and competent divers, as per a diving plan, and a diving log must be kept.

Task	What high risk construction work does this task involve?	What are the hazards and the risks?	What are the control measures?
Demolishing the building or structure (continued)	Movement of powered mobile plant.	Being struck by powered mobile plant.	<p>Prepare and implement workplace traffic management plan and make available to workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> exclusion zone for mobile plant to be clearly identified (signage and barricades as per site plan) and controlled during vehicle loading/unloading operations. dedicated, trained road traffic controller(s) to direct traffic entering and leaving site and control traffic (pedestrian and vehicle) on adjacent pedestrian footpaths and roadways. This includes: the use portable traffic signals and/or temporary safety barriers to direct/control traffic flow as required. <p>Plant delivery vehicle to be unloaded on-site (not from public roadway).</p> <p>Powered mobile plant and materials are not to be operated or stored within 2 metres of an open trench.</p>
	Demolition work that is carried out near a trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres.	Falls into excavations.	All open penetrations must be fenced or securely covered.
	Demolition work carried out on or near: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pressurised gas distribution mains or piping chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines energised electrical installations or services. 	Coming into contact with essential services.	<p>All electric, gas, water, sewer, steam and other service lines not required in the demolition process should be shut off, capped or otherwise controlled at, or outside, the building line before demolition work is started. Notify utility agency in advance and obtain approval to shut down. Any service retained for the demolition work should be adequately protected as required by the relevant authority – eg the protection of overhead electric lines.</p> <p>Obtain current information on the services prior to commencing work and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have regard for the information keep the information readily available for inspection under the WHS Act make the information available to any principal contractor and subcontractors retain the information until the excavation is completed or, if there is a notifiable incident relating to the excavation, two years after the incident occurs. <p>The available information about existing underground essential services may not be accurate. Therefore, it is important that demolition methods include an initial examination of the area to be demolished.</p>

	Task	What high risk construction work does this task involve?	What are the hazards and the risks?	What are the control measures?
	Demolishing the building or structure (continued)	Demolition work carried out at more than 2 metres.	<p>Workers falling from height.</p> <p>Falls from heights from unsecured ladders.</p> <p>Tools and materials falling from heights while not secured to person conducting the work.</p> <p>Fragile/brittle roofs.</p>	<p>Workers do not work from the top of a structure that is being demolished.</p> <p>For demolition work activity where there is a risk of a person or object falling less than 2 metres, use fully decked heavy duty frame trestle scaffolds, with bay lengths of 1.8 metres or less.</p> <p>For demolition work activity where there is a risk of a person or object falling greater than 2 metres, use heavy duty modular scaffolds with brick-guards.</p> <p>Scaffolds from which a person or object can fall more than 4 metres must be constructed and certified by a licensed scaffolder.</p> <p>For all scaffolds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • platforms are not to be loaded with more than 100 bricks per bay (or 400kg of blocks) • no scaffold alterations are to be undertaken except by a licensed scaffolder • access to scaffold platforms is to be via stairs or ladder towers. <p>Ensure ladders are secured top and bottom before accessing to work area.</p> <p>Secure tools and material while on ladders.</p> <p>Before working on the roof, it should be inspected to determine whether it is structurally sound. This includes determining whether it is made of any brittle material and whether it is fragile in certain areas.</p>
		Construction work that is carried out on or near energised electrical installations or services.	<p>Workers coming in contact with and/or receiving electric shock from overhead electric lines.</p> <p>Plant/equipment contacting overhead electric lines.</p>	The exclusion zones and approach distances to overhead electric lines at the locations and distances specified on the demolition plan are to be clearly identifiable and enforced by a dedicated controller.
3	Work completion	<p>Work carried out at more than 2 metres in height.</p> <p>Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse.</p>	Injuries to public from unauthorised access to workplace – eg falls from heights greater than 2 metres, structural collapse.	<p>All scaffolding and site fencing is secure and serviceable.</p> <p>All entries and exits must be locked at the end of each day.</p> <p>Emergency contact details to be in prominent place at workplace.</p>

Have workers been consulted about the SWMS?			
Person responsible for ensuring compliance with SWMS:		Date SWMS provided to principal contractor:	
Person(s) responsible for reviewing the SWMS:		Last SWMS review date:	
Signature:			
Worker's name:		Date received:	
Signature:			
Worker's name:		Date received:	
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