With funding supplied by the NSW WorkCover Authority, this Guide has been created to provide Retail Butchers with an information tool for assistance in the understanding and implementation of Occupational Health and Safety Risk Management in their workplace.

Risk Management is a process consisting of well-defined steps which, when taken in sequence, support better decision making by contributing to a greater insight into risks and their impacts. It is as much about identifying opportunities as it is about avoiding losses. By adopting effective Risk Management techniques you can help to improve safety, quality and business performance in your company.

There are many benefits in implementing Risk Management procedures including more effective strategic planning, better cost control, increased knowledge and understanding of exposure to risk and strengthening culture for continued improvement.

Current legislation has made CEOs, directors and managers increasingly become personally accountable for workplace injuries. Therefore there is a need for a strategy that assures they understand the implications and risks associated with all activities in their establishment.

We hope that this publication assists Retail Butchers to follow that path.

Kevin Cottrill  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Meat Industry Council

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- Peter Hopkins - Finance & Administration Manager
- Michele Jenner - Member Services Officer
- Craig Wright - Member Services Officer
- Jacqueline Baptista - Member Services Officer

**Retail Butchers**

- Zoran Petrovic - A J. Bush & Sons (Retail), Bondi Junction
- Peter Hummerston - Hummerston's Meats, Lane Cove West
- Craig Cook - Prime Quality Meats, Northbridge
- Ron Stapleton - Stapleton's Meats, Gymea
- Peter Bresnahan - Bresnahan's Fine Foods, Mortdale
- Mark Edwards - A Cut Above Fine Foods, Westleigh
- Phillip Anastopoulos - Supreme Souvlakia, Belmore
- Michael Koudounis - Waterloo Superior Meats, Waterloo
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Part A
Guide and Background Information
What is This Guide For and Why is it Necessary?

An important part of managing your business is to ensure the health and safety of all within your business. This is not just good business sense, but is required by law in NSW.

So why don’t we already do it? Some of this inaction is due to misconceptions such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myths (What many people believe)</th>
<th>Facts (The reality)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The OHS legislation only applies to larger companies/organisations</td>
<td>OHS legislation applies to all businesses and all workplaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As we have never had an accident, the workplace is safe</td>
<td>All workplaces have some risks involved. It is far better for everyone if safety risks are managed and we are not left saying “If only...” when someone is hurt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving workplace safety is expensive, complicated and time-consuming</td>
<td>Improving safety often only requires simple solutions such as buying chemicals that are safer, ensuring staff follow safe knife procedures. Following this guide will help to make the process easier to understand. Time taken to make the place safer can be readily balanced against time and costs involved with dealing with an injured worker or a WorkCover improvement notice/prosecution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to do everything at once</td>
<td>Like most things in business, improving safety is about setting priorities so that the most risky activities are dealt with first. It is also about ensuring that planned improvements do occur ie having a history of doing what you say you will do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ll have to start from scratch</td>
<td>There are many sources of help already available. This guide will point you to the most valuable of these and assist you to use them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Law

In NSW, the major legislation is the NSW Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2000 and the NSW OHS Regulation 2001.

These require employers to **ensure** the health and safety of employees and non-employees at their place/s of work. However, the Act does not state exactly how employers should do this. Rather, it requires employers to:

- identify what activities could put workers at risk of injury or illness
- assess how big a risk they pose and then
- take steps to minimise the risk
- review to ensure it continues to be safe.

This process is known as Risk Management (RM).

Under the legislation, employers are also required to:

- actively consult with their employees on OHS issues
- keep employees informed of the risks to their health and safety.
What if Retail Butchers Do Not Meet Their OHS Legal Obligations?

Non-compliance with the OHS legislation can have a serious impact on individual workers, your company and the retail meat industry as a whole. These include:

- Physical, emotional and social impacts on workers who may be injured in the workplace
- Financial impact on employer through their workers compensation premium
- Possibility of significant fines to both the company and individual owners/directors in the company if prosecuted by WorkCover
- Loss of productivity due to skilled workers not being available if injured. This is particularly an issue for small companies that rely heavily on the balance of skills of a small number of employees
- Possible increase in staff turnover if workers do not feel safe
- Difficulty meeting customer requirements - ‘corporate’ customers are increasingly requiring suppliers to meet OHS standards in their contracts.

What Will This Guide Help You To Do

The guide can help you:

- understand what the OHS law requires
- assess how well you are meeting these requirements
- help you to improve your level of compliance by setting priorities and planning.

It offers a number of solutions to problems within the retail meat industry but due to many different types of businesses in retail meat, it cannot offer ‘quick-fix’ solutions to all problems.

Who Can Use This Guide

The guide is primarily aimed at owners and/or store managers. OHS personnel, OHS Representatives and any worker can also use it with an interest in improving health and safety in their workplace. Also, as the OHS legislation requires that staff be consulted on matters affecting their health and safety, most activities will require input from most staff in the workplace.

The Guide is divided into two parts.

Part A provides:
- background information
- explanations of how the OHS risk management process works
- case studies to show how the process works
- additional resources
- useful contacts.

Part B contains:
- risk assessment checklists to get you started
- useful forms to help record what you need to do and how you are progressing.
NOTE
It is recommended that you initially read through all the Steps (pages 6-8). You will then have a clearer understanding of the overall process. Once you have done this, start at Step 1 and work through each step, referring to the various sections/resources, as/when required.

Step 1: Make sure you are ready to commence OHS Risk Management

Having an appropriate 'Frame of Mind' for tackling OHS Risks

Once you have read the introduction, you will understand the need to ensure your shop is safe and healthy. The OHS legislation places many demands on organisations to meet their legislative responsibilities. This initially can seem daunting. However, it is important to understand that improving health and safety in an organisation requires a commitment over a length of time. Improvement therefore requires a focus on priority setting and planning. It also requires an understanding of the critical importance of:

- Not feeling it is all too much and/or panicking, but planning for improvement
- Assessing to ensure you recognize what needs to be achieved
- Starting with priorities (ie tasks with a greater risk of injury)
- Staying focused on your priorities for improvement (unless evidence shows that you should re-prioritise your activities)
- Re-evaluating what has been achieved and celebrating what has been achieved/improved!

To help with this process, it can be helpful to imagine yourself in a year’s time, looking back at what has been achieved, rather than feeling overwhelmed by what needs to be done.

Step 2: Material you should have available before you begin

There are a number of documents that are referred to in this document that will allow you to gain a better understanding of issues discussed. Refer to Section 2 for a listing of key documents (page 10). For additional useful material, to be used if you wish to assess an issue in more detail, refer to Appendix 2.

Step 3: Develop a system that can help with the overall management of OHS

Risk Management (RM) is one part of any effective OHS Management Program. Other steps need to be taken to ensure that health and safety issues are well managed. These are outlined in WorkCover NSW's Small Business Starter Kit (2001). To assess the state of your business’s ‘readiness’, complete the OHS System Checklist at Appendix 1 and take any action required to establish/improve your OHS system.

Step 4: Consider how much you already know about OHS Risk Management

If you and/or your staff need to learn about, understand more about, or refresh your memory about the OHS Risk Management process, refer to Section 3.

If you and your staff are already very familiar with the OHS Risk Management Process, proceed to Step 5. However, please ensure you understand:

- The risk assessment process
- How risk ratings are arrived at
- How the different ways you control hazards, changes the level of risk.
Step 5: Begin to Assess the Risks in Your Shop

Working with your employees, select an activity to assess. The activity you select could be based on:

- Your ideas of what is the ‘least safe’ activity in your business (e.g., bandsaw operation)
- Your employees ideas on the ‘least safe’ activity
- Any recent near-misses
- Discussions with industry colleagues
- Alerts from WorkCover
- Alerts from AMIC or other member associations
- Any recent injuries
- Information in this Guide.

It is recommended that to start with, you select an activity that has a Checklist already developed (contained in Part B of this Guide). These cover some of the major risks of Retail Butchers and will help you become familiar with the process of risk management. Once you feel you have these well controlled, you can move onto other areas of concern, using the resources listed in Appendix 2 to assist.

Select the Risk Assessment Checklist associated with that risk (refer to Index at the beginning of Part B)

- Photocopy the Checklist
- Select a small team of staff to work with you to complete the Checklist
- Using the Checklist, assess the controls you already have in place and those that have yet to be put in place
- Based on the controls you have in place, assess how risky this task still is for you and your staff based on WorkCover’s HAZPAK matrix - the Residual Risk (refer to Section 3.3 and 3.4, pages 15-23)
- Place this Residual Risk Rating on the Risk Assessment Summary Sheet (Form 1 in Part B), along with the other details about the assessed activity.

Step 6: Repeat Step 5

Select another hazard to assess and repeat Step 5. It is recommended that you initially complete 4 Risk Assessment Checklists.

Step 7: Set Priorities for Action

Review your Risk Assessment Summary Sheet ➔

- If you have any Residual Risk ratings of “1”, these hazards will be your priorities for action.
- If you have no “1” ratings, then any hazards with a rating of “2” will be your priorities for action
- If you have no “1” or “2” ratings in the Risk Assessments you have conducted, then you can feel fairly comfortable that you have some adequate controls in place for the risks assessed to date. It is then suggested that you repeat Step 5-7 for another set of hazards and complete the review as above.
Step 8: Decide what action you will take to further decrease risk

- Once you have decided the hazards to work on, review the “Summary of Action Required” section on your Risk Assessment Checklists
- Consider what other steps you can take, in the short term and over a period of time, to reduce risk. It is important that you complete any actions that do not involve significant costs and/or disruption as soon as possible. However, you also need to plan to put in place the more effective controls in a staged program.

  **Remember:**
  - Not everything needs to be done at once
  - While small changes may not make the job completely safe, they may help to reduce some of the risk, and hence make the job safer for everyone.

Step 9: Take Action

- Determine who will do what and by when (Note: some timeframes will be short, for example, “Replace signs” but many will require longer timeframes for example, “Ensure all staff are, or are being, trained using MINTRAC bandsaw training modules”)
- Record the actions to be taken in an appropriate document so that progress can be reviewed. This document will also include the ‘Responsible Person’ and the ‘Due Completion Date’. A sample document is provided in Part B - Form 2.

Step 10: Monitor to ensure any new activities continue to be implemented.

Monitor to ensure all controls are being consistently implemented.

Step 11: Continue to implement controls for other risks.

Continue to reduce risk by implementing Steps 5-10 for other risks.

Step 12: Is the workplace safer?

Consider the impact of the actions you have taken by:
- Re-completing the Risk Assessment Checklists
- Assessing the changes made and how/if they have impacted on:
  - Residual risk rating
  - Injury rates and severity
  - Staff satisfaction with the program.

This should be undertaken at least on an annual basis.

Step 13: Continue to Manage Risks

The management of OHS risk is an on-going activity. This can be due to:
- Number of risks that need to be managed
- Research findings changing risk severity or controls required
- Changes in technology, equipment and techniques
- Changes in business focus.

It is therefore important that your OHS activities are programmed into your overall business plans for the company into the foreseeable future.
Organise a team of workers and ensure the team understands the Risk Management process  
[Steps 1, 2, 3, 4]

Select a task to assess  
[Step 5]

Select the corresponding Checklist (from Part B of this Guide)  
[Step 5]

Complete Checklist  
[Step 5]

Enter summary of assessment onto “Risk Assessment Summary Sheet”  
[Step 5]

Repeat RA process for 3 other tasks ‘Another checklist’  
[Step 5-6]

Review “Risk Assessment Summary Sheet” and select the task rated as the highest risk to work on  
[Step 7]

Decide on actions required and enter on OHS Action Plan (Form 2, Part B)  
[Step 8]

Implement Actions  
[Step 9]

Review to ensure - actions are taken  
- task is now safer  
[Steps 10, 12, 13]

Select another task to work on/implement changes and work through process  
[Steps 5-13]
3.1 Overview of Risk Management Process

There are four main stages in the Risk Management Process. They are:

Stage 1: Identify the Hazards
Stage 2: Assess the Level of Risk for Hazards
Stage 3: Control the Risks
Stage 4: Review (to ensure it is still effective)

These stages are described below.

3.2 Stage 1: Identify the Hazards

The retail meat industry has a variety of hazards. Most people in the industry will be aware of many of these. However, it is easy to become blasé about the risks we see and experience every day. Therefore, we need to sit back and identify and document the hazards around us.

Identifying Hazards: Activity

Firstly, let’s see if you can spot some common hazards found in many shops.
Below are 2 scenes from 2 different retail shops.
What hazards can you see?
What have they done to make it safer?
What else could they do?
Scene 1: Wrap-shrinking and hand-wash

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>What have they done to make it safer</th>
<th>What else could they do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Scene 1: Wrap-shrinking and handwashing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>What have they done to make it safer</th>
<th>What else could they do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk of burns:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Replace with alternative shrink machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- if urn is knocked over</td>
<td>Non-slip floor surface and treads on step ➔ reduce risk of trips/slips</td>
<td>Put urn on permanent surface (at correct height to minimise risk of burns and manual handling ie where top of urn is at about waist height)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- when emptying</td>
<td>Owner reports not emptied until water lukewarm or cold</td>
<td>Instruct staff not to use hose if urn in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- from steam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide Personal Protective equipment (PPE) to be worn for associated task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(gloves, apron, eye-wear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ensure lid is always fully on to reduce steam output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Warning signs - ‘hot water’ + PPE required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of burns from hose</td>
<td>Hose is heavier/more reinforced than ‘garden-type’ hose ➔ less resistant to twisting/spaying water inappropriately</td>
<td>Replace nozzle and hose with models that reduce risk of hose and nozzle twisting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of electrocution</td>
<td>Equipment has been safety checked and tagged</td>
<td>Install ‘wet area’ plugs and sockets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- wet area</td>
<td>No double-adapters used</td>
<td>Ensure all electrical equipment visually checked before each use to ensure no damage evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of slips/trips/falls</td>
<td></td>
<td>More electrical sockets to decrease need for cords to be draped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-slip floor surface and treads on step ➔ reduce risk of trips/slips</td>
<td>Retractable hose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Electrical cords not across walkways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good housekeeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual handling risk when:</td>
<td>Urn is close to sink and already raised</td>
<td>Use alternative shrink machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- filling/emptying urn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put urn in permanent area to ensure at optimal height (only reaching between hip and shoulder) and connect to plumbing system so does not need to be lifted to fill/empty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- loading/unloading product into urn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partly fill using jug once urn in place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partly empty urn before lifting to empty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(from top, not tap to decrease bending)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scene 2: Mincing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>What have they done to make it safer (Note, some of the actual controls cannot be seen in this photograph)</th>
<th>What else could they do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now compare your answers to someone with an objective/expert eye.

**Scene 2: Mincing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazards</th>
<th>What have they done to make it safer</th>
<th>What else could they do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk of severe cut from mincer mechanism</td>
<td>Mincer has auto-cut off if lid of mincing bowl is lifted + guard at meat exit Owner reports machine turned off and unplugged when cleaned</td>
<td>Instigate ‘Lock-out/Tag Out Procedure’ for all cleaning/maintenance tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk of electrocution - wet area</td>
<td>Equipment has been safety checked and tagged ‘Wet area’ plugs and sockets installed</td>
<td>Ensure all electrical equipment visually checked before each use to ensure no damage evident Install additional sockets so cords do not have to be stretched across the room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual handling risk when:</td>
<td>Smaller buckets used to minimise weight lifted/moved</td>
<td>Redesign mince output nozzle to decrease need to bend to control product Move on/off button so easily reached Use containers on wheels Raise height of buckets so output nozzle feeds more easily into buckets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- bending over to guide product into buckets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- leaning and twisting to control on/off switch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- moving buckets once full</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(around mincer and to cool room/product preparation area)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Risks from chemicals/hazardous substances* = “…any type of chemical that can harm human health”

**Identifying Hazards**

To help you identify hazards in your shop, the most common, major hazards for retail butchers have been identified and are outlined in Part B. These generally fall under the following headings:

- Emergency Management
- Electrical Safety
- Bandsaw Safety
- Mincer Safety
- Other Plant and Equipment
- Knife/Hand Tool Safety
- Slips/Trips/Falls
Manual Handling
Cold Rooms
Chemicals/Hazardous Substances
Scalds and Burns
Robbery
Drugs and Alcohol
Bullying and Harassment.

However, as businesses operate in a number of different environments, this may not cover all risks in your own situation. Therefore, you may need to also identify other hazards through:

- Reviewing what the legislation requires - refer to the Summaries of the OHS Act and Regulation
- Consultation with employees who do the job
- Reviewing any injuries/illnesses - refer to ‘Record of Injuries’ book, Workers Compensation Claims records and/or accident/incident investigations
- Inspecting the workplace - especially useful if this is done by someone who does not work in the area all the time and/or by asking questions that begin with “What if ....”
- Listening to what workers complain about most
- Asking what chemicals we use and what risks these have - Reading information that has been supplied with chemicals (Material Safety Data Sheets - MSDS) will tell you this (Note: Chemical suppliers must, by law, supply MSDS’s with all hazardous chemicals)
- Findings of a formal safety audit
- Reading information that has been supplied with equipment (manufacturers manual)
- Reviewing what is regularly requiring repair/attention
- Talking to other retail butchers
- Seeking advice from experts.

3.3 Stage 3: Assessing Risk

Now you have found the hazards in your business, you need to assess the level of risk each activity presents. This helps you decide where gaps exist and priorities for action.

Each work activity should be assessed to decide how much risk it poses. This is usually done using a risk assessment tool. WorkCover NSW’s Hazpak Risk Assessment Matrix is the most commonly used risk assessment tool in NSW. It is outlined below.

To use this tool/matrix, you consider both:
- how badly it could hurt someone (refer to the ‘red’ options in table below)
- how likely the event is to occur (refer to the ‘blue’ options in table below).

This assessment is done in a number of steps:
- to start with, the activity is assessed as if there was nothing in place to make the task safer. A way of doing this is by thinking about the risks if a completely new and/or inexperienced person was doing the task
- the activity is then assessed with the safety factors in place. This tells you both how safe it is now, and how much safer you have made it.

A number is then assigned to determine risk. The highest risk activity would be given a ‘1’ rating and the lowest risk activity has a ‘6’ rating.
To see how the assessment process works we will apply it to two different situations:

- **Use of bandsaw**
- **Risk of falls**

### HAZPAK Risk Assessment 1: Bandsaw Use

**Ask first:** How severely could it hurt someone?

A bandsaw could injure someone during a number of tasks:

- When using to cut product
- When cleaning it
- When checking/maintenance

Types of injury could range from:

- Amputation of body parts
- Severe cuts to hands/arms
- Severe cuts to other parts of body (if doors opened when in use and/or if accidentally turned on during cleaning/maintenance)
- Product flicking into eyes

It is clear that use of a bandsaw can cause ‘permanent damage’ and more minor damage (such as small cuts or eye damage). However, when assessing risk, it is important to consider the ‘worst case scenario’ as this is the one you want to ensure is managed so that it does not occur.

Therefore, go to the table and highlight the first choice of the ‘red’ options (shaded green).
HAZPAK Risk Assessment Matrix*

How Likely is it to Hurt Someone?  
(If NO controls in place)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Likely is it to Hurt Someone?</th>
<th>Kill or Cause Permanent Disability or Ill Health</th>
<th>Cause Long Term Illness or Serious Injury</th>
<th>Medical Attention and/or Several Days Off Work</th>
<th>First Aid Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very likely - could happen regularly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely - could happen occasionally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely - could happen, but only rarely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely - could happen, but probably never will</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hazpak - WorkCover NSW

**Next, ask:** How likely is it to hurt someone?

Consider if an untrained person was to use the bandsaw. It is probable that they could injure themselves within a short period of time. That is, they are 'very likely' to hurt themselves. Therefore, go to the table and highlight the first choice of the 'blue' options (shaded green).

The intersection of these two columns \(\rightarrow\) an overall rating of “1”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Likely is it to Hurt Someone?</th>
<th>Kill or Cause Permanent Disability or Ill Health</th>
<th>Cause Long Term Illness or Serious Injury</th>
<th>Medical Attention and/or Several Days Off Work</th>
<th>First Aid Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very likely - could happen regularly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely - could happen occasionally</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely - could happen, but only rarely</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very unlikely - could happen, but probably never will</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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HAZPAK Risk Assessment 2: Risk of falls:

Ask first: How severely could a fall hurt someone?

Workers are at risk of falls due to:
- Slippery floors (from water, ice, fat/other product, type of floor surface)
- Tripping (due to overcrowding, poor housekeeping, mats)
- Staff 'skylarking'

These risks can be increased in shops due to:
- Uneven surfaces/ramps/steps
- Carrying heavy/bulky/awkward objects
- Rushing in peak times
- Carrying sharp objects

Types of injury could range from:
- Severe head injuries (head hitting hard surfaces)
- Broken bones
- Back injuries (landing heavily or trying to stop fall)
- Severe cuts to self or others
- Bruising

It is clear that falls can both cause serious and permanent damage and more minor damage. However, when assessing risk, once again it is important to consider the 'worst case scenario' as this is the one you want to ensure is managed so that it does not occur.

Therefore, go to the table and highlight the first choice of the ‘red’ option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Likely is it to Hurt Someone? (if NO controls in place)</th>
<th>How Severely Could it Hurt Someone?</th>
<th>Kill or Cause Permanent Disability or Ill Health</th>
<th>Cause Long Term Illness or Serious Injury</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Next, ask: How likely is it to hurt someone?

Consider if nothing was done to decrease risks of falls eg wearing non-slip shoes, regular clearing of ice, keeping passageways clear. It is probable that someone could fall within a fairly short period of time. You may therefore highlight either ‘very likely’ or ‘likely’ to hurt themselves.

**Note:** you are not asking “how often HAS someone fallen” but “how often could it happen” - and if you asked all your employees, especially new employees, how often they had ‘slipped’ but not fallen, you will probably find that they ‘almost fall’ fairly often.

Therefore, go to the table and highlight those sections of the table. You will note that even though we have allowed 2 different possibilities, the rating remains the same.

The intersection of these two columns ➔ an overall rating of “1”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Likely is it to Hurt Someone? (If NO controls in place)</th>
<th>Kill or Cause Permanent Disability or Ill Health</th>
<th>Cause Long Term Illness or Serious Injury</th>
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In the second stage of the risk assessment you will then assess how big the risk is with the measures you have in place to make the task safer.

If the risk rating does not improve to an acceptable level, this makes it a priority to improve. Initially you will be trying to get all tasks to have a residual risk rating of “3”. Once this is achieved you will continue to work to decrease the rating for all tasks so that tasks have ratings of “3”, “4”, “5” or “6”.

We will come back to this point in the next section.

### 3.4 Stage 3: Eliminating or Controlling Risk

Once hazards have been identified and the level of risk assessed, steps must be taken to try to eliminate or minimise the level of risk associated with the task. In OHS there is a well-established set of steps for managing risks. These steps (known as the hierarchy of control) range from the most effective to the least effective methods for managing risk. Therefore, every effort should be made to use the first of these methods. In practice though, many risk control measures will require a combination of approaches. You will note that the Checklists contain a combination of these types of controls.
Effect on Risk Rating

The more the controls are from the ‘top’ of this chart (ie Elimination or Substitution), the less risk there will be involved for the task.

Types of Controls: Hierarchy of Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness of Control Method</th>
<th>Control Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most Effective</td>
<td>Elimination</td>
<td>In this case the hazard or risk is eliminated by changing/stopping the process entirely. For example a conveyor is put in place to eliminate the need for lifting and carrying of boxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substitution</td>
<td></td>
<td>The hazard is replaced by a process or material that presents a lower risk. For example, a chemical is replaced with another chemical that has fewer health effects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td>This method of risk reduction involves engineering changes that effectively isolate or reduce the hazard. For example, installing a rail to move carcasses/product, use of a trolley to move product, enclosing noisy machines, use of local exhaust ventilation and machine guards. This type of control is effective as long as it is maintained in good working order and consistently used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Controls</td>
<td></td>
<td>These controls rely on developing safe procedures and work methods. Examples of administrative controls include giving workers a variety of tasks to perform, work instructions, permits to work and training. These methods of risk control depend on human behaviour for their success and hence are less reliable than other methods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Least Effective</td>
<td>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</td>
<td>PPE is worn as a barrier between the person and the hazard. To be effective PPE needs to be properly chosen, maintained and used. PPE is generally considered the least effective control measure because it is the ‘last line of defence’. If the worker does not wear it, or wears it incorrectly, they are fully exposed to the risk.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To see how different levels of control can be implemented we will apply it to the two different situations previously assessed:

- Use of bandsaw
- Risk of falls

### Sample of Implementing Controls: Bandsaw Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness of Control Method</th>
<th>Level of Remaining Risk</th>
<th>Control Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most Effective</strong></td>
<td>Lowest remaining risk if use these types of controls</td>
<td>Elimination</td>
<td>Change processes/systems so no longer need to use bandsaw eg buy carcasses already split up; consider if need to use bandsaw for all current jobs/cuts (Note: while it may not be practical to eliminate for all tasks it could be eliminated for some tasks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Substitution</td>
<td>Use a different method to cut meat such as knife, cleaver (Note: this may not be practical for most butchers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Least Effective</strong></td>
<td>Highest remaining risk if use these types of controls</td>
<td></td>
<td>Place adjustable slide guard on blade Sensors on doors so that blade stops automatically if doors opened Emergency stop button - at hip level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engineering Controls</td>
<td>Develop safe work instruction Restrict use to trained personnel Train staff (to industry standard (using Mintrac modules) and assess competency level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative Controls</td>
<td>N/A for protection from cuts (Note gloves could get caught up in blade and make injury worse) Glasses to protect eyes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the controls are mostly at the bottom of the table, even if they are all implemented the task is still probably a high risk activity. Using the risk assessment matrix:

- How severely could it hurt someone? Kill or Cause Permanent Disability or Ill Health
- How likely could it hurt someone? Unlikely - could happen, but only rarely

⇒ overall rating of “2”

You will also see that the risk for bandsaw can never get below a rating of “3” due to the potential severity of injury.
## Sample of Implementing Controls: Risk of Falls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness of Control Method</th>
<th>Level of Remaining Risk</th>
<th>Control Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Most Effective</strong></td>
<td>Lowest remaining risk if use these types of controls</td>
<td>Elimination</td>
<td>Part solution - Design the work area to eliminate steps, uneven surfaces and ramps. Otherwise it is not possible to eliminate the risk altogether - staff will always need to move around and the work environment will always contain some substances that possibly make the floor slippery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Substitution</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have floor surfaces that are slip-resistant to minimise trips and slips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-slip covering on floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Least Effective</strong></td>
<td>Highest remaining risk if use these types of controls</td>
<td><strong>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</strong></td>
<td>Non-slip shoes - regularly inspected to ensure maintain grip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative Controls</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Train staff on risks. Rearrange storage to minimise traffic on higher risk areas. Implement Safety Rules to cover: • No walking with sharp object in hand (knives etc must be in pouch) • No running • No skylarking • Maintain housekeeping standards • Procedures for cold room/freezers use minimises ice build up. Regular housekeeping to ensure: • passageways kept clear • regular clearing of ice • trip hazards eliminated including fat and product regularly cleaned up. Regular inspection to ensure non-slip covering in good condition. Ensure above safety rules/standards are maintained.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>