

No matter the size or occupation of an organisation it is essential that owners, managers and employees understand the systems that are in place to identify and manage risk.

The failure of a single risk control effort or a hazard that goes unnoticed or is not corrected in a timely manner, could ultimately result in the closure of a business.

A self-inspection program can use checklists to identify and evaluate risks. This provides a disciplined and focused approach, with the goal of correcting identified deficiencies in a timely and efficient manner.



The benefits of a self-inspection program

A robust self-inspection program ensures risk control is provided to areas of need; appropriately, efficiently and reliably. It will assist in obligations to provide a safe work environment, whilst strengthening workplace culture and remove obstructions to business performance.

Who performs a self-inspection?

A well-functioning program requires collaboration between several departments of an organisation. The checklists within a self-inspection program are self-explanatory and in the hands of employees with a keen eye for detail, the overall program objective can be achieved.

Many risk controls may already be in place, for example the servicing of fire extinguishers by a professional contractor. It is a good idea to 'walk the floor' with these persons during their activity, to learn more about what they are looking for. Take a photograph of 'best practice' examples to keep a record and for easy comparison to future findings. Perhaps print and position the photo close to the inspected item for easy reference of best practice.

Don't just rely on one employee to perform this inspection. Surround them with others to learn and for support and succession planning.

How to conduct a self-inspection

Depending on the size of the facility and the complexity of the operation, consider zoning it into smaller areas and assigning an employee to inspect each of these. Swap the employee around during subsequent inspections, for them to gain experience and provide a fresh set of eyes in different areas. Consider using specialists for the completion of technical checklists such as a machinery inspection.

Number areas and items that are to be checked and align these numbers to the checklist so there is clear correlation between them.

Frequency

Carry out a self-inspection weekly until employees become familiar with the process and gain confidence. Once an acceptable standard of risk control has been achieved across the facility, extend the frequency to fortnightly. Time between inspections should be no more than one month, unless a reoccurring problem is identified and warrants immediate attention and more frequent monitoring to maintain standards.

Responsibility

The person assigned the task of inspection has the responsibility of performing the task completely.

A senior person should have overall responsibility for the implementation of the program, ensuring the completion of improvement actions.

All records should be retained on site to demonstrate good safety and risk management practice.

Tools and resources

The **Vero Risk Profiler Tool**, assessable from this link, helps customers understand risks to their business.

The top three risks per industry are described and several self-inspection checklists are provided, which can be tailored to assist along the risk management journey.

For more information:
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