



Poultry processing industry self-assessment checklist

The poultry processing industry in Queensland has a consistently higher workers' compensation claim rate than the overall manufacturing industry claim rate. Large poultry operators have a higher claim rate per \$1 million wages than medium operators, while small operators have the highest claim rate per \$1 million wages.

This self-assessment checklist looks at common work health and safety issues for the poultry processing industry, including labour hire workers.

Section A: Audit of occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS)

- Review your OHSMS against the self-assessment checklist with relevant staff including your occupational health and safety professional, senior management and other supervisors.
- Verify your OHSMS covers the risks and hazards in your workplace including consultation, information, training and instruction.

Section B: Verify that your system is being implemented by supervisors and other workers including labour hire workers, by observing them conduct the activities, asking them to demonstrate what they do and/or ask how they do it.

If you answer 'no' to any of the questions in the checklist, this is an area that needs more focus as part of your OHSMS. The checklist is a guide only to what might be expected at a poultry processing workplace. It is not an exhaustive list of potential issues for action.

For more information on how to manage these risks, visit [worksafe.qld.gov.au](https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au).

Section A: Audit of OHSMS

1. Safe systems of work

Is there a safe system of work at your poultry processing workplace?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- Documentation or processes in your system of work identify hazards at the workplace.
- Procedures provide workers with clear directions on how to complete the task in a safe way.
- Risk assessments include hazardous manual task risk factors and the sources of risk.
- A hazardous manual task is a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing. They involve one or more of the following: repetitive or sustained force, high or sudden force, repetitive movement, sustained or awkward posture or exposure to vibration.
- All workers are trained in the procedures.
- All workers are supervised or monitored to make sure procedures are being followed.
- Procedures are reviewed or developed when changes occur in the workplace, such as a new work process or new equipment.
- The procedures are dated and have review dates.
- Procedures are reviewed following an incident or near miss.

2. Consultative arrangements between management and workers

Are consultative arrangements in place between management and workers for this site?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- Workers tell you about the consultation process when asked.
- Workers are actively involved in conducting risk assessments or developing safe work procedures.
- Regular scheduled meetings (for example, toolbox or staff meetings) in which workers can raise and discuss health and safety issues.
- Consultation arrangements for workers with different work patterns or locations, such as shift workers and drivers.
- Health and safety issues are discussed to the point of resolution or close-out.
- Workers are provided with feedback about the outcome of issues raised during consultation.
- Workers are encouraged to assist in resolving health and safety issues that relate to their job activities.
- Examples and evidence of how workers' ideas about managing safety have been put in place.
- Health and safety noticeboards, suggestion boxes or posters are displayed in the workplace.
- Managers and supervisors can give an overview of their work health and safety duties.
- Managers and supervisors and workers participate in safety inspections, safety observations and work health and safety meetings.

3. Consultative arrangements with your labour hire company (if applicable)

Are consultative arrangements in place with all labour hire companies used on this site?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- A system in place for consultation to discuss and report on work health and safety matters between you and your labour hire supplier.
- Regular scheduled meetings to raise and discuss health and safety issues with your labour hire company.
- Health and safety issues are discussed to the point of resolution/close-out issues with the labour hire company.
- Consultation takes into account the nature of the work to be (or that is) carried out, plus the nature and severity of the particular hazard or risk, characteristics of workers including languages spoken and literacy levels.
- Managers/supervisors and workers participate in safety inspections, safety observations and work health and safety meetings.
- Feedback is provided about the outcome of issues raised during consultation.
- Feedback is documented and includes those involved, what the health and safety matter is, what decision has been made, who is to take action and by when and when the action has been completed.

4. Consultative arrangements with your supply chain

Are formal consultative arrangements for work health and safety risks (including hazardous manual tasks) in place between the employer and its supply chain partners?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- There a system in place for consultation between you and your supply chain partners regarding their requirements for how raw materials and other products are packaged, transported, loaded and unloaded to ensure your staff or others are not exposed to unnecessary risk.
- Health and safety issues are discussed to the point of resolution/close-out with your supply chain partners.
- Consultation between you and your supply chain partners take into account the nature of the work to be carried out and the nature and severity of the particular hazard or risk. For example, requirements to provide packaged raw materials in heavy cartons or bulky packaging can increase musculoskeletal disorder risks.

5. Hazard, risk management and reporting

Are health and safety risks at this workplace being controlled?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- Hazards have been identified in your workplace for:
 - falls from height
 - fixed plant
 - hand tools

- slips and trips
- hazardous manual tasks
- hazardous chemicals
- on-site traffic management (e.g. separation of pedestrian traffic mobile plant, cars trucks)
- There is a record of the identified hazard/s (e.g. in a register).
- Risk assessments have been conducted for all potentially hazardous tasks.
- Risk assessments are conducted when changes are made at the workplace (e.g. when new equipment or work processes are being introduced).
- Control measures are in place to eliminate or minimise risks (using the hierarchy of control).
- There is a process for reporting incidents and hazards including near misses (e.g. a form, book, or a written process).
- Workers are encouraged to report work health and safety issues.
- When someone reports an incident, hazard or near miss, it is acted on (e.g. an incident investigation).
- Workers are provided with feedback on the action/s and outcomes of any issues they report.
- There a process in place to identify out of hours risk and hazard management for non-production workers.
- Incident and hazard reports are developed and reviewed for trends that identify areas for improvement.

6. Information, training, instruction and supervision

Is appropriate information, training, instruction or supervision provided to workers at this workplace?

Yes / No

Indications of compliance include:

- There is a structured induction for new workers (e.g. an induction plan, checklist or booklet).
- The induction includes both general safety rules and those for specific task-related items.
- Workers receive instruction about safe work procedures prior to starting work on any new task.
- Records are kept of all training, including induction and on-the-job training.
- Tasks are physically demonstrated to workers (rather than only theory based training).
- Training needs assessments are conducted to check that workers have a clear understanding of work procedures (e.g. by asking them to physically demonstrate the task, using written competency assessment).
- There is a schedule of routine formal and random checks of worker practices to ensure compliance with procedures.
- Workers carrying out a class of high risk work (e.g. forklift, crane, and scaffolding) hold current and correct high risk work licences.

Section B: Verification of system

1. Manual tasks (includes slips, trips and falls)

Are health and safety risks that may result in musculoskeletal disorders from hazardous manual tasks being managed?

Yes / No

Select a packaging/stores task or high volume production task, for example:

- hanging chickens causing shoulder and other upper limb injuries
- reaching, picking, twisting and handling on conveyor/throwing product
- handling crates or cartons– stacking cartons, packing off, palletising, handling crates from pallets.

Observe and confirm with labour hire and other workers whether the tasks they are required to perform involve:

- high or sudden force
- repetitive movements (continuously for 30 minutes at a time or for more than two hours over a whole shift)
- sustained or awkward postures (continuously for 30 minutes at a time or for more than two hours over a whole shift)
- repetitive or sustained forces
- exposure to whole body or hand arm vibration (e.g. when using powered hand held tools, or when working on vibrating platforms and plant. This may require you to undertake further investigation.)

Check:

- whether any adjustments have been made by workers to avoid discomfort (e.g., stacking mats or flattened cartons to stand on). Note this creates unmanaged slipping and tripping risks
- whether your mechanical aids, equipment and tools are regularly maintained (e.g. wheels move freely on trolleys or processing equipment)
- whether the risks listed above (and others you have identified) have been adequately controlled
- whether all relevant matters have been considered, as per WHS Regulation Section 60(2) (e.g. environmental conditions design, layout, systems of work, loads).

2. Fixed plant

Are health and safety risks from fixed plant being managed?

Yes / No

Check for the following indications of compliance

- Workplace hazards from use of the fixed plant in your workplace have been identified.
- Workers are trained in the safe use of plant or machinery (buddy system, competency assessed).
- Workers report and stop work when identifying defective plant and machine/equipment breakdowns.
- Appropriate guards are in place, E-Stops are installed and working, and electrical components on plant are not damaged.

- Fixed plant has isolation or tag out/locks
- PPE is supplied for workers and is suitable for the plant being operated (e.g. hearing protection, gloves, etc.).

3. Work environment (including falling objects and working at heights)

Are health and safety risks from the work environment being managed?

Yes / No

Check for the following indications of compliance

- If workers are required to access or work at heights from ladders (e.g. fixed, extension, platform), access or work on plant or structure at a height (e.g. for inspection, cleaning or maintenance work), check:
 - there are appropriate ladder procedures and the type of work conducted from ladders is appropriate
 - if there are unprotected edges on plant and mezzanine levels are used for access, there are appropriate railings etc.
 - if heights work is conducted by workers and/or contractors, risks of falling objects are appropriately controlled (e.g. tools on lanyards, kickboards and railings on mobile plant).
- If storage racking is used, stored items are adequately secured.
- There is an asbestos register for the workplace and asbestos management plan where required.
- Workers are made aware of changes being made prior to the change (e.g. prior to new equipment or work processes being introduced).
- Biological hazards for workers are being adequately addressed (e.g. influenza vaccination for workers and wearing of masks for dust where appropriate).

4. Hazardous chemicals

Are health and safety risks from hazardous chemicals being managed?

Yes / No

Check for the following indications of compliance

- Workplace hazards from hazardous chemicals have been identified in your workplace.
- There is a hazardous chemicals register.
- Workers are aware of how hazardous chemicals (including gases) need to be safely handled and stored at the workplace.
- There are systems of work or procedures in place for the safe handling and storage of hazardous chemicals at the workplace.
- Workers are provided with instruction and training on the above procedures and assessed for competency.
- If hazardous chemicals are decanted on site, the containers (e.g. spray bottles) in which hazardous chemicals are decanted/stored are correctly labelled.
- Spill kits and clean up equipment are available.
- PPE/ respiratory protective equipment is provided and suitable.
- There is an emergency plan for your workplace and:

- the emergency plan takes into account a range of chemical incidents (e.g. gas leaks, fire, spills)
- the plan identifies emergency and evacuation procedures, medical treatment and first aid provisions, notifying emergency services, testing of the emergency procedures (and frequency of testing), emergency equipment (e.g. fire-fighting and spill containment).

5. Hand tools

Are health and safety risks from hand tools being managed?

Yes / No

Check for the following indications of compliance

- Workplace hazards have been identified in your workplace, including knife handling.
- There is a knife sharpening program to reduce force required to perform cuts (e.g. training in relation to knife sharpening and maintenance of knives including electric knives such as Whizard knives).
- There is adequate space between workers to prevent unintentional knife contact.
- Knives are stored securely when not in use (e.g. magnetic strip to secure knives).
- There are appropriate systems of work in place for the use of powered electrical tools. Workers are trained and competency assessed according to the safe work procedures.
- Workers are required to inspect tools prior to use to check for defects (e.g. damaged insulation on electrical leads, exposed wires).
- PPE (such as cut resistant glove for non-knife hand)/RPD is provided and suitable for tasks undertaken?
- Electrical tools and equipment are inspected, tested and tagged at prescribed intervals.
- Safety switches are installed and tested at prescribed intervals.

Guidance

Safe working at heights from platforms in the meat industry

Work health and safety consultation, co-operation and co-ordination Code of Practice 2011

Cutting edge knife skills for young workers fact sheet

Electrical Safety Act 2002

Electrical Safety Regulation 2013

Test and tag requirements/schedule and RCD installation and inspection intervals

Identifying and assessing hazardous manual tasks

Hazardous manual tasks Code of Practice 2011

Hazardous manual tasks worksheet

Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2011 Section 60(2)

Guide to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011

How to manage work health and safety risks Code of Practice 2011

Guide to machinery and equipment safety

Managing risks of plant in the workplace Code of Practice 2013

Managing the risk of falls at workplaces Code of Practice 2018

Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice 2011

Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace Code of Practice 2013