



SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK PLAN FOR CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

1. Organisations involved

Health and Safety Authority (HSA)

2. Description of the case

2.1. Introduction

The Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) is a new initiative, launched by Ireland's Health and Safety Authority (HSA) in 2005. Its purpose is to reduce injuries and deaths on construction sites. It is also designed to address issues related to migrant construction workers whose first language is not English.

Construction is a high risk, labour-intensive industry. Safety is everybody's business: designers, clients, construction companies and employees all need to be aware of their responsibilities in relation to health and safety. The number of migrant workers has increased considerably in some Member States, such as Ireland, the UK, Greece and Germany, and this poses new risks and challenges for health and safety. Employees who do not speak English and/or have limited literacy are at higher risk as they may not understand health and safety measures and instructions.

The HSA is the national body in Ireland with responsibility for securing health and safety at work. It is a state-sponsored body, operating under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 and it reports to the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment. Because safety is everybody's responsibility, HSA consults widely with employers, employees and their respective organisations. To help develop sound policies and good workplace practices, the Authority works with various Advisory Committees and Task Forces which focus on specific occupations and hazards.

In addition to its other roles, HSA is the national centre for information and advice to employers, employees and the self-employed on all aspects of workplace health and safety. The Authority also promotes education, training and research in the field and publishes research on workplace hazards and risks.

2.2. Aims

The Safe System of Work Plan (SSWP) was launched by the HSA in 2005. The purpose of the scheme is to reduce injuries and deaths on construction sites. It is also designed to address issues related to migrant construction workers whose first language is not English. The target groups of this action include health and safety authorities, OSH specialists, employees (including migrant workers), employers and union members.

2.3. What was done, and how?

The SSWP aims to focus on those in the construction industry who are most at risk and empowering them to ensure that all necessary safety controls are in place prior to the commencement of planned work.

The initiative relies heavily on pictograms to explain and clarify hazards and controls, thereby creating a wordless document where safety can be communicated to all workers regardless of literacy or language skills.

There are five main publications in the series. Each form has a supplementary Pictogram Booklet, with detailed explanations of each safeguard mentioned on all forms, as well as a close look at various hazards.

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The Ground Works form is tailored to address the various hazards encountered during the ground works phase of building.

The House Building form deals with the hazards operatives are likely to encounter during the house building phase.

The Demolition form relates to safe working practices during this type of work. The New Commercial Building form addresses this sector of the construction industry, and is devoted to safe working practices within this line of work.

The Civil Engineering form is designed to be used by operatives in this industry sector. The Authority has also launched a DVD to complement the SSWP. The DVD, which is designed for staff training purposes, identifies the key hazards and the precautions required on construction sites. The disc includes commentaries in Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Spanish.

Each of the five forms has three parts. In the first part the various details regarding the job are filled in. Normally this will be completed by the person planning the job; either the supervisor/foreman and/or self-employed person prior to work starting. Where a site safety officer is employed they should be involved in the process.

Figure 1. Construction Form (Ground Works)

SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK PLAN (SSWP)
CONSTRUCTION FORM 2 (HOUSE BUILDING) Plan No.

Job Details	Resources Required	Emergency Details
Employer Name: _____	Worker Skills: _____	Contact Names & Tel No. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
Supervisor/Lead Person: _____	Plants/Equipment: _____	First Aider: _____
Number of Workers: _____	Hazardous Materials: _____	Location of First Aid Box: _____
Specific Location: _____		
Description of Works: _____		
Start Date: _____		
NOTE: A new SSWP must be completed when the task or the environment changes.		
WORK PERMITS REQUIRED		
Hot <input type="checkbox"/> Electricity <input type="checkbox"/> Excavation <input type="checkbox"/>		
Confined Space <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		
Method Statement Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
Before Works Starts the following MUST be in place		

There are also a series of pictograms indicating the mandatory measures that must be in place before work starts. Clicking on one of the first two pictograms enables the information in the accompanying booklet to be viewed.

The second part of the form deals with hazard identification, risk assessment, and risk control. Normally this will be carried out by the supervisor/foreman and/or selfemployed person prior to work starting. Where a site safety officer is employed, they should be involved in the process.

The Hazards should first be identified by ticking the square boxes in the 'Select Hazard' column. The appropriate Controls to eliminate the hazard or reduce the risk should be identified by ticking the square boxes in the 'Select Control' column. When the Controls are in place the round box should be ticked. This must be done in collaboration with the workers at the specific work site prior to the work taking place. Similarly, the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Fire Equipment required should be selected by ticking the square boxes in the PPE/Fire sections and when they are acquired, this should be verified by ticking the round boxes. Verification that they are in place should be done in conjunction with the workers involved in the

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job. All the Pictograms contained in the form are explained in the accompanying Pictogram booklet.

Figure 2. Example of pictograms

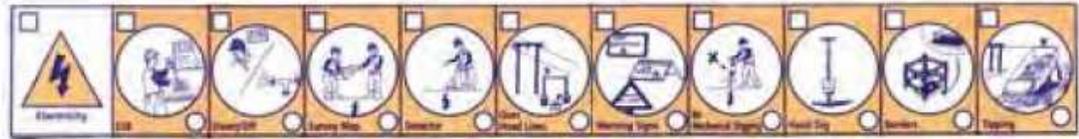


Figure 3 presents the series of pictograms to be found in the Electricity section of the form, as well as in the accompanying booklet. Clicking on pictograms enables the information in the accompanying booklet to be viewed.

The third, final part deals with the signing off of the SSWP. The purpose of signing off is to identify the person who has prepared the SSWP, and also to confirm that the completed SSWP has been brought to the attention of all those to whom the SSWP applies.

Figure 3. Part 3 of the form (signing up)

SSWP prepared by: _____ Date: _____

The controls to be used as per this form have been brought to my attention

PART 3

Signed by team:

NOTE: this list of Hazards and Controls is not exhaustive and is no particular order.

IF IT IS NOT SAFE DON'T DO IT AND INFORM SITE MANAGEMENT

The completed SSWP must remain at the work site, with the persons carrying out the work activity.

A new SSWP must be completed when (1) a new hazard is identified, (2) the task changes, or (3) the environment changes. Further information on control measures for all hazards listed on the forms can also be found on the HSA website. The hazards for ground works include the following: electricity, gas, plant and equipment, hand tools, working close to water, working close to public, excavation, dust, harmful gases, biological agents, manual handling and confined spaces.

Similar sets of forms are available for four other areas: house building, demolition, new commercial building and civil engineering. These areas contain slightly different risks. For example, the house building hazards include ground floor, upper floor, plant and lifting operations, electricity, roof work and roof space, falling objects, hand tools, gas and members of public. Information is available on how to deal with these specific risks in this type of work.

The website of this project includes interactive demonstrations of how to use the Ground Works form and the Civil Engineering form.

In the Publications section all SSWP publications are available for purchase online. They can also be ordered by phone.

This DVD is based on the Health & Safety Authority's Safe System of Work Plan. The disc includes Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian and Spanish commentaries.



2.4. What was achieved?

This action is relatively recent and ongoing and therefore evaluation is not available. Feedback has been positive. Moreover, HSA has had requests from other European jurisdictions to be allowed to use their model.

2.5. Success factors

This series of publications is very useful especially in the countries with a high and rising number of migrant construction workers coming from new EU Member States. The www.hsa.ie site is interesting and very user-friendly.

2.6. Further information

Contact information:
Health and Safety Authority
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James Joyce Street
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Tel: +353 1 614 7000
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2.7. Transferability

This concept can be applied easily in other countries and, if suitably modified, in environments other than construction work.

3. References, resources:

- <http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/reports/TE7809894ENC>