# Te Korowai Whakaruruhau

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service



**October 2026**

## RISK ASSESSMENTS AND RISK REGISTERS: MORE THAN JUST PAPERWORK

**Key Differences**

| Feature | Risk Assessment | Risk Register |
|---|---|---|
| **Nature** | An active **process or activity** (doing the analysis) | A static or living **document, table, or log** (storing the results) |
| **Timing** | Conducted **periodically** (e.g., annually, before new projects, or after changes) | Maintained **continuously** throughout the lifecycle of a project or business |
| **Primary Goal** | Analyses likelihood, impact, and whether controls work | Assigns risk owners, tracks mitigation plans, and provides enterprise visibility |
| **Relationship** | **Feeds** data into the risk register | **Stores and monitors** the data generated by assessments |

Risk assessments are one of the most effective ways to protect yourself, your colleagues, students, and others from harm. They are also a legal requirement, but most importantly, they help us identify potential issues before they become incidents.

Think of a risk assessment as a "what could go wrong?" conversation. It helps you identify hazards, understand who could be affected, evaluate the level of risk, and determine what controls are needed to prevent harm.

The University of Auckland's latest HSW Risk Assessment Template (Version 6) and additional guidance on completing risk assessments can be found here.

Once risks have been assessed, the key information should be transferred into a Risk Register. If the risk assessment is the detailed investigation, the risk register is the "big picture" view. It provides a central record of significant risks, the controls in place, and any actions needed to further reduce risk.

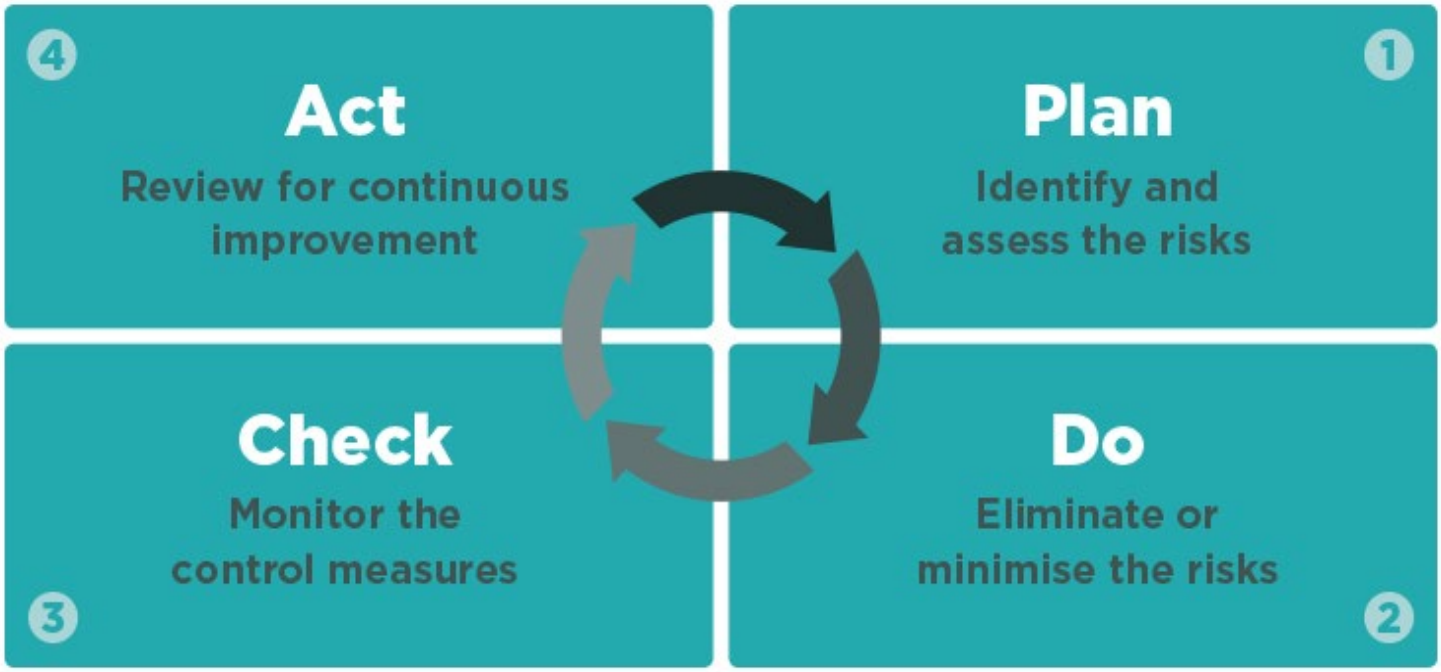
The Risk Register also helps teams track progress, assign responsibilities, monitor overdue actions, and review whether controls remain effective over time. A blank University of Auckland Risk Register template can be found on the Risk Assessment General information here.

In simple terms:

- Risk Assessment = Identifies and evaluates a specific risk.
- Risk Register = Records and tracks all significant risks in one place.
- Both together = Help ensure risks are actively managed, reviewed, and reduced.

Because a risk that's written down and regularly reviewed is far less likely to become an incident.

## Following these four steps can also help you with managing your work health and safety risks.




(WorkSafe, 2026)

*Risk assessment is the systematic process of identifying potential hazards, analysing their liklihood and impact, and implementing measures to control or eliminate them.*

*Its goal is to minimise negative outcomes and protect people, assets, or projects.*

# A LESSON FROM IMPROV

One way to build trust as a health and safety practitioner is to confound the expectation that your default position in response to any operational suggestion will be 'no'.

Speaking at the ePIC conference, Dr Megan Tranter said two words borrowed from improv theatre are powerful: "Yes, and ..."

She recalled her time as H&S leader with Netflix when director Sam Hargrave, working on the film Extraction 2 starring Chris Hemsworth, came up with the idea of landing actors onto a moving train from a hovering helicopter, in the snow.

Using her 'yes, and' philosophy, Tranter worked with Hargrave to come up with a safe way of achieving this scene: yes, director, and here is what we need to do to make it happen – safely.

Saying yes, she said, helps to build trust with both leaders and frontline workers.

"As a leader, how can I say more of 'yes, and' so I can move my agenda forward and not be seen as a block?"

Seattle-based Tranter, co-founder of the Institute for Safety Coaching and Leadership, described health and safety as a long game, and to play it well you need the ability to influence others. To do this, you need to demonstrate two qualities: warmth and competence.

"A lot of health and safety people are respected – competent – but not trusted, because low on warmth."

Even if your natural disposition isn't warm, you can take deliberate actions to signal higher warmth, including leading with the goals you share before displaying data or suggesting a control, be sure to articulate what both parties want.

Tranter suggested using the SPACE model to help expand your influence:

S – See the reality
P – Probe the hesitation
A – Affirm what is real (playback; you have heard them)
C – Connect (to what matters)
E – Enable (a small step)

Another hint? Ask before you tell by opening with a real question, which signals to others that you view them as competent. Sample: "What is stopping us from doing this?"

Starting questions with 'What' and 'How', she said, helps people feel psychologically safe and generates better answers.

(Safeguard Magazine, 14 September 2026)

# WHAT'S NEW, FOR YOU?

## Vice-Chancellor's Award for Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Nominations for the **Vice-Chancellor's Award for Health, Safety and Wellbeing** are open. This is a great time to start thinking now about colleagues or teams who champion a safe, healthy workplace.

This award is for exemplary contributions to leadership of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) culture. Nominations that highlight people or teams who are contributing to creating an environment where HSW is as part of how we care for one another.

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## Easier way for health, safety and wellbeing reporting




Staff, Students and Visitors are now able to make health, safety and wellbeing reports quickly and easily, using ***SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING – MAKE A DIFFERENCE!*** QR codes, that are available on posters across faculties, on e-screens, and lecture theatre screens.

By reporting concerns, incidents, accidents and hazards as soon as possible you can help keep everyone safe. **Just scan the QR code and submit a report!** It only takes a couple of minutes.

Staff can continue to use the University's existing incident reporting system or use the new QR codes.

Both reporting options ensure reports are sent to the correct team and managed appropriately.

## Tips for Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs)

"HSRs aren't expected to be the ChatGPTs of health and safety."

Opening the SafeSkills conference in Auckland, MC Helen Sadgrove shared a few tips for HSRs based on her experience working with them in multiple organisations as both an employee and as a consultant.

First, how do you represent your work group? If you work a day shift, how do you represent the people on the night shift? "The legislative framework doesn't operate without you," she said. "You are elected; you answer to the people who put you in the role." The first issue to resolve, then, is how best to serve them?

A second question: people approach HSRs with all sorts of issues, some serious, some clearly out of scope, and some which are in a grey area. How to sort the wheat from the chaff? She suggested asking four questions about the issue:

- What is the risk? (Name it clearly)
- Who creates the risk?
- Who could be harmed by the risk? (Name them!)
- What is the fix? (reasonably practicable)

If these questions can't be answered, then the issue probably isn't one for an HSR to grapple with.

Finally, does everyone you deal with understand the scope and limitations of the HSR role? "You might be the only person in your organisation who knows what your role is. Even your health & safety team might think you are a health & safety advisor in training."

An HSR, she said, is not a de facto member of the H&S team, even though some people might view them that way. "You need to communicate your role."

**(Safeguard Magazine, 7 September 2026)**

# SAFETY MOMENT

## Hokkaido University student dies following hydrofluoric acid exposure

A graduate student at Hokkaido University has died after severe exposure to hydrofluoric acid (HF) during an experiment in a science faculty building, the university announced 27 August. Two students who attempted to rescue the victim sustained minor injuries but are in stable condition.

HF is uniquely hazardous because of its ability to penetrate skin with a delayed onset of pain. The fluoride ion binds with systemic calcium and can cause severe tissue destruction or fatal cardiac arrest.

The university released a brief statement on its website but declined to provide further details—such as the student's department or principal investigator—when contacted by C&EN, responding that an investigation into the cause of the accident is ongoing.

> *"Hokkaido University takes this tragic accident extremely seriously," an automated translation of the statement says. "The loss of a student's precious life in an accident of this nature at a university, where education and research should be conducted in a safe environment, is a matter of profound concern."*

Hokkaido University has been expanding its semiconductor research capabilities. It established the Institute for Frontier Education and Research on Semiconductors in 2025 and opened a semiconductor prototyping laboratory in July. HF is widely used as an etching agent in computer chip fabrication, though it is not known whether the accident was related to semiconductor research.

Labs that handle HF typically stock calcium gluconate gel, which is intended to chelate fluoride ions before they can penetrate the skin. While several Japanese universities recommend keeping calcium gluconate on hand, safety experts note that topical gels may be insufficient in cases of extensive body exposure.

**(Chemical & Engineering News, 28 August 2026)**

# REGULATORS CORNER

## City Rail Link proves safety and scale can go hand in hand



As Auckland celebrates the opening of the City Rail Link (CRL), WorkSafe New Zealand is recognising the project's high standard of health and safety performance, demonstrating what can be achieved when safety is embedded from the start.

The City Rail Link is the country's largest transport infrastructure project and one of the country's most complex construction undertakings.

With more than 21.5 million hours worked, the project recorded no serious injuries and two incidents requiring hospital admission, setting a new benchmark for large-scale construction in New Zealand. WorkSafe worked alongside CRL Limited and Link Alliance, the organisations responsible for overseeing and delivering the project, throughout its construction. The regulator provided expertise in underground construction, energy safety, occupational health, silica dust management and major project risk management.

WorkSafe's Chief Inspector Extractives, Paul Hunt, says the project's strong health and safety performance was driven by a high engagement approach that secured commitment at every level, from the boardroom through to the frontline workforce.
"It's so important to get people on the same page with health and safety before the project even starts," he says. "Most people want to get on board, as long as they understand it."

"That's what happened with City Rail Link – they were really open to it. We had regular meetings set up and on-the-ground inspectors met with on-the-ground project managers. It helped build trust and allow for collaboration to resolve any issues quickly."

"This project demonstrates that serious harm is not inevitable in complex construction environments. Through strong leadership, effective risk management, and a commitment to continuous improvement, those involved in City Rail Link have shown what is possible."

"The lessons from City Rail Link extend well beyond this project," says Paul Hunt.
"The approaches developed here influenced major infrastructure projects elsewhere – such as the Christchurch Stadium and the recently opened Dunedin Hospital Outpatient building, which were also completed with outstanding safety results."

"The real legacy of City Rail Link isn't just new transport infrastructure. It's demonstrating what can be achieved when everyone involved is committed to keeping people safe."

**(WorkSafe, 14 September 2026)**

# OUT AND ABOUT WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Health and Safety Rep Community of Interest Group (CoI)

The University of Auckland Health and Safety Rep Community of Interest Group represents everyone at the University, bringing a level playing field of representation from across the University to the Senior Leadership HSW Committee meetings.

Information on meetings are posted on the HSW Rep Community of Interest MS Teams page.

Meetings are hybrid to encourage inclusivity and participation across the University.

**Not a member?** - request to join the HSW Rep Community of Interest Group via hsw@auckland.ac.nz

# GROW YOUR LEARNING

## Courses

- Fire Safety and Warden Training
- First Aid Refresher
- Comprehensive First Aid Course (with Online Pre-Learning)
- Health and Safety: Role of a Leader and Manager
- Risk Assessment
- Moving and Handling Training (Manual Handling): On-demand sessions
- Chemical Safety Management in Labs
- An Introduction to Personal Safety & De-escalation: On-demand sessions
- Incident Management & Investigation course
- Hidden Disabilities Sunflower workshop
- Health and Safety Representative: Initial Training
- Mental Health 101

## Evacuation Chair Training

Phil Jackson is now able to offer train the trainer sessions for the Evac Chairs we have installed. The cost of the session is $415 + GST, with a maximum of 8 people per session. Anyone wishing to become a trainer must have received training in the use of the chair prior to attendance.

If you know anyone who wishes to deliver Evac Chair training in-house, let us know via emil hsw@auckland.ac.nz and we'll set up a session.

# REO SPACE

## WHAKATAUKI




(Western Heights School)

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