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1. Purpose:

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that all risks associated with the use of chemicals within Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) are controlled and managed.

2. Scope:


This procedure applies to all chemicals used in DEECD workplaces including schools and central and regional offices.

3. References:


- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007*
- *Dangerous Goods Act 1985*
- *Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000*
- Dangerous Goods Storage and Handling Code of Practice 2000
- Australian Dangerous Goods Code 7th Edition (ADG7 Code)
- Australian Standard 1319 Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment
- AS 1345 Identification of the Contents of Piping, Conduits and Ducts
- Hazardous Substances Information System (HSIS): <http://hsis.ascc.gov.au>

4. Definitions:

Dangerous Goods:	Items or substances that may present an immediate safety hazard such as fire, explosion or toxic cloud emission. Dangerous goods are designated into nine different categories under the Australian Dangerous Goods Code (ADG7 Code) according to their immediate physical or chemical effect. They are easily recognisable by the diamond shaped sign displayed on the substance label.
Deputy Health and Safety Representative (DHSR):	An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the absence of the HSR.
Designated Work Group (DWG):	A group of employees in the workplace who share similar workplace health and safety concerns and conditions.
Hazard:	Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness or loss.
Hazardous Substances:	Dilute or concentrated substances in solid, liquid or gas form that have the potential to present a risk of harm to human health during handling or use. A substance is classified as hazardous by the Hazardous Substance Information System (HSIS) based on its health effects.
Health and Safety Committee:	A cooperative forum for employers and employees to work together on OHS issues.
Health and Safety Representative (HSR)	An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to OHS.
Incident:	An event that has led to or could have led to an injury. Incidents include near misses, accidents and injuries.

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Injury:	Physical damage or harm to a person (includes work related illness).
Management OHS Nominee:	A position nominated by the Workplace Manager to oversee the operational aspects of implementing health, safety and wellbeing initiatives, policies and procedures.
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS):	A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) is a document prepared by the manufacturer, importer or supplier of a dangerous good, hazardous substance or other chemicals. A MSDS describes the properties and uses of a particular substance. This includes details about substance identity, chemical and physical properties, health hazard information and precautions for storage, use and safe handling.
Minor Storage:	Stored quantities in the one location that are less than the “Placarding Quantity” in Schedule 2 of the <i>Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000</i> (refer to Guidance Sheet 3: Restricted Chemicals). A workplace could have quantities of dangerous goods for which placarding is not required to be displayed.
Packing Group:	Packing groups are used to indicate the degree of danger associated with dangerous goods within a given class. This information is used to determine appropriate storage (i.e. placarding) and transport requirements.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):	Items and clothing intended to provide individual employees with some protection from hazards. Examples of PPE may include protective clothing and footwear, dust masks, and respirators or breathing apparatus.
Placards:	Visual warning of the hazards associated with the dangerous goods stored on site.
Placarding Quantity:	The quantity of dangerous goods being stored which is required to be displayed on a placard according to class and packing group as per Schedule 2 of the <i>Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2000</i> (refer to Guidance Sheet 3: Restricted Chemicals).
Risk:	A description of the likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing injury or illness.
Risk Assessment:	The process of determining the likelihood and consequence of injury, disease or illness or damage arising from exposure to a hazard.
Risk Control:	Measures that eliminate or reduce the risks associated with hazards using the “hierarchy of controls”, where elimination of the hazard will be the first strategy considered.
Safe Work Procedure (SWP):	Are documented procedures that outline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The hazards associated with performing a particular task (which may include equipment use, chemical use or working in hazardous environments); ▪ Safety instructions in performing that task including any checks and precautions to be exercised; ▪ Any required PPE to protect employees, students, contractors and visitors; and ▪ A list of the persons authorised to supervise and train persons in how to undertake the task safely.

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Subsidiary Risk: Where a dangerous good presents hazards for more than one class or division the hazards that are not the primary hazard are referred to as the subsidiary risk. Where a significant subsidiary risk applies, an additional class label is required.

Workplace Manager: The Manager or Principal responsible for the school, central office, regional office or other DEECD workplace.

5. Responsibility:

Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominees are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all dangerous goods and hazardous substances are identified within the workplace and included in a chemical register;
- Ensuring risk assessments and controls are established for dangerous goods and hazardous substance use in consultation with the HSR and employees;
- Developing and implementing Safe Work Procedures (SWP) specific to the handling of dangerous goods and hazardous substances stored in the workplace;
- Ensuring safety information, including MSDS and the Chemical Register is readily available;
- Ensuring chemicals are not introduced into the workplace without considering and managing any associated risk;
- Ensuring restricted substances are not used or stored in the workplace;
- Providing appropriate training and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for employees who may be exposed to dangerous goods and hazardous substances; and
- Ensuring relevant signage is displayed, highlighting the hazardous nature of chemicals used or stored in the workplace.

Employees are responsible for:

- Reading and familiarising themselves with the contents of the MSDS for dangerous goods and hazardous substances they are required to use;
- Ensuring all dangerous goods and hazardous substance use and storage is in accordance with the MSDS;
- Assisting in the development and implementation of SWP and conducting risk assessments specific to dangerous goods and hazardous substances; and
- Supporting the Workplace Manager and Management OHS Nominee/s in the implementation of and adherence to policies and procedures relating to dangerous goods and hazardous substances.


6. Procedure:

6.1 Chemical Register and MSDS/Safety Information

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to ensure that all dangerous goods and hazardous substances stored or handled in the workplace are entered into a **Chemical Register** and MSDS are obtained.

The **Chemical Register** is to be kept up to date and reviewed when hazards are identified, risk controls are changed or new chemicals are introduced to the workplace. **The Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must maintain a hard copy collection of current MSDS (issued within 5 years) from the manufacturer or supplier of all chemicals stored and used in the workplace.

Where a MSDS has not been provided by the manufacturer, one may be obtained from the supplier or alternatively from Chemwatch at <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/intranet/health/chemwatch.htm>

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Note: The MSDS obtained for each chemical must be the authorised version prepared by the manufacturer or first supplier.

The **Chemical Register** and associated MSDS is to be kept by the **Workplace Manager and /or Management OHS Nominee** in a central location which is known and accessible to all employees in the workplace as well as any other person who is likely to be exposed to the hazardous substances and/or dangerous goods. Each MSDS should be reviewed to consider and manage any associated risk and relevant details entered into the **Chemical Register**.

Further, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** should make sure that each work area, e.g. Domain, Section, Division, Cleaning Contractor etc is responsible for obtaining and maintaining current MSDS relevant to their work area in a folder located where the bulk of chemicals are stored and where they are accessible to all employees under their control.

6.2 Identify Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to identify all dangerous goods and hazardous substances within the workplace and enter them into a **Chemical Register**.

Examples of locations where dangerous goods and hazardous substances may be found include:

- Materials technology areas;
- Art rooms;
- Dark rooms;
- Laboratories;
- Storage areas (including the cleaner's cupboard);
- Maintenance/Garden sheds;
- Kitchens/canteens; and
- Swimming pools (where a workplace may have one).

While dangerous goods are generally easy to identify (the diamond symbol on the product/label indicates the class), hazardous substances can be more difficult to identify.

The product label provides some information about the hazards of the substance and precautions for use. If the product is a hazardous substance the label should display the word 'hazardous' or other similar warnings. The MSDS will be the primary information source for most chemicals and includes details about substance identity, chemical and physical properties, health hazard information and precautions for storage, use and safe handling. Another source of information is the online Hazardous Substances Information System (HSIS) accessible at <http://hsis.ascc.gov.au>

The Safety Phrases and Risk Phrases for a specific chemical also provide additional information about the safety precautions and risks associated with the storage and handling of the product.


Examples of types of hazardous substances include:

- Acids;
- Caustic substances;
- Disinfectants;
- Pesticides and herbicides; and
- Solvents and thinners.

Note: The DEECD has a number of restricted substances which must not be kept in any DEECD workplace (refer to section 6.7).

6.3 Introducing Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances into the Workplace

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that the requirements

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of the **Purchasing Procedure** are adhered to. The procedure requires that the risks associated with procurement of goods are identified prior to purchase. New substances may present a risk to employees, students, contractors and visitors. Potential risks associated with a new chemical must be identified prior to purchase. **Guidance Sheet 3: Restricted Chemicals** provides a list of restricted substances that are not permitted on DEECD workplaces at any time.

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**, in consultation with the HSR and employees, must make sure that no new substances are introduced into the workplace without first receiving the manufacturer's MSDS and completing a **Safe Work Procedure** template using information from the MSDS to determine if the chemical can be safely introduced into the workplace (refer to Section 6.5 and 6.6 below and the **OHS Risk Management Procedure**).

6.4 Risk Assessment of Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** is to make sure that a **Safe Work Procedure** is completed for each chemical with a high or extreme risk rating as identified in the **Chemical Register**. In order to complete the **Safe Work Procedure**, the MSDS must be reviewed to determine whether or not the health and safety requirements defined within the MSDS can be met by the DEECD workplace and/or other persons such as contractors who may be exposed to, or use the substance.

Contact the OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 or your Regional WorkCover/OHS Advisor if technical assistance is required in completing the **Safe Work Procedure** template.

6.5 Controlling Risks

6.5.1 Risk Management of Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**, in consultation with the HSR and employees need to control and reduce risks in accordance with the information provided in the MSDS.

At all times the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** should make sure the risks posed to employees, students, contractors and visitors from dangerous goods and hazardous substances is as low as reasonably practicable.

When determining controls to reduce risks the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must follow the hierarchy of controls outlined in the **OHS Risk Management Procedure**. Examples of effective controls (from most to least effective) could include:

ELIMINATION

- Eliminate the use of the substance (e.g. using a physical process instead of a chemical process).

SUBSTITUTION


- Use a safer substance or a safer form of the substance (e.g. using a detergent instead of chlorinated solvent for cleaning).

ENGINEERING

- Physical controls that eliminate, isolate or reduce exposure to people or property (e.g. provision of drip trays to limit the area of contamination in the event of spills and leaks, using local exhaust ventilation system such as fume cupboards).

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Using SWP and other administrative processes including good housekeeping and storage practises (e.g. vacuuming or wet sweeping to suppress dust being generated, storing chemicals in purpose built cabinets).

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PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Protective clothing and equipment for employees, contractors and visitors (e.g. overalls, gloves, chemical resistant safety glasses).

6.5.2 Labelling

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that all dangerous goods and hazardous substances are clearly labelled to ensure proper identification. The label on the container in which the dangerous good and/or hazardous substance is supplied in must be intact, legible and unaltered.

All chemicals shall be retained in their original packaging where practicable, or where necessary decanted into a suitable container recommended by the manufacture/supplier. To allow for monitoring of the age of the chemical and the use of older materials first, the date of receipt and date of opening of the container should be marked on the original container.

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that all decanted chemicals are correctly labelled if not used immediately, including the product name and Dangerous Goods Class/Division diamonds for dangerous goods (if applicable).

Containers with unknown substances in them should be labelled 'CAUTION DO NOT USE: UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE' and then disposed of in accordance with local government waste guidelines.

6.5.3 Labelling of Enclosed Systems

Hazardous substances contained in an enclosed system (such as a pipe or piping system or a process or reactor vessel) need to be identified and labelled. Suitable means of identification include colour coding (AS 1319, Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment) and labelling (AS 1345 Identification of the Contents of Piping, Conduits and Ducts).

6.5.4 Storage

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that storage of chemicals is conducted in accordance with [Guidance Sheet 1: Chemical Storage](#).

Where possible, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that only **minor storage** quantities of dangerous goods are maintained in the workplace (refer to Storage Guidelines in [Guidance Sheet 1: Chemical Storage](#)). Storage quantities should be kept to a minimum to cater for demand however excessive storage for long periods should be avoided.


The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that if the workplace is storing dangerous goods exceeding the minor storage quantities, placards are provided as a visual warning. For more advice contact the OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 or your Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisor.

6.5.5 Signage

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that all storage cupboards, cabinets and refrigerators used for storing chemicals are labelled to indicate the type and class of chemicals being stored in them. Additional warning signs may also be required, such as "DO NOT USE TO STORE FOOD".

6.5.6 Disposal of Chemicals

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure dangerous goods

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and hazardous substances are disposed of in accordance with local legislation. For more advice on disposal, please contact the OHS Advisory Service on 1300 074 715 or your Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisor.

6.5.7 Emergency Facilities

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** in consultation with the HSR and employees must make sure that appropriate emergency management provisions are available for use in the event of a chemical emergency. The emergency management provisions may include:

- Spill kits;
- Additional plant or equipment to mitigate or reduce environmental impact (e.g. trade waste tanks/sumps);
- PPE;
- Fire blankets/extinguishers;
- First aid kits;
- Eye wash stations/eye wash kits/emergency showers;
- Appropriate numbers of trained emergency wardens and first aiders;
- Appropriately displayed emergency contact details; and
- Emergency shut down procedures for equipment.

Refer to **Guidance Sheet 4: Chemical Spill Management** for additional information.

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that all fire protection equipment is maintained in an operable condition and that all relevant emergency contact telephone numbers are displayed in prominent locations at the workplace (e.g. where the chemicals are stored).

6.5.8 Consultation and Training


The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must make sure that arrangements are in place for consultation in relation to chemical management with HSR and employees. Consultation should occur in relation to:

- The introduction of new chemicals to the workplace;
- The identification and assessment of risks associated with chemicals at the workplace;
- Development of SWP;
- Decisions about control measures to be implemented;
- Induction and training requirements; and
- Choice of a designated doctor for health surveillance (if required).

The **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee** must maintain records of any such consultation. For general requirements related to consultation, refer to the **Consultation and Communication Procedure**.

For employees required to use dangerous goods and hazardous substances or for employees who have the potential to be exposed to hazardous substances in the workplace, the **Workplace Manager and/or Management OHS Nominee**, is to make sure employees are trained in the safe use and storage of the substance. This training is to include:

- The requirement for, and type of information provided on labels of products;
- The location of, and how to read the MSDS for dangerous goods and hazardous substances;
- The control methods required to reduce the risk of an incident, near miss or harm to human health occurring (e.g. SWP to be followed in the use, storage, transport and disposal of dangerous goods and hazardous substances);
- The proper use and fitting of PPE;
- First aid treatment, incident reporting procedures and emergency management protocol to be

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- followed in case of injury or illness; and
- Any health surveillance required in order to detect the effects of exposure to a dangerous good or hazardous substance.

Records of this training are to be recorded and maintained by the **Workplace Manager** and/or **Management OHS Nominee** as outlined in *Induction and Training Procedure*.

6.6 Inspections

Inspections should be conducted (minimum quarterly) to ensure that dangerous goods and hazardous substances are being appropriately managed. Where a high or extreme risk chemical is identified (refer to section 6.4) specific checks relating to its safe storage and handling should be included in the *Workplace Inspection Checklist*.

6.7 Restricted Substances

There are some substances which are restricted for use in DEECD workplaces due to the risks associated with their use (refer to *Guidance Sheet 3: Restricted Chemicals*).

If any of these restricted substances are found in the workplace, they must be immediately disposed of following advice from local government authorities using the most effective method or by contacting a chemical disposal agent. For further information please contact the OHS Advisory Service on **1300 074 715** or your Regional OHS/WorkSafe Advisor.

7. Related Documentation:

Chemical Register

Consultation and Communication Procedure

Induction and Training Procedure

OHS Risk Register

OHS Risk Management Procedure

Purchasing Procedure

Safe Work Procedure Template

Workplace Inspection Procedure


Workplace Inspection Checklist

Guidance Sheet 1: Chemical Storage

Guidance Sheet 2: Dangerous Goods Classification System

Guidance Sheet 3: Restricted Chemicals

Guidance Sheet 4: Chemical Spill Management

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8. Version Control

Version	Section Amended	Amendment	Date Created	Author
2	All	<p>Change in terminology to chemical management, previously dangerous goods and hazardous substances.</p> <p>Review and deletion of requirement to conduct risk assessment on chemicals.</p>	July 2010	Employee Health Unit