



An Assessment of Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace

Overview of the People at Work Project

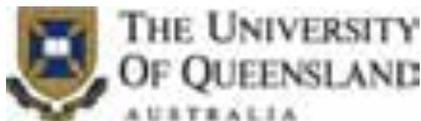
The People at Work Project is a research collaboration among The University of Queensland and The Australian National University, with Workplace Health and Safety Queensland, WorkCover NSW, WorkSafe Victoria, Comcare, Safe Work Australia, and *beyondblue* (Partner Organisations). The project is funded by the Australian Research Council and the Partner Organisations.



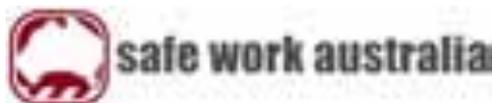
Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Organisations that participate in the People at Work Project will be contributing to a national research project aimed at understanding how workplace characteristics influence employee health and well-being in different industries and occupations.



Australian
National
University



Outline

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Overview

- The People at Work Project is a psychosocial risk assessment process based on a 5-step process of (1) Preparing, (2) Assessing, (3) Consulting on Outcomes, (4) Taking Action, and (5) Reviewing.
- It aims to help organisations identify and manage psychosocial hazards (i.e., high job demands and low job resources) that are detrimental to the psychological health of workers.
- The People at Work Project has been underway since 2008, accumulating comparison benchmarks for approximately 7,000 Australian workers across the public and private sectors, most industries, and occupations.

Implementation Process

5-Step Risk Management Approach for the People at Work Project



Why Manage Psychosocial Risks?

- In Australia, workplace health and safety is covered by individual state-based legislation. While there may be differences, the general principles are the same, requiring employers, so far as is reasonably practicable, to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health, including psychological health. For further information about this, refer to your local regulator.
- Apart from legislative requirements, it makes good business sense to prevent or minimise the risks to psychological health. Work environments that contain these risks can have significant human and financial costs.

Benefits of Participating

- ◎ Participating organisations will have access to:
 - > a reliable and valid online risk assessment tool at no cost (if paper surveys are required, organisations will be asked to meet costs associated with printing, survey packing, and manual data entry)
 - > resources to support organisations implementing a psychosocial risk management approach and evaluating the effectiveness of chosen interventions

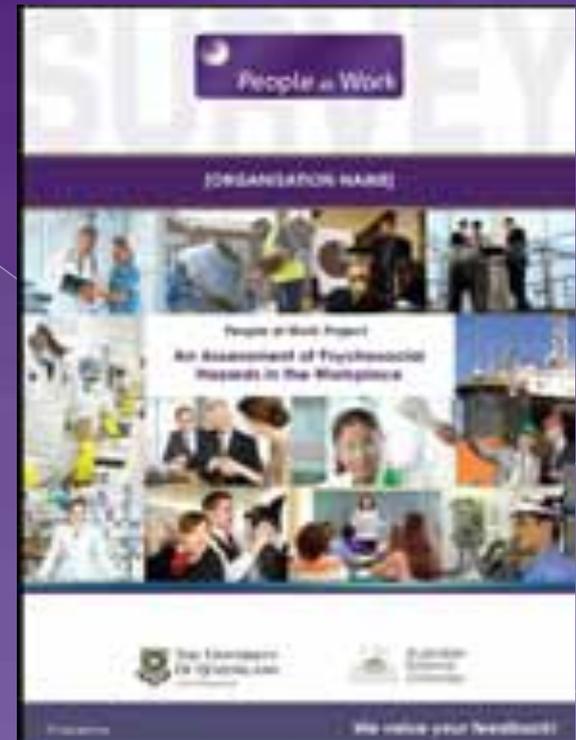
- ◎ Participating organisations receive a tailored organisational report and up to 10 breakdown reports for workgroups that highlight specific workplace risks to psychological health.

- ◎ Additional benefits include:
 - > focus on prevention of work-related psychosocial risk factors
 - > communicating a clear message to workers that their organisation values their health and well-being
 - > taking positive steps towards complying with health and safety laws in relation to psychological health

Survey - Overview

- The psychosocial risk factors included in the survey are based on a comprehensive review of the occupational stress literature.
- Research highlights the importance of managing high levels of Job Demands (i.e., work pressures) and low levels of Job Resources (i.e., protective factors) as these have been shown to have a detrimental effect on the psychological health of workers.
- The People at Work Survey assesses:

High Job Demands	Low Job Resources
Role Overload	Job Control
Role Conflict	Supervisor Support
Role Ambiguity	Co-Worker Support
Cognitive Demand	Praise and Recognition
Emotional Demand	Procedural Justice
Group Task Conflict	Change Consultation
Group Relationship Conflict	



Survey - Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many workers do you need to participate in the survey?

Organisations with at least 20 workers are eligible to participate in the survey. Ideally, everyone in the organisation should be invited and encouraged to participate to ensure that your psychosocial risk assessment is representative of your organisation. However, for very large organisations, it is possible to select a random sample of workers or target a specific group of workers to participate.

2. What if my organisation has less than 20 workers?

It is still possible for your organisation to participate in the People at Work Project. Please contact us to discuss options that are suitable for your organisation.

Survey - Frequently Asked Questions

3. Can we alter the survey?

The survey cannot be altered because doing so would alter your psychosocial risk profile and affect our ability to compare your organisation's profile to our existing normative database. However, there is the opportunity to include additional questions, should there be a specific issue that your organisation would like to have addressed.

4. Can the survey be adapted for workers with visual impairments or blindness?

Yes. Should any workers in your organisation require tailoring of the survey design to suit their needs, we have a number of options available for administering the survey in such a way that the confidentiality of responses is guaranteed.

5. How long does it take to complete the survey?

Completing the survey takes approximately 30 minutes.

Survey - Frequently Asked Questions

6. Can my organisation do the survey using a combination of online and paper surveys?

Yes, we will strive to meet your needs in terms of how the survey is administered. The survey can be administered online at no cost. If paper surveys are required, organisations will be asked to meet the costs of consumables associated with printing, survey packing, and manual data entry. Please refer to our “Pricing Schedule” for an overview of these costs on the People at Work Project website.

Survey - Frequently Asked Questions

7. What measures do you take to protect confidentiality?

For online administration of surveys, we use numerous security standards and procedures to protect personally identifiable information and prevent unauthorised access to confidential information. Qualtrics, the company that hosts the People at Work Survey, uses Transport Layer Security (TLS) encryption (also known as HTTPS) for all transmitted data. Qualtrics also protects surveys with passwords and HTTP referrer checking. All stored survey responses are encrypted, and data on deprecated hard drives are destroyed by U.S. DOD methods and delivered to a third-party data destruction service.

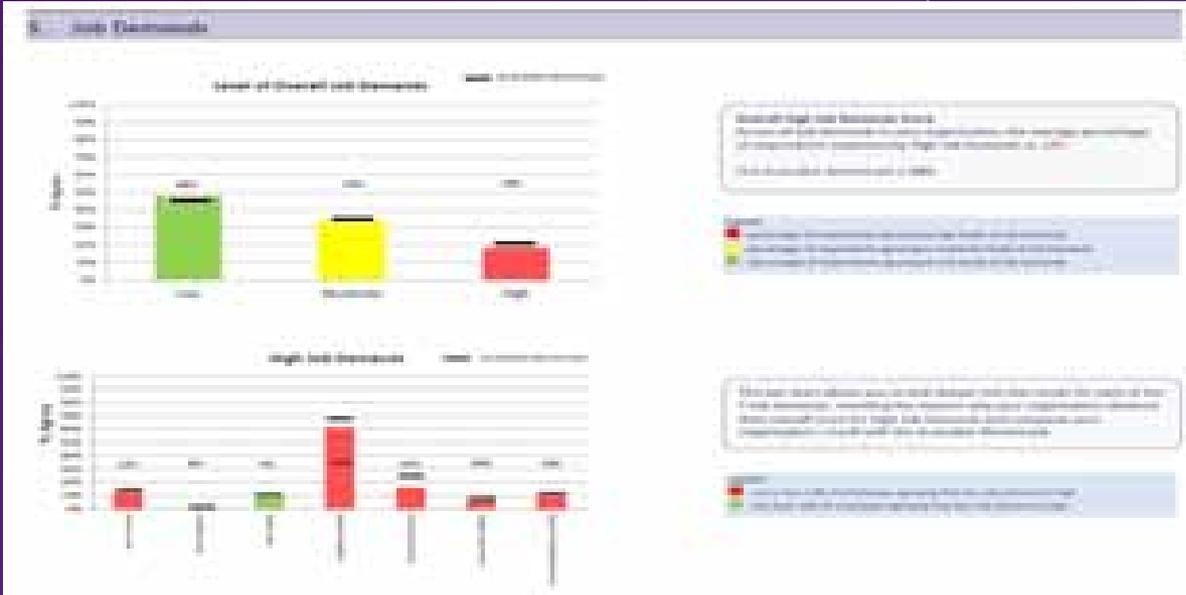
Responses are anonymous and will remain completely confidential. At no point in time will anyone (other than the UQ and ANU researchers) have access to the data. The Partner Organisations will not receive questionnaires after completion.

Feedback will be done in such a way as to ensure individuals cannot be identified. Responses will be averaged across groups of workers in your organisation and reported at the group-level. Furthermore, as part of the conditions of the universities' ethical clearance for this project, we cannot report on very small workgroups (i.e., less than 10 responses) to ensure anonymity is protected.

Reports - Overview

- Based on the results of the survey, organisations receive an overall report outlining a number of key pieces of information:
 1. level of Psychological Well-Being in your organisation
 2. percentage of workers experiencing High Job Demands and Low Job Resources
 3. comparisons of Psychosocial Risk Factors with Australian Benchmarks
 4. identification of Psychosocial Risk Factors that should be targeted for intervention
 5. comparisons of the Psychosocial Risk Factors among each of your workgroups (up to a maximum of 10 workgroups) with your organisation's average
 6. prevalence of Bullying (both experienced and witnessed), as well as the most common behaviours and sources

Reports - Example



Approximate Timeframes

- You need to allow enough time to prepare your organisation (e.g., conducting internal communications and establishing internal systems to support the process).
- Depending on whether your organisation chooses to use online or paper surveys, this will impact the time taken to deliver the People at Work Project.
- For a detailed guide on the steps to follow, please refer to our “Project Management Plan” on the People at Work Project website.



Key Messages

- ⦿ Access to a reliable and valid risk assessment tool for identifying psychosocial hazards in your workplace.
- ⦿ Substantial resources for managing these risks are available to support your organisation.
- ⦿ Engaging in the People at Work Project will assist you to meet your legal obligations in regards to workplace health and safety in a proactive manner.