

ADVISORY NOTE

A service to A.G. Coombs Group Clients

Safety-in-Design Responsibility

Building Operators have the onus to manage the residual risks from Safety-in-Design decisions and, as such, should actively engage in both the initial "Safety-in-Design" process and ongoing management of workplace safety.

Since the introduction of the Commonwealth Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Safety-in-design is a legislated requirement for the design, construction, on-going operation of buildings, all the way through to demolition. The Act details the responsibilities of designers, constructors, manufacturers, owners and operators to:

"...ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking".

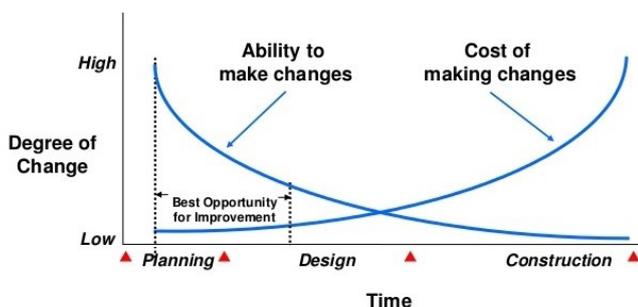
Under the Commonwealth Act, and in each state under their respective WH&S Acts, there is a clear onus on designers to ensure that built outcomes minimise risk to the Health & Safety of the persons:

- Who use the product
- Who construct the product
- Who decommission the product
- Who manage, operate and maintain the product

Safety-in-design is the integration of hazard identification and risk assessment methods in the design process to eliminate or minimise the risks of injury throughout the life of a facility.

When to Address Risk

The earlier an issue is identified and addressed, the less financial impact it will have. Improved co-ordination throughout the project planning phase may also reduce the ongoing operational and maintenance cost implications.



The integration of control measures early in the design process to eliminate or, if this is not reasonably practicable, minimise risks to health and safety throughout the life of the structure being designed.

Each stage of the project should include Safety-in-Design considerations:

Planning / Design phase

- Develop minimum standards / design expectations / tolerable risk criteria
- Conduct an "Initial assessment" including:
 - Identify the optimum long term solution
 - Consider future capacity
 - Consider all stages of asset life (including demolition)
 - Document your thought process in a Risk Register.
 - Ensure contractors are aware of their / your obligations to Safety-in-Design
- Alternate methods to achieve project goals

Construction phase

- Obtain copies of existing Safety-in-Design Risk Registers
- Continue Safety-in-Design workshops
- Engage professional Commissioning Management

Handover phase

- Ensure documentation and training includes appropriate information about safety-in-design considerations.
- Obtain the Safety-in-Design report from contractors
- Refer to/update risk register throughout life of the facility.
- Document safe work methods and control measures to be utilised when maintenance or works are undertaken.

Addressing Risk

The most effective approach to reducing hazards is to eliminate the risk all together or Substitute the risk with a safe alternative. Once all Elimination / Substitution options are exhausted, Engineered Controls can be implemented to reduce the risk associated with access and operation of the facility. What remains is deemed the Residual Risk.

Building owners are also responsible for ensuring people carrying out works on site are aware of the residual risks and control measures.

Managing Residual Risk

For buildings constructed after the introduction of the Act, identified risks and the residual risks should be identified in a Risk Register. This document categorises the risk with and without the nominated control measures and helps building operators discharge their statutory duty.

However, for older buildings, while the duty remains, it is a more significant challenge for building operators to manage these risks without a register provided by the designers. As such, building operators should apply a process to develop an initial register and then, review and refine this throughout the churn and change processes during the building's lifecycle.

For further advice or assistance contact:

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