HRP11: Hazardous Chemical Management

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) The purpose of this Procedure is to ensure Southern Cross University (SCU) management, employees, students and others are aware of the risks associated with hazardous chemical management in the workplace and relevant management strategies for the risk mitigation process.

(2) All employees, students, and others must follow this Procedure.

(3) This Procedure applies to all SCU Work Units and sites.

Section 2 - Definitions

ADG Code	The Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail, as in force or remade from time to time, approved by the Transport and Infrastructure Council. The ADG Code is accessible at the National Transport Commission website www.ntc.gov.au.
Article	A manufactured item, other than a fluid or particle, that is formed into a particular shape or design during manufacture and has hazard properties and a function that are wholly or partly dependent on the shape or design.
Biological monitoring	The measurement and evaluation of a substance, or its metabolites, in the body tissue, fluids or exhaled air of a person exposed to that substance, such as blood lead level monitoring.
Combustible substance	A substance that is combustible and includes dust, fibres, fumes, mists or vapours produced by the substance.
Consignor	A person or company that sends goods to someone, usually the person who is buying them: All goods are carried and stored at the risk of the consignor.
Container	Anything in or by which a hazardous chemical is, or has been, wholly or partly covered, enclosed or packed, including anything necessary for the container to perform its function as a container.
Correct classification	The set of hazard classes and hazard categories assigned to a hazardous chemical when it is correctly classified. Note: Part 1 of Schedule 9 of the WHS Regulation sets out when a hazardous chemical is correctly classified.
Competent Person	A person who has acquired through training, qualification or experience the knowledge and skills to carry out a function as prescribed in this procedure.
Duty holder	Any person who owes a work health and safety duty under the WHS Act including a person conducting a business or undertaking, a designer, manufacturer.
Globally Harmonised System (GHS)	The globally harmonised system for the classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS) is used internationally to standardise and harmonise the classification and labelling of chemicals.
Hazard	A situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include noisy machinery, a moving forklift, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, bullying and violence at the workplace.
Hazard category	A division of criteria within a hazard class in the GHS.
Hazard Class	The nature of a physical, health or environmental hazard under the GHS. Note: This includes dangerous goods.

Hazardous area	An area in which: 1. An explosible gas is present in the atmosphere in a quantity that requires special precautions to be taken for the construction, installation and use of plant. 2. Combustible dust is present or could reasonably be expected to be present in the atmosphere in a quantity that requires special precautions to be taken for the construction, installation and use of plant.
Hazardous chemical	Any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria for any one or more hazard classes in the GHS (including a classification referred to in Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulation), unless the only hazard class or classes for which the substance, mixture or article satisfies the criteria are any one or more of the following: 1. Acute toxicity—oral—category 5. 2. Acute toxicity—dermal—category 5. 3. Acute toxicity—inhalation—category 5. 4. Skin corrosion/irritation—category 3. 5. Aspiration hazard—category 2. 6. Flammable gas—category 2 . 7. Acute hazard to the aquatic environment—category 1, 2 or 3. 8. Chronic hazard to the aquatic environment—category 1, 2, 3 or 4. 9. Hazardous to the ozone layer.
Hazard pictogram	A graphical composition, including a symbol plus other graphical elements, that is assigned in the GHS to a hazard class or hazard category.
Hazard statement	A statement assigned in the GHS to a hazard class or hazard category describing the nature of the hazards of a hazardous chemical including, if appropriate, the degree of hazard.
Health and safety representative	An employee who has been elected by their work group under the WHS Act to represent them on health and safety matters.
HAZMAT Box	Generally, a waterproof red box to house the chemical manifest. Placed inside the boundary near outer warning placards and fitted with a 003 series lock for emergency services to access.
Label	Written, printed or graphical information elements concerning a hazardous chemical that is affixed to, printed on, or attached to the container of a hazardous chemical.
Manifest	A manifest is a written summary of specific types of hazardous chemicals with physicochemical hazards and acute toxicity that are used, handled or stored at a workplace. It contains more detailed information than a register of hazardous chemicals as its primary purpose is to provide emergency services organisations with information on the quantity, classification and location of hazardous chemicals at the workplace. It also contains information such as site plans and emergency contact details and must be stored in a red HAZMAT box at the front entrance of your place of work.
Manufacture	The activities of packing, repacking, formulating, blending, mixing, making, remaking and synthesising of the chemical.
Mixture	A combination of, or a solution composed of, two or more substances that do not react with each other.
Placard	A sign or notice displayed or intended for display in a prominent place, or next to a container or storage area for hazardous chemicals at a workplace, that contains information about the hazardous chemical stored in the container or storage area.
Placard quantity	The quantity referred to in Schedule 11 of the WHS Regulation, table 11.1, column 4 for that hazardous chemical.

Person with management or control of a workplace	1. A person conducting a business or undertaking to the extent that the business or undertaking involves the management or control, in whole or in part, of the workplace. A person with management or control of a workplace does not include: 1. The occupier of a residence, unless the residence is occupied for the purposes of, or as part of, the conduct of a business or undertaking, or a prescribed person.
Prime Contractor	A person or business who has been engaged and is responsible for a specific job, task or project.
Precautionary Statement	A phrase prescribed by the GHS that describes measures that are recommended to be taken to prevent or minimise the adverse effects of exposure to a hazardous chemical or the improper handling of a hazardous chemical.
Register	Chemical register.
Risk	The possibility harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.
Substance	A chemical element or compound in its natural state or obtained or generated by a process: 1. Including any additive necessary to preserve the stability of the element or compound and any impurities deriving from the process. 2. Excluding any solvent that may be separated without affecting the stability of the element or compound or changing its composition.
Supply	Selling or transferring ownership or responsibility for a chemical.

Section 3 - General Principles

Risk Management Process

(4) SCU will follow the risk management process outlined in WHSMP02: Hazard Identification, Risk and Opportunity Management Procedure. This process includes:

a. Hazard identification.
b. Risk assessment.
c. Risk Control.
d. Review of control measures.

Consultation

(5) Consultation is critical for effective risk management and is outlined in WHSMP07: Consultation, Communication and Participation.

Limitations

(6) This procedure does not cover selection and guidance for use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Please refer to the applicable Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

Lifecycle Management of Hazardous Chemicals

(7) SCU applies a lifecycle approach to hazardous chemical management.

Part A - Hazard Identification

Chemical Procurement Control

(8) All hazardous chemical purchases must be reviewed and approved prior to procurement. The responsible person (e.g. Supervisor, Lab Manager, or Procurement Officer) must:

a. Confirm the chemical is already listed in ChemWatch or request SDS upload.
b. Conduct a risk assessment (using WHSMP02 – FOR – 06) if the chemical is new, high-risk, or classified under Schedule 10, 11, or 14 of WHS Regulations.
c. Ensure suitable storage and spill response resources are available on site.
d. Consult the WHS Unit if the chemical may exceed manifest thresholds, requires licensing, or triggers health monitoring obligations.
e. Procurement of hazardous chemicals outside the University's preferred suppliers or chemical approval process is not permitted.

Chemical Register

(9) The Head of Work Unit must ensure that a register of hazardous chemicals at the workplace is prepared and kept up to date. SCU utilises ChemWatch as the system for maintaining a chemical register. ChemWatch must be readily accessible to employees involved in using, handling or storing hazardous chemicals and to anyone else who is likely to be affected by a hazardous chemical at the workplace. The register is a list of the product names, manufacturers, and quantities of all hazardous chemicals used, handled or stored at the workplace accompanied by the current SDS for each hazardous chemical listed. It must be updated as new hazardous chemicals are introduced or removed to/from the workplace.

Safety data sheets (SDS)

(10) The supplier or the manufacturer must provide the current SDS for the hazardous chemical when:

a. The chemical is first supplied to the workplace.
b. If the SDS is updated or amended.

(11) Work Units must ensure this occurs no later than when the chemical is first supplied at the workplace or as soon as practicable after it is first supplied, but before it is used at the workplace.

(12) Work Units must ensure that the current SDS is added to ChemWatch and printed copies readily accessible to employees involved in using, handling, transporting or storing the hazardous chemical at the workplace and emergency service employees, or anyone else who is likely to be exposed to the hazardous chemical.

Storage and Compatibility

(13) Quantities of hazardous chemicals should be kept to a minimum. Storage conditions specified in the SDS must be followed to ensure stability (e.g. maintain stabilizers or refrigeration, keep packages dry) and not above the manifest or placarding level. Hazardous chemicals may include requirements for separation and segregation by class type for all incompatible substances. This may require having a dedicated Australian Standard-approved cabinet for each type of hazardous chemical (depending on the quantity stored).

Labels

(14) Work Units must ensure that hazardous chemicals, the containers of hazardous chemicals are correctly labelled as per the GHS system and Code of Practice for Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals. Some labels do not contain all hazard information, for example, on some consumer product labels, some agricultural and veterinary chemical products, where the label is too small to fit all relevant hazard information, or when hazardous chemicals

that are dangerous goods are labelled to meet transport requirements. SCU should refer to the SDS when reading a label to ensure all safety precautions have been taken and appropriate PPE is available.

Manifests and Placards

(15) Each Work Unit in SCU must assess the quantities of hazardous substances and determine if they meet the threshold to place placards and maintain an up-to-date manifest as per the Code of Practice Managing Risks of Hazardous Substances. The Head of Work Unit will undertake this review in consultation with their employees.

Part B - Risk Assessment

Use of Chemicals

(16) All processes involving chemicals must be subject to WHSMP02 - FOR - 06 - Hazardous Substances Risk Assessment prior to commencement followed by implementation of controls.

(17) If there is a risk to health as identified in WHSMP02 - FOR - 06 - Hazardous Substances Risk Assessment prior to the work commencing (controls are to be implemented e.g. alternatives to those chemicals be found or the work not undertaken, or the task to be performed places an employee or others at higher risk, a risk assessment must be completed by the Work Unit. Please refer to WHSMP02: Hazard Identification, Risk and Opportunity Management Procedure for further guidance on conducting a risk assessment.

Training, Information and Instruction

(18) The Work Unit must ensure the information, training, or instruction is suitable and adequate to address the nature of the work and the degree of risk, confirming employee, and others, and understanding and application of controls. The training should address the following:

a. The nature of the hazardous chemicals involved and the risks to the worker.
b. The control measures, how to use and maintain hazardous chemicals correctly as outlined in the Safe Work Instruction (SWI).
c. The selection, use, maintenance and storage of any personal protective equipment (PPE) required to control risks.
d. Any health monitoring which may be required and the employee’s rights and obligations.
e. The labelling of containers of hazardous chemicals, the information that each part of the label provides and why the information is being provided as per the Globally Harmonised System and Code of Practice Labelling of Workplace Hazardous Chemicals.
f. The availability of SDS for all hazardous chemicals, how to access the SDS, and the information that each part of the SDS provides, and the work practices and procedures to be followed in the use, handling, processing, storage, transportation, cleaning up and disposal of hazardous chemicals.
g. Records of training provided to employees must be kept, documenting who was trained, when and on what.

Exposure Monitoring

(19) Work Units must ensure that no person at the workplace is exposed to a substance or mixture in an airborne concentration that exceeds the exposure standard for the substance or mixture. Air monitoring may be necessary to ensure that employees are not exposed to airborne concentrations above the chemical exposure standard.

(20) Biological monitoring should be done by Work Units to assess a worker’s overall exposure to a hazardous chemical that can be absorbed through the skin as well as inhaled. An Occupational Hygienist can be contracted to perform such assessments.

(21) Exposure standards do not represent a ‘no-effect’ level which makes exposure at that level safe for all employees.

(22) Work Units should ensure that exposure to any hazardous chemical is kept as low is as reasonably practicable. This includes exposure to hazardous chemicals that do not have exposure standards, as they may still pose a risk to employees. Exposure standard, including those for non-threshold genotoxic carcinogens (NTGC’s) that have the potential to cause cancer at any exposure level, can be found at SafeWork Australia.

Part C - Risk Control

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency and First Aid Procedures

(23) First Aid provisions must be provided in accordance with the SDS specifications. The Head of Work Unit is to ensure that where a hazardous chemical is used, the first aid items and systems match those stipulated by the SDS including:

a. The provision of first aid equipment.
b. That each worker has access to the equipment.
c. An adequate number of employees are trained to administer first aid or employees have access to an adequate number of people who have been trained to administer first .
d. Aid relevant to the chemical.
e. All employees have access to facilities for the administration of first aid.

Spill Kits

(24) Where necessary an appropriate spill kit which is compatible with the type and volume of spill in the area, which includes any necessary PPE must be readily available. Training in the use of the spill kit must also be provided as part on Induction and documented by the Work Unit. The spill kit must be kept up to date and monitored as part of the Workplace Inspection Checklist.

Work Unit Emergency Plans

(25) Emergency plans need to be available if the quantities of a hazardous chemical used, handled, generated or stored at the site exceeds manifest quantities for that hazardous chemical; and if quantities do not exceed manifest quantities.

(26) Emergency procedures need to be in place with employees trained in their implementation for each hazardous chemical used, handled, generated, transported or stored in the workplace.

(27) The emergency plan should typically include:

a. Potential emergency event/s the chemical may cause.
b. Injuries that would be expected and their first aid.
c. When to escalate to emergency services.
d. Immediate actions to prevent escalation of the incident.
e. Secondary actions to escalate the incident where it becomes uncontrolled.
f. Responsibilities and resources needed to contain and manage the incident.

Spill Prevention

(28) Spill prevention must be incorporated in the instructions for use of all substances using:

a. the advice provided in the SDS.
b. risk assessment conducted on the substance.
c. SWI's are developed using the SDS and or WHSMP02 - FOR - 06 - Hazardous Substance Risk Assessment.

(29) SWI's must include advice on action/s to be taken in the event of a substance spill as defined by the SDS or any associated risk assessment. Spill Kits must be readily available at all locations where hazardous chemicals are stored or used. All relevant employees must be trained in the SWI's and spill kit use.

(30) A spill kit containing all equipment and PPE necessary to deal with spills or leaks, including absorbent material, neutralising or decontaminating material, and relevant SWI's must be maintained at all sites where hazardous chemicals are used or stored.

(31) Any spills or leaks must be cleaned up immediately only if safe to do so for small spills depending on the chemicals, for large spills evacuate immediately i.e. break the glass in the red panels on the wall and call 000. Contaminated or damaged hazardous chemicals should not be returned to their original packaging, except for disposal or where this will not increase the risk.

(32) All incidents and near misses must be reported in accordance with WHSMP17: Incident Management, Reporting and Investigation.

Disposal

(33) All chemical waste needs to be handled, stored, labelled, and disposed of safely following the below recommendations.

a. SCU Transport, Storage and Disposal of Hazardous Substances Manual
b. The SDS
c. Relevant environmental legislation (NSW & QLD).
d. Waste must be segregated by hazard class and stored securely until collection.
e. Only SCU-approved licensed contractors may transport or dispose of chemical waste.
f. Waste transport certificates and disposal records must be retained.
g. ChemWatch must be updated to reflect disposal or removal.

Part D - Review of Control Measures

(34) SCU will regularly monitor and review the implementation of this procedure, associated risk controls and training requirements to ensure their effectiveness and ongoing suitability, in accordance with WHSMP15: Audit and Assurance.

Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities

(35) Refer to WHSMP13: Responsibility and Accountability Statement.

Section 5 - Records of Documentation

(36) All relevant documentation will be recorded and kept in accordance with WHS Legislation and other legislative obligations including:

a. Pre-purchased hazard assessments.
b. Hazardous chemicals risk assessments.
c. SWI's.
d. Workplace Inspections Checklists.
e. Training evidence.

Section 6 - Revision and approval history

(37) This Procedure will be reviewed as per nominated review dates or because of other events, such as:

a. Internal and external audit outcomes.
b. Legislative changes.
c. Outcomes from management reviews.
d. Incidents.

Section 7 - References

Work Health and Safety Act (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)
Work Health and Safety Regulation (in the applicable jurisdiction that SCU operates)
Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 NSW
Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2023
Environmental Protection Act 1994 Qld
Managing Risks of hazardous chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice. 2011 (QLD) 2022 (NSW)

Section 8 - Related Documents

WHSMP02 - FOR - 06 - Hazardous Substances Risk Assessment
WHSMP02: Hazard Identification, Risk and Opportunity Management
HRP06: Scheduled Substances
WHSMP13: Responsibility and Accountability Statement

Section 9 - References to Australian Standards

AS 1940:2017 Storage and Handling of flammable liquids

AS 2243.2:2021 Safety in Laboratories, Chemical aspects and storage

AS/NZS 4452:1997 The Storage and Handling of Toxic Substances

AS 3780:2008 The Storage and Handling of Corrosive Substances

AS 4326:2008 The storage and handling of oxidizing agents

AS/NZS 5026:2012 The storage and handling of Class 4 dangerous goods

AS/NZS 4681:2000 The storage and handling of Class 9 (miscellaneous) dangerous goods and articles

AS/NZS 3833:2007 The storage and handling of mixed classes of dangerous goods, in packages and intermediate bulk containers

AS 2252.2:2009 Controlled Environments Biological Safety Cabinets Class II – Design

AS 4775:2007 Emergency Eyewash and Shower Equipment

AS 4332:2004 The Storage and Handling of Gases in Cylinders

AS 4267:1995 Pressure regulators for use with industrial compressed gas cylinders

AS 4603:1999 Flashback arresters - Safety devices for use with fuel gases and oxygen or compressed air (Reconfirmed 2016)

AS 1894-1997 The storage and handling of non-flammable cryogenic and refrigerated liquids (Reconfirmed 2021)

AS 2896:2021 Medical gas systems - Installation and testing of non-flammable medical gas pipeline systems

AS 4289:1995 Oxygen and acetylene gas reticulation systems (Reconfirmed 2016)

AS/NZS 3788:2006 Pressure equipment—In-service inspection

AS/NZS 4501.1:2008 Occupational protective clothing Part 1 Guidelines on the selection use care and maintenance of protective clothing

AS/NZS 1715:2009 Selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment

AS/NZS 2243.8:2014 Safety in Laboratories Part 8 Fume cabinets

AS/NZS_IEC_60079.10.1:2022 Classification of areas - Explosive gas atmospheres

Transportation, storage and disposal of hazardous substances manual

Status and Details

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Head of Work Unit	Brendan Pearce Director, Workplace Relations
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