WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-DDC-TPL · Officers' Due Diligence Checklist

Product Overview

For: Directors, chief executives, owners and senior executives of Australian businesses, and the WHS advisers and company secretaries who support them

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

SAMPLE

A due diligence checklist for directors and senior executives: 28 plain-English questions on the six elements of due diligence, the evidence to look for, actions, and the questions to ask at every board or leadership meeting.

An officer must exercise due diligence to make sure the business meets its WHS duties. The checklist turns the six elements (know, understand, resource, respond, meet the duties and verify) into questions an officer can answer honestly, with the evidence they have actually seen and an action for every gap.

It focuses on what matters most: the most serious risks, the critical controls the business relies on, and whether someone has checked in the field that those controls work. A summary, an action plan and six questions for every board or leadership meeting complete it.

The guide explains who is an officer, the six elements, and how Victoria differs.

Written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws, in plain terms that also work in Victoria. The guide's state and territory notes show where the law differs, including the regulator to contact. Made by Orana Skills Centre.

What is included

Item	File
Officers' due diligence checklist: 28 questions on the six elements, evidence, actions, summary, action plan and board questions	02_TEMPLATE/Officers' Due Diligence Checklist.docx and .pdf
How to Use This Template: how to complete and adapt it, the law in brief, state and territory notes, records and every placeholder	01_START_HERE/How to Use This Template.pdf
Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Who it is for

- Directors and board members
- Chief executives, owners and senior executives who make decisions affecting the whole business
- WHS advisers preparing officers' briefings and annual due diligence reviews

File formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header

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SAMPLE · Officers' Due Diligence Checklist · Buy the full editable version:
training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/officers-due-diligence-checklist

How to Use This Template

How to complete, adapt and keep the officers' due diligence checklist

1 What this template is for

Due diligence is an officer's own, personal duty: to take reasonable steps to make sure the business meets its WHS duties. It is not met by signing a policy or receiving reports. It is met by knowing, understanding, resourcing, responding and, above all, verifying.

The checklist helps an officer test their own due diligence, find the gaps, and record the evidence and actions. Used each year, it builds a record of the reasonable steps taken.

2 How to use it

Step	What to do
1	Brief the officer on the WHS laws, the business's duties and the six elements before they start.
2	Gather the evidence: the risk register, the critical controls and their verification, incident and audit reports, the corrective action register, consultation records.
3	The officer answers each question, with a WHS adviser if helpful, writing the evidence actually seen.
4	Agree an action, an owner and a date for every Partly and No, and record them in the action plan.
5	Take the summary and actions to the board or leadership meeting, and follow them up at each meeting.
6	Use the six questions at every board or leadership meeting, and repeat the checklist each year and after a serious incident.

Make it work, not just exist

- Ask to see, not to be told. 'Show me the control' is the most useful question an officer can ask.
- Look at your most serious risks first. A long list of minor items can hide the one control that would stop a fatality.
- Lagging numbers, such as injury rates, show the past. Ask for leading measures: controls checked, actions closed, reports made.

3 The law, in brief

Under the model WHS Act, an officer of a business must exercise due diligence to make sure the business complies with its duties. Due diligence includes reasonable steps to: acquire and keep up to date knowledge of WHS matters; understand the nature of the operations and their hazards and risks; make sure the business has and uses appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks; make sure it has appropriate processes to receive and consider information about incidents, hazards and risks and to respond in a timely way; make sure it has and implements processes for meeting its duties; and verify that those resources and processes are provided and used.

An officer's duty is personal, and an officer can be prosecuted for failing to meet it whether or not the business is. Volunteer officers are generally protected from prosecution for this duty. Victoria takes a different approach: see the notes.

This template is written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws that the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, the ACT and the Northern Territory have adopted, each with its own variations. Victoria has its own Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) laws. The template uses plain terms that work in every jurisdiction; the state and territory notes below show where the law differs.

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Right-click > Change Picture

[Company name]

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Officers' Due Diligence Checklist

Six elements of due diligence, with the evidence an officer should see

Officer		**Role (director, chief executive, senior executive)**	
Business		**Period covered**	
Completed with (WHS adviser)		**Date**	

How to use it

- Answer each question honestly: Yes, Partly or No. Write the evidence you have seen, not what you have been told exists.
- For each Partly or No, write an action, with a date. Bring the summary and actions to the board or leadership meeting.
- Complete it each year, when you become an officer, and after a serious incident.

1 Know: acquire and keep up to date knowledge of work health and safety matters

Question	Answer	Evidence seen	Action and date
Do I understand my duties as an officer, and the duties of the business, under the WHS laws that apply to us?	☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No		
Have I had a briefing on WHS law, our duties and how they apply to our work, in the last two years?	☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No		
Am I told about changes in the law, codes of practice and regulator guidance that affect us?	☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No		
Do I know which codes of practice apply to our work, and how we follow them?	☐ Yes ☐ Partly ☐ No		

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Officers' Due Diligence Checklist

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. A due diligence checklist for directors and senior executives: 28 plain-English questions on the six elements of due diligence, the evidence to look for, actions, and the questions to ask at every board or leadership meeting.

What the full product contains

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Formats

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- Delivered as a single ZIP download

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https://training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/officers-due-diligence-checklist

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