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Workplace Safety and Health Guidelines

Contractor Management



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1. Introduction

Contractors are increasingly being engaged in a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from installation to maintenance and service. It is important to manage relationships with contractors to ensure that safety and health is accorded due attention throughout the contract duration. Both the client and the contractor are responsible for the safety and health of their employees and the public at the workplace.

Proper contractor management process is essential to ensure that contractors do not create unnecessary risks for themselves or others. If the contractor management process is ineffective, persons at or near the workplace may be exposed to risks which may cause serious injuries or fatalities.

While contracted work requires proper management to minimise risk and meet safety and health standards, all parties must collaborate to ensure that the safety and health system is effective.

1.1 Scope

This set of guidelines is developed to assist companies or clients in managing their contractors. It provides information and guidance to clients, contractors, subcontractors and key stakeholders who are involved in the contractor management process to ensure that safety and health is managed properly.

It aims to guide improvement in contractor workplace safety and health (WSH) performance, and provides a systematic approach to the contractor management process to minimise safety and health risks to employees and the public. The set of guidelines outlines the requirements for evaluating, selecting, coordinating, monitoring and communicating WSH expectations of clients and contractors.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Key personnel involved shall know their safety and health responsibilities for the duration of the project. In any client/ contractor relationship, both parties must be clear of their duties and agree on them. If the contractor engages subcontractors to carry out part or all of the work, all downstream parties will have safety and health responsibilities.

2.1 Clients

The Client, in the context of this set of guidelines, refers to the company or person who has engaged a contractor for a defined project. Clients should have sufficient WSH knowledge on the work being undertaken by contractors. They are responsible and accountable for the safety and health of every person who may be affected by the work at the workplace. The clients will manage and communicate with the contractors to ensure that they comply with the WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) and expectations of the contract.

Some key responsibilities of clients include:

- Determining the WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) and expectations that are applicable to the contract work.
- Ensuring that a formal evaluation of the contractor's WSH management plan is conducted and documented during the project contracting phase.
- Ensuring that the contractors comply with the WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) laid out in the contract.
- Participating in risk assessment (RA) and formulation of safe work procedures (SWPs).
- Ensuring that the contractors have undergone appropriate WSH induction prior to commencement of work.
- Familiarising contractors with in-house and/ or site safety rules.
- Informing contractors of site specific hazards and ensuring that the contractors implement measures to minimise risk to all involved in the contract work.
- Conducting all necessary and required worksite inspections based on the complexity and duration of the project.
- Monitoring WSH performance of contractors to ensure that they work safely and as agreed in the contract.



Figure 1: Client and contractor should communicate and agree on their respective roles and responsibilities.



Figure 2: Client should monitor the WSH performance of their contractors periodically.

Good Practice Tip

Clients should lead by example on WSH standards. For example, senior management can participate in toolbox briefings and worksite inspections to demonstrate their commitment towards WSH. The safety and/or health personnel of the client can advise and assist the contractors in their safety and health undertakings such as risk management (RM) planning. It will also be good for clients to mandate the contractors on WSH initiatives, so that the contractors understand the need and importance of integrating WSH into the contract works.

2.2 Contractors

The Contractor, in the context of this set of guidelines, refers to the company or person carrying out and overseeing the work for the client in accordance with the contract. Contractors should be aware of their responsibilities in WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) and expectations of the contract. They are responsible and accountable for the safety and health of their employees and subcontractors involved in the project.

Some key responsibilities of contractors include:

- Work according to clients' WSH requirements (including legislative requirements).
- Provide safe work standards and practices that may exceed clients' requirements.
- Promote safe and healthy work practices among employees and subcontractors.
- Ensure that employees and subcontractors are aware of and discharge their duties and responsibilities.
- Ensure that all employees and subcontractors involved in the contract works receive WSH induction and adequate training to be competent and that they follow all SWPs.
- Provide WSH information that is relevant to the contract upon clients' request.
- Develop WSH management plans or procedures on work activities and hazards at the work site.
- Conduct RA.
- Adhere strictly to WSH plans.
- Conduct regular toolbox meetings to brief employees and subcontractors on WSH matters.
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision of employees and subcontractors to make sure that they are complying with good WSH practices.



Figure 3: Contractor should ensure that all employees and subcontractors are informed of WSH information relevant to the contract.

3. Project Contracting

Clients must define the job and identify all aspects of the work that they want the contractor to do. These should be communicated and discussed with the prospective contractors. This is necessary to ensure that safety and health requirements are specified in the contract.

The risk level associated with the contract work will depend on the nature of the work. Clients should consider the related safety and health implications. This could involve:

- selecting a suitable contractor;
- assessing the risks;
- providing the required information and training;
- achieving cooperation and coordination among all parties;
- communicating to employees; and
- determining the level of supervision.

From procurement to execution of the contract, the related safety and health implications at the different stages of the contract are to be recognised and addressed where appropriate.

3.1 Contractor Selection and Evaluation

The contractor selected must be competent for the job. To identify the most suitable contractor, the selection and evaluation process must be holistic. This process is important to ensure that the appointed contractor can meet the client's standards for safety and health performance.

3.1.1 Contractor Assessment and Qualification

Clients must enquire about the safety and health performance of the potential contractor (e.g., their competence in managing safety and health issues). This can be done by assessing and evaluating the contractors to ensure that they are qualified for the job. The most suitable contractor who fit the job and fulfil all WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) laid out in the contract can then be selected.



Figure 4: Client should select the most suitable contractor who can meet the contract's WSH requirements.

Some factors for consideration when selecting contractors include:

(A) Safety and Health Management Plan

As part of the contractor selection process, clients should complete a review of the potential contractors' safety and health management plan. The review allows the clients to understand the safety and health standards of the particular contractor, and hence the capability of the contractor to perform the work safely and without risk to human health, as well as meeting the WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) of the contract. The contractor safety and health management plan can be included as part of the project tender documents to facilitate this purpose. The clients would then have an overview of the contractor's safety and health management plan for evaluation. Annex A shows a sample of the contractor safety and health management plan.

(B) Past WSH Performance

The WSH performance of the contractor's previous contracts can indicate the ability to manage safety and health. References can be obtained from previous clients to assess past WSH performance of the contractor. Check the contractor's competence for the job based on these references to verify that the contractor is able to perform as required.

(C) WSH Training and Competency

It is necessary for the contractor to possess the relevant WSH qualifications and training to perform the job. The clients should therefore assess the qualifications and training of the potential contractors to ensure that the job can be carried out competently and safely. It is preferred for the contractor to possess bizSAFE or any other recognised safety and health management standard. The contractor must also be able to provide WSH-trained personnel and competent persons with the necessary trade-specific training for the job, where applicable.

(D) WSH Documentation

WSH-related documents such as safety policies, WSH RAs and training records are useful sources of information that reflect the contractor's safety and health capabilities. The clients should include WSH documentation as part of the contractor selection process or criteria. The contractor should be able to provide the requested documentation to demonstrate the ability to manage safety and health. More importantly, the client must review the documents submitted by the potential contractors or tenderers, and assess the details for RA and/or WSH plans for the job.

(E) Subcontracting

The client should assess the likelihood of contractors engaging subcontractors. If there is further subcontracting, close coordination among all parties must be established. The selection of subcontractors is probably best left to the main contractor. However, the client could specify rules about subcontracting such as WSH qualifications of subcontractors, some form of control over subcontractors' activities, and so on (see Annex B for a sample of a contractor WSH evaluation checklist). Clients must satisfy themselves that their contractors have an effective procedure for appraising the competence of their subcontractors. When selecting a

suitable subcontractor, a contractor may use some or all of the criteria that a client may use in selecting a suitable contractor. The level of competence required of the subcontractor will largely depend on the job.

(F) Communication

To ensure a common understanding of the job requirements, both the client and contractor should meet and discuss the job, the site, site rules, and establish a method statement together. This is also a time to check safety and health conditions set down in contract against the specifications to ensure proper provision for controlling WSH risk. The need for subcontracting can also be discussed to decide if subcontracting is acceptable and will be safe. The dialogue session is important because it addresses safety and health issues in the contract before any work commences.



Figure 5: There should be regular dialogues between the client and contractor to discuss WSH issues throughout the course of the project.

Good Practice Tip

Clients can develop a set of contractor selection safety and health criteria to assist in the selection of contractors. These criteria should be appropriate for the type of work contracted. More stringent selection criteria should preferably be considered for higher risk work. These criteria set can be regarded as specific performance objectives or simply put as project WSH requirements. Examples can include the need for trained and competent workers and the establishment of RM process.

Audit of the contractors can be performed against these criteria developed. The audit serves as an independent check and ensures that the contractor selected meets the WSH requirements of the client. For example, the clients can audit one or more of the contractor's existing projects to confirm that a WSH policy is present.

The clients can also keep a current list of contractors with good WSH track record engaged by the company. These contractors can then be called in at a short notice, saving time in selecting and evaluating. In this manner, the clients can ensure that only competent contractors work for the company.

3.2 WSH Requirements in Contract

The contract document should incorporate WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) which stipulate the minimum standards of competence, qualifications, training and experience of the contractor.

A safety and health plan for the job needs to be prepared and submitted as part of the tender documents. An effective plan can help to reduce injuries and ill health. It can further help minimise loss, improve productivity in the long run, and contribute to a safer and healthier workplace. The contractors are also able to fulfil the WSH requirements of the contract.

A contractor safety and health plan includes:

- contract description;
- contract safety and health organisational structure (including responsibilities);
- WSH induction and training;
- RA;
- SWPs;
- WSH inspection and monitoring;
- personal protective equipment (PPE);
- emergency preparedness and response plan; and
- incident and accident reporting.

4. Project Pre-requisites

4.1 Pre-work Coordination

Once a suitable contractor has been engaged, the client should appoint a project safety and health coordinator to oversee and manage the safety and health aspects of all activities under the project. Pre-work meetings should be conducted to clarify and agree on the roles and responsibilities, means of communication, legal and other requirements, compliance issues, and so on. Subcontractors, if applicable, should also be involved in these meetings. The pre-work meetings ensure that there is proper planning and control of work for the whole project.

4.2 WSH Induction

Before contract works commence, all contractors and subcontractors should receive WSH orientation or induction training. The induction training session includes:

- relevant policies and procedures applicable to the project;
- in-house rules and regulations;
- site arrangements and conditions for work;
- site hazards and controls (includes special hazards)[^];
- permit arrangements;
- emergency and response procedures;
- medical provisions; and
- location of safety equipment.

The induction training should be reviewed periodically or when there are changes to the items covered in the training programme. Training should also be repeated at intervals for new employees or to serve as refresher/update training for other employees. Records of induction training should be documented and maintained. See Annex C for a sample of a WSH induction checklist.

The contractor must educate contract employees and/or subcontractors on site policies and hazards in the work area. The contractor needs to record this education session and forward the documentation to the project safety and health coordinator. For long term contracts, updated training records can be forwarded periodically, for example, monthly.

[^]WSH issues related to each work activity may not be included in the WSH induction. It is important that all the contractor's employees are informed of these issues in their specific work activity, such as through toolbox meetings.

4.3 Risk Assessment

Under the WSH (RM) Regulations, RA must be conducted to address the safety and health risks posed to any person who may be affected by the activities in the workplace. RA is the process of:

- identifying and analysing safety and health hazards associated with the work;
- assessing the risks involved; and
- prioritising measures to control the hazards and reduce the risks.

RA helps to identify hazards in the workplace and implement effective risk control measures before accidents or injuries occur.

The contractor should make conscientious efforts to identify all hazards and assess the risks that can arise from the project activities. Appropriate risk controls should be identified and put in place to minimise the risk level. RA must be established for the job involving those affected, including employees and visitors. It will be good for the contractor to develop the RA, and safety and health plans together with the client, and highlight the risks associated with the contract works. The subcontractors should be involved, if applicable.

Both the contractor and the client should make the effort to assess the risks that might arise from each other's work. This would avoid any incompatible work and safeguard the well-being of employees or anyone present at the project site. The risks and associated controls should also be communicated with employees and subcontractors.

For more information on RA, refer to WSH Council's *Code of Practice on Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Risk Management*.

5. Project Implementation

5.1 Work Communication and Coordination

In any client-contractor relationship, there must be cooperation and coordination between the parties so that the safety and health of all affected at the workplace is ensured. Regular work coordination meetings between the client and contractor should be arranged. These meetings are important and useful for the discussion of project-related issues where variations may arise or where more than one contractor or subcontractor is engaged.

Clients, contractors and subcontractors should involve their employees on safety and health issues, and have avenues for them to provide timely feedback. Participation and feedback can help to highlight workplace hazards or deficiencies that may affect the progress of the project. With a better knowledge of the workplace's conditions, employees can have a safer and healthier place to work in.

5.2 Information and Training

Clients, contractors and subcontractors should provide their employees with the necessary information and training specific to the work which may affect their safety and health. Analysis of training needs should be conducted to identify mandatory training and specific training for each job designation. All parties need to consider and decide on the type of information and how the instructions should be disseminated through selected channels.

Pertinent information that needs to be communicated and shared includes risks from the work activities, the relevant safety and health rules and procedures, and emergency response procedures. Details of any risks from other parties should also be included. All these information and instructions must be transmitted clearly.

The instruction and training provided by the client, the contractor and the subcontractor need to take into account the risks from their own and each other's work, such as those arising from RA.



Figure 6: Employees should receive adequate and relevant training for their work.

5.3 Management and Supervision

Clients need to be equipped with sufficient knowledge and expertise to manage and supervise the contract works. They have to decide what needs to be done in order to manage and supervise the contract works effectively. The responsibilities of the clients increase with the impact that the contract works could have on the safety and health of anyone who may be affected. Clients will also have greater management and supervisory responsibilities when they are more aware about the safety and health implications of the contract than the contractor. Some relevant issues to consider include the size of the workforce for the contract works, work procedures, equipment used, incident-reporting and record-keeping.

It is important that the safety and health controls implemented by the client are agreed with the contractors before work commences. The clients also need to agree with the contractors on how the contract works will be done and how the associated controls should be put in place. When subcontractors are engaged, arrangements for their selection and control are important too. This will facilitate the management and supervision of the subcontractors during the course of the contract and enhance productivity.

Good Practice Tip

Contractors at the workplace or site may be required to sign in before they commence work and sign out after completing the job for the day. Besides being documentation for the attendance of the contractors, it also serves as a form of check and control on them.

Safety and health information and site rules must be continually reinforced and communicated to the contractors and subcontractors. Any other information of relevance to the contractors or subcontractors must also be communicated. The client can provide a site contact for mutual communication with the contractors and subcontractors.

5.4 Monitoring and Review

Clients, contractors and subcontractors should monitor their WSH performance. This can include checking that the RA is up-to-date, and that control measures are working. The level of monitoring should generally increase with the level of risk for the contract works.

WSH performance monitoring and review should form an essential component in contractor management. This will send a clear message that WSH is important for contract work. WSH monitoring and review ensure that WSH requirements (including legislative requirements) in the contract are complied with, and corrective or remedial actions are taken immediately when requirements deviate.

Monitoring and reviewing the contractor's WSH performance form an important part of the job scope of a safety and health coordinator. Some responsibilities of a project safety and health coordinator include:

- meeting regularly with the contractor;
- monitoring contractor's WSH performance;

- conducting regular and ad-hoc WSH inspections;
- advising the contractor of hazards and risks;
- providing immediate feedback regarding compliance;
- reviewing contractor's WSH performance and following up on corrective actions;
- reviewing incidents, accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses;
- ensuring that WSH records are well-maintained; and
- conducting WSH performance review.

Clients should conduct regular inspections to make sure that their contractors conform to the contract's WSH requirements (including legislative requirements), and that the work is being performed as agreed. The clients should assess and work out with their contractors an effective inspection schedule. By keeping a check on contractors, clients can confirm if the work is progressing as planned, and if the contractors are working safely. Inspection records should also be maintained as part of proper WSH documentation.

Any non-conformance identified through inspections must be recorded. A sample of non-conformance form can be found in Annex D. Corrective actions for identified risks must be established and a timeframe for correction determined.

Contractors and subcontractors should also carry out daily checks to ensure adherence to agreed tasks.

Any workplace incident, occupational disease or dangerous occurrence should be reported to Ministry of Manpower (MOM). The contractor can develop and implement a procedure for reporting and of investigating these events.

Safety and health management systems and work procedures should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are current and effective. It is prudent to check for changes in the workforce or procedure/ process as these may impact the contract and works. Any further subcontracting must be properly understood and managed by both the clients and main contractors.

After monitors and checks, any findings should be formally reviewed for implementation. Where WSH requirements are not met, the client and contractor should come together to rectify the deficiency. If safety and health performance still cannot meet requirements, the client will need to stop the contractor from working on the job until the requirements are met.

Good Practice Tip

It is a good practice to investigate all cases of workplace injuries, ill health and near misses to find out what went wrong and why they were not prevented. The findings and lessons learnt should be shared among the clients, contractors, subcontractors and the whole workforce.

Metrics can be set to monitor and review contractor safety and health performance. Some of these metrics for consideration can include inspections, audits, observations, feedback loops and lost workdays.

6. Project Completion

Contractors should ensure a safe handover of the project and/or site back to their clients, and necessary due diligence in terms of safety and health has been performed.



Figure 7: The contractor should ensure a safe handover of the project back to the client.

6.1 Post-contract Review

After the contract work has ended, it is useful for both the client and contractor to review the WSH performance and identify improvements in future projects. The contractor's WSH performance can be rated against the target set at the beginning of the contract, noting the strengths and weaknesses. This can help in the selection of competent contractors for a new contract.

7. Risk Management Capability Building

WSH hazards and risks are present in contract works. If they are not managed properly, it may result in injury, non-compliance and loss of profit. These hazards and risks must be identified and controlled to improve WSH performance. RM and its implementation are therefore crucial, and RM forms part of a comprehensive safety and health management system in the company. The WSH Council's *Code of Practice on Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Risk Management* provides guidance on RM at the workplace and its implementation.

Both clients and contractors can leverage on the bizSAFE programme to build and enhance RM capability in the business. bizSAFE is a five-step programme to assist companies to build their WSH capabilities in order to achieve improvement in safety and health standards at the workplace. Companies are guided through the journey, starting from top management demonstrating their commitment towards WSH, to acquiring RM capabilities and implementing a safety and health management system.

Clients and contractors should consider embarking on the bizSAFE journey to create a safe and healthy workplace for their employees and themselves. By adopting bizSAFE, clients or contractors are taking a step towards complying with the requirements in the WSH Act and its subsidiary legislation (bizSAFE Level 3 — Implement Risk Management). Clients can include bizSAFE as one of the criteria for selecting their contractors to ensure that the contractor selected has sound RM capabilities. For more information on bizSAFE, visit www.wshc.sg/bizsafe

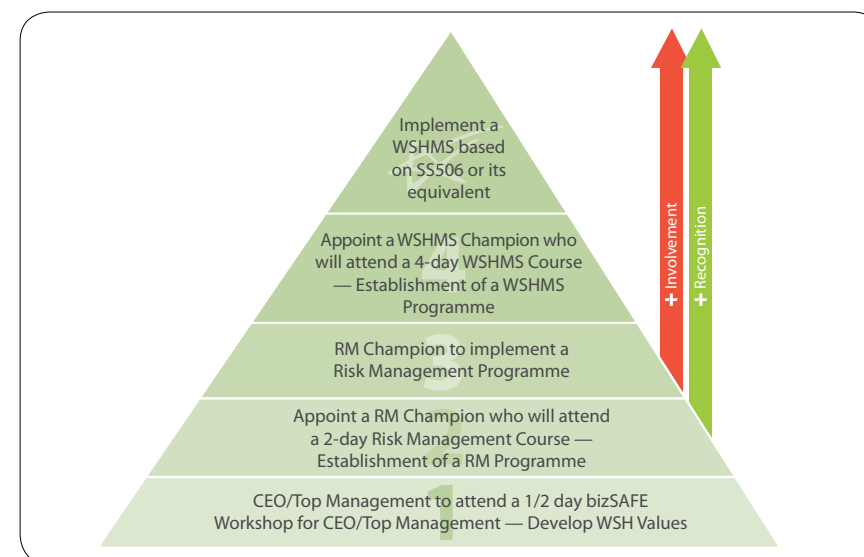


Figure 8: The bizSAFE triangle.

8. Annexes

Annex A – Contractor Safety and Health Management Plan (Sample)

Contractor Safety And Health Management Plan			
Contractor Details			
Name and address of company			
Name and designation of key contact person			
Phone number of key contact person			
Brief title for works involved			
Period of works			
Details of Emergency and Safety Personnel			
WSH personnel			
Name	Designation	WSH Responsibility	Contact number
Emergency contact details			
Contact Priority	Name	Designation	Contact number
First			
Second			
Third			
Fourth			
Details of Working Personnel			
Name	Designation	Responsibilities	Contact number

Description And Details of Scope of Contract Works
Contractor's Safety and Health Policy
Risk Assessment and Control
Risk assessment forms and related documentation
Safe Work Procedures
Safe work procedures for contract works
WSH Training And Induction
Training procedures, syllabus and records
Personal Protective Equipment
Necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the contract works and responsible parties
WSH Performance Monitoring and Measurement
Safety inspections and audits, evaluation of compliance, medical surveillance, hygiene monitoring, housekeeping patrol

Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedures

Emergency preparedness and response plan, and procedures

First Aid and Injury Management

First aid and injury management procedures and responsible parties

Subcontractor Management

Subcontractor details, management and supervision of WSH

Incident/ Accident Reporting and Investigation

Incident/ accident reporting and investigation procedures, follow-ups, corrective and preventive actions

Hazards Reporting and Investigation Management Plan

Hazards reporting, investigation procedures and remedial actions

Sign Off

Name and Signature of Client (Top Management)

Designation:

Date:

Name and Signature of Contractor (Top Management)

Designation:

Date:

Annex B – Contractor WSH Evaluation Checklist (Sample)

Contractor Selection Checklist

Contractor Details

Name and address of company

Name and designation of key contact person

Phone number of key contact person

Brief title for works involved

Period of works

Compliance with the Safety and Health Management Plan

Is the contractor able to comply with the Safety and Health Management Plan completely?

If not, list out the areas that are not in compliance.

Past WSH Performance

Attach records of contractor's past WSH performance, where applicable.

WSH Training and Competency

Is the contractor equipped with the relevant WSH qualifications and training to carry out the job?

If yes, attach the relevant training records.

WSH Documentation

Attach all relevant WSH records or documents upon request.

Subcontracting

If subcontracting is required, is the contractor able to manage the subcontractors in terms of WSH?

Attach all the subcontractors' relevant WSH documentation.

Communication

How does the contractor ensure effective communication with the employees or any other relevant stakeholders in relation to WSH? State the related communication channels and/or platforms used to achieve this.

Sign Off

Name and Signature of Client (Representative)
Designation:
Date:

Name and Signature of Contractor (Representative)
Designation:
Date:

Annex C – WSH Induction Checklist (Sample)

WSH Induction Checklist

Contractor Details

Name and address of company	
Name and designation of key contact person	
Phone number of key contact person	
Brief title for works involved	
Period of works	

Induction Details

Name of trainer		
Date of induction		
Title of induction course		
Mode of training	Trainer-led	Trainer plus web-based

WSH Training and Competency

Explain relevant site safety policy.	Yes	No
Explain relevant standard operating procedures (SOPs).	Yes	No
Explain relevant site conditions and arrangements to work.	Yes	No
Explain type of hazards that may be present.	Yes	No
Explain relevant method of controlling hazards.	Yes	No
Explain all permits arrangement before work.	Yes	No
Explain emergency preparedness and response procedures.	Yes	No
Show emergency escape routes.	Yes	No
Show location of medical/ first-aid facilities.	Yes	No
Explain operation of first-aid facilities.	Yes	No
Explain the safe work procedures to follow.	Yes	No
Explain procedures for hazard/ accident reporting.	Yes	No
Explain required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and who to provide.	Yes	No
Show key contact numbers during emergency.	Yes	No

Inductees' Details							
S/No.	Name	Designation	Date	Inducted		Sign Off	Remarks
				Yes	No		
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

Sign Off	
Name and Signature of Client (Representative) Designation: Date:	Name and Signature of Contractor (Representative) Designation: Date:

Annex D – Non-conformance Form (Sample)

Non-conformance Form		
Contractor Details		
Name and address of company		
Name and designation of key contact person		
Phone number of key contact person		
Brief title for works involved		
Period of works		
Criteria		
Site Conditions		
Are good housekeeping practices being executed?	Yes	No
Is clear and safe access available to the workers and public?	Yes	No
Are there only authorised personnel working on site?	Yes	No
Are openings on the floors well-barricaded or covered?	Yes	No
Permit To Work		
Are all relevant permits applied for?	Yes	No
Are relevant permits applied for appropriate tasks?	Yes	No
Machines		
Are the machines well-maintained?	Yes	No
Are operators of the machines trained?	Yes	No
Are the machines being operated in the correct manner?	Yes	No
Personal Protective Equipment		
Are all relevant Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided for?	Yes	No
Are all relevant PPE used correctly?	Yes	No
Others		
Are there relevant warning signage?	Yes	No
Are all workers aware of the emergency standard operating procedures (SOPs)?	Yes	No
If you answer No for any of the questions above, state the reason(s) and its respective corrective actions.		
State also the time frame required for the corrective actions to be executed.		

Evaluation		
Has the contractor agreed to the observation(s) made?	Yes	No
Has all the observation(s) been discussed with the contractor?	Yes	No
Has all the non-conformance(s) been rectified?	Yes	No
Has the contractor met their obligations and all relevant criteria?	Yes	No

Sign Off

Name and Signature of Client (Representative)

Designation:

Date:

Sign Off

Name and Signature of Contractor (Representative)

Designation:

Date: