

Climate change checklist



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Climate change is increasingly recognised as a significant and complex challenge. Rising temperatures, shifting environmental conditions, changes in air quality, and increasing likelihood of extreme weather events pose indirect and direct risks to workers' health, safety and wellbeing.

Businesses can integrate climate risk management and adaptation into their core OSH strategies. This includes embedding climate-related considerations into risk assessment, management systems and training programs. OSH professionals play a critical role in this transformation, utilising their existing skills to ensure that climate-related risks are identified, assessed and addressed with the same rigour as traditional workplace hazards.

The checklist is designed to support OSH professionals and organisational leaders in implementing practical, proactive measures to protect workers from climate-related risks. It complements broader strategic efforts and can be used as a tool to guide planning, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

By taking action, we can build safer, more resilient workplaces that safeguard both people and the planet. It's crucial that changes are made now.

The checklist is divided into four parts:

1. Policy
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Planning
4. Implementation and reviewing

There is also an extra section at the end for further deeper reflections on this topic.

Policy

Question	Yes/no	Actions/comments
Does the organisation have a policy (or has one in development) that aligns climate change with broader organisational objectives?		
Will/does this policy reflect the effects of climate change on the health, safety and wellbeing of workers?		
Has this policy been implemented within the organisation? If not, are there plans for this?		
Have policies related to climate change, including revised OSH policies and procedures, been consulted and/or extended throughout the value chain?		

Roles and responsibilities

Question	Yes/no	Actions/comments
Is responsibility for environment and climate change related activity allocated to any specific member of the Senior Leadership Team, staff member, or a consultant?		
Does your own role assist in identifying climate change related hazards?		
Have responsibilities for the control of risks associated with climate change (including operational and OSH risks) been appropriately defined and effectively communicated to all relevant parties?		
Do / would workers actively cooperate in ensuring that OSH risks arising from climate change policies and procedures are followed?		
Are you responsible for raising awareness of climate-related OSH risks within your organisation? If not, is someone else?		
Are you able to influence others' understanding and priorities around climate-related risks to safety, health and wellbeing?		
Does your organisation manage work related health risks that are related to climate change such as vector-borne disease, due to working in higher climates?		
Are other relevant people (such as senior and middle managers) aware of their responsibilities when it comes to managing climate-related risks?		
Are there training programmes and/or other educational materials in place to understand climate-related hazards and risks for people within your organisation?		

Planning

Question	Yes/no	Actions/comments
Has your organisation adequately incorporated risks associated with climate change into business continuity and contingency planning? Are they adaptive and dynamic to changes and reviewed regularly?		
Has your organisation worked to understand and mitigate any negative environmental impacts arising from business activities?		
Do you review and revise OSH policies and procedures regularly to reflect evolving climate risks?		
Do you actively participate in climate change strategy development and implementation?		
Do you as the OSH professional advocate for OSH inclusion in climate change mitigation and adaption planning?		
Has the organisation developed and tested a comprehensive emergency response plan, including the conducting of regular drills and the establishment of clear communication channels and protocols for use in the event of climate-related events/emergencies?		
Are mechanisms in place for gathering and responding to worker concerns and/or feedback relating to climate change?		
Have you identified climate change related risks and applied suitable controls (elimination, substitution, engineering and administrative, and PPE?)		
Have you identified the following controls as being required such as work-to-rest ratios, acclimatisation periods, or made changes to work patterns?		
Are OSH risk assessment processes inclusive of potential climate-related hazards?		
Is promoting awareness of climate change impacts on worker health and safety communicated within the organisation and broader supply chains?		
Do you have a process on tracking the effectiveness of climate-related OSH interventions?		

Implementing and reviewing

Question	Yes/no	Actions/comments
Are mechanisms in place to monitor the effectiveness of any actions implemented to control risks associated with climate change?		
Is there a process in place for regularly or routinely identifying emerging OSH issues, including those related to climate-related risks?		
Does the OSH management system collect and utilise meaningful performance indicators to inform decision making in relation to the risks associated with climate change?		
Is there effective collaboration within the organisation, with other establishments, public health agencies and other relevant stakeholders?		
Do you have access to the data and resources needed to make a compelling case for change in relation to putting in new procedures for controlling the risks from climate-related hazards?		
Do senior management monitor and evaluate of the effectiveness of the organisation's responses to climate change, including OSH responses, to ensure that they meet the intended objective/s?		
Do you or will plan to deliver and develop training on climate-related OSH risks?		
Do you plan to schedule in time frames to review and revise OSH policies and procedures regularly to reflect and address evolving climate risks?		
Is there an opportunity to align OSH practices with broader environmental and sustainability goals?		

Reflection points

Use the boxes below to write up your responses, alongside any actions or timelines

What challenges do you face in integrating climate change into existing processes, such as organisational cultural barriers that may limit progress in this area?

**Who do you need to work with to identify and control climate-change related hazards?
Will this involve working collaboratively across departments to manage and control the risks?**

**What action can you take to drive continuous improvement in climate-related OSH practices?
What will this involve, how will you ensure your up to date with current and future changes?**



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