MEMORANDUM

TO: UQ OHS network
FROM: Ross Dixon, Director Occupational Health and Safety Division (Acting)
DATE: 21 December 2016
Re: Risk Assessment Auditing

The UQ OHS network should be familiar with the OHS goal to audit 20% of active risk assessments within our areas and many OHS Managers and local Work Health and Safety Coordinators have achieved this goal. However, it has been identified that there remain a number of active risk assessments on the current UQ Risk Management Database with high or very high risk ratings.

Discussion at the most recent VCRCC meeting indicates the University’s appetite for risk is low, so I ask you to please dedicate some time over the next 6 weeks to identifying and audit active risk assessments in your areas with high or very high risk ratings.

As of 19/12/16, there are 253 complete risk assessments with high or very high risk ratings and only 15% of these risk assessments have been audited.

By the beginning of March 2017, I would like to report that 95% of risk assessments with high or very high risk ratings have been audited.

This process will also help to ensure higher quality risk assessments are entered into the new UQ Safe Risk Database.

During the audit process, you may identify that the risk ratings have been incorrectly selected or existing controls have not been accounted for, which may result in lowering the risk rating. Alternatively, you may identify that additional reasonable controls could be implemented to lower the risk rating.

You may also identify risk assessments where the risk rating accurately reflects the nature of the task and all reasonable controls have been implemented, in which case the risk rating remains at high or very high, but now the risk assessment has been audited.

Active risk assessments (where the risk level is high or very high) to be audited for quality of controls. Note that this is a new measure.

Data source: Current UQ risk assessment database.

“Audited for quality of controls” means:

i) Risk assessment is approved by supervisor;
ii) All relevant risks have been identified;
iii) Controls identified and implemented (as per the hierarchy of controls); and
iv) Confirm the controls are being implemented.

Current risk assessments with a high or very high risk may be the result of someone attempting to “copy” an existing risk assessment, but not completing the process before either sending for approval, or leaving it in the system. Many of these risk assessments could be archived and removed from circulation.

If risk assessments appear not to have been completed (e.g. All risk rating factors are set at very high, or the title contains “copy of”), or the risk rating not considered prior to approval (the risk rating is inconsistent with the activities listed in the risk assessment), then the author should be contacted to confirm their requirement to remain active in the system.
To generate a report on the risk assessments in your local areas, requiring action, select your Faculty/Division or School/Centre and the following filters:

Thank you in advance for your assistance and effort in this area.

If you have any queries please contact:

21st December – 6th January - Ross Dixon, OHS Division on 336 52563
9th January onwards - Jolene Cooper, OHS Division on 336 52341