



<b>Policy Hierarchy link</b>	<b>Protection of Environmental Operations Act 1997 UNSW Environmental Policy</b>		
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director, UNSW Sustainability		
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Manager, UNSW Sustainability		
<b>Superseded Documents</b>	Nil. New procedure		
<b>File Number</b>	TRIM 2010/03605		
<b>Associated Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Standards Australia AS/NZS 4360:2004 Risk Management.</li> <li>- Standards Australia HB-203:2006 Environmental Risk Management- Principles and Process</li> <li>- ISO 14000 Environmental Management Standards</li> <li>- Environmental Reporting Guidelines</li> <li>- Green Lab Environmental Aspects and Impacts Register</li> </ul>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
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1.	Purpose and Scope.....	1
2.	Definitions.....	1
3.	Procedure.....	2
3.1	Determine the consequences.....	2
3.2	Determine the likelihood.....	2
3.3	Determine the risk level.....	2
4.	Recommended action guide.....	3
5.	Review & History.....	3
5.1	Review.....	3
6.	Acknowledgements.....	3

## 1. Purpose and Scope

This environmental risk rating procedure provides a consistent standard for rating environmental risks across UNSW. Applying a consistent environmental risk rating system across the university will improve local unit decision making in choosing the most appropriate and adequate risk control measures. This Environmental Risk Rating Procedure aims to provide more effective management of environmental risks and prevention of adverse environmental impacts and adverse impacts on the University's operations. This procedure applies to all activities undertaken at all UNSW campuses and other locations where UNSW exercise operational control.

## 2. Definitions

- **Environmental Risk:** A risk that arises from the relationship between human activities and the environment. Environmental risks include:
  - A risk to the environment; and/or
  - A risk to the University from environment-related issues, including the risk of non-compliance with legislative and other criteria.
- **Environmental Hazard:** Is a source or situation with the potential for harm to the natural environment.
- **Environmental Aspects:** Those elements of the University's activities, which can interact with the environment, for example energy consumption, hazardous waste production.
- **Environmental Impact:** Any change to the environment, whether adverse or beneficial, wholly or partially resulting from the University's environmental aspects.

The term “impact’ also includes impacts to the University’s operations arising from environment-related issues.

- **An incident:** Include any event that has caused or has the potential for an adverse impact(s) on the environment. For example atmospheric emissions, noise pollution or waste.

### 3. Procedure

#### 3.1 Determine the consequences

Use Table 1 to determine the most probable consequence in terms of harm should an event occurs with existing risk controls.

**Table 1 - Consequences**

Level	Descriptor	Consequences examples
1	Catastrophic	Long term environmental damage (5 years or longer), requiring \$5 million to correct or in penalties
2	Major	Medium-term (1-5 years) environmental damage, requiring \$1 to 5 million to study or correct
3	Moderate	Short-term (less than 1 year) environmental damage, requiring up to \$1 million to correct
4	Minor	Environmental damage, requiring up to \$150,000 to study or correct
5	Insignificant	Negligible environmental impact, managed within operating budgets

#### 3.2 Determine the likelihood

Use Table 2 to determine the most probable likelihood of the determined consequence occurring.

**Table 2 - Likelihood**

Level	Descriptor	Likelihood of the risk arising and leading to the assessed level of consequence	
A	Almost certain	Is expected to occur in most circumstances and has a history of occurrence	Once a year or more frequent
B	Likely	Will probably occur in most circumstances	Once in 1 to 3 years
C	Possible	Could occur at some time	Once in 3 to 10 years
D	Unlikely	Not likely to occur in normal circumstances	Once in 10 to 50 years
E	Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances	Once in 100 years or more

#### 3.3 Determine the risk level

Use Table 3 to determine the risk level for each identified hazard.

**Table 3 – Risk Matrix**

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Catastrophic 1	Major 2	Moderate 3	Minor 4	Insignificant 5
Almost certain A	Extreme	Extreme	High	High	Medium
Likely B	Extreme	Extreme	High	Medium	Low
Possible C	Extreme	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Unlikely D	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Low
Rare E	High	Medium	Low	Low	Low

## 4. Recommended action guide

Use Table 4 to determine the action required based on the determined risk level. All activities must be controlled to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of risk controls. No activities rated at Extreme or High can proceed until additional risk controls have been implemented to reduce the risk level.

**Table 4 – Recommended action**

<b>Risk level</b>	<b>Recommended Action</b>
Extreme	<b>Act immediately</b> The proposed or identified task or process activity must be stopped immediately. Steps must be taken to lower the risk level to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of risk controls.
High	<b>Act today</b> The proposed or identified activity can only proceed, provided that: (i) the risk level has been reduced to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of risk controls. (ii) the risk controls must include those identified in legislation, Australian Standards, Codes of Practice etc. (iii) the risk assessment has been reviewed and approved by the Supervisor. (iv) a Safe Working Procedure or Safe Work Method has been prepared, and (v) the supervisor must review and document the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls.
Medium	<b>Act this week</b> The proposed or identifies task or process can proceed, provided that: (i) the risk level has been reduced to as low as reasonably practicable using the hierarchy of risk controls; (ii) the risk assessment has been reviewed and approved by the Supervisor, and; (iii) a Safe Working Procedure or Safe Work Method has been prepared.
Low	<b>Act this month</b> Managed by local documented routine procedures which must include application of the hierarchy of controls.

## 5. Review & History

### 5.1 Review

This procedure will be reviewed prior to 1 November 2012.

## 6. Acknowledgements

UNSW Occupational Health & Safety Unit  
UNSW Risk Management Unit

## Appendix A: History

Version	Author	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1.0	Aaron Magner & Arifa Sarfraz	Executive Director, University Services	13 October 2010	1 November 2010	New Procedure