

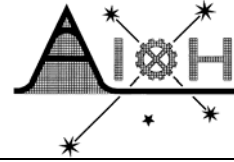
Guideline for Writing Occupational Hygiene Reports

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Guideline for writing Occupational Hygiene Reports

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Guidance Note is to inform Occupational Hygienists and their clients of the minimum contents of Occupational Hygiene Reports.

SCOPE

This Guideline is **limited to common contents** that should be included in Occupational Hygiene Reports. **It does not prescribe a specific report format.** The purpose of an individual report may vary; however, the basic contents remain the same.

THE REPORT

Reports should be written in plain English, address all question(s) raised in the scope of work and satisfy the technical reader that the work was properly conducted and appropriate conclusions drawn.

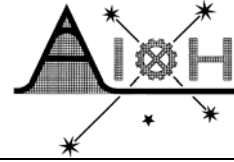
A typical report is divided into the following contents:

- Executive summary
- Title
- Introduction
- Process description
- Methods and measurements
- Results and discussion
- Conclusions and recommendations

TITLE

The report should include a title page with the following information:

- Title summarising nature of survey *eg "Assessment of risk arising from employee's exposure to XYZ..."*



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- Date of report eg *March 2006*
 - Name and address of company commissioning the work (the client)
 - Name and address of person/organisation carrying out the work (the consultant)
 - Name and signature of person who prepared the report eg *"Signed by..."* (the hygienist)

Where appropriate, the name and signature of the consultant who reviewed or approved the report should also be added eg *"Approved by..."* or *"Reviewed by ..."* (the senior consultant or manager).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For larger reports (usually greater than 7 pages) an executive summary enables the client to obtain an overview of the report contents. The executive summary should be no more than one page and should include the questions and their answers, as raised in the scope of work.

INTRODUCTION

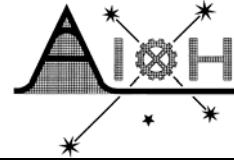
To assist the reader, it is useful to explain why the report was needed (the purpose), the terms of reference under which the report was commissioned and what information was provided eg *"the company requested that an assessment be done as some employees had reported symptoms..."*, *"...an Inspector requested on Improvement Notice No 123, that the company assess the risk arising from employee's exposure to XYZ"*.

Also the date(s) of visit(s) and the site(s) visited should be clearly identified.

PROCESS DESCRIPTION

Where a survey of an area, plant or process is conducted the following should be described:

- Area/plant/process surveyed eg *"a survey of the area known as cold press or CP was conducted"*.
- Conditions at the time (ie personnel, process conditions, risk controls in place) eg *"usual operator unavailable"*, *"shutdown"*, *"worst case situation, with no controls"*, *"as normal, believed to be a representative working day"*, *"only Blender No 2 was operating"*, *"protective equipment worn other than overalls"*.
- Identify any items examined eg *"Toolmaster serial number 123"*, *"machine called the hot block curer"*.



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- Number of employees, duration of workshift(s) and task frequency and duration eg “9 employees work an 8 hour day, 5 day week with 2 hours overtime worked infrequently”, “it takes about 30 minutes for 5 bags to be opened and poured daily”.

Diagrams and photographs are useful for clarifying sampling locations and conditions.

METHODS AND MEASUREMENTS

Where exposure or other measurements are conducted, the following should be included:

- Sampling procedures, analytical procedures and relevant technical standard(s) used. If a relevant published and validated method exists, it should be used in preference to a novel method. If it is necessary to use a novel method, a full explanation (including summary of validation) should be provided.
- Locations, times and duration of personal sampling and the names of the individuals concerned. If area/static sampling was also conducted similar details along with the reasons should be provided.

eg for airborne contaminants “full shift personal sample”, “partial shift area sample”, “snap”, “grab”
“as short as practicable (ie 5 minute intervals) given analytical constraints”

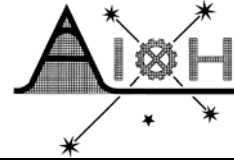
eg for noise “full shift personal sample”, “partial shift sample”, “spot noise readings”

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- Results may be presented in the body of the report or as appendices. The level of information, considering the complexity of the processes, tasks and risks, should satisfy the technical reader but not unnecessarily complicate the report. Results should be traceable to the original field notes to enable verification of supporting data (eg identity of equipment used, calibration, etc) should this be needed.
- Results of personal sampling should be compared with the relevant exposure standard. If there is no relevant exposure standard, it will be necessary to either modify or adapt an existing guideline or develop a guideline. The rationale justifying the guideline used should be provided.

eg for airborne contaminants

- (a) time weighted average (TWA) and short term excursions limits (STEL), or
- (b) TWA and general excursions limits (if no STEL is set), or
- (c) peak/ceiling limits.



eg for noise *exposure standard time weighted average ($L_{Aeq, 8hr}$) and peak noise level*

- Results should be compared with any previous surveys at the premises and data from similar premises if available eg “...*the process produced results that are similar to other coating operations*”. An explanation of general trends and unusual high or low trends should be included.
- The level of risk should be determined (preferably quantitatively) to allow for the adequacy of controls to be assessed and the prioritisation of control options. ‘Simplified Occupational Hygiene Risk Management Strategies’ (published by the AIOH) provides some basic tools to conduct risk assessment.

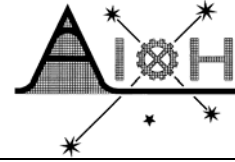
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions should be drawn about whether or not the relevant exposure standard(s) have been exceeded and if the work could harm employee health, eg “*Exposure is likely to approach and may exceed the exposure standard and there is a significant risk.*”, “*It is believed that exposures are unlikely to approach the exposure standard and the risk is not significant.*”, “*The risk is uncertain due to the state of knowledge (or level of exposure)*”

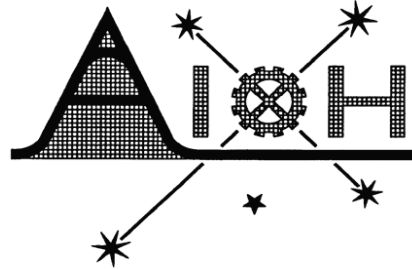
Conclusions should also be drawn about adequacy of control and any further practical actions to eliminate or reduce the assessed risk so far as is practicable eg “*existing controls adequate if maintained’.....’existing controls not adequate and need to be upgraded*”

Recommendations should be selected using the hierarchy of control approach (personal protective equipment being the last resort) and guidance on an appropriate implementation time frame (eg urgent, short, medium or long term) should be provided. eg “*Temporarily cease work on No 123 process until corrective actions (see below) have been implemented*”, “*Personal protection is a short term interim control. In the longer term engineering controls...*”, “*A preventive maintenance program should be implemented as soon as practicable.*”, “*Periodic reviews to determine if control measures need to be modified should occur at least once a year.*”

Recommendations arising from regulatory requirements or similar guidelines should reference the relevant source document(s) eg “*The Victorian Occupational Health and Safety (Noise) Regulations 1992 require that...*”, “*Australian Standard 4114 Spray Painting Booths states that a minimum velocity of ...*”



This Guidance Note was developed by the Australian Institute of Occupational Hygienists (AIOH) and recommended for use by Occupational Hygienists and their clients. The AIOH is the professional organisation for Occupational Hygienists in Australia. A list of occupational hygiene consultants, including Certified Occupational Hygienists (COH), is available from www.aioh.org.au.



Note: This guidance material has been prepared using the best information available to AIOH. Any information about legislative obligations or responsibilities included in this material is only applicable to the circumstances described in the material. You should always check the legislation referred to in this material and make your own judgement about what action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with the law. Accordingly, the AIOH extends no warranties as to the suitability of the information for your specific circumstances.