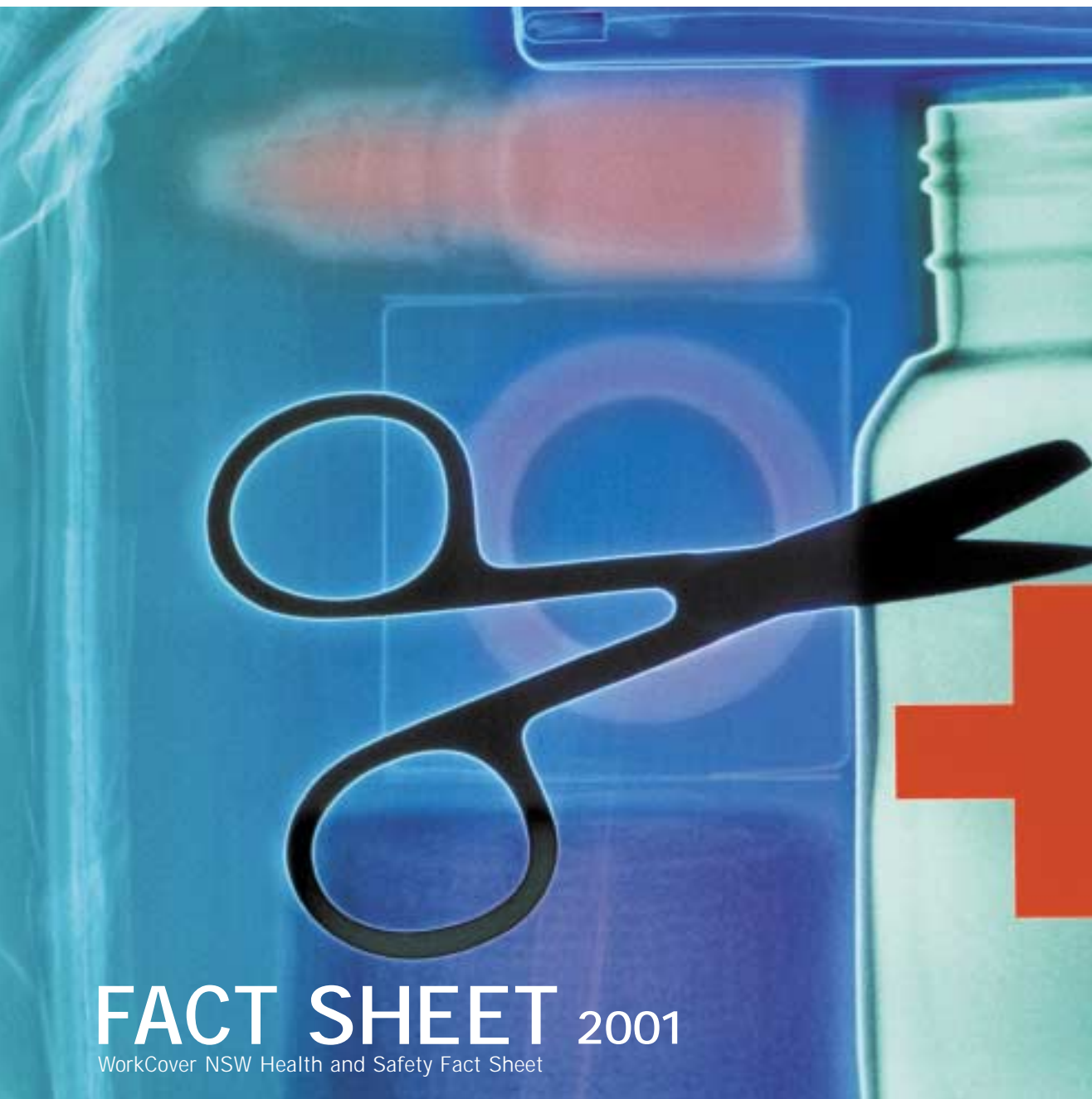


# FIRST AID

## IN THE WORKPLACE

AN EXAMPLE FOR SMALL TO MEDIUM BUSINESS



**FACT SHEET** 2001

WorkCover NSW Health and Safety Fact Sheet

# Fact Sheet: First aid in the workplace

## An example for small to medium business

### Why do you need first aid?

- First aid provides the initial and immediate attention to a person suffering an injury or illness.
- In extreme cases, a quick first aid response could mean the difference between life and death.
- In many cases, first aid can reduce the severity of the injury or illness.
- A quick and professional first aid response also calms the injured person, reducing unnecessary stress and anxiety.



Employers have legal responsibilities for ensuring adequate first aid provisions for employees.

### How to use this information

- **What is this fact sheet all about?**

This fact sheet provides some tools and solutions for establishing a first aid plan suitable for small to medium businesses. It uses an example of the retail meat industry but can be applied to many similar sized workplaces. The information here will help you by providing:

  - a list of common hazards, and the injuries and illnesses that might result;
  - a sample first aid plan, e.g. for a small butcher's shop;
  - a planning checklist to help you "fine tune" your first aid plan;
  - some key questions you should ask to keep your first aid plan up to date.
- **When to use the information?**

If you are setting up a new business, this fact sheet will show you what you need to do, and give you some solutions to typical situations. If you already have a plan for first aid, this fact sheet should be used to assess your current arrangements.
- **Where to get more information?**

Get a copy of the WorkCover Health and Safety Guide: First aid in the workplace for more information on managing first aid and your obligations under health and safety law.



The information in this fact sheet should be used when consulting with employees about first aid. The OHS Act 2000 requires employers to consult with employees and take into account their views when making decisions that affect their health, safety and welfare. Involving your employees in identifying hazards and solving health and safety problems is an essential step in making your workplace safe and healthy.

### How to establish the special needs of your workplace

1. **Look for the hazards** in your workplace - the things that can cause harm.
2. **Work out how serious your problems might be.** Decide who might be in danger (e.g. you, employees or contractors), the factors contributing to the risk, what injuries or impact on health and welfare could result, and how likely this is to occur.
3. **Eliminate or control risks.** Make changes that will protect people, develop agreed safety procedures, train employees, or - as a last resort - issue protective equipment.

These steps will help you to work out what assistance must be *immediately on hand* if there is an injury or illness in your workplace.

## Common hazards and resulting injuries / illnesses in the retail meat sector

Hazard	Typical problems	Typical injury/ illness requiring first aid
<b>Manual handling</b>	Working at inappropriate bench heights; moving and storing of cartons of meat; knives and cutting tools not properly sharpened.	Back sprains and strains; shoulder, arm and hand strains.
<b>Working environment</b>	Slips, trips and falls from uneven and poorly drained floor surface; cluttered work layout; noise from band saw; trips because of poor lighting.	Fractures, bruises, cuts, dislocations, concussion, headaches, dizziness.
<b>Electrical equipment</b>	Use of double adaptors and trailing cords through work areas; contact between electrical equipment and wet floors.	Shock, burns, loss of consciousness.
<b>Hand tools</b>	Knives not strong or sharp enough to withstand forces applied in cutting; poorly designed or slippery handles; lack of arm guards or mesh gloves.	Cuts, bruises, amputation, hand, wrist or arm sprains.
<b>Hazardous substances</b>	Exposure to chemicals used in shop cleaning and disinfecting.	Dizziness, vomiting, dermatitis, respiratory problems, burns to skin or eyes.
<b>Machinery</b>	Inadequate guarding on band saws; ineffective guarding of feed throat on mincer; ineffective means of securing or feeding product to bacon slicers.	Cuts, lacerations, amputations, crushing and bruising.
<b>Biological</b>	Moist hands combined with untreated cuts; re-using gloves.	Warts, infected wounds.

# Sample first aid plan, for example a small butcher's shop

Assessment of first aid requirements	First aid plan (Controls)
<p><b>Type of work performed.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Storage and handling of product</li> <li>Cutting, boning, sawing and tenderising</li> <li>Preparation and processing of meat products</li> <li>Cleaning and maintenance of equipment</li> <li>Customer service</li> </ul> <p><b>Types of injury/illness likely to be sustained.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back sprains and strains; shoulder, arm and hand strains</li> <li>Cuts, lacerations, amputations</li> <li>Crushing and bruising</li> <li>Electrical burns, shock</li> <li>Dizziness, vomiting, headaches</li> </ul> <p><b>Number and distribution of employees.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a typical shop, 3-5 employees working in close proximity to each other.</li> </ul> <p><b>Size &amp; layout of workplace.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail area at front, and cold storage and processing area at back.</li> </ul> <p><b>Location of workplace.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail precinct: likely to be close to medical centre.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Number of first aiders needed to cover all areas and shifts within the workplace.</b> The manager is a holder of a basic first aid certificate.</p> <p><b>Specific training requirements for first aiders.</b> Manager is planning to upgrade his first aid training to level 2.</p> <p><b>Response Procedures.</b> A simple flow chart posted in both processing and retail areas outlines <i>who does what</i> following an incident. The shop manager is responsible for plan.</p> <p><b>First aid room requirements and management.</b> Shop is close to medical centre and a specific room is not required.</p> <p><b>First aid kit requirements and management.</b> A type B kit (see OHS Regulation 2001) to cater for cuts, lacerations and amputations is kept in the processing area.</p> <p><b>First aid recording &amp; reporting system.</b> Treatment is logged in the first aid report book kept in right drawer of cabinet.</p> <p><b>Communicating the first aid plan.</b> The shop plan and list of emergency contact numbers are displayed in both preparation and retail areas. Sign where the first aid kit is kept.</p> <p><b>Important contact numbers.</b> Number and location of medical clinic, hospital, Poisons Information Centre, ambulance is displayed on wall of processing and retail area.</p>



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