

Is your business experiencing change?

All businesses, including those involved with heavy vehicles and classified as a party in the Chain of Responsibility (CoR), will experience change at different times. This change may be as simple as a minor update to a loading work procedure or more complex, such as:

- moving to a new or larger business location
- purchasing new equipment or technology
- a change in the law
- a new contract resulting in expansion.

For example, consider a situation where one day you have one truck delivering steel and the next you are asked to take on the whole contract. You need to purchase another 20 trucks to fulfil the contract requirements. Another example may be that you are currently transporting hay and are asked to start transporting livestock.

Preparing, or not preparing, for change can make the difference between a smooth and safe change process and an extremely stressful time, which could significantly impact on the safety of your transport activities.

What is change management?

Change can be daunting for any business and may introduce new hazards and risks that impact the safety of your employees and transport activities. It is therefore worthwhile to consider a structured approach to managing change, which should ensure the change does not result in reduced levels of safety. Preparing for change can be as simple as listing a few dot points on a page with key activities and dates. Alternatively, you could formalise the change process and consider the following:

- identify the change
- identify hazards, risks and obstacles the change may create
- involve others in the change
- assess, identify and implement controls to manage the risks.

Why manage change?

Changes in your business can introduce hazards that can affect the safety of your operations. The main objective of change management is to ensure that safety risks associated with your transport activities resulting from the change, are reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. Effectively managing change can reduce the risk of incidents that can impact on the safety of your operation, as well as reduce the time, effort and expense that may be involved.

How can you manage change?

All change, regardless of how it originates, will potentially involve risks to your business. There are very strong links between operational change and the safety of operations. They support each other and you should consider them together.

Change can be looked at from two different perspectives:

- change that needs to happen (e.g. imposed change or an identified need for change)
- change that requires decision-making (e.g. where a decision needs to be made about proceeding with the change).

1. Change that needs to happen

Change that needs to happen can fall into two categories. It can be an imposed change or change that just needs to occur. In either case, it isn't optional—change has to happen.

Such change could include:

- safer or improved processes
- additional risk controls
- change in the law
- new customer requirements.

The table on the following page provides a structured change management process that includes five steps you can follow when you need to implement change in your business.

2. Change that requires decision making

Often businesses may need to make a decision in regard to getting involved or going ahead with change. Change that falls into this category may be a larger project or a change that has a greater impact on the business. Some examples are:

- growing the business
- tendering for new work
- purchasing new equipment
- moving to larger premises.

Change in this category could involve safety, financial and reputational impacts on your business. Before you make a decision about the change, you should consider steps 1 to 3 from the change management process table. Depending on the complexity of the change, you may need to consider developing a business case to identify and address the issues associated with the change. A business case is a justification for a proposed project or undertaking which outlines the expected commercial and safety benefits. The business case should inform and assist decision makers when reviewing the impacts and benefits of the change.

Develop the business case for change

Developing a business case to identify, describe and consider the change will assist you to clearly explain the benefits and answer any questions and concerns. Being clear about the change should:

- help you show you have considered all relevant options
- encourage participation and ownership by all stakeholders.

The business case could include the:

- background or need for the change
- benefits or opportunities for your business
- human and financial resources required to implement the change
- safety, financial and reputational impacts on your business
- risks controls required to manage the change.

Deciding to go ahead with the change

Your business case was compelling and you have made the decision to go ahead with the change. A change that originally required a decision to be made has now turned into a change that needs to happen. To implement your change you may need to first revisit steps 1-3 of the change management process to ensure you have identified and listed all the involved stakeholders and risks. You will then be able to continue by completing steps 4 and 5 of the process.

Impact of the change on people

When implementing the change, consider the impact on employees and any third parties who may be involved. If stakeholders are involved throughout the change process and receive the necessary training, the impact should be minimised.

Always be aware that unexpected additional hazards and risks may be introduced that could potentially impact employees and third parties. Therefore, it's important to monitor and review any risk controls that have been put in place to confirm they are working as intended.

Celebrate the success of the change

Celebrating the success of the change is important. As well as celebrating the successful completion of the change, you may also consider celebrating the achievement of significant milestones and contributions from individuals throughout the change process.

Change management process

Process steps	Explanation						
1. Identify and involve stakeholders	This step includes identifying and involving the appropriate stakeholders within, and external to, your business. Select others in the team with a good range of skills and knowledge to help you identify issues, impacts and safety concerns.						
2. Conduct risk assessments	When planning or preparing for change, you should consider taking a risk-based approach. Looking at the risks associated with making the change requires you to: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">1. identify the hazards</td> <td style="width: 50%;">4. treat the risk with additional controls</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. assess the risk</td> <td>5. monitor the controls to ensure they are working.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. look at existing controls</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1. identify the hazards	4. treat the risk with additional controls	2. assess the risk	5. monitor the controls to ensure they are working.	3. look at existing controls	
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3. Prepare a change management plan	Developing a change management plan can be as simple as listing a few dot points on a page with key activities and dates. The plan should address the need for change, how to manage the change, and should be scaled to meet the complexity of the change and associated risks to your business. Even if you don't develop a detailed change management plan, you should consider: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for change • the impacts and benefits of the change • the timeframe and employee involvement </td> <td style="width: 50%;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocating responsibilities for specific tasks • documentation requirements • communication requirements • conducting risk assessments. </td> </tr> </table>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the need for change • the impacts and benefits of the change • the timeframe and employee involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocating responsibilities for specific tasks • documentation requirements • communication requirements • conducting risk assessments. 				
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4. Implement the change	When you assess and prepare for the change, your next focus should be 'getting it right' and ensuring the risk controls and treatments you set up to eliminate or minimise the risk, have been implemented and are working as intended. It's essential that you develop and communicate any required work procedures and training requirements, to ensure everyone knows what to do once the change has been implemented.						
5. Monitor and review	To ensure the change is successful and to account for any unidentified hazards and risks, it's important that you monitor, review and adjust the change management plan and processes as required.						