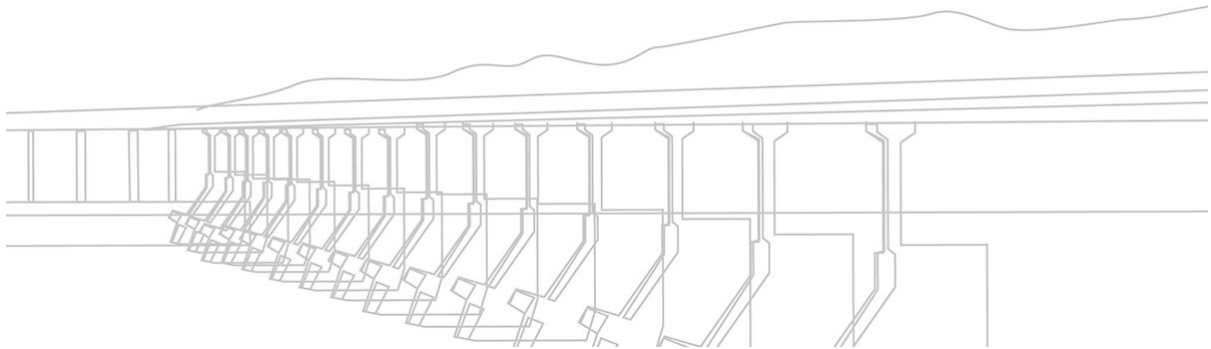




Dams Safety

Dams Safety Focus



22 February 2023



Message from the CEO

Over the past few months we have been receiving risk reports from dam owners that were due to be completed at the end of 2022. For many owners this will be the first time a risk assessment has been completed on their dams, a document that provides a rich collection of information to help manage their dams' safety.

Dams Safety NSW is often asked 'what should I put in a risk report?'. The quick answer is look for the word **MUST** under clause 15 of the Dams Safety Regulation 2019, and the corresponding Societal and Individual Risk Rating Methodology. That will give a clear indication of what must be included in a risk report. For more detailed information, read our [Risk reports for declared dams fact sheet](#).

Finally, I would like to thank Rob O'Neill for his service on the Board of Dams Safety NSW. Rob has been with us from the start on 1 November 2019 and has recently decided to resign and pursue other career interests. We wish him all the best.

Chris Salkovic
CEO, Dams Safety NSW



Six simple tips for writing clear operating procedures

The Dams Safety Regulation 2019 (Clause 9 (1)(a)) requires dam owners to prepare operating procedures with a 'concise description of the procedures and limits (operator controls) of plant and equipment used'.

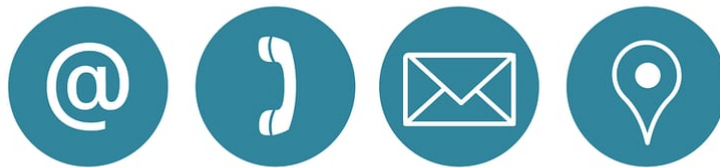
Operating procedures, when written with the end user in mind, make sure equipment, such as valves, spillway gates and pumps, runs smoothly - consistent with how equipment is meant to be operated.

Here are a six tips to consider when creating good operating procedures:

1. **Get your operators on board** – procedures can often be perceived as restrictive. It is important to involve end users when creating them. Gather ideas, understand their perspective, and make sure you share a draft with them early on.
2. **Practicality is key** – procedures need to be designed with practicality in mind. Operators must be able to put them into practice
3. **Keep it simple** – break down each procedure into individual instructions then into individual steps. Try to limit each step to a single action. Use one verb per sentence
4. **Avoid jargon** – short, familiar words are easier to read and understand particularly during an incident response

5. **Use action orientated language** - always use active voice instead of passive voice. *Active voice: Use handle to lift bucket. Passive voice: The bucket should be lifted by using the available handle*
6. **Use visuals!** – simple short videos are great for demonstrations and pictures work best for simple actions like 'Press green button'.

For more useful information refer to pages 7 and 8 of our [Operations and maintenance plans guideline](#).



Has the contact person for your dam changed?

Notify DSNSW - it's the law

If you have a new contact person for your declared dam, or their details have changed, you are legally required to notify Dams Safety NSW within 14 days.

Maintaining up-to-date details for a contact person for DSNSW ensures that the Dams Safety Act and regulation can be administered efficiently and safely.

Notify Dams Safety NSW of the new details by emailing us at info@damsafety.nsw.gov.au or calling **(02) 9842 8073**.



Serious incidents or injuries that occur at, or in relation to, a declared dam must be reported to Dams Safety NSW as soon as possible after the incident by calling **0403 681 645 (24 hours/7 days a week)**.

A written report of an incident in a form approved by Dams Safety NSW must be given to Dams Safety NSW no later than 72 hours after the incident, even if an oral

report of the incident has already been given. [Click here to complete the online incident report form.](#)

Examples of the types of incidents you should report to DSNSW include:

- Risk of or actual failure of the dam
- Death or serious injury of persons related to the dam and its operations
- A security incident that has or may affect the safety of the dam
- An incident related to dam safety that is reasonably likely to cause concern to members of the public

If you are not sure if an incident meets the reporting requirements in clause 19 of the Dams Safety Regulation, it is recommended that declared dam owners report the incident.

Even if you have already made an oral report, email any additional information to incident@damsafety.nsw.gov.au

Reporting incidents to DSNSW is required by law. The information helps us monitor action taken by dam owners to resolve issues at dams. It also helps us track issues related to dam safety to inform our policies and programs.

Have you submitted your Annual Safety Standards Report?

All declared dam owners are required to publish a report that shows their efforts over the year to manage dam safety. The [Annual Dams Safety Standards Report](#) covers the previous calendar year and is due by 31 March. Dam owners must submit the report to Dams Safety NSW, keep a copy at their office and publish it on their website (if they have one) for the public to view. The information gathered from the reports also helps Dams Safety NSW prioritise our compliance activities for the following year, focussing on areas that need the most attention to help make the NSW community safer.

All declared dam owners should read our [Annual Dams Safety Standards Report](#) fact sheet and familiarise themselves with the information they need to complete the report. Please use this [online form](#) for your report/s. Dam owners can email the report forms to Dams Safety NSW at info@damsafety.nsw.gov.au.

New fact sheet: Engaging a competent person or panel to review dam reports or assessments

Under the Dams Safety Regulation 2019, **owners of extreme or high consequence category declared dams** need to engage competent persons, or panels of competent persons, to undertake reviews of some reports and assessments, and when their dams are being designed. Declared dams with consequence categories of significant or below do not need to be reviewed.

Find out more by reading our [fact sheet](#).

Contact us

Dams Safety Focus is our newsletter on dam safety in NSW. If you have any questions or feedback contact us at:

Dams Safety NSW

Phone: (02) 9842 8073

Email: communications@damsafety.nsw.gov.au

Visit our website - Dams Safety NSW

Dams Safety NSW, Locked Bag 5022, Parramatta, NSW 2124

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