

## Appendix 2: So far as is reasonably practicable

### section 22 of HSWA

Certain PCBU duties (the [section 36–43](#) duties including the primary duty of care) must be carried out ‘so far as is reasonably practicable’.

### What to consider when deciding what is ‘reasonably practicable’

Just because something is possible to do, does not mean it is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Consider:

- What possible actions can be taken to ensure health and safety?
- Of these possible actions, at a particular time, what is reasonable to do?

Think about the following questions.

#### **WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT THE RISK?**

- How likely is the risk to occur?
- How severe is the illness or injury that might occur if something goes wrong?
- What is known, or should reasonably be known, about the risk?

#### **WHAT IS KNOWN ABOUT POSSIBLE CONTROL MEASURES?**

- What is known, or should reasonably be known, about the ways (control measures) to eliminate or minimise the risk?
- What control measures are available?
- How appropriate (suitable) are the control measures to manage the risk?
- What are the costs of these control measures?
- Are the costs grossly disproportionate to the risk? Cost must only be used as a reason to not do something when that cost is grossly out of proportion to the risk.

While PCBUs should check if there are widely used control measures for that risk (such as industry standards), they should always keep their specific circumstances in mind. A common industry practice might not be the most effective or appropriate control measure to use.

If PCBUs are not sure what control measures are appropriate, WorkSafe recommends getting advice from a suitably qualified and experienced health and safety professional.

For more information, see our [guidance: Reasonably practicable](#)