Working in heat can be hazardous and can cause harm to workers.

Number of workers’ compensation claims resulting from working in heat

1,360 over the ten years from 2008-09 to 2017-18p

Of these claims:

- 1,235 working in the sun
- 85 working in hot indoor conditions
  - 750 of these claims were cancer related
  - 140 of these claims were heat stroke or heat stress related
- 40 heat stroke or heat stress related

You must do everything reasonably practicable to eliminate the risks of working in heat. Where the risk cannot be eliminated, it must be minimised as much as reasonably practicable.

Different workers may react differently to heat conditions.

Heat is not just a hazard when working outdoors on hot days. Consider the conditions inside your workplace and what hazards may be present.

WAYS TO CONTROL RISK

- Automate processes, use plant equipment to reduce physical labour requirements
- Relocate work to cooler or air-conditioned areas
- Where possible, don’t allow workers to work alone
- Modify targets and work rates to account for conditions
- Schedule work to cooler parts of the day/year
- Review rest schedules

For further information see our Potential Hazards and Risks for working in heat fact sheet or our Guide for managing the risks of working in heat.

Note: The claims data has been sourced from Safe Work Australia’s National Data Set for Compensation-based Statistics (NDS), which is compiled based on workers’ compensation data provided annually by each of the jurisdictional workers’ compensation authorities. The data for 2017-18 is preliminary (denoted by ‘p’) and will be subjected to upwards revision when new data is available.