



Art Department:

Set construction

This chapter provides overarching guidance in relation to risk associated with set construction on a production. This is a subset of the art department chapter.





Section 5

Set Construction

Who needs to read this?

Anyone who has a set construction role should read and understand the overarching art department chapter and the below section on 'minimum responsibilities', they should also read other chapters that relate the work they undertake for example the chapters on working at heights or electricity.

Roles that have specific responsibilities, or influence, over set construction tasks should read the section on 'planning and guidance considerations' – this includes producers, directors, production managers, line producers, heads of departments, assistant directors and health and safety officers.

Important: when a film set is under construction it must be treated like as, and considered, a construction site. The construction supervisor / foreman has complete control over the site.





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Minimum responsibilities

Everyone involved with the construction department:

- must be competent to undertake their assigned work, including being licensed, certified or ticketed where required;
- must have the ability to identify that the equipment that they are using is safe and be able to maintain that equipment;
- should be aware of what personal protective equipment (PPE) they are expected to provide themselves and what will be provided by the production company;
- must use the required PPE;
- should inform their supervisor if they do not have the appropriate PPE;
- should understand the structure of the department, and the health and safety roles and responsibilities that come with specific positions;
- should attend department-specific health and safety tool box¹ meetings, if required by the construction supervisor; and
- must be aware of those working around them.



1. An informal group discussion that focuses on safety and opportunity to talk about and receive relevant information regarding new and existing hazards.



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Specific responsibilities – set construction

All those with specific technical responsibilities regarding set construction, such as the construction supervisor, or persons charged with these responsibilities, should read and understand what is required in this section, as well as the above sections and the [art department chapter](#).

All those with specific technical responsibilities should have a good understanding of:

- the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 and associated regulations; and
- potential hazards and associated risks related to set construction.

Funders

Funders should:

- be assured, through the provision of the production's health and safety plan, that the funding provided is adequate to provide for competent people to undertake and supervise all construction work and the appropriate tools and material; and
- incorporate health and safety clause/s in the funding agreement.

Production company

In pre-production, production companies (likely to be defined as the primary PCBU) must clearly identify who has control of set construction, and ensure those people are competent.

The production company is to ensure workers have the appropriate disposable PPE, such as mask filters and cartridges, and may supply the required PPE to workers

Producer

Before the production starts, the producer should:

- ensure (in consultation with the production designer/art director) a competent construction supervisor, with suitable experience for the size of the project, is hired;
- consult, cooperate and coordinate with the construction supervisor on set to determine the amount of work required and how long it will take, and take this into account when developing schedules;
- ensure the appropriate tools and material are acquired so work can be undertaken safely;
- ensure workers have and use the required PPE;
- work with the construction supervisor and ensure sufficient resources, including budget, are allocated to enable appropriate and safe practices;





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- consider how changing deadlines and making set changes at the last minute can lead to fatigue and stress for workers;
- consult and collaborate with the construction supervisor to understand the how long tasks will take and how deadlines may impact workload and final product;
- ensure hazard identification and risk assessments are undertaken for construction work;
- ensure all potential risks on location are eliminated or, if elimination is not reasonably practicable, minimised;
- ensure that emergency and first aid procedures are in place.

Set construction supervisor

The set construction supervisor should:

- consult, cooperate and coordinate with other heads of department on set to determine the amount of work required and how long it will take, and take this into account when developing schedules;
- ensure the appropriate tools and material are used so work can be undertaken safely;
- ensure workers use the required PPE;
- consider how changing deadlines and making set changes at the last minute can lead to fatigue and stress for workers;
- consult, cooperate and coordinate with the gaffer/head electrician and reference the [electrical chapter](#) for more information;
- ensure hazard identification and risk assessments are undertaken for construction work;
- ensure all potential risks on location are eliminated or, if elimination is not reasonably practicable, minimised;
- ensure workers aware of the emergency and first aid procedures that are in place;
- read and understand other health and safety chapters related to the work they undertake, such as [working at height](#), [noise](#), [electrical work](#) and [fatigue](#).

PRE-PRODUCTION

Construction supervisor should always consider health and safety when:

- looking at scripts;
- allocating budget; and
- developing work schedules.





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CONSTRUCTION PHASE

Once a construction plan of the set is finalised, the construction supervisor must ensure competent workers are engaged for the tasks required.

When a film set is under construction it must be treated like as, and considered, a construction site; the construction supervisor has complete control over the site and must follow standard construction health and safety guidelines, this includes, but is not limited to:

- access on site;
- electricity and other services;
- protecting the public;
- working at height;
- moving material;
- loading and unloading tools;
- excavation;
- working with vehicles and machinery;
- hazardous substances;
- noise;
- workloads and fatigues;
- alcohol and drug use;
- emergency situations;
- hot work.

PRODUCTION

Once filming has started, construction supervisors should always consider health and safety when:

- managing crew;
- setting work schedules; and
- monitoring the allocated budget.

STRIKE PHASE

After production is completed, the set construction supervisor must ensure that any remaining sets are struck – either disposed of, recycled or stored for future work – this may include:

- ensuring the power supply is disabled and removed, which should be done under supervision of the gaffer – refer to the electrical chapter for more information;
- considering how material is stored safely; and
- ensuring crew are briefed on hazards and associated risk they may be exposed to during strike.





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Health and safety advisor

The health and safety advisor, or person with health and safety responsibilities, should ensure there are:

- emergency and first aid procedures in place;
- hazard boards; and
- nominated qualified first aiders in construction areas.



Risk assessment – set design and construction

Detailed information about how to undertake a risk assessment² can be found in [appendix 2](#).

The risk assessment should set out risks to members of the production team, artists, crew, other contractors, contributors and other parties, and identify appropriate control measures for any sets or scenery, including props.

A list of potential risks can be found in the overarching [a](#) it is not exhaustive and a health and safety expert should be consulted when undertaking a risk assessment.

ScreenSafe

Appendix 2

Detailed information about how to undertake a risk assessment can be found in [appendix 2](#)

2. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>



VISIT [ScreenSafe.co.nz](https://www.screensafe.co.nz)

