



Why are we required to provide Back-up Measures to the Risk Controls?:

The ohs legislation requires that back-up procedures be assessed and in place should any of the risk controls fail. The legislation also dictates some minimum requirements.

Medical Personnel and Equipment

Every workplace must have a first aid kit suitable to its requirements, (with some minimum ohs requirements dictated by regulation and the film safety code). In order to meet legislative requirements, each hazard must be assessed to establish the type of injury that may result if the controls fail, and appropriate equipment supplied to deal with each situation, and an appropriate level of medical personnel provided.

For example, while not specifically required for workplaces under 100 people in New South Wales, if working with high levels of electricity or near water, as is often the case in the film industry, your risk assessment may dictate that a defibrillator and oxygen resuscitation system is on hand, along with the personnel trained to use them.

The assessment for back-up first aid equipment and personnel should be included in the risk controls for each hazard identified.

Do I really need to have a Registered Nurse?

It is traditional in the Film Industry to put on an experienced Registered Nurse, available through most of the major crew agencies, for the course of a film or a major commercial.

If you can afford to have a registered nurse on set for the full shoot do so. The safety and well being of crew and cast are of paramount importance and a qualified person on hand in the event of an accident is essential and especially important when filming with children. Alternatively, on low budget films, a registered nurse can be engaged on specific days to be present during all stunt and special effects sequences or at high-risk locations.

The Australian Film and Television Safety Code requires a Registered Nurse to be on set if there are any stunts, special effects or special rigs, and are usually required when on location, particularly if isolated, in the bush, or anywhere particularly hazardous. Additionally, the Child Employment regulations in most states requires a Registered Nurse to be on set and oversee the employment of babies and small children, (up to the age of three in some states, and additionally in other cases they may stipulate. Some qualified childcare professionals can be substituted in some cases in some states.

Why can't I use an enrolled nurse?

You can, but in order for them to work legally as a “nurse”, they must be under the direct supervision of a registered nurse. If you have a registered nurse on, and extra help is required, the registered nurse may agree to supervise them, which would enable them to work legally. Alternately, there is nothing to stop you putting on an enrolled nurse on, on occasions where a registered nurse is not required, but they could only work as a first-aider, with similar restrictions, and therefore should not be referred to as a ‘nurse’. Always check the qualifications of the nurse when booking them, to ensure legal compliance, but more importantly, to avoid misunderstandings.

The nurse is asking for extra people – can't they cope?

It is advisable to consult with the registered nurse in pre-production, as the nurse may request an additional nurses or paramedics as back-up for particular situations, or counselors or other health specialists as appropriate in the given circumstances.

If it is anticipated that it will be long days, and the nurse is expected to be present at or prior to call and stay until the last crew leave, it would be prudent, under the fatigue management plan, to budget for relief staff where necessary.

As the term paramedic is often loosely used (some first-aiders who have undertaken a two week course claim to be paramedics), it is important that the level required be determined before booking takes place. Generally speaking, if a registered nurse requests a paramedic, they are usually looking for someone who is at level 3 and very experienced, but if a particularly high risks is evident, then a level 5 paramedic who can intubate and is legally able to deliver restricted drugs on their own authority would be more appropriate.

Why does the registered nurse need pre-production time (Don't they just turn up?)

You need to ensure the nurse has sufficient time in pre-production to research locations and local health providers; assess medical histories for cast and crew; assess script, safety report, emergency procedures and relevant risk management controls order and to organise and distribute stock. This is particularly important if the crew is on location for the first part of the shooting schedule, and depending on the size of the production, it may not be unreasonable to allocate at least two weeks pre-production time. Conversely, if it is a small, local production, then two to three days may suffice. Consult with the nurse giving plenty of pre-production time to plan the health and injury management.

How much should I allow for kit hire?

On a larger production, the medical kit may be quite extensive. Ensure you budget a reasonable amount for kit hire and replacement costs. The kit will usually contain many items which hopefully you won't use, but are necessary back-up in most cases. Many drugs and supplies have a very limited expiry period, and are particularly susceptible to exposure to environmental elements, so may require replacement or extra cleaning at a rapid rate. The

size, location, environment and action of the shoot will impact on the budget costs. Traditionally, films have under budgeted for kit hire and consumables. Ensure your budget allows for a realistic equipment hire fee that adequately recompenses the supplier for the cost and upkeep of equipment and stock. The fee should be adjusted depending on what is provided and who maintains and transports it.

Professional development: There should be some financial consideration given for the fact that the employer normally pays for the professional update courses and information necessary to keep current with medical treatments, required by the state nurses' registration boards, which the freelance nurse rarely has the advantage of, and often has to pay for it out of their own pocket.

The registered nurse will also need to be provided with a vehicle to transport the medical equipment, and in some cases, injured persons. If the nurse provides a vehicle, then they should be adequately compensated.

If it is a large production, you should consider budgeting for a flu vaccination program.

If the production is traveling overseas, it is important that an immunization program be budgeted for, investigated and instigated at the earliest time possible. Many immunizations require several months and/or doses to become effective.

It is very hard to effectively treat a seriously injured person with less than two trained personnel. Multiple locations, shift clashes and long hours may need some degree of job rotation or extra personnel, and consider the ratio of nurses required to adequately supervise children.

As a guide, under NSW regulations: (you will need to check the requirements for each state)

Minimum requirements:

- If there are more than 25 people at a workplace – First Aider with a recognised WorkCover First Aid Certificate.
- If there are 100 or more people (construction site), or if more than 200 in a normal workplace - an Occupational Health and Safety First Aid Certificate, Level 3 Ambulance Officer, Registered Nurse, or Doctor. Additionally, a first aid room with minimum specifications are required.

Remember, regardless of minimum requirements in all states, your assessment may, and because of the nature of film, will, in most cases, require a higher standard!

You may require a first aider (or more, or a nurse or two) for even one-or two people if they are undertaking hazardous work, depending on the level of risk. Although this situation is rare, it is important not to overlook it when budgeting.

Additionally, equipment and facility requirements may increase depending on many variables affected by the risk level.

Further information about registered nurses can be found at:

- Your state nurses registration board:

Nurses and Midwives Board of New South Wales
<http://www.nmb.nsw.gov.au/>

Australian Capital Territory Nursing and Midwifery Board
www.nursesboard.act.gov.au

Nursing & Midwifery Board of the Northern Territory
www.nt.gov.au/health/org_supp/prof_boards/nurse_midwifery/board.shtml

Queensland Nursing Council
www.qnc.qld.gov.au

Nurses Board of South Australia
www.nursesboard.sa.gov.au

Nursing Board of Tasmania
www.nursingboardtas.org.au

Nurses Board of Victoria
www.nbv.org.au
Nurses Board of Western Australia
www.nbwa.org.au

- The Alliance safety web site under OHS Resources and then Safety Guides and Codes:
<http://ohs.alliance.org.au>

Draft Film & TV Safety Guidelines Nov 04

Occupational Risk Management in the Australian Film & Television Industry
Draft National Safety Guidelines also known as the "Film & TV Safety
Guidelines: *Safety guidelines for working in film and television.*"

Note: The above is a guide only. It is up to the individuals to check on current legislative requirements in each state they will be working in.