Is there an NHVR safety management system template?

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There isn't one ready-made SMS template, but the NHVR publishes free templates for many of the parts - a safety policy, a risk register, hazard and incident report forms, toolbox talks and more. They are a good start. You still need to tailor them to how your business actually works, and use them every day.

Free NHVR templates

These are free on the NHVR's SMS resources page. Here's how they line up with the five elements of the SMS Standard 2026:

Element	NHVR templates and tools
Getting started	SMS checklist
Leadership and commitment	Safety policy; responsibilities and accountabilities; safety alert; safety bulletin
Risk management	Risk register; single-risk assessment; task risk assessment; hazard report forms (including an owner-operator version); incident report form; incident investigation report form; Risk Register Builder
People	Toolbox talk and attendance form; driver competency assessment form; safety training calendar
Assurance	Change management checklist; continuous improvement register
Safety systems	Third party engagement checklist

The NHVR also has quick guides for each topic and a free eight-part SMS webinar series made for small operators and owner-drivers.

A template isn't a system

An auditor checks that your SMS suits your business and that it is being used and working. Copying templates without changing them to match what you really do - your trucks, freight, routes and people - won't show that.

How to use them

1. Start with the SMS checklist

See what you already have and what is missing.

2. Tailor every template

Change the wording to how your business really works. Delete what doesn't apply.

3. Use them every day

Hazard reports, incident reports and toolbox talk records are your evidence the system is working.

4. Review them

Check your SMS at least once a year, and after any incident or big change.

Want help building it?

RigsHQ helps small operators build an SMS that fits their business, and keeps the records and reviews on track.

General information, not legal advice.

Sources

NHVR - SMS resources (free templates) - https://www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/safety-management/resources

NHVR - Safety Management Systems (SMS) - https://www.nhvr.gov.au/safety-accreditation-compliance/safety-management/safety-management-systems-sms

NHVR - Risk Register Builder - https://www.nhvr.gov.au/resources/risk-register-builder/