

# Risk Scoring Matrix

## Introduction

A risk scoring matrix is a tool for volunteer health and safety management. It helps managers determine the likelihood and severity of an incident as a way of delineating the urgency of risk management.

## How to Use a Risk Scoring Matrix

Using a risk scoring matrix requires:

1. determining and listing **what risks are posed** by a volunteer/work site or activity;
2. determining the **likelihood of an incident** based on each risk; and
3. determining the possible **severity of harm** if there is an incident.

The risk scoring matrix below has been adapted by the Environment Network Manawatu from a NZ Landcare Trust chart. In this approach, each potential hazard is given a numerical score (1, 2, or 3) based on the likelihood of an incident, and an alphabetical score (A, B, or C) based on the potential severity of harm. Where a range of harms are possible from a single hazard (e.g. sunstroke; sunburn), the score is based on the most severe potential harm, and the most likely type of incident.

A Sample Risk Scoring Matrix		Likelihood of harm		
		1. High	2. Moderate	3. Low
Potential severity of harm	A. Fatality, serious harm, or long-term implications	A1	A2	A3
	B. Other injury requiring medical aid	B1	B2	B3
	C. Minor injury requiring first aid	C1	C2	C3

## Why to Use a Risk Scoring Matrix

Assigning each risk a score on the matrix can highlight the required management response.

Although each person or group responsible for volunteers will need to delineate risk management in the way they judge best, the following chart suggests possible approaches. For each rating, the first management suggestion is more appropriate to ongoing labour activities, whereas the second may be more appropriate to one-off or occasional events with less skilled or unknown volunteers and participants.

Hazard Rating		
A1, A2, B1 Serious risk	OR	Work must stop <b>IMMEDIATELY</b> and not proceed until the hazard has been eliminated, isolated, or minimised.
		Stop the activity and eliminate the hazard. If elimination is not possible <b>and</b> the activity is essential, then isolate and minimise to the fullest possible extent before engaging in the activity.
A3, B2, B3, C1, C2 Noteworthy risk	OR	Control measures must be implemented as soon as possible and <b>WITHIN 7 DAYS</b> .
		Before proceeding, ensure a best management plan is in place and follow it carefully.
C3 Minor risk	OR	Work may continue. Implement control measures as soon as possible.
		The activity may continue, but manage the risk.



