

Building Safety Excellence in the Public Sector

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**Government
of South Australia**

Office of the Commissioner
for Public Sector Employment

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Date of Operation 2015 – June 2022

Revised by OCPSE HSW team in February 2022 to update references to other documents

Foreword from the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment

Our people ensure that the public sector delivers the infrastructure and services needed to help South Australia thrive. But they can only do this if they are safe, healthy and supported at work. A person who is injured because of safety failures is someone who cannot contribute to providing services to the people of South Australia.

As Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, I am committed to the advancement of health, safety and wellbeing across the South Australian public sector.

Building Safety Excellence in the Public Sector builds on the progress that has already been achieved through previous South Australian public sector safety strategies, and reflects the important role of government workplaces as leaders in health and safety. It has been designed to complement the national safety strategy, Safe Work Australia's *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012–2022*, which envisions that we can all have healthy, safe and productive working lives. The national strategy recognises that it is imperative that 'Governments exemplify good work health and safety'.

Work health and safety is not just about ensuring the physical health and safety of our workers, though that is vitally important. Psychological health and safety issues cause the longest absences from work and the most costly workplace injuries. We must foster a workplace culture across government that values and supports health, safety and wellbeing and promotes satisfaction, motivation and productivity through an engaged workforce. It's about prioritising physical and mental wellbeing to create high-performing and sustainable workplaces.

Building Safety Excellence in the Public Sector provides the public sector a clear vision to achieve safety excellence, through informed safety leadership, positive wellbeing and engagement, effective risk management and targeted performance measurement to improve safety outcomes. Public sector agencies will move towards safety excellence through developing tailored strategies to address these four safety 'pillars'. The strategy recognises the importance of good leadership, not just from leaders within work health and safety teams but from leaders and managers across government. It calls upon all public sector leaders to actively demonstrate their commitment to safety by integrating health, safety and wellbeing into the core business of the agency and, by doing so, ensuring that safety is given the highest priority in everything we do.

Of course, staying safe and healthy at work is a joint responsibility. Everyone has an obligation to actively participate in protecting their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace. Together we can make sure that the public sector continues to deliver the high quality services the people of South Australia expect.

Erma Ranieri

Commissioner for Public Sector Employment

Improving work health and safety and return to work performance

The *Building Safety Excellence in the Public Sector* strategy provides a systematic approach to the improvement of work health and safety (WHS) management in the South Australian public sector and promotes the effective return to work of workers who are injured in the course of their employment. It supports an organisational culture that highly values safety and enhances agency safety performance by aligning WHS and return to work strategies, practice, leadership and accountabilities with organisational goals and priorities to achieve better outcomes.

For public sector agencies, the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy:

- Provides a framework describing four pillars of safety excellence
- Assists with measurement of current performance and the identification of areas requiring improvement
- Prioritises key result areas for the development of strategy to effect improvements.

Why do we need the Building Safety Excellence strategy?

The objectives of the *Building Safety Excellence (BSE)* strategy are to:

- Ensure that safety is given the highest priority in the work of the public sector
- Assist agencies to identify challenges to health and safety and address them before they adversely impact on workers
- Build work environments that promote wellbeing¹
- Provide leadership and drive safety performance to support a high performing public sector. (Support the Government's State Reform Agenda²)
- Enable the safe return to work of injured workers.

Through implementation of the BSE strategy agencies are assisted to:

- Build an organisational culture of continuous improvement in WHS, supported by strong safety leadership, that ensures all workers³ have healthy and safe working environments and that injured workers return to work in a safe and sustainable manner
- Increase productivity through an engaged and healthy workforce⁴
- Manage safety responsibilities in a transparent and accessible manner
- Enhance accountability for safety performance
- Effectively use performance information for evaluation of systems and evidence based decision-making

¹ Wellbeing is not merely the absence of injuries or incidents. It reflects the way work is designed, organised and managed, as well as environmental and organisational conditions in the workplace that impact motivation and engagement with work

² State Reform Agenda - Policy Enablers: A high performing public sector

³ The term 'worker' is used throughout this document to reflect obligations under s19 of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 SA*. The provisions of s16 of the Act apply to situations where shared duties exist and agencies have limited influence and control over the work.

⁴ Health and wellbeing have been recognised by the Australian Productivity Commission to be a feature of greater labour force participation and hence productivity. That is, healthy people are more physically and mentally productive, which not only impacts on organisational performance, but also has flow on effects to the economy.

What underpins the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy?

The *Building Safety Excellence* strategy supports agencies to fulfil their legislated obligations under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012 SA* (WHS Act) and associated Regulations and Codes of Practice, to protect the health and safety of all workers to whom they owe a duty. This includes recognising situations where duties are shared with other Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBUs) and consulting, cooperating and coordinating with these PCBUs to ensure that duties are fulfilled⁵.

Implementation of strategic priorities in the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy assists leaders⁶ who are officers⁷ under the WHS Act to demonstrate due diligence⁸ to protect health and safety, through the emphasis of the strategy on informed safety leadership, particularly:

- Understanding the hazards and risks associated with agency operations
- Ensuring appropriate processes are in place for receiving and considering information regarding hazards, incidents and risks, to ensure timely and effective responses
- Verifying that risk management measures have been implemented and work
- Using objective information on safety performance to make evidence-based management decisions.

Implementation of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy assists the public sector to contribute to achieving the objectives of the Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012 – 2022

The Building Safety Excellence strategy should be read in conjunction with the South Australian Public Sector Injury Management Standards⁹ which outline requirements, policies and guidelines for the administration of an injury management system across the public sector. Agencies are required to establish management systems that meet WHS legislation and address requirements of AS/NZS 4801:2001 'Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems – Specification with guidance for use'.¹⁰

⁵ Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination Code of Practice, Safe Work Australia, 2011

⁶ The term 'leader' is used throughout this document to indicate managers, who have an element of control in the workplace. Other than officers, they have worker duties under the Act (*Work Health and Safety Act 2012 SA*, Part 2, Division 4, s27)

⁷ An officer of the Crown is a person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking of the Crown, who must exercise due diligence to ensure that the person conducting a business or undertaking (agency) complies with (their WHS) duty or obligation (*Work Health and Safety Act 2012 SA*, Part 13, Division 5, section 247). Officer duties cannot be delegated.

⁸ *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, SA, Part 2, Division 4, s27

⁹ Approved by Cabinet December 2021 and available at <https://www.publicsector.sa.gov.au/hr-and-policy-support/work-health-and-safety-and-injury-management/injury-management>

¹⁰ This Standard specifies requirements for an occupational health and safety management system to enable an organization to formulate a policy and objectives taking into account legislative requirements and information about hazards or risks. It applies to those hazards or risks over which the organisation may exert control and over which it can be expected to have an influence.

Framework of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy

FOUR PILLARS OF SAFETY EXCELLENCE

The pillars of safety excellence describe the characteristics of organisations with a strong organisational culture for safety and minimal injury impacts on workers. They present a vision for safety excellence against which agencies can review their current performance and assess their progress.

KEY RESULT AREAS

Each of the four pillars is supported by a set of key result areas, which outline priority actions which agencies use to tailor their own strategies to move towards safety excellence.

A PERFORMANCE REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

Internal performance review and improvement processes are undertaken periodically by agencies to improve safety outcomes. As part of the review process, agencies identify if key result areas are addressed throughout the organisation, and if associated actions are effective. For each pillar of safety excellence the Strategy includes checklists and maturity matrices to assist this evaluation. Reviews provide agencies with a clear picture of their performance and assist in the identification of areas requiring further improvement.

AGENCY IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Agencies ensure that the four pillars of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy are addressed within their strategic planning processes for safety and injury management. Strategies are implemented that address the key result areas and reflect the business operations, relevant performance data and existing WHS and return to work programs of the agency.

How will we measure progress?

ACROSS GOVERNMENT SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES (APPENDIX 1)

A suite of outcome measures inform public sector safety performance and guide system improvement. These align to the targets of the *Australian Work Health and Safety Strategy 2012-22* and requirements of the *Return to Work Act 2014*.¹¹

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures that are predictive of the success of key result areas for the four pillars are established in consultation with agencies to enable tracking and monitoring across government. High performing agencies establish and monitor additional performance indicators for agency-specific risks and the effectiveness of safety and return to work initiatives to inform ongoing improvement.

¹¹ The *Return to Work Act 2014* has as its primary objective to provide early intervention to support workers to realise the health benefits of work, recover from injuries and return to work

PUBLIC SECTOR AUDIT AND VERIFICATION SYSTEM FOR SAFETY AND INJURY MANAGEMENT (AVS)¹²

The AVS provides external validation of an agency's WHS and injury management systems against legislative and system design criteria (AS/NZS 4801). It assesses whether the WHS management system is appropriate to the scale and nature of agency risks. The AVS confirms that strategies to address significant risks are outcome based and linked to performance measures. Findings from AVS assessment assist with identification of improvements required in the implementation of key result areas.

Monitoring and Reporting

PORTFOLIO /AGENCY SAFETY PERFORMANCE

The Office for the Commissioner of Public Sector Employment (OCPSE) provides quarterly reports to Chief Executives and the Treasurer covering:

- Agency / whole of sector performance against the across government safety performance measures and leading indicators
- Trends in agency performance
- Progress in implementing corrective actions arising from AVS recommendations
- Performance trends and risks

CHIEF EXECUTIVE PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS

Annual discussions take place between each Minister and their Chief Executive(s) that address agency WHS and injury management performance and are linked to Chief Executive performance outcomes. These are informed by data on safety performance and progress against agency implementation plans. Information for inclusion in Chief Executive performance discussions is provided at Appendix 2. A copy of agency performance outcomes is provided to OCPSE to enable across-sector reporting to Cabinet and for annual reporting purposes.

DEPARTMENT OF PREMIER AND CABINET – ANNUAL REPORT

Agencies provide information to OCPSE that describes their progress towards addressing the key result areas of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy and meeting performance measures and targets, for inclusion in annual reporting. The report collates across-sector WHS and injury management outcomes against audit and performance measurement.

STRATEGY REVIEW

The *Building Safety Excellence* strategy is maintained as a 'live' document to enable ongoing improvements as a result of collaboration and consultation with agencies. Strategy review reflects measured performance and allows emerging issues to be addressed, for example related to demographic workforce changes and the emergence of new technologies and work methods.

The next strategy review will coincide with the release of the next national Safety Strategy.

¹² The AVS forms part of a public sector reform that integrates performance measurement, auditing and reporting with the development of responsive strategy and policy to enable the sustainable improvement of safety performance outcomes.

The Framework for Safety Excellence

The four pillars of Safety Excellence are supported by key processes that link the pillars and enable high performance.



KEY RESULT AREA**KEY RESULT AREA****KEY RESULT AREA****Safety Leadership**

Leaders demonstrate commitment to safety by their actions.

Safety is integrated into agency strategic planning and business operations.

Leaders communicate and consult about the importance of safety improvement.

Leaders display in-depth knowledge of safety, including hazards and risks associated with business operations.

1.1 Active demonstration of safety leadership.

- Create a shared vision and sense of ownership for achieving safety goals.
- Establish and manage clear systems of accountability for safety.
- Integrate safety into organisational governance structures and strategic planning processes.

1.2 Leaders make evidence-based decisions.

- Actively drive safety strategic planning.
- Collect objective and verified data to inform management review of safety performance.
- Implement evidence-based improvement initiatives based on measured performance.

1.3 Leaders engage with workers.

- Are visible in the agency consulting on safety at all levels of the organisation.
- Communicate and cascade safety strategy.
- Proactively build organisational capabilities to deliver improved safety performance.

Wellbeing and Engagement

Organisational practices support wellbeing and engagement.

The organisational culture promotes engagement and psychological health.

The work environment minimises the risk of psychological harm.

Workers are engaged in decisions affecting their psychological health and wellbeing.

2.1 Cultivate an organisational culture that promotes wellbeing.

- Build a workplace culture that does not tolerate unresolved conflict, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Promote protective factors at a team level to maximise resilience
- Facilitate early intervention where workers exhibit signs of psychological distress.

2.2 Systematically manage psychological risks

- Implement strategies for the early identification of psychosocial hazards / stressors
- Identify opportunities for improved work design and associated practices.
- Provide information, training and support to promote.

2.3 Engage workers in workplace decisions that affect safety and wellbeing.

- Encourage participation in identifying improvements to the design of work
- Consult and collaborate with workers to focus effort at times of change.
- Co-design psychological health strategies with leaders and workers.

<p>Risk Management</p> <p>Risk management is systematic and proportionate.</p> <p>Risks arising from business activity are managed according to their nature and severity.</p> <p>Risk management efforts are directed to the source of the risk.</p> <p>Controls reduce the human, social and financial cost of injury and associated impacts on service delivery.</p>	<p>3.1 Identify and manage significant risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and manage safety systems consistent with the nature and complexity of organisational risks. • Address safety in contracted work, through consultation, cooperation and coordination with joint duty holders. • Promote a risk aware and informed culture. 	<p>3.2 Ensure that risk control measures remain effective.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain information on significant risks to enable timely and effective intervention. • Regularly review the effectiveness of risk controls using performance measures and assurance practices. • Encourage workers to challenge the effectiveness of controls. 	<p>3.3 Control risks impacting the return to work of injured workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively manage risks associated with workers returning to work following an injury, to prevent re-injury.
<p>Performance Measurement</p> <p>Regular verification and evaluation of safety performance is undertaken.</p> <p>Continuous improvement of safety systems through a cycle of measurement, evaluation and review.</p> <p>Evidence-based reviews of safety.</p>	<p>4.1 Measure the right things.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and monitor performance indicators for the management of significant risks. • Target performance measurement towards ‘what must go right’ for safety. 	<p>4.2 Evaluate performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify the effectiveness of safety systems and control of risks through a rigorous internal and external audit process. • Engage workers in the evaluation of safety performance. 	<p>4.3 Improve performance results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement evidence-based strategies to achieve high performance outcomes. • Reinforce the importance of safety performance for sustainable service delivery. • Embrace public accountability for results.

Safety Leadership

WHAT DOES SAFETY EXCELLENCE LOOK LIKE?

Leaders demonstrate commitment to safety by their actions

- Safety is integrated into agency strategic planning and business operations
- Leaders communicate and consult about the importance of safety improvement
- Leaders display in-depth knowledge of safety, including hazards and risks associated with business operations

Why is this important?

High performing organisations demonstrate effective safety leadership and accountability for safety performance.

Leaders ensure there are systems for:

- The prevention of workplace injury or illness
- The notification of unsafe work practices
- Early intervention to minimise harm
- Safe and sustainable return to work (RTW) of injured workers.

EFFECTIVE LEADERS...

... drive safety management through active involvement in planning safety strategies, ensuring successful implementation of safety programs and reviewing performance outcomes.

... make informed decisions for safety improvements through accessing and using a range of information on agency risks, the current status of risk management initiatives, performance data and safety outcomes.

... play a crucial role in establishing safety expectations and enforcing accountability mechanisms throughout the organisation by role modelling safety behaviours, consulting widely and implementing appropriate safety delegations.

... send a clear message to workers that safety is highly valued at all levels and is a priority by integrating safety into business planning and governance arrangements.

AS A LEADER, ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM, DO WE:

- ✓ Ensure that governance structures integrate safety at the highest level?
- ✓ Incorporate safety into agency strategic planning processes, including business continuity planning?
- ✓ Communicate clear safety expectations across our organisation?
- ✓ Operationalise accountability mechanisms for safety performance at all levels of the agency?
- ✓ Ensure that we comply with requirements of the WHS Act?
- ✓ Consult widely about safety?
- ✓ Encourage open communication and feedback on safety matters?
- ✓ Have processes in place for receiving and considering information on hazards, risks and incidents?
- ✓ Respond in a timely way to identified hazards, risks and incidents?
- ✓ Allocate resources to eliminate or minimise work health and safety risks?
- ✓ Use measurement and reporting processes that add value to safety decision making?

APPROACH

What are our strategic priorities?

- 1.1 Active demonstration of safety leadership
 - Create a shared vision and sense of ownership for achieving safety goals
 - Establish and manage clear systems of accountability for safety
 - Integrate safety into organisational governance structures and strategic planning processes
- 1.2 Leaders make evidence-based decisions
- Actively drive safety strategic planning
 - Collect objective and verified data to inform management review of safety performance
 - Implement evidence-based improvement initiatives based on measured performance
- 1.3 Leaders engage with workers
- Are visible in the agency consulting on safety at all levels of the organisation
 - Communicate and cascade safety strategy
 - Proactively build organisational capabilities to deliver improved safety performance

DEPLOYMENT

Our strategies are fully deployed when:

- Leaders are trained in, understand and are committed to their legislated obligations
- Leaders have access to a wide range of safety information and use this to develop a thorough understanding of safety matters
- Leaders support and recommend evidence-based safety interventions
- The effectiveness of safety strategies is evaluated
- Safety governance aligns and links with broader risk and financial governance
- Safety is an integral part of strategic and operational planning activities
- CE commitment statement clearly outlines safety expectations
- Leaders role model positive safety behaviours
- Performance review holds workers at all levels accountable for safety behaviours and outcomes
- Consultation processes are in place that include an agreed procedure for issue resolution

EFFECTIVENESS

We know we are successful when:

- Leaders communicate regularly and positively about safety
- Agency strategic and business continuity plans articulate safety considerations
- Everyone understands and fulfils their responsibilities for a safe work place and are held accountable for outcomes
- Leaders (officers) achieve the safety performance targets in their performance agreements
- High level of satisfaction with the quality of leadership (employee survey)

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

1. % officers meeting safety performance targets contained in performance agreements
2. % leaders who have undertaken safety training or refresher training as required by agency policy

MATURITY OF ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

LEVEL	LEVEL OF MATURITY	DESCRIPTION
1	Reactive	Attention is only paid to safety in response to incidents or to comply with legal requirements. There are limited accountability mechanisms in place and safety is dependent on worker advocates.
2	Calculative	Leaders acknowledge the relevance of safety management but don't see it as a core responsibility. The focus is on compliance. Incidents are seen as evidence of failure of "the system" or blamed on human error.
3	Proactive	Leaders understand safety management and look at all inter-related factors when considering the root cause of incidents. Safety responsibilities are established for all.
4	Safety Leader	Leaders believe that safety is good for business and actively support and promote safety. Safety responsibilities and performance are integrated with business strategy and HR functions (recruitment, performance management etc).

Wellbeing and Engagement

WHAT DOES SAFETY EXCELLENCE LOOK LIKE?

Organisational practices support wellbeing and engagement.

- The organisational culture promotes engagement and psychological health.
- The work environment minimises the risk of psychological harm.
- Workers are engaged in decisions affecting their psychological health and wellbeing.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

High performing organisations cultivate safe and healthy work environments and engage their workers to achieve superior performance.

High performing agencies recognise that psychological health issues cause the longest absences from work and the costliest workplace injuries. They systematically assess psychosocial risks and eliminate or minimise these to enable positive, safe and productive work environments and resilient workers.

A positive organisational culture supports:

- demonstration of sound safety behaviours
- leaders as role models of safety
- engagement in safety
- psychological health and resilience.

There is a clear link between health and wellbeing and performance at work. Strategies which build resilience and wellbeing improve psychological health outcomes and build individual capacity to withstand, recover and thrive in the face of change.

Participation in decisions affecting safety and wellbeing is central to achieving a positive organisational culture. Open, productive communication between management and workers engages everyone in safety.

AS A LEADER, ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM, DO WE:

- ✓ Value safety and wellbeing and communicate this to all workers?
- ✓ Understand the psychosocial risks arising from the work we conduct?
- ✓ Actively and systematically manage key psychosocial risks?
- ✓ Have an open reporting culture that makes it safe to acknowledge, report, and learn from hazards and incidents?
- ✓ Involve workers in decisions about how work is performed that may impact on their health and wellbeing?
- ✓ Respect diversity and differences in cultural background?
- ✓ Effectively communicate our commitment to positive workplace cultures and wellbeing and how this will be achieved?
- ✓ Celebrate our successes?
- ✓ Take action when a psychosocial risk is identified?
- ✓ Train and educate our managers and workers to engender resilience?

APPROACH

What are our strategic priorities?

2.1 Cultivate an organisational culture that promotes wellbeing

- Build a workplace culture that does not tolerate unresolved conflict, bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Promote protective factors at a team level to maximise resilience
- Facilitate early intervention where workers exhibit symptoms of psychological distress

2.2 Systematically manage psychological risks

- Implement strategies for the early identification of psychosocial hazards/stressors
- Identify opportunities for improved work design and associated practices
- Provide information, training and support to promote psychological health

2.3 Engage workers in workplace decisions that affect safety and wellbeing

- Encourage participation in identifying improvements to the design of work
- Consult and collaborate with workers to focus effort at times of change
- Co-design psychological health strategies with leaders and workers

DEPLOYMENT

Our strategies are fully deployed when:

- Agency expectations around psychological health and wellbeing are established and promoted
- Policies and procedures designed to protect psychological health and wellbeing and support a positive workplace culture are implemented
- Communication reinforces a commitment to psychological health and wellbeing
- Psychosocial risks are identified and responded to in a systematic manner
- Incidents are appropriately reported and investigated using risk management methodology
- There is integration of HR and safety processes in the management of incidents involving psychological health and wellbeing
- Engagement surveys measure wellbeing
- Workplaces demonstrate respect for diversity and cultural differences
- Training and development builds resilience, cultivates a positive workplace culture and minimises psychological harm
- Leaders receive training on addressing psychological health and wellbeing

EFFECTIVENESS

We know we are successful when:

- The frequency and duration of psychological injuries decreases
- Sick leave decreases
- Formal complaints and grievances decrease
- Satisfaction and performance improves
- There is open communication about psychological health and wellbeing
- There is increased recognition of the organisation as an 'employer of choice'

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Indicators of psychosocial risk (from employee surveys) e.g. job satisfaction, work: life balance, job demands
2. % of leaders trained in their role and responsibility for managing psychosocial risk

[To be finalised in consultation with agencies]

KEY RESOURCES:

Mentally Healthy Workplaces Framework – see Appendix 3.

Work Health and Safety Framework for Cultural Safety in the Public Sector.

MATURITY OF ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

LEVEL	LEVEL OF MATURITY	DESCRIPTION
1	Reactive	Safety consultation is limited, and communication mainly comprises safety messages responding to particular incidents. There is limited understanding of how the work environment affects people's psychological wellbeing.
2	Calculative	Formal engagement with staff occurs and safety is a regular item on the agenda of most team meetings. Changes to the work environment may be made when staff identify particular issues.
3	Proactive	There is active engagement of staff in resolving safety issues and two-way communication between staff and management occurs. Initiatives for improvement in the work environment are sought and welcomed.
4	Safety Leader	Staff are supported and encouraged to engage in decision making about matters that affect their wellbeing. Active collaboration of safety, HR and line management occurs to improve the psychological health of staff.

Risk Management

WHAT DOES SAFETY EXCELLENCE LOOK LIKE?

Risk Management is Systematic and Proportionate to Risks

- Risks arising from business activity are managed according to their nature and severity
- Risk management efforts are directed to the source of the risk
- Controls reduce the human, social and financial cost of injury and associated impacts on service delivery

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

High performing organisations understand and effectively manage their risks.

A complex range of health and safety risks exists in the public sector, including physical, psychosocial, work organisation, environmental, psychological and worker-centred risks. Agencies must have mechanisms in place to determine what must go right for safety, especially to mitigate those risks where failure of risk control measures could have significant adverse consequences. Unlike most other forms of organisational risk, risk acceptance is not an option under WHS legislation.

Safety management systems must comply with WHS legislation risk management requirements and apply the relevant standards (AS/NZS 4801 and AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009) to systematically identify and control risks. System design reflects the nature and complexity of those risks. **Effective** safety management systems eliminate or mitigate risks, especially those most likely to cause harm or to have the most severe consequences. An **efficient** safety management system limits system complexity to what is necessary to effectively manage risks and avoids 'over-engineering'.

Management of safety risks is everybody's responsibility. Leaders communicate safety expectations and direct resources to manage risk at source. Workers are actively engaged in identifying hazards and minimising harm.

ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM, DO WE:

- ✓ Understand the safety risks arising from the work we conduct, including all 'reasonably foreseeable' adverse events?
- ✓ Engage our people in identifying safety risks?
- ✓ Focus our risk management activity at grass roots level to control risks at source?
- ✓ Identify and prioritise risks associated with the most serious potential consequences?
- ✓ Introduce risk control measures that aim wherever possible to eliminate risks?
- ✓ Where the risk cannot be eliminated, substitute alternative methods, isolate hazards or apply engineering controls?
- ✓ Regularly check that our risk controls continue to work effectively and have not introduced additional risks?
- ✓ Know what risks are emerging from new or changed work?
- ✓ Undertake in-depth analysis to get to the root of safety incidents and procedural breaches?
- ✓ Implement corrective actions in a timely manner?
- ✓ Accommodate the specific needs of injured workers returning to work to prevent re-injury?

APPROACH

What are our Strategic Priorities?

3.1 Identify and manage significant risks

- Design and manage safety systems consistent with the nature and complexity of organisational safety risks
- Address safety in contracted work, through consultation, cooperation and coordination with joint duty holders
- Promote a risk aware and informed culture

3.2 Ensure that risk control measures remain effective

- Maintain information on significant risks to enable timely and effective intervention
- Regularly review the effectiveness of risk controls using performance measures and assurance practices
- Encourage workers to challenge the effectiveness of controls

3.3 Control risks impacting the return to work of injured workers

- Proactively manage risks associated with workers returning to work following an injury to prevent re-injury

Our strategies are fully deployed when:

- Safety systems are proportionate to the severity and complexity of safety risks
- The risk profile of an agency's significant risks is understood and regularly reviewed to ensure changes in risk exposure are managed
- Resources are focused on removing risks that pose the greatest danger to workers
- Emerging risks are identified through a system for reporting and responding to all hazards
- Thorough investigation of incidents occurs with corrective actions implemented in a timely manner to prevent re-occurrences
- Risks are addressed using high level controls from the Hierarchy of Control (eliminate, substitute alternative methods, isolate hazards or apply engineering controls)
- Risk control measures and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain effective and are revised as necessary
- Feedback on management of risks is shared with affected workers
- Processes are in place to match return to work duties with the capacity of an injured worker to reduce the risk of re-injury

EFFECTIVENESS

We know we are successful when:

- Workers are supported and encouraged to report hazards and near misses as well as incidents
- Frequency of repeat or multiple incidents related to similar hazards decreases
- Incidents and injuries related to high consequence risks decrease
- Risks are eliminated or minimised through effective (high level) control measures
- Corrective actions are implemented in a timely fashion
- Sustainable return to work outcomes are not impeded by repeat injuries

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. % planned workplace inspections completed
2. % corrective actions arising from reported incidents that apply high level controls (elimination, substitution, isolation or engineering controls)

[To be finalised in consultation with agencies]

MATURITY OF ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

LEVEL	LEVEL OF MATURITY	DESCRIPTION
1	Reactive	Injury prevention measures are rudimentary and tend to rely on procedural or training controls. Incident investigation focusses on immediate causes and there is little systematic follow up.
2	Calculative	There is a planned approach to identifying hazards and assessing risks. Incident investigation occurs but opportunities to address the real issues are often missed and corrective actions concentrate on training and procedural solutions.
3	Proactive	Hazards are identified and risks are assessed and controlled so far as is reasonably practicable. Many risks are engineered or designed out. There is systematic incident follow up to ensure required changes have taken place.
4	Safety Leader	Complex and less obvious hazards are actively identified. Risk controls are reviewed regularly. Investigation and analysis is driven by aggregating information from a wide range of sources. Follow up is systematic to check that change has occurred and is maintained.

Performance Measurement

WHAT DOES SAFETY EXCELLENCE LOOK LIKE?

Regular verification and evaluation of safety performance is undertaken

- Continuous improvement of safety systems through a cycle of measurement, evaluation and review
- Evidence-based reviews of safety strategies inform safety initiatives and improve safety outcomes

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

High performing organisations use safety information to achieve improved safety performance by:

- Developing performance indicators for the management of significant risks and implementation of safety initiatives
- Providing timely and relevant information to leaders to enable evidence based management review
- Implementing improvement initiatives based on measured performance

The impact of injuries on the delivery of business services is monitored via across government and agency safety performance targets.

Relevant performance measures are developed that reflect the success or failure of safety processes and provide advance warning of potential failures in the WHS management system. Carefully selected measures enable preventative action to be taken where performance is below expected levels to avoid adverse consequences, such as injuries.

The AVS provides the mechanism for external assessment and validation of safety management systems and strategies. AVS findings identify actions to improve performance and safety outcomes, focusing on what must go right for safety.

The AVS also requires a rigorous internal audit program within agencies to ensure the continuous improvement of safety systems between external audits.

AS A LEADER, ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM, DO WE:

- ✓ Set and monitor performance indicators that enable proactive management of significant risks?
- ✓ Establish objectives and targets for our organisational safety plans and associated safety initiatives and measure our progress against these?
- ✓ Have mechanisms in place for the collection and analysis of high quality safety data?
- ✓ Require assurance that our policies, procedures and systems are functioning effectively and delivering the right outcomes?
- ✓ Consider indicators of organisational health, from the outcomes of employee surveys?
- ✓ Regularly report on the management of significant risks and performance of our safety system to senior management?
- ✓ Evaluate our performance against our risk management strategies and system expectations?
- ✓ Use information from verification and evaluation to improve our systems and processes?
- ✓ Apply transparent reporting mechanisms?

APPROACH

What are our strategic priorities?

4.1 Measure the right things

- Establish and monitor performance indicators for the management of significant risks
- Target performance measurement towards 'what must go right' for safety

4.2 Evaluate performance

- Verify the effectiveness of safety systems and control of risks through a rigorous internal and external audit process
- Engage workers in the evaluation of safety performance

4.3 Improve performance results

- Implement evidence based strategies to achieve high performance safety outcomes
- Reinforce the importance of safety performance for sustainable service delivery
- Embrace public accountability for results

DEPLOYMENT

Our strategies are fully deployed when:

- Performance indicators are established and monitored to assess and improve the management of significant risks and implementation of safety initiatives
- Data management systems are established to provide information on safety processes
- Safety auditing is aligned to the corporate audit function and contributes to the auditing objectives of the agency
- A schedule of internal audits is in place that provides assurance on the effective control of safety risks
- Corrective actions arising from audit are implemented in a timely manner
- Everything that is measured adds value to the management review process
- Leaders regularly review safety performance and recommend relevant interventions aligned to agency strategic directions
- Safety programs respond to evidence provided through performance evaluation and review
- A wide range of performance measures are included in agency reporting

EFFECTIVENESS

We know we are successful when:

- There is positive trending of performance indicators for significant risks
- Compliance rates with safety audits are improving
- Corrective actions are implemented in a timely manner
- Reporting to senior management assists assessment of compliance with legal obligations and provides a risk picture
- The evidence base for continuous improvement strategies and system improvements is clearly established
- Performance measurement facilitates transparency in public reporting

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. % risks rated high or above that have performance measures developed and monitored
2. % internal audit recommendations implemented

KEY RESOURCE:

Across Government Safety Performance Measures – see Appendix 1

MATURITY OF ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

LEVEL	LEVEL OF MATURITY	DESCRIPTION
1	Reactive	Safety performance is poorly measured and reviewed. Audits only occur after major incidents and are seen as punishment. Statistics report the immediate causes of accidents.
2	Calculative	Performance measurement is restricted to outcome indicators that can be summarised using numbers. Some auditing is conducted, concentrating on known high hazard areas and legislative compliance.
3	Proactive	There is a scheduled audit program including cross-auditing within the organisation. Findings are not always followed up. Performance indicators are established for key processes and are used to develop strategy.
4	Safety Leader	Safety audits examine effectiveness of risk control and are used as an opportunity for continuous improvement. Key performance indicators are established, reported on transparently and are monitored and reviewed by senior executives.

Appendix 1: Across Government Safety Performance Measures

WHSIM PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TARGET	CALCULATION
PM1 Number of accepted death claims in last 5 years to end of quarter	zero	Number of accepted claims reported
PM2 Number of accepted seriously injured claims in last 5 years to end of quarter	No target	Number of accepted claims with whole person Impairment >30%
PM3 Total new accepted claims in last twelve months	30% reduction	Number of accepted claims in twelve month period (excludes rejected, withdrawn and undetermined claims)
PM4 Number of accepted significant* injury claims in twelve months period per 1000FTE	30% reduction	(Number of accepted significant injury claims in twelve month period / FTE) x 1000
PM5 Number of accepted significant musculoskeletal injury claims in twelve months period per 1000FTE	30% reduction	(Number of accepted significant musculoskeletal injury claims in twelve month period / FTE) x 1000
PM6 Number of accepted psychological** injury claims in twelve months period per 1000FTE	30% reduction	(Number of accepted Psychological injury claims in twelve month period / FTE) x 1000
PM7 Early assessment for rehabilitation***	80%	(Number of claims assessed for rehabilitation within last twelve months less seven days / Number of claims received within this timeframe) x100
PM8 Claims determined within 10 business days***	80%	(Number of claims determined in twelve month period / Number of claims received in twelve month period) x100

* Significant is defined as greater than one week lost time (pro-rata)

** Psychological is defined as Nature code is I Mental Diseases
OR Mechanism code is 8 – Mental Stress

*** Measure excludes Psychological and hearing loss claims

Appendix 2: Chief Executive Commitment and Accountability

The importance of sound safety leadership in achieving superior safety performance outcomes has been clearly established. The actions of safety leaders have a direct influence on the strength of the organisational culture for safety, resultant safety behaviours and consequentially on the number of incidents and injuries.

Safety leaders may be found at all levels of an organisation. At lower levels of management, leaders influence safety outcomes through their attitudes, knowledge and actions which have the capacity to influence the opinions and behaviours of others in a practical way. At the senior level, officers under the *WHS Act 2012* (including the Chief Executive) must exercise due diligence¹³ to ensure that the agency meets its obligations to provide safe workplaces and systems of work.

Officers require a knowledge and understanding of safety in the context of the business operations of the agency and the associated management of hazards and risks. This requires that they are properly informed, through having in place systems to gather, analyse and report on key safety data, and also that appropriate corporate governance structures exist within the agency to enable the systematic management of significant safety issues arising from the agency's business operations.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE SAFETY COMMITMENT

In support of the principles of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy, Chief Executives will issue a Commitment Statement that:

- Recognises safety as a core agency value and the contribution of the agency to achieving health and safety outcomes for the public sector
- Accepts responsibility and expresses commitment on behalf of themselves and senior managers for provision of safe and healthy workplaces and systems of work
- Reflects the role and responsibility of all people in the workplace to protect and ensure health and safety
- Addresses the four key characteristics of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy (Safety Leadership, Wellbeing and Engagement, Risk Management and Performance Measurement) in the context of the business operations of the agency.

PRIORITY AREAS

The *Building Safety Excellence* strategy provides guidance on priority areas for health and safety in the public sector, whilst encouraging agencies to develop a tailored response that reflects the nature and complexity of their core business, previous audit and evaluation outcomes and the level of maturity of their WHS and injury management systems. Chief Executives must ensure that the agency develops appropriate strategies that address the strategy key result areas.

Strategy implementation should be integrated within broader agency planning processes and mechanisms established to enable tracking and reporting of progress.

¹³ *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*, SA, Part 2, Division 4, s27

CHIEF EXECUTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR WHS AND INJURY MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for ensuring continuous improvement in their agency's WHS performance. They are required to:

- Ensure compliance with WHS legislation
- Implement safety systems that align to *AS/NZS 4801* to effectively manage safety risks
- Demonstrate compliance with the South Australian Public Sector Code of Practice for Crown Self-insurers and whole of government policy
- Ensure processes are in place for the safe and timely return to work of injured workers

Chief executives are held accountable through:

- Annual performance discussions with their Minister
- Annual reports to Parliament

PERFORMANCE DISCUSSIONS

Chief Executive performance discussions with their Minister cover officer due diligence requirements for complying with legislative obligations under the WHS Act and should inform strategic decision making for safety. Discussions address the following items:

1. Risk Management:
 - An overview of the risk profile of the agency including any new or emerging risks
 - The status and control of significant risks to the agency, including tracking against performance measures for these risks (where established)
 - Progress against agency plans to address significant risks
2. Safety performance and compliance:
 - Progress against strategies implemented to address the requirements of the *Building Safety Excellence* strategy, including associated performance measures
 - Performance against across government safety performance targets
 - Costs associated with the management of work-related injuries
 - Legislative compliance including notifiable incidents and dangerous occurrences reported to the Regulator, notices served by the Regulator, WHS prosecution, fines and / or enforceable undertakings
3. Verification of safety systems and processes:
 - Outcomes of AVS audits undertaken (where applicable) including status of agreed management corrective actions
 - Significant findings arising from the agency's internal audit program including the status of corrective actions

EXTERNAL FACING REPORTING

The Chief Executive will authorise the provision of information pertaining to the agency's safety system and performance to the Office for the Commissioner of Public Sector Employment (OCPSE) as required to produce an annual overview of safety performance across the public sector.

Appendix 3: Public Sector Mentally Healthy Workplaces Framework

The SA public sector Mentally Healthy Workplaces (MHW) Framework and Mentally Healthy Workplaces Toolkit draw on world-leading research to guide the creation of mentally healthy workplaces in our South Australian public sector agencies.

The MHW Toolkit provides practical information and evidence-based resources to support and grow agencies' current wellbeing strategies.

Leaders and practitioners in fields including Human Resources, Work Health and Safety, Injury Management, and Organisational Development will find the Toolkit assists in building mentally healthy workplaces by raising awareness, building positive cultures, preventing harm and supporting people with a mental illness.

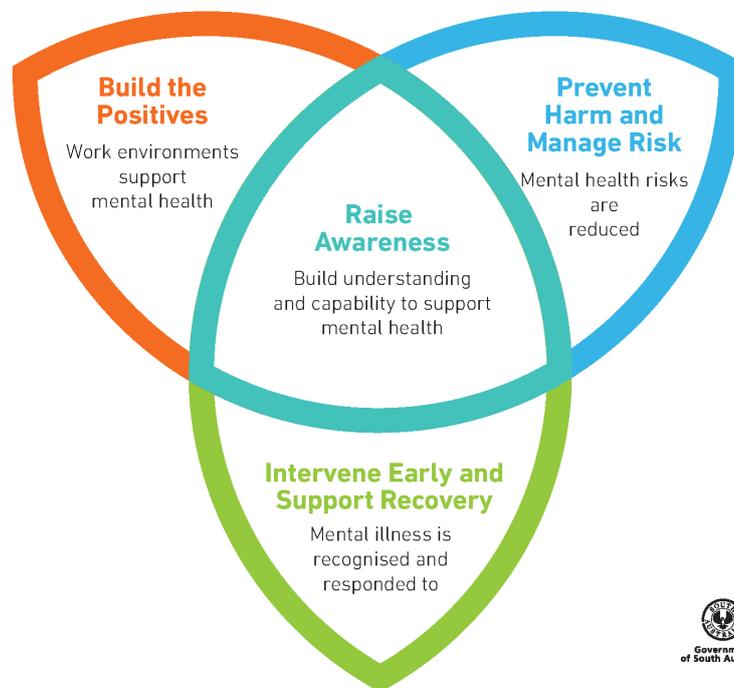


Purpose

To create mentally healthy workplaces that support employees through their public sector career.

Critical Success Factors

- 1 Leadership commitment
- 2 Collaborative approach
- 3 Central coordination
- 4 Shared mental health objectives
- 5 Plan of action at multiple levels of the agency
- 6 Commitment of resources
- 7 Measurement of improvements



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Last updated 14 February 2022