

Occupational Health and Safety Policy

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1. Purpose

1.1. MSA is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, positive and healthy working environment for its workplace participants, clients and anyone entering their premises or with connection to MSA's business operations.

1.2. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the staff members and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities as workplace participants of MSA, and under associated legislation, have a duty to provide and maintain, so far as practicable, a working and service provision environment that is safe and without risks to health.

1.3. This policy is to be read in conjunction with any relevant industrial instrument.

2. Application of this policy

- 1.1. This policy applies to the following persons, collectively referred to in this policy as 'workplace participants':
 - a) all prospective and current full-time, part-time and casual employees of MSA;
 - b) all volunteers engaged by MSA;
 - c) all agents and contractors engaged from time to time by MSA;
 - d) all office bearers and members of MSA bodies
- 2.1. The protections in this policy apply to volunteers to the extent that MSA acknowledges its duty under the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#), to ensure that other people (including volunteers) are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the undertaking of MSA.
- 2.2. This policy exists alongside the [Monash University Occupational Health and Safety policy](#).

3. Policy

- 3.1. The [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(VIC\)](#) and the [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 \(VIC\)](#) promote increased participation by employers, employees and their representatives in workplace health and safety issues. In demonstrating employer's duty of care, MSA will make every reasonable effort to provide a working environment that minimises incidents of risk or personal injury, ill health or damage to property.

4. Procedure

- 4.1. MSA manager's and supervisor's will implement the OH&S policy and take all practical measures to ensure that:
 - a) MSA workplace is safe and without risk to health;
 - b) Information about OH&S is distributed throughout the organisation;
 - c) Regular discussion about OH&S issues at staff meetings is encouraged;
 - d) A log of accidents and incidents is maintained and the information used to identify risks throughout the organisation which are reported to the management group;
 - e) Appropriate training is provided on an ongoing basis; and
 - f) The behaviour of all persons in the organisation is safe and without risk to health.
- 4.2. All workplace participants are required to follow the MSA OH&S policy and safety procedures to ensure their health and safety and the health and safety of service users and visitors in the organisation.

4.3. Consulting with Employees

- 4.3.1. As part of the [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004](#), the legal requirement for employers to consult with employees on matters that may directly affect their health, safety or welfare, came into effect of 1 January 2006.
- 4.3.2. Consultation is a two way conversation between MSA and employees that involves:
 - a) Sharing information (information must be made available in a timely way and in a form that can be understood by employees);
 - b) Giving employees a reasonable opportunity to express their views (employees are to be encouraged to play a part in the problem solving process);

- c) Taking those views into account (employees should help to shape decisions, not hear about them after they are made).

4.4. The Consultation Process

4.4.1. The consultation process may incorporate:

- a) Including OHS on meeting agendas and holding discussion forums;
- b) Asking employees about health and safety issues;
- c) Electing OHS employee representatives;
- d) Ensuring there are opportunities for employees to express opinions and discuss issues with Managers/Supervisors as part of everyday work arrangements and that the suggestions of all employees are valued;
- e) Establishing an OHS committee and ensuring it has strong management support;
- f) Involving employees in identifying and assessing safety issues and deciding how to control risks; and
- g) Providing general OHS information to all employees

4.5. Duty of Employer in Consulting with Employees

4.5.1. When carrying out any of the following, MSA must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult with employees who are likely to be directly affected when:

- a) Identifying or assessing hazards or risks to health or safety at a workplace under MSA's control or arising from the conduct of the undertaking of MSA;
- b) Making decisions about the measure to be taken to control risks to health or safety at workplace under MSA's control or arising from the conduct at the undertaking of MSA;
- c) Making decisions about the adequacy of facilities for the welfare of MSA employees;
- d) Making decisions about OHS procedures;
- e) Proposing changes that may affect the health and safety of employees (e.g. changes in the workplace, equipment or work performances).

4.6. Health and Safety Representatives

4.6.1. The [OH&S Act 2004](#) promotes the participation of employees and their representatives in OHS matters by the following two principles:

- a) Employees are entitled, and are to be encouraged, to be represented in relation to health and safety issues
- b) MSA and employees should exchange information and ideas about risks to health and safety and measures that can be taken to eliminate or reduce them.

4.6.2. Employees have a right to ask MSA permission to elect Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) for their particular service/region. Only employees can decide how to elect their HSR and only employees can vote.

4.6.3. According to the Act, HSRs have the power to do any of the following:

- a) Inspect any part of the workplace within their allocated service/region;
- b) Inspect the workplace immediately if there is an incident or a serious risk identified;
- c) Request that a health and safety committee be set up;

- d) Attend a health and safety interview;
- e) Ask for help;
- f) Represent employees outside of their designated service/region if there is an immediate health risk;
- g) Direct work to stop if there is an immediate health or safety threat;
- h) Be part of consultation of health and safety matters.

4.6.4. However, HSRs may only do the above for the purpose of:

- a) Speaking up and acting on behalf of the employees they represent on OHS issues;
- b) Monitoring the health and safety actions taken by MSA;
- c) Looking into anything that may be a risk to the health and safety of the employees they represent;
- d) Attempting to resolve with MSA any health and safety issue that could affect the employees within their allocated service/region.

4.6.5. MSA has an obligation in relation to Health and Safety Representatives to:

- a) Allow the HSR paid time off to attend training approved or conducted by WorkSafe including an initial OHS training course after being elected (currently 5 days), refresher training at least once per year and other approved training relevant to their work group. MSA must pay the costs of the initial and refresher training and requests for training must be made by a representative to MSA at least 14 days prior to commencement of a course.
- b) Provide access to information they have about actual or potential hazards in the workplace;
- c) Allow HSRs to attend interviews about health and safety between an employee within their service/region and a WorkSafe inspector;
- d) Provide facilities and assistance to help the HSR to carry out their role;
- e) Display a current list of HSRs for each service/region, or ensure it is readily accessible to all employees.

4.7. Safety Officers

4.7.1. MSA will appoint safety officers. Safety officers act as the employer's representative at the local level.

4.7.2. Safety officers:

- a) provide advice, information and instruction on local OHS issues;
- b) assist in the application of OHS procedures;
- c) help manage risks and hazards in their area;
- d) report and investigate incidents, injuries and hazards and implement agreed control measures;
- e) liaise with the head of the unit or controlled entity, OHS Unit and other safety personnel;
- f) review and analyse injury and incident reports and data;
- g) develop injury and incident prevention strategies for their area;
- h) monitor local area compliance with OHS policy and procedures;
- i) audit local area OHS compliance with regard to risk, emergency and hazardous waste management;
- j) help promote OHS awareness

4.8. Health and Safety Consultative Process

- 4.8.1. A health and safety consultative process will be developed to review OHS systems and address ongoing and emerging issues.
- 4.8.2. The functions of this process are:
 - a) To facilitate cooperation between MSA and employees in instigating, developing and carrying out measures to ensure health and safety at work;
 - b) To formulate, review and disseminate OHS standards, rules and procedures for the workplace.
- 4.8.3. The OHS consultative process will have the capacity to continuously review OH&S issues. A formal meeting will be called to discuss issues arising from this process as necessary.
- 4.8.4. An OHS committee may be set up to discuss a specific safety issue with MSA.
- 4.8.5. MSA will not discriminate against any employee because of involvement in health and safety issues. This includes as a result of acting as an HSR, being a member of the OHS committee or raising OHS issues.

5. Responsibilities

5.1. Responsibility of Employer

- 5.1.1. Responsibilities of MSA include:
 - a) Providing and maintaining a safe workplace, equipment and systems of work (e.g. how work is organised, including work arrangements, procedures to prevent and manage fatigue, occupation stress, and violence);
 - b) Ensuring employees have adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to work in a safe and healthy manner;
 - c) Implementing arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of any equipment and substances;
 - d) Monitoring the health of employees (e.g. collection and review of incident and injury data);
 - e) Keeping information and records relevant to employees' health and safety issues;
 - f) Engaging people with the necessary expertise to advise on health and safety issues;
 - g) Consulting with employees on matters which may directly affect their health, safety or welfare;
 - h) Nominating a management representative to work with employees and their Occupational Health and Safety representative to resolve health and safety issues;
 - i) Maintaining the workplace in a condition that is safe and without risks to health (including space, layout, security, lighting, ventilation and noise control);
 - j) Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the means of entering and leaving the workplace are safe and without risks to health;
 - k) Providing adequate facilities for the welfare of employees (drinking water, toilets, eating areas and first aid);
 - l) Informing employees about who to contact with health and safety inquiries or complaints;

- m) Ensuring clients, visitors and the public are not endangered by the conduct of our business;
- n) Taking out a WorkCover policy. There is no requirement here to cover volunteers;
- o) Ensuring that any persons carrying out work on MSA premises which requires specialist licences, registrations, permits or certificates of competency are properly qualified, experienced and supervised;
- p) Developing risk assessment strategies to minimise risks to persons in the work and service provision environment;
- q) Ensuring that all equipment and substances are safe and without risk to health when used in accordance with standard operating procedures;
- r) Encouraging consultation as an essential part of effectively managing health and safety at work;
- s) Providing training opportunities for workplace participants; and
- t) Displaying relevant OH&S information and Workcover notices on what to do if you are injured and who your Health & Safety representative is (if there is one) to assist people with their duties.

5.2. Notifiable Incidents

- 5.2.1. MSA must notify WorkSafe immediately after becoming aware of an incident that results in death or serious injury. Serious injuries include, but are not limited to, those that require:
 - a) Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance;
 - b) Immediate treatment in hospital as an in-patient; or
 - c) Immediate medical treatment for injuries e.g. amputation, serious head or eye injuries, electric shock, spinal injury or serious laceration.
- 5.2.2. MSA must also notify WorkSafe of incidents that expose a person in the immediate vicinity to an immediate risk to their health or safety, including:
 - a) The collapse or partial collapse of a building or structure;
 - b) An explosion or fire; or
 - c) The escape, spillage or leaking of any substance.
- 5.2.3. Within 48 hours of the notification to WorkSafe, an employee must also give a written record of the notifiable incident to WorkSafe and retain a copy of this record for five (5) years.
- 5.2.4. Where a notifiable incident has occurred, the site of the incident must not be disturbed until advised by a WorkSafe inspector. This does not apply where a site has to be disturbed to protect the health and safety of a person, to aid an injured person or to take essential action to make the site safe. Where such an incident occurs, the relevant manager must be informed as soon as possible to ensure that the relevant forms are forwarded to WorkSafe. The Executive Officer shall be informed of the incident.
- 5.2.5. People other than employers who are involved in a workplace have complementary duties including:
 - a) Workplace Participants;
 - b) Those who manage and control workplaces, such as the owner of the building;

- c) Manufacturers and suppliers of substances and equipment in the workplace; and
- d) People installing, erecting or commission plant at the workplace.

5.3. Responsibilities of Workplace Participants

5.3.1. All workplace participants including full-time employees, part-time employees, casual employees, volunteers and contractors have a role in health and safety within the organisation, and MSA will assist employees to understand their responsibilities. These include:

- a) Taking care for their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected (including avoiding practical jokes that could harm people and by not taking short cuts which could reduce safety in the workplace);
- b) Following workplace safety policies and procedures including the reporting of incidents and potential hazards;
- c) Attending training and following the instruction provided;
- d) Using correct equipment where necessary (e.g. adjustable workstations, gloves);
- e) Not recklessly interfering with or misusing equipment;
- f) Bringing workplace health and safety issues to the attention of their line manager; and
- g) Completing incident reports and Worksafe notifications as requested by their senior manager.

5.4. OHS Responsibilities in Job Descriptions

5.4.1. By including health and safety responsibilities in job descriptions, MSA will be assisted in fulfilling their health and safety responsibilities. Assessment and adjustment of these responsibilities can then be managed as part of normal performance reviews and when goal-setting.

5.5. Role of Managers and Supervisors

5.5.1. Managers and Supervisors play an important role in instructing and supervising employees in health and safety as well as monitoring work practices.

5.5.2. Responsibility for managing health and safety is included in a Manager's/ Supervisors role and discussion on health and safety should be included in regular team meetings as well as in catch-ups with individual employees. This also provides a support mechanism for employees to discuss issues and means that health and safety issues are identified as they arise. Managers should also consult with health and safety representatives on health and safety issues. This helps fulfil the legal responsibility for employers to consult regularly with employees on health and safety.

6. Related Policies and Procedures

[Anti-Bullying Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Complaints Handling Procedure](#)

[Equal Opportunity Policy](#)

[Freedom from Harassment Policy](#)

7. Related Legislation

[Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Victoria\)](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 \(Victoria\)](#)

8. Version History

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