Work health and safety policy

Work health and safety governance consultation and capability implementation standard

1. **Purpose**

This implementation standard identifies the minimum governance, consultation and capability requirements that evidence the implementation of the work health and safety (WHS) policy and the responsibilities of individual positions in relation to these requirements.

2. **Scope**

This implementation standard applies to all workers including staff, clients, contractors and others within the Department of Health divisions, agencies and Hospital and Health Services (HHS) that are not prescribed services.

3. **Supporting documents**

**Authorising policy and standards:**

- QH-POL-401:2014 Work health and safety policy
- QH-IMP-401-1:2014 Work health and safety planning implementation standard
- QH-IMP-401-3:2014 Work health and safety risk management implementation standard
- QH-IMP-401-4:2014 Work health and safety monitoring, evaluation and performance review implementation standard

**Procedures, guidelines and protocols:**

- QH-PCD-401-2-1:2014 Implementing a work health and safety training and development framework procedure

**Forms and templates:**

- WHS orientation and induction checklist
- WHS training matrix
- WHS incident report form
4. Related documents

- Public Health Act 2005.
- Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.
- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service.
- Work Health and Safety Consultation, co-operation and co-ordination code of practice 2011.
- Safety Management System policy framework–instruction guide (Department of Health).
- WHS policy register (Department of Health).

5. Requirements

5.1. Structure and responsibility

5.1.1. A whole of department WHS steering committee will have a key role in strategic WHS planning.

5.1.2. The manager of the accountability area shall oversee the implementation of the safety management system (SMS) across the accountability area. Implementation of the SMS in functional areas shall be the responsibility of the respective managers of those functional areas. The accountability area’s WHS unit shall support implementation by providing advice and other support as deemed appropriate.

5.1.3. In order to successfully implement the SMS the manager of the accountability area shall ensure that sufficient and appropriate resources are made available. This shall include human resources where necessary.

5.1.4. Where relevant, additional forums or groups shall be established to facilitate consultation and communication for particular matters (for example, to establish and promote wellness and prevention programs for development of WHS training).
5.1.5. Wherever possible, procedures relating to consultation and communication, training, and document and data control shall be integrated with or aligned to other organisational procedures.

5.2. Consultation and communication

5.2.1. The following WHS information shall be communicated throughout the organisation:
- the WHS policy statement
- the requirements of the departmental SMS and any supporting material
- identified and emerging WHS risks and the relevant controls to mitigate the risk.

5.2.2. The department, each agency and non-prescribed HHS’s shall establish a WHS committee which shall include worker representation, contribution or participation. Matters that may be considered by the WHS committee include, but are not limited to:
- workplace changes likely to impact on worker health and safety
- the accountability area’s key risks
- development, implementation and review of procedures for hazard identification, risk assessment and control
- matters that are unable to be resolved at the work unit or functional area level
- emerging issues.

5.2.3. Consultation and communication about WHS matters shall be integrated into management systems and core operations where relevant and practicable, to enable the sharing of information and viewpoints and to identify and resolve health and safety issues. This shall include consultation with other duty holders such as contractors, and other persons who have management or control of a workplace.

5.2.4. All staff, including senior management, shall be provided the opportunity, so far as reasonably practicable, to be involved in WHS consultation.

5.2.5. Consultation outcomes shall inform functional area’s business plans and the organisation’s WHS plan.

5.2.6. Pertinent WHS information shall be provided to, and sought from relevant workers and other interested parties in a timely and appropriate manner. The communication must facilitate understanding and promote participation in hazard identification, risk assessment and the implementation of appropriate controls.

5.2.7. The consultation process shall be in accordance with the requirements of Part 5 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination code of practice 2011, and shall take into consideration:
- when to consult
- who should be consulted with
5.2.8. The right of workers to elect health and safety representatives (HSR) shall be upheld as per the provisions of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

5.2.9. The role of the HSR shall be in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

5.2.10. Channels for consultation and communication of health and safety matters may include:
- Formal processes such as through HSRs where these have been elected by a work group, and WHS committees.
- Informal or semi-formal processes such as staff meetings, posters, QHEPS, suggestion box, newsletters, e-mail, e-alerts or surveys.

5.2.11. External or third parties such as unions, contractors and professional bodies may be included in the consultation process from time to time as required or relevant.

5.2.12. Consultation processes shall be clearly communicated to all workers and worker input into WHS matters is actively encouraged.

5.2.13. WHS risks that require addressing urgently or are of statewide interest shall be communicated to Organisational Health. Communication of this information shall be disseminated via one of the following methods:
- A safety alert shall be generated where a risk is identified that requires immediate attention and action.
- A safety notice shall be generated where a potential risk has been identified and a risk assessment is required locally to determine whether the risk exists.
- A safety information sheet shall be prepared and distributed where the provision / dissemination of information only is required.

5.3. Reporting

5.3.1. Internal reporting may be either routine such as performance monitoring reports (for example, systems audit or workplace inspection programs), or non-routine such as that which arises from identified non-conformances or events that require more urgent attention (for example, a release of a substance that affects a group of people). Processes shall be established for the internal reporting of:
- work health and safety performance monitoring (for example safety assurance model)
- identified non-conformances, (including non-conformance with procedures and work instruction)
- incidents, (including near misses), hazards and risk assessment.

5.3.2. A process shall be implemented for external statutory reporting or authorisation requirements (for example, reporting and registration registrable plant, reporting of notifiable incidents).
5.3.3. Reporting processes shall give due consideration to the relevant stakeholders.

5.3.4. Where actions are identified to improve performance or to rectify a non-conformance, a process for reporting implementation of actions shall be established.

5.3.5. Incidents which result (or may result) in injury or illness to a worker(s) shall be reported using the Queensland Health workplace incident report form or entered directly into the approved Queensland Health incident management enterprise system via the ‘Reporting Concerns’ icon located on all Queensland Health computer desktops.

5.3.6. The WHS unit is responsible for entering the incident details into the approved Queensland Health incident management enterprise system.

5.3.7. Where an incident has, or could have lead, to patient harm, the incident shall also be reported via the approved Queensland Health clinical incident management enterprise system.

5.4. Information, instruction and training

5.4.1. WHS information, instruction, training and supervision shall be provided to all workers, including senior managers, students, casual workers and volunteers, with the aim of ensuring that workplace practice is safe and without risk to health and to promote a culture of safety.

5.4.2. Managers / supervisors of functional areas shall include WHS training in the functional area’s training plan and ensure that all workers undertake mandatory WHS training programs detailed in HR Policy QH-POL-183:2013 Orientation and Induction or equivalent.

5.4.3. All workers, including senior managers, shall complete the mandatory WHS training detailed in HR Policy QH-POL-183:2013 Orientation and Induction or equivalent.

5.4.4. Additional or ongoing WHS training needs shall be identified by taking into account:

- licences, authorisations or other relevant qualifications prescribed by legislation and / or other professional standards
- the tasks being performed and any associated risks and risk mitigation strategies
- the responsibilities, skills and knowledge of the worker
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- industry standards
- injury and incident data
- the need for regular refresher training as prescribed by legislation or determined by the accountability area based on risk or other relevant factors
- new work processes, equipment or materials are introduced to the workplace.

5.4.5. Work practices shall be reassessed on a regular basis to ensure workers are performing tasks competently and according to safety requirements, and to determine requirements for additional training or instruction. Identified training needs may be included in a worker’s performance appraisal and development review.

5.4.6. Where legislation prescribes a specific licence, authorisation or other relevant qualification in order to undertake a particular activity, a worker shall not be allowed to undertake the activity until evidence is provided demonstrating the required competency or qualification has been achieved.

5.4.7. Procedures shall be established to:
- identify training needs and develop training programs
- record training
- evaluate the effectiveness of the training.

5.4.8. Managers / supervisors of functional areas shall ensure evidence of completion of training is provided by workers and that training records are maintained.

5.4.9. Training shall be provided by a competent person with relevant skills or experience.

5.5. Documentation and data management

5.5.1. The SMS architecture and the core elements of the SMS shall be available on the Organisational Health web site on QHEPS and on the Queensland Health policy site http://www.health.qld.gov.au/qhpolicy/default.asp under W for Work Health and Safety.

5.5.2. A procedure for SMS document control, including version control of supporting material, and work health and safety data management shall be established. The procedure shall detail:
- where the material is located
- how often the material shall be reviewed
- the procedure for removing and archiving obsolete material
- preservation requirements in accordance with any legislative requirements and organisational policy.

5.5.3. Details and data relating to WHS incidents shall not be provided to the media except in prescribed circumstances, as per the code of conduct for the
6. **Review**

This implementation standard is due for review on 01 May 2017 or subject to changes in legislation, organisational activities, or OHS performance. Notwithstanding this policy remains in force until such time as it is revoked.

**Date of last review:** 30/04/214

**Supersedes:**
- *QH-IMP-274-8:2012 OHS Management System*
- *QH-IMP-275-3:2012 OHS Consultation and Communication Arrangements*
- *QH-PTL-274-3-1:2012 OHS Consultation and Communication Arrangements*

7. **Business area contact**

Organisational Health, Human Resources Branch, System Support Services Division

8. **Responsibilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>All workers</td>
<td>• Compliance with this implementation standard.</td>
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</table>
| Deputy directors-general / chief executive (managers accountability areas) | • Oversight and participate in the whole of department WHS committee.  
• Actively promote the implementation of the SMS, and support consultation, communication and cooperation on WHS matters including making available the necessary resources to ensure work can be carried out safely.  
• Communicate infringements received, findings of incident investigations and other safety information in order to promote proactive management of risks and improve workplace safety.  
• Support the election of WHS representatives.  
• Ensure adequate and appropriate resources are available to support WHS.  
• Support the inclusion of unions in the consultation process if so requested by workers. |
| Senior director, HR Policy, Performance and Organisational Health | • Coordinate and manage the WHS Steering Committee meetings.  
• Coordinate the distribution of safety information and learnings state-wide via the HHS and agency WHS units.  
• Communicate the SMS via the Organisational Health web site and other relevant media. |
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<tr>
<th>Managers of functional areas</th>
<th>WHS manager</th>
<th>Health and safety representatives</th>
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| *Establish, where practicable, standardised and accessible WHS training programs and information resources.*  
*Provide support and advice on WHS matters to all Queensland Health entities.*  
*Communicate WHS performance and significant incidents to the Chief Executive Department of Health.* | *Actively participate in or contribute to the WHS Committee.*  
*Communication of SMS to workers in their functional areas.*  
*Consult with, and communicate to workers about matters relating to and impacting, or likely to impact on their health and safety.*  
*Ensuring that WHS communication networks and mechanisms are operating effectively.*  
*Ensure mandatory WHS training is completed.*  
*Ensure additional WHS training needs are assessed and required training facilitated.*  
*Maintain accurate training records.*  
*Contribute to or participate in the WHS committee.*  
*Facilitate election of HSR.*  
*Facilitate training for HSR if requested.*  
*To inform HSR of any workplace incidents.*  
*To inform the HSR of the presence at the workplace of an inspector from regulator.* | *Communication of SMS to line managers and supervisors across the accountability area.*  
*Consult with, and communicate to workers about matters relating to and impacting, or likely to impact on their health and safety.*  
*Ensuring that WHS communication networks and mechanisms are operating effectively.*  
*Actively contribute to or participate in the WHS committee.*  
*Facilitate the sharing of information across functional area.*  
*Ensuring incident details are entered into the Queensland Health incident management enterprise system.* |
| *Represent workers from their workgroup in matters relating to work health and safety.*  
*Monitor measures taken by the employer or delegate in relation to their work group.*  
*Follow up on complaints made by any member of their work group.* |
• Inquire into potential risks to the health and safety of workers in the work group that arise from the conduct of the employer.
• To review circumstances surrounding workplace incidents.
• To attend interviews relating to workplace incidents if requested by the injured party.
• To advise the employer of the results of the review and make recommendations arising from the review.
• To be involved in consultation processes regarding proposed changes to the work group, plant or substances used at the workplace, that affects or may affect the health and safety of workers.
• To help in the resolution of WHS issues within their work group.
• To report to the employer or local WHS unit any issue that, in the HSR’s opinion, affects, or may affect the WHS of persons in the work group.

9. Definitions of terms used in the policy and supporting documents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition / explanation / details</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accountability area</td>
<td>A division, agency or HHS.</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Functional area</td>
<td>A work unit, category of services, or a work group.</td>
<td>Department of Health</td>
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<td>Hazard</td>
<td>A situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person.</td>
<td>How to Manage Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011</td>
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<td>Regulator</td>
<td>Means the applicable enforcement body for the WHS issue appointed under the Public Service Act 2008.</td>
<td>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</td>
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<td>Risk</td>
<td>The possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.</td>
<td>How to Manage Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice 2011</td>
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<td>Work group</td>
<td>A group of workers who share similar work conditions, for example all electricians in a factory, all people of night shift, and all people who work in a loading bay of a retail storage facility.</td>
<td>Guide to the Work Health and Safety Act 2011–DJAG</td>
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<td>Worker</td>
<td>A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for the person conducting a business or undertaking, (e.g. the department,</td>
<td>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s 7</td>
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agency or HHS), including work as:
• an employee
• a contractor or subcontractor
• an employee of a contractor or subcontractor
• an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person’s business or undertaking
• an outworker
• an apprentice or trainee
• a student gaining work experience
• a volunteer
• a person of a prescribed class.

10. Approval and implementation

Policy custodian:
Senior Director, HR Policy, Performance and Organisational Health

Responsible executive team member:
Deputy Director-General, System Support Services Division

Approving officer:
Deputy Director-General, System Support Services Division

Approval date: 01 June 2014
Effective from: 01 July 2014

Version control

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<td>1.0</td>
<td>30/04/2014</td>
<td>OHS</td>
<td>SMS review project 2013-14</td>
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