PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY ASSET COMMITTEE

Governance & Operations Manual 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Pyrenees Shire Council Governance & Operational Manual in respect of its Committees of Management, known as Community Asset Committees in accordance with s65 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

The document will be known as the Pyrenees Shire Council (PSC) Community Asset Committee Governance & Operational Manual 2021 (the Manual).

Council's Community Asset Committees (CACs), formerly known as Section 86 Committees, were re-established by Council resolution in August 2020, and new Instruments of Delegation 2020.

PSC has 5 five CACs as at January 2021:

1. Beaufort Community Bank Complex Community Asset Committee
2. Brewster Hall Community Asset Committee
3. Landsborough Community Precinct Community Asset Committee
4. Snake Valley Hall Community Asset Committee
5. Waubra Community Hub Community Asset Committee

The PSC CAC Governance & Operational Manual 2021 must be read in accordance with the relevant Instrument of Delegation 2020, attached to the Manual.

Date of commencement

The Manual takes effect from 1 April 2021 and replaces the former Pyrenees Shire Section 86 Committee of Management Manual.

Objectives

the objectives of the Manual are:

a) To provide for the orderly conduct of Community Asset Committee meetings,
b) To provide procedures for fair and open decision-making,
c) To detail the proceedings for the election of Office Bearers of a Community Asset Community, and
d) To provide guidance to members of a Community Asset Committee as to:
    i. Powers, functions, and duties of a CAC in managing a Council community asset,
    ii. Running and planning for a Council community asset, and
    iii. Operational governance and conduct standards to be observed.

Expectations

It is expected that a Community Asset Committee will:

- Become incorporated if not already done so.
- Provide Council with an Annual Report which includes a list of any registered Conflicts of Interest (refer to Section 8 for a template).

- Sign an agreed Instrument of Delegation.
- Comply with Council policies such as the Child Safe Standards – refer to Council website.
- Develop a Business Plan.
- Adopt and use this Manual and associated information.

It is expected that Council will:

- Provide financial support and assistance for a Community Asset Committee to become incorporated (if not already done so).
- Provide Public Liability Insurances.
- Assist in the development of the Pyrenees Shire Community Vision and Council Plan.
- Have reporting templates and information for Community Asset Committees on the Council website.
- Provide training as required for Committees.

Definitions

In this Manual, unless the context suggests otherwise the following words and phrases mean:

Act	means the Local Government Act 2020
Chief Executive Officer / CEO	means the Pyrenees Shire Council Chief Executive Officer and includes an Acting Chief Executive Officer
Community	any reference to community within this manual refers to the community members relevant to the specific Community Asset Committee and may include facility users, potential users and neighbours within the locality or township.
Community Asset Committee / CAC	means a Community Asset Committee established under s65 of the Local Government Act 2020 for the purpose of managing a community asset in the municipal district.
Council	means the Pyrenees Shire Council
Meeting	means a meeting of the Community Asset Committee
This / The Manual	means the PSC Community Asset Committee Governance & Operational Manual 2021

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to provide accurate information in this document, legislative and procedural changes occur from time to time. Committees should ensure they access the latest information from relevant sources where the information may not be contained within the Pyrenees Shire Council Manual.

The Pyrenees Shire Council does not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your purposes and therefore disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on this information.

1. POWERS, FUNCTIONS & DUTIES

This part provides information and guidance on the powers, functions, roles, and duties imposed on a Community Asset Committee (the Committee) and its office bearers / members.

Committee purpose

The Committee has been appointed to act for and on behalf of Council to control and manage a community asset or facility and its surrounds. It is the purpose of the Committee to look after the asset (facility) regarding its operation, use and maintenance on behalf of Council and for the use of the local community.

The facility for which you are the Community Asset Committee is for recreation, social and leisure purposes.

Committee functions and powers

The powers of a Committee are provided via the Instrument of Delegation attached to this Manual.

Requirements

Members of the Committee must, when exercising the powers, functions and duties delegated to them:

a) encourage public interest and maximise involvement and participation of the community in the use of the facility.

b) comply with all applicable Acts, Regulations and Council Policy relevant to the facility and its operations.

c) ensure that the consumption of alcoholic beverages at the facility follows the appropriate liquor and planning laws and regulations and the rules imposed by the Committee and Council.

d) comply with the governance requirements as detailed in the Instrument of Delegation and Part 3 of this Manual.

e) comply with the financial management requirements as detailed in the Instrument of Delegation and Part 3 of this Manual.

f) comply with reporting requirements to Council as detailed in the Instrument of Delegation and Part 3 of this Manual.

g) ensure the provision of a safe and secure environment and effectively identify, management and report on its risks, hazards and incidents as detailed in the Instrument of Delegation, Part 4 of this Manual, and the CAC Safety Handbook.

h) maintain appropriate insurance coverage as required under the Instrument of Delegation.

Duties

The Committee's key duties are to:

a) manage, improve, maintain, and develop the facility for the overall benefit and safety of users and the community,

b) advise Council in relation to the general development and ongoing maintenance of the facility,

c) seek Council approval before undertaking any alterations, additions, or capital works to or at the facility,

d) be responsible for the day-to-day management and maintenance of the facility and grounds,

e) use the facility to the best economic advantage of the community,

f) report on the finances and identified issues as directed by Council,

g) maintain records and administer the facility and Committee's affairs in an open, transparent, and honest manner, and

h) ensure the Committee remains financially sustainable / self-sustaining (i.e. that it has enough income to pay all its related expenses).

Office bearers

Office bearers of the Committee are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting.

Duties of office bearers and Committee members

How many people are needed on the Committee?

- The Committee membership should be representative of the stakeholder groups using the facility (e.g. at least one representative from each stakeholder group).
- The Committee shall comprise of up to eleven (11) members.
- Representation from the wider community may also be sought.
- Council may appoint a Councillor or Council Officer to the Committee.
- The number and names of Committee Members will be approved as required by changes made to the Instrument of Delegation by Council's Chief Executive Officer and resolution of Council.

What office bearers must be appointed?

The members of the Committee will elect, on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the following office bearers:

- Chairperson
- Deputy Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

The Committee can create other positions if considered necessary – e.g. assistant secretary, risk management officer, public relations, or marketing officer.

Duties of the Chairperson

The duties of the Chairperson comprise:

- Organise and chair Committee meetings.
- Maintain order during Committee meetings.
- If there is a tied vote, the Chairperson may exercise a second or casting vote.
- Ensure a quorum is present for all decisions of the Committee.
- Representing the Committee in public.

The duties of the Deputy Chairperson is to take over the duties of the Chairperson, on a temporary or permanent basis, if the Chairperson is absent or becomes incapable of performing them.

Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary comprise:

- Receive all incoming correspondence addressed to the Committee and bring it to the attention of the Committee.
- Write and dispatch all outwards correspondence on behalf of the Committee, as required by Committee business.
- Liaise with the Chairperson between meetings to ensure Committee business is attended to and, if necessary, call extra meetings.
- Send all Committee members notices of meetings, agendas, minutes and copies of correspondence and reports.
- Keep minutes of all meetings, which should include the following information:
  - Date, time, and location of the meeting
  - Attendance of members and visitors
  - Apologies received
  - Agenda items considered
  - All formal decisions of the Committee – including:
    - The motion
    - The person moving the motion
    - The person seconding the motion
    - Whether the motion was approved or not
  - Date and time of the next meeting

Duties of the Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer comprise:

- Maintain a bank account in the name of the Committee (signatories to the bank account should be the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer – with any two of these signatories being required to sign cheques or authorities to pay).
- Record and bank any money received.
- Pay accounts as authorised by the Committee.
- Keep and file appropriately all invoices, receipts, cheque butts, bank statements or other financial records for audit purposes.
- Give a financial update at each meeting, including bank balances, income, and expenditure summaries.
- Prepare an annual financial report and forward a copy to Council at the end of each financial year (1st July to 30th June) no later than the end of August for each completed year.

Duties of a Risk Management Officer

Where appointed, the duties of a risk management officer are detailed in the CAC Safety Handbook, attached to this Manual.

If the Committee believes a risk management officer is not necessary, the Committee must do the work of risk management. The appointment of a risk management officer is strongly recommended as the most effective way of ensuring risk and OHS obligations are met.

Duties of Committee Members who are not office bearers

As a member of the Community Asset Committee it is your responsibility to assist the elected office bearers in managing and maintaining the facility. Also:

- inform the Committee of any problems, hazard or risks you have noticed or have been notified of that need attention,
- actively participate in Committee activities and business,
- attend all Committee meetings and participate in decision-making, and
- vote as appropriate on issues that may arise or decisions that need to be made.

Can other people join the Committee?

- The Committee may co-opt additional people to the Committee. However, those people do not have any voting rights unless and until that person has been officially accepted to Committee members through a formal change in the Instrument of Delegation.
- Formally adding Committee members should be done as part of an Annual General Meeting and then notified to Council to facilitate formal adoption.
- Council reserves the right for a Councillor, the Chief Executive Officer or nominated Council Officer to attend any Committee meeting. Council also reserves the right for its representative to exercise a voting option.
- A co-opted person cannot be appointed in any one of the four key office bearer positions (Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer).
- A co-opted person may be appointed to convene a sub-Committee or participate in a sub-Committee (particularly if they have needed skills).

Sub-Committees

- The Committee may form a sub-Committee for a particular purpose and may co-opt additional people on to the sub-Committee, regardless of whether they are co-opted on to the main Committee.
- Council must be formally advised in writing of the formation of any sub-Committee and reserves the right to not approval any such sub-Committee.
- It is desirable (but not essential) that at least one Committee member be a part of that sub-Committee and act as the convenor.
- Minutes of sub-Committee meetings must be kept and provided to the Community Asset Committee following a sub-Committee meeting as part of a report by the sub-Committee convenor.

- Members of the sub-Committee have voting rights only on that sub-Committee. The sub-Committee should not have any powers of decision but be able to make recommendations only to the Community Assets Committee.

2. FACILITY OPERATIONS

Electric power lines

A committee, as the occupier of the reserved land, is responsible for ensuring that trees do not interfere with any electric power lines that run through or into it, even if no power from the line is used on the reserve. This applies only to distribution lines (i.e. ordinary lines) and not to transmission lines (i.e. the larger steel structures carrying high-voltage lines).

The committee is also responsible for the maintenance of any trees on the reserve that may overhang a boundary and interfere with a power line on a neighbour's property.

Any issues with trees should be reported to Council.

Pests and weed control

A committee, as the occupier of the land, has an obligation to control all weeds and pests on its facility and ensure that they do not invade neighbouring land. Grants may be available through Council to assist in pest and weed control.

Fire prevention works

Reserves and facilities in rural areas may need to carry out fire prevention works before summer. To obtain further information, contact Council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer.

Buildings

For buildings that require an occupancy permit, and were built after July 1994, that occupancy permit will include a list of essential services for the building (fire mains, exit doors etc) and the maintenance required for those services. Council will undertake this responsibility.

Obligations regarding land, buildings, plant, and equipment

a) Council retains the right to access the facility and its assets. The Committee shall provide copies of all facility keys to Council.

b) For all maintenance projects, no fixtures, alterations, or additions can be made without written consent of Council. Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS) should be completed for all maintenance activities that involve risk of injury.

c) The Committee will seek Council approval prior to changing of locks or installation of security systems.

d) Where equipment or buildings are damaged, the Committee may recoup such reasonable costs as are necessary to replace such equipment or maintain / repair the assets from the person or persons / group responsible for such damage, but no legal proceedings should be issued without the written approval of the Council.

e) The Committee should conduct regular site inspections that include risk assessments.

f) Specific items of building maintenance should be included in the annual budget.

g) All contractors engaged by the Committee must evidence adequate insurances, qualifications and demonstrated safe work practices in accordance with the OHS Act 2014.

h) All associated sub-contractors must have appropriate qualifications. The principle contractor will be required to provide a list of sub-contractors and their qualifications to the Community Asset Committee prior to the commencement of maintenance works. The Community Asset Committee will record these details.

Routine maintenance responsibilities

The following table outlines maintenance responsibilities for Council and the Community Asset Committee (where applicable).

Activity		Responsibility	
		Committee	Council
Fixtures and furniture			
1.	Heating fixtures – Payment of all gas and electricity bills, servicing, replacing, and repairing when required.	Y	
2.	Ceiling fans and air conditioning units – purchase, installation, servicing, replacing, and repairing when required.	Y	
3.	Curtains and blinds – purchase, installation, cleaning, and maintenance.	Y	
4.	Doors (including cupboard doors and door fittings) – regular cleaning, repairs/replacement of internal doors.	Y	
	Doors – repairs on all external doors.		Y
5.	Equipment – goal posts, nets, and padding – purchase, installation, and maintenance.	Y	
6.	Clubroom equipment as provided by user groups. Responsible for installation, servicing, and maintenance.	Y	
7.	Other permanent fixtures – regular cleaning of all fixtures and repair / replace if due to foreseeable misuse.	Y	
Building / structural			
8.	Building alterations – determining and documenting the specific needs of the building relating to any requests to Council for building alterations	Y	
	Building alterations – for assessing all requests submitted and, if approved by Council, ensuring satisfactory completion of work by the responsible parties.		Y
9.	Ceilings – repairs due to foreseeable misuse.	Y	
	Ceilings – Major repair and/or replacement due to structural faults and age.		Y

	Activity	Responsibility	
		Committee	**Council**
10.	Floor surfaces and coverings – purchase, installation, cleaning, and maintenance.	Y	
11.	Walls and Floor – cleaning and repair if damaged through foreseeable misuse.		
	Walls and Floor – Structural maintenance.		Y
12.	Glazing – to keep clean and replace internal and external breakages.	Y	
	Glazing – Council will assess insurance claims where applicable.		Y
13.	Roofs and gutters – maintenance and repairs as per Council's asset maintenance and renewal program.		Y
14.	Skylights – All maintenance and repair as required.		Y
15.	Painting – internal painting if damaged through foreseeable misuse or on an as needs basis.	Y	
	Painting – external painting as per Council's asset management program.		Y
16.	Building external – all external maintenance.	Y	
	Building external – structural or weather-proofing maintenance as per Council's asset management program.		Y
17.	Scoreboards and coaching boxes – purchase, installation, and maintenance costs. Application to Council for installation approval.	Y	
18.	Hard courts – underlying structure – maintenance as per Council's asset management program. Repair of structural defects as assessed by Council.		Y
Electrical			
19.	Electrical wiring and fittings in buildings – repair and replacement due to foreseeable misuse. Secure a certificate of compliance and forward to Council for all electrical works arranged.	Y	
	Electrical wiring and fittings in buildings – all building wiring from main supply to and including the switchboard, power points, switches, and light fittings.		Y
20.	Tested and tagged electrical appliances – annual test and tagging of all electrical appliances.		Y
21.	Training Lights (lamps) – purchase of parts, globes, and fittings. Payment of utility costs and repairs.	Y	
	Training lights (lamps) – Provision of 1 x crane hire and electrical technician per facility per annum with timing to be negotiated with Community Asset Committee.		Y

	Activity	Responsibility	
		Committee	**Council**
22.	Light globes and fittings – external building fittings – responsible for enhancements.	Y	
	Light globes and fittings – external building fittings – replacement and maintenance when required.		Y
23.	Light globes and fittings – internal – responsible for enhancements. Replacement of globes up to 2 metres in height off the ground, including the completion of a Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS).	Y	
	Light globes and fittings – internal – replace light globes over 2 metres height off the ground and repair faulty fittings as determined by Council.		Y
Fire Services – Emergency Safety			
24.	Fire Services (extinguishers, hose reels, hydrants, booster systems, alarms) – To fill extinguishers when discharged.	Y	
	Fire Services (extinguishers, hose reels, hydrants, booster systems, alarms) – Arrange maintenance checks and replacement due to age.		Y
25.	Essential services – compliance with building code and Certificate of Occupancy. Costs associated with compliance to be approved by and forwarded to Council. Induction of facility users.	Y	
	Essential services – maintenance cost and replacement due to age.		Y
Security / vandalism			
26.	Vandalism (internal, where break-in occurs) – Reporting to Council and Police. Cost for repairs / replacement of user-owned fixtures.	Y	
	Vandalism (internal, where break-in occurs) – Council will assess insurance claims.		Y
27.	Vandalism (external) – Reporting vandalism including graffiti to Council and Police.	Y	
	Vandalism (external) – Repairs as determined by Council (copy of police report required). Council will assess insurance claims.		Y
28.	Keys and locks (compatible with Council's Master Key System) – responsible for keys issued by Council and maintaining a site-specific key register.	Y	
	Keys and locks (compatible with Council's Master Key System) – Purchase, install, and maintain external locks.		Y
29.	Security system – purchase, installation, service, and maintenance. To be compatible with Council's Master Key System and provide Council with a key / code.	Y	

Activity	Responsibility	
	Committee	Council
Plumbing / irrigation / toilets		
30. Plumbing and fixtures – maintenance of all plumbing fixtures including reticulated hot water systems and hot water units for tea/coffee making (e.g. urn / boilers). Consult with Council as to whether a repair or replacement is required.	Y	
Plumbing and fixtures – replacement or renewal of reticulated hot water systems will be determined by Council on failure only.		Y
31. Plumbing, waste pipes, and drains – keep clear of foreign objects and clear if blocked. Monitor and undertake septic tank pump-out as required.	Y	
Plumbing, waste pipes, and drains – renewal of septic system will be determined by Council.		Y
32. Irrigation maintenance – minor adjustments of sprinkler heads (i.e. spray pattern, maintaining surrounds of heats). Reporting malfunctions to Council and undertaking pre-seasonal inspections of irrigation system before use.	Y	
Irrigation maintenance – all irrigation piping from main supply, control system and distribution infrastructure. Repairs where required, including sprinkler heads.		Y
33. Storm water drain maintenance – all maintenance as required.		Y
34. Public toilets – cleaning to an approved schedule those toilets designated as Shire 'public toilets'. Maintenance and repairs as required for public toilets.		Y
35. Facility only use / internal toilets – maintenance, cleaning, and minor repairs.	Y	
Facility only use / internal toilets – major repairs as determined by Council.		Y
Food handling / hygiene / cooking equipment		
36. Hygiene – to keep all areas in a clean and hygienic state.	Y	
37. Food handling areas and equipment – to comply with the relevant Health Acts and maintain such equipment as required under the Act.	Y	
38. Stoves, cooking equipment, and grease traps – keep clean and maintain in operable condition. Cost of repairs. Maintain grease traps in accordance with manufacturer's recommendation.	Y	
39. Exhaust fans – keep clean and maintain in operable condition. Cost of repairs.	Y	

	Activity	Responsibility	
		Committee	**Council**
Oval maintenance / synthetic & artificial surfaces			
40.	Line marking of sports fields – purchase and application (non-toxic and non-permanent materials only).	Y	
41.	Management of watering sports ovals – responsibility for coordination and management of watering ovals (including cost).	Y	
	Management of watering sports ovals – responsible for investigating alternative water management systems and providing advice where required on watering regimes / schedules.		Y
42.	Mowing of designated sporting ovals – as per Council's asset management program. (Council only where within program resources)	Y	Sometimes
43.	Fire prevention mowing of reserves – mowing, whipper snipper around buildings and garden beds.	Y	
	Fire prevention mowing of reserves – all other fire prevention mowing at reserves, other than above.		Y
44.	Oval surfaces – fertilise, aeration, and week spray – as per Council's asset management program within program resources.		Y
45.	Oval top dressing – clubs to repair potholes identified by pre-usage inspection. Report issues to Council.	Y	
	Oval top dressing – minor, localised top dressing once per year as per Council's asset management program within program resources.		Y
46.	Synthetic / artificial sports surfaces – Cleaning of surfaces.	Y	
	Synthetic / artificial sports surfaces – resurfacing works.		Y
Utilities			
47.	Payment of utility costs (gas, electricity, telephone, water (including ovals) including supply and security arrangements of gas bottles.	Y	
Cricket pitches (where applicable)			
48.	Covering and uncovering of cricket pitches (soil) – levelling of the soil during the season to maintain safety.	Y	
49.	Synthetic cricket wickets (including training nets) – maintenance and replacement of synthetic surface material including removal of grit, sand, grime etc.	Y	
Car parks, roads, playgrounds, other facility maintenance			
50.	Grading of unsealed entrance roads and car parks (Committee responsible for reporting hazards to Council).		Y

	Activity	Responsibility	
		Committee	**Council**
51.	Maintenance of Council approved bike parks, skate parks and playgrounds as per Council's asset management program.		Y
Other facility maintenance			
52.	Fences – all fence maintenance.	Y	
53.	Trees – landscaping and vegetation planting / maintenance. Reporting dangerous limbs / trees to Council.	Y	
	Trees – all assessment, safety, and removal as required within program resources.		Y
54.	Advertising signs – purchase, installation, and maintenance costs. Application to Council for installation approval. Annual risk assessment and repair of signs.	Y	
55.	Rubbish – picking up of rubbish within managed areas. Placement of bins at collection points and all costs associated with additional bins.	Y	
	Rubbish – emptying of rubbish bins as per Council's waste management program.		Y
56.	Control of weeds and pest animals – take all reasonable steps to control declared weeds and pest animals.	Y	

3. GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Community Asset Committees and Membership

A Community Asset Committee is established by an Instrument of Delegation from the Chief Executive Officer, generally for a period of three years.

Committee members are appointed by resolution of Council, generally at the same time as the Instrument of Delegation is renewed or upon request from the Chairperson of a Committee when membership changes are made or proposed. Committee members are appointed for the term of the Committee, for three years or until the term of the Committee ends, whichever is sooner.

Office Bearers of the Committee are appointed annually at the Committee's Annual General Meeting, as nominated, and voted by Committee members.

Overarching Governance Principles

This Manual should be read in the context of and in conjunction with the overarching governance principles specified in s9(2) of the Act, and adapted as follows for Committee operations and governance:

i.   Committee decisions must be made, and actions taken, in accordance with any relevant law or regulation.
ii.   Priority must be given to achieving the best outcomes for Committee stakeholders and the local community, including future generations.
iii.   The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the community facility, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.
iv.   The community and stakeholders serviced by the Committee, and users of the facility, must be engaged in facility-focused strategic planning and decision-making.
v.   Innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued.
vi.   Collaboration with other similar organisations and Council is to be sought where appropriate.
vii.   The ongoing financial viability of the Committee and facility is to be ensured.
viii. Council plans and policies are to be considered in strategic planning and decision-making.
ix.   The transparency of Committee decisions, actions and information must be ensured.

In giving effect to the overarching governance principles, the Committee must consider the following supporting principles:

Community engagement principles

- A community engagement process must have a clearly defined objective and scope,

- Participants in community engagement must have access to objective, relevant and timely information to inform their participation,
- Participants in community engagement must be representative of the persons and groups affected by the matter that is the subject of the community engagement, participants in community engagement are entitled to reasonable support to enable meaningful and informed engagement,
- Participants in community engagement are informed of the ways in which the community engagement process will influence Committee decision making.

Public transparency principles

- Committee decision-making processes must be transparent,
- Committee information must be publicly available unless the information is confidential under an Act or public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest,
- Information must be understandable and accessible to members of the community,
- Public awareness of the availability of information must be facilitated.

Strategic planning principles

- An integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted,
- Strategic planning must address the Pyrenees Shire Community Vision,
- Strategic planning must consider the resources needed for effective implementation,
- Strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation,
- Strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances.

Financial management principles

- Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, and financial transactions must be managed in accordance with applicable financial policies and strategic plans,
- Financial risks must be monitored and managed prudently having regard to economic circumstances,
- Financial policies and strategic plans must seek to provide stability and predictability in the financial impact on the community asset or facility and its users,
- Accounts and records that explain the financial operations and financial position of the Committee must be kept.

Service performance principles

A Committee must plan and deliver services to its users and community in accordance with the service performance principles:

- Services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the community,
- Services should be accessible to users and members of the community for whom the services are intended,

- Quality and costs standards for services set by the Committee should provide good value to the community,
- A Committee should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the community in response to performance monitoring,
- Service delivery must include a fair and effective process for considering and responding to complaints about service provision.

Decision-making

In any matter in which a decision must be made by the Committee, it must consider the matter and decide:

- fairly, by giving consideration and making a decision that is balanced, ethical and impartial, and
- on the merits, free from favouritism or self-interest and without regard to irrelevant or unauthorised considerations.

The Committee must, when making any decision to which the principles of natural justice apply, adhere to those principles including, without limitation, ensuring that any person whose rights will be directly affected by a Committee decision is entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered.

Without limiting anything in the above paragraph:

- before making a decision that will directly affect the rights of a person, the Committee should identify the person or persons whose rights will be directly affected, give notice of the decision which the Committee is intended to make, and ensure that such person or persons have an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered before the decision is made, and
- if a report is to be considered at a Committee meeting that concerns subject matter that will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the report must record whether that person or persons have been provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered.

Committee appointment and re-appointment processes

Council will notify the Committee three to four months prior to the expiry of the current Instrument of Delegation. All relevant information will be provided to the Committee at that time, including nomination forms to be completed and signed by the nominees for the new Community Asset Committee.

- If the membership of the Committee is entirely made up of representatives from organisations or clubs using the facility, the retiring Committee will advise those groups of the need to forward nominations for the new Community Asset Committee.
- If there are community representatives on the Committee, Council will call for community nominations.
- Previously serving members of the Committee can reapply to remain on the Committee.

Any person wishing to join the Committee must do so in writing, using the nomination form, advising the Committee that they are willing to carry out the duties and abide by the rules and regulations as set out by the Committee and Council.

The Committee will forward all nominations to Council for a decision.

The number of Committee members will be determined by the number of nominations accepted and the Council resolution.

The accepted Committee nominations will be approved by Council resolution accompanied by a new Instrument of Delegation by the Chief Executive Officer. A new Instrument of Delegation will generally be for a term of three (3) years.

Resignations and appointments of members within the Committee term

The members of a Committee can change within the term of that Committee's appointment and delegation.

- If a person wishes to resign from the Committee, they must do so in writing – signed and dated and provided to the Committee. The Committee will advise Council in writing of the resignation and include the letter from the person resigning.

- If a person wishes to join the Committee mid-term, they must do so in writing – advising the Committee that they are willing to carry out the duties and abide by the rules and regulations set out by the Committee and Council. The Committee must then write to Council stating that the Committee is willing to let this person become a member and include the signed letter from the prospective member.

- Council will, by resolution at a Council meeting, appoint or revoke the person from the Committee. The term of appointment for the new person will expire on the same date that the Committee's term expires.

Removal of a Committee member

- Council can remove a member from a Committee at any time, but this power is rarely used without good reason.

- A Committee member can be removed from the Committee for the following reasons:

  o If a Committee member has been absent for three consecutive meetings without first obtaining a leave of absence from the Committee.

  o Bankruptcy

  o Conviction of a serious offence

  o The Committee member becomes incapable of performing Committee duties – e.g. chronic illness

  o The Committee member is considered not to be carrying out their duties satisfactorily.

It is a difficult and subjective matter to decide that a fellow Committee member is not performing or carrying out their duties satisfactorily. The first step should before the Chairperson or the whole Committee to discuss the matter with the member concerned, to try and resolve the issue.

Upon removal of a member, the Committee must notify Council of this circumstance.

Financial management

The Committee shall ensure the following:

a) The Committee shall adopt 1 July to 30 June in each year as the financial year and all accounting functions shall conform with applicable Accounting Standards, the Local Government Act 2020 and relevant regulations made under that Act.

b) The Committee will open a bank account in the name of the Committee to exercise powers and functions delegated by the Instrument of Delegation.

c) If the income of the Committee in any given financial year is greater than $20,000 (excluding Council's Community Grants Program) the accounts will be audited to the satisfaction of the Council, and the Committee will meet all associated costs.

d) All monies received from hire fees, rental and charges should be promptly deposited in the bank account by the Treasurer. All payment authorities must be signed or approved by two of the three principal office bearers.

e) All monies received by the Committee will be applied to the maintenance and operations of the facility and any other expenses that may be incurred by the Committee in the management of the facility.

f) In pursuing its objectives and functions the Committee will only commit those monies which are:
   i. Within the approved annual budget for the facility,
   ii. Grants obtained for specific projects applied in the operation of the facility, or
   iii. Obtained from other sources from time to time for use at the facility.

g) The Committee may use its funds in accordance with the operational responsibilities of the Committee, for the following purposes:
   i. toward the purchase of plant, equipment fittings and furniture for the benefit of the facility,
   ii. the maintenance and repair of buildings, fences and other improvements associated with the facility,
   iii. to implement programs and services as appropriate,
   iv. general administrative expenses of the Committee,
   v. with the written consent of the Council, the erection of further amenities at the facility or alterations / improvements, and
   vi. such other purposes as may from time to time be approved by the Committee in meeting its objectives.

h) The Committee will make its minute book and all other papers or documents available for inspection or audit by the Council's auditor, internal auditor, a representative of an investigative body (e.g. IBAC, Ombudsman or Inspectorate) or other municipal officers authorised by the Pyrenees Shire Council.

i) The Treasurer shall ensure that a financial report is included in the agenda of each meeting of the Committee.

j) The Committee may advance an amount of up to one hundred dollars ($100.00) to the Secretary for the purpose4 of change or petty cash. Such payments shall be recouped in the bank account.

k) The Committee must approve payments more than $500.00 for Secretarial purposes.

Fees and charges

The Committee will at least once in each financial year, in conjunction with the preparation of its budget, fix a scale of fees and charges for the use of the facility.

Budget

The Committee must prepare an annual budget to assist the Committee in monitoring its finances and maintain effective financial control and sustainability.

a) The Committee will prepare a budget for the next financial year prior to the 30 June of each year.

b) The Committee will forward a copy of the draft budget, prior to its adoption, to the Chief Executive Officer prior to 30 May of each year.

c) The budget will be adopted by a motion of the Committee no later than 30 June of each year. Council retains the right of veto or right to amend the budget.

d) In preparing the budget, the Committee must ensure that the budget adequately provides sufficient funds to meet its obligations and responsibilities and does not generate an accumulated deficit.

e) The Committee will not incur expenditure where it believes it will be unable to meet those commitments as they fall due.

As a minimum, a budget must include the following:

- A list of budgeted income from all sources for the financial year,
- A list of budgeted expenses for the financial year, and
- The opening and closing budgeted bank balance.

Insurance

a) Public Liability Insurance will be provided by Council at Council's expense to cover the Committee's activities in managing the facility, whilst acting within the scope of their duties for and on behalf of Council, subject at all times to the terms and conditions of Council's insurance policy.

b) User groups are responsible for providing their own public liability insurance coverage. The Committee shall ensure that each user group provide evidence of Public Liability Insurance cover on an annual basis to ensure maintained coverage.

c) Building insurance will be provided by Council at Council's expense under Council's insurance policy, including for any contents owned by Council.

d) Insurance of contents owned or provided by the Committee is the responsibility of the Committee. The Committee must ensure that contents are adequately insured against fire, burglary and other perils.

e) User groups are responsible for insuring their own contents.

f) Council may provide contents insurance upon request at a nominal fee.

Staff

The Committee must not employ staff without the written approval of Council's Chief Executive Officer.

Should written approval be granted, the Committee will be responsible for payment of all overheads associated with such employment, including all appropriate insurances.

Any proposal by the Committee to employ staff must be submitted in writing to Council for consideration.

Reporting to Council

The Committee is responsible for ensuring the following reports are provided:

a) A copy of the minutes from each meeting should be forwarded to Council within 14 days after each meeting. A copy can be forwarded by post or via email – pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

b) The Committee shall submit, at its public Annual General Meeting, an Annual Report including the audited Annual Statement of Accounts bearing the auditor's certificate where applicable. The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the report is lodged with Council by 17 July of each year.

c) Council must be advised in writing as soon as possible of the resignation of any Committee member.

d) The Committee shall conduct site risk assessments at least annually to ensure a safe environment. Copies of these inspections must be provided to Council.

e) The Committee will monitor its effective financial control through the preparation of a written budget for the following financial year and forward the draft budget to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 30 May of each year.

f) The Committee will maintain a personal injury and loss/damage register and advise Council as soon as reasonably practicable of any incidents that might give rise to insurance claims or legal proceedings.

g) The Committee shall report to Council any accidental and/or intentional damage to the facility as soon as is reasonably practicable.

h) The Committee will report to Council any attempted and/or successful break-ins into buildings or assets located at the facility as soon as is reasonably practicable.

i) The Committee shall comply with the provisions of the Occupational Health & Safety Act and report to Council's Risk Management Coordinator all incidents which result in injuries within 24 hours of the incident.

Dispute management

A procedure for the resolution of disputes or disagreement between members is provided at Section 7.

Communications with Council

Pyrenees Shire Council is committed to working in an open and collaborative way with its community. As such Council will seek to engage with the community to determine their expectations and manage service delivery to meet those expectations within resources available.

This section provides guidance on communication protocols between the Committee and Council.

a) Council will:

- Assist and support the Committee with the development and implementation of capital works and significant maintenance programs.
- Assist the Committee in identifying appropriate funding opportunities.
- Support the Committee with maintenance schedules and programs.
- Respond to requests / communications from Committees within 15 (fifteen) working days.

- Advise the Committee of any decisions or matters that will impact on the use of the facility within 24 hours of the decision.
- Provide the Committee with a list of designated Council Officers assigned as contact person(s) for specific matters and concerns annually.
- Explain any decisions that affects the Committee in respect of maintenance and capital works.
- Advise the Committee of the results from maintenance inspections undertaken by or on behalf of Council.
- Assist the Committee with the development of media releases or other promotional activity.
- Provide training as appropriate to support the Committee in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities.

b) The Committee will:

- Identify an elected office bearer (e.g. Chairperson or Secretary) to be the liaison person between the Committee and Council.
- Annually update contact information regarding Committee members, with Council's Manager Governance Risk & Compliance.
- Discuss any matters regarding the Instrument of Delegation or any other governance, risk, or compliance matter with Council's Manager Governance Risk & Compliance.
- Advise Council's Communications Officer of meeting dates, times, and locations for inclusion in Council's weekly community notifications.
- Raise any issues, concerns or matters relating to maintenance schedules and programs with Council's Manager Assets or Maintenance Officer.
- Inform Council's Community Wellbeing & Grants Officer of any funding application that the Committee may apply or plan for.
- Refer any requests for capital works or projects to Council's Chief Executive Officer for approval.
- Not seek to obstruct Council contractors or staff when carrying out their duties at the facility.

Grievance or dissatisfaction

If the Committee is dissatisfied with communications or response from Council, they may contact the Manager Governance Risk & Compliance to discuss their concerns.

If satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the Committee can contact the Director Corporate & Community Services.

4. COMPLIANCE OBLIGATIONS

Privacy and confidentiality

As a Community Asset Committee, operating on behalf of the Pyrenees Shire Council, members are subject to the requirements of the Victorian Privacy & Data Protection Act, and the 10 Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) that set out the minimum standards and practices for handling personal information in the Victorian public sector.

To meet these obligations, the Committee must comply with Council's Privacy Policy and the guidance provided below:

a) If collecting personal information as part of its operations, the Committee must provide a collection notice as part of the collection advising of why the information is being collected, what it will be used for and whether it will be disclosed to any person or organisation.

b) Any personal or identifying information collected and retained by the Committee must be protected against unauthorised access, use or disclosure – particularly if part of an online databased or application.

c) Personal information must only be collected when needed for a specific purpose.

d) Personal or identifying information must not be disclosed unless part of the reason for collection (and disclosed as part of that collection), required by law, or consent is provided by the individual.

e) Privacy complaints should be directed to Council's Privacy Officer.

Confidential information

Confidential information may include:

- Committee, Council, or facility business information that, if released, could prejudice the Council's or Committee's position in commercial negotiations.
- Security information that, if released, could endanger the security of Council property or the safety of any person.
- Law enforcement information that, if released, could prejudice the investigation into an alleged breach of the law or the fair trial or hearing of any person.
- Legal privileged information – information to which legal professional privilege applies.
- Personal information that, if released, would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.
- Private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that, if released, could unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

Committee members must not disclose confidential information unless authorised by the Chairperson / Committee resolution, or as required by law.

Licensing provisions

The consumption of alcoholic beverages at the facility must be compliant with the appropriate liquor and planning laws and regulations, and any rules laid down by the Committee and Council.

Disclosure of Conflicts of interest

This Part should be read in conjunction with Council's Conflicts of Interest Policy, included as section …. of the Community Asset Committee Governance Manual.

Committee member

A Committee member who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Committee meeting at which they present, must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present at the meeting, either at the beginning of the meeting or immediately before the matter is considered.

The Committee member with the conflict of interest, must leave the Committee meeting immediately before the agenda item is discussed and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been dealt with.

Councillor

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Community Asset Committee meeting at which they are present or intend to be present, must advise of the conflict of interest in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Definitions

General conflict of interest	A person has a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider that the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their duty to the Committee.
Material conflict of interest	A person has a material conflict of interest in respect of a matter if an affected person would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of the matter.
Benefit or loss	The benefit may arise, or the loss incurred: • Directly or indirectly • In a financial or non-financial form

Exemptions

A conflict of interest does not arise if any of the following applies:

a) the conflict of interest is so remote or insignificant that it could not be reasonably regarded as capable of influencing the actions or decisions of the relevant person in relation to the matter,

b) the interest that would give rise to a conflict of interest is held in common with a substantial proportion of the user group members or stakeholders of the facility and does not exceed the interest held by those user groups or stakeholders,

c) the person does not know the circumstances that give rise to the conflict of interest and could not be reasonably expected to know those circumstances, or

d) the interest only arises because the person is the representative of a user group that has an interest in the matter and receives no personal advantage from the user group.

Examples of conflicts of interest

the following are examples of conflicts of interest to provide guidance:

a) Acceptance of gifts of value, gratuities, benefits, or favours from individuals or organisations (e.g. suppliers).

b) Use of confidential Committee or Council information or assets for personal gain / benefit, or for the benefit of a person or organisation with whom the person has a closer personal, financial or non-financial relationship.

c) Situations where the Committee approves, or influences approval for, purchase of goods or services from a firm, company, or other business entity which the Committee member has an interest.

When a conflict of interest is not known immediately

It is recommended that Committee members ensure they are familiar with items on a meeting agenda to allow identification of where a conflict of interest may need to be declared at the start of a meeting.

a) **During a meeting:** where a conflict of interest becomes apparent during an item on an agenda, the person concerned should immediately advise of their conflict of interest and remove themselves from the meeting until after discussion on that item is finished.

b) **After a meeting:** if a conflict of interest becomes apparent to a member after a meeting (e.g. something becomes known that was unknown at the time of the meeting that creates a conflict of interest) that person should, as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the conflict of interest:
   - If a Councillor, notify the Chief Executive Officer in writing, or
   - If a Committee member who is not a Councillor, notify the Committee Chairperson in writing.

All notifications should be formally recorded and retained.

Acceptance of gifts, benefits, or hospitality

This Part should be read in conjunction with Council's Procedure for the acceptance of gifts, benefits, or hospitality, included as a sub-section of this Manual.

Individual Committee members must take responsibility for their decisions and actions regarding the acceptance of gifts, benefits and hospitality and ensure that there is no conflict of interest associated with accepting such offerings – actual or perceived.

This Part relates to the acceptance of gifts, benefits or hospitality relating to their position as a member of a Community Asset Committee.

When offers must not be accepted or sought

- Generally, Committee members must not seek or accept any offer of gifts, benefits or hospitality in response to services or activities they perform in connection with their position as a member of a Community Asset Committee, from anyone who could benefit by influencing them in their official capacity. Included in this category are gifts in kind (e.g. free or discounted accommodation, meals, travel, or entertainment), which go beyond common courtesies consistent with ethical and accepted business practices.
- Where it is determined that an offer will create a conflict of interest – actual or perceived.
- Committee members should not accept offers of hospitality of a greater value than modest networking opportunities, without discussion with the Committee Chairperson. Offers above this level of value, where it can be associated with their role as a Committee member, can be perceived as inducements or leading to conflicts of interest.
- In their role as a Committee member, persons should not accept the following under any circumstances:
  - Monetary gifts, cash, or cash equivalents (e.g. gift cards)
  - Offers from an anonymous source above a value of $100.00
  - Shares or the opportunity to acquire discounted shares in any supplier, customer, or competitor
  - An offer to purchase goods or services from any supplier, customer, or competitor, on terms more favourable than available in the normal course of business
  - A series of gifts from a single source with a significant cumulative value
  - Where gifts are offered selectively to individuals within the Committee or in a secretive fashion

Procedure for acceptance of offers

A Committee member should only accept an offer of a gift, benefit, or hospitality, in their role as a member of a Community Asset Committee, where that offer meets the following conditions:

- The offer does not exceed a value of $100.00
- The offer does not have the potential to instigate a conflict of interest on the part of the individual receiving the offer – actual or perceived
- The offer is not made to a Committee member who is likely to be a decision-maker regarding any matter that might result in a benefit to the person or organisation making the offer.

Where an offer is considered appropriate and does not cause an actual or perceived conflict of interest, the person accepting the offer should:

- Accept the offer with thanks, ensuring that the person making the offer understands that the acceptance is without any conditions, actual or inferred, and
- Register the acceptance of the offer with the Committee Secretary.

Token gifts

Token offers may include souvenirs, mementos and other items of low material value, or moderate acts of hospitality. It is expected that such token offers of gifts, benefits, or hospitality will be below $50.00 in value.

This type of offer need not be regarded as a conflict of interest and need not be declared unless a continuing pattern of such token offers is received from an individual or organisation could led to a conflict of interest.

Registration of gifts

All gifts received above an estimated value of $50.00 must be disclosed at, and recorded in the minutes of, the next committee meeting.

Minutes of a gift disclosure should include the following information:

- The individual or organisation making the offer
- Details of the offer
- Estimated value of the offer
- The Committee member to whom the offer was made
- Whether the offer was accepted

5. MEETING PROCEDURES

Definitions

In this part:

Agenda	means the notice of a meeting setting out the business to be transacted at the meeting
Chair / Chairperson	means the Chairperson of the meeting and includes the Deputy Chairperson when the Chairperson is unavailable
	A Committee may decide to substitute the term President or Vice-President
Minute book	means the collective record (minutes) of Committee meetings
Notice of motion	means a notice setting out the text of a motion, which it is proposed to move at the next relevant meeting
Notice of rescission	means a notice of motion to rescind a resolution made by the Committee
Written	includes duplicated, lithographed, photocopied, printed and typed, and extends to both hard copy and soft copy format

Role of Chairperson in a meeting

a) The Chairperson must take the Chair at all Committee meetings at which they are present.
b) If the Chairperson is absent, the Deputy Chairperson must take the Chair, or the Committee may select one of the meeting attendees as temporary Chair of that meeting only.
c) The Chairperson plays a crucial role in facilitating an orderly, respectful, transparent and constructive meeting by ensuring all attendees have opportunity to be heard, matters are adequately discussed, meeting procedures are appropriately followed, and statutory requirements are adhered to.

Meeting frequency, attendance, and voting

- The Committee must hold at least two (2) meetings per year, excluding the Annual General Meeting, on such dates as the Chairperson nominates.
- Meeting must be held regularly. It is recommended that meetings be held frequently, e.g. monthly, but if there isn't a lot of new business, meetings can be held quarterly.
- Anyone can attend Committee meetings.

- Committee members are expected to attend all meetings. If unable to attend a meeting, the Committee member should contact an Office Bearer to ensure that their apology is accepted and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- Any member's position on the Committee will become vacant if they miss three consecutive meetings without approval or an apology.
- Only Committee Members appointed by Council's Instrument of Delegation can vote at Committee meetings.
- Each member of the Committee is entitled to one vote.

Meeting conduct

- All meetings must operate in accordance with this Manual.
- Committee members must disclose and manage any actual or perceived conflict of interest in accordance with Part 4 of this Manual.
- If any person starts to interrupt and talk over any other person, the Chairperson must take control of the meeting and request that this person be quiet and await their turn.
- If a non-member starts to interrupt and talk over members, the Chairperson must take control of the meeting and request that the person be quiet and be seated.
- If an interruption causes too much trouble, whether by member or non-member, the Chairperson may ask that person to leave the meeting. Where necessary, the Police may be called to restore order.

Meetings conducted remotely

If a meeting is conducted electronically, the Chairperson may, with the consent of the meeting modify the application of any of the Rules in this Part to facilitate the more efficient and effective transaction of the business of the meeting.

Notice of meetings and delivery of agendas

- An annual schedule of meetings should be fixed each year by the Committee, setting the date, time and place.
- The Committee, by resolution, or the Chairperson may change the date, time and place of, or cancel, any meeting that has been fixed, providing reasonable notice of the change.
- The Committee, by resolution, or the Chairperson may call an unscheduled meeting of the Committee.
- A notice of each meeting, incorporating or accompanied by an agenda of business to be dealt with, must be delivered, or sent electronically to each Committee member at least two days (and preferably one week) before the meeting.
- Reasonable notice of meetings should be provided to the public. This can be done via publishing an annual schedule of meetings or publishing a notice of meeting just before each meeting. If this is done via Council notices in the local media, this must be provided to Council by the Wednesday before the week of the meeting to allow for media publication deadlines.

Agenda

- An agenda must be prepared before any meeting of the Committee. An agenda is a short document that sets out the business to be dealt with at the meeting.
- The agenda and the order of business for a meeting will be determined by the Secretary in conjunction with the Chairperson, but all Committee members can nominate items of business for inclusion on the agenda.
- A template for an agenda is included as part of Appendix A of this Manual, but typically includes some or all the following:
    - Details of the date, time, and place of the meeting
    - List of all members and non-members invited to attend
    - Apologies (if known)
    - Minutes of the previous meeting (for approval)
    - Correspondence inwards
    - Correspondence outwards
    - Reports from the Secretary and Treasurer
    - Report from the facility manager or caretaker
    - General business
- When circulating an agenda in advance of a meeting, the minutes from the previous meeting and any reports to be considered at the meeting are usually attached to allow pre-reading.

Meeting procedure

At the start of the meeting, the Chairperson should:

- Make an acknowledgement of Country.[1]
- Ask if there are any other items of business that any member wishes to be added to the agenda. (The addition of new items at the meeting is generally acceptable, but if those items are contentious and/or some members are absent from the meeting, the Committee may decide to refer such items to a subsequent meeting.)
- Ask if there are any conflicts of interest to be declared relating to any item of business on the agenda. (If yes, follow the processes outlined in Part 4 of this Manual).
- Ask if any member wishes to change the order of the agenda.

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[1] We acknowledge the [name of people] as the Traditional Owners of this land along with their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture. We pay our respects to their ancestors and elders past, present and emerging.

Quorums

A quorum is the minimum number of Committee members who must be present for the Committee to make decisions. The quorum for a Committee must be a majority – i.e. 50% of members attending +1.

If, 30 minutes after the start of a meeting, a quorum has not been obtained, the Chairperson will decide to:

- Postpone the meeting, or
- Conduct the scheduled business of the meeting but refer all decisions and motions to a subsequent meeting when a quorum is present for reconsideration and/or ratification.

If, at any time during the meeting a quorum cannot be maintained, the Chairperson will decide to:

- Close the meeting and refer any unfinished business to a subsequent meeting, or
- Continue to conduct the scheduled business of the Committee, but refer all decisions and motions made with no quorum present to a subsequent meeting (when a quorum is present) for reconsideration and/or ratification.

This rule does not apply if a quorum cannot be maintained because of the number of Committee members who have a conflict of interest in a matter to be considered.

Conflicts of Interest

If a Committee member has a conflict of interest with any item on the agenda, it should be declared at the start of the meeting, or immediately before the matter where the member has conflict is considered.

When disclosing a conflict of interest, members must:

- Advise / remind the Committee of the conflict of interest immediately before the matter is considered,
- Advise the Chairperson that they are leaving the meeting and not participating in any discussion, and
- Leave the room and any area where they may be able to see or hear the meeting until the matter has been concluded.

Conflicts of interest must be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Addressing the meeting

- Committee members should direct their remarks through the Chairperson.
- A Committee member addressing the meeting shall not be interrupted by any other member, except that the Chairperson has the right to provide any direction to the member regarding the conduct of that address (appropriate language, length of time taken etc).
- In the case of competition for the right to speak, the Chairperson must decide the order in which members will be heard.

Making decisions / motions

Each decision of the Committee should be made by a formal vote, even if everyone agrees, and recorded in the minutes.

- Decisions are made by passing motions.

- o   Any Committee member may move a motion – e.g. "I move that the treasurer's report be accepted" moved by member 1.
  - o   Any other Committee member may second the motion – e.g. "I second that motion" says member 2.
- The Chairperson accepts the motion and asks:
  - o   "All in favour" then counts the number of hands raised, then asks
  - o   "All against" and counts the number of hands raised.
- The Chairperson then declares the outcome of the vote on the motion – e.g. "The motion is carried".

The minutes must record:

- The wording of the motion,
- The member who moved the motion,
- The member who seconded the motion, and
- Whether it was passed or defeated and the voting margin.

Committees may have motions that are more complicated and contentious, arising from their discussions on how to proceed with a project or manage their facility. In such cases it is useful for the motion to be written down and read out or circulated before voting, so that everyone is clear about what is being decided.

If a vote is tied, the Chairperson has a second or casting vote.

A Committee can only make decisions if a quorum of its membership is at the meeting.

Voting

- Voting should be by a show of hands.
- When discussion on an agenda item is complete, the Chairperson should call first for a show of hand of those in favour of a motion, and then for those opposed to a motion, and then declares the result to the meeting.
- In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson may exercise a casting vote.

Public participation in meetings

All Committee meetings are open to the public.

The form of public participation at any Committee meeting is at the discretion of the Committee and may range from simply allowing the public to witness the Committee's proceedings to actively encouraging input into the discussion of general business.

Suggestions on managing public participation include:

- Allowing public question time at the start of a meeting,
- Accepting questions in writing, either at the start of the meeting or as part of general business, and
- Encouraging deputations and petitions.

A Committee that regularly attracts public interest may develop and circulate publicly some simple rules on how members of the public are expected to conduct themselves in Committee meetings. These rules can detail any

limits on participation, such as limiting questions to two per person, or giving the Chairperson the right to eject any person disrupting the meeting.

Members of the public cannot vote on any matter before the Committee.

Minutes of meetings

Minutes are the formal, written record of a meeting and must be kept for all meetings of the Committee.

Minutes should record decisions, rather than who said what. At a minimum, the minutes should record:

- The time the meeting started and finished
- The date and place of the meeting
- The names of the Committee members present
- The names of any guests or members of the public present
- The time of any arrivals or departures during the meeting
- The failure of a quorum
- A list of all items of business considered
- The exact wording of any motions moved, including the name of the mover and seconder, and the mover and seconder of any amendments to the motion
- A record of any or all the members who supported or opposed the motion, if requested by any member
- The results of consideration of any motions – carried, lost, withdraw, lapsed, or amended
- Details of any questions taken on notice
- Details of any deputations made to the Committee or any guest speakers
- Disclosure of any pecuniary interest or conflict of interest by any member

The minutes should enable a Committee member not present at the meeting to be informed of all actions and decisions arising from the meeting, and the reasons for those actions and decisions.

Every page of the minutes should be numbered and should have the date of the meeting included.

Minutes are a permanent record of the Committee's decisions and proceedings. The Secretary should keep a minute book that will be passed on to the incoming Secretary at the end of the Committee's term.

In the longer term, the minute books must be stored and archived in accordance with the Public Records Act as Community Asset Committees are public bodies. To facilitate this, all records older than two years should be forwarded to Council's Records Management Team for appropriate archiving. See Part 4 of this Manual for more information on this point.

Upon ratification of the previous meeting's minutes, the Chairperson should sign the minutes and initial each page of the minutes. Once endorsed by the signing of the Chairperson, they must never be altered.

The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a public meeting held once per year where the Committee reports to its community, between 1st July – 31st October of each year at a date fixed by the Committee.

The AGM should be advertised in advance in local newspapers, on public notice boards and via a mail-out to users of the facility. Committee members should receive the agenda, reports and minutes from the last AGM at least one week before the meeting. Ideally, public notification of an AGM should be made at least one week before the meeting.

The AGM should be attended by a Council Officer representative who will manage the appointment of Office Bearers for the coming 12 months.

The AGM includes the following business:

1. Ratification of the minutes of the previous AGM.
2. The Chairperson's report on the Committee's activities for the past 12 months.
3. Presentation of audited financial statements by the outgoing Treasurer or Secretary.

At this point, the Chair of the meeting will be handed over by the outgoing Chairperson to the Council Officer representative, who will temporarily take the position of Chairperson.

4. The temporary Chairperson will declare the positions of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary as vacant.
5. The Temporary Chairperson will call for nominations for each vacant office bearer position in turn:
   o If there is only one nomination for a vacant office bearer position, the temporary Chairperson will declare that office as filled by that nominee.
   o If there is more than one nomination for a vacant office bearer position, the temporary Chairperson will call for a silent vote.
     ▪ Every Committee member will be provided with a slip of paper upon which they will write the name of the nominee they are voting for.
     ▪ Each slip of paper will be put into a box on the table.
     ▪ Once all voting is complete by Committee members, the temporary Chairperson will count the votes for each nominee away from the main meeting.
     ▪ Upon conclusion of voting, the temporary Chairperson will declare the office as filled by the nominee with the most votes.
     ▪ If there is a tie in votes for nominees, the temporary Chairperson will …
6. Upon conclusion of each nomination, voting and declaration of office, the temporary Chairperson will hand the Chair of the Committee over to the new Chairperson to conduct the rest of the meeting.
7. The new Chairperson will then outline of the Committee's proposed activities for the next 12 months, which may also include seeking the community's approval of those plans.

Attendees can ask questions of the Committee only in the time set aside in the meeting to do so, but the AGM is not a forum for taking motions from the floor or for voting on proposals. Any such business should be held over to the next regular meeting of the Committee.

6. COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct applies to Community Asset Committees managing community assets and facilities on behalf of the Pyrenees Shire Council.

Introduction

As a member of a Community Asset Committee, you are performing a valuable service to your local community and to the wider Pyrenees Shire and Victorian communities. Your role is an important and trusted one with corresponding obligations in relation to integrity and accountability, which are described in this section.

Standard of Conduct

Committee members must always act in the public interest (the best interests of managing the facility for the benefit of the community).

As a committee member, you have a duty to:

- **Act with honesty and integrity**. Be open and transparent in your dealings, use power responsibly, do not place yourself in a position of conflict of interest, strive to earn and sustain public trust of a high level.
- **Act in good faith in the best interests of the community**. Demonstrate accountability for your actions, accept responsibility for your decisions, do not engage in activities that may bring you, the committee, facility, or Council into disrepute.
- **Use information appropriately**. Ensure information gained as a committee member is only applied to proper purposes and is kept confidential, even after your appointment ends.
- **Use your position appropriately**. Do not use your position as a committee member to seek an undue advantage for yourself, family members or associates, or to cause detriment to the committee or Council, ensure that you decline gifts or favours that may cast doubt on your ability to apply independent judgement as a committee member.
- **Act in a financially responsible manner**. Understand financial reports, audit reports and other financial material that comes before the committee. Actively enquire into this material.
- **Exercise due care, diligence, and skill**. Ascertain all relevant information, make reasonable enquiries, understand the financial, strategic, and other implications of decisions.
- **Comply with the Local Government Act 2020 and any other legislation under which Council operates.** Act within the powers and for the functions set out for your community assets committee.
- **Demonstrate leadership and stewardship.** Promote and support the application of Council's values, act in accordance with this Code of Conduct.
- if standing for election to Parliament / local Council, notify the committee and avoid using committee resources in connection with your candidature.

Acceptance of gifts, benefits, and hospitality

Unless good reason exists otherwise, avoid accepting or giving gifts in your role as a committee member.

A 'gift' is a free or heavily discounted item or service (e.g. an offer to paint your fence at a reduced rate). The term 'gift' also applies to a benefit or offer of hospitality that exceeds common courtesy (e.g. an offer of a cup of coffee is a common courtesy, an offer of a ticket to the AFL Grand Final is an offer of hospitality).

The more valuable or significant a gift, the less likely that it will be in the public interest for you to accept or give it. When in doubt, err on the side of caution. Council can be contacted for advice.

Any offer of a gift, benefit or hospitality must be recorded in the minutes of the next committee meeting.

When a gift offer must be refused

You must:

- never solicit gifts,
- always refuse and report any attempt to bribe you,
- never accept any gift that may case doubt on your integrity or impartiality or that of the committee,
- never accept any gift from a person likely to be affected by a decision that the committee makes, now or in the future (e.g. from a person likely to apply for a contract or tender with the committee),
- Never accept any gift in cash or cash equivalent (e.g. bonds or shares) or other items easily converted into money.

The above restrictions apply to gifts offered to you directly or indirectly (e.g. offer of gifts to your family by someone who is seeking a licence from the committee).

Gift giving

The committee should never purchase a gift from committee funds unless it can clearly be justified in the public interest, which is rare. This applies to gifts to committee members and to non-committee members. Any such expense must be recorded in the committee's records.

Cultural gifts

The committee as an entity can accept gifts offered to them, including cultural gifts. Receipt of such gifts must be recorded in the minutes of the next committee meeting, including estimated value and donor. Such gifts must remain the possession of the committee.

Collective accountability and responsibilities

The overall role of the committee is to manage, improve, maintain, and control the facility for the purpose for which it was built or provided. The committee must:

- act in accordance with its collective accountability to the Council,
- ensure that all its actions and decisions are consistent with its functions and powers under its Council Instrument of Delegation and this Manual,
- inform Council of any known major risks (existing or emerging) to the effective management of the facility, and
- unless prohibited by law, provides the Council with any information relating to the committee and its operations that is requested.

7. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

This section sets out the Committee's processes for resolving disputes between Committee Members.

Definition of a dispute

A difference of opinion between members in relation to a proposed decision by the Committee (e.g. whether to build a new shed or repair the old one) is not a 'dispute'. It is the normal difference of views which the Committee talks through together in a considered, courteous, and constructive manner before voting to make their decision, in accordance with the Committee's meeting procedures.

For this policy, a 'dispute' exists if:

- Two or more committee members have difficulty working together (e.g. due to a conflict of personalities or ideological differences), and
- The situation is unduly affecting the ability of some or all of the Committee to perform their duties in an effective and efficient manner.

Duty to act in good faith

Disputes are to be avoided where possible. If a dispute arises:

- the members in dispute (the parties) have a duty to act in good faith to resolve the dispute as soon as possible in the public interest (the best interests of the management of the facility),
- the Committee Chair actively guides the parties towards resolution of the dispute,[2] and
- the other committee members support this process.

Informal resolution

All parties to a dispute are required to make a reasonable, thorough, and conscientious effort to resolve the dispute on an informal basis, under the guidance of the Chair.

If at any time during the information resolution process the Chair is of the view that the committee should be formally notified of the existence of the dispute (e.g. because it may pose a major risk to the effective management of the facility), the matter is placed on the agenda of the next committee meeting for noting and/or monitoring.

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[2] If the Chair is a party to the dispute, this role is undertaken by a member nominated by the Committee.

Notice of an unresolved dispute

If a dispute cannot be resolved on an informal basis, the Chair places the matter on the agenda of the next committee meeting. At the meeting, the committee invokes the formal mediation process if it is satisfied that:

- A dispute exists which cannot be resolved on an informal basis, and
- It is in the public interest to do so.

Formal mediation process

If the committee invokes the formal mediation process:

- An independent, suitably qualified mediator is appointed who is acceptable to all parties.
- If the parties cannot agree on a mediator, the dispute is referred to the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria which organises a mediation using its mediators, in consultation with the parties and the Chair. If the Centre advises that the matter is not suitable for its free service, the Council is contacted for advice.
- The parties cooperate with the mediator and provide all reasonable assistance. Under the guidance of the Chair, they actively work in good faith to resolve the dispute.
- If the dispute is resolved, unless good reason exists otherwise, the outcome is recorded in writing by the mediator and signed by the parties, who each receive a copy and consent to the Chair receiving one.
- If the dispute is not resolved and is continuing to unduly affect the operation of the committee, the Council is contacted for advice.

Major risk

If at any time the dispute poses a major risk to the effective management of the facility, the Council must be notified.

8. TEMPLATE – ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT TO PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL

When completed please return by 30th September of the financial year being reported on to: Director Corporate & Community Services, Pyrenees Shire Council via pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

Name of Community Asset Committee:	
Introduction:	*(This is where you describe your facility and information on the management of the asset.)*
Achievements:	*(Describe what achievements / improvements have been made at the asset for the past 12 months. This could include exceeding expected hirings for the year, construction of an asset, smooth change-over period, excellent volunteer work etc.)*
Future vision:	*(Describe where the committee believes the future of the facility lies and what could possibly be done to achieve this.)*
Conflict of Interest:	*(Please list any minuted conflicts of interest.)*
Review key committee contact details:	If the Committee's contact details have changed since your last return, please insert new details below. Please include a current email address for the Committee.

	Name:	
	Title:	*(E.G. Chair, Secretary, Member)*
	Postal address:	
	Committee email address:	
	Telephone number:	
	Mobile number:	
Conclusion:	*Please describe the asset's position after 12 months of trading and how things will progress in the future.*	

FINANCIAL REPORTS:			
INCOME		**Financial Year**	**$**
a.	Fees *(e.g. hall hire, entrance fees, membership fees)*		
b.	Fundraising		
c.	Gifts or donations		
d.	Grants received		
e.	Leases / licences / informal agreements		
f.	Proceeds from asset disposal *(e.g. sale of lawn mower)*		
g.	Interest received		
h.	GST / Tax refunds *(if applicable)*		
i.	Other *(please specify)*		
j.			
	Income Total		
EXPENDITURE		**Financial Year**	**$**
k.	Utilities *(e.g. electricity, gas, water, Council rates, phone, internet)*		
l.	Fundraising costs		
m.	Administration expenses *(e.g. stationery, postage)*		
n.	Building maintenance *(e.g. repairs, up-keep, cleaning)*		
o.	Asset purchases and additions *(e.g. tools, lawnmower, capital improvements)*		
p.	Land maintenance *(e.g. tree removal, fencing, contract gardeners)*		
q.	Insurance costs *(include premiums and any excess payments)*		
r.	Salaries & wages *(where approved, do not include contractors)*		
s.	Banking costs – fees and charges		
t.	GST / Tax Payments *(if applicable)*		
u.	Other *(please specify)*		
v.			
	Expenditure Total		
	SURPLUS / NON-SURPLUS		

ATTESTATION OF COMMITTEE'S RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	
(The Committee's Responsible Officer must be a Committee Member – e.g. Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer.)	
I certify that the financial information supplied in this report can be substantiated from supporting records and that any attached information is accurate.	
Name:	
Title:	
Telephone number:	
Signature:	
Date of signing:	

Additional comments	Include issues you would like to bring to Council's attention:

9. HEALTH & SAFETY OBLIGATIONS

As a volunteer who is a member of a Community Assets Committee, you have health and safety responsibilities as part of the leadership team. You may also have concerns about your own health and safety as a volunteer. This section addresses both aspects in accordance with the Victorian Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 (the OHS Act).

Being a Committee Member

You have several health and safety obligations as a Committee Member. Generally, as a community assets committee you are not an employer (unless specific permission has been granted by Council). However, committee members have obligations to make sure volunteers are not exposed to risks to their health and safety, so far as reasonably practicable.

As a volunteer committee member, you are not liable for prosecution under the OHS Act for anything you do or fail to do as a volunteer. However, the organisation, as a legal entity, and Council may be liable if a volunteer suffers a work-related injury or illness.

You also have an obligation to protect the health and safety of anyone, including service users, who enter premises that you occupy or manage.

Committee members should provide leadership on health and safety in the organisation and know their organisation's health and safety obligations. You should also make sure:

- Everyone on the committee and in the organisation knows their health and safety responsibilities,
- Health and safety implications are considered when decisions are made,
- Employees (where applicable) and volunteers are consulted on all aspects of their health and safety, and
- The committee's systems for improving health and safety are regularly monitored and reviewed.

As an organisation with just volunteers (no employees) it is good practice to make sure their health and safety it looked after the same way as employees.

WorkSafe's *Volunteer health and safety in community service organisations – a handbook for workplaces* has more information about how to look after the health and safety of committee members and volunteers. This handbook is provided as an attachment to this Manual.

Being a volunteer

You will have concerns about your own health and safety as a volunteer. In particular, volunteer members can suffer stress and burn-out. This can be prevented or the risk reduced by:

- Induction and training about the committee's responsibilities and powers, conflict resolution and finance management,
- Support from members and stakeholders in the organisation.

It is important for the committee to take the health and safety of its volunteer members seriously. Some initiatives to avoid the risk of stress and burn-out among members include:

- Gathering resources from similar organisations about the role of the committee and setting aside time in a committee meeting to discuss the materials. Health and safety guidance published by WorkSafe should also be discussed.
- Organizing for committee members to attend formal training on its role and responsibilities or individual aspects of its role and responsibilities, such as health and safety obligations.
- Arranging for an experienced committee member (from another community organisation or the commercial sector) to address your committee on its role and responsibilities. Members of your committee with experience in areas such as health and safety, conflict resolution and finance management may also be willing to pass on their knowledge and skills.
- Holding a committee retreat with key stakeholders and volunteers to talk about where the committee is heading and what support is needed to lead it.
- Setting up systems for inducting new committee members into their role (including outlining their responsibilities) and for providing them with the ongoing support they need.

Supporting information

Two documents have been provided in support of this Manual which provide greater information relating to health and safety obligations of the community assets communities:

- Working safely in community services
- Volunteer health and safety handbook

These provide basic information relating to ensuring a safe environment for members, volunteers, contractors, users, and visitors.

10. REVENUE RAISING

Grants

There are a variety of grants that can be applied for, from state and federal government. Council will help you find funding sources and develop your funding applications.

Council will lodge the application on behalf of the committee, as the committee has o legal capacity to enter into an agreement with the funding body. Frequently, local government is the only body that may apply for funding.

You can also apply to Council for grants under its Community Grants Program. A long-term strategic plan for the facility is recommended for this program.

Generally, grant applications are for the development of the facility, to support new activities and programs, and major works that create new opportunities or increase participation.

Funding bodies rarely provide funds for regular or cyclic maintenance, or to replace or repair damaged facilities arising from misuse or accident.

Fundraising

Fundraising is a matter for the committee to deal with. Committees are best placed to decide the best way to raise money, for example:

- Permanent hire of the hall to local clubs to use for meetings, giving a regular income from rental.
- Casual hire of the hall for weddings, parties, and dances.
- Holding weekend markets and making money by charging stallholders a small fee.
- Obtaining sponsors from the community or nearby areas, giving them signs on fences or similar for an annual fee.

The committee can establish standard charges and collect revenue for the use of the facility; however, Council can override established charges where it sees fit.

The committee may reduce or waive fees in special circumstances.

Facility Hire

Council has an established procedure for facility hire, which the committee is bound to follow.

All hirers must enter into a hire agreement for all casual, short-term, or seasonal use. This means even regular users, such as football or cricket clubs, must have a user agreement with the Community Asset Committee.

Seasonal agreements are most easily managed on an annual basis.

All organisations or individuals hiring the facility must provide evidence that they have public liability insurance cover, or evidence that they are covered by another organisation's public liability insurance. Alternatively, sessional coverage can be purchased through Council, the committee, or an insurance broker. If the hirer

provides evidence of their own public liability insurance cover, the committee is responsible for ensuring that they get a copy of the insurance for the hire records.

What can't the committee do to raise funds?

- The committee cannot undertake any commercial activity without the written consent of Council.
- The committee may not enter loan arrangements on behalf of Council.
- Applications for funding may not be submitted to external authorities without the consent of Council.
- Committees shall not undertake any raffles, except in accordance with the regulations under the Gaming Regulation Act.

11. ANNEXURES

This section details additional documents or information provided for the Committee's information and use.

   a. **Instrument of Delegation**

   b. **Strategic management and business planning**

   c. **Facility hire agreements**

   d. **Regular hire agreements**

   e. **Occupational Health & Safety**

   f. **Tagout of unsafe / defective equipment**

   g. **Inspection checklists**

   h. **Community markets**

   i. **Sample agenda and minutes for Committee meetings**

   j. **Risk management**

General Meeting

Time, Day, Date, Year

Venue

Welcome

Apologies

Declarations of Conflict of Interest

1. Minutes from previous meeting
2. Business Arising from Minutes
3. Correspondence
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Other Reports
   - 1.
   - 2.
   - 3.
6. General Business
   - 1.
   - 2.
   - 3.

Next Meeting

Image	**[Committee Name]**
	Community Asset Committee of Pyrenees Shire Council

Meeting Minutes

Meeting commenced at: Time, Day, Date, Year

Venue:

Present:

Apologies:

Motion:

That apologies be accepted

Moved: **Seconded:**   **Carried :**   **Yes/No**

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Name:	Agenda Item:		Left Meeting:	Returned to Meeting:

Item:	Details:	Action By:	Date:
	eg: Meeting Opened by….. who welcomed all present ……		

1.   **Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

Discussion

Nil/Details

Actions Arising:

Nil/Details

Moved: **Seconded:**   **Carried Yes/No**

2.   Business Arising from the Minutes:

Discussion

- **Item** – details

- **Item** – details

- **Item** – details

Actions Arising:

Nil   **Name**

Motion:

Nil

Moved:	**Seconded:**	**Carried :**	**Yes/No**

3.   Correspondence:

Secretary, … reported that the following correspondence had been received/sent:

1. 1st Item
2. 2nd Item etc.

Discussion

1. Any discussion re correspondence

Actions Arising:		**Name**	**Timeline**

1. Action

Motion:

That the correspondence as tabled be accepted

Moved:	**Seconded:**	**Carried :**	**Yes/No**

4.   Treasurer's Report:

Discussion

- Balance stands at $

Actions Arising:		**Name**	**Timeline**

Action

Motion:

That the Treasurer's report be accepted

Moved: **Seconded:**   **Carried :**   **Yes/No**

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5.   **[Other] Officer Report**

Discussion

    1.   1st Item

    2.   2nd Item

    3.   3rd Item etc.

Actions Arising: **Name**   **Timeline**

Action

Motion:

That the [Other] Officer's report be accepted

Moved: **Seconded:**   **Carried :**   **Yes/No**

6.   **General Business:**

Discussion

    1.   Item

    2.   Item

    3.   Item

Discussion

- Details

- Details

- Detail

Motion:

Nil

Moved: **Seconded:**   **Carried :**   **Yes/No**

Meeting closed at

Next usual Meeting:

Meeting Times and Dates

Meeting Type	Date	Time	Venue
General			
General			
General			
AGM			
General			
General			
General			

Signature of President: _____

Name: **Date:**

_____

Strategic Management Template
(Business Plan)

The following templates are provided as an overview of how to write a business plan for a Committee of Management.

They should be used as a guide, and the Committee should make their plan their own.

A business plan is a necessary step if you want to apply for funding from the Community Grants fund through Council or for any external funding from government.

The process does not have to be a big one, the final document in fact can be no larger than the attached template as long as the words used within it convey the meaning and explain adequately what the Committee is trying to achieve.

The important thing is to get started, as once it is started the whole process becomes a lot easier, and the finished document will help the Committee get a real idea of where they are going, how they are going to get there and how they will know when they have arrived.

Good Luck!

Strategic Management Template
(Overview)

Contents
Cover Sheet
Signature page
Executive Summary

COVER SHEET

A cover sheet should include your Committee name, venue address, postal address, contact person, contact phone number and the period covered by the business plan.

SIGNATURE PAGE

It is always important that key personnel are committed to the business plan. Empower them by having them have direct input into the planning process and signing the signature page once contents have been agreed upon.

The signature page should look similar to Appendix 1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary summarises who you are, what your Committee does, where your Committee is going, why it is going where it is going, and how it will get there. If you are seeking funding, it specifies the purpose of the funding you seek and justifies the financial feasibility of your plan.

Although the executive summary appears near the front of the plan, it is most effectively written after the rest of your business plan is complete. At that time, your concepts will be well developed and all the information and financial data needed will be available.

In a concise, one-page statement you will sum up the essence of your business plan by including

• Purpose of writing a business plan, aims and objectives
• What your plan incorporates and the time frame of your plan
• Why is funding needed?
• Past achievements
• Recommendations
• Acknowledgments

1 INTRODUCTION

An introduction to the business plan process, how it was initiated and who by, why a business plan is being produced and who was involved in the whole process.

2 HISTORY

This section should include the background of your Committee. When it was formed, what facilities are available? <possibly insert a picture of your Committee>

3 COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES

3.1 Mission Statement
Why does the organisation exist? What is the purpose for their existence?

3.2 Vision
A statement that describes where the Committee wants to go. Where you want to be in the near to distant future?

3.3 Values
Values help to make decisions about what is important in your Committee. What values does your organisation see as important?

3.4 Goals
What are the goals of the organisation in question? What is it that they wish to achieve? Ensure that all goals are measurable.

3.5 Key Objectives
A number of statements that clearly outline intentions surround:

1. Bodies - Issues surrounding people
2. Buildings - Issues surrounding facilities and equipment
3. Budget - Issues surrounding money and finances

3.6 SWOT Analysis
Specific statements (can be one word or more) outlining the organisations:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPURTUNITIES	THREATS

4 COMMITTEE POSITION ANALYSIS – KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS AND FOCUS AREAS

4.1 Management

4.1.1 Committee Name and Legal Form – S86 Committee of Management for the Pyrenees Shire Council. (Please insert committee name)

4.1.2 Governance
The (name of Committee) is run by a paid/unpaid administration made up of a committee of (number of people). The (name of Committee) was enacted as a S86 Committee of Management for the Pyrenees Shire Council under the Local Government Act 1989, and as such its powers are contained within it's Deed of Delegation.

Insert a table outlining committee members and their position.

4.1.3 Committee structure
This section consists of elected positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and elected general committee members.
You may want to include an organisational chart.
Table

4.1.4 Volunteer Management
Table outlining all Committee volunteers and the positions they have taken on. How does the Committee go about recruiting/retaining volunteers?

4.1.5 Demographics
The changing demographics of your local community can play an important part in your planning process. There are a number of factors that affect the environment of your Committee.

4.1.6 Existing facility conditions
Give a brief description of your current facility conditions and any work that has been done to improve the quality of your facilities.

4.2 Marketing

4.2.1 Fundraising
Does the Committee partake in any fundraising? Are there any opportunities that the Committee may be missing out on?

4.2.2 Promotions
How does the Committee promote itself to the general public? Do they have a plan in place to promote the Committee?
Table
This section should include a description of your Committees most successful promotional activities over the past year. How did you measure its success? (ie. community markets, rent to clubs etc).

4.3 Operational

4.3.1 Facilities
What facility(s) does your Committee control?

4.3.2 Equipment
Does the Committee own any equipment? Are they in need of new and updated equipment?

4.3.3 Services
What services does the Committee provide for the general public?

4.4 Financial

4.4.1 Five year financial history and forecast year
NOTE: Optional. Committees may wish to add financial information to their business plan.

5 STRATEGIES

5.1 Select an aspect of the Committee to target (eg. Seasonal User Groups)

5.1.1 Objective:
A statement that clearly outlines the organisation's intentions surrounding the issue.

Strategies to implement Committee policies & procedures where needed:

5.1.2 Actions in progress:
A list of actions that are already in progress or activities that the Committee already undertakes.

5.1.3 Strategies for the future:
A list of actions that the organisation has planned to do in the future.

NOTE: This process can be repeated for a number of aspects within the Committee.

4

6 ACTION PLAN

6.1	**Area of action:**	Same area(s) as looked at in strategies section.
6.2	**How will we know it's finished:**	Specific measurement or it could be on-going.

Action	Responsibility	Others	Timeline	Resources
What will be done	Who will oversee/do it	Who else should be involved	When will it be done	What is required to do it

7 TIME LINE

12 Month Action Sheet - To Be Checked At Every Committee Meeting

Date to be Completed by:	Person(s) Responsible	Action to be Completed
November 2007		
December 2007		

A twelve month account of what should happen month by month. During the first few months, putting the business plan into place and the activities involved with that process should take up most of the time.

8 CONCLUSION

A quick conclusion of how the strategic planning process went. What went right and what went wrong should be included so that next time the process is completed, the reader can see what to repeat and what to change.

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Example Signature

The following Business Plan has been developed at length and agreed to and signed off by the following stakeholders of <name of Committee>

Name		Signature	

Grants

Community Grants

The Pyrenees Shire Council recognises the important contribution made by not-for-profit and community groups across the Pyrenees Shire. Council will provide financial assistance to groups located in or servicing people living in the Pyrenees Shire, through the provision of the Community Grants Program.

The aims of the program are to:

- Support Community-focused groups in addressing identified needs within their community;

- To enable the delivery of projects, programs, events and/or activities that contribute towards increasing the livability of the Shire and the health & wellbeing of its residents;

- To support the delivery of projects and programs that reduce discrimination or victimisation in any form, and/or encourage inclusion and diversity in our communities;

- To empower community groups to improve, expand or build facilities within the Pyrenees Shire for use by our communities, and/or;

- To help create opportunities for new or modified recreation and community activities that promote and foster resilience, participation, achievement and wellbeing.

Round Dates

Round 2 grants for the 2020/21 Financial Year open on **Monday March 15 and close 5pm Friday April 23**.

Available Grants

Community Grant Scheme

1. Programs, Projects & Equipment – Up to $1,500.

2. Inclusion & Diversity – Up to $1,000.

3. Events – Up to $750.

Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Scheme

1. Capital Works & Infrastructure – Up to $5,000.

Guidelines

Guidelines-Community-Grant-Scheme.pdf(PDF, 229KB)

Guidelines-Community-Capital-Works-Infrastructure-Grants-Scheme.pdf(PDF, 258KB)

Application forms

Community-Capital-Works-and-Infrastructure-Application.pdf(PDF, 218KB)
Community-Events-Application.pdf(PDF, 217KB)
Community-Inclusion-and-Diversity-Application.pdf(PDF, 221KB)
Community-Programs-Projects-and-Equipment-Application.pdf(PDF, 220KB)

For more information or support, please contact Council's Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator, Marcus Murrell, on 5349 1100 or email marcus.murrell@pyrenees.vic.gov.au to discuss your project.

Once completed, applications can be emailed to pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au

Projects enhancing Inclusion & Diversity within the Pyrenees Shire

A new funding scheme, Inclusion & Diversity, supports the delivery of projects and programs that reduce discrimination or victimisation in any form, and/or encourage inclusion and diversity in our communities; particularly focussed upon Traditional Owner groups, members of the LGBTQ+ community and the promotion of gender equality.

For further information please contact Council's Community Wellbeing and Grants Officer, Marcus Murrell, on 5349 1100 or email marcus.murrell@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

Auspicing

If your group does not meet the eligibility requirements you may be able to apply with an auspice. Please see guidelines for more information on this.

Please note that organisations who act as an auspice will not be disadvantaged by any funding allocation to the organisation to which they provide auspice support. Council reserves the right to allocate funding amounts.

Please ensure you contact Council's Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator on 5349 1100 or email marcus.murrell@pyrenees.vic.gov.au to discuss your project.

Grant Acquittals

Council requires that you complete a final report for your project using the below form. This is required for both the Community Grant Scheme and the Community Capital Grant Scheme and is due within twelve months of receiving your grant.

Acquittal Form(PDF, 296KB)

Funding Applications

Community groups and sporting clubs often require a funding application to be submitted by Council to assist with facility developments and upgrades. Council is required to address certain information in a funding application and the checklist available below outlines the suggested planning process. It has been developed to ensure that potential funding applications are planned properly and have the best chance of being funded in what is a very competitive environment. If you are planning a facility development or upgrade, download the form and work through the checklist with your committee. Contact the appropriate council officer early in the planning stages as it is important that they are aware of your project to allow them to identify the most appropriate funding source and provide advice throughout the planning phase. If you require further information or assistance please contact our Manager Community Wellbeing on (03) 5349 1100.

COMMUNITY CAPITAL WORKS & INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

Pyrenees
Shire Council

Application Form

Please use this form to apply for Council Community Grants for capital projects including facility / infrastructure improvements. Community Grants in this section are available up to a maximum of $5,000 for eligible projects.

Please attach any supporting project details to this application.

1   Organisation details:

Organisation name:	
Postal address:	
Main contact person:	
Position:	
Telephone:	BH: Mobile:
Email:	
Group ABN:	
Incorporation Number:	
Grant Round: September – Round 1 March – Round 2	Round: Financial Year:
Bank details [for direct credit of funds]	Account Name: BSB Number: Account Number:

2   Project details:

1.	Project name:	
2.	In 100 words or less please describe your project:	
3.	What does your project set out to achieve?	☐ Improvements to a facility or local community infrastructure ☐ Asset protection (e.g. security, lighting) ☐ Increased community safety ☐ Other_____

3 Assessment Criteria

The following questions seek information on how your project addresses Council's key goals for provision of Community Grants. Answers to these questions will assist Council in its decision-making process.

1.	Does your project address a community need? If yes, what is the need and how does your project address this? [20 points]
2.	How will your project benefit residents of the Pyrenees Shire? (20 points)
3.	Will your project help to increase participation, community connections or health and wellbeing within the community? If yes, please describe how? [15 points]
4.	Does your project encourage multi-use or shared facilities, or collaboration with other community groups? If yes, please provide details? [15 points]
5.	Does your project provide a new or enhanced service to the community? If yes, please provide details. (15 points)

6.	**Is your project identified as a priority action or need in one of Council's Plans or Strategies, or in a local Community Action Plan? If yes, please provide details.** [5 points]
7.	**How will you ensure that you are able to successfully deliver the project on time and within the budget?** [10 points]

4 Budget

It is important that costs and funding have been thought through. Please complete the budget section below relating to your event.

Please note:

    a) The total income must equal total expenditure – i.e. the budget must balance.
    b) Grants require a ratio of $2 Council funding to each $1 of funding / in-kind from elsewhere.

Income	Value $	Expenditure	Value $
Amount requested for this grant	$		$
Other grants already confirmed	$		$
Funds from your club/group	$		$
In-kind support from your club/group	$		$
In-kind support from other sources	$		$
Other	$		$
Other	$		$
TOTAL INCOME	$	**TOTAL EXPENDITURE**	$

5 Checklist

Please check the following requirements before submitting your grant application for consideration by Council.

☐ Does my budget add up correctly?

☐ Does my budget meet the $2:$1 funding ratio?

Have you included a copy of the following?

☐ A copy of your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate (minimum $10 million coverage)?

☐ A copy of your organisation's most recent Bank Statement (less than 3 months old) and/or Financial Statement?

   [This is required to ensure financial capability of completing the project]

☐ Incorporation and ABN number?

   [Grants can only be provided to incorporated organisations or groups auspiced by incorporated organisations]

☐ Quotes for all components of the project?

☐ Details of any in-kind works or donations you will be claiming?

☐ Written consent from the landowner or land manager, if applicable?

☐ Any further information in support of your project application.

6 Condition of Grant Agreement

I/We agree to abide by the conditions of the Community Grant as specified in the Community Capital Grant Scheme Guidelines.

Organisation Name:	
Authorised Signature:	
Name: *[please print]*	
Position: *[please print]*	
Date:	

Pyrenees
Shire Council

Guidelines
Community Capital Grants Scheme

1.   Introduction

The Pyrenees Shire Council recognises the importance of providing financial assistance to not-for profit and community groups across the Pyrenees Shire.

The Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grants aim to assist not-for-profit and community groups to implement capital works and infrastructure projects benefitting community facilities located within the Pyrenees Shire.

2.   Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply for a Pyrenees Shire Council Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grant you must:
- be a Committee appointed by Council or Council Community Assets Committee (formerly Section 86 Committee); or an Incorporated not-for-profit organisation/group (or be auspiced by one).
- have Public Liability Insurance coverage to a minimum of $10 million.
- be based within the Pyrenees Shire Council Local Government Area and/or provide services and programs to people living within these boundaries (or propose to).

Please note that your group/organisation may not be eligible to apply if they have:
- already received a Community Grant within the existing financial year.
- have outstanding projects or acquittals from previous funding rounds.
- have an outstanding debt to Council.

3.   How much can I apply for?

Community Grants will be **allocated to a maximum of $5,000** for capital works or infrastructure projects.

4.   Application Conditions:

The applicant must demonstrate that they are capable of successfully completing the project. To do this, your application must:
- include a budget that meets the funding ratio and is completed correctly and balances.

- shows that the project is thoroughly scoped.

- includes quotes for all components of the project.

- includes a copy of your organisation's most recent bank statement (less than 3 months old) and/or financial statement.

- includes a copy of your current public liability insurance certificate.

- includes written approval to undertake works from the landowner or manager.

Applications for projects that are included in local Community Action Plans (CAPs) will be favourably regarded.

#Please note – Incomplete applications will not be considered for assessment and no late applications will be accepted.

Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grant Guidelines - 2021

5. How much do I have to contribute?

Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grants will fund projects on a 2:1 basis. This means that for every $2 provided by Council, successful applicants must contribute a minimum of $1 towards the cost of the project.

Applicants can claim up to 50% of their required contribution as in-kind or voluntary support.

Volunteer labour contribution can be calculated at $25 per hour per person while specialist contributions can be valued at up to $45 per hour. Costings need to be based on 'reasonable' commercial rates.

Donation of materials is based on the item's value. Use of equipment and contractors should be based on standard hire rates.

Please note: *Any in-kind contribution in support of your project must be detailed in your application form. Written confirmation from the supplier for any in-kind contribution details in the application must be provided to Council upon request.*

The following examples have been developed to assist you in understanding funding ratios:

	Grant requested	Your contribution		Project total	Eligible	Explanation
		Cash	in-kind			
✓	$5,000	$2,500	$0	$7,500	Yes	Funding ratio is met. No in-kind contribution.
✓	$5,000	$1,250	$1,250	$7,500	Yes	Funding ratio is met. In-kind contribution does not exceed 50% of your contribution.
✗	$5,000	$0	$2,500	$7,500	No	Funding ratio is not met. There is no cash contribution.

6. Potential projects that may be eligible

This grant scheme will fund capital works and infrastructure development projects that contribute towards increasing liveability of the Shire and the health & wellbeing of our residents. Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- responds to an identified community need or Council strategic priority contained within a Council Strategy or Plan.
- demonstrates a clear intent or purpose that will result in benefit to residents of the Pyrenees Shire.
- helps to increase participation, community connections or health & wellbeing of the community.
- encourages multi-use or shared facilities or collaboration with other community groups.
- supports equal opportunity, anti-discrimination; specific population groups (E.g. Traditional owner groups, members of the LGBTQI+ community; improved mental health; increased community resilience; or climate change adaptation.
- provides a new or enhanced service to the community.
- demonstrates capacity to successfully complete the project including ability to meet contribution requirements.

#Please note: Groups proposing projects at Council owned or managed facilities must apply for and receive approved Council consent prior to submitting a grant application. Where this applies, groups are encouraged to contact Council in sufficient time prior to the grant opening as the approval process may take up to six weeks.

7. What will not be funded?

The Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grants scheme will not fund:
- projects which are not infrastructure based such as equipment, training, events and programs.
- applications that do not meet the funding ratio.
- applications with an incorrect or incomplete budget.
- applications that do not include quotes for all components of a project.
- projects that require ongoing funding from council.
- projects that will not be completed within a 12-month period from receipt of the funding.
- projects which have commenced prior to the execution of a funding agreement.
- requests for ongoing operational costs such as, but not limited to: salaries, utilities and general maintenance and upkeep.
- projects which have been funded through the Council grants scheme previously.
- projects or organisations that are eligible for funding under another government or statutory body.
- projects that do not meet relevant Australian Standards or other legislative obligations (E.g. lighting projects or netball court dimensions).
- repair of facilities that can be fully covered by insurance.
- facilities where little or no public access is available.
- projects designed to promote political or religious ideals.

8. General conditions of grant.

- **Funding agreement:** To receive grant funds, successful applicants must enter into a Funding Agreement with Council and adhere to all conditions outlined in that agreement.

- **Acquittal:** The grant must be acquitted as per the terms and conditions of this application form and the Funding Agreement. If a grant is not acquitted within the 12-month period, you must notify Council in writing and seek written permission for additional time to complete your project. Failure to notify or acquit the project will impact consideration of future applications.

- **Unspent funds:** If there is likely to be any unspent funds from your project, you must contact Council's Community Wellbeing & Grants Coordinator to discuss either returning the unspent funds or the reallocation of them.

- **Acknowledgement:** Council asks that any promotional material associated with the funded project or activity include an acknowledgement of Council's financial support. Recommended wording is as follows: *"Thank you to the Pyrenees Shire Council for providing funding support through their Community Capital Works & Infrastructure Grants Program."*

- Late applications will not be accepted.

- Incomplete applications will not be considered for assessment.

- Council approval must be gained for any projects proposed on Council owned or managed land.

- Where applicable, applicants must demonstrate what planning, building or other permits are required to undertake the project and demonstrate steps already undertaken to obtain these approvals.

- The cost of planning and building permits must be included in the project's budget.

9. How do I apply?

Please take the time to read the guidelines and consider discussing your project with us before starting an application.

For more information or to discuss your application please contact Council's Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator on 1300 797 363 or at pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

10. Checklist.

- Is my project a capital works/infrastructure project?

- Does my budget add up correctly?

- Does my budget meet the $2:$1 funding ratio?

- Have I included a copy of the following?

  o A copy of your current Public Liability Insurance Certificate (Minimum $10 million).

  o A copy of your organisation's most recent Bank Statement (Less than 3 months old).

  o Quotes for all components of the project are included.

  o Details of any in-kind works or donations you will be claiming.

  o Written consent from the landowner and land manager.

Facility Hire Agreements
Council Controlled Buildings

01 PURPOSE

To facilitate the timely and accurate process of taking bookings, keeping records and taking payment for Hall's, Community Centres and Resource Centres under the control of Council

02 SCOPE

To identify the procedural actions required when Council Controlled Hall's, Community Centres and Resource Centres are hired out to the public, community organizations or other public bodies. It extends to cover the Avoca Hall, Avoca Community Centre, Avoca Resource Centre, Beaufort Hall, Beaufort Community Centre, Beaufort Resource Centre and other Council controlled facilities that may be let from time to time.

03 ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Facility Acceptable for Hire

The Customer Services Officer/Facility Co-ordinator is to ensure that the facility to be hired meets the requirements of the potential hirer. Unsuitable issues may be the type of hirer for the facility, activities proposed to be undertaken, deficiencies in the facility, any dangers that may exist if granted access to the facility etc.

3.2 Maintenance & Cleaning of Facilities

3.2.1 Maintenance

Monthly workplace inspections are undertaken by Management representatives for all Council controlled buildings. Refer: Workplace Inspections Procedure PYR-09-209

3.2.2 Cleaning of Facilities

All Council Controlled Buildings are cleaned on a regularly cycle by Councils Contract Cleaners except for the Avoca and Beaufort Hall. These facilities are to be cleaned on a "need basis" prior to any hiring of the venue. The Customer Service Officer/Facility Co-ordinator shall notify Councils Contract Cleaners of any permanent or casual bookings of the date, time and what facility is required at the time of taking the booking and at least one week prior to the hiring as a follow-up.

3.3 Fees, Charges and Bonds

3.3.1 Fees and Charges

Council Controlled Facility hire fees are set by Council from time to time. Requests for any variation to these fees and charges are to be directed to the relevant Director or Chief Executive Officer. Refer to the Schedule of Fees and Charges for Council Facilities – CUS-09-23(6.1) for the current hiring and insurance costs.

3.3.2 Security Deposit

A Security Deposit is required for certain types of functions that are held in Council Controlled Facilities. These can be identified by checking the Schedule of Fees and Charges CUS-09-23(6.1) which will identify what functions require a Security Deposit. The Customer Services Officer/Facilities Co-ordinator shall receive the Security Deposit and issue a receipt. Details of the Deposit are to be recorded on the Security Deposit Record Schedule CUS-09-23(7.0), Facility Booking Diary CUS-09-23(1.0) and Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0).

For the returning or withholding of Security Deposit monies, refer to 3.6.2 Post-Event Inspections for full details.

03 ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

3.4 Bookings, Agreement and Conditions of Hire

The Customer Service Officer/Facilities Co-ordinator shall take all bookings for Council Controlled Facilities. A Facilities Hire Checklist CUS-09-C23A is to be obtained and the first section completed prior to completing the Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0). The Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) is to be fully completed, formally acknowledged and signed off by the hirer as being read and understood. A copy of the Conditions of Hire CUS-09-23(3.1) is to be given to the hirer.

Under no circumstances are Council Controlled Facilities to be hired without completing a formal Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0).

The Customer Services Officer/Facilities Co-ordinator shall record the booking in the Facilities Booking Diary CUS-09-23(1.0), recording the name or organization hiring the venue, what facility is being hired, time of hiring, contact persons name, phone number and an address for sending accounts. When payment of any bond is received, the receipt number and amount is to be recorded. If full payment is made the receipt number and amounts are also to be recorded.

If the hire fee is not paid prior to the hire, the Customer Service Officer responsible for issuing monthly Invoice/ Statements shall at the end of the month, sent an invoice to the hirer for the required fee. Details for the invoice are to be obtained from the Facilities Booking Diary CUS-09-23 (1.0) or checking the Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) for payment details.

3.5 Insurance (Public Liability)

All Hirers of Council Facilities must have Public Liability Insurance.

3.5.1 Providing Own Insurance

If the Hirer has their own Public Liability Insurance, evidence of the cover must be produced and a current copy of the policy attached to the Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) to form part of that agreement. The amount of cover must not be less than five (5) million dollars, insuring the hirer against all actions, costs, claims, charges, expenses and damages whatsoever which may be bought, made or claimed against Council or Hirer or both, arising out of or in relation to the hiring arrangement.

3.5.2 Council to Provide Insurance

If the Hirer does not have any Public Liability Insurance or does not comply with the requirements of Council in regard to satisfactory cover for the hiring, cover may be taken out through Councils Insurers by payment of the current fee, refer to Schedule of Fees and Charges – Council Facilities CUS-09-23(6.1) and completion and acceptance of the Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0)

3.6 Pre and Post – Event Inspections

3.6.1 Pre-Event Inspection

The Customer Services Officer/Facility Co-ordinator shall conduct a pre-event inspection of all facilities hired. This is to be carried out preferably with the hirer. A walk through of the facility is suggested and any important issues or unusual features are to be verbally pointed out to the hirer. This may include pointing out where equipment or appliances are kept, any "off-limit" areas, location of cleaning equipment and what can or cannot be moved or placed on the building or around the walls such as decorations. Any issue not covered in the Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) are to be clarified through this inspection. If whilst carrying out any of these inspections, any maintenance needs are identified, they are to be reported immediately to the Management representative. The Management representative shall take immediate steps to rectify any problems or maintenance needs before the venue is re-hired.

03 ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

3.6.2 Post Event Inspection

At the completion of the hiring, the Customer Services Officer/Facility Co-ordinator shall carry out a post-event inspection. The condition shall be noted on the Facility Inspection Record CUS-09-23(5.0). If the Customer Services Officer/Facility Co-ordinator is satisfied the hirer has left the premises in an acceptable condition (no damage to buildings, fittings and furniture) and there is no breach of the Facilities Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0), they shall complete a Security Deposit Refund Advice CUS-09-23(8.0) and give to the accounts payable officer who shall raise a cheque through Council creditors to refund the Security Deposit. Once the Security Deposit Refund Advice CUS-09-23(8.0) is processed by the Accounts Payable Clerk, the Security Deposit Record Schedule CUS-09-23(7.0) is to be complete noting when the Security Deposit was refunded or if not what action was taken.

If the facilities have been left in an unacceptable condition and the Facilities Inspection Record CUS-09-23(5.0) identifies a problem or there was a breach of the Officer/Facilities Co-ordinator is to notify their Director who shall take such action to see that the problem is rectified or the bond shall be surrendered.

3.7 Filing and Records

Completed Hire Agreements - CUS-09-23(2.0), Facility Hire Checklists CUS-09-C23A, Inspection RecordsCUS-09-23(5.0) and any other records or documents that relate to a specific hire agreement shall be filed in Councils Central Records Filing System (Refer Procedure PYR-16-04) against the relevant facility file by the Central Records Officer.

04 STANDARDS AND REFERENCES

Facility Hire Arrangements	CMP Best Practice Manual
Workplace Inspections	Procedure PYR-09-209
Central Records Filing Systems	Procedure PYR-16-04

05 FORMS AND RECORDS

Facility Booking Diary	**CUS-09-23(1.0)**
Facility Hire Agreement	**CUS-09-23(2.0)**
Conditions of Hire	**CUS-09-23(3.1)**
Facility Hire Checklist	**CUS-09-C23A**
Facility Inspection Record	**CUS-09-23(5.0)**
Schedule of Fees and Charges – Council facilities	**CUS-09-23(6.1)**
Security Deposit Record Schedule	**CUS-09-23(7.0)**
Security Deposit Refund Advice	**CUS-09-23(8.0)**

CUS•09•23 **(2.0)**

Club/Organisation:

Name:

Address:

Telephone: DH   AH

Date of Application: /   /

I,   of

hereby make application for the premises set out in the Schedule to this application for the day and the times specified in the Schedule and I acknowledge having received and read a copy of the Conditions of Hire CUS – 09 – 23 (3.0) and undertake to be bound by and comply with these Conditions in every respect and I further undertake to be responsible for ensuring that all individuals or groups using the premises in association with this application shall comply with the Conditions.

Signature:

SCHEDULE

DETAILS OF FACILITIES TO BE HIRED:

Name of Venue:

Address:

Date of Hiring: /   /

Preparation: From: To: Function: From: To:

DETAILS OF FUNCTION:

Type of Function: No. of people attending:

Will you be serving a meal?   Will kitchen facilities be used?

Will alcohol be consumed?   Permit Provided?

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE:

Have you got your own Public Liability Insurance?

If YES, copy of Policy to be attached to this application.
If NO or DO NOT comply with Council Requirements Insurance to be taken out with Council's Insurers.

Amount Paid: $ Receipt No.

SECURITY DEPOSIT: (If Applicable)

Amount: $ Receipt No.   Date Paid:

HIRE FEE:

Amount: $ Receipt No.   Date Paid:

Signature of Authorised Officer: Date Received:

PYR•09•23 **(8.0)**

Name of Hirer:

Address:

Date of Hire: / /

Facilities Hired:

Ledger Account: 712010000000

A I Authorize the sum of $.......... To be refunded, as the facilities have been inspected and found to be in a satisfactory condition.

B The Amount of $.......... is to be refunded, as the facilities were not left in a satisfactory condition and the full Security Deposit is not refundable.

C The Security Deposit is not to be refunded as the facilities were left in an unsatisfactory condition.

*A/B/C Strike out whichever is not applicable.

Signature of Authorised Officer

CUS•09•C23A

Check Suitability of Facilities

Facility Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) Completed

Conditions of Hirer CUS-09-23(3.0) Given to Hirer

Evidence of Insurance Received

YES   NO

Cover taken out with Council Insurers - Paid Receipt No:

Facilities Booking Diary CUS-09-23(1.0) Noted

Security Deposit Required

YES   NO

Recorded on Security Deposit Record Schedule CUS-09-23(7.0)

Security Deposit Paid - Receipt No:

Pre-Inspection Carried Out-Facilities Inspection Record CUS-09-23(5.0)

Keys Issued

Post-Inspection Carried Out-Facilities Inspection Record CUS-09-23(5.0)

Keys Returned

Security Deposit Refund Advice CUS-09-23(8.0) Completed

Records Filed

Completed By: Date:

CUS•09•23 **(5.0)**

Date: /   /

Facility being inspected:

PRE-EVENT

	Tick	Comments (if applicable)
Facilities Clean, Floors, Walls, Toilets etc.		
Cleaning Equipment Supplied, Brooms, Mops etc.		
Equipment Stored Correctly		
Emergency Exits Clear		
Fire Fighting Equipment in Place		
Facilities, Furniture and Fixtures - Any Damage		
Anything Else to Note		

POST-EVENT

	Tick	Comments (if applicable)
Facilities Left Clean		
Cleaning Equipment Stored Correctly		
Equipment & Furniture Stored Correctly		
Emergency Exits Clear		
Fire Fighting Equipment OK and in Place		
Any Damage to Facilities, Furniture, Fixtures		
Any Other Loss of Domage		

Signature of Authorised Officer

Security Deposit Record Schedule

CUS•09•23 (7.0)

Date of Hire	Facilities Hired	Name	Address	Bond Amount	Receipt No.	Date Paid	Amount	Bond Refund		
								Date Paid	Cheque No.	Authorised

LEDGER A/C 712010000000

Conditions of Hire
Council Controlled Buildings

Council grants the hire of its facilities subject to the following conditions:

01 APPLICATION

The right to use the hall is subject to the Council receiving a Facility Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) signed by the proposed hirer undertaking to comply with these conditions. If the proposed hirer is a club the agreement must include the personal undertaking by the president and secretary or at least two members of that club.

02 SECURITY DEPOSIT

For functions that require a Security Deposit, the required sum shall be paid by the hirer at the time of booking as a guarantee of fulfilment of these conditions, and as security against damage to the buildings or any fitting and furniture contained therein, and for any cleaning arranged by the council resulting from the hirer's use of the premises. The hirer shall be liable on demand by the (nominated council officer) to pay any further amount in excess of such bond to meet the full cost of such damage or cleaning. If there is no breach of the conditions of usage or damage to the building or any fittings and furniture therein or abnormal cleaning the security deposit will be returned.

03 HIRE FEES

Hire Fees shall be in accordance with the Schedule prepared by the Council from time to time and shall be payable two (2) weeks prior to the date of the function.

04 MINIMUM BOOKING TIME

The minimum booking time for any Council Facility is two (2) hours.

05 USE OF FACILITY AFTER ENGAGED TIME

If the area is not vacated by the nominated time, the hirer shall forfeit the entire Security Deposit, if applicable.

Every consideration must be given by people using and vacating the area to the residents who live nearby in regard to minimising noise and unruly behaviour.

06 CANCELLATION OF BOOKING

Any cancellation of a booking for the hire of the premises shall be made at least 24 hours prior to the date of the function.

07 INSURANCE

The hirer is responsible for obtaining Public Liability Insurance cover by way of a "PRINCIPLES INDEMNITY CLAUSE"

If the hirer does not have their own Public Liability Insurance or does not comply with the requirements of Council for satisfactory cover, cover is to be taken out with Council insurer's by payment of the current fee. (Refer to current Schedule of Fees and Charges – Council Facilities CUS-09-23(6.1) for the insurance costs)

If the hirer has their own Public Liability Insurance, evidence must be produced and a current copy attached to the Facility Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0).

08 INDEMNITY

The hirer agrees to indemnify, and keep indemnified, and to hold harmless the council, its servants and agents, and each of them from and against all actions, costs, charges, expenses and damages whatsoever which may be brought, or made, or claimed against them, or any of them, arising out of, or in relation to the hiring engagement.

09 ACTS AND REGULATIONS

The hirer shall conform to the requirements of the Health Act, Local Government Act, any Local Law/By-law or Regulations made thereunder, and shall be liable for any breach of such Acts, Local Laws/By-laws or Regulations. All other Statutory rules. Provisions and regulations of the Commonwealth of Australia or state of Victoria/Tasmania for the time being in force must be complied with by the user and the notice given to the proper officers.

10 OBSTRUCTIONS

The hirer shall comply in every respect with regulations under the Health Act and Victorian/Tasmanian Building Regulations with regard to Public Buildings for the prevention of overcrowding and obstruction of gangways, passages, corridors, or of any part of the building. Any person causing an offence against such regulations shall be removed from the building.

11 PERMISSION TO OCCUPY

(a) The hirer shall only be entitled to the use of the particular part or parts of the building hired on the date set out in the Facility Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0) and the Council reserves the right to permit any other portion of the building to be hired for any other purpose at the same time.

(b) The right conferred on the hirer shall be a permission to occupy and shall not be construed as a tenancy. Nothing contained in these conditions shall confer on a regular hirer the right to exclusive possession and the Council may at its discretion allow other individuals and groups to have casual use of the premises.

12 ASSIGNMENT

Hirers that are granted permission to use the facilities shall not assign the right of use to any person, organisation or body.

13 ADULT SUPERVISION

Hirers under the age of 21 years must have the application form referred to in Clause 1, completed by an adult who will be supervising the function. The person completing the application form and whose signature appears on the same is subject to these terms and conditions

14 GAMBLING

No game of chance, at which either directly or indirectly money is passed as a prise, shall take place in any part of the premises, with the exception that this clause shall not prevent the hirer using the premises for games of Bingo or equivalent, providing relevant permits have been obtained.

15 SUNDAYS "PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT"

Where a function comes within the provisions of the Sunday Entertainment Act 1967 the hirer shall prior to the function produce to Council staff the permit form the Minister required under the provisions of the above-mentioned Act.

16 DETERMINATION

If the hirer commits, permits or allow any breach or default in the performance and observance of any of these conditions, the Council may terminate the permission to use the premises and the hirer shall immediately vacate the premises and the security deposit shall be forfeited to the Council if applicable.

17 THEFT

Neither the Council nor it servants shall be liable for any loss or damage sustained by the hirer or any person, firm or corporation entrusting to or supplying any article or thing to the hirer by reason of any such article or thing being lost, damaged or stolen. The hirer hereby indemnifies the Council against any claim by any such person, firm or corporation in respect of such article or thing.

18 CORPORATE MANAGER

Wherever appearing in these conditions and where the context so admits the expression (nominated council officer) shall be deemed to include any other officer of the Council acting with the authority of the (nominated council officer) expressly or implied.

19 REFUSAL TO GRANT HIRE

It shall be at the discretion of the (nominated council officer) to refuse to grant the hire of a hall in any case and, not withstanding that permission to hire the premises may have been granted or that these conditions may have been accepted and signed and the fees and security deposit paid, the (nominated council officer) shall have the power to cancel such permission and direct the return of the fees and deposits so paid. The hirer herby agrees in such case to accept the same and shall be held to have consented to such cancellation and to have not claim at law or in equity for any loss or damage in consequence thereof.

20 GOOD ORDER

(a) The hirer shall be responsible for the full observance of these conditions and for the maintenance and preservation of good order in the building throughout the whole duration of the period of use.

(b) No spitting, obscene or insulting language or disorderly behaviour or damage to property shall be permitted in any part of the building

21 PIANO

The Council's piano must not be moved off the stage and no piano shall be brought into the building without the permission of the (nominated council officer). Any authorised movement of pianos shall be done under the supervision of the (nominated council officer). Upon the return of the piano to its original position on the stage the Council shall arrange for the returning of the piano and the cost of such returning shall be paid the hirer.

22 CLEANLINESS

The hirer is responsible for leaving the premises in a clean and tidy state, and shall immediately remove all rubbish, refuse and waste matter. Any cost incurred by Council in cleaning the premises resulting from the condition in which the hirer left the premises shall be recoverable from the hirer.

23 DAMAGES

(a) The floors, walls, curtains or any other part of the building or any fittings or furniture shall not be broken, pierced by nails or screws or in any other way damaged.

(b) The hirer shall accept full financial responsibility for damage to Council property except for normal wear and tear.

24 SIGNAGE

No notice, sign, advertisement, scenery, fittings or decorations of any kind shall be erected on the building or attached or affixed to the walls, doors or any other portion of the building, fittings or furniture, without prior consent of the (nominated council officer).

25 DECORATIONS STAGE FITTINGS

No stage property, decorations, electric lighting, naked lights of any kind or articles of similar nature shall be brought into the building without the consent of the (nominated council officer). All such articles and property together with any catering appliances or fittings shall be removed by the hirer at the end of the function.

26 SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted n any council controlled facilities

27 LIQUOR

The sale of liquor on the premises is forbidden unless the hirer obtains a permit form the Liquor Control Commission, and the permit is produced to the (nominated council officer) who shall make an endorsement on the Facility Hire Agreement CUS-09-23(2.0).

28 **SUBJECT OF ENTERTAINMENT**

The (nominated council officer) may require the hirer to submit for approval the subject and program for any entertainment or lecture prior to the use of the premises.

29 **FREE ACCESS**

Any officer or employee of the Council whom the (nominated council officer) may appoint shall at all times be entitled to free access to any and every part of the building.

30 **DISPUTES**

In the event of any dispute or difference arising as to the interpretation of these conditions, or of any matter or thing contained therein the decision of the (nominated council officer) thereon shall be final and conclusive.

31 **PERFORMING RIGHTS**

In the case of a dramatic or other performance or concert, the hirer shall not produce, or permit to be produced or performed, any dramatic or musical work in infringement of the copyright or performing right of any owner of such right or rights, and the hirer agrees to indemnify the Pyrenees Shire Council against any claim for breach of copyright or any other action herewith.

32 **EXITS**

During the period of the hire, all doors marked "EXIT" must be kept unlocked, for use as escape in case of fire or other emergencies.

33 **WHEN VACATING**

Heaters and stoves are to be turned off. Fridge's to be turned off and the doors left open. Ensure that all doors are LOCKED and ALL LIGHTING is OFF.

Regular/Seasonal User
Hire Documents

1. Regular Hire Approval Process

Processes	Actions Required	Responsibility
1. Application	1.1. Fill out and provide the Initial documentation. (See checklist below)	Hirer
2. Approvals (Committee of Management, P&G, Risk, CD)	2.1. Review of Application / Documents	Committee of Management supported by IMS
	2.2. Risk Assessment	CoM & IMS
	2.3. Determine whether additional information required	Committee of Management
3. Recommendations to Committee of Management	3.1. Blanket/Conditional Approval	Committee of Management
	3.2. No Approval / Resolution options	
4. Committee of Management determine to accept/reject the hire application	4.1. Application form signed	Committee of Management
	4.2. Evidence of Authority sighted	
	4.3. Signed application form provided to Customer Services	
	4.4. Evidence of Insurance sighted & copied.	
	4.5. Security Deposit received	
	4.6. Hire fee received.	
	4.7. Acknowledgement Signed	
5. Pre-Hire Inspection	5.1. On-site inspection carried out	Committee of Management and Hirer
	5.2. Inspection forms filled out and signed by Committee Representative and Hirer.	Council
	5.3. Provision of Key/s	
6. Post Hire Inspection	6.1. On-site inspection carried out	Committee of Management and hirer
	6.2. Inspection forms filled out and signed by Committee Representative and Hirer.	Council
	6.3. Return of Key/s	CoM
	6.4. Return of Security Deposit (If applicable)	

Checklist of what applicants have to Provide:

Documentation	Provided	Hirer
Evidence of Insurance	Sighted & Copied	CoM, Hirer
Security Deposit	Paid	Hirer
Hire Fee	Paid	Hirer
Evidence of Authority	Sighted	CoM, Hirer

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

This agreement pertains to the _____ Reserve.

The agreement is between the Reserve Committee of Management and the User Group/s who are named in and signatories to this agreement.

Definitions :

Council — Refers to Pyrenees Shire Council, the controlling authority of the Reserve, who has established a Delegated Committee to undertake day to day management responsibilities of the Reserve.

Delegated Committee of Management — Refers to the _____ Committee of Management, henceforth known as the Committee of Management, who is responsible for the management of the reserve in accordance with Instrument of Delegation authorised by the Pyrenees Shire Council.

User Group — Clubs or other regular community users of the reserve under this Facility User Agreement (FUA) authorised by the Committee of Management.

Reserve — Refers to all built and natural assets on Council owned/controlled lands. This includes but is not restricted to; buildings, ovals, open space areas, driveways, pathways and trees etc included within the Bounds of the Delegation for the _____ Reserve.

Facility — Specific area(s) of the Reserve, available for use, allocated to User Group/s per schedule 1

Access — Details of User Group/s entitlements to use specified Facility(ies) as per Schedule 1

Facility User Agreement - Facility Inclusions
Facilities available to be accessed under this FUA to Reserve Users are:

Facility Name		
Facility 1		
Facility 2		
Facility 3		
Facility 4		
Facility 5		
Facility 6		
Facility 7		
Facility 8		
Facility 9		

Please see Schedule 1 of "Facility User Agreement; Annual Access Agreement" for details of Reserve User's Annual exclusive/shared use.

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

01 USER FEES

1.1 The Committee of Management will establish User Groups fee charges as deemed appropriate as per Schedule 2 of the Annual Access Agreement.

1.2 A review of User Fee Charges will occur annually to be confirmed by January 31st subject to Council approval.

1.3 All information required by the Committee of Management is to be provided by user groups.

02 OTHER COSTS

2.1 The Committee of Management and the User Group shall agree on responsibility for any other costs which may be incurred as a result of or related to tenancy at the reserve.

2.2 These other costs may include, but are not limited to, carpark lighting, security systems or services and fire services.

2.3 Other costs and the contribution received from the users is detailed in schedule 2 of the Annual Access Agreement.

03 SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 There shall be a joint Emergency Evacuation Management Plan for the facility, to be produced and managed jointly by the User Groups and the Committee of Management. (A copy of the Emergency Evacuation Management Plan is to be maintained by the Committee of Management and made available to Council on request.) It shall be reviewed on an annual basis. Each party shall be responsible for displaying relevant information regarding the Emergency Evacuation Management Plan in their respective areas and ensuring that all persons entering their areas are aware of the Plan.

3.2 The Committee of Management shall ensure the safe condition of the facility at all times.

3.3 All User Groups must:
   (a) Comply with reasonable direction of the Committee of Management relating to Sport & Recreation Management and any specific regulations of their own user association.
   (b) Have in place safety procedures, practices and equipment.

3.4 The facility will operate using Risk Management practices consistent with the Council requirements (as stated in the Pyrenees Shire S86 Committee of Management Manual).

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

04 TENURE

4.1 User Groups may negotiate exclusive or shared access to the facilities on an annual basis under the "Facility User Agreement; Periodic Tenure Agreement". This is subject to the User Group abiding by the terms of this User Agreement, subsequent variations and written instructions of the Committee of Management.

4.2 The Committee of Management is responsible for allocation of tenure of the facility to the User Groups (in writing).

4.3 The User Group shall have use of the facility for the period of their tenure, except where access is approved by the Committee of Management for the purposes of:
• another User Group's out-of-season requirements, including meetings, registration days, presentations etc;
• promotional activities which may be conducted at the Reserve; or
• casual hire of the facility
so long as this usage does not conflict with the currently allocated User Group's needs.

4.4 In the interests of the Reserve and the community, the Committee of Management may negotiate any potential booking conflicts to achieve a compromise regarding access.

4.5 No sub-letting of the facility by User Groups is allowed.

4.6 Where no satisfactory resolution of a dispute regarding access can be reached Pyrenees Shire Council reserves the right to mediate and arbitrate the decision.

4.7 Tenure may be revocable at any time, without notice, in the event of any contravention of the conditions of the Facility User Agreement.

4.8 The Committee of Management shall ensure Reserve users provide the Committee of Management details of their annual activities. The Committee of Management is to collate this and provide to Council an Annual plan of usage by March 31st, for the year covering the period 1st July to 30th June.

05 USE OF FACILITIES FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

5.1 A User Group may negotiate additional access to other areas of the reserve based on needs and availability with the Committee of Management.

5.2 All special events (eg Finals Matches, Fundraising, Celebrations, Festivals) are required to obtain a Casual Hire Agreement with Committee of Management.

06 ACCESS /KEYS

6.1 The Committee of Management will issue keys to all relevant User Groups upon the completion and signing of the User Agreement.

6.2 All keys will be returned to the Committee of Management following the cessation of tenure for each User Group.

6.3 The Committee of Management is responsible for maintaining a key register with the names and contact details of all persons allocated with keys and providing an annual update to Council. (March)

6.4 A bond may be required prior to hand over of keys as deemed necessary by the Committee of Management, for an amount which they may determine.

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

07 INSURANCE AND LIABILITY

7.1 The Reserve and its Facilities is hired at the User's own risk and the User remains responsible for their actions.

7.2 The Committee of Management is advised that Public Liability insurance is required to utilise the Reserve and its Facilities.

7.3 Council has obtained "General Public and Products Liability Insurance" for casual / adhoc hirers for the hire of the facility. Casual / Ad Hoc is defined as no more than 52 times per annum. This insurance coverage is for not for profit users only and is subject to the policy wording.

7.4 The Committee of Management is advised that the following activities are excluded from Council's "Casual Occasional Public Liability Insurance." Conduct of these activities therefore requires the User groups to prove to the Committee of Management (by provision of certificate of currency) that they have obtained appropriate insurance coverage ($10 million). Without appropriate insurance coverage, the User acknowledges that the stated activities are specifically prohibited:

> **7.4.1** Fireworks
> **7.4.2** Rock / Pop Concerts
> **7.4.3** Festivals
> Any unusual activities should be referred to Councils Risk Officer for advice on insurance coverage required.

7.5 The User is advised that the following risks are excluded from Council's "Casual Occasional Public Liability Insurance." The User is responsible to ensure that these risks are identified and adequately treated:
> **7.5.1** Sporting participation at the facility
> **7.5.2** Amusement (children's rides, animal rides, amusement rides and devices, inflatable recreational equipment)
> **7.5.3** Grandstands
> **7.5.4** Sub-contractors
> **7.5.5** Security Personnel
> **7.5.6** Child molestation
> **7.5.7** Excludes Products Liability in respect of children's toys
> **7.5.8** Terrorism Attacks
> **7.5.9** Electronic Data.

7.6 The seasonal users under the "Facility User Agreement; Annual Access Agreement" are not covered by the casual users policy, and they must have their own public liability insurance cover prior to the start of the agreement.

7.7 Proof of cover must be provided annually as per "Facility User Agreement; Annual Access Agreement" (A copy of certificate of currency must be supplied to the Committee of Management. Note that you may also be required to supply a copy of the full insurance policy to the Committee of Management or Council upon request).

7.8 The User is advised that they are at liberty to obtain Public Liability Insurance in addition or instead of Council's "Casual Occasional Public Liability Insurance."

7.9 The User shall be responsible for all actions, claims, penalties, demands, costs, expenses or damages in any way related to any act or omission in respect to the use of services and facilities at the Reserve when the User has booked and or uses the facility.

7.10 If the Reserve is left in an unacceptable condition, due to neglect, not including circumstances out of the user's control, which results in an action, claim, penalty, demand, cost, expense or damages, then the user who left the Reserve in an unacceptable condition will be held responsible and liable for any damages/ costs.

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

08 THEFT AND VANDALISM

8.1 Council insurance which covers all Council buildings on recreation reserves does not cover contents of the buildings not owned by Council. User Groups must have their own insurance for such purposes relating to loss or damage to any property belonging to the user group within the buildings.

8.2 Council shall not be responsible for any loss or damage sustained by the hirer for any person, firm or corporation entrusting to or supplying any article or thing to the user by reason of any such article or thing being lost, damaged or stolen. The user shall indemnify Council against any claim by any such person, firm or corporation in respect of such article or thing.

8.3 Any act of vandalism resulting in damage to facilities, due to lack of due diligence by the User Group and whilst under the control of a User Group will be the responsibility of the User Group and the Committee of Management. The responsibility for costs incurred must be negotiated between the two parties. Vandalism must be reported to the Police and to the Nominated Council Liaison Officer immediately for insurance purposes. The User Group and the Committee of Management must keep appropriate documentation in relation to each event of vandalism.

09 BUILDING, ALTERATIONS, ADDITIONS, MODIFICATIONS

9.1 No work of any kind, is to be undertaken on a building at a Reserve without prior approval from the Committee of Management and Council. Should a club wish to undertake major works they must first provide relevant plans and permits and obtain written approval from the Committee of Management who also must obtain approval as per the Council delegation to the Committee. Please note should Clubs undertake unauthorised works Council may require these works to be removed or to be completed to Councils requirements.

10 CAR PARKING

10.1 Car parking is to occur within designated parking areas only.

11 CODES OF CONDUCT

11.1 Alcohol must not be provided or consumed without appropriate license at the Reserve. It is the responsibility of the User Group to ensure that all provisions of licences held are adhered to.

11.2 Intoxicated persons will not be granted admission. It is the responsibility of the club to ensure all legal requirements of the public liquor laws are upheld in relation to BYO functions.

11.3 Equipment must be maintained in good condition. Replacement of equipment damaged through misuse will be the responsibility of the User Group.

11.4 The Reserve encourages access to all groups. Any individual or group, which through their behaviour limits the enjoyment of other users, will be asked to leave the facility.

11.5 Animals (with the exception of guide dogs) may not enter the buildings.

11.6 Smoking is not permitted in all Council facilities. Users are required to enforce this on behalf of Council through appropriate actions and signage. Users may choose to provide a designated outdoor area receptacles for the purposes of smoking.

11.7 No activity is to be conducted at the facility which contravenes the rules and/or guidelines of either Pyrenees Shire Council or the Committee of Management. User Groups are to abide by any decisions of Council or the Committee in relation to use of the facilities.

2. Reserve Facility User Agreement

12 CLEANING

12.1 User Groups are responsible for cleaning the Reserve and removal of rubbish both inside and surrounding the facility prior to departure from the Reserve on each day of use.

12.2 For example:

12.2.1 Kitchen benches, crockery and equipment must be cleaned and put away. All foodstuffs are to be removed.

12.2.2 Rubbish bins are to be emptied into large bin outside.

12.2.3 As a guide, floors in all indoor areas utilised must be vacuumed and mopped at the conclusion of every session. Floors, walls, showers and toilets to be cleaned thoroughly throughout the change rooms.

12.3 If the shared access areas of the Reserve are left in an unacceptable condition, that being not ready for use for normal programming, due to neglect, not including circumstances out of the clubs control, contract cleaners may need to be employed and the User Group responsible for the neglect will incur all costs associated to remedy this neglect.

13 MAINTENANCE

13.1 All User Groups in conjunction with the Committee of Management are responsible for maintenance of the facility due to any damage or necessary maintenance that arises during their use.

13.2 All maintenance work must be conducted reported and recorded in accordance with the Committee of Management Appointments and delegations policy and procedures.

13.3 An annual condition assessment of all areas is required to be undertaken by the Committee of Management and User Group.

14 COMMUNICATION

14.1 The Committee of Management and the User Groups shall work co-operatively to promote each other's activities. This will include reciprocal rights to display promotional literature in areas of the Reserve/facility approved by each and to distribute said material to participants.

14.2 User Groups must provide updated contact names and addresses of office bearers following their Annual General Meting every year to the Committee of Management and Council.

14.3 In order to enhance communication between all parties, the Committee of Management shall comprise representatives of all User Groups as well as community representatives.

15 CHANGE OF CONDITIONS

15.1 Council reserve the right to change any of the above mentioned conditions and will discuss the changes with the User Groups and Committee of Management prior to implementing any changes.

This agreement pertains to the [_____] Reserve.

The agreement is between the Reserve Committee of Management and the User Group as named.

The agreement becomes effective as of the date of signing by the Committee of Management.

Access is granted subject to the terms and conditions of the User Agreement and subject to annual completion of "Facility User Agreement; Annual Access Agreement"

User Group: [_____]

Period of Tenure (Not including 'out of season' access):

From: [_____] To: [_____]

I, [_____]

being an Office Bearer of the [_____] User Group

Confirm acceptance of the terms and conditions of the User Agreement and hereby sign this agreement to access allocated facilities at the above named reserve.

Signature: [_____]

Title as Office Bearer: [_____]

Date: [____] / [____] / [____]

I, [_____]

being an Office Bearer of the [_____] Reserve

Committee of Management hereby sign this agreement to access by the aforementioned user group.

Signature: [_____]

Title as Office Bearer: [_____]

Date: [____] / [____] / [____]

This agreement pertains to the [_____] Reserve.

The agreement is between the Reserve Committee of Management and the User Group as named.

The agreement becomes effective as of the date of signing by the Committee of Management.

Access is granted subject to the terms and conditions of the User Agreement and subject to annual completion of "Facility User Agreement; Annual Access Agreement"

User Group: [_____]

Period of Tenure (Not including 'out of season' access):

From: [_____] To: [_____]

Time of Hiring	From: [_____]	To: [_____]

I, [_____]

being an Office Bearer of the [_____] User Group

Confirm acceptance of the terms and conditions of the User Agreement and hereby sign this agreement to access allocated facilities at the above named reserve.

Signature: [_____]

Title as Office Bearer: [_____]

Date: [___] / [___] / [___]

I, [_____]

being an Office Bearer of the [_____] Reserve

Committee of Management hereby sign this agreement to access by the aforementioned user group.

Signature: [_____]

Title as Office Bearer: [_____]

Date: [___] / [___] / [___]

4. Schedule 1

Access Agreement

In completing this form Facilities are for example, Club Rooms, Oval, Grandstand etc. being specific area(s) of the Reserve available for regular hire use.

Room Name	Facility Description	Your Limited Access
Facility 1		
Facility 2		
Facility 3		
Facility 4		
Facility 5		
Facility 6		
Facility 7		
Facility 8		
Facility 9		

4. Schedule 2

Fees

User Fees	
Additional Costs	
Total User Fees	

Attachments

- List of Office Bearers (and contact details)
- "Reserve User Group Data"
- Insurance – Copy of Users Certificate of Currency

Community Markets

Organising a community market has much merit and offers opportunities for local community development.

This information is provided by Council as a way of assisting committees to understand the issues involved in establishing a community market. _It should be regarded as a guide only and not be taken to be any commitment by Council, nor definitive legal advice._

People seeking to develop a community market are strongly urged to commence the planning process early, and wait until confirmation that a market can be held at a chosen location before setting a first market day. This will avoid any distress that may be caused if unexpected problems arise and prevent the operation of the market on the chosen day.

KEY ISSUES

Public liability insurance (PLI)

This area is often the most difficult. The following observations/options are based on advice received from Council's insurer.

- Council's insurance policy does not provide PLI coverage for activities carried out by community groups and organisations.

- Council's coverage extends ONLY to those Committees of Management appointed to act on behalf of Council (i.e. Section 86 Committees of Management).

- Coverage that Council has in relation to hall and community centre hire for unincorporated groups does not extend to activities such as a market.

- There is coverage for community groups available through a Community Not For Profit Organisations scheme, auspiced by Council's Insurer. It is highly likely that the community market will meet the criteria for coverage by the scheme, and even though the organising committee is unincorporated, PLI may still be available through the scheme.

- Insurance can be purchased through local brokers.

- Seek an auspice organisation for the market (i.e. an incorporated body with its own PLI), so as to come under that organisation's PLI coverage.

- PLI coverage obtained by the market organiser will only cover the organiser(s) of the market. Each individual stallholder should have their own separate PLI coverage and it is the responsibility of the market organiser to ensure that the stallholders demonstrate their proof of coverage in writing.

- **Council's policy in relation to community groups and organisations is that Council itself is not able to act as an auspice for community activities for the purposes of extending PLI coverage.**

- However, if a Council Committee of Management of a facility agrees to auspice a community market (i.e. the Committee Of Management agree to auspice the community market as a fundraising exercise to support the facility/centre operations and/or local community groups) then the market could come under the extended coverage of the Committee of Management under Council's policy. This is acceptable, provided that the committee agrees to conform to Council's risk-management procedures and policies.

PLANNING PERMITS

In the Pyrenees Planning Scheme, a market is defined as: *Land used to sell goods, including foodstuff, from stalls.*

Under the planning scheme, a planning permit may be required before the commencement of any proposed market. The location of the market and the zoning under the planning scheme will determine whether or not a planning permit is required.

Under legislation, where a planning permit is required for an activity, and the activity is carried out without a planning permit approval, Council is obligated to issue an infringement notice, which may carry a penalty of up to $500. The final outcome of an infringement notice is subject to Council's discretion.

Once a permit application is lodged, there is a statutory obligation for the application to be advertised and for a copy to be placed on display on the property. The fee for application is $440. As Council has the discretion to waive any Council fees or charges, it may be worth writing to Council, requesting that the fee be waived, considering the value of the project to the community.

Usually, lodging a planning permit application involves advertising in local papers, opportunity for objections, consideration of the application and objections, time for appeals against decisions, etc., all of which could take several weeks. It is therefore highly desirable that sufficient time be allowed for the process. It is suggested that a minimum of two months be allowed for the planning permit process.

Generally, the following steps should be followed:

1. Contact the planning officer to see if a planning permit is required. In some circumstances a permit may not be required.
2. If a planning permit is required, lodge one as soon as possible.

Note:

- A permit application would require proof of public liability insurance.
- Letters from adjoining property owners indicating their support for a market would aid the process, and it could be worth including any people who might reasonably be affected by traffic entering and leaving the market precinct.

FOOD SAFETY

All food must be prepared in registered food premises. All food must be labeled in accordance with current requirements. If the food requires temperature control, then adequate refrigeration or heating must be provided. Hand washing and drying facilities must be provided.

In the first instance, this requirement falls on the stallholder, however the market organiser should insist that the stallholder either demonstrate their compliance or leave.

TOILETS

There is no requirement from Council's Planning or Environmental Health departments to provide access to toilet facilities in order to hold a community market.

Risk Management

PROCESS TO FOLLOW WHEN DEVELOPING A RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHAT IS A RISK?

A risk is the chance of something happening that will impact adversely on your objectives. Most activities have some risk, and risk management tries to limit the effect of undesirable events, without discouraging appropriate risk-taking and initiative.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE RISKS

Risk is measured in terms of consequence and likelihood. In conducting a risk assessment, you need to identify all the elements that make up that risk. The following questions should help you to do so:

- What could go wrong?
- How could it happen?
- When could it happen?
- Where could it happen?
- Who could be involved in creating the risk?
- Who or what could be impacted by the risk?
- What measures are in place to prevent or manage the risk?
- How reliable is the data/information?
- What information is not available?

EXAMPLE

Example 1:
There is a risk of someone falling down the stairs while entering or leaving the building. The stairs are in good order and well lit. There is no hand rail. A ramp is adjacent to facilitate access for people with a disability.

Example 2:
There is a risk that committee funds might be misappropriated. All cash is counted by two people, and two signatures are required on each cheque and bank withdrawal. Committee funds are audited each year.

STEP 2: ASSESS THE CONSEQUENCES OF EACH RISK

The consequence of a risk can usually be expressed as a measure of financial loss, impact upon the achievement of business or project objectives, reputational damage, or safety impacts.

Consequence is determined on the basis of "most credible worst case scenario". The ultimate worst case scenario of any risk could potentially be a catastrophic loss to any organisation. However, such extreme worst scenarios are not those that are experienced by the overwhelming vast majority of organisations that are exposed to risk.

Impact Level	Safety and Security	Financial Performance
Catastrophic	• An incident resulting in multiple fatalities. • Long term severe health impact on significant numbers of people.	• Operating budget blowout of >30%. • Reduction in operating profit of >30%.
Major	• An incident resulting in a single fatality. • Long term severe health effects on multiple individuals.	• An operating budget blowout of 20-30%. • Reduction in operating profit of 15-30%
Moderate	• A severe injury or multiple casualties requiring hospitalisation. • Long term negative health effects on one or more members of the staff or public.	• An operating budget blowout of 10%. • Reduction in operating profit of 5-15%.
Minor	• Injuries requiring medical attention. • Short term negative health effects.	• An operating budget blowout of <5%. • Reduction in operating profit of 1-5%.
Minimal	• Incident requiring simple first aid only. • Transient or limited ill health impact.	• An operating budget blowout of <1%. • Reduction in operating profit of <1%

Example 1:
The consequence of someone falling down the stairs while entering or leaving the building is "moderate". The most credible worst case scenario is that someone might have a severe injury.

Example 2:
The most credible worst case consequence that committee funds might be misappropriated is "catastrophic". This is because potentially all of the committee's funds could be lost.

	Business Performance and Capability	Reputation
	• The overall survival of the Committee is threatened. • Majority of major goals, programs and or projects cannot be achieved. • Significant intervention by Council is required.	• Consistent extreme negative media attention for greater than one month. • A consistent and long term public outcry against policies or actions of the committee • A long term irreconcilable loss of confidence in the committee's capabilities.
	• The continued capability of the committee is threatened. • One or more critical goals, programs or projects cannot be achieved. • Significant intervention by committee is required.	• Consistent extreme negative media attention for a period of several weeks. • Prolonged public disaffection with the policies or actions of the committee • Loss of confidence in the committee's capabilities lasting for several months
	• The efficiency and effectiveness of major elements of the committee deteriorate. • The achievement of objectives or delivery of outcomes for one more critical programs or projects is significantly impaired. • Substantially increased management intervention is required.	• Consistent negative headlines for greater than one week. • Public disaffection with the committee's policies or actions lasting from days to weeks. • Loss of confidence in the committee's capabilities lasting for several weeks
	• The efficiency and effectiveness of elements of the committee are impaired. • The ability to achieve objectives or deliver outcomes is affected.	• Negative media attention for one or two days. • Public disaffection with the committee's policies or actions is limited to a few days. • Short term loss in public confidence regarding the committee's capabilities lasting for several days.
	• There is a negligible impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of the committee. • There are minimal effects on the achievement of objectives or the delivery of outcomes. • Management can be undertaken within existing parameters.	• Occasional negative media coverage. • There is limited public disaffection with the policies or actions of the committee. • Public confidence in the committee remains largely unaffected.

Risk Management

STEP 3: ASSESS THE LIKELIHOOD OF EACH RISK

The next step involves determining the likelihood of the risk occurring with the particular consequence as estimated in Step 2 above. Estimation of likelihood is based on a consideration of the effectiveness of the controls known to be currently in place.

It is important to note that when we are talking about likelihood we are talking about the likelihood of an event occurring with the predetermined "most credible worst case scenario"

Level	Descriptor	Probability Description
A	Almost Certain	• 99% probability, or • Risk is occurring now, or • Could occur within "days to weeks"
B	Likely	• >50% probability, or • Balance of probability will occur, or • Could occur within "weeks to months"
C	Possible	• >20% probability, or • May occur but against short term probabilities, or • Could occur within "months to years"
D	Unlikely	• >1% probability, or • May occur but not anticipated, or • Could occur in "years to decades"
E	Rare	• <1% probability • Occurrence requires exceptional circumstances

Example 1: The likelihood of someone falling down the stairs and sustaining a severe injury while entering or leaving the building is "possible". The rating was chosen because the event is could occur within months to years.

Example 2: The most credible worst case consequence that all of the committee's funds might be misappropriated is "unlikely". This rating was chosen because all financial transactions including cash handling involve two people.

STEP 4: DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF RISK

The overall level of risk or "risk rating" is determined through combining the consequence and likelihood estimations using the table below, to achieve a risk rating or risk level of "Low" to "Extreme", allowing groups of risk to be prioritised if required.

Likelihood \ Consequence	Minimal	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Almost Certain	Medium	Significant	High	Extreme	Extreme
Likely	Medium	Medium	Significant	High	Extreme
Possible	Low	Medium	Significant	High	High
Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Significant	High
Rare	Low	Low	Medium	Significant	Significant

Example 1:
The level of the risk of someone falling down the stairs and sustaining a severe injury while entering or leaving the building is "significant" (moderate/possible).

Example 2:
The level of the risk that all of the committee's funds might be misappropriated is "high" (catastrophic/unlikely).

STEP 5: EVALUATE THE RISK

Evaluating risk involves determining which risks are acceptable (or can be tolerated), and which risks are unacceptable (or cannot be tolerated). Criteria for determining acceptability/tolerability of risk are included in the diagram below.

Monitor   Treat within 3 months   Treat within 1 month   Cease activity or treat immediately

EXAMPLE

Example 1:
The level of the risk of someone falling down the stairs and sustaining a severe injury while entering or leaving the building is "significant" (moderate/possible) and as an "yellow" level of risk falls between the treat within 3 months and treat via monitoring sections.

Example 2:
The level of the risk that all of the committee's funds might be misappropriated is "high" (catastrophic/unlikely) and as an "orange" level of risk falls between the treat within 1 and treat within 3 months sections.

STEP 6: EVALUATE THE RISK

Where risk has been determined as unacceptable or intolerable, some form of treatment will usually be required to reduce the level of risk. It will never be possible to completely control all risk, the aim is to manage the level of risk to an acceptable level.

EXAMPLE

Example 1:
The level of the risk of someone falling down the stairs and sustaining a severe injury while entering or leaving the building could be treated by installing a hand rail to prevent the likelihood of a fall occurring. If there was a concern of all fall during an event then maybe a doorperson might be appropriate.

Example 2:
The level of the risk that all of the committee's funds might be misappropriated could be treated by having an operating account and an investment account so that access to the majority of the committee's funds was not available. Requiring the treasurer to report at each committee meeting and show banking details/ balances would aid early detection.

STEP 7: MONITOR AND REVIEW

Risks can change due to changes in circumstances. So you need to regularly monitor and review each risk (at least every six months) to see if they have changed in any way.

EXAMPLE RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

POTENTIAL RISK	SOMEONE FALLING WHILE ENTERING OR LEAVING THE BUILDING.
Consequence	Moderate
Likelihood	Possible
Risk Level	Significant
Risk treatments	Install handrail. Ensure door person in place during events
SIGNATURE :	
COMPLETED ✓	

POTENTIAL RISK	THERE IS A RISK THAT COMMITTEE FUNDS MIGHT BE MISAPPROPRIATED.
Consequence	Catastrophic
Likelihood	Unlikely
Risk Level	High
Risk treatments	Instigate regular monthly reporting Open separate operating and investment accounts
SIGNATURE :	
COMPLETED ✓	

POTENTIAL RISK	
Consequence	
Likelihood	
Risk Level	
Risk treatments	
SIGNATURE :	
COMPLETED	

POTENTIAL RISK	
Consequence	
Likelihood	
Risk Level	
Risk treatments	
SIGNATURE :	
COMPLETED	

POTENTIAL RISK	
Consequence	
Likelihood	
Risk Level	
Risk treatments	
SIGNATURE :	
COMPLETED	

| Location: |
| Inspection Date: |
| S86 Rep: |
| Council Rep (if appropriate): |

SCORE:	**PRIORITY:**
U UNSATISFACTORY	**A** IMMINENT ACTION REQUIRED
S SATISFACTORY	**B** ACTION REQUIRED WITHIN 24 HOURS
NA NOT APPLICABLE	**C** ACTION REQUIRED BY NOMINATED DATE
	D HAZARD REQUIRES SEPARATE RISK ASSESSMENT

	SCORE	PRIORITY	DETAILS OF PROBLEM	ACTION COMPLETE AT INSPECTION	DATE ACTION COMPLETE
Health & Safety Issues					
Accident/Incident forms available					
Emergency procedures displayed					
Evacuation plan displayed					
OH&S Policy displayed					
Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) Register for all chemicals available and updated in last 12 months					
Housekeeping					
Work areas free of obstructions - benches, desks and floors					
Floors					
Free from Slip/Trip hazards					
Maintained clean & tidy					
Free from oil/water/debris					
Mats used where appropriate					
Mats in good order					
Walkways					
Free from rubbish / obstructions					
Clear view at intersections					
Paths of travel to exits clear					
Lighting					
Good natural light levels					
Adequate lighting levels					
Fire Protection					
Extinguisher / hoses condition ok & checked within last 6 months					
Flammable products stored appropriately					
Exits clear of obstructions					
Emergency exit signs operating (ie lit)					
Required exit doors intact and operational					
Emergency procedures displayed					
PC's & monitors shutdown at night and turned off					
Smoke detectors / alarms installed					
Heaters / air conditioners turned off when no one is in attendance					
Extinguisher locations signed with 'fire extinguisher' pictogram, and type of extinguisher eg dry chemical					
Fire protection systems adequate					
Small heaters / other electrical items free of dust					
Heaters guarded					
First Aid					
Cabinets are adequate and updated regularly					
Personnel trained in first aid available					
First Aid procedures available					
Up to date First Aiders list available					
Electrical					
Plugs / switches appear faultless					
Are there any leads on floors (trip hazard)					
Electrical leads checked within last 12 months (look for dated tag on lead)					

	SCORE	PRIORITY	DETAILS OF PROBLEM		ACTION COMPLETE AT INSPECTION	DATE ACTION COMPLETE
Environmental						
Use of energy sources minimised - electricity, gas, water						
eg lights, equipment, taps turned off when not in use						
Electronic mail used where possible						
Double sided photocopying and printing used where possible						
Work Stations / Desks						
Access not obstructed						
Layout adequate / Clear of debris						
Working heights / Posture appropriate						
Adequate storage areas						
Clean & tidy - housekeeping ok						
Adequate ventilation / airflow						
Storage Areas						
Containers labelled - preferrably original packaging						
Hazardous substances stored correctly						
Storage heights adequate (not above shoulder and not below knee)						
Appropriate '3-point' ladders available for higher storage areas (ie two feet and one hand on ladder at all times)						
Double handling minimised						
Nothing stored where it could fall						
Unauthorised entry restricted eg locks						
Signs and Placarding						
Warning signs erected and clearly visible						
No Smoking signs						
Restricted area signs						
Flammable/Corrosive Store signs						
Property Exposures						
Fire - Arson (public access to unauthorised areas restricted, access to combustibles incl. rubbish bins, flammable materials stored adjacent to buildings)						
Fire - Non Arson (electrics overloaded, gas, dangerous flammable goods)						
Burglary / Theft (door/window damage, security, skylights barred, roof access via trees, ladders, valuable items left out, equipment left unsecured)						
Water / Storm Damage (leaking pipes, blocked drains and gutters, loose roof and wall materials, condition of trees near assets eg leaf drop into gutters)						
Vandalism (investigate any acts of vandalism or willful damage)						
Other hazards (that may cause property damage, list here)						
Other						

Name	Position	Signature

9

COUNCIL POLICY – PRIVACY

DATE AMENDED:	**10 September 2017**
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	**17th October 2021**
ADOPTED BY COUNCIL:	**17th October 2017**
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**Manager Governance, Culture & Risk**
REFERENCES:	

Best Value Principles

Pyrenees Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

To achieve the best over life outcome for Council's expenditures, which meets quality and service expectations, there will be periodic review of services against best on offer in both the public and private sectors.

All Council staff members are responsible for supporting best value principles in their normal day to day actions to ensure services are recognised by the community as delivering best value.

Martin Walmsley
Manager Governance, Culture & Risk
Privacy Officer

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

To state Council's commitment to the:

- Victorian Information Privacy Principles and other obligations proscribed within the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic); and

- Health Privacy Principles and other obligations proscribed within the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).

To facilitate the balancing of the public interest in the free flow of information with the public interest in protecting the privacy of personal information; and

To provide guidance in the responsible and transparent handling of personal information within the Pyrenees Shire Council.

This Policy applies to personal, identifying, sensitive and health information collected and used by the Pyrenees Shire Council – both internal and external to the Council. Any personal information collected, regardless if it is from a member of the public or an employee or officer of the Pyrenees Shire Council, will be handled in accordance with this Policy.

Privacy law does not apply to personal information unless it is recorded. However, privacy provisions do apply to oral disclosures of personal information where that information exists, or existed, in a recorded format.

Relationship of Victorian privacy legislation to other laws

Privacy and health records law in Victoria is considered 'subservient' law. This means that, if a conflict exists with the requirements of any other Australian or Victorian law, privacy law obligations are secondary to that within the other law, and the other legal requirements must be followed – even at the expense of privacy compliance.

DEFINITIONS

Council's Privacy Officer	Manager Governance, Culture & Risk
Personal information	Information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database or system), that is recorded in any form and whether true or not, about an individual whose identity is apparent, or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.
Health information	Information or an opinion about the physical, mental or psychological health of an individual, a disability, an individual's expressed wishes for future provision of health services or any health service provided to an individual, or other information collected to provide or in providing a health service.
Sensitive information	Information relating to an individual's racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, membership of groups or criminal records.
IPPs	Information Privacy Principles. There are ten IPPs contained in the schedule to the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.
NPPs	National Privacy Principles. There are ten NPPs contained in Schedule 3 of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Commonwealth).
HPPs	Health Privacy principles contained in the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).
Elements of	• The individual must have the capacity to consent; • Consent must be voluntary;

consent	• Consent must be informed;
	• Consent must be specific; and
	• Consent must be current.

COLLECTION NOTICE

When collecting personal or health information, Pyrenees Shire Council will take reasonable steps to advise the individual of what information is being sought, for what purpose, whether any law requires the collection of the information and the main consequences, if any, of not providing the information.

It is acknowledged that much of the information collected by Council is not voluntary and is mandated by law.

INFORMATION COLLECTED

Council will only collect personal and health information that is necessary for its functions and activities; and will do so in a lawful, fair and non-intrusive manner. Typical information collected includes:

- Ratepayer information
- Planning and Building permit applications
- Food premises, animal and waste water registrations
- Correspondence from the public; enquiries, submissions, surveys and complaints
- Details of residents receiving home and community care
- Insurance claim information

Council will only collect sensitive information where consent has been given or as permitted / required by law.

Under normal circumstances, Council will collect personal information about an individual directly from that individual. However, if Council collects personal information about an individual from someone else, Council will take reasonable steps to ensure that individual is informed of that collection.

Individuals will have the option of remaining anonymous when supplying information or entering into transactions with Council whenever lawful and practicable. It is acknowledged, however, that many transactions with Council cannot, under law, remain anonymous.

Individuals can visit our website anonymously because the site does not collect or record personal information other than information he/she chooses to provide.

USE AND DISCLOSURE

Council staff are provided with the information necessary for them to carry out their authorised functions and activities. Staff members are required to handle all personal and health information with discretion and to comply with the provisions of privacy legislation.

Council will only use or disclose personal and health information for the purpose for which it was collected; for a reasonably expected, related purpose; another legally authorised purpose or with an individual's consent.

Information collected for the purpose of providing education, welfare and other community support services may be shared with other organisations for the purpose of providing such services.

Council does outsource some of its functions to third party contractors. Information will only be disclosed as necessary to allow them to carry out their authorised functions and activities; and all contractors will be required to comply with privacy law in all respects.

Legally proscribed information will be contained on public registers, e.g. register of building permits, food premises and animal registration details.

DATA QUALITY AND SECURITY

Council will take reasonable steps to ensure the information it holds is accurate, complete and up-to-date. Where possible, accuracy of personal or health information will be checked before it is used.

A number of procedural, physical, software and hardware safeguards, together with access controls, secure methods of communication and back-up and disaster recovery systems are used to protect information from misuse and loss, unauthorised access, modification and disclosure.

Generally, information is destroyed or permanently de-identified when it is no longer required. However, information held by Council is subject to the *Public Records Act 1973* and is required to be disposed of or retained under the relevant Retention & Disposal Authority.

Generally, we will not send your personal or health information outside Victoria without obtaining your consent.

ACCESS AND CORRECTION

Individuals have the right to seek access to their personal and health information and make corrections. Requests for access to and/or correction of documents containing personal or health information held by Council will be handled in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and should be addressed to the FOI Officer, 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort VIC 3373.

PRIVACY COMPLAINTS

Complaints relating to privacy are handled by Council's Privacy Officer – the Manager Governance, Culture and Risk. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with Council's *Privacy Complaints Procedure* and a written response will be provided within 15 days.

Privacy complaints should be provided in writing and addressed to the Privacy Officer, 5 Lawrence Street, Beaufort VIC 3373, or via email to pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au.

If an individual is not satisfied with the way in which a complaint is managed by Council, a formal complaint can be made to the relevant Commissioner:

Commissioner for Privacy and Data Protection
Can be made via secure online web form or in writing to:

PO Box 24014	Phone: 1300 666 444
Melbourne VIC 3001	Email: privacy@cpdp.vic.gov.au
	Website: www.cpdp.vic.gov.au

Health Complaints Commissioner
Can be made via secure online web form or by telephone to:

Level 26, 570 Bourke Street	Phone: 1300 582 113
Melbourne VIC 3000	Website. www.hcc.vic.gov.au

REFERENCES

- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
- Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
- Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)
- Council's Privacy Guidelines – IPP1 Collection of personal or health information
- Council's Privacy Guidelines – IPP2 Use and disclosure of personal information
- Council's Privacy complaints management procedure [under development]
- Council's Privacy Impact Assessment procedure [under development]

PYRENEES
S H I R E

COUNCIL POLICY & STRATEGY – CHILD SAFE

DATE CREATED:	**30th June 2017**
DATE OF NEXT REVIEW:	**17th October 2021**
ADOPTED BY COUNCIL:	**17th October 2017**
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	**Chief Executive Officer**
REFERENCES:	**Victorian Child Safe Standards**

Best Value Principles

Pyrenees Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

To achieve the best over life outcome for Council's expenditures, which meets quality and service expectations, there will be periodic review of services against best on offer in both the public and private sectors.

All Council staff members are responsible for supporting best value principles in their normal day to day actions to ensure services are recognised by the community as delivering best value.

Signed

JIM NOLAN
Chief Executive Officer

1

1   Purpose and scope

This policy demonstrates the commitment of the Pyrenees Shire Council, its leaders, staff and volunteers to child safety and the creation of a child safe organisation.

This policy applies to all Councillors, employees, contracted staff, contractors and volunteers of Pyrenees Shire Council; and any outsourced providers of services on behalf of Council.

2   Statement of commitment

The Pyrenees Shire Council is committed to being a child safe organisation and has zero tolerance for abuse or harm to children, young people or any other person. We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe from harm and promoting their best interests.

Council is committed to creating environments where children feel safe, are empowered, valued and protected – where all children have a voice and are listened to, their views are respected and they contribute to how we plan for, design and develop our services and activities.

3   Child Safe Principles

The Pyrenees Shire Council's framework to be a child safe organisation is underpinned by a set of key principles:

- The safety and protection of children and young people is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child is a primary consideration in all actions and decisions relating to children.
- Protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous children, children from culturally diverse backgrounds and children with a disability is paramount.
- Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within Council and with its partners and associates.
- Child safe training is mandatory for all Councillors, Senior Leadership Group and all employees.
- All suspected instances of abuse or harm to children or young people under the age of 18 must be reported.

4   Council Strategy - creating a child safe organisation

Council has a three-year plan to create a child safe organisation and promote child safety throughout the Pyrenees shire via its partners and associates.

4.1   Our focus

- Design and implement a whole of Council approach to creating safe environments for children and young people participating in Council programs and activities.
- Create a safe and welcoming environment that invites children and young people to discuss and report safety concerns.
- Ensure an appropriate response to children and young people experiencing and/or witnessing physical, sexual, emotional / psychological abuse; neglect; family violence; or racial, cultural or religious abuse.
- Create a culturally safe environment for children and young people that is free from harassment, bullying, violence, discrimination, racism or sexism.

4.2   Population group for focus

Children and young people under the age of 18 - including those from culturally diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal backgrounds, and those with a disability.

4.3   Council action focus

A whole of Council approach with specific focus on:

- Pyrenees Shire Council as a workplace:
  - o Pyrenees direct delivery of services involving children or young people.
  - o Pyrenees indirect contact with children or young people.

- The local Community and organisations who have an association with Council and who may provide direct / indirect services to children and young people.

- The public context where Council can influence or create awareness of Child Safe environments.

4.4   How Council will achieve this

A three-year project (2017-2020) to create and promote:

- The Pyrenees Shire Council as a Child Safe Organisation.
- A Child Safe culture throughout the Pyrenees Shire and its Communities.

By:

- Policy and procedure development – to inform service delivery, process development and conduct of Councillors and Staff.
- Communication – to raise awareness of child safety, our activity in this area and legal responsibilities / obligations.
- Workforce development – to ensure a trained and aware workforce is in place.
- Organisational systems development – to underpin and support activity.
- Partnership activity – working with key stakeholders and associated organisations to promote child safety across sectors and the community.
- Advocacy – to support and strengthen policy and systemic reform.

4.5   Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation processes will be developed and implemented over the three-year period. These processes and experience gained through development and implementation will inform the development of a further improvement plan indicating priority areas for action in 2021-2023.

4.5.1   Anticipated outcomes over 2017-2020

a) A Child Safe organisation implementation plan / strategy is in place to embed an organisational culture of child safety across Council and ensure safe participation of children and young people in Council activities.

b) Council commitment, via a Child Safe Statement of Commitment, to securing the safety of children and young people within Council's sphere of influence and control.

c) A framework of procedures and guidelines developed and implemented to support and guide staff with regard to the safety of children and young people.

d) Introduction of Child Safe principles within a dedicated Child Safe Code of Conduct applicable to all Councillors and Staff.

e) Human Resource mechanisms implemented to ensure all new and current staff working directly (or indirectly) with children and young people have current Working with Children checks and appropriate measures in place to manage reports of abuse perpetrated by Council staff.

f) Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected violence and abuse against children / young people in place.

g) Staff are familiar with indicators of abuse perpetrated against children and young people and are able to respond appropriately.

h) A workforce training and awareness program is developed and delivered – focused on increasing staff awareness and capability regarding issues pertaining to the safety of children and young people.

i) Partnership with local community and organisations associated with Council to promote and educate on the safety of children and young people throughout the Shire Community.

j) Advocacy and partnership with State and Federal Government, other Local Government bodies and peak organisations to further promote and secure the safety of children and young people across communities.

5   References

5.1   Legislation

- Children Youth and Families Act (2005)
- Working with Children Act (2005)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005)
- The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)
- The Commission for Children and Young People Act (2012)
- Privacy and Data Protection Act (2014)

5.2   Criminal offenses

- Failure to protect a child from sexual abuse (2015)
- Failure to disclose child sexual abuse (2014)
- Grooming offence (2014)

5.3   The Betrayal of Trust Report

In April 2012, the Victorian Government initiated inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations within religious and other non-government organisations – final report "Betrayal of Trust" made a number of recommendations accepted by the Victorian Government:

- Criminal law reform – offences relating to grooming, failure to protect and failure to disclose.
- Creating child safe organisations – mandatory Child Safe Standards and a reportable conduct scheme – compulsory for all organisations working with children.
- Civil law reform – removal of the time limit on legal action applying to both past and future cases of child abuse.

Policy – Council - Health Safety and Wellbeing 2021
The Pyrenees Way

Date amended:	December 2020
Date of next review:	December 2022
Adopted by:	Council
Date adopted:	19.01.2021
Responsible officer:	Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance

1   PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy affirms Council's commitment to providing a healthy and safe workplace for all Councillors, staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors of the Pyrenees Shire Council; and maintaining compliance with all applicable Victorian and Australian safety laws. This policy applies to all Council premises, workplaces, worksites and any other locations where activities are undertaken by Council representatives or those undertaking activities on behalf of Council.

Council recognizes that health, safety and wellbeing is an integral part of our business.

2   THE PYRENEES WAY

'The Pyrenees Way" describes how the Pyrenees Shire Council manages its Health, Safety and Wellbeing obligations – ultimately representing a culture where safe work practices and attitudes, and a speak up culture are reflective of the 'way we do things at the Pyrenees Shire Council- safely and without harm".

3   POLICY STATEMENT

The Pyrenees Shire Council will work towards minimizing harm by focusing on four key pillars:

1. *Leadership: provide direction and support in the provision of high standards of health, safety, wellbeing and environmental standards; aiming to eliminate or reduce as far as is easily practicable the risk of harm and promoting a zero tolerance to workplace aggression or violence;*

2. *Systematic Approach: establish a management framework that supports a strong and compliant health, safety and wellbeing culture, inclusive of behavioural standards that promote good mental health;*

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3. ***Active OHS and Speak Up culture:*** *promoting an organizational culture that accepts good health, safety and wellbeing; and encourages continuous improvement as an integral part of the way that Council and its workforce undertakes its activities; and*
4. ***Workplaces and equipment:*** *ensuring a deep understanding of the nature of hazards inherent within Councils work, activities and undertakings.*

The Pyrenees Shire Council will achieve these goals by:
- Ensuring that health, safety and wellbeing is adequately resourced and maintained as an integral part of business planning processes;
- Complying, as a minimum, with all relevant OHS laws and regulations;
- Identifying, eliminating or mitigating risks, as far as is reasonably practicable, to Councils workforce;
- Implementing, maintaining and reviewing our OHS Management system;
- Continual and effective improvement of OHS performance, through the setting and review of objectives and targets, which relate to key aspects of the business;
- Providing and maintaining an effective mechanism for consultation, communication and partnership with all Councillors and staff on health, safety and wellbeing matters;
- Maintaining a culture of employee consultation and teamwork in all aspects of health and safety;
- Providing and maintaining an effective process and tools to encourage the reporting, management and resolution of health, safety and wellbeing hazards, risks, incidents and issues;
- Providing appropriate health, safety and wellbeing awareness and training to develop an informed and knowledgeable Council and workforce; and
- Requiring all Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers to accept responsibility for their own actions, and to behave in a manner that reflects safe work practices.

4   KEY LEGISLATIVE DUTIES

Council as an employer:
- To provide and maintain as far as is reasonably practicable, working environment that is safe and without risk to health
- To ensure that the health and safety of others is not put at risk from any Council activities or undertakings.

Councillors, employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors:
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety;
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- Cooperate with anything Council does to comply with OHS requirements; and
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided at the workplace for OHS.

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4.1 Obligations regarding Councillors

Pyrenees Shire Councillors are deemed to be an employee of Council in the following circumstances:

- While they are carrying out duties as a Councillor; and
- If they are injured while carrying out duties as a Councillor.

Councillors are included within the OHS designated workgroup 'Direct Line Customer Contact"; alongside Directors and operational staff with duties that primarily include direct line customer contact; for the purposes of Health, Safety and Wellbeing consultation and communications.

5   IMPLEMENTATION

The Manager Governance, Risk and Compliance is responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated to all Councillors, employees, contractors and visitors to maximise awareness, and for the updating of this document as required.

This policy is approved by Council, with the strategic management responsibility belonging to the Chief Executive Officer. This Policy shall be prominently displayed at all permanent Shire workplaces and will be available electronically for all staff.

5.1 Compliance

Employees - Failure by any Council employed person to comply with this policy is likely to result in disciplinary action in accordance with the relevant Council procedure.
Contractors – Contractors that fail to comply with the policy shall be stood down until such time as the Manager/relevant officer or coordinator is satisfied that the contractor will not commit any further breaches. Any serious or continued non-compliance with this policy shall be considered a breach of the contract and grounds for termination of that contract.
Volunteers – the participation of volunteers in Council activities is conditional upon compliance with Councils policies and procedures. Any serious or continued non-compliance with this policy will result in the volunteer being instructed to leave the site and will be refused permission to participate in further volunteer activities.
Visitors – visitors that fail to comply with this policy shall be required to leave the premises or worksite immediately.

6   REFERENCE & RELATED DOCUMENTS

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004(Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017(Vic)
Pyrenees Shire Council Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy
Pyrenees Shire Council Contractor Safety Management Procedure and Framework
The Altus ERM for the reporting and management of Hazards, Risks and Incidents

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All Pyrenees Shire Council procedures, guidelines and work instructions developed as part of the overall Pyrenees Shire Council OHSMS (Occupational Health and Safety Management System)
Pyrenees Shire Council Performance Management and Disciplinary Actions Procedure
Pyrenees Shire Council Employee Code of Conduct Policy
Pyrenees Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct Policy
Any other behavior focused procedures, guidelines and work instructions supporting the Health, Safety and Wellbeing framework (includes Mental Health policies and procedures)
The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Intranet site (Pyrenees Shire Council)

6.1 Consultation and impact

Pyrenees Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and its employees. Council will involve elected employee health and safety representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health, safety or wellbeing of any of its employees.

Development of this Policy was conducted in consultation with relevant staff and consultative committees prior to approval. It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on the rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (2007).

7   VERSION HISTORY

Version Number	Issue date	Description of change
1.0		Initial release
2.0	July 2018	Complete Review of policy
3.0	December 2020	Minor updates to policy and transfer to new template

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A handbook for community
service organisations

Volunteer health
and safety

Contents

Introduction

The community services sector covers a wide range of not-for-profit non-government organisations that rely on many volunteers to provide a broad range of community services.

Community service organisations range from small informal community groups to large incorporated organisations. Recognising the vital role volunteers have in community service organisations helps maintain motivation and enthusiasm.

Part of this recognition should include protecting their health and safety. An active, systematic approach that involves all team members will help promote health and safety in the workplace.

Audience and scope

This handbook includes general health and safety information for people who manage volunteers in community service organisations. It may also be of use to volunteers themselves.

It is not intended for emergency services although it may provide helpful advice.

As well as reading this handbook, organisations need to identify and deal with specific health and safety hazards and risks associated with the type of work they undertake.

> This handbook provides guidance in relation to your health and safety obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* only. You should seek advice about other legal duties that may apply to your organisation. For further information on legal duties, contact WorkSafe Advisory Service (1800 136 089), your insurance agent or the Law Institute of Victoria (03 9607 9311).

Protecting volunteer health and safety

All community service organisations with employees have obligations to protect the health and safety of both employees and volunteers under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act). Other community service organisations that have no obligation under the OHS Act should also meet the same standards to protect their volunteers from harm.

Both employees and volunteers are legally entitled to a healthy and safe working environment. The best way to manage the health and safety of volunteers is to treat volunteers as paid employees, for example, by providing volunteers with the same risk and safety assessments as paid employees.

Managing health and safety as part of the day-to-day operations will make sure your organisation meets its legal obligations without the cost and effort of establishing additional systems. It also demonstrates to your volunteers you value their help and commitment and are serious about their health and safety. This can contribute to higher satisfaction and volunteer retention.

If your organisation doesn't manage the health and safety of its volunteers, it risks damage to its reputation and legal action.

You should designate a person with health and safety knowledge and skills to be responsible for the management of volunteers and their health and safety.

Make sure your insurance cover protects volunteers

You should also make sure your insurance covers your employees and volunteers in case of a work-related injury, illness or death. If you engage employees or contractors and you pay, or expect to pay, more than $7500 in rateable remuneration (ie wages and other benefits), you must take out a WorkSafe Injury Insurance policy. If your employee has a work-related injury or illness and you do not have WorkSafe Injury Insurance, the benefits payable to the injured employee are guaranteed by WorkSafe. However, you may face penalties for failing to hold a policy and may be liable for the full cost of any claims incurred while you were uninsured.

Volunteers are not usually treated as employees for WorkSafe purposes so you should take out separate insurance cover for them'. Failure to provide adequate insurance cover could lead to serious financial and reputational consequences for the organisation.

' Under particular legislation, volunteers assisting government agencies are entitled to compensation in accordance with the Accident Compensation Act 1985 if injured while carrying out specified duties. These government agencies include the State Emergency Services and the Country Fire Authority.

Consulting your volunteers

Being committed to a high standard of health and safety practices means ensuring everyone is involved in safety planning and decisions.

Your volunteers have valuable knowledge and experience they can contribute to the management of health and safety. You should make sure they have a reasonable opportunity to contribute to the improvement of health and safety at your organisation. This is a legal duty under the OHS Act in relation to your paid employees. While it's not a legal duty under the OHS Act in relation to volunteers, it's good practice and will help you manage health and safety better.

Consultation includes actively seeking the views of your volunteers about health and safety matters and taking those views into account when making decisions. Encouraging volunteers to raise health and safety issues prevents illness and injuries.

You could involve your volunteers by:

- holding regular meetings that focus on health and safety
- making health and safety a standing item at staff meetings
- including health and safety information in regular newsletters.

Taking a systematic approach

Similar to managing other aspects of your operations, if you deal with health and safety systematically, you are more likely to be protecting your volunteers and meeting your legal obligations.

You should identify the actions you need to take to remove or control the health and safety risks associated with the organisation's work. This process is called **risk assessment and control** and should be done in consultation with your volunteers and employees (see figure below for a five-step process).

Step 1: Identify the hazards

Think of all possible causes of injuries or illness.

Get started by walking around the workplace and talking to your employees and volunteers.

Check records of incidents to identify problem areas.

Step 2: Identify who could suffer injury or illness

Include employees, volunteers, clients, contractors and visitors.

Step 3: Prioritise the risks

Prioritise risks according to:

- how likely it is that an injury or illness will occur

- if an injury or illness occurs, how serious it will be.

Step 4: Take steps to remove or control risks

Eliminate risks altogether if reasonably practicable to do so.

Otherwise change the risk to reduce it if reasonably practicable (eg substitute equipment or a system of work with less risk or isolate people from the risk).

Or change the way people work (eg reduce their time in contact with the risk or ask them to wear personal protective equipment).

Inform and train volunteers and employees about the risks and controls.

Step 5: Review

Review your risk assessments and control measures to make sure they are up-to-date.

Identify hazards again if necessary.

Figure 1: Health and safety risk assessment and control process

Thinking about the risks

It's imperative to think about all hazards and risks when doing risk assessments. Talk to your volunteers and employees about the hazards and risks they know about and take action to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury and illness, so far as reasonably practicable (see definitions on page 18).

The table starting on page 9 provides examples of injuries and illnesses that can occur through common activities in community services. This is a good starting point for your own risk-assessment process. You should be open to exploring new ideas and ways of doing things (eg transporting clients in specially designed taxis rather than using volunteers' vehicles) to make sure your risk assessments are comprehensive.

Consider whether volunteers have different risks or higher levels of risk to your employees. For example, different risks may arise from the age or language profile of your volunteers.

When recruiting volunteers, make sure they are matched with roles consistent with their current skills and experience. Otherwise other volunteers, employees and clients may be put at risk.

Information, instruction, training and supervision

Volunteers, like employees, need to have the experience to do their volunteer role safely or they need to be supervised by an experienced person.

You should provide volunteers with information, instruction and training on the safe use of any object, substance, equipment or machinery you require them to use. This will help lessen the risk of volunteers hurting themselves, other volunteers, employees, clients or others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

You should think about health and safety issues when you are introducing new volunteers to their duties. For example, volunteers may be using equipment, tools and ways of working that are new to them or different to what they are used to.

Before volunteers start their role at your organisation, you should outline:

- health and safety procedures (eg instructions for equipment they will be using or security arrangements if they are away from the organisation)
- emergency procedures, location of emergency exits and where equipment is kept
- tasks and boundaries of their role
- existing and potential risks they may face
- who to talk to if they have any health and safety concerns and how to report any health and safety incidents and hazards
- what situations they should remove themselves from
- arrangements for debriefing or counselling after an incident or other traumatic circumstance
- results of any safety tests or monitoring you are aware of.

You should also give volunteers a written statement setting out their role and responsibilities. Remember to think about the language, culture and literacy needs of your volunteers.

Emergency and first aid arrangements

Your organisation needs to have a plan to deal with emergencies that may occur. The plan should include measures to be taken to eliminate or reduce the risk of emergencies occurring and information on the workplace including:

- plans showing the location of high-risk areas
- fire escape routes and exits
- who is responsible for carrying out emergency procedures
- how to protect service users from external threats (eg a 'lock down' plan in childcare services).

The plan should also have procedures for:

- training volunteers on emergency arrangements and keeping training records
- emergency evacuation, including procedures for evacuating people with limited mobility, clients, contractors and other people who may be in the premises
- fire equipment maintenance (eg ensuring equipment is regularly tested).

Providing first aid facilities is necessary to meet the health and safety needs of volunteers if they are injured or become ill. The facilities required depend on the nature of the workplace and the activities being performed. As a minimum, you should provide first aid kits (including in vehicles). You may also need to have first aid officers (trained) and first aid rooms.

Supporting injured volunteers return to work

If a volunteer is injured or ill because of their volunteer role, it is essential to their recovery that you keep in touch and encourage and support their return. Showing support and interest in their progress demonstrates your commitment to their wellbeing.

For the volunteer, a speedy return can restore self-confidence and help them get back into the social and community networks they enjoy. Your organisation also benefits by retaining the volunteer's skills and experience and avoiding the costs of recruiting and training a new volunteer.

All contact with injured or ill volunteers however should be made with sensitivity and not in a way that makes them feel pressured to return to their role when they might not be ready.

Legal responsibilities

If you employ paid staff, you have legal responsibilities to return an employee with a work-related injury or illness to work as soon as possible and prevent a recurrence of the injury. This includes preparing an occupational rehabilitation program, individual return to work plan and risk-management plan.

You should take the same steps to help volunteers return as soon as it is safe if they choose to do so, although it isn't a legal requirement.

Common injuries and illnesses in community services

The following table lists injuries and illnesses that can result from common activities that volunteers undertake for community service organisations, and their possible causes.

Activity	Injuries and illnesses that may result	Possible causes
Driving a vehicle	Death or injury in a road accident due to:	
	the driver	• lack of medical fitness • fatigue • use of medication • lack of experience or training for the vehicle • inappropriate licence for the vehicle • use of mobile phone while driving.
	passengers	• not using seatbelts or restraints • excessive numbers • challenging behaviour • presence of equipment such as oxygen cylinders, wheelchairs, walking frames or guide dogs • dehydration on hot days.
	vehicle	• not roadworthy • not checked for faults before the journey • no reverse warning signal • volunteer's own vehicle not suitable for the task.
	driving conditions	• low visibility due to rain, fog or poor lighting • slippery roads • traffic congestion.
	Lack of rescue plan if the vehicle breaks down	

Activity	Injuries and illnesses that may result	Possible causes
Fundraising	Death or injury in a road accident	• lack of high-visibility clothing and suitable footwear • lack of training and instruction • lack of supervision.
	Cancer from exposure to sun	• roadside collection between 11am and 3pm (ie warmest part of the day) • long periods of exposure • lack of sun hats and other clothing to prevent or reduce exposure.
	Injury from violence while doorknocking	• doorknocking alone • lack of training and instruction • carrying large quantities of cash.
Working alone in a private home	Injury caused by risks within the home	• no information gathered about the home before the first visit • volunteer using hazardous or unfamiliar equipment • lack of training and instruction in hazard identification.
	Injury following aggression or verbal abuse by someone within the home	• no information gathered about the client before the first visit • no contact arrangements and organisation unaware of the worker's schedule • other people present in the home whose behaviour is aggressive and/or who are substance affected • volunteer still wants to deliver a service despite unease with circumstances in the home • lack of instruction to withdraw if uncomfortable • visits made in the evening or when other people are unlikely to be around • carrying cash or valuables.
	Injury caused by an animal	• volunteer still wants to deliver a service despite danger • lack of instruction to withdraw or ask the owner to restrain the animal.

Activity	Injuries and illnesses that may result	Possible causes
Running a charity shop	Death or injury because emergency exit is obstructed	• congested aisles • loose items on the floor.
	Injury caused by slips, trips and falls	• wet flooring • loose items on floor.
	Injury from fire	• old wiring • heaters near clothing • old fire extinguishers.
	Stress or injury following aggression or verbal abuse from clients or others	• difficult customers • easy access to money in the cash register.
	Back injury	• moving and handling heavy bags and boxes • lack of working space leading to poor working postures • bending or twisting while sorting goods.
	Cuts or wounds with possibility of infection	• sharp objects in donated goods being sorted (eg needlesticks, broken glass) • use of equipment such as steamers, irons and price tag guns.
	Injury caused by falling objects	• items stored at high level.
	Dermatitis and other occupational diseases	• use of cleaning substances.
	Deterioration in general health	• poor lighting • poor ventilation • poor temperature control.
	Children being injured	• access to sharp objects or chemicals on low shelves.
Running a sausage sizzle	Back or shoulder injury	• heavy or unwieldy BBQ equipment. • equipment transported in an unsuitable vehicle (difficult to get out of vehicle or put back into vehicle).
	Burns resulting from contact with hotplate or from fire	• equipment inadequately maintained • equipment used by people without appropriate training and experience • lack of training in fire procedures.

Activity	Injuries and illnesses that may result	Possible causes
General activities	Psychological injury and illness (eg stress, depression)	• demanding workload and work environment • lack of control over how the work is done • lack of encouragement, training and access to support services • unresolved conflict • challenging client behaviour • lack of role clarity • poor management of organisational change.
	Injury or illness caused by work equipment	• electrocution or electric shock • contact with moving parts • contact with hot or cold parts • sharp surfaces or blades • noise and vibration • fire (eg old equipment, faulty wiring, poorly maintained gas equipment) • entrapment or entanglement • tasks requiring work at height (eg from a ladder) • heavy/awkward equipment (eg vacuum cleaner or wheelchair) • inappropriate choice of equipment for activity.
	Illness caused by contact with hazardous substances	• lack of information about the health effects of substances used in the work (eg material safety data sheets) • substances not labelled • volunteers and clients who may come into contact with substances that are not labelled • use of hazardous substances not eliminated, or replaced with use of less hazardous substances • lack of training about health effects and use of substances.
	Injury or illness caused by a poor working environment	• working in an unsafe structure or a hazardous outdoor environment • exposure to asbestos • unsafe entrances, exits, steps, stairs and ramps • slippery and uneven floors • cramped work spaces • uncomfortable temperatures • poor ventilation • excessive noise • insufficient lighting • obstructions and trip hazards • non-ergonomic work stations • insufficient and/or non-hygienic toilets and hand basins.

Case studies

These case studies are intended only as a guide to what control measures could be put in place to deal with health and safety risks in particular work situations. They are not a substitute for carrying out a risk assessment and determining the most appropriate control measures for your organisation in consultation with volunteers and employees.

Case study 1 – Volunteer drivers

Volunteer drivers from an organisation used their own vehicles to transport patients to and from a medical centre. Some of the patients had complex medical needs or behaviours that required the attention of the driver during the journey. Occasionally oxygen cylinders had to be carried in the vehicle.

In consultation with the drivers, the organisation carried out a risk assessment of the task. The following risks were identified:

- manual handling injuries from loading and unloading equipment and assisting patients
- injuries from road traffic accidents (eg due to distraction of the driver or driver fatigue)
- medical emergencies during the journey
- fire as a result of inadequately restrained oxygen cylinders.

It was agreed that in the medium term, the use of private vehicles for this task should be discontinued. Wherever possible, the organisation provided or arranged for suitable vehicles for patients' needs. It applied for funding for the purchase of a suitable vehicle which would be fitted with safe and secure means of carrying equipment such as oxygen cylinders and wheelchairs. The organisation also implemented the following risk control measures:

- drivers carried out routine vehicle checks each day using a checklist
- drivers and their supervisors agreed on the route to be taken for each journey and discussed the needs of patients to be collected and equipment to be carried. The discussion covered when drivers were to take breaks to ensure they didn't become fatigued
- where the patient was assessed as needing medical assistance or having needs which might distract the driver, the organisation arranged for a suitable escort such as a first aider or professional nurse
- a procedure was developed for vehicle breakdowns, including arrangements for patients to complete their journey by a back-up vehicle
- a procedure was developed for managing a medical emergency (eg an emergency pack was carried in each vehicle and each driver was provided with contact numbers and a mobile phone). Note: The procedure didn't permit use of the mobile phone while driving the vehicle
- where lifting heavy items into the vehicle couldn't be avoided, drivers were trained in safe lifting techniques.

It was agreed that all procedures would be reviewed every 12 months and progress on implementing the control measures would be reviewed every six months.

Case study 2 – Volunteers at an animal shelter

An animal shelter enlisted the help of volunteers to clean out cages, feed and water animals and receive unwanted domestic animals being dropped off at the shelter for new owners to be found. There was little supervision of the volunteers because it was recognised they were all animal lovers committed to the mission of the shelter. Sometimes the volunteers cleaned out the cages wearing unsuitable or no footwear. Volunteers receiving animals were sometimes subjected to abuse from owners who didn't expect they would have to pay a fee for leaving their animal at the shelter. Some volunteers felt intimidated.

Following the departure of a number of volunteers, the shelter decided to seek the assistance of a consultant to carry out a risk assessment. As part of the assessment, the consultant held meetings with volunteers and employees. The following risks were identified:

- diseases from handling animals without suitable precautions and clothing
- back and shoulder injuries from twisting and straining while lifting animals in and out of cages and cleaning out the cages
- injury and stress from violence by animal owners
- stress resulting from euthanasia of unwanted animals.

The consultant's report recommended a number of risk-control measures. The key measures included:

- volunteers to be supervised by employees at all times
- volunteers to be provided with training in animal hygiene
- a procedure (in which volunteers were trained in) to be developed for cleaning out cages
- the animal house and equipment to be redesigned as soon as reasonably practicable so volunteers wouldn't have to stretch and twist to move animals
- at least two people to be present at all times when receiving animals and an alarm system installed so other staff could be summoned immediately if needed
- a process to be initiated for volunteers, employees and the management jointly to identify causes of stress at the shelter and to identify measures to address them
- new volunteers to be provided with induction training, including training on the shelter's health and safety procedures.

It was agreed that all procedures would be reviewed every 12 months and progress would be reviewed jointly by volunteers, employees and management every six months.

Case studies

Case study 3 – Volunteers collecting donations at the roadside

A large charity involves volunteers twice a year to collect roadside donations. The volunteers report to local centres early in the morning of the collection day to pick up their bright t-shirts and collection boxes. They are despatched in small groups to major intersections in the local area with instructions to approach as many vehicle drivers as possible to collect donations. They are asked to return to the local centre at about 4pm with their collection boxes.

The charity is concerned after hearing a volunteer of another charity was struck by a vehicle while doing a roadside collection. The charity's reputation was apparently damaged through articles in the local papers. The CEO has called for the organisation to carry out a risk assessment. As part of the process, a group of last year's volunteers are invited to participate in a focus group to identify hazards and risks involved in roadside collections.

The organisation's employees and volunteer focus group identified the following risks:

- injuries from being struck by a vehicle
- injuries from slipping or tripping on the road (eg because of unsuitable footwear)
- injuries as a result of a hold-up of an isolated volunteer
- skin cancer through prolonged exposure to the sun during summer collections.

Following further discussion with paid staff and volunteers, the charity developed a procedure for roadside collections. The procedure included:

- all volunteers to be briefed centrally the day before the collection day about the safety procedures, including wearing appropriate footwear
- an employee to be allocated as team leader at each intersection – they are issued with a mobile phone to ensure immediate contact with the emergency services when required
- an employee (in a vehicle) to visit each intersection every couple of hours to check there are no problems, take the full collection tins and provide new ones
- sun hats and skin lotion to be issued to all volunteers and for t-shirts to be replaced with long-sleeved sun-resistant shirts and lightweight high visibility vests (also ask volunteers to wear jeans or other sun-protective clothing)
- after each collection day, the organisation to invite the team leaders from each intersection to a half-day workshop to debrief on the collection day and review the health and safety procedures.

It was agreed that all procedures would be reviewed every 12 months and progress would be reviewed jointly by volunteers, employees and charity management every six months.

Case studies

Case study 4 – Volunteers providing home help services

A church agency in a large rural area involves volunteers to provide home help services to aged people or clients with disabilities who live alone and need assistance with day-to-day living. While the volunteers generally visit the same clients every week, sometimes there are variations – such as when another volunteer is not available or the agency accepts a new client. Generally the clients are welcoming and keen for a chat but occasionally the home help volunteer has to deal with clients (or other people in the client's home) who have been drinking and/or are threatening. One or two clients also have dogs which behave in a threatening manner when the volunteer enters the client's home.

The volunteers generally use equipment provided by the client to carry out cleaning and other tasks.

The agency's health and safety officer, based in Melbourne, has visited the rural centre and requested risk assessments be done in relation to all the agency services. Centrally a generic risk assessment has been prepared, but the rural centre decides to use it as a starting point and to seek input from the volunteers themselves.

For the type of issues that might be covered in relation to driving to the clients' homes, see case study 1.

Combining the information from the generic risk assessment and the input from the local volunteers, the agency identified the following risks:

- physical injuries caused by faulty, heavy or awkward equipment provided by the client and constrained working areas
- physical injuries caused by a violent client or animals
- electrical problems from aged electrical circuits in private homes
- stress as a result of uncertain or hostile working environment.

Case studies

Case study 4 – Volunteers providing home help services (cont)

Following discussions (between the health and safety officer, the agency's local management and a group of volunteers), the agency agreed to implement the following control measures:

- provide standard equipment for volunteers, wherever reasonably practicable, to reduce the risks of back and shoulder injuries
- give volunteers information to help them avoid illnesses (such as dermatitis) arising from frequent use of household cleaning agents and provide a list of permitted cleaning products
- make it a requirement that clients ensure any electrical equipment used by volunteers is inspected and tagged by a suitably qualified person at least every two years
- issue volunteers with a portable safety switch that must be plugged into an electrical socket before any appliance is attached
- collect information that sets out any risks that might be present in each home to be visited. Information to be gathered by a trained supervisor and shared on a confidential basis with each volunteer (eg other people present, presence of animals, emergency exits, history of violence)
- develop procedures for delivery of the service. The procedures will emphasise the volunteer's right to withdraw from a client's home at any time and require domestic animals be restrained if necessary. All volunteers will be trained in the procedures
- provide volunteers with a mobile phone to contact the agency in case of emergency. A contact arrangement system or buddy system will be introduced so each volunteer's whereabouts are known and action can be taken if necessary.

It was agreed that procedures would be reviewed every 12 months at the Melbourne office and more often at a local level until management and volunteers were satisfied they were settled and working effectively.

Definitions

Community sector organisation (CSO)

Not-for-profit non-government organisation that generally relies on high levels of volunteers to provide a welfare service. Community sector organisations (CSOs) range from small informal community groups to large incorporated organisations. Services may include:

- childcare
- children and family support
- disability
- domestic violence
- drug and alcohol
- emergency relief (including financial counselling and gambling)
- education (eg neighbourhood houses)
- housing and homelessness support
- information and support
- mental health
- multicultural services (including migrant resource centres)
- youth.

Employee

A person employed under a contract of employment or contract of training.

Hazard

A potential source of harm or injury.

Reasonably practicable

All of the following things must be taken into account when deciding whether it is reasonably practicable to control a risk:

- the likelihood of harm occurring
- the type of consequences of the harm, if the harm occurs
- what the employer knows (or ought to know) about the hazard or risk and ways of controlling it
- the availability and suitability of ways to control the hazard or risk
- the cost of controlling the hazard or risk.

Also see the WorkSafe Position on *How WorkSafe applies the law in relation to reasonably practicable*.

Risk

The likelihood of a hazard occurring and the severity of the harm if it does occur.

Volunteer

An activity that takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects that is:

- to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion
- for no financial payment
- in designated volunteer positions only.

Definition courtesy of *Volunteering Australia*.

More information

WorkSafe **(worksafe.vic.gov.au)**

Stresswise: preventing work-related stress – A guide for employers in the public sector

Working safely in community services

Volunteering Australia **(volunteeringaustralia.org)**

Running the risk? Risk management tool for volunteer involving organisations

Useful further reading

Health and Safety Executive, UK **(hse.gov.uk)**

Charity and volunteer workers: A guide to health and safety at work

New Zealand Department of Labour **(workinfo.govt.nz)**

Working safely for your community: health and safety guidelines for community and volunteer organisations

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Warrnambool................03 5564 3200

Controlling OHS hazards and risks

A handbook for workplaces

Work Safe VICTORIA

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Contents

Introduction

Workplaces can be dangerous; there are many hazards that have the potential to kill, injure or cause ill health or disease.

Protecting the health and safety of people in the workplace is a community expectation that makes good business sense.

A safe and healthy workplace, and compliance with the law, does not happen by chance or guesswork.

This guide sets out the method that should be used to control OHS hazards and risks.

Who should use this guide?

This guide is written for employers, self-employed people and those with management or control of workplaces who have duties to ensure health and safety under the OHS Act and its regulations. These people are referred to in this guide as 'duty-holders'.

This guide can also be used by HSRs and workers to assist in resolving OHS issues in the workplace.

Controlling OHS hazards and risks

Workplaces can be dangerous; there are many hazards that have the potential to kill, injure or cause ill health or disease.

Protecting the health and safety of people in the workplace is a community expectation that makes good business sense. Workplace incidents can have a dramatic impact on people's lives (people in the workplace, families and friends), and they can have significant financial impacts on organisations through loss of skilled staff and lost production of goods or services.

Duty-holders have obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act) to ensure the health and safety of people 'so far as reasonably practicable'.

A safe and healthy workplace and compliance with the law does not happen by chance or guesswork. Good health and safety is all about eliminating and controlling hazards and risks. This is best achieved by a proper consideration of the sources of harm and what can be done to prevent the harm from occurring.

This guide sets out the method that should be used to control OHS hazards and risks. The OHS Act duties anticipate, and WorkSafe expects, that the method set out in this guide will be used for the control of OHS hazards and risks.

The method does not require elaborate systems or large amounts of paper to support it. How the method is put into action depends on the complexity of the hazards or risks, the nature of the organisation and how its business is conducted.

In straightforward situations, the method is no more than a way of thinking through a problem and taking action. In complex situations or in large organisations, appropriate systems and procedures to support the method may be needed to ensure good health and safety outcomes and compliance.

This method, and the processes that surround it, should never be seen as ends in themselves. The method is a tool for arriving at controls for OHS hazards and risks that provide the highest level of protection for people that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Introduction

Consultation with HSRs and employees is critical

Consultation with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), employees and others is a critical part of controlling OHS hazards and risks.

Apart from it being required by law, involving HSRs, employees and others at the workplace in the method makes sense. The people who do the job often know and can provide insight into how hazards and risks can come about, and about the workability and effectiveness of potential controls. They also have to work with the control measures and they will do this more effectively if they understand the reasons for them and how they work.

Consultation with HSRs, employees and independent contractors and their employees at the workplace in each step of the process is required by law; that is, when:

- identifying and assessing hazards and risks
- making decisions about controlling risks
- making decisions about procedures for providing information and training to employees and monitoring the health of employees.

Consultation must involve sharing information with those people, giving them a reasonable opportunity to express their views and taking those views into account. If there is a Health and Safety Committee it may be useful to engage the committee in the process as well.

Key concepts

There are four important concepts that need to be understood so that this guide makes sense:

1. A hazard is something currently, or may in future be, in the work environment that has the potential to cause harm to people.

2. A risk is the chance (or likelihood) that a hazard will cause harm to people.

3. Harm is death, injury, illness (including psychological illness) or disease that may be suffered by a person from a hazard or risk.

4. A control is a thing, work process or system of work that eliminates an OHS hazard or risk or, if this is not reasonably practicable, reduces the risk so far as reasonably practicable.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Figure 1 – Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION

STEP 1
Identify Hazards

Know what hazards
are present

STEP 2
Assess Risks

Understand the nature of
the risks, the harm that
could occur and the
likelihood of it occurring

STEP 4
Check Controls

Review the implemented
controls to ensure they
are working as planned
and effective

STEP 3
**Control Hazards
and Risks**

Determine the options for
eliminating or reducing the
risks, select the best controls
and implement them

CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Step 1 – Identify hazards

Identifying hazards involves finding all of the foreseeable hazards in the workplace and understanding the possible harm that the hazards may cause.

What to look for

A hazard is something in the workplace (or that will be in the workplace) that can cause harm to people. Table 1 below lists some common types of workplace hazards.

A piece of plant, a substance or a work process may have many different hazards, and each of these hazards needs to be identified. For instance, a production line may have mechanical hazards, noise hazards, electrical hazards, body-stressing hazards associated with manual handling and psychological hazards associated with the pace of work.

Table 1: Common workplace hazards

Mechanical hazards	Plant, equipment and items (and parts of them) that have the potential to cut, rip, tear, abrade, crush, penetrate, produce projectiles or cause sudden impact.
Chemical and biological hazards	Chemicals, compounds, materials, powders, dusts and vapours that have the potential to impair health, have adverse effects on human reproduction, cause disease or have explosive, flammable, toxic or corrosive properties.
Sources of energy	A range of sources of energy that have the potential to cause harm, including electricity, heat, cold, noise, high-powered light and damaging radioactive sources.
Body stressing or impact hazards	Activities that cause stress to the muscles or skeleton, including manual handling of people, animals, goods or materials, and things or circumstances that can cause a person to slip, trip or fall at the same level.
Gravity	Activities that are carried out where a person can fall or an object can fall onto people.
Psychological hazards	Events, systems of work or other circumstances that have the potential to lead to psychological and associated illness, including work-related stress, bullying, workplace violence and work-related fatigue.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Methods for identifying hazards

There are a number of methods for identifying hazards. The following are the most common:

Inspecting the workplace

A walk through the workplace is a direct way of identifying many hazards. This walk-through can be assisted by using a hazard checklist developed in consultation with employees to suit the workplace.

Inspections should not be limited to physical things such as plant, equipment or buildings and structures. The inspection should also look at systems of work and work procedures.

The walk-through may detect straightforward problems and action should be taken on these immediately:

- Some may be simple matters such as a risk control not being used or not working properly, or things being put in the wrong place. There is no need to do a formal risk assessment – action can be taken without delay to eliminate or control the risk – and consultation can take place on the spot with the employees or HSRs doing the inspections, and with the people doing the work.

- At the other end of the scale, a walk-through may detect a situation that represents an immediate or substantial danger to people doing work. The work causing the risk should either be stopped immediately or the people moved to safety.

Finding and applying available information

A large amount of information is readily available for particular industries, types of activity and job types. Sources of information include:

- WorkSafe publishes information on its website and in hard copy on a range of OHS topics and industries. Visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or read the WorkSafe publication *More information about Controlling OHS hazards and risks*.

- Industry associations and unions can provide information about hazards in particular industries or particular jobs.

- Manufacturers and suppliers can provide information about hazards associated with specific plant, substances or processes.

- Safety Data Sheets (SDS) from manufacturers or suppliers of workplace substances.

- WorkSafe's workers' compensation insurance agents.

- Technical and OHS specialists.

Testing and measuring

Some hazards such as noise and atmospheric contaminants may require measurement to decide if further action is required. For instance, there are simple comparisons that can be made to estimate general noise levels (eg can people working within close proximity be easily heard?), and testing and measuring can provide a more accurate determination of the hazard (eg noise meters, atmospheric testing).

Surveys of employees and others at the workplace

Conducting a survey of employees and others who work at the workplace can provide valuable information about matters such as workplace bullying, occupational stress, as well as muscle and skeletal aches and pains that can signal potential hazards.

Analysing records and data

Records of injuries or incidents and the results of any investigations are useful sources of information about hazards. Larger organisations may even have records or data that show incident and injury trends.

WorkSafe and other workplace safety authorities publish data about the common sources of injury in particular industries. Similarly, some industry associations may have data about the hazards that have caused injuries in the industries that they cover.

Resources and tools

- Refer to Appendix 2 for a general form to assist in hazard identification and risk assessment.

- WorkSafe publishes guides and checklists to assist in the identification of specific hazards. Visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or read the WorkSafe publication *More information about Controlling OHS hazards and risks*.

Hazard identification outcomes

Hazard identification provides a complete knowledge of the hazards for the particular part of the workplace assessed. Keep a list of what the hazards were and where they were identified to ensure that nothing is forgotten.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Step 2 – Assess risks

Risk assessment is a process for developing knowledge and understanding about hazards and risks so that sound decisions can be taken about control. A formal risk assessment is unnecessary if the knowledge and

understanding already exist. However, there will be many times when a risk assessment is the best way of building knowledge and understanding.

Risk assessment assists in determining:

- what levels of harm can occur
- how harm can occur
- the likelihood that harm will occur.

A risk assessment will provide knowledge to make informed decisions about controlling hazards and risks. The risk assessment needs to be tailored to the situation and to the organisation in which it is conducted; it can be as simple as structured discussion during consultation or it can be more elaborate and formal.

When should a risk assessment be done?

A risk assessment should be done when:

- there is only limited knowledge about a hazard or risk, or about how the risk may result in injury or illness
- there is uncertainty about whether all of the things that can go wrong have been found
- the situation involves a number of different hazards that are part of the same work process or piece of plant and there is a lack of understanding about how the hazards may impact upon each other to produce new or greater risks.

There are common events in the life of an organisation when a risk assessment should be done. These events typically result in a lack of understanding about OHS hazards and risks or what needs to be done to control them. Appendix 1 lists common events that should trigger a formal risk assessment.

When a risk assessment is not necessary

Many hazards and risks are well known and have well established and accepted control measures. A formal risk assessment is not required when:

- OHS laws require some hazards or risks to be controlled in a specific way - these requirements must be complied with
- other laws require specific risk controls to be implemented, eg gas and electrical safety and dangerous goods laws - these requirements must also be complied with
- a WorkSafe Compliance Code or other WorkSafe guidance sets out a way of controlling a hazard or risk and the guidance is applicable to the situation – this guidance can simply be followed
- there are well known and accepted controls that are in widespread use in the particular industry, that are suited to the circumstances in the workplace and provide acceptable control of the hazards or risks - these controls can simply be implemented.

Doing a risk assessment – work out what levels of harm can occur

The level of harm from a hazard will influence decisions about how much effort is needed to control the risks.

The hazards in the workplace should have been identified in Step 1. The first task in the risk assessment is to work out what harm each hazard can cause.

This involves looking at the potential of the hazard and making an assumption that a person will be exposed to it when the harm actually occurs. A hazard may have the potential to cause a range of different types of harm ranging from minor discomfort to a serious disabling illness, injury or death. The possible levels of harm need to be understood.

For example, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders may be stored in a factory room. One of the hazards of LPG is its potential to catch fire or cause an explosion. If the LPG escapes:

- the gas may disperse harmlessly
- if ignited the room could be set on fire, causing burns to anyone in the room
- if enough gas escaped, there could be an explosion that could destroy the room, damage areas outside and kill or injure anyone nearby.

Ask the following questions to estimate the degree of harm that could result from each hazard:

- What harm can occur? Could the hazard cause death, serious injuries, illness or less serious harm, such as minor injuries requiring first aid?
- What factors could influence the severity of an injury? For example, the distance someone might fall or the concentration of a particular substance will determine the level of harm that is possible. The harm may occur immediately something goes wrong (eg injury from a fall) or it may take time for it to become apparent (eg illness from long term exposure to a substance).
- How many people could be harmed? If something goes wrong, is one person affected or are many people affected? For example, a mobile crane collapse on a busy construction site has the potential to kill or injure a large number of people.
- Are there circumstances that could magnify the severity of an injury or incident? Using information about the nature of risks and the effectiveness of controls can provide an indication of the potential harm when more than one thing goes wrong.

When assessing how things may go wrong, look more broadly than the immediate effects. Can one failure initiate other failures? Is there something in the workplace that can be affected to cause the incident to become more serious?

For example, failure of electrical supply can cause risk controls that rely on electricity in the workplace to become ineffective unless they are 'fail-safe'. The presence of large amounts of unnecessary combustible materials in a workplace can spell disaster in the event of an initial minor fire that is not controlled quickly.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Doing a risk assessment – work out how hazards may cause harm

A sequence of events has to occur before a hazard will cause harm to a person. Understanding the sequence of events provides valuable information about how to control the risk from the hazard. If one or more of the events in the sequence can be stopped or changed, the overall risk may be eliminated entirely or reduced.

One way of working out the sequence of events is to determine the starting point where things begin to go wrong and then ask, 'If this happens, what may happen next?'. Continuing to ask this question will provide a list of events that results in the harm eventuating. Figure 2 shows how this may be done.

Figure 2 – Working out a sequence of events

One hazard for a customer service officer dealing face to face with customers is assault. If an assault occurs, the officer may suffer shock, stress or physical injury. The sequence of events for the assault might be:

A customer comes into the service area with an issue about service.

What may happen next?

The customer service officer is unable to satisfy the customer's concerns or issues.

What may happen next?

During the service discussion with the customer service officer, the customer becomes upset.

What may happen next?

The customer service officer is unable to calm the customer and the customer becomes aggressive.

What may happen next?

The situation escalates. There is no protection offered by the counter.

What may happen next?

The customer service officer is assaulted.

Looking forward to the control step for this example, some of the potential control measures become clear. A counter area can be designed to make it difficult to reach officers, but still allow service to be delivered; escape routes can be provided; aggression management training could be provided to manage upset customers.

There may be other ways to prevent customers from becoming angry when experiencing the organisation's services in the first place.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Each of the identified risks associated with a hazard needs to be analysed to develop an understanding of how harm can be caused. In doing so:

- take account of existing health and safety controls

- look at how work is actually being carried out rather than relying on written manuals and work procedures

- look at abnormal situations as well as how things are normally meant to occur. Consider maintenance and cleaning as well as breakdowns of equipment and failures of health and safety controls.

Doing a risk assessment – work out the likelihood of harm occurring

The likelihood that a hazard will cause harm will influence decisions about how much effort needs to be taken to control the risks.

Estimating likelihood can be based on what is known about a risk, the actual circumstances of the workplace and the way work is really done. Table 2 sets out questions that can help estimate likelihood.

It should be sufficient to simply rate the likelihood as one of the following:

- certain to occur

- very likely

- likely

- unlikely

- rare.

It is not usually necessary to quantify frequencies or probabilities to understand the likelihood of harm occurring.

Resources and tools

- Refer to Appendix 2 for a general form to assist in hazard identification and risk assessment. WorkSafe publishes specific guides and checklists to assist

- in the identification of specific hazards. Visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or read the WorkSafe publication *More information about Controlling OHS hazards and risks*.

Risk assessment outcomes

Carrying out a risk assessment provides an understanding of what harm hazards can cause, how the hazards cause harm and the likelihood that harm will occur.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Table 2: Typical questions to ask to estimate likelihood

Typical questions to ask in determining likelihood	Explanation and examples
How often does a hazard have the potential to cause harm?	A risk may exist all of the time or it may only exist intermittently. The more often a risk is present, the greater the likelihood that it will result in harm.
	For example: Crushing is one of the hazards arising from meshing gears in an enclosed gear box. A crush can only occur if the gearbox is open during maintenance, and therefore the potential for harm will not occur very often.
	Body stressing is one of the hazards arising from continuously lifting heavy boxes, and there is always the potential to cause harm whenever the work is done.
How effective are current controls in reducing risk?	In most cases the risks being assessed will already be subject to some control measures. The likelihood of harm resulting from the risk will depend upon how adequate and effective the current measures are.
	For example: Four wheel drive vehicles have been introduced into a government department's fleet because of the need for officers to travel off-road. Controls have been implemented for the current fleet, including safe driving procedures on good roads. Off-road driving by inexperienced staff increases the risk of crashes/injuries and existing controls may need to be upgraded.
How could variations in an organisation's operating conditions increase the risk?	The demand for goods or services in many organisations varies throughout the year. Changes in demand may be seasonal, depend on environmental conditions or be affected by market fluctuations that are driven by a range of events. Meeting increased demand may cause unusual loads on people, plant and equipment and systems of work. Failures may be more likely.
	For example: Inner city restaurants and bistros are very busy in the period prior to Christmas, placing extra demands on kitchen and serving staff. The increase in volume of food to be prepared and serving a larger number of patrons increases the potential for human error and the likelihood that injuries will occur.
Can risks become more likely to cause harm because of the working environment?	The risk of injury or illness may become more likely if:
	• *Environmental conditions change.* For example, work performed in high temperatures in a confined space increases the potential for mistakes because workers become fatigued more quickly; wet conditions make walkways and other things slippery.
	• *People are required to work quickly.* The rate at which work is done (eg number of repetitions) can over-stress a person's body or make it more likely that mistakes will be made.
	• *There is insufficient light or poor ventilation.*
How long might people be exposed to the harm?	The longer that someone is exposed to a risk, the greater the likelihood that harm may result.
	For example: Noise causes hearing loss; the extent of which is dependent on the exposure time and noise levels. The longer a person is exposed to noisy work, the more likely it is that they will suffer hearing loss.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Table 2: Typical questions to ask to estimate likelihood

Typical questions to ask in determining likelihood	Explanation and examples
Could the way people act and behave affect the likelihood of a hazard causing harm?	The possibility that people may make mistakes, misuse items, act spontaneously or panic in particular situations needs to be taken into account. The effects of fatigue or stress may make it more likely that harm will occur.
Do the differences between individuals in the workplace make it more likely for harm to occur?	People with disabilities may be more likely to suffer harm if the workplace or process is designed exclusively for able people.
	New or young workers may be more likely to suffer harm because of inexperience.
	People who do not normally work at the workplace will have less knowledge than employees who normally work there, and may be more likely to suffer harm. These people include contractors, visitors or members of the public.
	If there are other organisations sharing the workplace, one employer's operations may affect their workers and vice versa, making harm more likely.

Step 3 – Control hazards and risks

Duty-holders are required to ensure health and safety by controlling risks. Risks must be controlled by eliminating them so far as reasonably practicable or, if this is not possible, reducing the risks that remain so far as reasonably practicable.

Arriving at appropriate controls involves:

- Identifying the options for controls. A control option may be a single control or it may be made up of a number of different controls that together provide protection against a risk.

- Considering the control options and selecting a suitable option that most effectively eliminates or reduces risk in the circumstances.

- Implementing the selected option.

Note: mandatory controls specified in the OHS regulations must be implemented regardless of the results of the method in this guide.

Reasonably practicable

Duty-holders are required to ensure health and safety so far as reasonably practicable. Determining what is reasonably practicable to protect people from harm involves weighing up all the following matters and making a judgement about what is reasonable in the circumstances:

- The likelihood of a hazard or risk occurring.

- The degree of harm that would result if the hazard or risk occurred.

- What the duty-holder knows, or reasonably ought to know, about the hazard or risk, and any ways of eliminating or reducing the risk.

- The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or reduce the hazard or risk.

- The cost of eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk.

Step 1 and 2 will provide information about the hazards and risks in the workplace and their likelihood and degree of harm.

Figure 3 – Effectiveness and reliability of controls

HIGHEST   MOST

Eliminate the hazards or risks
- Eliminate the hazards or eliminate the risks

Change the risks to reduce them
- Substitute the risks with lesser risks
- Reduce the risks through engineering changes or changes to systems of work
- Isolate people from the risks

Change people to reduce the risks
- Reduce the level of harm using administrative actions
- Use personal protective equipment to protect people from harm

Level of protection   Reliability

LOWEST   LEAST

Some controls are more effective than others

The various ways of controlling risks can be ranked from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest. *See Figure 3.*

According to this ranking:

- The most effective protection measure is to eliminate the risk, which can be done by eliminating the hazard. If the hazard cannot be eliminated, then eliminate as many of the risks associated with the hazard as possible.

- The second most effective measure is to reduce the risks that remain by changing the risk to reduce the likelihood and/or level of harm. These measures are more effective than those that rely on controlling the behaviour of people.

- The least effective measure is to change the way people expose themselves to the risk or their behaviour. This does nothing to change the risk itself, but relies on protecting people by controlling the behaviour or skill levels of people, limiting the chance of human failure, limiting exposure time or by providing personal protective equipment for people to use.

The OHS regulations contain requirements concerning the order in which the controls referred to in Figure 3 must be considered. These regulations must be complied with.

Eliminating the hazard or risk

Eliminating hazards

A hazard can be eliminated if it is not really necessary to have the hazard in the workplace to start with.

> *Example: Mezzanine floors or space above offices in warehouses and manufacturing areas are often used to store archived records and disused items. These areas can become fire hazards and there are fall hazards if proper access arrangements are not made. These hazards are not necessary. Good records management and discipline concerning appropriate storage or disposal of unwanted items can eliminate these hazards.*

Eliminating risks

A hazard may not be able to be eliminated if doing so means that the end product or service cannot be made or delivered.

> *Example: A commercial kitchen that prepares fried food requires a deep fryer. If the fryer was not available, this type of food could not be prepared. This hazard is necessary for the operation of the kitchen.*

A hazard will normally have several different risks associated with it and these should have been identified in the risk assessment. The hazard may have the potential to cause different kinds of harm or be capable of causing different levels of the same type of harm. These are different risks.

High temperature oil is one of the hazards of a deep fryer. There is a risk that a kitchen worker may be burned in various ways, including:

- minor burns as a result of spitting oil when damp food is placed into it

- minor burns from oil dripping from cooked food

- serious burns to a hand or arm if the person's arm slips into the hot oil

- serious burns to the face and upper body if a pot of water is inadvertently spilled into the hot oil causing it to be violently ejected out of the fryer.

If the hazard cannot be eliminated the next step is to find out how many of the risks associated with the hazard can be eliminated by making it impossible for a particular kind or level of harm to happen.

Review the sequence of events that leads to the harm occurring. Can the sequence of events be broken by a control in such a way that the harm can never happen?

> *Example: Continuing with the kitchen example above, the hazard from the hot oil cannot be eliminated. However, one of the risks – the risk of serious burns from water being spilled into the fryer – can be eliminated by ensuring that the kitchen is designed so that food preparation involving pots of water is done in another area of the kitchen away from the fryer.*

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Reducing risks

If it is not possible to eliminate the hazards or all of the risks, steps need to be taken to reduce the likelihood or degree of harm of the hazards and risks that remain.

Changing the risk to reduce it

Changing the risk is the most effective way of reducing it because this approach is less reliant on people performing faultlessly.

The three approaches to changing risk to reduce it are to:

1. substitute the risk with a lesser risk

2. reduce the risk by using engineering methods or changing the work process

3. isolating people from the risk.

> *Examples:*
>
> *1. Substitute the hazard with one that has lesser risks: For instance, the risks from body stressing (back and shoulder injuries) from lifting and moving 40kg bags of cement can be reduced by having cement delivered in 20kg bags. The likelihood and severity of injury will be reduced.*
>
> *2. Using engineering controls or changes to systems of work: Engineering controls involve the use of mechanical or electrical devices to reduce risk – a guard on a machine is an example of an engineering control.*
>
> Changes to systems of work involve changing the way work is done. For example, in home care, a site visit may be needed to assess the needs of a new client. The new client and the circumstances are unknown and a team of two people (rather than a single person) may be used to control possible risks in the home environment. As a further measure, the carer's supervisor telephones the carers to check the situation soon after arrival.
>
> *3. Isolating people from the source of risk: This involves physically separating people from the source of harm by space or by using barriers. For instance, a particularly noisy piece of equipment may be located in an area of a workplace where people do not normally work.*

Changing how people interact to reduce risk

This method of risk reduction does nothing to change the risk itself. It relies on changing the likelihood that a person may be harmed by changing how people interact with the hazard or risk, or how they behave.

On its own, this method of risk reduction is unreliable because it relies on people acting as expected. However, used in combination with more effective controls, it can be used to further reduce risk.

> *Examples:*
>
> *1. Administrative controls: One way is to control exposure time. For example, in a child care centre, a manual handling risk is ineffectively controlled by limiting the number of children that are lifted onto a change table each day by a child care worker.*
>
> *Another way is to control exposure by trying to ensure that people do the 'right thing'. For example, a child care worker is trained and instructed on correct lifting techniques for lifting children onto a change table, in an attempt to control the manual handling risk.*
>
> *Note: There are engineering controls (eg steps) available that are far more effective than either of the two controls described above.*
>
> *2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): PPE limits exposure by reducing the harmful effects of the hazard. Examples include breathing protection, aprons and protective eyewear.*

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Developing control options

Researching potential control measures

Information about risk controls may be obtained from:

- WorkSafe – Compliance Codes and guidance material
- industry associations
- unions
- manufacturers and suppliers of plant, substances and equipment used in your workplace.

In some cases, published information will provide guidance to whole work processes. In other cases, the guidance may relate to individual items of plant or how to safely use specific substances. The options can be implemented if they are appropriate to the situation and provide high levels of protection from the risk.

Developing specific control measures

Specific control measures may need to be developed if the available information is not relevant to the hazards and risks or circumstances at the workplace.

This can be done by referring to the sequence of events that were recorded during the risk assessment. For each of the events in the sequence, ask:

"What can be done to stop or change the event occurring?"

An example of this approach is shown in *Figure 4*.

Working through all of the events in the sequence will result in a list of all of the possible control measures that can be applied to eliminate or reduce the risk. There may be more than one measure for each of the events. The control options that have been identified need to be evaluated. The control option that is selected must be:

- Available – that is, it or its parts can be purchased, made to suit or be put in place.
- Suitable for the circumstance in the workplace – that is,
- it will work properly given the workplace conditions, work process and the people who do the work, and have the least impact on the delivery of goods or services.
- One that provides the highest level of protection for people and is the most reliable – that is, controls that are towards the top of the hierarchy in *Figure 3*.

  Where there are options for control, the ones that have the most impact on the likelihood and/or the degree of harm (eg elimination) should be implemented in preference to options that have lesser impacts. Where the hazard or risk has the potential to cause high levels of harm (eg death, serious injury or serious illness), more emphasis should be given to those controls that eliminate or reduce the level of harm, than those that reduce likelihood.

Controls must provide the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Figure 4 – Developing risk control measures

One hazard for a customer service officer is assault by a customer. The officer may suffer shock, stress or physical injury. The potential ways of either eliminating or reducing the likelihood or degree of harm can be identified by asking what can stop or change the events.

Time

| A customer comes into the service area with an issue about service. | What can stop or change this? → | Service needs to be provided to customers who come into the service area. A telephone complaints service may remove some potential for customers to go to the service area. |

What may happen next? ↓

| The customer service officer is unable to satisfy the customer's concerns or issues. | What can stop or change this? → | Providing customers with information about the extent of services and policies, and providing training to the customer service officer, may reduce the chance of dissatisfaction. |

What may happen next? ↓

| During the service discussion with the customer service officer, the customer becomes upset. | What can stop or change this? → | Providing customer service officers with training on conflict resolution and dealing with difficult situations may prevent customers becoming upset. Ensuring other staff are available to assist. |

What may happen next? ↓

| The customer service officer is unable to calm the customer and the customer becomes aggressive. | What can stop or change this? → | Implementing procedures for customer service officers to follow to disengage with the customer safely is one way of managing the escalating situation. |

What may happen next? ↓

| The situation escalates. There is no protection offered by the counter. | What can stop or change this? → | Change the service counter or area so that customer service officers cannot be reached by customers or to provide an escape route to a safe place. |

What may happen next? ↓

| The customer service officer is assaulted and suffers injury, shock and related problems. | What can stop or change this? → | Ensure that there are emergency procedures in place to stop the assault. Ensure that there is first aid available to deal with the outcomes of an assault. Ensure that counselling is available to support the victim. |

Steps in controlling OHS hazards and risks

Cost

The cost of controlling risk is a factor that can be taken into account in determining what is reasonably practicable.

There are controls available for all risks, and cost is never a reason in itself for doing nothing; it is always possible to provide instructions to those exposed to the risk or to stop the activity that gives rise to the risk. There will normally be a number of different control options between these two extremes, and cost is one factor that may be considered in determining the best control option.

However:

- A duty-holder's own inability to afford the cost of a particular control option is not a factor in determining what is reasonably practicable. WorkSafe expects a duty- holder to incur the cost if other duty-holders in that particular type of enterprise do so.

Example: The provision of canister respirators for workers involved with spray painting isocyanate paints is a well known and accepted means of controlling the risks that remain after engineering controls are implemented. A duty-holder who provides gauze masks because canister respirators are too costly will not be doing what is reasonably practicable to control the risk.

- The cost of providing the highest level of protection should be borne unless it is unreasonable in the circumstances to do so. A decision not to implement controls should only be made where the cost far outweighs the safety benefits that will be achieved.

If two control strategies will result in the same levels of protection for people and have the same reliability, it is appropriate to adopt the least costly option.

Cost should not be used as a reason for adopting controls that rely exclusively on changing people's behaviour or actions when there are controls available that can change the risk through substitution, engineering or isolation.

Implementation of controls

After decisions have been made about the controls, an organised and managed approach needs to be taken to ensure that the controls are put in place. Good organisational or business management practice should be followed:

- develop plans
- allocate budget
- assign responsibility and accountability for the various steps in the plan
- assign responsibility and accountability for resolving problems and issues during the planned work
- monitor and report on progress of the work
- test controls once they are put in place.

The formality of the plan and the extent of it will need to match the organisation and the extent of work to be done.

Resources and tools

- Refer to Appendix 2 for a general form to assist in hazard identification and risk assessment.
- WorkSafe publishes specific guides and checklists to assist in the identification of specific hazards.
- Visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or read the WorkSafe publication *More information about Controlling OHS hazards and risks.*

Risk control outcomes

At the end of the risk control step, all of the reasonably practicable measures to either eliminate risk or reduce it should have been identified and implemented.

Step 4 – Check controls

Controls that are put in place to protect the health and safety of people need to be monitored to ensure that they work as planned. This requires checking them and ensuring that processes are put in place to identify and quickly fix problems.

Checking controls

Checking controls involves the same methods as in the initial hazard identification step (step 1), and creates the loop in which workplace health and safety measures are maintained. Common methods used to check the effectiveness of controls are:

- inspecting the workplace
- consulting employees
- testing and measuring
- using available information
- analysing records and data.

Any failures in current controls should become apparent if these checks are made on a regular basis.

Mandatory review of controls

There are certain situations where the OHS Regulations require hazard and risk control measures to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised. These situations generally arise when:

- The hazard or risk changes. This can occur if there is a change to the thing, work process or system of work that gives rise to the hazard or risk.
- The current control measures do not adequately control the hazard or risk.
- An HSR requests a review on reasonable grounds.

Refer to the OHS Regulations to find out more information about the mandatory review of controls.

Maintaining effective controls

Maintaining effective controls to withstand the impacts of changed operating conditions requires a number of things to be put in place. The following elements are necessary to maintain effective controls over time:

- *Allocated accountability* for health and safety – accountability must be clearly allocated at various levels of management to ensure procedures are followed and maintained.
- *Regular consultation* – risk controls are more effective where there is initial and ongoing consultation with employees and HSRs.
- *Effective communication* – risk controls are more effective where procedures are communicated in appropriate language, and signs and symbols are used.
- *Up to date training and competency* – risk controls, particularly lower level controls, depend on all workers and supervisors having the appropriate competencies to do the job safely. Training should be provided to maintain competencies and to ensure new employees are capable of working safely.
- *Up to date hazard information and risk assessments* – information about hazards, such as plant and substances, may be updated by manufacturers and suppliers from time to time, and needs to be checked to make sure controls are still relevant. Changes to operating conditions or the way activities are carried out may also mean that risk assessments need to be updated.

Checking control outcomes

A good process for checking controls should test the ongoing effectiveness of control measures. If problems are detected, go back to any point in the methodical approach, review your information and make further decisions about risk control.

Putting the method into action

Getting ready – implementing an approach that suits the organisation

WorkSafe expects duty-holders to establish a system for controlling hazards and risks that ensures effective controls are implemented and maintained, and which is suited to the organisation.

The method in this guide needs to be adapted so that it will work effectively in the workplace. This will be influenced by:

- what the organisation does
- the way the organisation is managed and organised
- the size of the organisation
- the number of hazards and hazardous processes
- the types of hazards and risks
- the level of harm hazards and risks may cause.

Large organisations with many hazardous processes, large numbers of staff and layers of management will benefit from establishing formal processes to ensure consistency and certainty of results.

Any organisation (small or large) that has highly complex hazards with the potential to cause significant harm should also have formal processes to ensure that the hazards and risks are rigorously analysed and understood, and that control measures are formally assessed for effectiveness.

For smaller organisations that do not have high risk processes, less formal approaches may be used that rely on a minimum set of procedures and documentation.

All people involved in the steps to controlling hazards and risks must have the necessary skills to contribute.

This may mean providing briefings on the approach adopted for the workplace or it may mean providing training. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to engage an OHS specialist.

Visit www.worksafe.vic.gov.au or read the WorkSafe publication *More information about Controlling OHS hazards and risks* about specific techniques that can be used in the methodical approach to control of risk.

Managing the process

The process is likely to be more manageable if the workplace is divided into discrete areas and the method outlined in this guide applied to each. This could be done on the basis of:

- specific work processes (machining parts on a lathe or order picking)
- work locations (warehouse, office, kitchen)
- work roles (nurses, call centre workers)
- production or service delivery processes (waste collection, drum cleaning, class room teaching).

In doing this, make sure that a review is carried out to ensure that hazards and risks that impact on other areas are identified and controlled so as to protect both areas. Hazards and risks should not 'fall between the cracks', and actions to control hazards and risks in one area should not create risks in another area.

In determining priorities for action, focus first on those areas that have the potential to cause the greatest harm or to cause harm more frequently.

Example:
A rural hospital could be broken into the following areas:

- *one area for each ward*
- *the operating theatre*
- *radiography*
- *pharmacy*
- *outpatients area*
- *emergency*
- *laundry and delivery*
- *food preparation and delivery*
- *building services.*

A committee could be established with representatives from all areas to ensure that health and safety issues common to the various areas are identified and dealt with.

Keeping records

Documenting the results of hazard identification, risk assessment and risk controls has significant benefits. In some cases, the OHS Regulations will require certain records to be kept and this must be done.

In any case, keeping basic records:

- provides a good way of detecting flaws and omissions during the process

- assists induction and specific training to be targeted at key hazards

- provides a basis for preparing safe work procedures

- enables a duty-holder to demonstrate how decisions about what is reasonably practicable were made

- provides a base level of information when any changes

- to legislation or business activities require a review of risk control measures

- allows new staff to understand why risk control decisions have been made

- can be used to demonstrate to others (eg investors, shareholders, customers and regulatory bodies such as WorkSafe) that OHS hazards and risks in the organisation are under control.

A note on other approaches to risk management

The techniques used in the methodical control of OHS hazards and risks are drawn from risk management methodology. Risk management is used to help make decisions about risks in other fields of an organisation's activities, including financial and reputation risk. The approach to these risks is similar; however, there is a greater emphasis on acceptable risk criteria, the ranking of risk priorities and the 'treatment' of risk. Treatments may include avoidance and transfer of risk though contracting or insurance arrangements.

A methodical approach to the control of OHS hazards and risks that is consistent with the law does not permit the avoidance or transfer of OHS risk through contracting arrangements. The most widely used risk management standard is the *Australian/New Zealand Standard on Risk Management (AS/NZS 4360:2004)*. The standard and its companion guide *HB 205:2004* sets out a much more detailed process than the OHS risk management process. It is essential to remember that these industry tools only support the OHS risk management process set out in this guide. They are not alternative methods for satisfying the legislative requirements.

To ensure that 'reasonable practicability' is properly determined and that all legal requirements are met in relation to controlling OHS hazards and risks, duty-holders should follow the four-step approach summarised in this guide.

Appendix 1 – Common events that should trigger a risk assessment

Event	Description
Commencing a new business from scratch	There are normally a lot of things that need to be done in setting up a new business – setting up a place to run the business from, registering the business, setting up financial systems, recruiting staff, bringing in plant and equipment that will be used to produce the goods and services, and setting up work systems and procedures.
	This is the time to use the methodical approach to controlling OHS hazards and risks as well. Time invested ensuring that safety is 'built into' the business will protect people and avoid having to fix problems after start up.
Purchasing a new business	Purchasing a new business normally involves a range of 'due diligence' tests to ensure that unknown liabilities are not inherited. A methodical approach should be one of those tests to ensure that the purchaser does not become legally responsible for an unsafe or unhealthy workplace.
Appointment of an insolvency administrator to a business administration	The insolvency administrator appointed may assume obligations under the OH&S Act. A methodical approach should be adopted that includes:
	▪ Conducting hazard identifications and risk assessments of premises, equipment and other assets under the control of the insolvency administrator.
	▪ Coordinating with management and staff who have responsibilities regarding health and safety including health and safety representatives and OH&S committees.
	▪ Reviewing relevant OH&S information and other documentation of the business.
	This is particularly important if the insolvency administrator proposes to continue trading.
When there are changes in the work done, changes in the work environment, etc.	▪ When your organisation takes on a new work activity or makes changes it should use the methodical approach to ensure that appropriate prevention measures are used. This situation could arise where a business begins a new product line or where it undertakes contract work in a new field.
Purchasing new or used equipment or hiring equipment, or using new substances and processes	The methodical approach should be used to evaluate new plant, equipment, substances and processes before they are introduced into the workplace. The methodical approach provides a means of analysing these items before they are brought to the workplace. This assists with making choices between options and provides a basis for setting up safe systems of work, training and supervision.
Planning for the impact of new OHS legislation	When legislation changes, checks need to be made to ensure that current OHS measures are still applicable. One of the characteristics of the OHS law is that standards change over time, and what was acceptable 10 years ago may not be acceptable today. In other words, what is reasonably practicable will change as technologies and knowledge about hazards improve.
Responding to incidents	Incidents (whether they cause an injury or not) need to be investigated to work out how current measures may have failed. An incident may be an indicator that not all that is reasonably practicable is being done to prevent harm in the workplace
Responding to issues	Issues may be raised by employees and their HSRs about health and safety in the workplace. These issues may be best resolved by working through the methodical approach. Responding to the results of monitoring of hazards, such as noise or fumes, is also best done by using the methodical approach.

Appendix 1 – Common events that should trigger a risk assessment

Event	Description
To justify an alternative to recognised practices	Specific requirements are normally found in regulations, while recognised solutions are found in codes and guidance. In circumstances where there is no mandatory way of controlling a risk and the recognised solutions do not meet the particular circumstances in the workplace, the methodical approach to controlling OHS hazards and risks should be used to identify all alternatives. If you adopt a control measure that is an alternative to current methods, then that alternative must: • Achieve the safety objective. • Provide the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable.

Appendix 2 – Control of OHS Hazards and Risks

Location: _____

Date: _____

Hazard	What are the risks?	What can make the risk worse?	What are the current controls?	What is the likelihood and harm?		What further controls are required?	How will the controls be implemented?		
				Likelihood	Harm		Action by	Due Date	When Completed

WorkSafe Victoria

WorkSafe Agents

Agent contact details are all available at
worksafe.vic.gov.au/agents

Advisory Service

Phone	(03) 9641 1444
Toll-free	1800 136 089
Email	info@worksafe.vic.gov.au

Website	**worksafe.vic.gov.au**

For information about WorkSafe in
your own language, call our Talking your
Language service

廣東話	1300 559 141
Ελληνικά	1300 650 535
Македонски	1300 661 494
Italiano	1300 660 210
普通话	1300 662 373
Српски	1300 722 595
Español	1300 724 101
Türkçe	1300 725 445
Việt Ngữ	1300 781 868
العربية	1300 554 987
English	1300 782 442
Other	1300 782 343

WSV1101/04/06.17

WORKING SAFELY IN COMMUNITY SERVICES

2ND EDITION

OCTOBER 2006

PUBLIC SECTOR AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

On 18 June 2017, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (OHS Regulations 2017) replaced the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 (OHS Regulations 2007), which expired on this date. **This publication has not yet been updated to reflect the changes introduced by the OHS Regulations 2017 and should not be relied upon as a substitute for legal advice.**

Information on the key changes introduced by the OHS 2017 Regulations can be found in the guidance titled *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017: Summary of changes* - available at https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/207659/ISBN-OHS-regulations-summary-of-changes-2017-04.pdf. However, this guidance document contains material of a general nature only and is not to be used as a substitute for obtaining legal advice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

COMMUNITY SERVICES OHS INFORMATION PACK

Community services workers play a vital role in caring for our people and helping to maintain a quality of life expected in Australian society, often in challenging and confronting circumstances.

The Victorian community services sector employs more than 60,000 people and many volunteers who are committed to providing services that enhance the physical, mental and social wellbeing of individuals.

Community services work can be very rewarding, but it can also present challenges in delivering outcomes in a way that balances the rights of clients with the safety and wellbeing of employees.

Nobody wants to be injured or otherwise harmed at work, but community services workers are often required to provide care or make decisions in an environment that can be hazardous.

In Victoria in the past year there were more than 1,200 claims in the community services sector. Work related injury or illness sustained by employees were mostly due to manual handling, slips, trips and falls and occupational violence.

Clients' rights and employee health and safety are not mutually exclusive. Clients' rights and wellbeing can be protected and enhanced through effective occupational health and safety risk management. WorkSafe Victoria stands ready to assist the community services sector to reduce workplace injuries and illnesses.

This publication provides information about the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* with a focus on how community service organisations can, through careful planning and consultation with employees, effectively manage workplace health and safety issues. It provides valuable checklists and tools to help formulate health and safety management plans.

CONTENTS

SECTION 1

HEALTH AND SAFETY BASICS

1 HEALTH AND SAFETY BASICS

1.1 THE COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTOR

The Victorian community services sector is made up of a diverse range of workplaces providing a broad spectrum of services. In 2004/05, more than 1,200 employees in this sector sustained a work-related injury or illness that resulted in a standard WorkCover claim (10 or more days away from work or $495 or over in treatment costs). The main causes of these injuries and illnesses were:

- lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling;
- slips, trips and falls; and
- occupational violence.

Community services employers have a responsibility to promote and protect clients' rights and provide services that improve their quality of life while ensuring compliance with Victoria's health and safety laws.

Work practices that put employees at risk of injury often also place clients at risk. For example, employees using unsafe lifting methods may sustain an injury as well as possibly injuring the client.

Clients' rights and employee health and safety are not mutually exclusive. Consulting with employees and clients on health and safety issues is important. Effective occupational health and safety risk management can enhance clients' rights as well as better protect employees, volunteers and others.

1.2 WHY MANAGE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY?

Managing workplace health and safety is a legal requirement under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (the OHS Act 2004) and associated regulations. To ensure work environments are safe and free from health risks, the OHS Act 2004 imposes a number of duties on employers, employees and others (explained more fully in **Section 1.4**).

Maintaining a safe and healthy workplace is also good for business. Effective health and safety systems help improve productivity and service delivery. Those who work in a safe, healthy and supportive environment are more likely to remain at an organisation and are also better able to cope with work demands.

Recurring safety concerns have detrimental effects on any organisation. As such, health and safety should be part of any organisation's core business, part of business planning and performance management.

By making workplace health and safety a priority, an organisation demonstrates:

- commitment to the welfare of employees, clients, volunteers and the public;
- social responsibility in regard to its legal, ethical and moral obligations;
- good management practice in that health and safety issues are addressed proactively, resulting in improved organisational performance; and
- sound financial management by addressing risks and preventing loss through illness and injury.

In addition, funding bodies are increasingly insisting that community service organisations demonstrate they have effective health and safety management systems in place.

1.3 THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This flow chart shows the legislative framework for workplace health and safety. See **Section 5.2** for further clarification of the status of regulations, compliance codes and other guidance materials.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ACT 2004

The OHS Act 2004 deals with workplace health and safety and imposes general duties on employers and employees relating to workplace health and safety.

REGULATIONS

There are also numerous health and safety regulations that detail legal requirements for managing specific hazards (such as manual handling or hazardous substances) and health and safety issues.

COMPLIANCE CODES

Compliance codes provide practical guidance and are produced by the Victorian WorkCover Authority and approved by the Minister for WorkCover. They provide guidance to persons as to how to comply with the duties or obligations imposed under the OHS Act 2004 or health and safety regulations.

A duty holder is considered to have met the requirements of the OHS Act 2004 or regulations, if they comply with the provisions in a compliance code that relate to a duty or obligation made under the Act or regulations.

GUIDANCE INFORMATION

WorkSafe Victoria provides guidance in a range of different publications, including Codes of Practice made under the OHS Act 1985. These publications are intended to help people manage health and safety in their workplaces and to assist them in meeting their legal responsibilities.

Australian Standards and Australian Safety and Compensation Council (formerly National Occupational Health and Safety Commission) Guidelines also provide practical information on many health and safety matters.

(Note: Codes of Practice made under the OHS Act 1985 continue to provide practical guidance to persons who have duties or obligations under Victoria's OHS laws. Page 93 of this Guide provides information about the impact of the OHS Act 2004 on existing Codes of Practice).

1.4 OHS RESPONSIBILITIES

The OHS Act 2004 imposes duties on those who have health and safety responsibilities. This section details duties of employers, management committees and employees (including contractors and volunteers).

Employers

Ultimately, responsibility for providing a safe workplace rests with the employer, as they exercise control over the workplace.

Under the OHS Act 2004 and regulations, employers must ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees by providing, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- a working environment that is free from health and safety risks;
- safe plant and systems of work;
- measures to ensure the safe storage and handling of hazardous substances;
- information, instruction, training and supervision for all employees;
- processes for consulting with employees, involving them in decisions and informing them of decisions that may affect their health and safety;
- processes for identifying hazards, assessing risks and eliminating or controlling risks;
- processes for regular review of risk control measures;
- personal protective equipment (PPE), including clothing and footwear where necessary;
- amenities, including toilets and eating areas, which are maintained in a safe and hygienic condition; and
- emergency procedures and first aid facilities.

Employers must also ensure people other than employees – such as clients, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and visitors – are not exposed to risks arising from the activities of the workplace. Employers must ensure that all people are given the necessary information and instruction regarding:

- site safety and safe use of any equipment provided;
- emergency procedures; and
- any other health and safety issues to which they could be exposed.

It is up to the employer to ensure managers, co-ordinators and supervisors are capable of undertaking assigned health and safety responsibilities. These responsibilities may include making sure that:

- employees are properly trained and supervised;
- identified hazards and risks in areas under their control are managed;
- employees and health and safety representatives (HSRs) are consulted on issues that could affect their health and safety; and
- health and safety concerns referred to them are addressed without undue delay.

This may require specific OHS training and instruction. They must also have the necessary resources to enable them to implement the workplace's OHS policies and procedures.

Management committees

Many employees in the community services sector are employed by small independent associations, with a management committee.

Even if they are comprised solely of volunteers, management committees have the same health and safety responsibilities as employers. As long as the relationship between the committee and people working for it is one of employment, the management committee is responsible for ensuring safe working conditions and that systems are in place to manage workplace health and safety.

This publication uses the term 'employer' to include management committees.

Employees

Employees are people working at a workplace under a verbal or written contract of employment or a contract of training – this includes:

- direct employees;
- placements through group training and apprentices;
- independent contractors and sub-contractors of that contractor; and
- staff whose services are provided by a labour hire or recruitment agency.

The OHS Act 2004 requires employees to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that of others in the workplace;
- cooperate with their employer's efforts to comply with health and safety requirements (for example, by following procedures, using equipment properly and participating in hazard identification and reporting); and
- not interfere with anything at the workplace, which has been provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare.

Contractors and temporary staff

Employers' duties to their employees extend to independent contractors and their employees who are working at the workplace as well as temporary employees who may, for example, be employed by an agency. However, the employers' responsibilities only relate to matters over which they have control.

An organisation hiring a contractor or temporary employee must provide a safety induction for these employees before they start.

Once inducted, contractors must meet the safety measures in place and have a responsibility to ensure their own health and safety as well as that of others.

Before engaging a contractor, employers should ensure they have public liability insurance that covers any of their actions that may result in harm to the public.

Throughout this publication the term 'employees' is used to refer to both contractors and temporary staff.

Volunteers

Employers have obligations to volunteers under the OHS Act 2004. As such, they must consider volunteers' tasks and ensure they are not exposed to health and safety risks.

Volunteers must also be provided with the same health and safety training and information as employees doing similar tasks.

Volunteers must comply with an organisation's safety policies and procedures and should be consulted on all health and safety matters relevant to their role. The *National Standards for Volunteers*, produced by Volunteering Australia, provides useful guidance on managing and consulting volunteers.

Throughout this publication the term 'employees' is used to refer to both employees and volunteers.

HEALTH AND SAFETY BASICS

Visitors

Visitors cannot be expected to know the hazards or risk control measures in place at a workplace. Procedures are needed to ensure visitors are properly supervised and their whereabouts in the workplace are known at all times.

Visitors should be signed in and out and accompanied by someone who is familiar with the workplace's health and safety requirements.

Clients, relatives, members of the public, suppliers, volunteers from other organisations or people with an advocacy role can all be considered 'visitors', as are children being cared for while their parents or guardians are attending the workplace. For more information on managing the risks associated with children see **Section 2.14** of this guide.

SECTION 2

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

2

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

2.1 DEVELOPING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO OHS MANAGEMENT

All employers are responsible for managing health and safety risks in their workplace. This includes any location where their employees work.

What is a workplace? A 'workplace' is any place where an employee may find themselves in the course of their work. Some employees 'take the workplace with them' to perform their duties.

Employers' and employees' duties extend to all places where work is carried out, such as clients' homes and community settings. If driving is a main duty in a job, the vehicle also becomes the employee's workplace.

A risk management model that identifies hazards and assesses and controls risks can be implemented with a simple three-step approach: think, do, review.

What is a hazard? A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. This can include chemical substances, plant, work process and/or other aspects of the work environment.

What is a risk? A risk is the likelihood of illness, injury or even death occurring following exposure to a hazard.

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Identifying hazards and the risk of them occurring is essential to prevent or reduce injury and illness in the workplace.

Hazards can arise due to the use of equipment and substances, poor work design and inappropriate practices and procedures.

Identify hazards

Hazards should be identified when:

- identification has not previously been undertaken;
- designing a new job or task;
- changing a job or task;
- introducing new equipment or substances to the workplace;
- reviewing a procedure when problems have been identified (for example, after an incident);
- preparing a submission for service funding; and
- planning ongoing tasks as part of continuous improvement.

Hazards can be identified by:

- **Observation and consultation**

  Look around the workplace and determine what may affect the health, safety or welfare of employees or other people. Workers should be asked if they are aware of any hazards or unsafe equipment, substances or practices in the workplace.

  OHS policies should require that all employees, volunteers, contractors, supervisors and managers notify the employer when they become aware of any workplace hazards.

- **Workplace inspections**

  Inspect workplaces regularly with employee representatives. Use the workplace inspection checklists in **Section 3.8** and **Section 3.9** as a guide.

- **Injury and illness records**

  All workplaces are required to keep a record of injuries and illnesses and review these records regularly to identify hazards.

- **Incident investigations**

  Investigate any incidents and near-misses to identify the hazards that contributed to these events. Ask witnesses for their opinions on what caused the incident and how it could be prevented from happening again.

  Prepare a brief report to the manager or management committee detailing the incident, potential causes and recommendations to avoid a repeat of the incident.

  Some incidents need to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria (**Section 4.7**).

Assess risks

The risk of particular hazards occurring varies. As such, risks must be prioritised to manage resources effectively and keep employees safe.

Risk can be assessed by answering the following:

1. How **likely** is injury or illness to occur?
2. How **severe** could the injury or illness be?

The sample risk assessment work sheet in **Section 3.3** is one way of documenting any identified hazards and deciding what priority you should give to addressing them.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Ideally all risks should be eliminated, but if this is not possible methods must be identified to manage hazards and reduce risks. Some hazardous work, such as dealing with infectious clients is unavoidable, but must be managed safely.

What does reasonably practicable mean?

This is a legal term that is specified in the OHS Act 2004. For example, employers are required to provide a working environment that is safe and without risk to health, so far as is reasonably practicable. To determine what is reasonably practicable, you must consider the following five factors:

- the likelihood of the hazard occurring;
- the degree of harm that would result;
- what the employer concerned knows, or ought reasonably know, about the hazard or risk and ways of eliminating or reducing it;
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or reduce the hazard or risk; and
- the cost of eliminating or reducing the hazard or risk.

Hierarchy of control

This describes the preferred order of applying measures that can eliminate or manage OHS hazards and risks – the higher up the hierarchy, the more effective the control. In the community services sector, a combination of approaches will result in the most effective and appropriate solution. It would be unusual for a single risk control to provide adequate protection unless it entirely eliminates the hazard or risk.

1. Eliminate the hazard

The most effective method for controlling risk is to eliminate the hazard, so try this approach first.

Example: An employee tripped over an electric cord leading to an old wall-mounted fan. On inspection, the employer realised that the fan was broken and not needed since air-conditioning was put in a year ago, so the fan and its cord were removed.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS continued

Reduce the risk

If a risk cannot be eliminated then steps should be taken to reduce the risk, so far as is reasonably practicable. The best way to control a risk at its source is by:

2. Changing the equipment or process

Replace one substance or activity with a less hazardous one.

Example: Employees in a community residential unit reported headaches after using oven cleaning chemicals with a strong smell. The management committee obtained information about alternative products (including their material safety data sheets), and decided to trial two different chemicals. One of these did the job just as effectively and generated no strong fumes. Employees reported no incidence of headaches after its use.

3. Isolating the hazard

If equipment or materials cannot be changed or substituted to make them safer it may be possible to separate them from people, either by moving them away or by installing a barrier to prevent people from coming into contact with them.

Example: Employees at a youth welfare centre were concerned about clients having access to sharp implements (i.e. cutlery) usually stored in the kitchen. As a result, a lockable unit was installed in the kitchen, requiring clients to seek access from staff.

4. Designing for safety

If a hazard can't be isolated, perhaps redesign the surroundings to minimise risks. This may involve redesigning the workplace, providing increased ventilation or lighting or finding engineering solutions to make plant and equipment safer.

Example: Shift employees at an emergency accommodation facility indicated they were concerned about threats of violence during the night. The workplace was inspected for opportunities to increase night-time safety. New lighting and security alarms were installed and a lockable door with a view panel replaced the solid door.

5. Change work methods

If a workplace or equipment cannot be made safer, it may be possible to adopt safer work methods. Any change in work practices must be documented and supported by training and supervision. See also Section 2.2 Consultation.

Example: Employees at a nursing home are concerned that there is an inadequate number of staff to conduct the morning bathing session. After a review of tasks, changes to work practices were implemented (such as bathing clients over two sessions rather than in one session).

6. Provide training

Training, while very important, is a low order level of control. Information, instruction and training should only be used to control risks when it is not practicable to control the risk by altering the workplace, the systems of work or the objects used in the tasks, or by providing mechanical aids.

Example: Manual handling training should help employees to understand what sort of manual handling is hazardous, how this may affect the body and how injuries can be prevented. Training should include information regarding the measures in place to control the risk, how to select appropriate manual handling techniques and how to use mechanical aids.

7. Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

If no other measures will totally solve the problem, consider whether PPE (including clothing and footwear) could help reduce the risk. Because PPE focuses on the person rather than the hazard, it should not be relied on solely and should be used in conjunction with other measures. All PPE must be checked regularly and kept in good condition. To be useful PPE must be appropriate for the intended purpose, fit properly and be worn correctly.

Example: Using gloves when cleaning/changing/handling soiled clothing.

Use the sample *Risk control work sheet* (Section 3.4) to help document decisions regarding control measures to employ. Use it in conjunction with the OHS checklists (Section 3.6 and Sections 3.8 – 3.13) to address common hazards.

Develop an action plan

Managing workplace health and safety risks may require that a range of measures be implemented over time and at various levels within the organisation. To do this, an action plan should be developed, including a schedule for actions to be taken in the short, medium and long term, those responsible for authorising and implementing each action, and a date for each action to be reviewed. Action plans should be signed off by management and the HSR.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

As risks can change, all control measures should be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective.

Employees should be asked the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and likelihood of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, a child-care centre installed a shade structure over the sandpit to control the risk of employees and children getting sunburnt. However, the structure was too low and employees complained about back pain because they had to bend to get under it.

The sample risk management work sheets (**Sections 3.3 – 3.7**) have some questions to prompt review of your risk controls.

2.2 CONSULTATION

Employees

Employees' expertise can make a significant contribution to identifying hazards, assessing risks and developing preventative measures for OHS issues that arise in the workplace.

Employees must be consulted on health and safety matters that directly affect them. This includes:

- identifying or assessing hazards or risks;
- deciding on measures to control risks;
- deciding on the adequacy of employee facilities;
- determining the membership of any OHS committee; and
- proposing changes that may affect health and safety.

Employers must also consult with independent contractors and their employees.

The OHS Act 2004 provides flexibility on how consultation can occur. A HSR may be elected, a health and safety committee may be established, and/or other agreed arrangements may be established. If employees are represented by a HSR, the consultation must involve the HSR. If an agreed procedure has been developed in line with the OHS Act 2004, this must be followed.

The OHS Act 2004 enables the employer and their employees to adopt the consultative arrangement which they believe will best ensure effective and meaningful consultation and OHS management. Meaningful and effective consultation draws on the knowledge and experience of employees and encourages their participation and input to improve OHS.

The OHS Act 2004 sets out the elements of meaningful and effective consultation. It requires employers to:

- share information with employees about the matter on which the employer is required to consult;
- give employees a reasonable opportunity to express views about the matter; and
- take those views into account.

Clients

It is important to consult with clients and consider their particular needs and concerns. Employers need to develop OHS management strategies that allow services to be delivered in a way that respects clients' rights and ensures employees' health and safety.

See **Section 5** Resources and links for further information on consultation.

2.3 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Clear, straightforward policies and procedures are the foundation of good OHS management systems and training programs. A policy states the objectives the organisation would like to achieve: an 'injury-free workplace'; a 'smoke-free workplace'; or a 'violence-free workplace' are some examples. A procedure sets out the steps to put the policy into practice (e.g. working alone, electrical safety, patient handling, or personal protective equipment).

Policies and procedures don't work if people don't have input into their development or don't know about them. Once procedures have been developed and documented, they must be communicated to employees.

In the community services sector, OHS policies and procedures can impact significantly on the clients who access the services. Client representation and involvement in the development of policies and procedures are ways of ensuring their rights are considered.

Developing an OHS policy

An organisation's OHS policy statement is an affirmation of its commitment to the principles of health and safety. This policy should outline the essential elements of an effective OHS management system, and include:

- a commitment by the employer to provide a safe workplace (demonstrated by giving health and safety issues priority in all decisions affecting the workplace and work methods);
- the provision of adequate resources to ensure the workplace is safe and every effort has been made to control risks (to ensure that equipment is available, safe and properly maintained, and that health and safety issues are addressed promptly and employees are properly trained); and
- clearly defined OHS responsibilities to ensure everyone in the workplace is competent and accountable (accountabilities of management committees, co-ordinators, managers, supervisors, employees, subcontractors and volunteers).

Once consultation has occurred with all relevant groups the policy should be finalised.

Organisations then need to develop further specific policies to address specific hazards/activities such as:

- hazard reporting;
- risk assessment and risk control;
- safe job design;
- induction training and supervision;
- purchasing procedures;
- commitment to consultation;
- emergency procedures;
- driver safety; and
- hazardous waste disposal.

It may be appropriate to contact the relevant funding body (if applicable) to check if there are specific documents, policies or procedures that they require.

Developing OHS procedures

List hazards and issues

The first step is listing the hazards and issues that are important to manage if health and safety is to be assured. This might result in a list covering hazards such as chemicals, plant and fire and other issues such as contractors and purchasing.

Narrow down the field to big impact issues

Discussion with employees, use of relevant information and a review of workplace experience will narrow down areas that are likely to have most impact.

Prepare procedures for priority issues

Keeping in mind the considerations above, a procedure can be developed. Consider:

* WHAT the purpose of the procedure is;
* HOW to undertake the task safely;
* WHO has responsibility; and
* WHEN activities should be undertaken and when the procedure must be reviewed.

This can be done by simply going through the steps with the work group. The format for the written procedures should meet effective workplace communication standards.

'Road test' procedures with users

Participation of users in developing procedures is important for the message to be understood and owned by those affected. Testing the procedures with work groups and getting their comments on how well it works is essential before a final version is released. This can be done through OHS committees, HSRs, work groups or team meetings.

Making sure procedures are doing the job

It is recommended that a periodic check of procedures be made to make sure they are achieving the desired result. It is of no comfort to find out after an incident or injury that the procedure was inadequate. If your procedures are primarily directed at reducing risks (i.e. safe operating procedure type) you should focus on outcomes. Have the procedures been effective in protecting people? This can be established by checking injuries/incidents reports and talking to employees.

If your procedures are part of a more formal OHS management system (i.e. procedures about the system) you will need to audit whether procedures are being followed and look at specific conditions set out in the procedures. These include:

* Are the procedures up-to-date?
* Are the procedures authorised by the appropriate manager?
* Are there records kept?
* Have the procedures been reviewed as required?

A simple checklist (Section 3.1) can be used to write OHS policies or procedures for an organisation.

2.4 INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION/TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Whether an organisation is large or small, every employee may be exposed to health and safety risks. Regular information, instruction, training and supervision are essential to enable people to work safely.

Health and safety training should not be limited to specific hazard training or training after an incident has occurred. It should be a part of all workplace training, just as health and safety is an integral part of day-to-day management.

What kind of instruction/training do people need?

Employers must ensure new employees receive induction training in workplace hazards, risk control measures and OHS management systems. They should cover health and safety procedures, contact information for health and safety representatives, first aiders, fire wardens and others who can assist in creating a safe workplace, and how to access health and safety information.

Training should consider the competence and experience of the employee. A sample induction training agenda for employees and volunteers is in Section 3.2.

Health and safety should also be an integral part of:

- co-ordinator, supervisor and management training;
- on-the-job training; and
- work procedures and skills training.

It is important that training systems are flexible and accommodate different schedules, needs and skill levels. Shift employees, part-time or casual employees and volunteers all need to be considered when assessing training requirements and scheduling training sessions. Questions should be encouraged, and attendees should be asked whether they understand the information. Employers may need to provide health and safety information to employees in languages other than English.

What kind of information do people need?

Employers should consult their employees regularly about the information they need to do their work safely. Health and safety information requirements must be reviewed regularly, as these can change if duties, work methods or other aspects of the workplace change.

Any person who may be exposed to a risk must be informed of the measures in place to control that risk, and relevant information must be accessible to all staff.

Privacy and confidentiality

A number of laws may apply to community service organisations, requiring them to keep their clients' personal and health information private and confidential.

Privacy law is found in these Acts of Parliament:

- *Health Records Act 2001 of Victoria*;
- *Information Privacy Act 2000 of Victoria*; and
- *Privacy Act 1988 of the Commonwealth*.

There is also some common law (law made by judges) that requires organisations to treat client information as confidential.

All community service organisations who deal with health information are required to comply with the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Health information is defined as information or an opinion about:

- a person's physical, mental or psychological health; or
- a health service that a person has received or may need in the future.

The *Health Records Act 2001* sets out how we can keep people's health information private, and states that health information can be disclosed when necessary, to lessen or prevent:

- a serious and imminent threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare; or
- a serious threat to public health, public safety or public welfare.

In these cases, a community service organisation can disclose information to their employees and other organisations who are dealing with the client. For example, if a client has a history of aggressive behaviour it is necessary that employees know this and they are informed about the person's behaviour management plan.

Where health information is disclosed, it should only be given to the people who need to know it. Employees who have this information are not free to disclose it to other people or organisations unless there is a 'serious and imminent danger' to their health, safety and welfare.

Supervision

Employers must provide adequate supervision to employees to enable them to perform their work in a safe, risk-free way. Employers must ensure their supervisors are competent (in terms of knowledge, training and experience), are familiar with OHS legislation, and know about potential and actual hazards.

Supervision can take many forms depending on the nature of the tasks involved, for example face-to-face, telephone or email.

Remote employees may be more exposed to risks as they are not able to be supervised as closely. As such, there should be some other means of monitoring their health and safety. This may involve discussing with the employee or employees at the start of the day what they will be doing and determining safety information they may need to have. Contact with the employee or employees may also be required during or at the end of the day, depending on the OHS risks.

It is especially important for remote employees to have the training and competency to perform their job safely, the authority to stop work and seek clarification if they encounter health and safety problems, and have a reliable way to contact their supervisor when they need to.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

2.5 MANUAL HANDLING

Manual handling covers a wide range of physical activity. It includes lifting, pushing, pulling, carrying, lowering, holding or restraining a person or object. It is a major cause of injury and lost time from work in the community services sector. Hazardous manual handling can cause various injuries and conditions such as:

- injuries to muscles, ligaments and intervertebral discs in the back;
- injuries to soft tissues such as nerves, ligaments and tendons in the wrists, arms, shoulders and legs;
- abdominal hernias; and
- chronic pain.

What the law says

The *Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999* require an employer to identify hazardous manual handling tasks and then assess whether these tasks could result in musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). The employer must then either eliminate the hazardous manual handling, or where this is not possible, control the risk associated with the hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.

How to manage the risks

The WorkSafe Victoria publication *Manual Handling (Code of Practice No. 25, 2000)* provides more detailed guidance to identify, assess and control the risks involved in manual handling tasks. The WorkSafe publication *Transferring People Safely* also contains manual handling solutions that may be applicable to client handling tasks.

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Hazardous manual handling is defined as tasks that involve:

- repetitive or sustained application of force;
- repetitive or sustained awkward posture;
- repetitive or sustained movement;
- application of high force;
- handling of people or animals; and
- handling loads that are unstable, unbalanced or difficult to hold.

Consider all possible sources of information about whether the tasks that employees are required to do could involve hazardous manual handling and whether they could lead to an injury:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify manual handling hazards;
- review injury records to identify whether anyone at the workplace has reported an injury in the past; and
- ask employees about tasks that they find difficult to do.

WorkSafe's *Manual Handling* publication gives assistance in this process and in understanding what is meant by terms such as repetitive, sustained, awkward, etc. The work sheets in *Manual Handling* are reproduced in **Sections 3.5 – 3.6** of this guide.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Consultation with employees, clients who require manual handling and possibly other service providers is recommended to develop effective manual handling risk controls. *Manual Handling* risk control work sheet (**Section 3.7**) will assist in this process.

These sample solutions illustrate approaches to eliminate or reduce hazardous manual handling.

1. Eliminate the hazard or risk

Eliminating the manual handling task that creates the risk is the most effective way of protecting the safety of employees.

- Use a bus with a wheelchair hoist to eliminate the need to transfer clients into seats in buses; and
- rather than lift children on to a bench for changing nappies, provide steps at the change tables for toddlers to climb up under supervision of carers.

2. Reduce the risk

Altering the workplace or environmental conditions

- Install ramps so that trolleys can be used to move goods across different levels;
- provide height-adjustable benches and desks;
- store goods at waist level or on shelves between shoulder and knee level; and
- provide portable steps to allow clients to get on and off a community bus with minimal assistance.

Altering systems of work

- Provide seats for employees who have to perform detailed tasks for long periods;
- use job rotation to vary employees' tasks regularly; and
- encourage employees to kneel rather than bend for some tasks.

Changing the objects

- Adapt clothing for dependent clients to allow them to be changed without employees bending or twisting; and
- arrange for goods to be supplied in smaller or lighter packages.

Using mechanical aids

- Put frequently moved items on wheels;
- use hoists for lifting dependent clients; and
- provide trolleys for moving equipment.

Note: It is also important to ensure that equipment such as hoists, trolleys, etc are stored safely and are easily accessible. An ongoing maintenance/replacement schedule needs to be established and monitored.

Providing information and training

- Instruct staff to sit on an adult sized adjustable chair or stool when assisting young children for prolonged periods (rather than kneel/squat/sit on a child's chair); and
- teach employees about the correct way to use a patient hoist.

Training

In the past, the common 'fix' for manual handling problems was often thought to be simply teaching employees how to care for their back and how to lift 'correctly'. While this sort of training is important, it does not address the underlying manual handling risks in an organisation.

Employers should ensure people involved in manual handling are trained in manual handling techniques, the correct use of mechanical aids and team lifting and other appropriate procedures.

All employees would benefit from training to help them:

- learn how to identify hazardous manual handling;
- understand the risks involved in hazardous manual handling and the need to use control measures;
- use appropriate manual handling techniques; and
- use equipment correctly and safely.

Ensure that training is regular and up-to-date, not just a one-off activity. Keep records of who has attended training and monitor the way work is done to ensure employees have understood the manual handling risk controls and are implementing them correctly.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees and clients to determine whether risk controls are effective and ask the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, using lifting equipment may pose a storage problem and increase tripping hazards.

2.6 SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Slips, trips and falls can cause a variety of musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) and are a significant cause of injury in the community services sector.

Slippery floors, loose gravel, spills or shoes that have poor grip can all contribute to the risk of slipping.

Uneven surfaces, objects left on the floor or jutting out into aisles or paths, pets, poor lighting and getting in or out of vehicles can all contribute to the risk of trips and falls.

Falls often occur when people use ladders, work over inadequately guarded drops or ledges or stand on chairs to reach something – for example, when changing a light globe.

What the law says

Employers have duties under the OHS Act 2004 to ensure safe working conditions for employees and others in the workplace. The *Occupational Health and Safety (Prevention of Falls) Regulations 2003* also stipulate that employers are required to identify hazards and assess and control risks that could result in a fall of more than two metres.

Employers must also consider tasks carried out by contractors, such as working on roofs or cleaning windows above ground level.

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Consider all possible sources of information that could establish how employees may be exposed to slip, trip or fall hazards, for example:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify slip, trip and fall hazards (e.g. an uneven bottom step, a floor that is slippery after cleaning or employees using chairs to stand on because a stepladder is not available);
- review injury records to identify if there has been a slip, trip or fall in the past; and
- ask employees if they have had any near-misses (that is, where they may have slipped, tripped or fallen but did not injure themselves).

Document any common reports of particular situations and then assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Consult employees about the best way to deal with the problems you have identified. These sample solutions illustrate the hierarchy of controls approach:

1. Eliminate the hazard or risk

- Keep hallways and corridors clear of equipment, rubbish and electrical cords;
- maintain floors in a safe condition – repair or replace loose flooring (such as torn or shifting carpets) and use non-slip surfaces where possible, particularly in wet areas. Minimise the use of dividing strips between floor surfaces as they can cause trips and make pushing wheeled equipment difficult;
- repair or replace damaged steps;
- ensure parking and outdoor areas are kept in good repair – fix potholes and level uneven surfaces; and
- store items at a suitable height to avoid the need for climbing to reach them.

2. Reduce the risk

Change the equipment or process

- Replace loose mats with secured slip-free coverings;
- make sure stairs and steps have non-slip surfaces and edge strips where appropriate and that treads are of adequate depth; and
- ensure that a stepladder is available and used when required (instead of a chair).

Isolate the hazard

- Change the times when floors are routinely mopped (schedule these jobs for times when people are not using the area).

Design for safety

- Ensure there is adequate lighting throughout the workplace, particularly in stairwells and over exits;
- do not keep items like filing cabinets in hallways; and
- ensure there is safe access to all parts of the workplace and that rails and ramps are provided where appropriate.

Change work methods

- Implement an immediate clean-up policy of any spills.

Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Ensure employees wear non-slip footwear.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Once controls are in place consult employees and consider the following questions:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, joining strips were installed between the carpet and vinyl in a community residential unit to eliminate the tripping hazard of loose carpet. However, this introduced a manual handling hazard for staff pushing trolleys over the ridge it created.

2.7 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Hazardous substances are those that may have harmful health effects, either immediately or over a longer term.

These substances may be solids, liquids or gases and exposure can occur through contact with the skin or eyes, or via the respiratory or digestive systems.

Potential harmful effects include poisoning, chemical burns of the skin and eyes, and diseases of the skin.

The severity of the health effects depends on the substance and the amount absorbed by the individual. Seemingly harmless items found in most workplaces and homes can be dangerous if they are not used appropriately.

What the law says

The *Occupational Health and Safety (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1999* set out duties for manufacturers, importers and suppliers of hazardous substances, as well as for employers.

Manufacturers, importers and suppliers must identify and classify hazardous substances, and must provide information so they can be used safely. This includes correct labelling and supplying material safety data sheets (MSDSs) for each hazardous substance.

An MSDS is a document describing the identity, properties and health hazards of a substance. It also lists precautions for using and handling the substance safely.

The employer must obtain a MSDS for any hazardous substance when it is first supplied. Contact manufacturers or suppliers if no MSDS is supplied.

If a hazardous substance is being used, employers must:

* make the MSDS readily available to employees who could be exposed to the hazardous substance and ensure that the MSDS is not altered;
* keep a register of all hazardous substances used (see **Section 3.15** of this guide for information about how to set this up);
* provide training for employees who use hazardous substances and keep records of the training; and
* ensure hazardous substances are labelled correctly, labels are not removed or altered, and relabelled if decanted into another container.

Employers must ensure employees understand the risks involved in handling these substances. For example, ordinary household bleach can kill anyone who inadvertently swallows it, and can also burn the skin and seriously damage the eyes. Similarly, dishwashing detergent, oven cleaner, pesticides and some glues can all be hazardous.

It is also important to know about any hazardous substances that contractors intend to use before they start work and check that appropriate measures are used to ensure the safety of the contractor and others in the vicinity.

How to manage the risks

WorkSafe's *Hazardous Substances (Code of Practice No. 24, 2000)* provides detailed guidance on the risk management process.

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Consider all possible ways employees may be exposed to hazardous substances:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify the hazardous substances being used in the workplace, and consider where and how they are being used;
- refer to each substance's MSDS – this is the best source of information;
- examine each substance's label, which should include:
  - the name of the chemical and the manufacturer;
  - the potential health effects of exposure, inhalation, skin contact or ingestion;
  - precautions for safe use;
  - first aid instructions;
  - the use-by date;
- make sure those who will use the product are aware of this information;
- review injury and illness records to identify whether employees have suffered ill effects from using particular substances. The health of employees who have had long-term exposure to hazardous substances may need to be monitored; and
- ask employees if they are aware of any chemicals that are being stored in leaking or unlabelled containers.

Document any reports of particular common situations and then assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Once hazards and risks have been identified consult employees on how best to respond.

These sample solutions illustrate the hierarchy of controls approach:

1. Eliminate the hazard or risk

- Where possible replace chemicals that are hazardous substances. For example, vinegar can be mixed with water and used instead of chemicals to clean tiles and other surfaces.

2. Reduce the risk

Change the equipment or process

- Upgrade the printer and photocopier to avoid using loose toner powders.

Altering the workplace or environmental conditions

- Provide adequate ventilation with a natural or local exhaust ventilation system wherever chemicals are used.

Change work methods

- Make sure that all the chemicals stored are accurately labelled with a description of the chemical and the precautions for use;
- if chemicals are decanted into smaller containers, ensure they are suitable for the chemical being stored and properly labelled; and
- store chemicals in a locked cupboard.

Provide training

- Train employees in safe chemical handling procedures and ensure they follow the manufacturer's instructions provided on the label of each hazardous substance.

Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Make appropriate gloves, aprons and safety glasses available and ensure they are used when necessary;
- use appropriate respiratory protection if ventilation is a concern (check the product label and the MSDS for instructions); and
- ensure employees understand the need to use PPE when working with certain hazardous substances and are trained in how to use the equipment correctly.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Having put in place controls, now review whether they are effective. Consult your employees and ask the following questions:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, someone in the workplace may be sensitive to a chemical that was substituted for another.

2.8 INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Infectious diseases can be spread from person to person in a number of ways, including by:

- inhalation of airborne droplets of respiratory secretions being spread by coughing, blowing the nose, sneezing and even talking;
- contact with contaminated items or surfaces. When viruses, bacteria or parasites are present in the faeces of infected people, these may be passed on to others if the infected person doesn't wash their hands properly after going to the toilet. Similarly, if hands are not washed properly after changing contaminated nappies or clothes, this contamination can be passed from hands to surfaces and objects such as tap handles, toothbrushes, reusable towels, nappy changing areas, toys or to food that may be eaten by others; and
- direct contact with infected blood or bodily fluids when there is broken skin, needle stick type injuries or splashes to mucous membranes.

What the law says

In line with the OHS Act 2004, employers are obliged to provide and maintain a work environment for employees that is safe and without risk to health, so far as is reasonably practicable. The provision of infection control procedures, equipment, training and information to staff falls within this duty of care.

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Consider all possible ways employees may be exposed to infection:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify infection hazards. For example, examine hand washing and food-handling practices of staff and volunteers and the adequacy of hygiene facilities;
- review injury records to identify whether anyone at the workplace (including members of the public) has become infected in the past;
- ask employees if they have had any concerns about possible exposures to infectious diseases; and
- check with the Department of Human Services and other providers of similar services about infectious diseases that employees may be exposed to in the course of their work.

Assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury or illness.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Consult employees and decide the best way to deal with identified problems.

Standard (universal) precautions

When dealing with blood or bodily fluids, use 'standard precautions' (also known as 'universal precautions'). Standard precautions treat all clients the same way, regardless of their infectious status.

Standard precautions are work practices required for a basic level of infection control. They include:

- personal hygiene practices, such as hand washing and drying before and after all significant client contact;
- use of PPE, which may include gloves, plastic aprons, gowns, overalls, masks, face shields and eye protection;
- appropriate handling and disposal of sharp instruments and clinical waste;
- correct cleaning and disinfecting of non-disposable equipment;
- appropriate use of cleaning agents; and
- environmental controls, such as workplace design and maintenance, cleaning and spills management.

Standard precautions are used in healthcare settings. Not all of the precautions listed need to be applied all of the time in community service organisations. PPE (such as gloves) is only required for circumstances where the employee has direct contact with blood (including dried blood), other bodily fluids, secretions and excretions (for example, faeces, saliva, mucous) and non-intact skin. This sort of exposure may occur during the cleaning of bathrooms, nappy changing, disposal of waste, cleaning of bodily fluid spills, or the administration of first aid. The most common means of infection control in community services workplaces are hand washing, gloves, immunisation and the use of cleaning agents.

Additional precautions

Additional precautions should be considered when dealing with some infectious diseases transmitted by airborne droplets of respiratory secretions – such as tuberculosis, chickenpox, measles, rubella, pertussis and influenza.

In such cases, infected clients or employees should be quarantined until the period of acute infection has passed. In some cases, such as chickenpox, clients can have continued care if employees are immune.

For residential care providers, isolate the client in a separate room and provide them with separate toilet and bathroom facilities if possible.

Additional measures are not required for patients with blood borne viruses such as HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C, unless there are complicating infections, such as pulmonary tuberculosis.

In the case of outbreaks of a rare infectious disease, such as meningococcal disease, the Infection Control Unit of the Department of Human Services should be contacted for instructions and assistance in coordinating the response, including notifying people who may have had significant contact with an infected person.

1. Eliminate the hazard

Infected employees and clients may need to be quarantined or excluded from the workplace to prevent the infection spreading to others. Remember to ask for a medical certificate stating that it is safe for a person to return to work before allowing them back into the workplace.

2. Reduce the risk

Change the equipment or processes

- Replace bars of soap with disposable liquid hand-wash dispensers; and
- replace cloth hand towels with paper towels.

Isolate the hazard

- Immunisation from certain infections such as hepatitis B is a form of risk control (immunisation guidelines are available from the Department of Human Services website – www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation).

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS continued

Design for safety

- Replace rotating taps with lever taps that can be turned on and off with the elbow or wrist and are easier to clean.

Change work methods

Hand washing and hand care

- Hand washing is the most important hygiene measure in preventing the spread of infection. Employees should be informed of the need to wash their hands and the correct way to do it.

Hands should be washed:

- at the start and end of shifts and breaks;
- whenever cross-infection from bodily fluids is possible (such as after assisting a client with toileting, changing nappies, administering medicines and applying first aid);
- before and after meals or handling food;
- after going to the toilet or coughing;
- after cleaning or handling soiled equipment, surfaces or linen;
- after touching animals; and
- before contact with any clients whose immune systems may be compromised.

The things to focus on are:

- wash the hands for 15 seconds with soap and water or a mild liquid hand-wash;
- clean all surfaces of the hands, including the sides and between the fingers;
- avoid nail brushes, as they can damage skin and be a source of infection;
- use a paper towel to turn off the tap if it can't be turned off with the elbow or wrist;
- avoid rings and wrist jewellery and keep nails short and clean if the work involves significant: physical contact with clients; cleaning; or maintaining areas that come into contact with bodily fluids;
- cover cuts and abrasions with water-resistant dressings and change them regularly;
- employees who have skin problems (such as weeping lesions or dermatitis) should seek medical advice before having physical contact with clients;
- minimise chapping by using warm water, patting rather than rubbing hands and using hand cream;
- use alternative means of hand washing (such as portable containers, alcoholic hand-rubs or foams) if visiting places where running water is not available; and
- rinse and dry hands thoroughly to help avoid irritation or sensitivity leading to dermatitis (early assessment and treatment is recommended if this is suspected).

Cleaning to prevent infection

The following steps should be considered:

- establish protocols outlining cleaning methods and frequency for routine cleaning of work areas to remove dust, soil and micro-organisms;
- identify priority areas for more frequent cleaning, including food preparation areas and surfaces likely to come into contact with bodily fluids (e.g. toys, bathrooms and nappy change facilities);
- clean surfaces with neutral detergent and hot water both before and after an activity like nappy changing;
- spills involving blood or bodily substances should be cleaned with neutral detergent and hot water using standard precautions; and
- cleaning equipment should be changed routinely (immediately if it has been used for cleaning blood or bodily substances).

Linen and disposable items

All items that are soiled with blood or bodily substances have the potential to cause infection and should be placed in a plastic bag, sealed, and disposed of in the normal waste (or handled as 'clinical' waste in health care facilities).

Towels, tissues, face cloths, toothbrushes and razors should not be shared.

Management of infection control incidents

Although the risk of exposure for most community services employees is relatively low, a protocol should be in place for the management of incidents such as needle stick injuries or other incidents involving blood or bodily fluids that could lead to exposure to HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C.

Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

The use of PPE, such as gloves, aprons, face masks and eye protection, is a good way of reducing contact with bodily fluids.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Now consult employees and review whether the risk controls have been effective:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, the disposal of infectious waste could become a manual handling hazard.

2.9 WORKPLACE BULLYING

Workplace bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health or safety.

The following types of behaviour, if repeated, could be considered bullying:

- verbal abuse;
- excluding or isolating particular employees;
- harassment or intimidation;
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the employee's job;
- assigning tasks that are impossible for the employee to successfully complete;
- changing work rosters with the deliberate intention of inconveniencing particular employees;
- intentionally withholding information that prevents a employee from effectively carrying out the job; and
- threats of dismissal.

While a single incident does not constitute bullying, one-off incidents should not be ignored.

Physical assault (or the threat of physical assault) should be regarded as occupational violence and dealt with accordingly (see **Section 2.10** and **Section 3.11** of this guide).

The WorkSafe Victoria publication *Prevention of Bullying and Violence at Work* provides more detail to help prevent bullying. The guidance note recommends an integrated approach to prevention, including creating awareness, policy development, informing, instructing and training, identifying risks, controlling risks, encouraging reporting, and responding to incidents.

What the law says

Workplace bullying creates an unsafe working environment. Employers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that risks to health and safety from bullying are eliminated or reduced.

Employees have duties under the OHS Act 2004 to take reasonable care of their own and other's health and safety and to cooperate with employers regarding the steps that must be taken to comply with a requirement under that Act.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

While bullying can occur in any workplace, it is difficult to detect and is often unreported due to: fears of 'payback' by the bully; the belief that nothing will be done to address the problem; fear of being considered weak; fear that reporting will have a negative impact on job security or career prospects; or the acceptance of bullying as a 'normal' part of workplace life.

Nonetheless, there are identifiable risks, which can be revealed through consultation with employees.

Consider all ways that employees may be exposed to bullying:

- conduct surveys to determine employees' opinions of the workplace climate and culture;
- review reports from HSRs and issues raised through health and safety committees; and
- consider any complaints made by employees about bullying or intimidating behaviour.

Factors that can increase the risk include:

- organisational change – such as restructuring or technological change;
- workforce characteristics – age, gender, disability, ethnicity and a range of other factors that could lead to individuals or groups being in a minority and being singled out;
- workplace relationships – which could create a climate in which teasing, practical jokes and bullying are more likely to occur; and
- work systems – such as high work rates, long hours, staff shortages and poorly defined jobs where tasks and objectives are not clear.

Bullying can occur in any workplace given certain circumstances. While an organisation might appear free from bullying, it still may be happening. As bullying can occur wherever people work together, employers should implement a range of complementary prevention measures.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Consult employees and decide the best way to deal with the problems identified.

While the hierarchy of controls used throughout this guide may be difficult to apply directly to workplace bullying, identifying potential problems and implementing risk controls is still the best strategy when trying to prevent bullying.

The first step should be to raise awareness. This will help employees to recognise the circumstances in which workplace bullying may be more likely to occur.

Other preventative actions may include:

- developing and communicating a 'no bullying' policy and procedures for reporting, investigating and resolving incidents;
- providing appropriate training, particularly for those with supervisory roles;
- consulting employees and HSRs before and during any planned organisational change;
- redesigning (and clearly defining) jobs;
- developing a conflict management process;
- reducing excessive working hours; and
- reviewing resources and staffing levels.

If some employees are potentially at higher risk of bullying (such as young employees or employees with limited skills), additional measures may be appropriate, such as:

- a 'buddy' system for new employees;
- additional training (for example, in workplace diversity and tolerance of individual differences); and
- specific training for supervisors and managers with responsibilities for those employees.

Reporting

An important part of any risk management strategy for bullying is to encourage reporting. Employees must feel they can raise problems and employers must be prepared to take complaints seriously, so that prompt assistance and support can be provided where appropriate.

Reporting procedures should be developed in consultation with employees and HSRs. Procedures must set out a process that will ensure confidentiality and fair treatment for all those involved.

Resolving incidents and reports

The key principles for responding to reports of bullying should be part of standard procedure. They include:

- treat all reported matters seriously;
- respond promptly to the report;
- ensure that the person who has raised the problem is not victimised;
- provide support for all those involved;
- communicate the process to those involved;
- maintain neutrality – the person responsible for investigating the circumstances must be impartial;
- ensure confidentiality;
- document meetings, interviews and agreed outcomes; and
- address underlying risk factors.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees to review whether controls are effective and ask the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, a 'buddy' system was implemented for new employees, but without adequate training of the 'buddies'. This introduced additional hazards for the 'buddy' when faced with work demands that didn't match knowledge and abilities.

2.10 OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

Occupational violence includes incidents where employees are physically attacked or threatened including any statement or behaviour that causes them to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked.

The term 'occupational violence' applies to all forms of physical attack on employees, including:

- striking, kicking, scratching, biting, spitting or any type of direct physical contact;
- pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing;
- throwing objects;
- attacking with any type of weapon; and
- any form of indecent physical contact.

A 'physical attack' can occur regardless of the attacker's intent and includes situations where an employee is attacked by a person who may not be able to form intent, but their behaviour can cause harm.

An example of this is would be a community services employee being punched by a client who has an acquired brain injury. While it is not clear whether the client made a conscious decision to punch the employee, this is still classified as occupational violence.

In the community services sector, the main threat of violence is from clients or residents. However, violence in the workplace can be perpetrated by co-employees (including managers, supervisors or employers), people known to the organisation (such as family members of people in care) and intruders.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

What the law says

Employers are obliged to provide safe and healthy workplaces including ensuring employees are protected from occupational violence.

Violence should be viewed in the same way as other occupational health and safety risks, and an organisation's commitment to the prevention of occupational violence should be included in its health and safety policies. Employees need to be provided with information, instruction, training and supervision so that they are able to prevent or manage the occurrence of violence in the workplace.

Sometimes occupational violence is not just an OHS issue, in some circumstances violence can be a crime and incidents should be reported to the police. Occupational violence that will not be offences under criminal law include where an employee is physically attacked by a person, such as a psychiatric patient, who is incapable of forming the necessary intent.

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

There is a potential for occupational violence when:

- working with clients who are in distress or who are likely to be intoxicated;
- working with people who have psychological or other conditions that may result in violent behaviour;
- working where drugs are kept or handled;
- denying someone a service or dealing with frustrated customers;
- working alone or at night; and
- handling cash.

The above list is not exhaustive as there may be other situations that could expose employees to occupational violence.

Consider all ways employees may be exposed to occupational violence:

- review incident and injury reports, statistics from the community services sector or other similar community services organisations;
- consult employees and clients;
- consult local police and industry experts in occupational violence;
- review work systems and procedures – such as staffing levels, the quality and validity of assessment and referral information, procedures for high-risk clients, client transport, off-site visits and emergency procedures;
- review communication systems and PPE. Use the *Working 'off-site' safety and security checklist* (Section 3.12);
- determine the skills and competencies needed to perform work with high-risk clients;
- review data from employee assistance or peer support programs (if there is one in place);
- inspect the workplace for current security measures. Refer to sections in the OHS internal and external inspection checklists (Sections 3.8 – 3.9); and
- review current client referral systems, security systems and cash handling systems. Use the *Occupational violence checklist* (Section 3.11).

Assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury.

The *Sample risk assessment work sheet* (Section 3.3) can help to document the risk assessment process and determine priorities.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Now consult employees and decide the best way to deal with the problems.

Procedures for violence prevention should be part of standard operating procedures. Review existing procedures to see if they are effective in controlling the potential for violence-related harm to employees and others in the workplace.

Demonstrate a commitment to preventing occupational violence by developing a violence prevention and management policy or a communication strategy to promote zero tolerance of aggression and violence.

These sample solutions illustrate the hierarchy of controls approach:

1. Eliminate the hazard or risk

First, ask if the risk of occupational violence can reasonably be eliminated or if the activity that gives rise to the risk can be discontinued or changed. Examples may include:

- removing the incentive for occupational violence by not having drugs or valuables on the premises;
- changing client contact arrangements – for example, by providing services over the phone instead of in person; and
- withdrawing a service to a client who is known to be violent.

2. Reduce the risk

Change the equipment or process

- Replace breakable glass panes with safety glass;
- replace furniture that could be thrown with fixed furniture; and
- replace metal cutlery with plastic cutlery.

Isolate the hazard

- Increase the depth of the reception counter to create more space between the client and the staff member.

Design for safety

The design of the workplace can reduce the risk of occupational violence by reducing opportunities to commit violence. Risks are minimised by focusing on the placement of doors and windows, the immediate surroundings, and the selection of particular fittings and furniture.

- Ensure effective lighting and landscaping eliminates hiding places;
- create a clear distinction between public and staff areas, control access for internal or high-risk areas, and display directional and warning signs;
- wherever clients have to wait for services, waiting areas should be comfortable and spacious, and if there are long waiting periods, provide a TV or reading material;
- interview rooms should be designed so that employees are in full view of other people in the area, and should have: two doors in each room; client access control; windows of shatterproof glass; minimal furniture that cannot be thrown or used to attack; an escape route for staff; and
- customer counters should be sufficiently wide so that it is difficult for a client to strike an employee; sufficiently high that it is difficult for someone to jump over; and have duress alarms fitted.

Change work methods

Develop or improve policies or procedures covering issues such as:

- referral, intake and assessment;
- the provision of information and training to employees to help them identify early warning signs of potentially volatile situations and know how to defuse a situation before it escalates into violence;
- written and verbal hand-over on the status of risk (for example, clients who have exhibited the potential for violent behaviour during a previous shift);
- entering, securing and leaving the premises;
- client management, service and complaints management;
- staffing and rosters;
- cash handling;

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS continued

- emergency communication and exit planning;
- working alone;
- post-incident reporting, debriefing and review;
- home visits, call-outs and off-site work;
- client transport;
- training;
- supervision and peer support; and
- grievance procedures.

Use personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Provide duress alarms for employees, including those at reception; and
- supply personal alarms and mobile phones in situations where this may provide greater security.

A useful source of further information is WorkSafe Victoria's publication *Prevention of Bullying and Violence at Work.*

Training

Briefing or training employees is an integral part of preventing aggression and violence. Training should focus on the potential situations most likely to occur in the workplace (identified in Step 1 above).

Training could cover:

- employer and employee responsibilities;
- types of occupational violence;
- legal issues associated with violence;
- policies and procedures for on-site and off-site work;
- recognising signs of impending violence;
- controlling risks associated with specific tasks or worksites;
- client service and complaints management;
- anger-management techniques;
- defusing and de-escalation techniques;
- self-defence;
- emergency response procedures (including violence, fire, bomb scare, armed hold-up);
- incident reporting mechanisms;
- debriefing procedures; and
- supervision, mentoring and peer support.

The importance of a response strategy

While the aim is to have effective controls in place that eliminate or reduce the risk of occupational violence, employers also need to have appropriate response measures in place.

A response strategy is important, as prompt and well-planned action can help reduce the harm to employees or others by occupational violence. In the aftermath of an incident, first aid and medical treatment may be required and planning should take this into account.

Employees involved in a violent incident should be given the option of being relieved of their duties. It may be necessary to arrange debriefings or ongoing counselling for the victim of occupational violence and any witnesses to the event.

HSRs should be made aware of any incidents, and in some circumstances WorkSafe Victoria (see **Section 4.7** of this guide) and Victoria Police must be notified.

Responding to serious incidents

Following a serious incident involving occupational violence, it is important to:

- ensure that the potential for violence no longer exists;
- provide first aid and medical treatment;
- call the police and, if necessary, the ambulance service;
- leave the scene undisturbed for the police;
- ask witnesses to remain until the police arrive, or if this is not possible, write down their names and contact numbers;
- warn/exclude perpetrators where appropriate;
- contact the family of those affected (keep a file with all staff's family contact numbers);
- relieve affected employees and volunteers of their duties;
- arrange an incident debriefing; and
- record the details in a workplace register of injuries.

Employers should ask for a full report from employees on what has occurred. It is important they are not made to feel in any way responsible until all facts are known by management and police, and they have been fully debriefed and counselled.

Threats

Following spoken threats (in person or over the phone):

- write a report on the incident, detailing the time, who was involved, the nature of the threats, reasons behind the threats (if known) and possible triggers for the threats;
- interview everyone involved if possible;
- ask the employee whether they feel the police should be involved;
- relieve the staff member if necessary;
- warn/exclude the client;
- if the offender is a staff member, implement the process for dealing with workplace bullying or aggression, and refer them to counselling (if deemed appropriate); and
- arrange debriefing and counselling.

Ongoing support

Usually, victims of occupational violence will feel better if they have the opportunity to talk about the incident. However, the effects of occupational violence will not disappear after the initial counselling, discussions or meetings.

Every person will react differently to being involved in or witnessing an aggressive or violent event. Some people may have a delayed reaction or suffer post-traumatic stress and treatment by qualified counsellors/psychologists may be an option.

The level of assistance provided will need to be assessed on an individual basis, but in general:

- for all reported incidents, the co-ordinator, manager or supervisor should initiate discussion with the person affected to monitor their reaction and assess the need for further assistance;
- for incidents of occupational violence, the co-ordinator or manager should arrange a debriefing as soon as possible with all relevant staff to discuss the incident, how it happened, how each person feels and what can be done to prevent it from happening again; and
- for very serious incidents, an external professional may be required to lead a further staff meeting, and to counsel staff individually. It is important that arrangements with suitable professionals are in place so they can be engaged within a short time after the incident (employee assistance programs can be helpful in this regard).

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees to decide whether the controls are effective and ask the following:

- Why did it happen? Review the incident – triggers/underlying risk.
- Did it work? Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- Did it create another hazard? The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, counter-to-ceiling security screens were installed in a community service office. The structure of the screens made communication between staff and clients difficult, leading to poor levels of service to the client that promoted aggression from the client.

2.11 WORK-RELATED STRESS

People may become stressed when faced with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. Stress is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues or little control over work or how they can cope with its demands and pressures.* While stress can build up over time it can also occur following specific incidents involving bullying, occupational violence and trauma.

* This is how the World Health Organisation describes stress in its publication *Work Organisation & Stress (2003)*.

Stress can lead to:

- frustration, anxiety, distress and emotional exhaustion;

- physical symptoms such as headaches, tiredness, shortness of breath, heart palpitations, sweating, indigestion, blurred vision, muscle tension or aching neck and shoulders;

- behavioural change such as irritability, excessive worrying and difficulty sleeping, leaving work early and/or working late, taking work home, absenteeism or increased sickness absence; and

- confusion and difficulty concentrating or making decision, muddled thinking.

What the law says

The OHS Act 2004 places legal responsibilities on both employers and employees. The definition of health, within the Act, now includes psychological health.

Employers have a duty under Section 21 of the Act to identify, assess and eliminate or reduce so far as is reasonably practicable the sources of risk to psychological health, safety and welfare of employees and other persons in any workplace over which the employer has control.

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

A combination of information provides the best indication of stress in the workplace. Employees should be consulted and a variety of workplace records may be examined. Before examining workplace records, have a claims agent or human resources service remove any identifiable information to protect people's privacy.

- Review incident reports and employees' compensation claims for workgroups or teams. Examine the investigation and claims text to determine the sources of risk;

- review sick leave records. Look at the pattern of sick leave for the past three to six months. High usage of sick leave is often associated with workplace stress;

- review annual leave records. Taking small amounts of time off is commonly associated with unpleasant working conditions and employee stress;

- review records of absenteeism and staff turnover. Look at trends particularly related to shifts, following periods of unpredictable work or periods of work under high pressure, etc;

- review data from employee assistance or peer support program (if there is one in place);

- review employee opinion, organisational climate or feedback survey data. This source of information may identify sources of risk such as the management of workplace conflict, reward and recognition of effort, career opportunities, job security, workplace consultation, communication and involvement in decision-making, control over workload, work schedules, work culture issues such as levels of support and social or physical isolation;

- examine research evidence of stress in the industry in Australia or internationally. It may also be useful to liaise with other organisations about the strategies they find effective for preventing risks to psychological health from stress; and

- workers should be consulted to assess the risk to psychological health from stress.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Consult with employees and then decide the best way to deal with the problems. There are various strategies to reduce risk to psychological health from work stress that focus on the sources of risk.

WorkSafe Victoria is developing guidance material to assist workplaces in dealing with psychological health risks. This will be available in 2007.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Regular monitoring

There should be a procedure for regularly monitoring the effect of changes in the workplace over time, including the actions taken to reduce risks to psychological health from stress. Consult employees and ask the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, an employee suffered work related stress because they perceived a lack of potential for career growth. The employee was given more responsibility, but without adequate training. This introduced additional hazards as the employee faced work demands that didn't match their knowledge and abilities. If a hazard such as this is created, it should be included in a continuous process of identifying and assessing hazards to psychological health from stress. Where required, modify a control measure to better control a risk.

2.12 WORK-RELATED FATIGUE

Fatigue is an acute or chronic state of tiredness that can affect employee performance, safety and health. It affects the physical and mental capacities needed for optimum work performance, increasing the risk of workplace incidents.

Fatigue can also contribute to workplace conflict, absenteeism, poor performance and mistakes that result in physical injuries or compromised client care. Work-related fatigue affects not only employee health and safety, but the health and safety of others as well.

Many potential causes of fatigue are present in community services workplaces. These may include:

- mentally and physically demanding work;
- long periods of time awake (e.g. long hours of work extended by long commuting times);
- inadequate amount or quality of sleep (e.g. when 'on-call');
- regular work at night;
- environmental stresses (e.g. noise, heat); and
- work requirements or systems of reward (pay, recognition or promotion) that provide incentives to work longer and harder than may be safe.

Prolonged fatigue can have detrimental effects on physical and mental health. These include:

- sleep disorders;
- mood disturbances;
- gastrointestinal complaints;
- headaches;
- nausea;
- depression and other psychiatric disturbances;
- cardiovascular disease;
- irregular menstrual cycles; and
- problems associated with the disruption of medication regimes for medical conditions (for example, insulin for diabetes).

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

What the law says

The OHS Act 2004 requires employers and employees to manage health and safety risks associated with or influenced by fatigue. Fatigue should be viewed in the same way as other occupational health and safety risks, and be included in organisational health and safety policies.

Employers have a duty to identify, assess and eliminate or reduce, so far as is reasonably practicable the sources of risk to health, safety and welfare of employees and other persons in any workplace over which the employer has control.

Employees also have a duty to comply with organisational procedures to control the risk of fatigue.

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

A combination of information provides the best indication of fatigue in the workplace. Employees should be consulted and a variety of workplace records may be examined. Before examining workplace records, have a claims agent or human resources service remove any identifiable information to protect people's privacy.

- Review incident data information (e.g. determine if incidents have been associated with start/finish/overtime, shift changeover and shift times);
- review workplace injury claims information;
- review records of absenteeism and staff turnover (e.g. look at trends related to periods of unpredictable work or periods of work under high pressure);
- review employee opinion survey data; and
- consult with employees.

Document any common reports of particular situations at work or at the home/work interface that contribute to fatigue and then assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury, or how likely it is to lead to injury.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Fatigue is often caused by a combination of factors and it may be necessary to use a combination of risk control measures. Consult with employees and decide the best way to deal with the problems.

See sample solutions below:

1. Eliminate the hazard or risk

Where reasonably practicable, eliminate:

- early morning start times (before 6:00am);
- late finish times;
- work between the hours of 2:00am and 6:00am; and
- the need to work overtime or extended shifts on more than three consecutive days.

2. Reduce the hazard

- Provide back-up for absences rather than having others work longer hours to cover absences;
- use mechanical aids (hoists, trolleys) to reduce the physical demands of the task;
- control environmental factors, e.g. noise and heat;
- address issues related to inadequate amount or quality of sleep (for example when 'on-call');
- avoid work at times when we would normally be sleeping (10:00pm – 8:00am);
- provide more notice about change of working hours or shifts to enable employees to organise their commitments;
- improve shift schedules or rosters to prevent build-up of sleep debt (the fatigue that accumulates when normal sleep or rest schedules are disrupted over time); and
- provide training and information about risks to health and safety from fatigue, e.g. raise awareness, and disseminate information about the strategies that may be used to prevent fatigue. While assisting employees to manage their fatigue may be of value, this is an unreliable way of preventing risk from fatigue in the workplace.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Now review whether the controls are effective.

Regular monitoring

Review actions implemented and regularly monitor the changes in the workplace over time. Consult employees and ask the following:

• **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?

• **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, a roster was changed to reduce fatigue, but the new roster did not take into account the regular overtime staff worked. This resulted in inadequate rest periods between shifts. If a hazard such as this is created, it should be included in a continuous process of identifying and assessing fatigue hazards. Where required, modify a control measure to better control a risk.

2.13 HOME VISITS

Home visits are common for many community services organisations. They present a unique situation in terms of OHS because the location of the work is both the client's home and a workplace.

To manage the risks, the physical environment, the actual work being done and client behaviour must be considered.

The types of activities that may involve home visits include:

• aged care assessments;
• counselling;
• disability assessments;
• psychiatric assessments;
• adoption/child welfare/foster care services;
• outreach support services;
• case management services;
• emergency relief;
• pastoral care;
• independent living programs; and
• client service planning.

The *Victorian Home Care Industry Occupational Health and Safety Guide* has been developed to specifically cover the following home care services: home maintenance; meals on wheels; respite; attendant care; personal care; home care; driving; and transporting as part of these services to clients. If your organisation provides these types of services, you need to refer to this document. See **Section 5** Resources and links for details on how to obtain this guide.

What the law says

Employers' and employees' responsibilities that apply when working in a client's home are set out in the OHS Act 2004. This means that employers must identify hazards and assess and control risks to employees who work at clients' homes.

Employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others while in the client's home.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

How to manage the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

Consider all ways employees may be exposed to hazards at a client's home:

- conduct a preliminary off-site check with the client over the phone to ask about access, people who may be present, and whether the client owns dogs or other animals;
- consult with the referring agency to ensure all relevant information is obtained;
- review injury and illness records to identify the types and causes of injuries that employees may have sustained during home visits; and
- ask employees if they have had any near-misses.

A home assessment must be conducted. Depending on the type of service, this may be undertaken prior to or on the initial visit. Use some of the sample work sheets provided in Sections 3.8, 3.9 and 3.12 of this guide.

Plan the home visit inspection with employees. Ask them what issues they anticipate and what tasks are to be undertaken.

Assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often people are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Now consult employees about the best way to deal with the problems. Remember to refer to Section 2.1 of this guide to assist developing a hierarchy of controls.

An extensive list of controls is provided in the *Victorian Home Care Industry Occupational Health and Safety Guide*. The guide details controls for manual handling, hazardous substances and electrical hazards, for tasks such as vacuuming, cleaning and home maintenance. A number of examples are provided here:

- provide substitute lightweight vacuum cleaners to be used until the client is able to buy a suitable cleaner;
- provide clear instructions and guidelines on work procedures and techniques to reduce manual handling (wrap hose around your back so that you are pulling the cleaner with one hand and guiding the hose with the other hand);
- use PPE when emptying a vacuum cleaner (mask and gloves);
- check cords and power points before use;
- employer provides home care employees with safety switch;
- only use chemicals that have been approved by the employer. Use personal protective equipment (gloves, masks, waterproof apron) as required by the MSDS;
- provide clear instructions and guidelines on work procedures to reduce exposure to hazardous substances (e.g. ensure toilet is well ventilated before cleaning with chemicals – open windows and doors, turn on exhaust fan);
- avoid lifting and/or carrying where possible – use a trolley to carry the washing basket to the line; and
- ensure that pathway between laundry and clothesline is not obstructed. Refer to maintenance staff if long-term hazard.

Violence is also a major risk for employees visiting client homes. Consider all the following risk controls:

- do not carry out the visit if the risk is assessed as high, and advise the police where appropriate;
- provide the service at your workplace if the client has a known history of aggressive or violent behaviour;
- train employees so they can assess the potential risks when they arrive at the client's home – if the situation is too risky (for example, there are exposed syringes or the client is intoxicated), employees should not continue with the visit. Employees should be aware that they have the right to refuse to work with a client if they feel at risk and that they should leave a client's home if a situation develops where they are not comfortable;
- ensure that employees share any safety concerns with the co-ordinator before leaving the office to meet the client;

- if there is known history of aggressive or violent behaviour, ensure that at least two employees are allocated to conduct the home visit;
- ensure that employees advise the organisation of the client's address and their expected arrival and return times, and that someone is available to respond appropriately if the employee does not meet these timeframes;
- employees should park in an easily accessible position on the street (not in the driveway) and should keep their car keys in their possession at all times;
- ensure that employees carry identification with them, which specifies the organisation where they work;
- provide employees with mobile phones that have a programmed emergency number, and ensure they are switched on during client visits;
- make sure that employees have established code words to alert the organisation if they are in a threatening situation;
- consider a procedure where every employee phones the office within 30 minutes of arriving at the client's home;
- insist that all employees phone the office at the end of each visit;
- discuss with the police the best methods of contacting them in an emergency, particularly in situations where employees may not be able to speak freely; and
- call the police if a employee is more than 30 minutes late and cannot be contacted.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees to decide whether the controls are effective and ask the following:

- **Why did it happen?** Review the incident – triggers/underlying risk.
- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, the use of a trolley may avoid the need to lift or carry laundry, but the trolley may then become a tripping hazard when not in use.

2.14 CARING FOR CHILDREN IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Many organisations may at times have children at their workplaces, raising significant issues. Some workplaces may provide child minding services while their parents or guardians are attending interviews or programs at their premises. Often, this service is provided on an informal basis in an area near the reception desk or interview room, or in a toy room or an outdoor play area. Staff in homelessness and domestic violence services may be required to work with children who enter their site. Organisations may also provide respite services for parents and their disabled children.

What the law says

Employers have a responsibility to ensure people who are not employees but who are in the workplace are safe. In each case, your organisation must consider the safety of children whether your workplace's prime activity is childcare or if children are just visitors to the workplace. The *Children's Services Act 2003* and *Children's Services Centres Regulations 1998* may also be applicable to your organisation and can be viewed at www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au.

MANAGING OHS IN YOUR WORKPLACE

How to control the risks

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

The most common injuries sustained by children under five are:

- falls;
- poisoning (often as a result of children gaining access to medication or common household products);
- burns (hot drinks are the most common cause);
- cuts;
- crushing or trapping injuries, particularly fingers being jammed in doors;
- objects being put in the ear, nose and eyes;
- collisions;
- dog bites; and
- choking (more often from non-food items than from food).

Consider all hazards children could be exposed to at your workplace:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify hazards. For example, consider the potential for falls, poisoning, burns and choking, remembering that hazards for children depend on their age, size and stage of development;
- review any complaints or concerns from parents about child-minding arrangements; and
- review injury and illness records to identify whether children have sustained any injuries in the past at a workplace, and look at the nature and causes of those injuries.

Assess the risk of these hazards – consider how often children are exposed to the hazard and the potential severity of an injury.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

Now consult employees and decide the best way to deal with the problems you have identified.

See sample solutions below:

1. Eliminate the hazard

- Remove a physical hazard completely so that it no longer poses a threat (for example, remove play equipment that is damaged or dangerous);
- do not provide child minding. Use a childcare service instead; and
- instruct parents or guardians not to leave bags in areas accessible to children (even baby bags often contain unsafe objects and look attractive to children).

2. Reduce the risk

Change the equipment or process

- Replace fluffy, absorbent toys with toys that are easily cleaned and sterilised.

Isolate the hazard

- Place a fence around play equipment to ensure children can only access the equipment while supervised.

Design for safety

- Install safety switches, door latches, power outlet covers and other safety devices.

Change work methods

- Always store medication and chemicals in different locked cupboards out of the reach of children;
- provide a trained childcare employee to supervise children in care;
- request that parents or guardians sign in children to ensure that employees are aware of the children for whom they are responsible;
- ensure that children remain in view of employees;
- check toys regularly and remove broken toys or those with loose parts; and
- ensure that employees and parents or guardians do not have hot drinks near children.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees to monitor whether controls are effective and ask the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, putting up fencing without proper railing measurement causing risk of head entrapment.

2.15 OFFICE ENVIRONMENTS

There are a range of hazards that may exist in the office environment: manual handling; potential for slips/trips/falls; hazardous substances; occupational violence; and bullying. These hazards are covered in detail in **Sections 2.5 – 2.14**. This section will focus specifically on the risks associated with working at a computer for long periods, which can lead to neck, shoulder and back pain.

What the law says?

Employers have duties under the OHS Act 2004 to ensure safe working conditions for employees and others in the workplace. The *Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999* define repetitive or sustained application of force, awkward postures or movements, as hazardous manual handling. When hazardous manual handling is identified a risk assessment must be undertaken and any risks controlled, so far as is reasonably practicable.

How to manage the risks

The WorkSafe guidance on office environment, *Officewise*, provides more detailed guidance to help identify, assess and control the risks associated with the office environment.

STEP 1: THINK – IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS AND ASSESS THE RISKS

As for any manual handling risk you should consider all possible situations where computer-based or written tasks involve sustained or repetitive awkward postures, and whether they could lead to an injury:

- complete a workplace inspection with employees to identify workstations where staff adopt awkward postures, for example prolonged sitting on non-adjustable chairs performing writing or computer-based tasks;
- review injury records to identify whether anyone at the workplace has reported an MSD in the past; and
- ask employees about tasks that they find difficult to do.

STEP 2: DO – CONTROL THE RISKS

To prevent injuries associated with sustained awkward postures, ensure workstations are set up in a way that encourages an upright, symmetrical and relaxed working posture. Provide suitable furniture and train employees to set up their workstations. Regardless of having the most appropriate workstation set-up, employees need to take regular breaks away from the desk, stand regularly to stretch and go for a walk.

Consider all the following controls when setting up workstations.

Desk and chair

- A height-adjustable desk is best. Adjust the height, to allow the operator to have their feet flat on the floor. If the desk's height can't be adjusted, a footstool may be required for operators of slight stature. Desk thickness should be less than 30mm, and depth of the desk must be sufficient so that the screen is not too close;
- chairs should have a five-star base and be easily adjustable for seat height, back rest height and tilt;
- adjust the backrest so that it supports the small of the back. Adjust the height of the chair so that the forearms are parallel to the desk when the elbows are at 90 degrees or more – this will ensure that the shoulders are relaxed when typing; and
- avoid armrests if most of the time at the desk is spent typing (armrests restrict an employee's ability to move closer to the desk and can cause the shoulders to be raised when typing).

The screen, keyboard and mouse

- Position the screen at eye level to avoid the need to incline the head, which can contribute to neck and shoulder pain;
- position the screen at arm's length – too far away and there is a tendency to lean forward and away from the back support of the chair;
- position the screen to avoid glare from overhead lights;
- clean the screen regularly – fingerprints and dirt make the screen hard to read;
- attach a separate keyboard and mouse when using a laptop on a desk to enable typing positions to be adjusted;
- give the eyes a break by looking away from the screen;
- place the keyboard and mouse to avoid overstretching;
- rest the hands in the lap or on the desk when not typing – this relaxes the shoulders and forearms;
- avoid hovering over the keyboard or the mouse to avoid muscle tension;
- don't strike the keys with unnecessary force;
- learn the shortcut function keys; and
- avoid working from documents that are flat on the desk. Instead, consider using a document holder that places documents beside the screen. If employees need to look at the keyboard when typing, choose a document holder that sits between the screen and the keyboard.

What else is on the desk?

- Think about removing clutter from the desk. Decide whether it would better to store some items away from the desk and then take a short walk when these items are required; and
- place frequently used items within reach and avoid overstretching or twisting.

STEP 3: REVIEW – MONITOR AND REVIEW RISK CONTROLS

Consult employees to monitor whether controls are effective and ask the following:

- **Did it work?** Did the risk control address the identified hazard and the risk of it occurring?
- **Did it create another hazard?** The risk control may have addressed the initial hazard but did it create another one? For example, a filing cabinet was provided to alleviate storage needs at a workstation. However, it was placed in a location that presented a tripping hazard when opened.

2.16 FIRST AID

First aid in the workplace is the provision of emergency treatment and life support for people suffering injury or illness at work.

This could include treatment for an injury such as a cut, fracture or burn, or for exposure to fumes or vapours resulting in dizziness or vomiting. It can also include treatment for a person who suffers a medical emergency such as a heart attack or an epileptic seizure.

First aid should not be seen as a substitute for medical treatment. If a person who has received first aid appears to need further treatment, medical help must be obtained without delay, either by taking the person to a doctor's surgery or hospital, or by calling an ambulance if moving the person may place them at risk.

What the law says

The OHS Act 2004 requires employers to provide adequate facilities for the welfare of employees. Employers must also provide the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to enable employees to perform their work in a safe manner.

The WorkSafe publication *First Aid in the Workplace (Code of Practice No. 18, 1995)* provides practical guidance to assist employers to fulfil these duties in regard to the provision of first aid.

The first aid system must be established long before any person at your workplace may need it.

Establish your first aid requirements

To establish the first aid needs of the workplace:

* identify local doctors and hospitals;
* identify the likely causes of work-related injury and illness and assess the risks they pose; and
* determine the level of first aid that may be required in the event of an injury or illness as a result of any of these risks.

As well as considering the nature and severity of the risks at the workplace, consider:

* the size and layout of the workplace (will access to treatment be difficult for some employees?);
* the number and placement of employees (including arrangements such as shiftwork, overtime and flexible hours);
* the location of the workplace (how quickly can medical attention be given if required?); and
* known occurrences of injury and illness.

Employees and HSRs should be consulted when assessing first aid requirements, including training and information, number of qualified first aiders and first aid facilities required to ensure an effective response to any incident.

Section 3.14 has a simple checklist to help you assess the needs for first aid facilities and training.

First aiders – selection and training

There is no 'typical' number of first aiders for a workplace, as the number required will vary from one workplace to another. An assessment of workplace risks will help determine how many first aiders are needed, and what their competencies should be.

As a minimum requirement, all first aiders should be able to undertake initial treatment of injuries and illnesses occurring at the workplace.

Training for first aiders should be arranged with their required competencies in mind, and employers should ensure that first aiders maintain their knowledge and skills by undertaking further training or 'refresher' training when necessary.

First aid kits and rooms

First aid kits should be clearly marked (usually with a green cross on a white background) and should be accessible to employees. The number of kits required will depend on the first aid needs of the workplace.

Kits must be checked regularly to ensure that their contents are replenished, and the container should protect the contents from dust and damage. They should not be locked so as to ensure they can be accessed immediately.

In most workplaces, the following items are likely to be included in a basic first aid kit:

- emergency services phone numbers and addresses;
- names and contact numbers of workplace first aiders;
- basic first aid instructions;
- individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings;
- sterile eye pads;
- sterile covering for serious wounds;
- triangular bandages;
- safety pins;
- small, medium and large sterile wound dressings;
- adhesive tape;
- rubber thread or crepe bandage;
- disposable gloves; and
- scissors.

Some workplaces may need a room specifically set aside for first aid treatment. Whether the organisation requires a first aid room is something to consider during an assessment of first aid needs.

Awareness of first aid arrangements

It is very important that all employees know the first aid arrangements and procedures, including who the first aiders are and where first aid kits are located.

This information should be provided to employees on their first day and must be updated whenever any changes are made to first aid arrangements.

SECTION 3

CHECKLISTS AND TOOLS

3

CHECKLISTS AND TOOLS

HOW TO USE THESE TOOLS

These tools have been designed to assist organisations establish 'OHS basics', the building blocks for managing health and safety. The OHS inspection checklists provide a wide ranging list of issues to consider. Please note that not all issues are relevant for all organisations.

These tools should be adapted to fit each organisation, its activities and work environments.

They can also be photocopied and distributed to help managers, employees, volunteers and OHS committees fulfil their roles in health and safety. If OHS processes are already in place use the tools to review existing OHS systems.

Writing an OHS policy or procedure (**Section 3.1**) assists organisations develop an OHS policy.

Sample OHS induction for employees and volunteers (**Section 3.2**) is an example agenda of a half-day induction program.

Sample risk assessment work sheet (**Section 3.3**) and *Sample risk control work sheet* (**Section 3.4**) are generic documents that can be used to document the risk management process for any hazard. They are one way to show hazards have been identified and risks assessed, taking into consideration the likelihood and severity of injuries. Controls should then be documented and responsibilities and time frames allocated.

Manual handling work sheet (**Section 3.5**), *Manual handling risk assessment work sheet* (**Section 3.6**) and *Manual handling risk control work sheet* (**Section 3.7**) can be used for manual handling risk management process.

OHS inspection for the internal environment checklist (**Section 3.8**) and *External environment checklist* (**Section 3.9**) cover a range of hazards and can be used to assess all work premises including clients' homes.

Emergency evacuation checklist (**Section 3.10**) can be used to assess evacuation systems.

Occupational violence checklist (**Section 3.11**) can be used to examine systems intended to address occupational violence. It should be used in conjunction with the internal and external environment checklists (**Sections 3.8** and **3.9**) for specific environmental controls and with the *Working 'off-site' safety and security checklist* (**Section 3.12**) for those not working in an office environment.

Working 'off-site' safety and security checklist is useful for all organisations that have employees working away from the organisation's office. It covers security and communication.

Transport safety checklist (**Section 3.13**), can be used by organisations whose employees drive as part of their work or provide client transport services.

Assessment of first aid needs checklist (**Section 3.14**) provides a basic guide to the questions that need be asked when determining a workplace's first aid requirements.

Establishing a hazardous substances (chemicals) register (**Section 3.15**) is relevant to all organisations that have any hazardous substances at their workplaces.

Use this checklist to review your existing OHS policy and procedures, or as guidance when drafting new ones.

YOUR OHS POLICY SHOULD INCLUDE:

☐ the purpose of the policy

☐ the legal duty of your organisation as an employer

☐ your organisation's commitment to controlling hazards at their source where practicable, and minimising risks where hazards cannot be eliminated

☐ an outline of *how* a hazard or issue will be managed – including resources to be provided

☐ roles and accountabilities of managers and supervisors

☐ a description of how the policy will be communicated to employees/volunteers and put into practice

YOUR OHS PROCEDURE SHOULD INCLUDE:

☐ the purpose of the procedure

☐ the standards the procedure must meet: relevant legislation; Compliance Codes; Australian Standards; or industry best practice

☐ steps to be followed to achieve required objectives in managing the hazard or issue the procedure addresses

☐ roles and accountabilities of managers, supervisors, employees and volunteers

☐ direction to any additional guidance people will need to implement the procedure

☐ a process for review of the procedure and the date by which that will happen

Finally, review and/or test OHS policies and procedures to make sure they are:

- written simply and clearly, so they will be understood by all employees and volunteers
- comprehensive, consistent and compliant with relevant legislation and standards in the way they will manage the hazard or issue addressed

3.2 SAMPLE OHS INDUCTION FOR EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Timetable and topics

TIME	TOPICS
9:00am	General administration
9:15am	Introduction to the course Expected learning outcomes Topic 1 – OHS legislation in the workplace Defining key terms Key elements of OHS legislation Workplace responsibilities Responsibilities of employees Role of WorkSafe Victoria
10:00am	Topic 2 – Communication and consultation in OHS Effective OHS consultation OHS consultative processes Role of OHS committee/Health and Safety Representatives
10:45am	**Break**
11:00am	Topic 3 – Managing workplace hazards Key elements of OHS risk management Identifying hazards Risk assessment Controlling and monitoring OHS risks Elements of a safe system of work
11:45am	Topic 4 – Emergency and first aid arrangements Workplace emergency plans Elements of an emergency response plan Elements of a site evacuation plan Emergency procedures for fire Workplace arrangements for first aid
12:30pm	Topic 5 – Workplace injury management and insurance Defining workplace injury management and insurance Entitlements and obligations of injured employees Elements of workplace injury management and return to work Summary, questions and evaluation
1:00pm	**Close**

Note:
This course may be more than four hours duration if trainers customise to suit the needs of the organisation: for example, by including training in agreed procedures to manage particular workplace risks.

Source: adapted from 'OHS Induction for Employees', WorkCover NSW, OHS Education Unit 2002.

Location: Albert Lane Community Centre, ground floor and steps inside front entrance

Risk assessment conducted by: Centre Manager, Health and Safety Representative [names required] **Date:** 30/9/2005

HAZARD	RISK	RISK – LIKELIHOOD	RISK – SEVERITY
Slipping hazard: wet floors after mopping stairs.	Risk: Slip or fall on stairs could result in injury to employee, volunteer, client or visitor to the Centre.	Likely to happen: stairs are mopped twice a week when the Centre is open to clients and visitors.	Significant risk: could result in fracture, loss of consciousness or soft tissue injury.
Slipping hazard: Plate glass exit door close to foot of stairs.	Risk: Slip or fall on stairs could result in a person falling against or through plate glass exit door.	Likely to happen: consultation with Centre staff and volunteers indicates that two people have slipped on wet stairs this year, so far without serious injury occurring.	Significant risk: could result in deep cut if a person falls into the glass door and the glass is broken. Shattering glass would also place at risk persons outside the Centre.

3.4 SAMPLE RISK CONTROL WORK SHEET
TAKE ACTION TO CONTROL RISK, REVIEW EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CONTROLS

Work Safe

ACTION REQUIRED (RISK CONTROL)	DATE BY WHICH ACTION WILL BE COMPLETED	RESPONSIBILITY	DATE COMPLETED/ SIGNATURES OF MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATIVE, HSR
Change equipment or process: replace glass exit door – no glass except for window at face height.	5/11	Manager to arrange with building owner.	
Design for safety: install non-slip surfacing on stairs.	29/10	Manager to arrange with building owner.	
Improve lighting on stairs: add light to landing and above exit door.	15/10	Manager to arrange with building owner.	
Change work method: wet mopping to be done after hours when stairs are not in use.	Immediate (1/10)	Manager will arrange with cleaners for work to be organised so stairs are not mopped while the centre is open to the public.	
REVIEW to be undertaken by: **REVIEW signed off:**		**Proposed date for review:** 2/12/2005 **Date completed:**	

3.5 MANUAL HANDLING WORK SHEET
HAZARDOUS MANUAL HANDLING IDENTIFICATION WORK SHEET

Management representative:

Health & Safety Representative:

Does the task involve hazardous manual handling? Tick any of the following that apply to the task.

TASK	REPETITIVE OR SUSTAINED APPLICATION OF FORCE	REPETITIVE OR SUSTAINED AWKWARD POSTURE	REPETITIVE OR SUSTAINED MOVEMENT	APPLICATION OF HIGH FORCE	EXPOSURE TO SUSTAINED VIBRATION	HANDLING LIVE PEOPLE OR ANIMALS	HANDLING LOADS THAT ARE UNBALANCED, UNSTABLE OR DIFFICULT TO GRASP OR HOLD
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If more than one box is ticked for a particular task, you must do a risk assessment of that task.

Hazardous manual handling must be identified for all existing and proposed tasks in your workplace. You must also identify hazardous manual handling whenever changes occur in the workplace or new information or reports of MSD are brought to your attention.

3.6 MANUAL HANDLING
RISK ASSESSMENT WORK SHEET

Task:	Date:

Management representative

Health & Safety Representative:

RISK ASSESSMENT WORK SHEET

Step 1a – Does the task involve repetitive or sustained postures, movements or forces?

Tick yes if the task requires any of the following postures, movements or forces more than twice a minute (repetitive) OR more than 30 seconds at a time (sustained).

POSTURES AND MOVEMENTS	YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)
Bending the back forwards or sideways more than 20 degrees		
Twisting the back more than 20 degrees		
Backward bending of the back more than 5 degrees		
Bending the head forwards or sideways more than 20 degrees		
Twisting the neck more than 20 degrees		
Bending the head backwards more than 5 degrees		
Working with one or both hands above shoulder height		
Reaching forwards or sideways more than 30cm from the body		
Reaching behind the body		
Squatting, kneeling, crawling, lying, semi-lying or jumping		
Standing with most of the body's weight on one leg		
Twisting, turning, grabbing, picking or wringing actions with the fingers, hands or arms		
Working with the fingers close together or wide apart		
Very fast movements		
Excessive bending of the wrists		
Lifting or lowering		
Carrying with one hand or one side of the body		

Step 1a – Does the task involve repetitive or sustained postures, movements or forces? continued

POSTURES AND MOVEMENTS	YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)
Exerting force with one hand or one side of the body		
Pushing, pulling or dragging		
Gripping with the fingers pinched together or held wide apart		
Exerting force while in an awkward posture, e.g. • supporting items while arms or shoulders are in an awkward posture • moving items while legs are in an awkward posture		
Holding, supporting or restraining any object, person, animal or tool		

Step 1b – Is the task carried out over a long period of time?

Tick yes if the task is done for more than two hours over a whole shift, OR continually for more than 30 minutes at a time.

YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)

Step 2 – Does the task involve high force?

Tick yes if the task involves any of the following high force actions, even if force is only applied once.

	YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)
Lifting, lowering or carrying heavy loads		
Applying uneven, fast or jerky forces during lifting, carrying, pushing or pulling		
Applying sudden or unexpected forces (e.g. when handling a person or animal)		
Pushing or pulling objects that are hard to move or to stop (e.g. a trolley)		
Using a finger-grip, a pinch-grip or an open-handed grip to handle a heavy or large load		
Exerting force at the limit of the grip span		
Needing to use two hands to operate a tool designed for one hand		
Throwing or catching		
Hitting or kicking		
Holding, supporting or restraining a person, animal or heavy object		
Jumping while holding a load		
Exerting force with the non-preferred hand		
Two or more people need to be assigned to handle a heavy or bulky load		
Exerting high force while in an awkward posture		

Refer to Step 1a for guidance on awkward postures.

Tick yes if employees report *any* of the following about the task.

	YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)
Pain or significant discomfort during or after the task		
The task can only be done for short periods		
Stronger employees are assigned to do the task		
Employees think the task should be done by more than one person, or seek help to do the task		
Employees say the task is physically very strenuous or difficult to do		

Step 3 – Is there a risk?

Does the task involve repetitive or sustained postures, movements or forces, and long duration?

(See page 22 of WorkSafe publication *Manual Handling (Code of Practice No. 25, 2000)*.

Tick yes if you ticked any boxes in Step 1a *and* Step 1b.

☐ Yes

Comments

The task is a risk. Risk control is required.

Does the task involve high force?

Tick yes if you ticked any box in Step 2.

☐ Yes

Comments

The task is a risk. Risk control is required.

Step 4 – Are environmental factors increasing the risk?

Tick yes if any of the following environmental factors are present in the task.

	YES	COMMENTS (i.e. WHEN AND WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?)
Vibration (hand/arm or whole body)		
High temperatures		
Radiant heat		
High humidity		
Low temperatures		
Wearing protective clothing while working in hot conditions		
Wearing thick clothing while working in cold conditions (e.g. gloves)		
Employees are working in hot conditions and are not used to it		

WorkSafe

Step 4 – Are environmental factors increasing the risk? continued

Has there been a report of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) associated with this task?

☐ Tick box if yes.

Comments

It may be helpful to sketch the task or attach a photograph here and describe the task or area more fully.

Generally, the more boxes you ticked in each section on this work sheet, the greater the risk.

If the assessment shows a risk of MSD, you must keep this record until the task is no longer done or if the task is changed and another assessment is done.

WorkSafe VICTORIA

Workplace:	Date:

Work sheet completed by:

What are the sources of the manual handling risk?

Can you eliminate all or part of the task?

IF YES ⇨

HOW?

IF NO ⇩

Is it possible to eliminate or reduce the risk by:
- making changes at the workplace
- changing the environmental conditions
- changing system of work
- changing objects used in the task
- using mechanical aids

IF YES ⇨

HOW?

IF NO ⇩

Can you reduce the risk by providing information, instruction and/or training to employees and volunteers who will carry out this task?

Date by which risk control(s) is to be implemented:
Person(s) responsible for taking the agreed action:
Date by which effectiveness of the risk control(s) will be reviewed:
Signed off (management rep and HSR):

3.8 CHECKLIST: OHS INSPECTION – INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

| Workplace: | Date: |

| Inspection completed by: |

| Date for review of agreed actions: |

SECURITY	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Adequate locks on all external doors			
Adequate locks on all external windows			
All keys are registered and records kept identifying people holding them at all times			
Alarm system installed and functional			
Emergency communication (e.g. duress alarm or intercom) provided where appropriate			
Window and door security screens fitted			
Signs and physical barriers indicate boundaries between public and restricted areas			
Signs clearly visible to indicate security measures are in place			
Emergency procedures and evacuation points clearly displayed			
Restricted public access to objects that could be used as a weapon			
Cash to be kept in secure places out of view of clients/visitors			
Areas where an intruder/aggressor could hide have been identified and communicated to staff			
Secure cupboards, lockers or drawers provided for staff and volunteers to keep personal items			
Emergency phone numbers displayed at every telephone			
'Safe haven' provided where staff could quickly and safely access a phone in an emergency			
Client consultation areas have two exits and a window or one-way mirror			
Only one public access point in use at night			
Visual access to outside of external doors, i.e. view hole, glass panel or closed-circuit camera			

FLOORS/AISLES/EXITS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Entrances and steps in good order			
Entrances, doorways, stairs and steps kept free from obstructions			
Hand rails installed where appropriate at entrance/exit steps and ramps			
Floor coverings in good order			
Floors even, with no cracks, dips or holes			
Floors clean and not slippery			
Signs available and always placed to indicate wet floors after cleaning			
Computer and other electrical leads and cables kept clear of aisles and walkways			
Aisles and walkways free from obstructions – boxes, rubbish, bins, etc			

STAIRS AND LANDINGS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Lighting adequate			
Good visual contrast between steps			
Slip-resistant strips on step edges			
Hand rails installed and at appropriate height			
Minimal variation between step height and step depth (horizontal)			

LIGHTING AND INDOOR CLIMATE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Lighting for vision adjustment from sunlight to indoors			
Lighting in all indoor work areas is sufficient and suitable for work performed			
Accessible light switches			
Task lighting provided for close and/or detailed work			
Overhead lights shielded to minimise glare			
Stairwells and exits well lit			

LIGHTING AND INDOOR CLIMATE CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Temperature maintained at appropriate (comfortable) level throughout indoor areas			
Air conditioning filters (if required) cleaned regularly			
Air quality acceptable (no fumes, odours, particles)			

BATHROOMS/TOILETS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Adequate toilets for men and women			
Toilets provided for people with disabilities			
Nappy change facilities available			
Facilities cleaned regularly			
Facilities well ventilated			
Hand wash, single-use hand towels/driers provided			
Sanitary bins provided			

KITCHEN AND LUNCH ROOMS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Suitable eating/tea break facilities provided			
Food stored appropriately, i.e. refrigerated where required			
Cooking facilities clean and in good working order			
Clean work benches			
Locked cupboard or drawers for knives and other sharp implements			
Kitchen staff to wear protective clothing where appropriate			
Kitchen staff to wear gloves when handling or preparing food			
Exhaust fans above cooking units functional and clean			
Electrical equipment in good condition (check leads)			
Anti-slip floor surfaces provided; floors free from water and grease			

HOUSEKEEPING	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Work areas kept clean and tidy			
Materials and equipment stored safely			
Rubbish bins/recycled paper bins emptied regularly			
Employees/volunteers provided with PPE for cleaning tasks, e.g. disposable rubber gloves			
Appropriate container(s) provided for disposal of 'sharps'			
Procedures in place for cleaning up spills and breakages			

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) available for all hazardous substances in the workplace			
Hazardous substances register kept (and up to date)			
Procedures in place to dispose of all chemicals appropriately			
All chemicals clearly labelled			
Hazardous substances to be kept in locked cupboard or drawers			
Emergency procedures in place and promoted to all employees/volunteers			
All employees instructed in correct use of hazardous substances, and provided with any necessary PPE			
Fire extinguishers (of correct type) located close to chemical storage areas			
Facilities to deal with chemical spills or splashes maintained nearby to areas of chemical use			

STORAGE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Materials stored in racks, cupboards, compactus, storage rooms or bins where possible			
Storage designed to minimise manual handling			
Floors in storage areas free from rubbish and packaging materials			
Files and document boxes stored securely and appropriately			

FIRST AID	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
First aid kit clearly labelled and complete as required			
First aid kit easy to access for all employees			
All employees aware of where the first aid kit is located			
Names of trained first aiders clearly displayed			
First aid qualifications kept up-to-date by trained first aiders as necessary			
Disposable gloves available and used for treatment of all injuries			
Register of injuries kept			

WORKSTATIONS/OFFICE FURNITURE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
No broken or unstable items			
No sharp edges on desks, tables or equipment			
Filing cabinets and cupboards stable or secured to wall to prevent tipping			
Furniture not blocking aisles or doorways			

CHAIRS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Chairs are height-adjustable			
Back rests are adjustable			
Chairs have been adjusted (seat and back rest) to suit individuals using them			

DESK/WORK SURFACE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Desk at correct height for the work being performed			
Sufficient leg room beneath desk			
Desk is uncluttered			

WORKPLACE LAYOUT	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Document holder provided for continuous keying (typing and reading documents) work			
Phone connection nearby			
Sufficient individual storage space			
Frequently used items located within comfortable reach			
Computer and other cables are secure beneath work surface			
Computer monitor is at recommended height			
Keyboard and mouse are positioned correctly			
Adequate space between items of furniture			
Adequate space for staff and clients in passageways			

ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Switchboards and electrical equipment in safe condition			
Electrical installations and equipment regularly inspected or tested and tagged as safe			
Records kept of all electrical inspections, testing and repairs			
Procedure in place for immediate withdrawal of any item thought to be faulty – and warning notice where necessary			
Plugs, sockets and switches in safe places and free from obvious defects (loose, broken, overheating)			
Electrical leads free from kinks, frays, loose or exposed wires or leads			
Adequate number of power points for appliances and equipment in use			

ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Earth leakage protection installed			
Main and isolating switches clearly signed and accessible			
Power tools, power boards, extension leads maintained in safe condition			

NOISE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Equipment regularly maintained			
Noisy equipment enclosed or isolated from employees, volunteers and clients			

PHOTOCOPIERS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Located in well ventilated room			
Located away from employees to minimise their exposure to noise			

RESIDENTIAL	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Privacy for clients and employees (e.g. not having a TV and stereo in the same room)			
Kitchen safety rules clearly displayed and understood			
House rules displayed and understood			
Residents informed of curfew times and comply with these			
Visitors informed of house rules and comply with these			
Drug and alcohol policy clearly displayed and enforced			
Housekeeping satisfactory throughout residential environments			
Emergency procedures in place and understood by employees, volunteers and residents			

'SAFE ROOMS'	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Door with handle that can be pulled closed and locked			
Double lock on door			
Exit from the room other than the entry door			
Telephone in the room			

FIRE EXITS AND PROCEDURES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Smoke detectors and alarms appropriately located and in working order			
Accessible fire exits			
Appropriate exit signs			
Uncluttered fire exits and stairwells			
Fire exits unlocked during working hours			
Fire extinguishers located as appropriate for building area and accessibility requirements			
Fire extinguishers of correct type for identified workplace hazards			
Fire extinguishers regularly serviced and service dates recorded on tags			
Fire blankets provided where appropriate			
Regular fire drills held, with staff participation documented			

3.9 CHECKLIST: OHS INSPECTION – EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

WorkSafe VICTORIA

| Workplace: | Date: |

| Inspection completed by: |

| Date for review of agreed actions: |

VEHICLE PARKING AREA AND BUILDING PERIMETER	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Vandal-resistant security lights illuminate building perimeter			
Security lights can be set to automatically activate and de-activate			
Security lights are on a separate electrical circuit to the main facility			
Employees/volunteers working after dark have parking available in an area close to a building entrance			
Landscaping provides minimal places of concealment for intruders			
Entrances and exits are clearly marked			
Surface of parking area and driveways are free from potholes, cracks and other trip hazards			
External roads and car parks are well drained to prevent flooding or pooling of water			
Drainage grates are in good order			
Required direction of traffic is well defined and clearly indicated by signs and/or painted roadways			
Traffic and speed restriction signs are clearly visible and free from obstructions			
Adequate lighting throughout parking areas is installed and functioning			
Intersections and pedestrian areas (e.g. crossings) are identified and clearly signed			
Potential vehicle damage areas, corners and guardrails are effectively marked			
'No parking' areas are clearly indicated by signs and/or surface marking			
Disabled parking areas are designated and in priority locations			
Emergency and service vehicle parking areas are designated and in priority locations			
Facility vehicle parking spots are designated in well-lit areas and close to buildings			

PEDESTRIAN AREAS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Continuous clear, accessible pathways (i.e. no barriers, no impediment from trees or bushes)			
Landscaping provides minimal places of concealment for intruders			
Pathways free from raised curbs, projections, holes and other tripping hazards			
Paths are well drained to prevent flooding or pooling of water			
Adequate illumination of paths, walkways, stairs, steps and ramps			
Steps and changes of level clearly defined and indicated			
Anti-slip surfaces where necessary, with fungus/slippery fallen leaves etc treated or cleared			
Waste bins provided and regularly emptied			

BOUNDARIES AND ACCESS POINTS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Walls, gates and fences in good order without gaps or protrusions			
Signs clearly displayed to indicate security arrangements in place			
Childproof locks fitted to gates where needed			

SHADE	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Adequate protection from sun provided			
Sunscreen provided to staff and clients who may have prolonged exposure to sun			
Hats and other protective clothing worn by staff and contractors (e.g. gardeners) when working outside			

FIXED CHILDREN'S PLAY EQUIPMENT	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Impact absorbing material under all equipment where fall height could exceed 0.5 metres			
Impact absorbing fall zone free from objects and extends at least 2.5 metres beyond perimeter of equipment			
Accessible gaps higher than 600mm above ground are either less than 100mm or more than 230mm			
All handrails and grabrails are between 19mm and 38mm in diameter			
Guardrails with vertical or solid infill provided for platforms over 1 metre high			
No protruding bolts, nails or splinters			
All equipment regularly checked to ensure it is safe and in good repair			

OTHER	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Assembly area for emergency evacuations is clearly marked			
Gardens maintained safely – debris, dead or loose branches, long grass cut/removed as necessary			
Gardens and grounds free of sharp objects (glass, metal, wood, needles, etc)			
Disposal containers provided for smokers (if smoking is permitted within property boundaries)			
Storage areas locked and kept free of material, obstructions and rubbish			
Fire hoses appropriately located, regularly checked and maintained			

Workplace: **Date:**

Checklist completed by:

Date for review of agreed actions:

EMERGENCY RISK CONTROL	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
All emergencies that could require evacuation of the working area have been identified			
Persons responsible for managing emergencies, including any evacuation, have been nominated and informed			
Signals/instructions that will trigger an evacuation have been established and communicated			
Those responsible for activating alarms/warning signals have been nominated and informed			
Emergency procedures are clearly displayed in the workplace at appropriate locations			
Employees and volunteers have been informed of emergency procedures (and briefed where necessary)			
Emergency procedures are included in induction training for all new employees and volunteers			
Evacuation route has been identified and needs of people with disabilities considered			
Assembly points have been identified and communicated to all employees and volunteers			
Procedures are in place to ensure that everyone is accounted for (including visitors and contractors)			
Signal or instruction indicating 'all clear' has been established and person has been nominated for this role			
Re-entry procedures have been established and persons nominated to manage this following the 'all clear'			
Evacuation 'rehearsals' are held on a regular basis and evaluated afterward to ensure that plans are being followed			

3.11 CHECKLIST: OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE

WorkSafe

Workplace:	Date:

Checklist completed by:

Date for review of agreed actions:

POTENTIAL RISK CONTROL MEASURES

CLIENT ASSESSMENT AND REFERRAL	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Procedures followed for referral and assessment of clients			
Written criteria used to determine the types of clients the service will accept and those to be referred elsewhere			
Clients assessed for their potential of aggression and violence (risk profile)			
Referring organisations provide written information regarding client behaviour, history of violence or aggression			
Referral information verified and further information sought from family, carers, teachers or general practitioners			
Relevant information is communicated to staff			
Services reduced or discontinued for clients who present a level of risk which cannot be managed within existing resources			
Procedures followed for referring clients to appropriate services for treatment of psychiatric, illicit drug and alcohol issues			
Day to day behavioural status of higher risk clients monitored and recorded, and next shift of employees/volunteers made aware of relevant information			

STAFF MANAGEMENT	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Procedures followed for employees/volunteers working alone or off-site			
Inexperienced employees paired with experienced employees			
Employees' clothing does not add to risk of injury during a violent incident (e.g. earrings, ties, scarves)			

Work Safe VICTORIA

STAFF MANAGEMENT CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Procedures followed for disputes and grievances between employees, volunteers and management			
Client rights and responsibilities documented and provided to clients at the start of service			
Client dispute resolution procedures in place			
Items that could be used as a weapon removed from clients where practicable and without risk to employees			
Client medication procedures in place			
Sleeping clients woken with voice, not by touch			
Procedures in place for handling client cash and personal items			
Procedures to ensure clients are never given employees' personal telephone numbers/home address details			
Employees working with high-risk client groups encouraged to consider silent private telephone numbers			
Employees/volunteers prohibited from sexual or other personal relationship with clients			

SECURITY PROCEDURES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Information provided to clients, visitors, contractors and suppliers on workplace arrangements to manage violence			
Security procedures for all premises in place day and night			
Access restricted at night to as few entrances as possible			
Arrangements made to ensure employees do not need to access outside storage areas at night			
Arrangements made to enable employees to park close to the building at night			
Personal property stored in a secure place			
Register of visitors and other persons on site (e.g. contractors) provided and maintained as a requirement of entry			

CASH HANDLING	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Cash handling system in place			
Limited cash kept on premises			
Cash stored in secure location out of sight of public and clients			
Procedure for safe transport of cash when bank deposits (or withdrawals) are made			

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND TRAINING	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Procedures in place including defusing of threat, back-up, reporting, retreat to safe areas and calling police			
Person nominated to take charge in case of any violence-related emergency			
Procedure in place to handle bomb threats, armed hold-ups, abusive telephone calls			
Home visits and emergency call-out procedures in place			

POST INCIDENT PROCEDURES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
First aid and access to medical care provided for anyone injured			
Transport home and communication with family of those affected arranged if necessary			
Psychological support (debriefing and/or counselling) available to affected employees/volunteers			
Time off arranged as necessary for affected employees/volunteers following an incident			
Incident details recorded and reported to manager or employer			
Serious violent incidents such as physical or armed assault or bomb threats reported to police			
Client-perpetrated aggression or violence recorded in the client's files			
WorkSafe Victoria notified of incidents as required by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004			

Workplace: **Date:**

Checklist completed by:

Date for review of agreed actions:

COMMUNICATION	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Employees have communication equipment, e.g. a mobile phone			
Communication equipment to be checked prior to leaving 'base'			
Communication equipment is switched on at all times while off-site, and programmed with back-to-base and emergency numbers			
Employees leave details of off-site addresses, scheduled arrival and departure times, registration number of vehicle			
Employees report movements to base as stipulated by protocols (e.g. regular call-in, call-in on arrival or departure or at end of shift)			
Procedures in place if contact is lost or if off-site employees do not make contact when expected			
Code words established for off-site employee to indicate they are in a threatening situation			

HOME VISIT AND CALL-OUT SECURITY	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Risk assessments of client behaviour and home is undertaken before committing employees to a home visit or call-out			
Higher risk clients are asked to attend at the organisation's premises or are seen by employees in pairs (this may include staff from another community service organisation)			
Employees carry official photo ID which identifies the issuing organisation			
Employees have been trained and instructed to respect clients and will be aware that clients may view home visits as 'invasion of their personal space'			
If a client is being helped to escape domestic violence, visits are scheduled for times when back-up is available, and if necessary police are involved			

Work Safe

HOME VISIT AND CALLOUT SECURITY CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Employees have been trained and instructed to withdraw from a visit if they feel they are at any risk			
Employees who are alone or in an isolated situation are provided with duress alarm, mobile phone and call-in system			
Mobile phone 'black-out' areas are identified and procedures are in place for emergency communication (and/or work undertaken in pairs)			
Employees are trained in procedures for home visits, e.g. maintaining a clear line of exit, keeping car keys/diary secure, parking car to enable exit in emergency			
Employees are trained and instructed to leave client premises and notify police if firearms or other weapons are observed			
Employees are trained in techniques to defuse threat of aggression or violence			
Incidents on client premises are recorded in client files and incident reports			
Employees are instructed to avoid walking in deserted places or taking shortcuts that could place them at risk			
Employees are trained and instructed to withdraw from neighbourhoods where there are signs of unrest or trouble			
Employees are instructed to seek directions by telephone or from business owners, not from strangers on street			
If followed while at work (by car or on foot) employees have been trained and instructed to cross the road, walk in the opposite direction and seek refuge in a safe place			

WORKING IN OTHER PREMISES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Employees in other sites such as community buildings or schools are aware of the security and emergency procedures at those premises			
Security arrangements (both internal and external environments) will be established and communicated to employees before they use premises			

Work Safe Victoria

Workplace: **Date:**

Checklist completed by:

Date for review of agreed actions:

VEHICLES	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Employees hold valid driver's licences for the class of vehicle they use. Licences are recorded and verified annually			
Vehicle records (registration, insurance, fuel, mileage, servicing and parts) are maintained and checked			
A roadside assistance scheme is in place for all work vehicles			
Drivers are instructed to check fuel records and visually inspect tyres before leaving base			
Vehicles are routinely serviced, and a procedure for reporting faults is in place and known to all employees			
Random checks are conducted at appropriate periods to check vehicle condition and safety			
An incident kit is kept in each vehicle, with instructions, report form, first aid advice and emergency phone numbers			
An incident reporting and investigation system is in place and is implemented following all car incidents			
An incident database is established and maintained			
Crash test ratings and safety devices (e.g. front and side airbags, anti-lock braking systems, three-point seat belts, adjustable head rests) are considered when buying or leasing new cars			
Passenger safety (hydraulic devices, fold-down steps and handles to assist when getting on and off, wheelchair storage, seatbelts, sufficient room between seats, slip-resistant steps and floor surfaces) are considered as part of a risk assessment undertaken when buying or leasing new buses			
Cargo barrier in place in station wagons and hatchbacks			
Consideration given to wiring daytime running headlights to ignition			

VEHICLES CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Heavy or bulky freight stored in boot or separated from passengers by cargo barriers			
Procedures in place for drivers, including speed limits, fatigue management, alcohol and drug use			
Hands-free mobile phone kits installed in vehicles, and employees instructed that vehicle must be pulled over and stopped before dialling			
Requirements and standards in place for use of private vehicles for work purposes (including insurance status, safety features and maintenance)			
Consideration given to equipping vehicles with first aid kits, safety vests and triangles, fire extinguishers			
Consideration given to pre-employment driving assessments for employees whose job will involve a lot of driving			
Consideration given to driving performance review as a part of overall work performance review			

TRANSPORTING CLIENTS	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Client risk profile is assessed prior to transport and if necessary an additional escort is provided			
A driver who is not familiar with a client will be provided with relevant information regarding any physical and behavioural limitations, issues and concerns			
Drivers instructed to use inside lane to facilitate pulling over safely and quickly in an emergency			
Means of emergency communication are readily accessible in vehicles			
Drivers are trained in emergency procedures, including immobilising cars, retreating to a safe place and calling for back-up assistance			
Employees have been trained and instructed to ensure clients are not seated directly behind driver			
Potential weapons such as cigarette lighters are removed and objects such as fire extinguishers are stored in the boot			

TRANSPORTING CLIENTS CONTINUED	YES	NO	COMMENT/ACTION BY DATE
Employees who regularly transport clients hold current first aid training qualification			
Employees know locations of medical centres and emergency departments in areas where they are transporting clients			
Clients will be required to wear seatbelts at all times while vehicle is in motion			
Child-proof locks are used when transporting children and clients with dementia			
Employees who transport clients in private vehicles have comprehensive vehicle insurance and have notified their insurance companies of the activity they undertake for their organisation			
Employees have been trained in manual handling techniques specific to moving people with physical limitations or disabilities and equipment such as wheelchairs in and out of vehicles			
Wheelchairs used for client transportation are lightweight and designed for portability			

3.14 CHECKLIST: ASSESSMENT OF FIRST AID NEEDS

Work Safe VICTORIA

Workplace:	Date:

Checklist completed by:

'Tick off' each aspect of your assessment in consultation with a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or relevant employees and volunteers (if you have no HSR).

Step 1 – Consider size, location and layout of the workplace

☐	How far would an injured or ill person need to be transported to your first aid facility?
☐	Is the workplace a long way from incident and emergency facilities and local doctors?
☐	Is the workplace spread over more than one floor?
☐	Will prompt access to first aiders be available throughout the workplace?

Step 2 – Consider the number (and locations) of your employees and volunteers

☐	Do your employees/volunteers work alone or in groups?
☐	Do your employees/volunteers work flexible hours or shifts?
☐	Will placement of portable first aid kits solve any problems in regard to accessing first aid materials?

Step 3 – Consider the nature of your hazards and potential severity of risks

☐	Has your risk management approach to hazards identified any special first aid needs?
☐	Is all necessary first aid information readily available (e.g. material safety data sheet for all chemicals on site)?

Step 4 – Review your history of work-related incidents and illnesses

☐	Does your record of past incidents and illnesses provide useful information about your probable first aid needs?

Evaluate your answers and use them as the basis for determining how many first aiders you need, what their level of first aid competency should be, and what you require in first aid kits and possibly a first aid room.

Derived from the *Code of Practice for First Aid in the Workplace*, June 1995 (WorkSafe Victoria).

Work Safe Victoria

A hazardous substances register identifies and lists all the hazardous substances used in the workplace. A material safety data sheet (MSDS) for each listed chemical should be included with it.

The hazardous substances register must be kept up-to-date. Following the four key steps below will help establish and maintain a register:

1. Identify all hazardous substances – list them by product name in a folder which will be available to all employees and volunteers who may use these chemicals as part of their work.

2. Maintain an electronic register for those working with the chemicals. A printed copy should also be readily available. If chemicals are used in different areas of the organisation (e.g. by cleaners, kitchen staff, gardeners) provide a copy of the register for employees in each area.

3. Ensure the MSDS for each listed hazardous substance is detailed. Manufacturers and suppliers have a legal obligation to provide this information upon request.

4. Maintain the register and establish a review process so new hazardous substances are added, and chemicals no longer used are removed. Check that the MSDS is current by asking suppliers if there have been any changes.

SAMPLE entry in a hazardous substances register, with overview and immediate first aid information (this level of information will NOT substitute for having the MSDS of a product):

PRODUCT NAME	TYPICAL HEALTH EFFECTS	PRECAUTIONS FOR USE	FIRST AID
LIQUID DRAIN CLEANER Supplier: ABC Company Tel: 1234 5678 Date MSDS reviewed: 21/07/04	Corrosive to mouth and digestive tract if swallowed. Can cause skin burns and irritation to upper respiratory tract if fumes are breathed. Can cause serious eye damage if splash occurs.	Use in well ventilated area. Use PVC or neoprene gloves when decanting, mixing and using. Use eye protection when decanting, mixing and using. Make sure you have an eye wash facility at hand before you handle or use the liquid drain cleaner. Note of the size and number of containers, e.g. 500mls x 3 packs/bottles.	**SWALLOWED** Rinse mouth with water. Give glass of water, but do NOT induce vomiting. Seek immediate medical assistance. **INHALED** Assist employee into open air or well ventilated space. Do NOT induce vomiting. Seek immediate medical assistance. **SPLASHED** Wash skin thoroughly. Hold eyes open, flush with water for 15 mins. Seek immediate medical assistance.

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SECTION 4

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

4

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

4.1 ACCIDENT COMPENSATION – WHAT THE LAW SAYS

The objectives of the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* are:

a) to reduce the occurrence of incidents and disease in the workplace;

b) to provide for the effective occupational rehabilitation of injured employees and their early return to work;

c) to increase suitable employment opportunities for employees who are injured, enabling their early return to work;

d) to provide adequate and just compensation to injured employees;

e) to ensure employees' compensation costs are contained to minimise the burden on Victorian businesses;

f) to establish incentives conducive to efficiency and discourage abuse;

g) to enhance flexibility in the system and allow it to be adapted to needs of disparate work situations;

h) to establish and maintain a fully funded scheme; and

i) in this context, to improve the health and safety of all at work and reduce the social and economic costs to the Victorian community of incident compensations.

4.2 PREPARING YOUR WORKPLACE

Every organisation should plan for the possibility of an injury occurring or illness affecting an employee or visitor.

This publication has already covered the need to establish first aid arrangements (Sections 2.16 and 3.14) and to have emergency procedures (Section 3.10).

While these will only be needed if an incident occurs, they are a vital prevention activity and can help minimise the harm resulting from any incident or emergency at work.

Workplace OHS procedures should include action plans to ensure:

- immediate assistance to anyone who is injured or ill;

- procedures to make the workplace safe in the aftermath of an incident; and

- an investigation process to prevent further similar occurrences.

Developing an occupational rehabilitation program

Employers with an annual payroll of more than $1 million must have an occupational rehabilitation program in place.

Those with an annual payroll of less than $1 million must develop a program when a work-related injury at their workplace results in an injured employee being unable to work for 20 or more calendar days.

An occupational rehabilitation program sets out assistance available at the workplace to help injured employees stay at, or return to, work. As part of the program, employers must:

- develop a return to work policy;
- appoint a return to work co-ordinator; and
- nominate an approved occupational rehabilitation provider.

Taking the following steps will help establish your occupational rehabilitation program:

- gain commitment from senior management;
- identify a responsible person (this could be your return to work co-ordinator) or appoint a working party to help develop your program;
- in consultation with employees develop your draft program and circulate it to all interested parties for review and comment;
- consult and agree on any changes required and submit a final draft for management and employee agreement;
- circulate and promote the program and ensure everyone understands how it will work; and
- establish a process for regular review of the program's suitability and effectiveness.

4.3 TAKING OUT A WORKCOVER POLICY

If your annual payroll is more than $7,500, you must take out a WorkCover policy with an approved insurer. Should a work-related injury or illness occur, insurance may provide the employee with compensation such as:

- weekly benefits if there is a loss of wages;
- medical and hospital expenses;
- payment for rehabilitation services; and
- a lump sum payment in the event of permanent impairment.

Who is covered?

Workplace injury insurance covers all those deemed to be employees under the *Accident Compensation Act 1985* who are eligible to make a claim if they suffer a work-related injury.

Employers are required to display an *If you are injured* poster giving employees information they need to make a claim. Posters can be obtained from WorkCover authorised agents or from WorkCover. Claim forms should also be available at all workplaces.

Workplace injury insurance does not usually cover volunteers, contractors and visitors. These people may be covered under other insurance such as public liability insurance, volunteer incident insurance or, in the case of contractors, their own workplace injury insurance.

4.4 IF A WORK-RELATED INJURY OR ILLNESS OCCURS

Immediate action

If an injury or illness occurs in the workplace, first aid or transport to medical treatment should be arranged straight away. It should also be ensured that the hazard poses no further threat to any others. Securing the scene may be necessary to safeguard others and assist with subsequent investigation.

Notify WorkSafe Victoria immediately if there is an incident involving a fatality or serious injury to any person at the workplace (**Section 4.7**).

Potential impacts of a serious or violent incident on employees can also be managed by:

- providing debriefing for employees;
- providing services if required; and
- consulting employees about how they are feeling.

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

Handling a claim

If an employee submits a WorkCover claim form to an employer it must be acknowledged and considered. An employee cannot be dismissed for making a claim. The employer is responsible for forwarding the documents to the WorkCover authorised agent.

An employer claim report must be completed stating if liability for a claim is accepted and if the employee's description of the incident and injury is accurate. To answer this correctly, the incident should first be investigated and all facts documented. Consider the following:

- Did the employee suffer an injury or disease?
- Was their work a significant contributing factor?
- If the claim is for time off work and weekly benefits, does the injury or disease prevent them from working?

The injured employee's completed claim form and completed employer's claim report (with any supporting documentation) should be sent to the WorkCover authorised agent within 10 days of receiving the claim form. The sooner a claim is lodged with the WorkCover authorised agent, the sooner steps can be taken to assist the injured person to get back to work.

The WorkCover agent has 28 days following receiving the claim form and WorkCover certificate/s of capacity to determine liability. The employee can lodge an early notification form with the WorkCover authorised agent enabling them to notify the relevant WorkCover agent of the claim at the same time it is served on the employer. If an employer fails to forward a claim to the agent more than 38 days after receiving a valid claim from the employee, the claim is deemed accepted.

If a claim for weekly benefits is made to the WorkCover authorised agent and is received more than 39 days from when the employee served the claim to the employer, the claim will be deemed accepted upon receipt.

If the claim is accepted

If the claim is accepted by the insurer, the employer must pay the first $506 (as of 1 July 2004 – this amount is indexed annually) of the employee's medical expenses, unless the employer has selected the 'excess buyout' option.

If an employer fails to forward a claim for weekly benefits within the legislative timeframes, they may be required to pay an additional excess which consists of weekly payments starting on the 11th day of incapacity and ceasing on the date the VWA authorised agent receives the claims form from you.

If the employee is entitled to weekly payments, these must be made within seven days of the end of the week for which they are payable. If the employee would normally be paid less frequently, payments must be made at the same intervals as they would be if they were at work.

Employers should seek reimbursement from the employee's WorkCover authorised agent within three months after making weekly payments to the employee.

If the claim is disputed or denied

If a claim is disputed or denied, the employee may request the WorkCover authorised agent review the decision and may also refer the decision to the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service for review.

A conciliation meeting may be needed and employers should talk to their WorkCover authorised agent about who should attend.

The WorkCover authorised agent will not pay any medical bills, weekly payments of compensation or other bills from the time that the claim is denied or disputed.

Employers should continue to help the injured employee, keeping in touch with them and, with their permission, the treating doctor. Provide suitable alternative duties if possible.

Employee responsibilities

Employees should:

- notify their employer of the injury as soon as possible and provide details of what happened;
- submit a written report of the injury within 30 days or they may not be entitled to compensation (if the employee is unable to provide this report, another person can do it on their behalf within the 30 day limit);
- lodge a claim for weekly payments as soon as practicable after the incapacity arising from their injury becomes known to them; and
- make a reasonable effort to return to work in whatever capacity agreed by the employer, the doctor and the WorkCover authorised agent.

4.5 MANAGING RETURN TO WORK

Managing return to work is about ensuring an employee's prompt, safe and lasting return to work after injury.

Although the WorkCover authorised agent will arrange help for the injured employee, employers should keep in touch with them. A simple get-well card and regular phone contact can comfort the employee and assist their recovery.

Contact the injured employee's treating health practitioner

The most effective way to assist an employee to recover is to adopt a team approach. The team should consist of the injured employee, the WorkCover authorised agent and the treating health practitioner (doctor or other practitioner such as a physiotherapist, chiropractor or osteopath).

The treating health practitioner should be aware of the full range of tasks or activities carried out within the organisation. This will assist them in designing an appropriate treatment plan, and advise what duties may be suitable for the employee on their return.

Remember, the employee gives their treating health practitioner permission to discuss return to work options with their employer and the WorkCover authorised agent when they fill in the compensation claim form. Should an employer feel uncomfortable contacting the injured employee's treating health practitioner, the WorkCover authorised agent can arrange for a representative to call them in the employer's place.

Developing a return to work plan

Return to work plans should be completed as soon as is practicable, no later than 10 days after the 'relevant day', that refers to the later of the following events:

- when a claim for weekly payments is accepted, a decision at conciliation is made and accepted; or the claim is determined by a court in favour of the employee (whichever happens earliest); or
- when the employer becomes aware, or ought reasonably have been aware, that the employee's period of incapacity is likely to exceed 20 days.

Once a return to work plan has been prepared (and whether or not the employee has returned to work), employers must maintain contact with the employee unless it is not practicable to do so.

The plan should be reviewed as often as is appropriate to the injury and the circumstances.

The Return to Work Guide for Victorian Employers, available from WorkSafe Victoria, provides further information to assist employers in helping injured employees return to work.

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

4.6 KEEPING A REGISTER OF INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

All workplaces should keep a register to keep track of any work-related injuries and illnesses.

It can be a diary, an exercise book, or in an electronic format as long as employees know where it is, can access it at all reasonable times and know how and when to use it.

WorkSafe Victoria inspectors may ask to see the register when they visit a workplace.

If an employee notifies an employer of a work-related injury or illness, they must ensure the following information is recorded in the register:

* the name and job title of the injured employee;
* the date and time of the injury or onset of the work-related illness;
* the exact location of the employee when they were injured or became unwell;
* exactly how the injury or onset of the illness occurred;
* the nature of the injury or illness, and what parts of the employee's body were affected;
* the names of any witnesses;
* the date on which you were notified; and
* any first aid treatment provided and any referral for medical treatment.

It should also be noted what action was taken to fix any unsafe conditions identified as causes of the injuries and illnesses recorded.

Requirements for reporting of workplace injuries and illnesses to WorkSafe are set out in **Section 4.7** below.

4.7 NOTIFICATION OF INJURIES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES

The OHS Act 2004 requires employers notify WorkSafe Victoria (ph: 13 23 60) when an incident at the workplace results in:

* a death;
* someone requiring medical treatment within 48 hours following exposure to a substance (e.g. a chemical spill or inhalation of fumes);
* someone requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient at a hospital; or
* someone requiring immediate treatment for:
  - an amputation;
  - a serious head or eye injury;
  - the separation of skin from underlying tissue;
  - electric shock;
  - a spinal injury;
  - the loss of bodily function (including loss of consciousness); or
  - a serious laceration.

If an incident occurs the scene must be preserved until advised otherwise by a WorkSafe inspector. WorkSafe must also be notified of dangerous occurances (i.e. collapse of a part of a building or structure, an explosion or a fire).

What details will be required?

The person notifying WorkSafe will be asked for the following information:

* the name and address of the organisation;
* the name of any injured person, details of the injury and a brief description of what happened; and
* the contact details of a person from the organisation who is at the incident scene.

In addition to phone notification, written details of the incident must be sent to WorkSafe within 48 hours. An incident notification form is available from local WorkSafe offices or from www.worksafe.vic.gov.au.

A written description will be accepted as long as it provides all the information requested on the incident notification form. A copy of the record must be kept for at least five years.
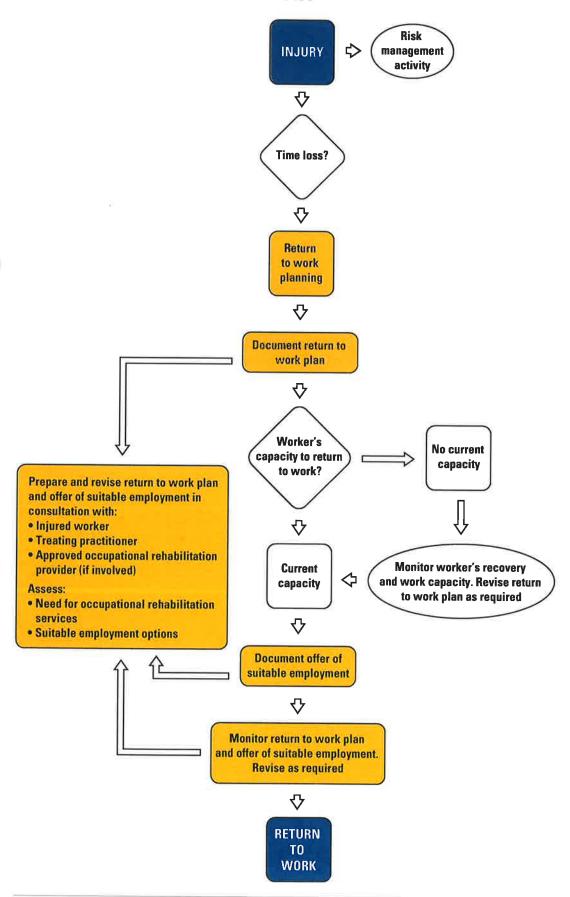
CHECKLISTS AND TOOLS

4.8 CHECKLIST: RISK MANAGEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL REHABILITATION

CHECKLIST FOR SMALL EMPLOYERS ✓

(Injuries on or after 1 March 2004)

If your annual payroll is $1 million or less use this checklist to assess whether you are meeting your obligations.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND OCCUPATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM CHECKLIST

Your obligation: establish and maintain a risk management program and an occupational rehabilitation program if a worker has an incapacity for work.

☐ Have you had an injury at your workplace where the injured worker has had an incapacity for work?

If so:

☐ Have you nominated a return to work co-ordinator for your workplace?

☐ Did you nominate a return to work co-ordinator as soon as was practicable but no later that 10 after the relevant day?

After the injury occurred did you:

☐ Establish your risk management program?

☐ Did you establish your risk management program within three months after the relevant day?

☐ Have you put in place the other components of your occupational rehabilitation program?

Does your occupational rehabilitation program include:

☐ A written statement of your return to work policy?

☐ The name of your return to work co-ordinator?

☐ The name of your nominated approved provider of occupational rehabilitation services?

☐ Did you establish your occupational rehabilitation program within three months after the relevant day?

Have you ticked all the boxes? If not, to ensure your programs comply fully, refer to **Sections 1** and **3** of *Working Safely in Community Services.*

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

4.9 FLOW CHART: RETURN TO WORK PROCESS

INJURY ⇨ **Risk management activity**

⇩

Time loss?

⇩

Return to work planning

⇩

Document return to work plan

⇩

Worker's capacity to return to work? ⟹ **No current capacity**

Prepare and revise return to work plan and offer of suitable employment in consultation with:
- Injured worker
- Treating practitioner
- Approved occupational rehabilitation provider (if involved)

Assess:
- Need for occupational rehabilitation services
- Suitable employment options

Current capacity ⟸ **Monitor worker's recovery and work capacity. Revise return to work plan as required**

⇩

Document offer of suitable employment

⇩

Monitor return to work plan and offer of suitable employment. Revise as required

⇩

RETURN TO WORK

4.10 SAMPLE: RETURN TO WORK PLAN

VICTORIA NURSING HOME

RETURN TO WORK PLAN

Employer details

Victoria Nursing Home		
1 Victoria St	Plan number	Date
Victoria	1	18/05/01

Return to work (RTW) plan prepared by	Position	Contact number
Mary Blue	RTW Co-ordinator	9876 5432

Worker details

Given name	Surname	
Brenda	Smith	

Place of residence	Telephone	Date of birth
1 The Avenue	9876 5555	01/06/74
Victoria	Date of injury	Claim number
	1/05/01	0000001

Occupation/pre-injury duties:
(Attach job description if available)

Registered Nurse – Division 2

Interpreter required? Yes [ ] No [✓]   Language: N/A

Treating medical practitioner details

Given name

Dr. G. Scott

Address

24 Rose Street
Victoria

Telephone	Fax
9465 1234	9465 1235

Nature of injury

Acute soft tissue back strain

Other treating practitioners (physiotherapist etc.)

Name

S. Wilby (physiotherapist)

Address

2A Bush Street
Victoria

Telephone	Fax
9465 4321	9465 4322

Current treatment: (include how often attends)

Physio 2 x week + self managed exercise
program + medication

Return to work process

Medical restrictions affecting the capacity to work

RTW at the end of June 4 hrs Mon, Wed & Fri for 2 weeks then review before any increase.
Avoid prolonged bending and standing.

Suitable employment offer attached?
Yes [✓] No [ ] If no, date this will be reviewed [ ]

Will assistance for RTW or other occupational rehabilitation services be required for this worker?
Yes [ ] No [✓]

Approved occupational rehabilitation provider (if applicable)

Telephone

Occupational rehabilitation services

Will you be able to offer duties?
Yes [✓]   No [ ]   Unknown [ ]

Estimated date of return to work
25/06/01   Unknown [ ]

Employer's signature	Date
MBlue	18/05/01
Worker's endorsement	Date
Brenda Smith	18/05/01

Date plan to be reviewed
18/06/01

Date plan forwarded to

Authorised Agent	18/05/01	Treating Practitioner	18/05/01

MANAGING ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS

4.11 CHECKLIST: RETURN TO WORK PLAN

CHECKLIST FOR RETURN TO WORK PLANS ✓

For injuries on or after 1 March 2004, use this checklist to assess if your return to work plans meet your obligations.

Your obligation: prepare a return to work plan for injured workers who have an incapacity for work.
Prepare your plan as soon as practicable but no later than 10 days after the relevant day.

☐ Do you have a return to work plan for every injured worker who has an incapacity for work?

☐ Was the plan developed as soon as practicable but no later than 10 days after the relevant day?

☐ Did your return to work co-ordinator, or other authorised person, undertake the required actions to prepare the plan?

☐ Were your worker and their treating practitioner contacted in order to obtain information about the worker's capacity to work?

☐ Was your authorised agent contacted to inform them of the relevant circumstances and discuss the necessity for any occupational rehabilitation services?

☐ Where an occupational rehabilitation service was provided on or after 1 July 2005 - was the worker offered a choice of approved occupational rehabilitation provider from a list of (not less than three where available) approved occupational rehabilitation providers? Was the list compiled having regard to the worker's circumstances at the time and the criteria specified in the law?

☐ Was the plan prepared in consultation with your worker, their treating practitioner(s), and where one was involved, the occupational rehabilitation provider?

☐ Were the contents of the plan consistent with information, if any, obtained from the worker's treating practitioner?

☐ Was the plan developed with the view to your worker ultimately returning to their pre-injury employment?

☐ Did you use your best endeavours to arrive at a consensus with all parties in relation to the plan?

☐ Was the plan revised? Did you revise the plan when:
You became aware of your worker's capacity to work? When requested by your worker?
Their treating practitioner? Their occupational rehabilitation provider?
Their return to work co-ordinator? Your authorised agent?

☐ Did you sign the plan and invite your worker to endorse the plan?

Does the return to work plan contain the following information?

☐ Your worker's name?

☐ An estimate of the date that your injured worker should have been fit to return to work?

☐ Where made, an offer of suitable employment?

☐ The occupational rehabilitation services (if any) that are reasonably necessary for the maintenance at work or return to work of your injured worker?
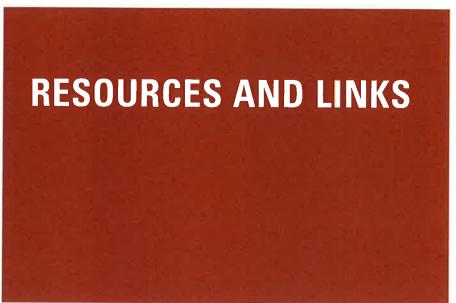

SECTION 5
RESOURCES AND LINKS

5 RESOURCES AND LINKS

5.1 WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

WorkSafe Victoria

WorkSafe Victoria offers a complete range of occupational health and safety services, including: emergency response; advice; information and education; inspections and audits; licensing and certification; publications; and on-line guidance. WorkSafe Victoria and Victorian WorkCover Authority publications can be downloaded from the WorkSafe Victoria website.

Contact information:

Website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au
Email: info@workcover.vic.gov.au

Advisory Service

222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

GPO Box 4306
Melbourne VIC 3001

Phone: 03 9641 1444
Toll-free: 1800 136 089
Fax: 03 9641 1353
Email: advisory_service@workcover.vic.gov.au

WorkSafe Incident Notification

Phone: 13 23 60

5.2 FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

WorkSafe Victoria *Working Safely in Community Services* publication has been adapted from the *Community Services Safety Pack* published by WorkCover New South Wales. Direction to NSW material has not been provided here unless that material is available through their website: www.workcover.nsw.gov.au.

The impact of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* on WorkSafe Victoria's existing publications

From 1 July 2005, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (OHS Act 2004) will replace the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985* (1985 Act).

WorkSafe Victoria's existing publications (e.g. Codes of Practice, guides, brochures, guidance notes, etc) have been written with reference to the 1985 Act. These publications will be progressively reviewed and amended to reflect provisions in the OHS Act 2004.

Impact on publications

Publications may contain references to the 1985 Act. The OHS Act 2004 maintains the core provisions of the 1985 Act and builds upon it with positive additions, simplified and clarified provisions. After 1 July 2005, it is important you reference the section of the 1985 Act with the relevant section in the 2004 Act to ensure you meet any new or changed duties.

Impact on Regulations

Most Regulations written under the 1985 Act will, after the commencement of the new Act, continue for two years or until revoked. The *Occupational Health and Safety (Incident Notification) Regulations 1997* have been repealed and have now been incorporated into the 2004 Act with some minor changes.

Impact on Codes of Practice

Codes of Practice made under the 1985 Act provide practical guidance to people who have duties or obligations under Victoria's OHS laws. The 2004 Act allows the Minister for WorkCover to make Compliance Codes which will provide greater certainty about what constitutes compliance with the OHS laws.

Codes of Practice will continue to be a practical guide for those who have OHS duties and WorkSafe Victoria will continue to regard those who comply with the topics covered in the Codes of Practice as complying with OHS laws. WorkSafe Victoria will progressively review all Codes of Practice and replace them with guidance material and, in appropriate cases, with Compliance Codes.

OHS and the law in Victoria

- *Summary of the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, 2nd edition – WorkSafe Victoria, June 2005
- *Consulting with Employees on Health and Safety – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, June 2005
- *Employee Health and Safety Training – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, June 2005
- *Casual Employees: Managing their health and safety – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, June 2005
- *Provision of Occupational Health and Safety Information in Languages Other Than English (Code of Practice No.16, 1992)*

Consultation

- *Talking safety together – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, October 2005

RESOURCES AND LINKS

Risk management approach

- *Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment and Risk Control in the Workplace – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, October 2000 (updated June 2005)

Manual handling

- *Occupational Health and Safety (Manual Handling) Regulations 1999*
- *Manual Handling (Code of Practice No. 25, April 2000)*
- *Manual handling and the risks of musculoskeletal disorders – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, November 1999 (updated June 2005)
- *Transferring People Safely Guide*, 2nd Edition, WorkSafe Victoria, September 2006
- *Manual handling – Risk Management in a large organisation – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, March 2001 (updated June 2005)
- *Manual handling – Risk Management in a small organisation – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, March 2001 (updated June 2005)
- *National Standards for Manual Handling and National Code of Practice for Manual Handling – National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC)*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, February 1990. The revised *National Standards for Manual Handling* are scheduled for release at the end of 2005. For further information: NOHSC website address is http://www.nohsc.gov.au
- *Back belts are not effective in reducing back injuries – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, March 2001 [The NIOSH information on back belts can be found via the NIOSH home page: www.cdc.gov/niosh/homepage.html]
- *Good Shepherd Aged Services: Back Injury Prevention Program* – Better Health and Safety Awards, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aging, HESTA (Super for Health and Community Services), 2001 Case Studies

Hazardous substances

- *Occupational Health and Safety (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 1999*
- *Hazardous Substances (Code of Practice No. 24, 2000)*, WorkSafe Victoria
- *A step by step guide to managing chemicals in the workplace – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, 2001

Infection control

- *NOHSC, National Code of Practice for the control of work related exposure to hepatitiis and HIV (blood-borne) viruses* [NOHSC: (2003)] Downloadable from the NOHSC website at www.nohsc.gov.au
- *Infection control in health care settings: Guidelines for the prevention of transmission of infection diseases*, National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), 1996 [www.health.gov.au/nhmrc/publications/ichome.htm]
- *Infection control guidelines for the prevention of transmission of infectious disease in health care settings* – Australian Department of Health and Aged Care. Commonwealth of Australia, 2002. [Under review at 1/04]

First aid

- *First Aid in the Workplace (Code of Practice No. 18 – 1995)* WorkSafe Victoria

Workplace bullying

- *Prevention of Bullying and Violence at Work – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, February 2003

Occupational violence

- *Prevention of Bullying and Violence at Work – Guide,* WorkSafe Victoria, February 2003
- *Prevention and Management of Workplace Aggression: Guidelines and Case Studies from one NSW Health Industry –* jointly published by WorkCover NSW and Central Sydney Area Health Service, 2001. PDF download for www.workcover.nsw.gov.au (publications search keywords 'workplace violence prevention')
- *Violence in the workplace –* WorkCover NSW, publication no. 701: www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
- *A Guide to Managing OHS in the Cash-in-transit Industry. WorkSafe Victoria's expectations for safe work practice – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, August 2005

Stress

- *Work Organisation & Stress, Systematic Problem Approaches For Employers, Managers And Trade Union Representative, Protecting Employee's Health Series No 3*, World Health Organisation 2003
- *When It's Right in Front of You. Assisting Health Care Employees to Manage the Effects of Violence in Rural and Remote Australia –* National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), 2000. Commonwealth of Australia publication
- *Preventing and Managing Psychological Injury in the Workplace. A Guide for Managers.* Commonwealth of Australia, 2003: www.comcare.gov.au

Fatigue

- *National Code of Practice – Hours of Work, Shiftwork and Rostering for Hospital Doctors –* Australian Medical Association, 1999: www.ama.com.au
- *Fatigue Management for the Forestry Industry – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, March 2004

Office environments

- *Officewise: a guide to health and safety in the office – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, September, 1997

Home visits

- *Health and Safety for Home and Community Employees: Guidelines for Managing OHS (Forms) WorkCover NSW Corporation Grants Scheme*, SAFER Industries, November 2000
- *Victorian Home Care Industry Occupational Health and Safety Guide, WorkSafe Safety Development Fund Industry Initiative, VAHEC and MAV Project Managers.* This guide is available from WorkSafe Victoria. Contact the Advisory Service see **Section 5.1.**

RESOURCES AND LINKS

Labour hire

* *Placing workers in safe workplaces – Safety management systems guide for Labour Hire Agencies – Guide, 3rd Edition*, WorkSafe Victoria, June 2006

Caring for children

* *Keeping it Safe – video on playground inspection and maintenance: Child Incident Prevention Foundation of Australia.* See also http://www.kidsafe.com.au/factsheets.htm

Emergencies

* *Emergency management – developing a plan for a small organisation – Guidance Note*, WorkSafe Victoria, 2005 (updated June 2005)

Incidents

* *Incident Notification – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, August 2005

Employee's compensation claims

* *Return to Work Guide for Victorian Employers – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, June 2005
* *Introducing WorkCover A Guide for Injured Workers – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, July 2005
* *Contractors and WorkCover – Guide*, WorkSafe Victoria, August 1996

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This publication provides information to community service organisations on how to effectively manage workplace health and safety issues.

Providing information on workplace health and safety 'basics', common hazards and issues that may require attention and action, *Working Safely in Community Services* also includes checklists and tools to help establish a system suited to your organisation, as well as information to help you manage incidents and employees' compensation claims.

Primarily written for managers of community services sector organisations, elected health and safety representatives (HSRs) and other employees will also find this publication helpful.

Materials contained in this publication may also be used for staff training or to develop an organisation's operating procedures.

WORKSAFE VICTORIA

Advisory Service

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Toll-free 1800 136 089
Email . . . . . info@workcover.vic.gov.au

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Melbourne VIC 3000

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Bendigo. 03 5443 8866
Dandenong 03 8792 9000
Geelong. 03 5226 1200
Melbourne
(628 Bourke Street). . . . 03 9941 0558
Mildura 03 5021 4001
Mulgrave. 03 9565 9444
Preston 03 9485 4555
Shepparton 03 5831 8260
Traralgon 03 5174 8900
Wangaratta 03 5721 8588
Warrnambool. 03 5564 3200