



ACT
Government

Chief Minister and Treasury

Policy Statement
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ACT PUBLIC SERVICE

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT

1. PURPOSE

This document articulates the ACT Government policy in relation to the effective management of risks in ACT Public Service (ACTPS) workplaces.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Directorates and any person considered to be a worker for the ACT Government under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act).

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

Directorates are required to provide and maintain, as far as reasonably practical, a work environment that is without risk to the health and safety of its workers.¹

Further, Directorates must maintain safe plant and structures and systems of work that are necessary to protect people from risks that may arise in ACTPS workplaces.²

3.1 Compliance with Codes of Practice

The most effective way for Directorates to minimise risks in workplaces is to integrate risk management processes into daily business operations.

Directorates must develop and implement a workplace health and safety management system that meets the compliance requirements of the WHS Act, *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* (Regulations), and the *Work Health and Safety (How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks) Code of Practice 2011*.

A Directorate's work health and safety management system must provide for:

- a structured approach to managing health and safety matters in the workplace that includes workers, those using a service, contractors and visitors to a workplace;
- systematic identification and assessment of hazards along with their associated risk;

¹ Refer to part 7 of this policy on the meaning of reasonably practicable.

² WHS Act s19.

- control of risks using the hierarchy of control covering elimination, substitution, isolation, engineering, the use of protective personal equipment and administrative;
- documentation of the process; and
- monitor and review the process to identify any new hazards and continually review the effectiveness of controls.

3.2 Developing a workplace health and safety system

The ACT Government has developed a whole of government Work Health and Safety Management System Framework (see Section 5 for details).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy must be read in conjunction with WHS-03-2013: Responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. In addition to the general responsibilities under the WHS Act, the responsibilities specific to this policy are:

a) Directors-General

Directors-General are responsible for:

- understanding work health and safety matters and any hazards and risks associated with the Directorate's operation;
- appropriately resourcing a Directorate's safety management system;
- the provision of appropriate training for workers, including appropriate consultation regarding work health and safety issues in accordance with the WHS Act, associated Regulations, Codes of Practice and ACTPS requirements; and
- provision of ongoing emergency management, critical incident and first aid infrastructure and procedures.

b) Executive, Managers and Supervisors

Executives, managers and supervisors have responsibility, within their area of control, to exercise reasonable care in assisting Directors-General in the implementation of this policy by ensuring:

- knowledge of workplace health and safety matters and awareness of potential hazards and associated risks in their workplaces;
- resourcing the development, review, implementation, and maintenance of the WHS management system;
- support Health Safety Representatives in carrying out duties as described in s69 of the WHS Act; and
- Health and Safety Representatives to undertake training in an approved training course within three months of election in accordance with ACTPS policy on consultation to ensure they are appropriately trained to execute their role.

c) Workers

ACT Government workers must exercise reasonable care to ensure that they cooperate and comply with all safety responsibilities including risk management instructions.

d) Health and Safety Representatives³

If a Health and Safety Representative has been elected to represent a work group within a Directorate they are responsible for:

- representing the work group in relation to work health and safety issues;
- monitoring the measures taken by the ACTPS, their Directorate, manager or supervisor, or their representative in complying with their legal responsibilities for the safety of workers;
- promptly following up on work health and safety inquiries or issues presented by workers in the work group;
- inquiring into anything arising from the conduct of the Directorate that appears to be a risk to the health or safety of workers in the work group;
- supporting managers and supervisors in conducting inspections of any part of the workplace where workers in the work group are located to identify foreseeable hazards and associated risks;
- informing the relevant manager of work safety matters directly affecting the workers they represent; and
- cooperating and complying with ACTPS policies and procedures relating to work health and safety.

A Health and Safety Representative can only exercise powers and functions for the safety of workers in another work group in accordance with section 69 of the WHS Act.

e) Other persons

In implementing this policy, Directorates must put strategies in place that ensure other persons, such as visitors, are made aware of hazards they may be exposed to in ACTPS workplaces, and of their responsibility to take every reasonable care of their own health and safety.

5. TOOLS

The ACT Government has developed a whole of government Work Health and Safety Management Framework. The framework is the first point of reference for ensuring that a Directorate's management system is robust. The Framework can be found at <http://sharedservices/ACTGovt/WHS/safetymgt/default.htm>.

The whole of government Risk Management Framework is detailed on the ACT Insurance Authority (ACTIA) website. Along with the Code of Practice, this site provides comprehensive guidance material on the development and implementation

³ Refer to ACTPS policy *Consultation in the Workplace*.

of a risk management system. ACTIA has also produced a Risk Management Guide and Toolkit to assist this process. These documents can be accessed by clicking on the following links.

[ACTIA WoG Risk Matrix](#) [ACTIA Risk Management Templates and Forms](#)

ACTIA's automated risk register has been developed to record the risk management process from setting the context, identifying and analysing risks, through to risk treatment plans.

6. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Records in relation to the WHS management system must be maintained, archived, and disposed of in accordance with the:

- *Territory Records Act 2002* and subordinate laws and associated instruments established under the Act; and
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

7. GLOSSARY

“Control” A control is a mechanism or process that minimises the risk of the hazard becoming actual. A control is designed specifically to protect people, property or the environment from the identified hazard.

“Hazard” means a situation or thing that has the potential to harm a person. Hazards at work may include: noisy machinery, a moving forklift, chemicals, electricity, working at heights, a repetitive job, bullying and violence at the workplace.

“Reasonably practicable” means that which is reasonable to undertake in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- the likelihood of the hazard or the risk occurring, and the degree of harm that might result from it;
- what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or the risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk; and
- the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk, and the cost associated with available ways to do this, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

“Risk” is the possibility that harm (death, injury or illness) might occur when exposed to a hazard.

“Risk control” means taking action to eliminate health and safety risks so far as is reasonably practicable, and if that is not possible, minimising the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. Eliminating a hazard will also eliminate any risks associated with that hazard.

“Worker” refers to:

- public employees of the ACTPS (as defined in the PSM Act);
- contractors or sub-contractors;
- an employee of a contractor or subcontractor;
- an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the business;
- an outworker;
- an apprentice or trainee;
- undertaking student gaining work experience;
- volunteers; and
- person of a prescribed class for the purposes of the WHS Act.

“Workplace” means ‘a place where work is carried out for a business or undertaking and includes any place where a worker goes, or is likely to be, while at work.

“Work Group” means the group of all of the employer’s workers, and a group which is established under subdivision 5.3.2 of the WHS Act.

8. REFERENCES AND LINKS

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35/current/pdf/2011-35>

Work Health and Safety Codes of Practice

<http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-35/ni.asp>

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

www.legislation.act.gov.au/sl/2011-36/current/pdf/2011-36

ISO30111 Risk Management & AS/NZ 4801 SMS

Workplace Health and Safety Management System Framework

<http://sharedservices/ACTGovt/WHS/safetymgt/default.htm>

ACTIA Risk Management website

<http://www.treasury.act.gov.au/actia/RM.htm>

9. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed after three (3) years unless there is a requirement for earlier review.

10. APPROVAL AUTHORITY

This policy is approved by Andrew Kefford, Commissioner for Public Administration, 18 October 2013.

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Prepared by: Continuous Improvement & Workers' Compensation Branch, CMTD
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