

'Work Health and Safety Committee' - Membership and Terms of Reference

Section 1 - Establishment

Background

(1) This document has been developed in accordance with:

- a. [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#) and [Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017](#);
- b. [Model Code of Practice - Work Health and Safety Consultation, Co-operation and Co-ordination](#); and
- c. Charles Sturt University (the University)'s [Work Health & Safety Management System Manual](#).

(2) The University Work Health and Safety Committee contributes to the foundation of work health and safety (WHS) consultation in our workplace. Along with health and safety representatives (HSRs), designated work groups (DWGs) and the WHS management group of senior executives, the WHS Committee is a key source of collaborative and meaningful consultation of University health and safety matters.

(3) Representatives from the following campuses (hereinafter referred to as the committee) will represent University staff on WHS matters:

- a. Bathurst;
- b. Dubbo;
- c. Manly;
- d. Orange;
- e. North Parramatta;
- f. Port Macquarie;
- g. Wagga Wagga;
- h. Albury-Wodonga;
- i. Canberra;
- j. Wangaratta; and
- k. Goulburn.

The University's Goulburn Campus will maintain its current arrangements for Health and Safety Committee consultation, that is, consultation will occur via the NSW Police Academy Committee, which is convened by NSW Police. Staff of the University have membership on this committee and are therefore represented.

Purpose

(4) The functions of the committee as per Section 77 of the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#) are (in summary):

- a. to facilitate cooperation between the University and staff in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure health and safety at the workplace; and

b. to assist with system development for ensuring health and safety at the workplace.

(5) The University charges the committee to assist with the following legislative and WHS management system duties of the University:

- a. Promotion of a positive and proactive health and safety culture based on responsiveness, inclusion and consultation.
- b. Review of hazards and risks, in particular those tabled at work group meetings which have not been resolved or require further attention.
- c. Identify hazard and risk trends across the University and identify risk mitigation measures.
- d. Review injury and near miss reports (personal identification information removed).
- e. Strategic review and development of the University WHS management system and associated initiatives.
- f. Consideration of training requirements to ensure health and safety at the University.
- g. Forward meeting minutes (including recommendations) to:
 - i. the University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC) for consideration; and
 - ii. all work group members which have escalated issues to the committee.

(6) Unlike Officers of the University, health and safety representatives (deputies and nominees) are not personally liable for anything done or omitted to be done in good faith. Health and safety representatives (HSRs) are a representative 'voice' only. Responsibility for health and safety at the University cannot be delegated or transferred to them beyond the responsibilities imposed upon them in the capacity for which they are employed.

Section 2 - Glossary

(7) For the purpose of this document:

- a. Committee - means Work Health and Safety Committee.
- b. Designated work group - means a designated work group as per the definition in the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#).
- c. Person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) - means the organisation, being the University - as per the definition in the [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 \(NSW\)](#).
- d. University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC) - means the overarching University-wide safety committee.

Section 3 - Membership

(8) The committee consists of representatives from each campus of the University. Members of the committee are also considered health and safety representatives (HSRs), except where separately stated.

(9) The members of the committee shall consist of :

- a. elected worker representatives from each designated work group (DWG). Where there is an elected HSR, they must represent their DWG. If there are not enough worker representatives, the committee may invite additional representatives from areas not currently represented;
- b. Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing or nominee; and
- c. as far as possible, an equal distribution of sections, establishments and equal employment opportunity groups. Any member of professional/general or academic staff, employed on a fixed-term or continuing basis, is eligible to become a member of the committee.

- (10) A worker representative may serve any number of consecutive terms on the committee, provided they are successful in gaining re-election every three years.
- (11) If a worker representative leaves, retires or is transferred prior to completion of their term, the committee may exercise the right to invite a worker representative by invitation to fill the position until the next election.
- (12) Worker representatives shall be provided with sufficient time and resources to undertake matters related to workplace health and safety.
- (13) A member of the committee will hold office for a term of three years and is eligible for further terms of office.
- (14) The committee does not have the power to make final decisions about health and safety matters and cannot be held accountable for safety within the University.
- (15) Members of the committee will be published on [Work Health and Safety Consultation at CSU](#) web page.

Section 4 - Functions and responsibilities

Member responsibilities

Presiding Officer (PO)

- (16) The Presiding Officer (PO) and Deputy Presiding Officer (Deputy PO) are elected by and from the committee. The Presiding Officer (PO) (or Deputy Presiding Officer (Deputy PO)) attends meetings of the University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC) and reports on the actions of the committee.
- (17) The Presiding Officer (PO) is responsible for:
- a. providing leadership of the committee;
 - b. taking responsibility for the committee's development;
 - c. ensuring the committee receives proper information;
 - d. preparing/developing the agenda with assistance from the Minute Secretary;
 - e. planning and conducting committee meetings effectively;
 - f. following up on actions or resolutions of the committee;
 - g. getting all members involved in the committee's work;
 - h. ensuring the committee focuses on its key tasks;
 - i. engaging the committee in assessing and improving its performance;
 - j. overseeing the induction and development of new committee members;
 - k. seeking nominations and electing a Deputy Presiding Officer (Deputy PO);
 - l. reporting on all material matters arising from the deliberations of the committee and consulting with the Minute Secretary (or nominee) on the preparation of the agenda and minutes;
 - m. providing a report, orally or in writing, to the committee at its next scheduled meeting on the activities of the committee, and any issues about which the committee should be aware, during the intervening period; and
 - n. representing the committee on the University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC), established to coordinate work health and safety matters across the University.
- (18) In the event of the Presiding Officer (PO) being absent, the Deputy Presiding Officer (Deputy PO), or another worker representative as elected at the meeting, will preside over the meeting.

Minute Secretary

(19) A Minute Secretary will be appointed by the Division of People and Culture (DPC).

(20) The Minute Secretary shall carry out duties at the direction of the Presiding Officer (PO). Duties of the Minute Secretary shall also include, but may not be limited to:

- a. collating meeting agendas for the approval of the Presiding Officer (PO) (NOTE: the Presiding Officer (PO) is responsible for preparing/developing the agenda);
- b. calling for agenda items, in conjunction with the Presiding Officer (PO);
- c. circulating material and documents to all members of the committee;
- d. recording of minutes at each of the committee's meetings;
- e. ensuring the safekeeping of all records of the committee; and
- f. assisting the Presiding Officer (PO) with preparation of correspondence as required and requested, and distributing the approved agenda and minutes.

Role of committee members

(21) The duties of the committee members shall include, but may not be limited to:

- a. appointing a Presiding Officer (PO) and Deputy Presiding Officer (Deputy PO);
- b. assisting the Presiding Officer (PO) by actively sharing in the workload, to achieve the responsibilities, aims and objectives of the committee;
- c. contributing, in a positive nature, to committee meetings and activities;
- d. represent employee and others' health safety and injury management matters in the workplace;
- e. preparing and contributing information on WHS risk control strategies for the area represented;
- f. facilitating exchange of information between the representative areas and the committee on hazard management and procedural matters;
- g. ensuring that personal information is not disclosed; and
- h. advising the Minute Secretary in advance if unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

Section 5 - Meetings

Quorum

(22) A quorum will consist of more than half of the membership.

Meetings

(23) Meetings shall be held four times per year and at least once every three months, except under special circumstances and at times as decided by the Presiding Officer (PO) to deal with extraordinary matters.

(24) Members will be allowed reasonable time off during working hours to attend and prepare for meetings.

(25) Meeting venues, including rooms and/or video conference details, will be informed via the agenda for the meeting or, alternatively, via email or some other appropriate method of correspondence to the committee members.

(26) At the final meeting in any given year, the committee members are to agree on meeting dates for the following year's meetings. The Minute Secretary is to advise all committee members of the agreed dates for the meetings to be held in the following year.

(27) Whenever possible, committee meetings should be held at least one (1) week prior to a University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC) meeting.

(28) Procedures for calling an emergency meeting are to be agreed to by the committee.

Agendas and minutes

(29) Members must be given at least one week's notice of a meeting and a request for items for the agenda.

(30) Copies of the minutes of each committee meeting are to be circulated to all committee members and the Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing (for placement on the [Health, Safety and Wellbeing consultation](#) web page).

Right of audience and debate at meetings

(31) A right of audience and debate is granted to certain persons, who may be required to attend all or part of those meetings, to receive notices of and other communications relating to those meetings. Those granted right of audience and debate are entitled to receive any papers relevant to the meeting (or part of the meeting) they are attending and to be heard at any meeting, or part of a meeting, relevant to them. These persons shall not be entitled to vote.

(32) The following persons will be granted an ongoing right of audience and debate for attending full meetings:

- a. Work Health and Safety Advisers.
- b. Work Health and Safety Systems and Compliance Officer.
- c. Committee Minute Secretary.
- d. Student representatives, who have been nominated by the Student Representative Committee to represent student health and safety interests.

Attendance of non-members at meetings

(33) Attendance of non-members at committee meetings shall be approved by the Presiding Officer. The role of the non-member will be as an observer until requested by the committee to participate.

(34) The non-member will not have voting rights. The duration of the attendance of the non-member at the meeting shall be at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

Non-attendance at meetings

(35) Any worker representative member of the committee who absents themselves from three consecutive committee meetings or who fails to send an apology for non-attendance may be asked to resign or may, by majority vote of the committee, be removed.

Resignations

(36) A worker representative may, by notice in writing to the Presiding Officer (PO) and Minute Secretary, resign from their health and safety representative role and committee membership with immediate effect or with effect from a specified date occurring after the service of the notice.

Information for committees

(37) The committee is entitled to receive information pertinent to its operation from the WHS Unit.

(38) The committee, through the Presiding Officer (PO), shall have access to any information relevant to accidents, incidents and occupational illnesses/diseases that is evident or known at the workplace.

(39) The University must not allow the committee to have access to any personal or medical information concerning a worker without the worker's consent unless the information is in a form that:

- a. does not identify the worker; and
- b. could not reasonably be expected to lead to the identification of the worker.

Procedure for changing the terms of reference

(40) Changes to this document may be recommended to the University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC) by the committee or the University.

(41) Changes may only take effect following the approval of the University Safety and Health Management Committee (USHMC).

Sub-committees

(42) Sub-committees may be formed with the approval of the Executive Director, People and Culture (ED, PC).

(43) Sub-committees will operate within the framework of the committee to aid with the role and function of the committee.

(44) Sub-committees, where formed, will operate as part of managing specific workplace health and safety issues and will disband following the resolution of that issue.

(45) Reports from any sub-committee will be tabled through the Work Health and Safety Committee agenda, as and when required.

Conflicts of interest

(46) Where a member has a perceived or material conflict of interest, they must declare this to the Presiding Officer (PO) and at the committee meeting, prior to discussion to the item of business.

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