Introduction

For Council to succeed in providing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment, it is essential that all staff participate in adopting safe work practices as part of their day to day activities. To assist staff in achieving this aim Council has committed to developing and maintaining a Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS).

A WHSMS is a set of plans, actions and procedures to systematically manage health and safety in the workplace that is actively endorsed by a committed employer to achieve:

- Provision of a safe and health workplace and the prevention/reduction of illness and injury equally for employees and contractors.
- Identification of workplace hazards, assessment and control of all risks.
- Active involvement in health and safety matters by managers, supervisors and employees and their representatives.
- Provision of information and training for employees at all levels so they can work safely.
- Audit and review of the OHSMS.

Council’s WHSMS Framework has five key elements (based upon the information provided in AS/NZS 4804:2001). These are as follows:

- Commitment and policy
- Planning
- Implementation
- Measurement and evaluation
- Review and improvement.
Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>A systematic examination against defined criteria to determine whether activities and related results conform to planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve Council’s WHS Policy &amp; Objectives.</td>
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<td>Competent Person</td>
<td>A person who has acquired, through training, qualification or experience, or a combination of these, the knowledge and skills, including WHS knowledge and skills, qualifying that person to perform the task required in accordance with relevant standards.</td>
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<td>Continual Improvement</td>
<td>Process of enhancing the WHSMS to achieve improvements in overall WHS performance in line with Council’s WHS Policy.</td>
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<td>LEG</td>
<td>Leadership Executive Group – Council’s Senior Management Team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Health and Safety System (WHSMS)</td>
<td>WHSMS is a set of plans, actions and procedures to systematically manage health safety and wellbeing in the workplace that is actively endorsed by Bega Valley Shire Council (BVSC).</td>
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| WHS Instructions | WHS Instructions refers to any documented BVSC safety system which aims to ensure Council maintains a healthy and safe workplace. WHS Instructions include (but are not limited) to the following:  
  - WHS Policy  
  - WHS Procedure  
  - Safe Work Method Statements  
  - Safety & Emergency Management Instructions/Guidelines  
  - Safe Work Procedures  
Council must ensure that all WHS Instructions are appropriately communicated to all relevant staff. |
| Work Health and Safety (WHS) Objectives | Overall WHS goals and objectives in terms of WHS performance as set out in Council’s WHS policies. |
| Work Health and Safety Performance | The measurable results of the WHSMS related to Council’s elimination and/or control of health and safety risks based upon WHS Policy, objectives and targets. |

Purpose

To establish requirements for the overall management of BVSC’s work, health and safety management system.

Scope

Objectives

This procedure provides the basis for effective integration of safety into the workplace through a structure that reflects the principles contained in AS/NZS 4804:2001. The following objectives are therefore promulgated to ensure Council is able to maintain an effective safety management system:

- Council will develop and maintain an integrated work health and safety management system which aims to ensure so far as reasonably practical that all ‘workers’ perform their work related tasks in a safe working environment.
- Council will develop, monitor and enforce policies, procedures and instructions which aim to ensure that a healthy and safe workplace is maintained.
- Council will develop annual work health and safety plans to fulfil its WHS policy, objectives and targets;
- Council will ensure all staff is adequately trained to be able to safely perform their job.
- Council will ensure the WHSMS measures, monitors and evaluates the organisation’s WHS performance and takes preventative and corrective actions.
- The WHSMS will be regularly reviewed and continually improved with the objective of improving WHS performance.

WHSMS Framework

The following WHSMS framework has been established to ensure Council develops and maintains an effective management system for work health and safety.

1. Commitment & Policy

1.1 General Considerations – Commitment & Policy

The application of a structured WHSMS in a planned and organised manner with dedicated resources across all areas of Bega Valley Shire Council ensures ongoing monitoring, review, evaluation and effectiveness of the system to reduce injury and illness in the workplace.

1.2 Leadership and Commitment

Strong, dedicated leadership is the cornerstone of an effective WHSMS. Management shall be responsible for the development, documentation and commitment to a WHS policy and the implementation and communication of all WHS systems to safeguard the health and safety of all persons in the workplace. Consultative processes shall be implemented to ensure the needs of all employees, volunteers, contractors, labour hire employees and visitors are represented. Leadership in the field of WHS will be demonstrated at Council by:

- Determining and confirming Council’s current/up to date position on WHS.
- Appropriate resource allocation (including setting budgets, responsibilities, authorities & accountability).
- Coordinated management planning and agreed delegations.
- Decisions followed through and performance assessed.
- Communication of WHS values and policies unambiguously throughout Council, and
- Management demonstrating their commitment by their own actions.

In order to maintain continual improvement, suitability, effectiveness and review of the WHS Management System, Council has also established a Management Team/Work Health and Safety Committee that meets bimonthly.
1.3 Initial WHS Review

The current position of Council’s performance in relation to WHS Compliance should be established by means of an initial review of the WHSMS. This will include:

- Identifying hazards associated with Council’s activities
- Identifying all relevant WHS legislative (and other) requirements which are applicable to the undertakings of Council
- Assess compliance with identified WHS Legislation/regulations
- Review/investigate past experiences (namely previous incidents, assessments, reviews etc.)
- Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources dedicated to WHS management
- Identify gaps in existing WHS systems and establish desired outcomes to aim towards.

1.4 WHS Policy

BVSC will define its overall WHS objectives and commitment to improving WHS performance with a WHS Policy. This policy should be authorised by the Councillors and should also:

- Be appropriate to the nature and scale of Council’s Risks
- Include a commitment to establish measurable objectives and targets to ensure continued improvement aimed at the elimination of work related injury and illness
- Include a commitment to comply with all relevant WHS Legislation
- Be documented, implemented, maintained and communicated to all employees
- Be available to all interested parties
- Be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

2. Planning

2.1 General Considerations – Planning

The successful implementation and operation of a WHSMS requires an effective planning process with well-defined measurable outcomes. Bega Valley Shire Council as part of it WHSMS planning process will establish objectives, targets and performance indicators within our WHS plans to ensure our aims are achieved.

2.2 Planning identification of hazards, hazard/risk assessment and control of hazards/risks

A controlled system of policies, procedures, processes and the necessary tools exist for hazards and risks to be identified and ranked. This system also allows for timely reporting, consideration of control measures, further investigation if necessary and recording. Responsibility is assigned to individuals for action with timeframes set for completion. Incidents and hazards are communicated to the organisation with feedback to the persons reporting and to those affected by any change.

Workplace activities and all aspects of the WHS risk management system are constantly reviewed in consultation with employees. The review process considers changes in legislation, codes of practice and national standards. A corporate risk register has been implemented, maintained and updated when risks are identified.

2.3 Legal and Other Requirements

Council’s WHS legislative requirements are identified, assessed and managed by the Workforce and Administration Section, with specific changes to applicable WHS legislation being identified by the WHS Officer.
2.4 Objectives and Targets

Bega Valley Shire Council will establish, implement and maintain documented WHS objectives and targets to meet our organisational WHS Policy. WHS Objectives and Targets will be set annually by LEG in Consultation with Council’s WHS Committee.

2.5 Key Performance Indicators

The key performance indicators consist of a number of both lead (positive) and lag (negative) indicators which can be used to measure WHS performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Indicators</th>
<th>Lag Indicators</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lead Indicators include:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lag Indicators include:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Number of scheduled workplace inspections;</td>
<td>• WHS incidents reported for quarter;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Number of training sessions completed;</td>
<td>• Number of Workers Compensation claims for quarter;</td>
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<td>• Number of WHS Committee meetings;</td>
<td>• Number of Lost time Injuries for quarter / Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR);</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Number of incident investigations completed within required timeframe;</td>
<td>• Average duration of Lost Time Injuries for quarter;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Corrective actions completed and reviewed;</td>
<td>• Workers compensation claims costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reviews completed of WHS Management System components including Procedures, Risk Registers, Safe Work Method Statements/ Risk Assessments, etc.</td>
<td>The lag indicators will also be reported regularly to LEG as well as the Work Health and Safety Committee.</td>
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The lead indicators will be reported regularly to LEG as well as the Work Health and Safety Committee.

2.6 WHS Safety Management Plans

An annual WHS Management Plan will be developed by Councils WHS Officer in consultation with the WHS and endorsed by LEG. This plan shall be reviewed at each WHS Committee Meeting and shall be amended where necessary due to legislative or organisational change.

3. Implementation

3.1 General Considerations - Implementation

A key consideration for the implementation of a WHS management system is the involvement of all workers at all levels within the organisation. Bega Valley Shire Council will ensure that the WHSMS is managed using appropriate consultative mechanisms.

3.2 Resources – Human, Physical and Financial

Appropriate human, physical (e.g. facilities, equipment) and financial resources essential to the implementation of Council’s WHSMS will be defined and made available.

3.3 Integration

Bega Valley Shire Council will ensure that the WHSMS is fully integrated into existing systems (namely records management, organisational policies/procedures etc.)
3.4 Accountability & responsibility

Council shall define, document and communicate the areas of accountability and responsibility of all personnel involved in the implementation, maintenance and review of the WHS Management System through the following:

- Position descriptions
- Risk Registers
- WHS Procedures
- Safe Work Method Statements.

These accountabilities and responsibilities are reviewed through performance reviews conducted annually.

3.5 Consultation, motivation and awareness

BVSC understands the ability to improve our WHS systems relies on ensuring the cooperation of all workers. Further to this Council acknowledges that knowledge and experience throughout the workforce is a valuable resource and all workers must be encouraged to participate in the development and implementation of the WHSMS. Council therefore agrees to undertake the following:

- Provide mechanisms to ensure all workers are involved in the development, implementation and review of WHS policies, procedures and instructions;
- Ensure all workers will be consulted where there are changes that affect workplace health and safety;
- Foster and encourage the role of the WHS Committee as well as WHS Representatives;
- Ensure that all relevant WHS instruction is effectively communicated to all workers as appropriate to their role.

3.6 Training and Competency

Training is conducted at all levels of the organisation commensurate with the needs of individuals. A structured system exists to ensure safety related training is conducted by suitably qualified or competent personnel to meet the needs of individuals to carry out tasks related to their job. Assessment of individuals ensures personnel are competent prior to them undertaking tasks.

3.7 Communication

Council understands the importance of effective two way communication with timely reporting in ensuring that our WHSMS is able to meet all promulgated objectives and ultimately ensure that our workplace is free (so far as reasonably practicable) of all risks to health and safety. BVSC will therefore develop mechanisms to communicate WHS information to all levels within our organisation.

3.8 Reporting

Procedures will be established for relevant and timely reporting of all information relating to Council’s WHSMS. The following reporting mechanisms will be used at Council to achieve this specific aim:

- WHS Performance Reporting;
- Non-conformance (with legislation/procedures) Reporting;
- Incident reporting;
- Hazard/Near Miss Reporting;
- Statutory Reporting Requirements (As defined in the WHS Act).
3.9 Injury Management

BVSC will develop a coordinated and managed program that integrates all aspects of injury management (including treatment, rehabilitation, retraining, claim management and employment management practices) for the purpose of achieving optimum results in terms of a timely, safe and durable return to work for injured workers.

3.10 Documentation and Document Control

Controlled WHS documents are used throughout Council ensuring consistency and uniformity in the application of procedures and providing an auditable trail of activity. Documentation exists in both electronic and printed form with processes allowing consultation and review by those it impacts on prior to approval.

3.11 Records and Information Management

Procedures and systems have been established and are maintained for identification, collection, indexing, filing, access, confidentiality, secure storage, maintenance and disposal of WHS records in accordance with legislation. The WHSMS will integrate with Council’s existing records management systems.

3.12 Hazard Identification, hazard/risk assessment and control of hazards

All hazards should be identified, hazard/risks assessments conducted (as appropriate) and all hazards/risks controlled and monitored.

3.13 Administrative (Procedural) Control

Policies, procedures, processes and tools are developed and maintained in a systematic manner that allows for proper planning, consultation, recording, review and evaluation and communication.

3.14 Purchasing Goods and Services

Procedures will be developed to ensure the health and safety practices of the organisations providing goods, services and human resources to Bega Valley Shire Council are screened. Pre purchase risk assessment procedures and the necessary tools will also be developed to ensure WHS risks are considered prior to purchase and entering into service of any relevant item.

3.15 Emergency Preparedness and Response

Emergency procedures have been developed, implemented and maintained. Council will also ensure that emergency management plans are regularly tested and reviewed.

4. Measurement and Evaluation

4.1 General Consideration – Measurement and Evaluation

Measuring, monitoring and evaluating are key activities which ensure the organisation is performing in accordance with its WHS Policy.

4.2 Inspection, testing and monitoring

A system exists for the inspection and testing of environment, plant and procedures to ensure conformance to standards, legislation or specifications. Responsibility is assigned to competent individuals to complete such tests and to assure results are recorded and maintained. Should deviation from the required level be detected, corrective action is taken.

Statistical techniques are used as a means to analyse incident, injury/illness and workers compensation data to establish objective measures of WHS performance and ascertain the effectiveness of the implemented WHS system. The outcome of statistical analysis is used to support requirements for the implementation of appropriate performance improvement strategies and to prevent adverse health and safety trends.
4.3 WHSMS Audits

Periodic audits of elements within Councils WHSMS as well as the entire system are necessary to determine whether or not Council is meeting the WHS objectives detailed in our WHS Policy. Planned internal (namely self-audits but also overarching internal audits) and external audits are conducted to measure the effectiveness of the implemented WHS system. The results of audits are used to identify system gaps for improvements to be made and strategies considered and implemented to reduce the risk of illness and injury in the workplace. BVSC may engage an external audit provider, at least every two years, to undertake a full WHS system review. The results of these audits will be combined with internal WHS audits and reported to LEG and WHS committees and made available to the organisation on the WHS website.

4.4 Incident Investigation, Corrective and Preventative Actions

The investigation of incidents provides an opportunity to examine many aspects of Council’s WHSMS. Incident investigations should be commissioned and the incident investigation team assembled as soon as possible after an incident. The focus of any investigation should be to identify system deficiencies and to prevent a recurrence of a similar incident.

A central register detailing all incidents, investigations and corrective actions shall be maintained by the WHS Section.

5. Review and Improvement

5.1 General Considerations – Review and Improvement

BVSC will ensure a continual improvement process will be applied to achieve improvement in WHS performance.

5.2 Review of the WHSMS

LEG will, at appropriate intervals; conduct a review of Council’s WHSMS to ensure its continuing suitability and effectiveness in satisfying Councils WHS Policy and Objectives.

Review of the WHSMS will include the following:

- An evaluation of the suitability of the WHS Policy;
- Reviews of WHS objectives, targets and performance indicators;
- Initiating and implementing findings of WHS Audits as appropriate.

5.3 Continual Improvement

The concept of continual improvement is embodied in Council’s WHSMS. It is achieved by continually evaluating the performance of the WHSMS against Council’s WHS Policy, objectives and targets for the purpose of identifying opportunities for improvement. Council’s Continuous Improvement Process should:

- Identify areas of opportunity of the WHSMS which will lead to improved WHS performance
- Determine the root cause or causes of non-conformance or deficiencies
- Develop and implement plans of corrective and preventative action to address root causes
- Verify the effectiveness of corrective and preventative actions
- Document any changes in procedures resulting from process improvement
- Make comparisons with objectives and targets
5.4 Non Conformance

All Council workers are expected to follow all reasonable WHS instructions as well as ensuring within their workgroup (as reasonably practicable) that Council does not breach relevant WHS Legislation. If a non-conformance is identified a non-conformance report will be sent to the relevant manager (or drafted by the relevant manager/WHS Officer if it relates to an employee) so that corrective actions can be made.

A non-conformance report will:

- Identify the non-conformance, opportunity for improvement or legislative/procedural breach;
- Note the immediate actions taken to rectify (in the short term) the non-conformance, opportunity for improvement or legislative/procedural breach.
- Propose corrective actions.

A non-conformance report is not primarily designed to be a disciplinary tool however continued breaches of reasonable WHS Instruction may constitute grounds for disciplinary action. A non-conformance report however may be used as evidence for failure to meet WHS KPI’s during an employee performance review.

Duties and Responsibilities

Leadership Executive Group (LEG)

LEG has the overall responsibility to provide a healthy and safe workplace for workers and to ensure adequate resources are provided to meet the organisation’s health and safety objectives and implementation strategies.

Managers

Managers are responsible to ensure all their team members are aware, follow and comply with all Council’s WHS procedures and all relevant WHS instructions. Managers have a responsibility in their areas of control to ensure that:

- They carry out their roles and responsibilities as detailed in the relevant health and safety policies and procedures.
- They effectively implement relevant health and safety policies, procedures and instructions as they relate to all risks to health and safety relevant to their area within Council. This includes ensuring all WHS risks are identified, assessed and effectively controlled in consultation with workers and their representatives.
- The effectiveness of risk control measures are regularly monitored and deviations from standards are rectified.
- Supervisors and workers who report to them have adequate knowledge and skills to carry out their health and safety responsibilities.
- Workers and their representatives are consulted on any proposals for, or changes to, the workplace, work practices, policies or procedures which may affect the health and safety of workers.

Supervisors/Team Leaders

Supervisors, team leaders or workers with supervisory responsibilities have a responsibility to ensure:

- They carry out their roles and responsibilities as detailed in the relevant health and safety policies and procedures.
- Relevant health and safety policies and procedures are implemented in their areas of control.
• All risk control measures in their areas of responsibility are implemented, regularly monitored and maintained.

• Workers under their supervisory control are provided with the necessary information, instruction and training to effectively and safely carry out their jobs.

Workers
Workers are responsible to follow and comply with these procedures and other related Work Health and Safety protocols and systems as detailed above.

Workers have a responsibility to:
• Take care to protect their own health and safety and to avoid adversely affecting the health and safety of any other worker.
• Report any incident or hazard at work to their manager or supervisor as soon as possible by the fastest means.
• Carry out their roles and responsibilities as detailed in the relevant health and safety policies and procedures.
• Obey any reasonable instruction aimed at protecting their health and safety while at work.
• Use any equipment provided to protect their health and safety while at work.
• Assist in the identification of hazards, the assessment of risks and the implementation of risk control measures.
• Consider and provide feedback on any matter which may affect their health and safety.

WHS Committee and WHS Representatives
The WHS Committee, subcommittee, WHS working groups and WHS representatives are responsible to assist with the implementation and consultation processes relating to WHS matters, providing feedback to managers, team co-ordinators and employees.

References and Associated Documents
• ISO 31,000:2009
• Bega Valley Shire Council WHS Policy.
• Work Health and Safety Act 2011
• Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011