

Health and Safety Procedure - Consultation and Communication

Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) Consultation with staff and communication of Health and Safety information is an essential part of managing health and safety at La Trobe University.

(2) The purpose of this Procedure is to specify how La Trobe University will consult with staff on health and safety matters and communicate Health and Safety information.

Section 2 - Scope

(3) Refer to the [Health and Safety Policy](#).

Section 3 - Policy Statement

(4) Refer to the [Health and Safety Policy](#).

Section 4 - Procedure

Part A - Responsibilities

(5) Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Team will:

- a. Manage the Health and Safety Consultation and Communication Procedure.
- b. Maintain lists of Designated Work Groups (DWGs) and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) on the HSE intranet site.
- c. Participate in quarterly Consultative Committees.
- d. Manage the quarterly HSR briefings and minutes.
- e. Coordinate and monitor the workplace inspections.
- f. Communicate health and safety information with University stakeholders.
- g. Administrate HSR training.

(6) Leaders and Managers will:

- a. Consult via meetings with staff on issues that may affect their health and safety.
- b. Communicate important HSE information.
- c. Support HSRs to attend approved training.
- d. Confirm sufficient numbers of HSRs are appointed.
- e. Coordinate the workplace inspections.

(7) The College / Division Health and Safety Committee Chair will run the quarterly Consultative Committee.

(8) The Secretariat will take and communicate the meeting minutes for the quarterly Consultative Committee.

(9) Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) will:

- a. Participate in the quarterly Consultative Committee where a position is vacant
- b. Participate in the quarterly HSR briefing
- c. Participate in quarterly workplace inspections where these are not assigned to an incumbent role.

(10) Deputy HSRs will exercise the powers of the HSR when the elected HSR ceases to hold office or is unable because of absence or any other reason.

(11) The School / Divisional Administrator will retain completed workplace inspections in a manner that meets record retention requirements and allows for auditing by the HSE Team.

Part B - Designated Work Groups

(12) The University has established Designated Work Groups (DWGs) which are groups of employees formed on the basis of location, type of work, number of employees and the nature of hazards at the workplace.

(13) The Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Team will maintain a list of DWGs on the HSE intranet site.

Part C - Election Process

(14) The election for a HSR / Deputy HSR will be held within 28 days of any of the following occurring:

- a. A HSR resigns
- b. If more than one half of employees within the DWG request an election
- c. A new DWG is established

(15) All fixed-term and continuing employees of La Trobe University are eligible to nominate as a HSR or Deputy HSR.

(16) When an election is required to take place a nominee of the DWG will call for nominations.

(17) If only one nomination is received the nominee is deemed to be elected. If more than one nomination is received an election will be held.

(18) The nominee of the DWG will manage the election process and advise the successful candidate/s, Head of School, the General Manager / Director of area, of the outcome of the election and communicate this to relevant staff.

Part D - HSR Term of Office

(19) A HSR / Deputy HSR for a DWG will hold office for a period of three years. HSRs are eligible to be re-elected once their term has expired.

(20) A HSR / Deputy HSR will cease to hold office if:

- a. They cease to be a member of the DWG;
- b. They resign as a HSR by giving written notice to the relevant member of the HSE Team;
- c. The majority of members of DWG agree in writing that the person should no longer represent the DWG.

Part E - Workplace Inspections

(21) The HSE Team will work with stakeholders to schedule workplace inspections and monitor their completion.

(22) HSRs and /or relevant staff members will conduct inspections of their DWG buildings and areas to identify potential hazards on a quarterly basis.

(23) HSRs and /or relevant staff members will action all identified hazards as specified in the Hazard and Incident Reporting Procedure.

(24) Completed inspection reports will be forwarded to the School / Division Administrator.

(25) School / Division Administrators will retain completed workplace inspections in a manner that meets record retention requirements and allows for auditing by the HSE Team.

Part F - Consultation

(26) Leaders and Managers will consult with staff in relation to issues affecting their health and safety including:

- a. Identifying and assessing hazards or risks to health and safety;
- b. Making decisions to control risks to health and safety;
- c. Proposed changes that may affect the health and safety of staff and students;

(27) Staff will be consulted in the following ways:

Type	Participants	Timeframe
Consultative Committees	In accordance with the respective College / Divisional Consultative Committee terms of reference	Quarterly
HSR briefings	All HSRs, HSE Team	Quarterly
Toolbox talks	All staff of a division / Contractors	As required
Pre-Start meeting	All staff of a division / Contractors	Daily when working under a Task Safety Analysis*

*See [Health and Safety Procedure - Hazard and Incident Reporting](#)

Part G - Communication

(28) The HSE Team will develop a range of communications on important HSE information.

(29) Leader and Managers will communicate this information to HSRs and staff as appropriate in accordance with the target audience.

(30) Specific modes of communication will include:

Type	Target Audience	Description	Frequency
SEG - OHS Consultative Committee report	Senior Executive Group OHS Consultative Committee	Overview of incident and hazard report data and workers' compensation data	Quarterly
CGARC report	Corporate Governance, Audit and Risk Committee	Oversight of hazard and incident reporting data and workers' compensation data	Quarterly
HSE dashboards	Managers and Leaders Colleges / Divisions, HSRs	Analysis of key HSE data, trends and targets	Quarterly

Type	Target Audience	Description	Frequency
Minutes of committee meetings	All staff covered by the consultative committee	Summary of committee meetings discussion and actions	Quarterly
HSE topics	All staff and contractors	Information on a pertinent topic	Monthly
Alerts	Relevant staff and contractors	Highlights important safety information about a product or process	Ad hoc
Lessons learned	Relevant staff and contractors	Highlights key learnings resulting from the failure of product or process	Ad hoc
HSE noticeboards	All staff and contractors	Displays safety information	As required

Part H - Training for HSRs

(31) All elected HSR and Deputy HSRs have the option to attend an initial approved course of training in occupational health and safety, annual refresher HSR training and any training conducted by WorkSafe Victoria.

(32) The HSR and their Supervisor will work together to schedule relevant training. Initial training should commence within three months of the staff member being appointed as a HSR.

(33) The HSR should contact the HSE Team to administrate the booking.

Part I - Documentation

(34) The HSE Team will maintain a register of DWGs and HSRs on the HSE intranet site.

(35) The College / Division Secretariat will take minutes for all Health and Safety Consultative Committee meetings and distribute to the committee.

(36) The HSE Team will take meeting minutes for all quarterly HSR briefings and distribute to the relevant committee.

Section 5 - Definitions

(37) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. Designated Work Group (DWG): A group of employees determined on the basis of location; type of work; number of employees, the nature of hazards at the workplace and of overtime or shift working arrangements.
- b. Deputy Health and Safety Representative: A deputy health and safety representative for DWG is elected the same way as a HSR. The deputy HSR will exercise the powers of the HSR when the elected HSR ceases to hold office or is unable because of absence or any other reason to exercise the powers of a HSR.
- c. Health and Safety Committees: Health and Safety Committees bring together a group HSR's employees and employer representatives to discuss and develop ways to improve health and safety across the college, division or campus.
- d. Health and Safety Representative (HSR): An employee elected by members of a designated work group to be the group's representative on health and safety issues.
- e. HSE: Health, Safety and Environment.

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