

1. BACKGROUND

The Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) Committee facilitates the effective communication on health and safety related matters. The operation of the Committee is broadly outlined by the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

Organisation

OH&S plays a vital role in ensuring that OH&S related issues are canvassed in an appropriate forum and that they are considered in the context of the wider operation of the business.

The responsibilities of the Committee are outlined within this Charter and approved by the Board. The Charter will be periodically reviewed to confirm it remains accurate and consistent with the needs of GWMWater.

Composition

Membership of the Committee shall include management representation and employee representation consistent with GWMWater's structure.

Board Directors may act in the capacity of management representatives or attend meetings of the Committee, while Safety Representatives may act in the role of employee representatives on the Committee.

The elections for employee representative positions will be held every three years or more frequently if elected representative changes occur within the designated work groups. The elected representative, is elected for a period of three years.

In the event that there is only one nomination from a workgroup then that nominee is declared elected.

If there is more than one nominee from a group, and the total number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies on the Committee, then an election by secret ballot will be held.

The committee shall elect a Chairperson on an annual basis.

2. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee has the following functions and responsibilities:

- a) To assist in the development of OH&S policies and procedures and processes;
- b) To report on a regular basis to the Audit, Governance and Risk Committee of the Board, through the Senior Leadership Team, on the status of GWMWater's safety systems and compliance with legislation;
- c) To review accident, incident and disease statistics and trends, and provide recommendations to management as necessary;

- d) To review, consider and discuss Health and Safety reports and provide recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team as necessary;
- e) To consider and discuss reports by Health and Safety representatives or management representatives on issues of relevance (e.g. chemical storage, emergency management procedures, confined space entry);
- f) To participate in the consultative processes on Health and Safety issues related to health and safety in the workplace; and
- g) To assist in the integration of policies and procedures that address Health and Safety issues into GWMWater's management systems.

3. MEETINGS

Ordinary meetings shall be held at least quarterly, at a time and place as determined by the Committee.

The Chairperson may call additional meetings as required.

Half of the current membership plus one, at the time of the meeting shall form a quorum for Committee meetings. Divisional Managers can appoint a substitute representative for attendance at meetings if employee representatives are unavailable.

4. REPORTING

The Committee reports to the Board and the Senior Leadership Team as required.

Minutes of the Committee meeting shall be published and be available to all employees.

5. STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS

The following extracts from the *OH&S Act 2004* outline the various responsibilities incumbent on management and employees.

Management (Board/Senior Officers) Responsibility

(Ref: Section 21 – *OH&S Act 2004*)

- a) An employer shall provide and maintain so far as is practicable for employees a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.
- b) Provide and maintain plant and systems of work that are so far as is practicable safe and without risks to health.
- c) Make arrangements for ensuring so far as is practicable safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of plant and substances.
- d) Maintain so far as is practicable any workplace under the control and management of the employer in a condition that is safe and without risks to health.
- e) Provide adequate facilities for the welfare of employees at any workplace under the control and management of the employer.

- f) Provide such information, instruction, training and supervision to employees as are necessary to enable the employee to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risks to health.

Functions of Health and Safety Committee

(Ref: S.72 – *OH&S Act 2004*)

- a) To facilitate co-operation between an employer and the employees of the employer in instigating developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety at work of the employees.
- b) To formulate, review and disseminate to the employees the standards rules and procedures relating to health and safety which are to be carried out or complied with at the workplace and include such other functions as are prescribed or agreed upon by the employer and the health and safety committee.

Functions of Health and Safety Representatives

(Ref: S.58 – *OH&S Act 2004*)

- a) Inspect any part of the workplace at which a member of the representative's designated work groups:
- (i) at any time after giving reasonable notice to the employer or employer's representative; and
 - (ii) immediately in the event of any accident, hazardous situation, dangerous occurrence or immediate risk to the health and safety or any person.
- b) After consultation with the employer's representative or representatives accompany any inspector during an inspection of the workplace.
- c) After consultation with the employer's representative or representatives require the establishment of a health and safety committee in accordance with S 35 of the Act.
- d) After consultation with the employer's representative or representatives with the consent of the employee, be present at any interview between an employee and an inspector concerning health and safety.