

 <p>MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA</p>	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	1 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Council of Australian Government (COAG) committed in July 2008 to harmonization of occupational health and safety laws in Australia. In 2011, each state and territory Parliament passed new Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws based on a national model WHS Act.

As a result, all organisations in Australia are required to develop and implement policies consistent with the new WHS law, regulations and codes of practice. These laws became operational in January 2012. A key feature of the WHS legislation is that it applies to all persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) whether for profit or gain, that all workers, managers and directors are duty holders and that there is a requirement to consult with all stakeholders in policy development and implementation.

The Multicultural Council of Tasmania's (MCOT) policy draws on advice and reference material relating to WHS legislation developed for and by agencies in similar work environments to our own. The current office of MCOT is within facilities which make provision for WHS. Separate provision is made in this policy for working from home.

SCOPE

The law provides that a person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, or make provision for:

- (a) A work environment without risks to health and safety
- (b) A safe plant and structures;
- (c) Safe systems of work;
- (d) The safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances;
- (e) Adequate facilities for the welfare at work of workers in carrying out work for the business or undertaking, including ensuring access to those facilities;
- (f) Information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety arising from work carried out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking; and
- (g) Monitoring of the health of workers and the conditions at the workplace for the purpose of preventing illness or injury of workers.
- (h) In this policy, 'workplace' includes working on site or off-site, attendance at a work-related conference or function, and attendance at a client or other work-related event, including retreats and social events.
- (i) Each duty holder has a responsibility to read, understand and comply with the policies which are relevant to his/her work with MCOT. The need to comply with these policies should be stipulated in staff position descriptions and in guidelines for volunteers.

 <p>MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA</p>	<p>Workplace Health and Safety Policy</p>	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	2 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

The Workplace Occupational Health & Safety Policy and related procedures will be displayed in the workplace and all employees, volunteers and board members will be provided with a copy. New employees will be provided with a copy of the documents as part of their induction.

The policy and related procedures will be reviewed regularly to ensure continued compliance with the relevant legislation.

PURPOSE

Multicultural Council of Tasmania is committed to ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of the working environment for its staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to its premises.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania supports the rights of all persons covered by the policy to work in an environment that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania is committed to the promotion of a joint and united approach to consultation and resolution of Work Health and Safety issues.

Multicultural Council of Tasmania is committed to improving health and safety with a view to improving workplace efficiency and productivity. This will be accomplished through the ongoing development, in consultation with Multicultural Council of Tasmania's Safety Representatives, of management systems and procedures designed to, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- identify, assess and control workplace hazards;
- reduce the incidence and cost of occupational injury and illness; and
- provide a rehabilitation system for those affected by occupational injury or illness.

Work Health and Safety statutory requirements, including regulations and codes of practice, are minimum standards and so the aim is for them to be improved upon, where practicable.

RESPONSIBILITIES

This policy applies to duty holders as follows:

- (a) All staff members;
- (b) Board members;
- (c) Committee members and all persons who make, or participate in making, management members and all persons who make, or participate in making, management decision that influence the whole or a substantial part of MCOT.
- (d) Volunteers and interns gaining work experience
- (e) Workers employed by external agencies using MCOT facilities
- (f) Contractors, volunteers and visitors to Multicultural Council of Tasmania's premises, to the extent it is relevant to them.

 MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	3 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

A person may be a multiple duty holder from those described above.

The CEO will ensure that this policy is accessible and made available to all duty holders. The manual will include all relevant Work Health and Safety procedures to be followed by duty holders.

POLICY

Reducing and Managing Potential Hazards in the Workplace

The list of hazards will be noted in the MCOT risk matrix including actions and measures to be taken to address the identified issues. The matrix will list persons or positions responsible for managing hazards. Responsibilities for managing hazards may be shared by more than one person. The nominated person will have an obligation to eliminate the risk so far as is reasonably practicable and, if elimination is not possible, she/he must minimize risk so far as is reasonably practicable. Information contained in the Incident Report is fed back into the matrix; the matrix will be a live document available to all stakeholders.

Workers, officers and other persons listed in section 1 above must:

- (a) take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety;
- (b) take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons;
- (c) comply with any reasonable instruction that is given by a MCOT staff member which allows the person to comply with this Act;
- (d) cooperate with the provisions and procedures outlined in this policy relating to health or safety at the workplace.

The buildings in which the MCOT offices are located are non-smoking. Offices are equipped with fire blankets and a first aid kit.

Among other precautions, MCOT staff members are required to ensure the following:

- Materials are contained and stacked safely.
- Care is taken when shifting or carrying heavier boxes or equipment, with correct lifting procedures used and trolleys and other aids used as appropriate.
- A ladder used when retrieving materials from higher than head height.
- Each workstation is lit appropriately.
- Staff, volunteers and interns using keyboards and computers are aware of guidelines on the optimal sitting posture for avoiding injury and have a chair, desk and (if necessary) footrest which enables them to follow these guidelines.
- Power boards and leads for electrical equipment and computers are attached to a wall or desk or secured in a way to avoid trips and falls and to maximize safety.
- Walkways and work areas are kept clear to avoid trips and falls.
- Signage to exits is maintained and not obscured and exits are kept clear.
- The lid of the photocopier is kept down when in use.

 MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	4 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

Safe use of equipment and chemicals

Staff members are required to store and use all chemicals (including photocopier ink cartridges) safely and ensure that all electrical equipment is used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. To enable this to occur, inventories of all electrical equipment and chemicals are to be kept in MCOT's office. The inventory should be filed in a designated place in the office for easy reference by staff and others covered by this policy. Each inventory should include details, as appropriate, of:

- Manufacturers instructions for safe use of equipment.
- Details of when equipment was checked or serviced.
- Procedures relating to the safe storage or disposal of chemicals.
- How to access materials safety data sheets for listed chemicals.
- Information about how to report a fault for any equipment or a concern relating to the use or storage of chemicals.

More detailed information on safe work practices should be kept with each inventory.

Evacuation procedures

The buildings in which MCOT's office is located are equipped with firefighting and protection equipment, fire exits, alarms and loudspeakers for emergency messages.

When an alarm is activated and instructions for evacuation are given, all staff, volunteers and visitors to the MCOT office must evacuate immediately via the appropriate exit. The staff present at the time must take responsibility for ensuring that the office is evacuated and that all people present in the office at the time the alarm is sounded meet in the designated meeting location and are accounted for after evacuation.

A map of the building including exits to the building is in the office. The designated meeting place after evacuation is rear carpark.

Reporting an incident

Following a reportable incident, persons covered by this policy are required to verbally report the matter to the CEO. An Incident Report form is to be accessible and available to all duty holders. This report makes provision for recording details of the incident and the response to it.

Persons involved in the incident must complete this form as soon as possible after informing the Officer of the incident and submit the completed form to the Officer with a copy to the Office Administrator.

This report serves as a record of the incident and the response to it and is to be kept for a period of five years. MCOT personnel must notify MCOT's Insurer in the case of a serious or dangerous incident resulting in illness or injury (e.g. electric shock or falling from a height).

 MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	5 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

Reducing hazards when working externally

MCOT staff members are required to take a commonsense approach to maintaining safety and reducing the likelihood of risks when working externally, including when travelling, when conducting interviews and when attending or hosting external meetings or consultations.

Staff members who are required to drive a vehicle at any time in the course of their work must hold a valid drivers' license, a copy of which must be provided and retained in MCOT's office. In the event of the license being revoked or not renewed, the staff member must notify the Chair of the Committee of Management.

If a staff member is required to use her/his own vehicle at any time for work purposes, she/he must ensure that the vehicle is registered and appropriately insured.

When visiting worksites, staff members are required to comply with the WHS regulations of worksites they are visiting. Where another organization's site is being used by MCOT for a meeting, MCOT staff or volunteers should ensure that proper precautions are taken to ensure the safety of all present. These precautions should include:

- Ensuring the room is set up in a way which reduces the possibility of trips, falls and other obvious hazards.
- Ensuring that appropriate manual handling procedures are used when moving furniture, equipment or boxes of materials.
- Ensuring that paths to exits are kept clear and that those present are aware of how to leave the building quickly in an emergency.

When visiting a site where there are obvious potential risks, a staff member should ensure that he/she is aware of any security or other safety procedures which might apply. Information should be sought from the site's supervisor if it is not readily supplied.

Maintaining a safe workplace when working from home

A home-based work arrangement is a voluntary and cooperative arrangement. Each application for a home-based work arrangement is considered on a case-by-case basis and approved by the CEO.

Staff members with approval to work from home on a regular or frequent basis are required to list potential risks and hazards in the work space while on work duties, including the location of the hazard and to propose strategies to reduce the hazards. They are required to ensure that fixtures and fittings are without health and safety risks.

Prior to a staff member being granted approval the staff member will designate the area in the home to be used as the workplace and complete and submit to the CEO a Working from Home Application and Checklist. MCOT may require that photos of the proposed work area be supplied and/or may visit the worksite to provide advice which will ensure safe working conditions for the staff member. Reporting requirements are the same as for staff members working from the MCOT office.

 MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	6 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

Managing workload and stress

In the past, occupational health and safety laws have focused on the prevention of risks to physical health. The WHS legislation which came into effect in 2012 emphasizes psychological risks to health including managing workload and stress. While some stress is a normal part of the workplace, excessive stress can interfere with productivity and reduce physical and emotional health. The ability to manage stress in the workplace can improve physical and emotional health and improve levels of productivity, effectiveness and confidence.

Symptoms of stress may include anxiety, irritability, loss of interest in work, sleeping problems, trouble concentrating and the use of alcohol or drugs to cope. While these may not be work related, MCOT seeks to minimize the potential for work to lead to stress. Staff members are encouraged to inform the Chair if they have pre-existing or developing medical conditions which predispose them to stress, such as high blood pressure.

There are specific issues related with working in a small agency such as MCOT with fluctuations in workloads, unpredictable funding and specific challenges working with refugee and migrant policy which is frequently contentious and contested within an organisation to which the public has direct access.

The need to manage leave and time in lieu to ensure that sustainable work practices are maintained has been taken into consideration in the development of the MCOT's Personnel Policy by staff with input and support from the Committee of Management. Measures to reduce workload risks taken by MCOT include:

- Staff being required to record and report time in lieu each fortnight.
- Limits to the amount of time in lieu which can be accrued.
- Processes relating to the management of annual leave.
- The staff team developing an annual work plan which stipulates which staff member takes principal responsibility for each aspect of the work plan.
- Each staff member being encouraged to develop a task schedule based on her/his part of the workplan.
- Regular staff/Committee of Management meetings providing for feedback on workloads and opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their jobs.
- Staff being able to negotiate with the CEO regarding flexible working arrangements.
- Staff being able to discuss with the CEO issues that are causing workplace stress and develop a plan to address these issues.
- An annual appraisal process for staff at which opportunities to nominate career development activities are discussed.
- Opportunities being created for professional and social interaction between staff.

Staff members will keep a log of nuisance calls and mail and are encouraged to share the information with the CEO and colleagues. Interns and volunteers are provided with Guidelines on commencement of work with MCOT.

 MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of TASMANIA	Workplace Health and Safety Policy	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	7 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

Appropriate behaviour in the workplace

Psychological risks to health include workplace bullying and harassment. In its Draft Code of Practice, Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying (September 2011), Safe Work Australia defines bullying in the following manner:

“Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behavior directed towards a worker or a group of workers, that creates a risk to health and safety. ‘Repeated behavior’ refers to the persistent nature of the behavior and can refer to a range of behaviors over time.

‘Unreasonable behavior’ means behavior that a reasonable person, having regard for the circumstances, would see as victimizing, humiliating, undermining or threatening.”

MCOT has a zero-tolerance policy for harassment either among staff or between staff and internal or external stakeholders. Harassment, bullying or discrimination - including discrimination based on gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion or disability- is unlawful and has no place in the workplace. More detailed Information about workplace bullying and how to respond can be found in the Safe Work Australia draft code of practice (see reference at the end of this policy).

MCOT has a responsibility to ensure that all staff members and volunteers are protected from bullying and harassment in accordance with relevant Federal and State legislation. This is a two- way responsibility: all staff and volunteers are required by law to ensure the workplace remains free of harassment, bullying and discrimination. Any staff member who witnesses any activity which may constitute harassment, bullying or discrimination should raise the matter immediately with the Chair or members of the Committee of Management.

Breach Of This Policy

Any breach of this policy may result in counselling and/or disciplinary action, which, in the case of employees, may lead to dismissal, or, in the case of volunteers, may lead to the cessation of their engagement.

Any breach of this policy by a contractor may result in cancellation by Multicultural Council of Tasmania of the services provided by that contractor.

Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator

The Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator will be held accountable for coordinating Multicultural Council of Tasmania’s management of health and safety on behalf of the CEO. The Occupational Health and Safety Coordinator does not assume the responsibilities of supervisors and managers.

Health And Safety Representatives

Multicultural Council of Tasmania will encourage and facilitate the formation of work groups and the election of Health and Safety Representatives to represent employees on health and safety matters.

 <p>MULTICULTURAL COUNCIL of <i>TASMANIA</i></p>	<p>Workplace Health and Safety Policy</p>	Policy ID	MCOT-WHS
		Version Number	1
		Implementation Date	20 June 2019
Page Number	8 of 8	Last Reviewed/Update Date	Approved 20 June 2019
Policy Owner	BOARD	Approval	Board
Drafted by	Ron Franks	Next review date	April 2021

Health And Safety Committee

Where required under legislation, Multicultural Council of Tasmania will establish a Health and Safety Committee consisting of management and employee representatives. The Health and Safety Committee will be the principal forum in which management consults with employees on broad health and safety and policy issues.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Anti-discrimination policy
- Equal Employment Opportunity policy
- Grievance policy
- Anti-sexual harassment policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Code of Conduct

AUTHORISATION

Signed by CEO:Date: 20 June 2019

Signed by Chair: Date: 20 June 2019