

HEALTH SERVICES UNION

Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Policy

1. Statement of Purpose

The HSU is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees. This policy outlines our commitment to identifying, preventing, and managing psychosocial hazards that may impact the mental health and well-being of our employees. This policy should be read in conjunction with WHS policy, the WHS Act (2011) and the HSU additional policies related to health and safety.

2. Scope

This policy outlines the HSU's approach to managing psychosocial hazards at work. The Policy applies to the person conducting a business or undertaking (the PCBU) and all officers, workers and other persons as defined in Section 3 below and in the WHS Act.

3. Definitions

Terminology / Acronym	Definition
Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)	A "PCBU" (person conducting a business or undertaking) under the WHS Act refers to any entity that conducts a business or undertaking. They have a primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of workers and others who may be affected by their work and are responsible for complying with relevant WHS laws and regulations.
Officer	<p>The senior management of the HSU will usually be officers under the WHS Act.</p> <p>The term "officer" under the WHS Act refers to an individual who holds a position of authority in an organisation and has a significant influence over the management or operations of the business. This includes people who make or participate in making decisions that affect the whole, or a substantial part of the business.</p> <p>Officers have a duty of due diligence under the WHS Act, which means they must take reasonable steps to ensure that the business complies with its health and safety obligations.</p>

Rule 40 Policy

Worker	A "worker" under the WHS Act is any person who performs work for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including employees, contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons and volunteers.
Health and Safety Representative (HSR)	A worker elected by members of their work group to represent them in health and safety matters.
Other Persons	Includes any visitors to the HSU
Psychosocial Hazard	a workplace condition, situation, or factor that has the potential to adversely affect an individual's psychological and social well-being.
Incident	An event that has led to or could have led to an injury or illness. Incidents include near misses, accidents, and injuries or illness.
Psychosocial Incident	A specific incident that causes exposure to a psychosocial hazard.
Injury or Illness	The result of physical or mental harm.
Psychosocial Risk	Psychosocial risk refers to the potential threats or dangers to an individual's psychological and social well-being
Plant at the Workplace	Workplace machinery, equipment, appliances, containers, implements and tools and any components or anything fitted or connected to those things.

4. Psychosocial Hazards at Work

Psychosocial hazards are hazards that may cause psychological and physical harm and may arise from or in relation to:

- the design or management of work
- the working environment
- Plant at the workplace
- workplace interactions or behaviours

Psychosocial hazards may cause psychological harm or injuries including conditions such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and sleep disorders.

Physical injuries from psychosocial hazards include musculoskeletal injury, chronic disease, and physical injury following fatigue-related workplace psychosocial incidents.

5. Responsibilities

HSU Secretary:

The responsibilities of the Secretary as the PCBU are outlined in the HSU WHS Policy. In addition, the Secretary as the PCBU will:

Rule 40 Policy

- identify reasonably foreseeable hazards that could give rise to psychosocial risks.
- eliminate psychosocial risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the psychosocial risks – minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- maintain implemented control measures so they remain effective, and
- review, and if necessary, revise, control measures so as to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, a work environment that is without risks to health and safety.

HSU Assistant Secretaries and Managers:

The responsibilities of HSU Assistant Secretaries and Manager are outlined in the HSU WHS Policy. In addition, HSU Assistant Secretaries and managers, as officers, will take reasonable steps to:

- acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of psychosocial work health and safety matters.
- gain an understanding of the nature of the operations of the HSU and generally of the psychosocial hazards and risks associated with those operations.

Workers:

The responsibilities of workers are outlined in the HSU WHS policy.

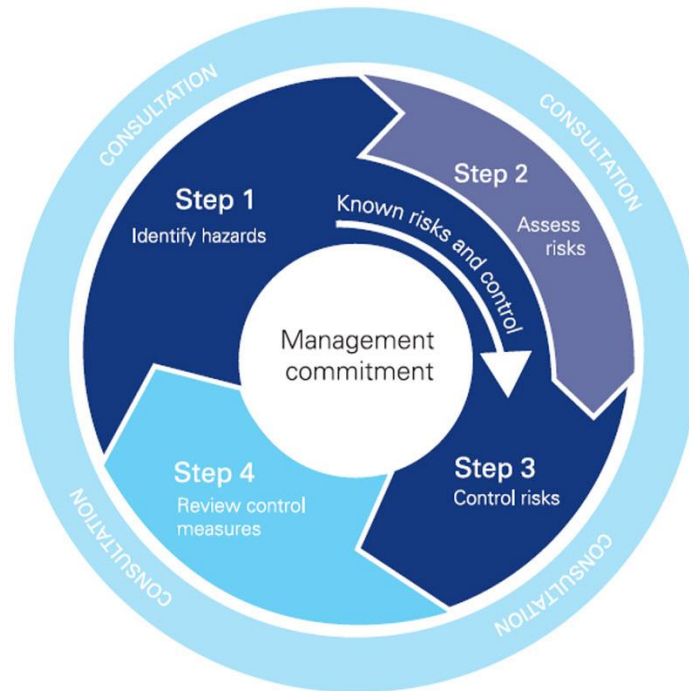
Other Persons:

The responsibilities of workers are outlined in the HSU WHS Policy.

3. Managing Psychosocial Risks in the Workplace

The HSU has an obligation to eliminate psychosocial hazards and manage risks to health and safety arising from work so far as reasonably practicable. To achieve this, the HSU will be guided the Risk Management Process that is outlined in the [SafeWork Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work Code of Practice](#). The steps are outlined below:

- 1. Identify Hazards:** Finding out which psychosocial hazard arising from the business or undertaking could cause harm to officers, workers and other persons.
- 2. Assess Risks:** Understand the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be and the likelihood of it happening.
- 3. Control Risks:** Implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances and ensure it remains effective over time.
- 4. Review Control Measures:** Monitor and review control measures to ensure they are working as planned and make changes as required.



Human Resources will maintain a register of all components of the risk management process including the psychosocial hazards, risk assessments, outcomes of consultation, control measures and training provided.

4. Consultation

The HSU will consult with workers who are, or are likely to be, directly affected by work health and safety matters.

When conducting the risk management process, implementing control measures and making decisions about the psychosocial risks to health and safety, the HSU will consult with workers and HSRs.

Consultation on changes that may affect work health and safety will occur as early as reasonably practicable.

When consulting with workers the HSU will:

- share relevant information.
- give workers a reasonable opportunity to express their views, raise health and safety issues and contribute to the decision-making process.
- take those views into account before making decisions on health and safety matters, and
- advise workers of the outcome of consultations in a timely manner.

Rule 40 Policy

5. Reporting Psychosocial Hazards

Workers should utilise the reporting method outlined in clause 9. *Hazard and Incident Reporting* of the HSU WHS policy.

6. Investigating Reports of Psychosocial Hazards

The HSU's approach for investigating reports of psychosocial hazards is outlined in clause 9. *Hazard and Incident Reporting* of the HSU WHS Policy.

7. Training

The HSU's training approach is outlined in clause 10. *Training* of the HSU WHS policy.

8. Reasonable Management Action:

Reasonable management action taken by the Secretary, Assistant Secretaries and Managers to direct and control the way work is carried out is not workplace bullying if the action is carried out in a lawful and reasonable way, taking the particular circumstances into account.

Whether management action is reasonable is determined by considering the actual management action rather than a worker's perception of it, and where management action involves a significant departure from established policies or procedures, whether the departure was reasonable in the circumstances.

9. Communication

The HSU's communication approach is outlined in clause 6. *Communication* of the HSU WHS policy.

10. Employee Assistance Program (EAP) – Converge International

The HSU engages an EAP provider. An EAP is beneficial for any employees experiencing psychological harm. Employees are encouraged to make use of the confidential counselling services. Access details can be found on the employee portal system or by contacting Human Resources.

Rule 40 Policy

11. Review and Document Control

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner in response to legislation amendments.

12. Breaches of this Policy

Failure to comply with the requirements within this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

13. Policy Version Control

Policy Approval Date:	30 November 2023
Approved by:	Union Council under Rule 40
Approval Resolution No:	UC 77/2023
Version No:	V1
Replaced Version No & Date:	N/A