

Title

- 4.02.01** The title of the Committee will be the University of New England Occupational Health and Safety Strategic Committee (hereinafter called the OHSS Committee). This committee has been established for the purposes of consultation in accordance with legislative requirements stated in the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000 (Section 17).

Aims

- 4.02.02** The purpose of the OHSS Committee is to:
- (a)** facilitate an effective and efficient cooperation among the University community in establishing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment;
 - (b)** provide a forum for frank and open discussion and make recommendations to University Management on the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) strategies and implementation of Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems (OHSMS) in the workplace; and
 - (c)** address and resolve OHS issues that have been referred to the Committee by the University Community accordance with the University *Policy for Resolving OHS Issues*.
 - (d)** to make recommendations for relevant educational programmes affecting the OHS of the University community; and
 - (e)** to consider and report on any matter referred to the Committee by the Academic Board or the Vice-Chancellor

Scope

- 4.02.03** In all its aspects the OHSS Committee will operate within the guidelines and in accordance with the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act (2000) as amended, the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (2001), and the WorkCover NSW Code of Practice: Occupational Health and Safety Consultation.
- 4.02.04** The OHSS Committee will concern itself with occupational health and safety matters with regard to:
- (a)** the development, implementation and continuous improvement of the University Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems and OHS Policies and Procedures as defined in the University OHS Plan;
 - (b)** assign projects, make recommendations and monitor the activities of the University OHS Working Groups;

- (c) review the significant injuries, illnesses and reported near misses, which have the potential to cause serious injury, ill-health or damage to University property;
- (d) resolve OHS issues in accordance with the University *Policy for Resolving OHS Issues*; and
- (e) make recommendations for relevant education programmes affecting the occupational health and safety of the University community.

Membership

- 4.02.05** The membership of the OHSS Committee will consist of employee and employer representatives from the University of New England as follows:
- (a) Eight employee representatives
 - (b) Four employer representatives

Employee OHSSC Representatives

- 4.02.06** Eight University OHS Employee Representatives, one from each of the eight OHS Working Groups will be elected to the OHSS Committee. Election of representatives to the OHSS Committee will be conducted by the OHS Officer unless stated otherwise in the Working Group's Terms of Reference. Unless otherwise agreed Employee OHS Representatives must have completed mandatory OHS Consultation prior to appointment to the OHSS Committee.
- 4.02.07** The Employee OHS Representative will be eligible to hold office for a period of two (2) years, however, may be reappointed/elected in accordance with the Working Group's Terms of Reference.

Procedure

- 4.02.08** Each OHS Working Group will advise the Chair of the Committee of the Employee OHS Representative to hold office as soon as practicable before a Committee meeting, when the following occurs:
- (a) At the first meeting of the Committee; or
 - (b) When there is a change of Employee OHS Representative to the Committee.

Employer OHSSC Representatives

4.02.09 A minimum of four, and maximum of eight University Employer Representatives (hereinafter called Management Representatives) appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, that will have the authority to make decisions on OHS matters for University Management.

Procedure

4.02.10 The Vice-Chancellor will advise the Chair of the Committee of the Management Representatives to hold office as soon as practicable before a Committee meeting when the following occurs:

- (a) At the first meeting of the Committee: or
- (b) When there is a change of Management Representative on the Committee.

Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

4.02.11 A Chair and Deputy Chair will be elected from and by the Employee OHS Representatives that hold office at the first meeting of the Committee, and thereafter every 12 months, or as the occasion requires. The Chair and Deputy Chair may be re-elected.

Decision-making procedures

4.02.12 All agenda items or other issues raised by Employee representatives must be discussed at least one Working Group prior and with the Occupational Health & Safety Officer prior to referral to OHSS Committee. Documented details of Working Groups actions to resolve the issue must be provided to OHSS Committee members.

4.02.13 All procedural matters relating to the operation of the OHSS Committee will be determined by the OHSS Committee, and where relevant, within the guidelines of the University Policy for Resolving OHS Issues.

4.02.14 The Committee will operate as a consultative Committee, with the appropriate Management Representatives on the OHSS Committee delegated the decision-maker on all items raised after consultation has been duly exercised. If any item raised falls outside the authority of the Management Representatives the Committee will make recommendations directly to the Vice-Chancellor.

Specialist Advice

- 4.02.15** The University Environment and Hazardous Substance Officer will be invited to attend all meetings.
- 4.02.16** Various University staff or external experts may also be invited to attend meetings as determined by the Committee but will not have voting rights.

Observers

- 4.02.17** Observers are welcome to attend Committee meetings, provided that permission has been sought and approved by the Chair prior to the meeting. Observers may address the OHSS Committee and answer questions only on the invitation of the Chair and with the agreement of the OHSS Committee. Observers are not entitled to vote.

Information and advice for the Committee

- 4.02.18** Within the limits of privacy legislation Management Representatives will provide for the OHSS Committee direction and advice on all occupational health and safety matters. These may include:
- (a)** University OHSMS, OHS policies, procedures and programmes which impinge upon OHS issues and their implementation strategies;
 - (b)** a report from Human Resource Services on its activities and issues related to OHS including details of all injuries, or incidents which have occurred since the previous meeting including any relevant investigations into these matters;
 - (c)** a report from the Director of Facilities Management or nominee on incidents which may affect the health, safety and welfare of members of the University's community;
 - (d)** reports from consultants or inspectors which have been provided to the University on any aspect affecting health, safety and welfare: and
 - (e)** other matters as the OHSS Committee may request information on from time to time.

Training of Committee members

- 4.02.19** All OHSS Committee Members must have completed an appropriate accredited Committee Training Course in accordance with Clauses 31 and 32 of the Occupational Health Safety Regulation 2001.

- 4.02.20** The training of employee representatives, where ever possible, will take place prior to their appointment to the OHSS Committee. Training for Management representatives and any other new or co opted OHSS Committee members will take place as soon as possible after their election or appointment to the Committee.
- 4.02.21** Any Employee OHS Representative attending a training course in accordance with the provisions as laid down in Clause 31 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001 will be entitled to the appropriate rate of pay, travel allowance and subsistence.

Members non-attendance at meetings

- 4.02.22** All Committee Members are expected to attend all OHSS Committee Meetings.
- 4.02.23** In the event that any Member is unable to attend meetings on a regular basis, the Chair will be notified by that Member.
- 4.02.24** Where it becomes apparent to the OHSS Committee that a Member is not attending meetings sufficiently in order to fulfil their role or where a member fails to attend three successive meetings.
- 4.02.25** The OHSS Committee, at its own discretion may then take the following action in this instance:
- The OHS Committee will request that the member provide an appropriate explanation for their reason of non-attendance.
- 4.02.26** If the explanation is not acceptable to the OHSS Committee, the OHSS Committee may take the following action.
- (a)** If the member is an Employee Representative:
 - (b)** The OHSS Committee will request that the relevant OHS Working Group resolve the matter before the next meeting. If the matter cannot be resolved, the Committee will request the Representative to be replaced by a suitably qualified person.
 - (c)** If the member is a Management Representative:
 - (d)** Notify the Vice-Chancellor to resolve the matter before the next meeting. If the matter cannot be resolved, the OHSS Committee will request for the Representative to be replaced.

Substitute Representatives at meetings

Employee OHS Representatives

- 4.02.27** Where an Employee OHS Representative appointed by an OHS Working Group cannot attend a meeting, the Working Group will appoint a substitute Representative in accordance with the OHS Working Group's Terms of Reference.

Management Representatives

- 4.02.28** Where Management Representative cannot attend a meeting, the Management Representative may arrange for the Vice-Chancellor to send an appropriate representative.

Meetings and minutes

Meetings

- 4.02.29** The OHSS Committee will meet at least once every three (3) months, or at shorter intervals if the need arises.
- 4.02.30** The date, time and place of each scheduled meeting will be decided by agreement among members of the OHSS Committee, and details will be organised by the Committee's secretary. At least seven (7) working days notice will be given of each meeting. An agenda will be circulated with the notice of the meeting.
- 4.02.31** In accordance with the University Policy for Resolving OHS Issues or in exceptional circumstances, the Chair may call a meeting at any time.
- 4.02.32** A quorum for a scheduled meeting will be four Employee OHS Representatives and two Management Representative. However, if a meeting is called by the Chair in exceptional circumstances a quorum will be three Employee OHS Representatives and one Management Representative.
- 4.02.33** All agenda items are to be submitted through the Chair to reach the OHSS Committee's Secretary at least ten (10) working days before each meeting.
- 4.02.34** The Committee will attempt to make decisions through general consensus. If the Committee fails to reach consensus on any issue, the matter will be decided by vote.
- 4.02.35** Where voting takes place there will be equal voting rights when considering procedural matters or on making recommendations to the Vice-Chancellor. There will be no casting vote when determining motions.

Minutes

- 4.02.36** Minutes of OHSS Committee Meetings, whether or not those meetings are regarded as ordinary or extraordinary will be kept.
- 4.02.37** It is the responsibility of the Secretary to record the Minutes. Minutes may contain the following information:
- (a)** Description of Meeting (i.e. ordinary meeting or exceptional circumstances etc.), place, time and date on which it was held.
 - (b)** A list of those present.
 - (c)** Apologies for absences.
 - (d)** Notification of Approval of Minutes from previous meeting.
 - (e)** Whether there was any business arising from the Minutes.
 - (f)** Notation of reports or correspondence, including OHS Working Groups.
 - (g)** OHS Policies for review.
 - (h)** OHS Issues for resolution.
 - (i)** Items of General Business, the decision of the meeting, and the appropriate action to be taken.
 - (j)** Time meeting closed and date, venue for next meeting.
- 4.02.38** If insufficient members attend a duly notified meeting to constitute a quorum, the OHSS Committee's Secretary will record the names of those attending. These names will be entered in the minutes of the next meeting.
- 4.02.39** After each meeting the Secretary will provide an electronic copy of the minutes to each member of the OHSS Committee within fifteen working days.
- 4.02.40** The Minutes are to be kept in a secure location by the University and all OHSS Committee members will have access to them.

Communications with employees

- 4.02.41** Employee OHS Representatives will be allowed time to discuss OHS issues with the employees they represent.

Procedure for recommending changes to this document

- 4.02.42** A request for any change to this document will be submitted in writing to the Chair. The Chair will provide the supplied documentation to the Secretary for distribution to members for inclusion on the Meeting Agenda.
- 4.02.43** The procedure for any constitutional changes will be as follows:

Any proposed change will be provided to the Secretary at least 21 working days prior to any meeting so that notice may be given to all Committee Members in advance of any meeting.

4.02.44 Any constitutional changes will require a two-thirds majority vote.

4.02.45 The Vice-Chancellor must approve any recommended changes to this document.

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