

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

OHS CONSULTATION

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to provide practical guidance on meeting the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, which require employers to consult with employees and Health and Safety Representatives on health and safety matters.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

Consultation

The two-way exchange between employers and employees that involves sharing information about health and safety, giving employees a reasonable opportunity to express views about the matter and taking those views into account when making decisions.

Health and Safety Representative (HSR)

An employee elected by members of a designated work group to be the group's health and safety representative.

Designated Work Group (DWG)

A grouping of employees who share similar workplace health and safety concerns and conditions.

Employer Representative

The employer representative is the senior manager for the nominated area with management and control of the area or functions at issue within the designated work group.

Employer representatives are listed in the Register of Designated Work Groups

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 faculty, division or zone. They also improve health and safety across the zone and also improve the spread health and safety knowledge through discussions, the development of policies and procedures and the distribution of meeting minutes and reports.

Issue Resolution.

The framework within which the university, employees and health and safety representative work to deal with health and safety issues when they arise.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1. **Dean, Head of School/College or Divisional Manager**

The Dean, Divisional Manager and all Managers are responsible for consulting employees when;

- Identifying hazards or risks, assessing the risks, and deciding how to control the identified risks
- Making decisions on the adequacy of facilities for employees welfare
- Determining the membership of health and safety committees
- Making decisions on health and safety policies and procedures including
 - Issue resolution of OHS matters

- consultation on health and safety
- monitoring health of employees and conditions at work
- providing information and training to employees
- Proposed changes to the workplace that could affect the health and safety of employees, including changes to plant and equipment and substances used or how work is to be undertaken.
- When final decisions are made and the reasons for the decisions.

In accordance with the La Trobe University Issue Resolution procedure, Health and Safety Representatives are to be involved in the consultation process.

4. DESCRIPTION

4.1 Ways to Consult.

There are several ways in which employees can be consulted about matters which affect their health and safety. Some of these include direct consultation (team meetings or face to face discussions), consulting with and through the Health and Safety Representative, and discussion at zone health and safety committees or other regular scheduled meetings.

4.2 Health and Safety Representatives and consultation.

Managers are required to :

- provide all information on the particular issue or matter to the HSR which will be provided to employees.
- Provide that information to the HSR a reasonable time before distributing it to other employees if possible.
- Meet with the HSR on the particular matter or issue if they accept an invitation to meet or if a meeting is requested by the HSR by way of consultation.
- Give the HSR the opportunity to express views.
- Take the HSR's views into account as part of the consultation process.
- Provide final decisions with the HSR and posted on notice boards and or sent via email where appropriate.

If there is no elected health and safety representative for the designated work group concerned, or if it is impractical to consult with the health and safety representative, managers and supervisors must ensure that employees have been provided with the opportunity to express their views about decisions which may affect their health and safety.

Where appropriate and required, independent contractors will also be consulted.

5. REFERENCES

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007

6. CROSS REFERENCES

La Trobe University OHS Policy
LTU OHS Committee Procedure
WorkSafe Handbook Edition 1 June 07.
LTU Issue Resolution procedure.

7. DOCUMENTATION
Nil

This procedure was updated and endorsed by the Executive Occupational Health and Safety Committee at its meeting on 6 March 2006.

Updated in line with OHS Regulations June 2008