

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES PROCEDURE

1. **PURPOSE**

This procedure outlines the function, role and compositions of La Trobe University Executive and Zone Occupational Health and Safety Committees

Health and safety committee activities are an important part of an overall health and safety program that aims to prevent incidents, injuries and disease in the workplace. The health and safety committee has a key role in the development, implementation and monitoring of steps taken to improve health and safety in the workplace.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

Health and Safety Committees

Provide a formal structure for discussing and resolving workplace health and safety issues. They consist of employer representatives (management representatives) and other employees.

Executive Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Executive OHS Committee is a committee of University Council.

Zone Occupational Health and Safety Committees

These committees are usually campus, faculty or area based and review OHS within their areas of concern to ensure University OHS Policy and Procedures are met. These committees report to the executive OHS committee.

Employer representatives (management representatives)

Employer representatives are generally nominated to the committee by management and may be drawn from line managers, supervisors, laboratory managers. These people should provide the committee with accurate information on University policy and ensure that decisions are made and not continually referred elsewhere.

Committee Employee Representatives

Are generally nominated to the committee by employees and to be representative of the workplace. An understanding of safety issues is vital. Health and safety representatives may also be employee representatives on the committee.

Health and Safety Representatives

Are nominated and elected representatives of a Designated Work Group. Where Health and Safety Representatives are not members of the committee, it is important to arrange communication between Health and Safety Representatives and employee representatives on the committee. Elected Health and Safety Representatives may also be committee members.

Persons in attendance

Health and safety committees may, invite people from time to time to participate in discussions, for example Buildings and Grounds, or representatives of Occupational Health and Safety staff. Persons in attendance do not have voting rights on the committee.

3. **PROCEDURE**

3.1. Establishment of Committees

The Executive Occupational Health and Safety Committee is a specific purpose committee of Council and reports to Council annually.

The Zone Occupational Health and Safety Committees may be established on the approval of the Executive OHS Committee. Zone committees are normally campus or faculty based and represent schools and departments within the zone.

3.2. Terms of Reference

Executive Committee

- To review and evaluate the University's overall performance in achieving the objectives set out in the OHS Policy.
- To approve, or recommend for Council approval, University policies, standards, rules and procedures designed to promote a healthy and safe environment for employees, students, visitors and contractors.
- To oversee the development and implementation of policies procedures and actions to achieve compliance with the OHS Act, Regulations, LTU Policy and procedures.
- To monitor compliance with OHS Act, OHS Regulations and LTU OHS Policy and procedures.
- Where appropriate in the opinion of the committee to intervene on matters to achieve compliance or resolution on OHS matters.
- To coordinate and monitor the performance of occupational health and safety zone committees.
- To refer occupational health and safety matters to Zone OHS Committees for resolution, review or policy formulation.

Further information on University committee functions may be obtained from the University Secretariat's web page. <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/secretariat/assets/downloads/secman.pdf>

Zone Committee

Zone Occupational Health and Safety Committees have been set up to facilitate cooperation between the University and employees in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety of employees, students, contractors and visitors.

- To formulate and review policies, procedures and standards for Executive OHS Committee approval which relate to health and safety of employees, students, contractors and visitors which are to be carried out or complied with, and to disseminate those policies, procedures and standards.
- To instigate, monitor and review occupational health and safety programs within the Faculty or

Zone in (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Examination of workplace audits and inspections
- Hazard management-The study of accident and notifiable disease statistics and trends, so that reports can be made to management on unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices together with recommendations for corrective action
- Emergency preparedness.
- First aid and Emergency Evacuation wardens.
- Training programs
- Accident investigations.

3.3. Membership of committees

Membership of the committee should aim at ensuring that there is representative of the workplace, and allows discussion of health and safety issues covering all areas and processes covered by the committee.

OHS Regulations state that at least half of the members of a health and safety committee must be employee representatives. In addition to committee members, OHS staff and a nominee from Buildings and Grounds may sit in attendance on Zone committees.

3.3.1. Membership of the OHS Executive Committee

The Committee comprises:

- A. A chair appointed by Council.
- B. Vice Principal (Resources & Administration) (or nominee)
- C. Director, Human Resources (or nominee)
- D. Dean, Faculty Science Technology and Engineering (or nominee)
- E. Deans' representative
- F. Director, Bendigo (or nominee)
- G. Six elected Health and Safety Representatives or staff representatives.

In Attendance :

Corporate Risk Manager
LTU OHS Adviser.
OHS Coordinator Bendigo

At least half of the members of the committee shall be Health and Safety Representatives.

3.3.2. Membership of the OHS Zone Committee

The recommended structure of the zone OHS committees is as follows.

- A Dean, or nominee
- B Faculty Registrar (where relevant) or nominee
- C A representative of Heads of Schools, or Departments

- D A representative of Laboratory Managers (where relevant)
- E Employee representatives

In Attendance

Manager OHS, or nominee
Manager Building & Grounds, or nominee.
Student nominee

It is recommended, but not mandatory, that the employee representatives be elected Health and Safety representatives and that at least half of the members of the committee shall be employee representatives as defined in section 2.

The above composition is the recommended structure. However the inherent nature of activities performed in the zones should be taken into account and reflected in the representation of the committee. The membership can by agreement be increased or amended to ensure that issues are properly addressed and that the committee can function effectively.

3.4. Electing committee members

An election for health and safety committee members will be held within 28 days of any the following occurring:

- The group has been recently formed or the composition amended
- A committee member advises the University Secretariat/ zone secretary in writing of his or her resignation from office
- The term of office expires

3.4.1. Conduct of elections

All fixed-term and continuing employees of La Trobe University are eligible to nominate as committee members.

Elections for Executive OHS committee members' positions shall be advertised and conducted by the University Secretariat. Election and calls for nomination shall be advertised by the University Secretariat in the University News after a notification of vacancy is received and an election held if more than one nomination is received. The Secretariat will then advise the successful candidate and the Occupational Health and Safety Section in writing of the date of election and the outcome and will publish the result in the University News

Elections for Zone Committee membership shall be advertised and conducted within the Zones covered by the committee.

The term of office for elected members is three years. Health and safety committee members are eligible to re-nominate when their term of office expires.

3.5. Meeting schedules

The Executive OHS Committee is required to meet at least every three months. Half of the members of the committee may require a meeting of the committee to be held at any time.

Each Zone OHS Committee is required to meet at least every three months, but half of the members of the committee may require a meeting of the committee to be held at any time.

Zone OHS Committees must report regularly to the Executive OHS Committee.

3.6. Appointment of Chairperson

The chairperson shall be the senior manager / representative or the committee shall elect a chairperson at the first meeting.

3.7. Conduct of Committee

The conduct of the committee shall be in accordance with established university procedures <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/secretariat/assets/downloads/secman.pdf>

3.8. OHS in Areas Not Covered by a Committee

It is recommended that for departments, divisions or areas not included within the scope of Zone OHS Committee, health and safety issues are included at regular management meetings. Any issues arising from such areas which require clarification or resolution may be referred directly to the Executive OHS Committee.

Departments, divisions or areas reporting to a separate body or board of directors will be expected to provide an annual report on occupational health and safety to that body or board of directors.

3.9. Training

Each member of a committee, on appointment or election or as soon as practicable thereafter, shall attend an appropriate occupational health and safety course.

4. REFERENCES

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.
WorkCover. Getting Started with Workplace Health and Safety Series

5. CROSS REFERENCES

La Trobe University OHS Policy

The Executive Occupational Health and Safety Committee approved this procedure at its Meeting on 4 June 2001.

Editorial changes: July 2005

Amendments endorsed by Executive OHS Committee Meeting 7 September 2006