



ACT
Government

PUBLIC SECTOR WORK HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

2019 – 2022



January 2019

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ACT
Government

A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF SERVICE



The health, safety and wellbeing of our people is fundamental to the ACT Government's pursuit of excellence in our service delivery to the ACT Community.

The ACT Public Sector Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2022 (the Strategy) has been designed to deliver improved engagement, participation and productivity of our people through an integrated work health, safety and wellbeing approach.

Our Strategy focuses on the role that good work plays in keeping our people safe and healthy by ensuring access to safe work and workplaces, promoting health and wellbeing, and facilitating recovery or supporting people to return to work when illness or injury occurs.

As a signatory of the Royal Australian College of Physicians' *Australian and New Zealand Consensus Statement on the Health Benefits of Work*, the ACT Government recognises that what we do, where we do it and the way we do it are all important aspects of good work.

The vision for the Public Sector Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019 – 2022 is:

- > Our workplaces will be safe and enable our people to participate fully by being healthy, engaged, and skilled to perform at their best.
- > Our people will be leaders and innovators in building healthy and safe workplaces where people can thrive, perform at their best and contribute fully to their workplace and the broader ACT community.

The Strategy sets the direction for the ACT Government's approach to improving work health, safety and wellbeing. It is consistent with the requirements of the work health and safety legislation, has been informed by knowledge and analysis of past health, safety and wellbeing performance and is consistent with our requirements as a self insurer. The supporting implementation plan provides an overview of the activities we will undertake to deliver the Strategy.

Work health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace is everyone's responsibility. We all play a role in knowing our workplace and working collaboratively to ensure that it is healthy and safe. The Strategy helps focus our efforts as a service to share and learn from our experiences to continually improve ACT Government workplaces and the services we deliver to the ACT community.

Kathy Leigh

Head of Service

THE ACT PUBLIC SERVICE

The ACT Public Service works collaboratively to serve the Government of the day and to provide the Canberra community with responsive and accessible services for the benefit of all Canberrans.

WHO WE ARE

The ACT Public Service (ACTPS) is comprised of over **22,000** staff across eight directorates and agencies who are charged with delivering a broad range of services to the ACT community.

- > The average age of the workforce is **42.4** years,
- > nearly **65%** of staff are female; and
- > **76%** are permanent officers, with the remainder being employed on a temporary (**17%**) or casual (**7%**) basis.

The ACTPS approach to managing the work health and safety of its employees, is governed by legislation (Work Health and Safety Act, 2011).

Directorates and agencies develop their approaches to address and manage work health and safety based on their unique risks and workforce profile.

Workers compensation is managed through provisions outlined in the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* which provides rehabilitation and worker's compensation to employees suffering work related injuries.

WHAT WE DO

The ACTPS exists in order to manage the responsibilities of the government and to provide our community with responsive and accessible services for the benefit of all Canberrans.

The ACTPS includes eight directorates, each specialising in a different function of the ACT Government.



**Health,
safety and
wellbeing is
everyone's
responsibility**

THE STRATEGY



The evidence is clear: good work is good for health and productivity. Organisations must design and deliver work that prevents harm, promotes health and supports work as part of rehabilitation.

OUR FOCUS

The Strategy and its Implementation Plan provide an integrated approach for the management of work health, safety and wellbeing for the ACTPS.

The Strategy focuses on enhancing the work health, safety and wellbeing of our people by preventing harm, promoting health and supporting people to remain in or return to work following illness or injury.

The individual, organisational and societal benefits of being engaged in healthy and safe work are clear. Focussing on the health, safety and wellbeing of our people strengthens our capacity to provide high quality and responsive services to the ACT community.

Leadership direction and accountability, building the capability of our people and our managers, designing good work, and providing systems and supports to identify, understand and manage our risks are all considered in the development of an integrated approach to drive work health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

OUR COMMITMENT

The Strategy:

- > demonstrates the ACT Government's commitment to, and investment in, our public sector workforce;
- > connects with the ACT Government's strategic objectives to develop an agile, responsive, innovative, engaged workforce; and
- > is underpinned by our legal obligations in the *Work Health and Safety Act (2011)*, *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (1988)*, *Public Sector Management Act (1994)* and our employment frameworks.

OUR APPROACH

Four fundamental principles underpin the initiatives of the Strategy to deliver a healthy, safe and engaged workforce:

- > Our senior leaders are accountable for driving health, safety and wellbeing performance.
- > Our work and our workplaces must prevent harm, promote health and wellbeing, and support our people to participate fully and perform at their best.
- > Our people are our greatest asset.
- > The health, safety and wellbeing of our people and our workplaces is our legal and moral responsibility.

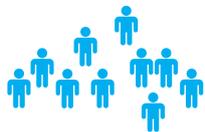
THE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Strategy has five priority areas for focused attention:



Our senior leaders

Our senior leaders are focused and committed to driving health, safety and wellbeing performance as part of our organisational priorities.



Our people

Our people are supported to be responsible for health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace and to participate fully and perform at their best in workplaces that are safe and promote health and wellbeing.



Our managers

Our managers are supported to drive better practice in people management for a safe, healthy and engaged workforce, to improve outcomes in work health and safety, and to support our people to remain at or return to work.



Our work

Health, safety and wellbeing is integral to the design of our work and services and enables our people to perform at their best.



Our systems

The systems that support people's health, safety and wellbeing throughout their life course with ACT Government are structured, consistent and integrated.

ACTPS

WORK HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2019-2022

VISION

Our workplaces will be safe and enable our people to participate fully by being healthy, engaged and skilled to perform at their best.

Our people will be leaders and solution creators in building healthy and safe workplaces where people can thrive, perform at their best and contribute fully to their workplace and the broader ACT community.

OBJECTIVES

 **PREVENT HARM**

 **PROMOTE HEALTH**

 **SUPPORT PEOPLE TO REMAIN IN OR RETURN TO WORK**

PROPOSITION



21,000+
people



8
directorates and agencies



1 approach

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

Our people are our greatest asset.

Work is good for health and good health is good for work.

Good work design will deliver health and safety outcomes.

LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

As the leaders of the ACT Government, we understand the importance of maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of the ACT Public Service.

The health, safety and wellbeing of our people is fundamental to the ACT Government's pursuit of excellence in the services we deliver to the ACT community.

TARGETS



ZERO fatalities



≥ 30% reduction in the incidence rate of musculoskeletal disorders resulting in one or more weeks off work



≥ 30% reduction in incidence rate of claims resulting in one or more weeks off work



5 AREAS OF FOCUS



Our senior leaders

Our senior leaders are focused and committed to driving health, safety and wellbeing performance as part of our organisational priorities.



Our people

Our people are supported to be responsible for health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace and to participate fully and perform at their best in workplaces.



Our managers

Our managers are supported to drive better practice in people management for a safe, healthy and engaged workforce, to improve outcomes in work health and safety, and to support our people to remain at or return to work.



Our work

Health, safety and wellbeing is integral to the design of our work and service and enables our people to perform at their best.



Our systems

The systems that support people's health, safety and wellbeing throughout their life course with ACT Government are structured, consistent and integrated.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy provides the ACT Government with the strategic direction to become more proactive and enlightened in our work health, safety and wellbeing practices.

THE IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation Plan details the actions to deliver the Strategy. The effectiveness of the Strategy will be measured against activities within the Implementation Plan.

The Implementation Plan will be a living document. It will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure alignment of current and planned activities with the vision of the Strategy. Reviews will ensure that work health, safety and wellbeing policies and programs are delivering intended outcomes, and the results will inform the development of future work.

The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, led by the Work Safety and Industrial Relations Division, will be responsible for the whole of government strategic framework, program and policy development required to deliver the Strategy.

Directorates and agencies will be responsible for the implementation of whole of government policies and procedures, and program delivery at the local level.

Directorates and agencies will manage day-to-day workplace health and safety issues and are accountable for individual directorate/agency workplace health and safety outcomes.

Programs of work

ACTPS work is built on a foundation of safety and the understanding that good work is good for us. The work health, safety and wellbeing practices will be integrated and embedded into our business systems and better practices will be shared to drive continuous improvement across the service.

Implementation of the Strategy will be through programs of work that address an identified risk for the ACTPS workforce.

Programs include:

- > supporting mental health and wellbeing;
- > addressing occupational violence;
- > supporting work through the life course (considering age demographics and impact);
- > enhancing physical health and wellbeing; and
- > work as part of rehabilitation.

Programs will be developed in collaboration with directorates and agencies and will consider the evidence base of literature, data and the ACT experience. The programs will seek to identify and expand on existing good practice approaches, identify areas for targeted initiatives and tap into opportunities to use economies of scale to deliver better practice.

Governance and accountability

Connection to the Strategy and ownership of the Implementation Plan is critical to our success and ability to create a culture that promotes the role of good work to prevent harm, promote health and wellbeing, and facilitate work as part of recovery when illness or injury occurs.

The Strategy and Implementation Plan will be overseen by a newly formed whole of government Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee reporting to the Strategic Board.

Consisting of Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing leads from across ACT Government, this group will:

- > monitor the progress of the strategy and implementation; and
- > consider and inform on Work Health, Safety and Wellbeing outcomes at both the directorate and agency, and whole of government level.

A whole of government WHS and Wellbeing Working Network will be formed, with subject matter representatives from directorates and agencies who will support the Implementation Plan by providing the important connection to the activities occurring at the directorate and agency level.

Targets and KPIs

The Strategy establishes a clear set of accountabilities, responsibilities and reporting mechanisms for the Strategic Board with respect to an integrated approach to work health, safety, and wellbeing and injury management.

Whole of government targets and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been established with consideration of the operations and services of the ACT Government.

Targets



ZERO fatalities



≥ 30% reduction in the incidence rate of musculoskeletal disorders resulting in one or more weeks off work



≥ 30% reduction in incidence rate of claims resulting in one or more weeks off work

KPIs

Quarterly reporting will provide updates on directorate and whole of government progress with:

- > Work Health and Safety Management Systems development and review
- > Delivery of audit and assurance programs
- > Health, Safety and Wellbeing index with links to a maturity matrix (to be developed)
- > Work rehabilitation and injury management

Program implementation outcome KPIs will be developed in conjunction with the development of the programs of work.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Our senior leaders

Goal: Our senior leaders are focused and committed to driving work health, safety and wellbeing performance in all our organisational priorities.

What we will do:

We will ensure our senior leaders are skilled, accountable and committed to work health, safety and wellbeing across all organisational priorities.

We will build work health, safety and wellbeing maturity within directorates and across whole of government for health, safety, wellbeing and rehabilitation outcomes.

Key initiatives:

- > Drive Executive commitment and accountability through the Leadership Commitment for Director Generals and Strategic Board, and KPIs in performance agreements.
- > Implement a due diligence training program for senior leaders across the service.
- > Implement an organisational health, safety and wellbeing maturity matrix to establish work health, safety and wellbeing maturity.
- > Develop and implement a work health, safety and wellbeing leadership program to increase understanding and cultivate buy-in.

Our people

Goal: Our people are supported to be responsible for health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace, and to participate fully and perform at their best in workplaces that are safe and promote health and wellbeing.

What we will do:

We will know the people who are doing our work and understand and manage the risks, challenges, and opportunities they bring.

We will understand the demographics of our workforce including their health risks.

We will implement approaches that prevent harm, promote health, address the workplace risk of lifestyle risk factors, slow the acceleration of chronic disease, and minimise the impact of long term disability.

We will engage with our people through a positive work, health, safety and wellbeing culture.

Key initiatives:

- > Undertake a comprehensive analysis of whole of government and directorate demographics and risks to inform work health, safety and wellbeing approaches and targeted programs.
- > Establish key responsibilities for work health, safety and wellbeing for all levels across directorates and whole of government.
- > Develop, test and evaluate early intervention, and remain in and return to work initiatives, to establish the evidence base that will support ongoing investment, an implementation approach, and sustainability.
- > Develop, and improve accessibility of, resources that support health, safety and wellbeing at work and make these available to our people.

Our managers

Goal: Our managers are supported to drive better practice in work health, safety and wellbeing as part of management for a healthy, safe and engaged workforce and to improve outcomes in supporting our people to remain in or return to work following injury or illness.

What we will do:

We will support our managers to drive better practice in people management for an engaged workforce and to improve outcomes in supporting our people to remain in or return to work.

Health, safety and wellbeing will be part of all business decisions and people management conversations.

Key initiatives:

- > Build manager capability to proactively manage work health, safety and wellbeing as part of their business service delivery.
- > Implement manager supports for managing psychological ill health/injury, reasonable adjustments and early identification and management of workplace conflict.
- > Take a user centred design approach to identify, and implement resources and training to support managers to address workforce risk and challenges.

Our work

Goal: Health, safety and wellbeing is considered in the design of work and service approaches to enable our people to perform at their best.

What we will do:

We will incorporate health, safety and wellbeing in the design of services or functions to promote good work, participation and productivity.

We will proactively design and assess workplaces to address physical, ergonomic and psychosocial risks and promote an integrated approach to manage modifiable chronic disease, musculoskeletal disorders and psychosocial risk factors.

Prevention and early intervention activities will be focused on the risks identified and approaches will be tailored to directorate and agencies' needs.

Key initiatives:

- > Review and refresh work health and safety policies and procedures to incorporate an integrated approach.
- > Implement approaches to facilitate health, safety and wellbeing in our different working environments.
- > Utilise a risk management approach to develop whole of government understanding of work risk, management plans and opportunities for continuous improvement through sharing across the service.
- > Identify employee life course 'flags' for risk to employment participation and develop approaches for early intervention/targeted approaches/service offerings.

Our systems

Goal: The systems to support people's health, safety and wellbeing throughout their life course with the ACT Government are structured, consistent and integrated

What we will do:

We will ensure systems to support people's health, safety and wellbeing throughout their life course with the ACT Government are structured, consistent and integrated.

Our systems will enable data capture, analysis and reporting to evaluate and continuously improve approaches across the service.

Work health and safety will be improved through the use of a robust and evidence based safety management framework.

We will analyse and audit at whole of government level to inform and improve hazard and risk management. Consultation and collaboration will support the delivery of targeted programs and service offerings to support directorates and agencies with incident review and continuous improvement with their safety management systems.

Key initiatives:

- > Establish positive health, safety and wellbeing performance indicators throughout the implementation of our Strategy for reporting to Strategic Board.
- > Refresh the whole of government safety management system framework and identify opportunities to align with business systems to reduce complexity and duplication.
- > Develop or refresh directorate and agency specific safety management systems to align with the whole of government framework.
- > Establish and implement a whole of government audit and assurance program to support continuous improvement.





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