Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

Southern Cross University management holds in high regard the safety, welfare and health of all staff and students. In recognition of this, Southern Cross University will consistently work towards establishing and maintaining a safe place of work, safe work practices and the provision of safe plant, machinery and equipment for staff, students and visitors to the University. The University accepts its responsibilities and obligations under relevant legislation to provide resources, direction and support to achieve its commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace.

Management's Responsibility

The promotion and maintenance of work health and safety is primarily the responsibility of management. Management at all levels is required to contribute to the health and safety of all persons at the University.

Consultation

Consultation between the University and employees is an essential part of effectively managing health and safety in the workplace. The University will consult with employees so that they may contribute to decisions about the implementation of safety practices and systems designed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees. Employee involvement at all levels is critical for ensuring a safe workplace.

The University will ensure:

- the sharing or relevant information about WHS and welfare with employees;
- that employees be given the opportunity to express their views and to contribute in a timely fashion to the resolution of WHS and welfare issues at the workplace; and
- that the views of employees are valued and taken into account.

Safety Support Officers represent designated groups of employees at the University. Their main function is to carry out WHS workplace inspections. In keeping with the consultative process, they may also raise with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) any WHS concerns of the employees in their designated group.

Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

Work Health and Safety Management System

In order to implement the general provisions of the University's *Work Health and Safety Policy* a WHS Management System has been set up and will be continually updated and effectively carried out. The WHS Management System will relate to all aspects of work health and safety, including, but not restricted to:

- risk management that includes identification of hazards, assessment of risk, control and monitoring
- workers' compensation, injury management and rehabilitation
- WHS training and education
- work design, workplace design and standard operating procedures
- changes to work methods and practice, including those associated with technological change
- safety responsibilities
- emergency procedures and drills
- provision of Health and Safety equipment, services and facilities
- workplace inspections and audits
- reporting and recording of incidents, accidents, injuries and hazards
- provision of information to employees, students, contractors and visitors

Specific Responsibilities

Vice Chancellor

The Vice Chancellor is responsible for the overall implementation of the University's WHS Policy Statement. The responsibility includes ensuring that staff are able to meet their obligations, through the provision of adequate budgets, the allocation of resources, availability of health and safety guidelines and the establishment and functioning of the Work Health and Safety and Injury Management Systems. The Vice Chancellor delegates responsibility for the management of workplace health and safety but retains ultimate accountability.

Executive

Each member of the Executive is responsible and accountable for assisting the Vice Chancellor in the overall implementation and compliance of the University's work health and safety policies. Where necessary, members of Executive will advise the Vice Chancellor of work health and safety implications of activities in areas under their control. This includes providing support and guidance in the management of work health and safety to those whom they supervise.

Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

Heads of Work Units and Directors

Heads of Work Units and Directors are responsible and accountable to ensure that relevant safety standards and procedures are implemented, reviewed and maintained in their area of responsibility. They shall ensure the health and safety at work of staff (and students and visitors where applicable) by the provision of safety equipment, safe systems of work, information, instruction, training and supervision, as prescribed in the Legislation.

Managers and Supervisors

Each first-line Manager/Supervisor is responsible and accountable for taking all practical measures to ensure that the workplace under their control is safe and without risk to health, and that all persons in the workplace take reasonable care to ensure that the workplace is safe and without risk to health.

More specifically the Manager/Supervisor is responsible for detecting any unsafe or unhealthy conditions or behaviour and, if they do not have the necessary authority to fix a problem, they must report the matter promptly, together with any recommendations for remedial action, to the Head of the relevant work unit.

Employees

All employees are required to comply with the University's health and safety policies, procedures and instructions, to ensure their own health and safety and the health and safety of others at the University. All employees are also required to take corrective action to eliminate hazards at the workplace, or report those beyond their control to their immediate supervisor.

All employees must cooperate with the University to enable compliance with any requirements under the Legislation or the regulations imposed on the University.

Contractors and Sub-contractors

All contractors and sub-contractors engaged to perform work on the University's premises or locations are required, as part of their contract, to comply with the health and safety policies and procedures of the University and observe directions on health and safety from designated persons of the University. All contractors are required to complete a Work Health and Safety Induction.
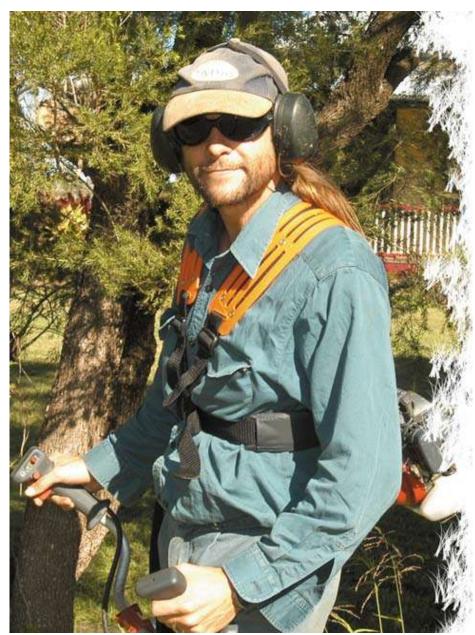
WHS Information for staff

The University's Manager, Workplace Health and Safety is located in HR Services in the Rod Treyvaud Building (F Block). The contact number for the Manager, Workplace Health and Safety is (02) 6626 9143.

In meeting its responsibilities under legislation the University will endeavour to:
- prevent work-related injuries to and illness of University staff, students and visitors, and to minimise property damage.
- fully integrate health and safety with other operational functions of the University so that staff, students and visitors are working with:
  - a safe working environment;
  - safe systems of work;
  - safe use of plant and substances;
  - appropriate knowledge and information about hazards in their work area and adequate instruction, induction training, ongoing training and supervision;
- adequate facilities, including access to medical and first-aid services;
- an effective means of consultation and communication on health and safety issues;
- an effective system for monitoring their health, welfare and working conditions;
- an effective mechanism for reporting, recording and investigating hazards identified and/or work-related illness and injury;
- an effective staff rehabilitation strategy, providing full support to those whose health has been affected by their work activities.

Legislation imposes a duty upon all staff and students at the workplace to take reasonable care for the health and safety of persons in the workplace who may be affected by their acts or omissions. It further imposes a duty to co-operate with the University to enable the employer to comply with requirements of legislation.

Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

The Coffs Harbour campus WHS Committee has University members that represent employees on WHS matters.

Staff with concerns, information about hazards they have noticed, or ideas for change in the workplace should approach their supervisor in the first instance. If they are not satisfied with the response they have a right to take their concerns to their Health and Safety Representative.

The names of current HSRs can be located on the *online staff directory*.

Accident reporting and compensation procedures

If you injure yourself at work, you should obtain treatment from a First Aid Officer, a doctor or hospital.

NOTE: You have the right to choose your own doctor.

As soon as is practicable report the injury to your supervisor and ensure that you and your supervisor complete an *Incident, Accident and Hazard Report* form.

You must report any work injury or disability as soon as possible by:

- informing your treating doctor that the injury is work-related and obtaining a WorkCover Medical Certificate from the doctor.
- providing the WorkCover NSW Medical Certificate or recognised equivalent medical certificate used in other states to your supervisor. Retain a copy for your records.
- forward all documentation including medical certificate and expense receipts to HR Services.

NOTE: You remain legally responsible for all accounts until the University's insurer accepts your claim.

Your Supervisor's Responsibilities

Your supervisor should ensure that the Incident, Accident and Hazard Report form is properly completed and signed before sending it to the HR Manager, Workplace Health and Safety. If practicable, this should occur within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

When an incident has occurred, your supervisor should consult with the HSR regarding safe work practices in order to prevent a recurrence.

For any injury that results in your absence from work, or a claim for medical expenses, your supervisor will contact the Manager, Workplace Health and Safety within 24 hours of the incident and forward all relevant documentation to HR Services.

Rehabilitation Policy

The University provides rehabilitation programs pursuant to the Workers' Compensation Act 1987 (including Workers' Compensation Legislation Amendment Act 2010) and Workplace Injury Management and Workers' Compensation Act 1998. These programs have the objective of achieving the maximum possible restoration of physical, psychological, economic, vocational and social functions of injured staff members at the earliest possible time.

Refer to the Rehabilitation Program Policy Brochure on your workplace notice board for details or the *Injury Management and Rehabilitation Policy* on the HR website.

Rehabilitation: Your Rights and Responsibilities

If you have been injured at work or become ill because of your work, you may be entitled to claim workers' compensation for medical expenses, rehabilitation and time off work. Where appropriate, and in consultation with your treating doctor, rehabilitation coordinator, supervisor and rehabilitation case manager, you will be required to participate in a rehabilitation program.

If you are involved in a rehabilitation program you have specific rights and responsibilities which will be explained to you by the rehabilitation coordinator.

Your rights include the provision to choose your own treating medical practitioner, and to have all reasonable medical and similar expenses related to the injury paid, provided your claim is accepted.

Your responsibilities include an obligation to undertake appropriate medical treatment as recommended by a doctor of your choice, to participate in the planning of your rehabilitation program and to co-operate fully in the rehabilitation program. Refer to the University's *Injury Management and Rehabilitation Policy* on for further information.

Emergency Procedures and Emergency Numbers

The University has documented procedures in place for responding to emergency situations, including trained, volunteer Safety and Emergency personnel.

The emergency personnel on each campus include *Emergency Wardens* and *First Aid Officers*. The University's Emergency Procedures document contains detailed information relating to all types of emergencies, including, but not limited to:

- assault
- bomb threats
- bushfire
- chemical spills
- evacuation
- fires

Emergency numbers are located in the University Telephone Directory and on Emergency Evacuation Posters located in all buildings.

Information to give when making an emergency call:

- your name
- service needed e.g. police, ambulance, fire
- details of emergency
- location of emergency i.e. campus, building, floor and room number
- safety status of any personnel

The campus is generally a safe and secure environment, and your cooperation is sought in assisting Safety and Information Section to provide a crime-free area for staff, students and visitors to the University.

Remember: **BE SAFE**

Breakages or other damage to locks, windows and doors should be reported to Safety and Security on extension 66203628 for Lismore and The Gold Coast & Tweed Heads Campus.

Entry/exit doors should not be wedged open as this can interfere with security monitoring and provide access to unauthorised persons. Never lend anyone your ID access card or divulge your PIN.

Safety and Security Officers are available to escort you between your workplace and vehicle if you are working after hours. The Officers will wait and ensure your safe exit from the parking space.

Any person acting suspiciously on campus should be reported to Safety and Security. Details of their location and description should be provided, but they should not be approached under any circumstances.

Familiarising yourself with the shortest, most well lit route to your vehicle or destination is recommended if you are working after dark. When working alone you should notify Security of your location and how long you expect to be there.

Emergency HELP telephones are strategically located around the campuses so make yourself aware of the location of your nearest one.
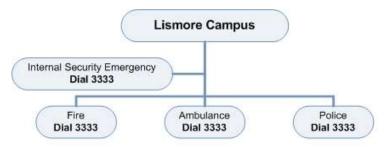
These telephones are linked directly to Safety and Security. Staff and students should also make themselves aware of the location of the nearest Emergency Exit, Fire Extinguisher and Fire Hose, and read the instructions on all fire equipment. For Fire, Police or Ambulance services, dial **3333 in Lismore** and Security will assist you by calling and directing the emergency services personnel to the right location. For Gold Coast & Tweed Heads Campus use the emergency telephones adjacent to the lifts on each floor.
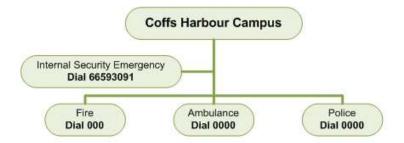
The Safety and Security Officers will attempt to assist you in any way they can.
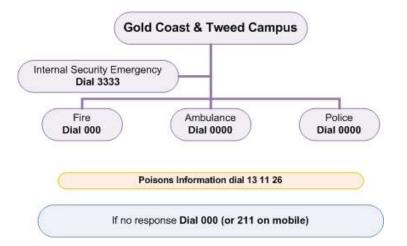
Emergency Telephone Numbers

When dialing 000 you must first dial zero (0) to get an outside line.

Lismore Campus
- Internal Security Emergency Dial 3333
- Fire Dial 3333
- Ambulance Dial 3333
- Police Dial 3333

Coffs Harbour Campus
- Internal Security Emergency Dial 66593091
- Fire Dial 000
- Ambulance Dial 0000
- Police Dial 0000

Gold Coast & Tweed Campus
- Internal Security Emergency Dial 3333
- Fire Dial 000
- Ambulance Dial 0000
- Police Dial 0000

Poisons Information dial 13 11 26

If no response **Dial 000 (or 211 on mobile)**

Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

Security at Gold Coast & Tweed Heads campus is coordinated by Lismore Campus Safety and Information Section and all enquiries should be forwarded to the above number. The Gold Coast & Tweed Heads campus fire control panel is directly linked to the Tweed Heads Fire Brigade, however Security should also be informed.

Emergency Telephone Numbers

When dialing 000 you must first dial zero (0) to get an outside line

Coffs Harbour campus

The **BESAFE** principles as stated for Lismore and Gold Coast and Tweed Heads campus also apply at Coffs Harbour, except that the emergency telephone numbers for Coffs Harbour are as follows:

Internal Security is **#6110**

Coffs Harbour campus - Security Services is extension **3091** or email security@chec.scu.edu.au

Switchboard is **9**

Public Telephones: If making an emergency call from a Public Telephone on campus use the free number which is **1800 004 357**

The University's full *Emergency Procedures* are available on the Workplace Health and Safety website.

Emergency services numbers are also located in the University Telephone Directory and on appropriate Safety and Emergency posters in all buildings of each campus.

Information to give when making an emergency call:
- your name
- service needed
- details of emergency
- location of emergency, i.e. campus, campus building, floor and room number
- safety status of any personnel

Hazards and Hazard Removal

A hazard is anything that has the potential to harm life, health or property. As hazards are the prime identifiable cause of health and safety problems, controlling the risk arising from them offers managers the greatest area of opportunity for reducing injury and illness in the workplace.

In general, hazards can be grouped into five different categories:

- physical
- mechanical/electrical
- chemical
- biological
- psychological

WHS legislation requires the University to provide a safe, healthy workplace. To help achieve this goal the University has in place procedures for identifying safety issues and concerns.

Systematic identification of hazards includes, but is not limited to:

- **Safety Checklists**. This is a systematic and periodic inspection of the workplace to identify hazards and evaluate the effectiveness of the health and safety systems in place. The safety inspections are undertaken by Safety Support Officers in each workplace.
- **Safe Working Procedures (SWP)**. The SWP contains detailed information relating to specific job functions, their process and time spent (daily, weekly, monthly) on a particular task. It also identifies the hazard associated with each task and the steps taken in eliminating or controlling the risk. This process is ongoing and will be reviewed approximately every twelve months.

Once a hazard is identified, the risk needs to be assessed. Risk assessment involves making a decision about level of risk. It means estimating how likely it is that injury or illness will occur and how severe that injury or illness may be.

Risks must be eliminated or controlled. The hierarchy of control measures, starting with the most preferred, is:

- eliminate the hazard – total removal of the hazard from the workplace.
- substitute the system of work, plant or substance with something safer, e.g. less hazardous cleaning agent.
- isolate the hazard from the employees, e.g. introduce a restricted work area in a laboratory.
- engineering controls, e.g. fume hoods and machine guarding.
- administrative controls, e.g. warning signs, rotation of tasks, training and routine maintenance.
- personal Protective Equipment (PPE), e.g. gloves, safety glasses and dust coats.

Refer to WHS Risk Management Procedure located on the HR website for further information.

Prohibited Practices

Employees are expected to know and observe safety practices as well as those practices that are prohibited on University property. Prohibited practices include:

- working under the influence of alcohol and/or prohibited drugs
- smoking in all enclosed areas, in University vehicles, within 10 metres of any building and on concreted or paved areas
- bringing firearms, knives, or offensive/illegal weapons on site
- tampering or interfering with University property
- interfering with safety equipment
- riding skateboards and using roller blades on campus
- riding bicycles on any pedestrian access
- no eating or drinking in teaching facilities
- no skylarking

Chemical Safety and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Chemical Safety

Many chemicals used in the workplace can be hazardous to your health if safety precautions are not observed. Therefore you should:

- Read the container labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS) on all chemicals you use. This will help to identify the ingredients, list possible harmful effects, instruct how to use the chemical safely, and provide details of recommended first aid procedures.
- Use chemicals only as directed.
- Not use any container that is not labelled. If unsure how to correctly use a chemical – ASK your supervisor.
- Wear personal protective clothing (PPE) when handling or using chemicals. PPE may vary depending on the chemical or method of use, but includes eye and skin protection.
- Safely store, handle and dispose of chemicals. Detailed information can be found in the WorkCover NSW Control of Workplace Hazardous Substances Code of Practice 2006,
- Be familiar with the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for the chemical you are using. SDS'scan be accessed online through the staff intranet at Chemwatch.

If you feel unwell when working with a chemical, report immediately to your Supervisor. If you feel unwell outside working hours, see a doctor. Inform the doctor that you have been working with chemicals and advise what chemical in particular.

More detailed information on the use of Hazardous Chemicals can be obtained from the *Code of Practice for the use of Workplace Hazardous Substances* 2006.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) refers to the equipment worn to reduce exposure to hazards. PPE includes items such as eye protection, ear protection, respiratory protection, foot protection, head protection, clothing and body protection, and skin measures such as sunscreen.

The area in which you work will supply you with any necessary PPR and training required to perform your job safely.

Workplace Health and Safety Awareness

Manual Handling/Lifting

Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of force exerted by a person to lift, push, pull, carry or otherwise move or restrain an object. Tasks involving manual handling must be assessed for hazards. Risk factors to be assessed may include:

- forces required to undertake task (includes weights)
- frequency and duration of task
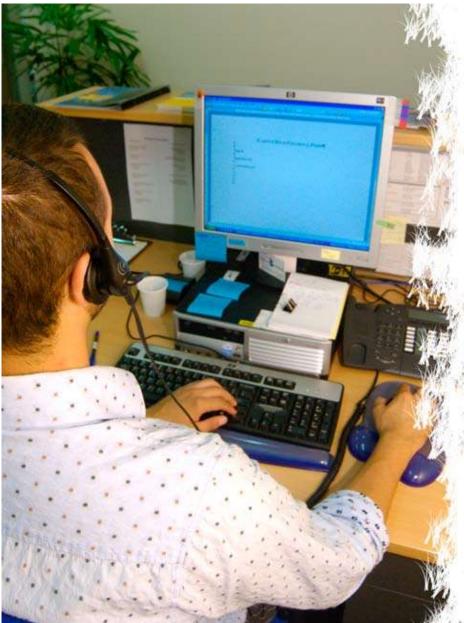- working postures and workplace layout

The following risk factors may contribute to manual handling injury and should be eliminated (where possible) or minimised:

- twisting or bending sideways
- performing work at an inappropriate height in comparison to the task at hand i.e. sorting and packing materials at a table or bench not designed for working while standing
- prolonged or frequent stretching of limbs or working above shoulder height
- pulling, pushing or lifting an object in an awkward manner and without firm support
- carrying heavy or large objects upstairs
- slippery and uneven floors

There are many more ways in which manual handling injury could occur so it is extremely important that correct handling and lifting procedures are followed.

Remember: Work design methods to remove the risk must be considered before relying on mechanical aids and/or training. Consultation should take place with employees when making changes.

Workstation ergonomics and safety in the office

Ergonomic equipment refers to workplace equipment and furniture, including but not limited to desks, chairs and computers provided to assist staff with the performance of work.

The provision of ergonomic equipment helps reduce the risk of injuries, and provides a safe and healthy work environment.

Guidelines for sitting and using a computer workstation:
- the top of your computer screen should be at eye level; lower for bifocal wearers.
- screen distance ideally should be at arm's length.
- document holder (if used) adjustable to screen height.
- chair backrest should provide firm lower back support.
- chair back and seat should be easily adjustable for height and tilt by user.
- keyboard height should promote relaxed arms with forearms parallel to the floor.
- thighs should be parallel to the floor.
- there should be ample legroom under the work surface.
- feet should be placed firmly on the floor or footrest.

Good housekeeping includes:

- maintaining clear and well lit traffic ways and aisles by not placing materials and equipment where it could be hazardous.
- floors that are level and free of electrical cords across walkways.
- free-standing fittings that are stable or secured to walls or floors.
- filing cabinets that do not open into aisles.
- identifying, reporting and taking appropriate action to rectify faulty equipment such as overloaded circuits, broken plugs and sockets.
- ensuring that hazardous situations are reported promptly.

Equipment isolation, tagging and electrical safety

When working with any electrical equipment you must take care and observe any relevant safety requirements.

In those areas where industrial equipment is being used there must be a documented procedure in place for the isolation, lock out and/or tagging of equipment that presents a hazard during breakdown, maintenance or commissioning. Isolation means turning off the machine, the circuit or apparatus to be worked on.

Employees using industrial type equipment - band saws, lathes, drills etc. - should receive training in the proper use and maintenance of such equipment.

General safety precautions when using electrical equipment include:
- not carrying or suspending power tools by their leads
- not working with electrical tools or apparatus in metal enclosures or in damp places unless the tools are cordless or a Residual Current Device (RCD) is utilised
- not allowing extension leads to be coiled tightly when in use - they may overheat
- not standing on metal ladders when using power tools unless they are cordless tools
- not using frayed or damaged electrical cables
- not piggybacking (using multiple double adapters) to connect equipment

Electrical Leads and Equipment– Compliance Testing and Tagging

All electrical equipment that could be affected by a hostile operating environment should be compliance tested according to Australia Standards/New Zealand Standards code: AS/NZS3760:2001. A hostile operating environment is one where electrical equipment is, in its normal use, subjected to operating conditions that are likely to result in damage to the equipment.

For example, workplaces where electrical equipment is likely to be damage by moisture, heat, vibration or workplaces where corrosive chemicals are used or workplaces where electrical equipment could be subject to mechanical change.

Machinery

Machine guarding must prevent access to all danger areas that are within the reach of an operator or a passerby. Machinery guards and other protective equipment must not be removed or altered under any circumstances unless all sources of energy are isolated.

All staff and students using industrial equipment should receive training in the proper use and maintenance of equipment. DO NOT operate any equipment or machinery that you are not trained and authorised to use.

Operating Guidelines:

- All fencing (of machinery) must be maintained in position and in an efficient state while the machine parts are in motion or in use.
- Guards MUST be kept in an efficient state that prevents access to the dangerous parts of the machinery.

Confined spaces

A confined space is any space, not intended as a normal place of work, that may have restricted means of entry and exit, and that may have an inadequate or contaminated atmosphere.

When working in confined spaces, staff must comply with the provisions of the Legislation. This regulation sets out the minimum standards needed to ensure the health and safety of people working in confined spaces. Staff/students should be trained or certified as per the Australian Standard AS 2865-1996 'Safe Working in a Confined Space'.