



Annual Report

Occupational Health & Safety Report 2021

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is committed to fostering and promoting a healthy and safe working environment for all employees. We respect and care for our employees. Our foundation for managing workplace health and safety is the premise that all injuries are preventable, and our goal is to strive for zero harm to our employees, contractors and visitors.

Performance highlights

OHS Management Plan

An OHS Management Plan was prepared for implementation from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. It focused on assessing the MAV's level of maturity, establishing an OHS Committee to further embed a shared responsibility for OHS across the organisation and supporting staff through COVID-19.

Active Mature OHS Culture

The work to assess the level of maturity in the MAV OHS culture was postponed in 2020 as the MAV WorkCare scheme planned to undertake a complete review of all members in March/April 2021.

An independent consultant completed the maturity assessment of the MAV's OHS culture in April 2021. It benchmarked the MAV against member councils.

The general findings indicated that:

- MAV's level of safety maturity was 46% compared with the survey average of 59%. This was below the average from all the surveys received.
- The maturity scores for Accountability (39%), OHS Systems (46%), Safety Culture (52%) and Senior Management Commitment (44%) were all below the average scores for these focus areas. The survey average maturity scores for these focus areas were about 60%.

Systemic approach

The MAV Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee was established in December 2020 to promote health, safety and well-being in the workplace. It also considers relevant information and strategies that may have organisational impact as well as engages in discussions to identify opportunities to improve MAV OHS processes.

Four committee meetings were held in 2020-21. Key actions were to establish the committee's Terms of Reference, deliver a COVID-Safe Plan for the return to the office and establish a quarterly meeting schedule for 2021.

OHS Committee members represent various work areas and officer levels. The current membership is:

- Troy Edwards,
Director, Policy and Advocacy
- Alison Standish,
Manager, HR & Corporate Services
- Anne-Maree Neal,
Governance Adviser
- Grace Hamilton,
Contracts Manager, MAV Procurement
- Kim Howland,
Manager, Community Services
- Louise McFarlane,
Manager, Strategic Communications

Leadership

Managers continue to monitor OHS issues with their team and report any concerns back to the Manager, HR and Corporate Services the Executive Team and/or the PHS Committee.

Workplaces and equipment

All staff completed an assessment of their home workplace when the organisation moved to working from home in March 2020.

As lockdown continued, more guidance was provided to staff about reviewing their home set-up, providing information about the benefits of standing and moving around regularly.

Health and wellbeing were a key focus throughout the extended lockdowns. Actions included the creation of a TEAMS site to encourage staff to exchange ideas to support each other; online yoga, pilates and social activities; ergonomic tips shared at staff meetings; and mindfulness sessions offered to all staff over a five-week period to help reduce stress and anxiety.

A transition plan was developed to guide the staff return to the office - this was developed in consultation with staff and the OHS Committee and aligned to changing government regulations.

Updates regarding COVID and recommended COVIDSafe actions were regularly provided to staff, particularly through the new fortnightly internal newsletter – *MAV Insider*, which was launched in March 2021.

In June and July, a one-hour online 'Working from Home' OHS refresher was provided and covered topics from managing the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial risks that may occur when working from home.

Hazard/Incident Summary

Category	2019-20	2020-21
Hazards	0	0
First Aid	1	0
Incidents	0	3
Lost Time Incidents	0	0
Work Care Claims	0	1

Quarterly OHS Inspection

There was one quarterly inspection of the office in this period as staff were predominantly working from home.

Corrective Actions

The Corrective Actions Register provides a listing of all corrective actions identified from inspections, incident and hazard reports, risk assessments or observations.

We continued to provide staff access to their work computers, monitors, keyboards, mouse pads and ergonomic office chairs to use at home. New staff employed were required to complete the working from home checklist and provided with the necessary equipment to work safely in a home office.

During the time when staff could attend the office, several corrective actions were undertaken including:

- Fire extinguisher services checked,
- Annual test and tag of monitors and electrical cords undertaken,
- New defibrillator pads
- First-aid kits renewed.

Other

During the intermittent lockdowns in 2021, there was a noticeable sense of work and COVID/ lockdown fatigue across the team - affecting managers and staff alike.

The Executive Team discussed concerns about staff mental health and the challenges for managers of managing a team remotely for such a long period of time and initiated actions to support and strategies to help address these issues.



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