



# ADVICE SHEET 1

# MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

## WHY IS MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT IMPORTANT?

...because responsibility for safety starts at the top.

Everyone agrees that a safe workplace is important, but it won't happen if you don't do all you can to make your workplace as safe as it can be. The primary responsibility for a safe workplace rests with you, the employer. Demonstrate your commitment to safety and ensure that everyone in your business is clear about their health and safety responsibilities.

Your workers are your greatest asset when establishing an effective safety management plan.

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### Management commitment

Develop a successful safety culture in your business by leading from the top, where your actions and attitudes send a message to your workers that you are serious about safety. From this commitment, effective partnerships are formed with your workers to achieve safer workplaces.

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### WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE RED ZONE...

...it is unlikely that safety responsibilities in your business have been made clear or that safety is seen as a priority.

Ticks in the RED zone indicate that you need to take immediate action to develop a safety culture by clarifying people's roles in managing safety, defining your role, allocating resources to meet your safety responsibilities, and demonstrating your personal commitment to operating a safe business.

Outline safety responsibilities in your workers' job descriptions. Be clear about who is responsible for safety.

#### Determine safety responsibilities

Speak with your workers about what is expected of them regarding safety in the workplace – and about what you need to do to help them achieve these expectations.

If you expect them to report incidents, they need a safety reporting procedure – and they expect you to act upon the safety reports. Similarly, if you expect them to work safely, they need safe work procedures – and they should expect you to involve them in the development of those procedures.

Consider these expectations as the safety responsibilities of you and your workers.

Time and money spent on safety is an investment in good business practice – it means reduced costs for workers' compensation, less time lost due to injuries, and better productivity.

### **Commit time and money**

When responsibilities have been identified, commit adequate time and money to ensure these responsibilities are met.

Spend time to:

- develop safe work procedures
- supervise and train your workers
- act on safety reports.

Spend money to:

- maintain and repair equipment
- provide personal protective equipment
- fix safety problems.

Good communication between your workers, supervisors and you ensures that your workplace systems will be effective. Discuss safety issues at your regular workplace meetings, implement an incident reporting procedure for accidents and near misses, and follow-up workers' safety issues as a priority.

### **Make safety a priority**

When you have identified safety responsibilities and have committed resources to make your business safe, take the initiative to make safety a top priority.

Elements that comprise your safety management approach should include:

- developing and implementing safe work procedures for all tasks that expose your workers to risk
- ensuring that safe work procedures are followed at all times
- involving your workers in decisions about their health and safety
- training your workers to do their jobs safely
- ensuring safety problems are reported quickly – and acted upon
- reviewing procedures when there are changes in the workplace or after an incident
- providing resources to address your safety responsibilities
- ensuring your workers' compensation insurance policy is accurate and up-to-date and your workplace rehabilitation policy and procedures are prominently displayed in the workplace.

## **WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE ORANGE ZONE...**

**... you're on the right track, but you need to do more to address the risks in your workplace.**

Ticks in the ORANGE zone indicate that you need to be more consistent with your commitment to workplace safety. Are safety responsibilities effectively communicated? Are there adequate resources to meet safety responsibilities? Are you appropriately involved in safety issues?

### **Ensure safety responsibilities are clearly defined and understood**

Your workers will contribute to safety if they understand their responsibilities – and have the skills to meet those responsibilities.

Are your new workers given induction training that includes safety information and outlines their safety responsibilities? Do they have clear instructions on how to deal with safety issues? Do supervisors understand their role in ensuring safety in the workplace?

## WHERE YOU TICKED IN THE GREEN ZONE...

### Review resources to support safety initiatives

Demonstrate your commitment by providing enough time and money to deal with safety problems – and fix problems when they arise. Where problems cannot be fixed immediately, provide an alternative solution.

### Demonstrate your commitment

Get actively involved with safety issues when they arise. Attend workplace meetings regularly. Speak with your workers and act upon their feedback regarding safety issues. Ensure solutions to safety problems are implemented promptly by those responsible.

Inform your workers of any plans you may have regarding new technologies, work practices or equipment – they may have safety concerns of which you are unaware. Ask them how to best use the resources set aside for safety. Ask them what training they require.

### ...your workers understand their role – and yours – in getting their work done safely.

Ticks in the GREEN zone indicate that safety roles, responsibilities and procedures have been defined.

Maintain your commitment by:

- monitoring and reviewing your safety performance
- building safety into your future business plans
- promoting safety to your workers as a core business value
- providing feedback to your workers regarding their successful contribution to safety
- providing ongoing training so that everyone can enhance their skills
- making up-to-date information available to your workers so they improve their knowledge of safety issues and solutions.

## TYPICAL WORKPLACE RESPONSIBILITIES

Owner/manager responsibilities	Worker responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult your workers in all safety related activity.</li> <li>• Develop and implement safe work procedures.</li> <li>• Identify hazards in your workplace and control all risks.</li> <li>• Train your workers in safe work procedures.</li> <li>• Ensure safe equipment is purchased and maintained.</li> <li>• Develop an incident and injury reporting procedure, and act upon the incident and injury reports.</li> <li>• Supply safety gear (e.g. personal protective equipment).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a workers' compensation insurance policy and a return to work program.</li> <li>• Follow procedures.</li> <li>• Participate in training.</li> <li>• Report incidents and injuries.</li> <li>• Use equipment properly.</li> <li>• Use safety gear.</li> <li>• Participate in your return to work plan.</li> </ul>

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