Balranald Shire Council

Work, Health and Safety Policy

Policy, procedure, protocol	Policy
Document version	V 1
Date adopted by Council	Council – 21/10-2025 Minute No. 2025/195
ECM reference number	D25.115267
Due for review	01/07/2028
Documents superseded	D25.108446
Author	Scott Howe
Section / Department	
Linkage to Our Community Strategic Plan	
Objective	
Strategy	

Background and Context

Balranald Shire Council (Council) recognises its obligations as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and that it has a primary duty of care to manage Work Health and Safety (WHS) at Council.

Council is committed to providing a workplace that enables all work activities to be carried out safely. We will take all reasonably practicable measures to eliminate hazards and minimise risks to the health, safety and welfare of workers, contractors, visitors, and anyone else who may be affected by our operations. Council will establish, implement and maintain a Health and Safety Management System that enables us to identify and eliminate hazards and reduce risks presented by any of our activities and facilities and the way they are used. This will comprise of policies and procedures aligned with ISO 45001 – Occupational Health and Safety Management System.

As per Council's current approved Enterprise Risk Management Policy (ERM) and this Work, Health and Safety Policy (WHS), Council will adopt a structured, consistent and holistic approach to the management of risk at all levels and for all business activities through the integration of business, work health and safety and environmental risk management into a common framework.

Council is committed to incorporating risk management into critical processes and to managing risk consistent with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk Management – Principles and guidelines; AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems; HB221-2004: Business Continuity Management and AS/NZS ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Standards.

Our Enterprise Risk Management Policy sets out the Council's approach, mandate and commitment to risk management from a strategic perspective.

This WHS Policy works in unison with Council's ERM Policy and Framework, and describes how council will carry out planning, measurement, operational management and reporting for work health and safety, including outlining the process for WHS management review.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish and communicate Council's approach for managing WHS risks and to establish clear objectives to ensure that all Councillors, management, staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of and responsible for the management of WHS risk which will allow Council to maximise opportunities and minimise negative outcomes.

Council is committed to ensuring we comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (the Act). We will also comply with any other relevant legislation, applicable Codes of Practice and Australian Standards as far as reasonably practicable.

We will continually improve our performance by:

- Ensuring that Council complies with its legislative obligations;
- Allocating necessary resources to meet its WHS commitment;
- Committing to a system that allows us to identify hazards, assess risks, and eliminate and/or minimise risk to the health and safety of workers and others;
- Providing adequate systems and resources to effectively manage injury management and clearly defining roles and responsibilities for Work Health and Safety;
- Promoting work health and safety as a shared responsibility of all in the workplace;
- Promoting effective consultation on Work Health and Safety matters with all workers and others;
- Communicating through induction, instruction, training, supervision to improve individuals WHS understanding of workplace hazards, including safe work procedures and establishing measurable objectives and targets to ensure a continued improvement aimed at eliminating work-related injury and illness;
- Implementing, maintaining; reviewing and continually improving our WHS Management System.

Objectives of the Policy

As per Council's current approved Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Policy and Framework and this WHS Policy, Council will adopt a structured, consistent and holistic approach to the management of risk at all levels and for all business activities through the integration of business, work health and safety and environmental risk management into a common framework.

It is committed to incorporating risk management into critical processes and to managing risk consistent with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Guidelines; AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems and AS/NZS ISO 14001:2016 Environmental Management Systems – Requirements with guidance for use.

Scope

This policy shall apply to all "workers" as defined within this policy or as per the definition within the Act (Part 1 – Preliminary, Division 3 –Interpretation, Subdivision 2 - Other Important terms, Section 7 – meaning of a Worker.)

This policy shall apply to all "workplaces" as defined within this policy or as per the definition within the Act (Part 1 – Preliminary, Division 3 –Interpretation, Subdivision 2 - Other Important terms, Section 8 – meaning of a Workplace).

This policy shall be read and interpreted in relation with Council's operational policies and procedures relating to our Workplace Health and Safety Management System. The policy applies to all areas of Council operations and includes Council employees, councillors, volunteers, and contractors of Council.

Employees are accountable for the identification and management of safety risks in their area of responsibility and for the escalation of these risks to their people leader.

The Senior /Executive Leadership Team and the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee will monitor and review Council's risk management (including WHS) activities and performance, and outcomes will be reported to Council's elected body.

Risk Appetite

As per Council's current approved Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Policy and Framework, in relation to pursuing the achievement of its objectives and governance responsibilities, Council will accept a degree of risk commensurate with both the potential reward and with consideration of Council's role in the community.

Council supports creativity and innovation by aligning it with an active approach to risk management, balancing its exposure to risk against the expected benefit to the community in accordance with the goals of Councils Community Strategic Plan.

In considering its approach to risk, Balranald Shire Council's appetite increases for risks that seek to continually improve the services we provide and the way we do business, without compromising integrity.

In relation to WHS risk and hazards Councils risk appetite is:

Health and Safety Risk

Council has no appetite for risks that compromise the health and safety of staff, volunteers, contractors and/or members of the public and will seek to mitigate such risks as far as reasonably practicable.

Responsibilities & Accountability

Detailed responsibilities and accountabilities for the development, implementation, recording, communication and review of Council's enterprise risk management system and activities are detailed in Council's Enterprise Risk Management Framework.

Key responsibilities and accountabilities as they relate to this policy are,

Responsibilities

Council (being the PCBU) must ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that:

• The health and safety of workers and other persons is not put at risk from work carried

out as part of the conduct of the business or undertaking;

• The workplace, the means of entering and exiting the workplace and anything arising from

the workplace are without risks to the health and safety of any person.

A PCBU must provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

• Adequate facilities and access to the facilities;

• Information, training, instruction or supervision;

• Safe general working environment;

• First aid equipment and personnel;

• Emergency plans;

• Personal protective equipment;

• Effective communication with remote or isolated workers.

COUNCIL

The Council, as the elected body, will:

• Review and endorse the Balranald Shire Council Enterprise Risk Management Policy and Work, Health and Safety Policy

• Ensure a Framework is in operation that delivers a consistent approach to risk management across the organisation.

• Review Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) reports and monitors, that effective risk management and controls have been implemented.

Officer

Persons considered officers at council are the General Manager, Directors, Managers and other

person who has significant decision-making abilities and financial control of the business or

undertaking.

The overall responsibility and accountability for Work Health and Safety rests with Council's

"Officers" and that duty cannot be transferred.

It is an Officer's duty to exercise due diligence to ensure their business or undertaking fulfils its

health and safety obligations under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

Essential elements of due diligence for an Officer are interrelated and cumulative in nature. These elements require an Officer to:

• Acquire and keep up to date knowledge of work health and safety matters;

• Gain an understanding of the operations of the business and the hazards and risks involved

• Ensure appropriate resources and processes are provided as far as is reasonably practicable to enable hazards to be identified and risks to be eliminated or minimised;

• Ensure information regarding incidents, hazards and risks is received and the information is responded to in a timely way;

• Ensure the PCBU has, and implements, processes for complying with any legal duty or obligation; and

• Ensure processes are verified, monitored and reviewed.

Councillors

Councillors have the following duties under the WHS Act – to:

a) take reasonable care for your own health and safety

b) take reasonable care that your acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons

c) comply, so far as you are reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given to ensure compliance with the WHS Act and any policies or procedures adopted by the council to ensure workplace health and safety

d) cooperate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the council relating to workplace health or safety that has been notified to council staff

e) report accidents, incidents, near misses, to the general manager or such other staff member nominated by the general manager, and take part in any incident investigations

f) so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, co-operate and coordinate with all others who have a duty under the WHS Act in relation to the same matter.

Managers

Managers and leaders are responsible for providing a workplace that is, as far as reasonably practicable, safe and healthy workplace for workers and visitors, in particular in the areas of their control.

This includes:

• Modelling health and safety leadership

Demonstrating a commitment to good health and safety performance, by:

- talking about safety at regular meetings
- ensuring safe work procedures are followed
- reporting incidents, hazards and safety concerns promptly
- assessing task risk and not allowing an activity to continue until it can be controlled adequately

• Fostering a strong work health and safety culture where worker input is valued

• Promoting and implementing the Work Health and Safety Management System

• Actively support the identification of hazards and risks and the management of these

• Understand and monitor safety performance objectives

• Proactively manage other duty holders (e.g. contractors), when required

Staff in supervisory positions, have additional responsibilities which include:

• Lead safety initiatives in the workplace.

• Consult with their workers on measures to protect their health and safety

• Actively follow agreed safety practices and model positive attitudes towards health and safety matters

• Arrange for their workers to be instructed in healthy and safe systems of work and procedures and supervise the practice of safe working procedures

• Notify managers of all incidents, hazardous situations, dangerous occurrences or immediate risks to health and safety of any workers

• Ensure that all workers are informed of this policy

• Undertake consultation with all managers and workers on change that may affect their health and safety

• Ensure that WHS is a standing agenda item at all staff meetings

Workers and others

Workers and others must, while at work:

• Take reasonable care for their own health and safety;

• Take reasonable care for the health and safety of others;

• Comply with any reasonable instruction by the PCBU;

• Cooperate with any reasonable policies and procedures of the PCBU.

Health and Safety Committee / Health & Safety Representatives – "Duty to Consult "

Council has a duty to consult obligation under the Act *(Part 5 – Consultation, representation and participation, Division 2 – consultation with workers)*.

Council will consult with workers using formal and informal methods of consultation including working with the Workplace Consultation Committee, toolbox talks, team meetings, newsletters.

Council uses a Consultative Committee for formal consultation and does not have formal Health and Safety Representatives (HRS) as defined within the Act *(Part 5 – Consultation, Representation and Participation, Division 3 – Health and Safety Representatives)* however if circumstances change and HSR are implemented additional consultation may be required.

The role of the Health and Safety Committee is to ensure a coordinated approach to consultation in relation to health and safety matters within Council and to make recommendations to the General Manager /Management / Safety Team.

Work Health and Safety System (WHSMS)

In order to implement the general provisions of the Policy a new Work Health and Safety Management Framework and System has been developed and will be continually reviewed and monitored in compliance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulation 2017 and ISO45001:2018.

The WHS Framework and System includes WHS Policy, procedures, and programs which work together to manage health and safety at Council. The system relates to all aspects of work health and safety including the following elements:

• Context of the Organisation

• Leadership and Worker Participation

• Planning

• Support

• Operation

• Performance

• Evaluation

• Improvement

Compliance

Compliance with Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy

Compliance for Council Management and Staff

All workers are required to comply with this Policy and associated procedures. A failure to comply could be considered a breach and would be dealt with in accordance with Discipline Procedures under the New South Wales Local Government (State) Award.

Compliance for Others (PCBUs, including contractors who work with or on behalf of Council)

Others who with or on behalf of Council are required to comply with this Policy and associated procedures. A failure to comply could be considered a breach of contract.

Relevant Legislation and Standards

- Local Government Act (NSW) 1983
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011, NSW
- Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 2017
- Civil Liability Act 2002, NSW
- AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 Risk management – Principles and Guidelines
- AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems
- ISO 9100: 2015 Quality Management
- AS/NZS ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Standards
- AS/NZS ISO 5050:2010 Business Continuity – managing disruption related risks.

Related Documents

- Enterprise Risk Management Policy
- Enterprise Risk Management Framework
- Code of Conduct
- Work Health and Safety Framework
- Business Continuity Plan

Review

Review of this policy will incorporate relevant legislation, documentation released from relevant state agencies, best practice guidelines and relevant internal and external stakeholder context /data

The standard review period will be within each term of Council following the Local Government Elections, or as required to ensure that it meets legislation requirements and the needs of the community and Council. The responsible Council officer will be notified of the review requirements three months prior to the expiry of this policy.

The XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX is responsible for the review of this policy.

Definitions

The definitions used within this policy are consistent with the risk terminology used by Council as part of its Enterprise Risk Management Framework. Council has adopted a number of the definitions of risk as contained in AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 and AS/NZS 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems

For the purposes of this policy:

Risk Term	Definition
Council	Shall mean Balranald Shire Council.
	This includes any person who holds a position identified by the council as the position of a Councillor, the General Manager or a designated person, which involves the exercise of functions of Council by these persons (such as functions relating to duty of care, regulatory functions or contractual functions).
Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)	A person conducts a business or undertaking:
	• Whether the person conducts the business or undertaking alone or with others;
	• Whether or not the business or undertaking is conducted for profit or gain;
	• An elected member of a local authority does not in that capacity conduct a business or undertaking.
Officer	An officer is a person who makes decisions, or participates in making decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of a business or undertaking and has the capacity to significantly affect the financial standing of the business or undertaking.
Worker	A person is a worker if the person carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:
	• An employee; or
	• A contractor or subcontractor; or
	• An employee of a contractor or subcontractor; or
	• An employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking; or
	• An apprentice or trainee; or
	• A student gaining work experience; or a volunteer

Risk Term	Definition
Others	Is taken to mean others at a worksite, including but not limited to visitors, customers, and members of the public.
Risk	Risk is the effect of uncertainty on objectives, where an effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and threats. Risk is usually expressed in terms of risk sources, potential events, their consequences and their likelihood.
Enterprise Risk Management	Co-ordinated activities to direct and control an organisation with regard to risk
Enterprise Risk Management policy	Statement of the overall intentions and direction of an organisation related to risk management
Enterprise Risk Management Framework	A set of components that provide the foundations and organisational arrangements for designing, implementing, monitoring, reviewing and continually improving risk management throughout the organisation. The foundations include the policy, objectives, mandate and commitment to manage. The organisational arrangements include plans, relationships, accountabilities, resources, processes and activities. Risk management framework is embedded within te organisation's overall strategic and operational policies and practices.
Risk management process	Systematic application of management policies, procedures and practices to the activities of communicating, consulting, establishing the context and identifying, analysing, evaluating, treating, monitoring and reviewing risk
Communication & consultation	Continual and iterative processes that an organisation conducts to provide, share or obtain information, and to engage in dialogue with stakeholders regarding the management of risk
Stakeholder	A person or organisation that can affect, be affected by, or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision or activity
Risk appetite	Relates to the amount of risk an organisation is prepared to accept in pursuit of its goals. Is also known as risk attitude or target level of risk, the approach to assess and eventually pursue, retain, take or turn away from risk.
Duty of Care	The law says that if it is 'reasonably foreseeable' that a person might suffer some sort of loss or harm because of something someone else does, then that person is owed a duty of care.
ALARP	'As Low as Reasonably Practicable' - ALARP involves weighing the benefits and opportunities to be gained from managing the risk and continuing with the proposed activity against the effort, time and resources needed to control the risk

Risk Term	Definition
Business Interruption/ Business Continuity	Is any event, whether anticipated (i.e. public service strike) or unanticipated (i.e. blackout/natural disaster) which disrupts the normal course of business operations at an organisation location for an extended period of time.