

 Department of Education and Early Childhood Development		Procedure No. DEE EHU 03-1-4
		Authorised By: Secretary
Title: OHS Consultation and Communication Policy		
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Scope:

This policy applies to **all employees, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors** in Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) **schools and offices and is readily accessible to all interested parties.** This policy builds on Part 4 of the Victorian *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act 2004* which outlines the legal duties of employers to consult.

DEECD OHS Commitment and Principles:

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is committed to providing DEECD workplaces with consultative arrangements that allow employees to contribute to decisions that impact on their health and safety.

Workplace health and safety benefits significantly from effective consultation. Employees are often best placed to identify health and safety hazards and issues in the workplace. Consultation and communication can also help build commitment to health and safety.

- Consultation on OHS issues shall be meaningful and effective and employee contributions valued and taken into account;
- Consultation will not delay the implementation of a policy or procedure to address an immediate or serious health and safety risk in a timely manner;
- Consultation will be undertaken in a manner consistent with positive supportive working relationships; and
- DEECD has ultimate administrative and operational responsibility for all workplace decisions that affect health and safety provided that these decisions are made in accordance with the consultation principles outlined in this policy.

DEECD will meet its commitment to Health & Safety by:

Consulting with health and safety representatives and employees so far as is reasonably practicable when making any decision or change in relation to their health and safety in the workplace including the following:

- identification of workplace hazards;
- assessment of the risks associated with workplace activities and hazards;
- decisions made in relation to measures taken to eliminate or control workplace risks;
- review of workplace risk assessments;
- introduction of, or alteration to procedures for monitoring workplace risks;
- decisions made in relation the adequacy of workplace facilities;
- proposed changes to the work premises, systems of work, plant or substances used at the workplace;
- decisions made in relation to changes in job role; and
- decisions made in relation to consultation procedures, and any legislative requirements.

Where OHS issues cannot be resolved directly as a result of using the local/established OHS issue resolution procedure, external assistance may be sought.

DEECD employees, visitors, volunteers and contractors are required to:

- consult and cooperate with DEECD on health and safety related matters;
- openly communicate any instances of hazards or incidents in the workplace;
- provide feedback to DEECD on the effectiveness of established consultation and communication arrangement.

Richard Bolt



Secretary
19 January 2012